

Releasing the Supernatural Ministry of the Holy Spirit

I. FUNCTIONING IN THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- A. The Spirit is speaking to the Church about being vessels of His supernatural ministry by functioning in the spiritual gifts and using our authority in Christ. He does not want the Church to be ignorant of the spiritual gifts. Faith comes by hearing and hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Being informed about the gifts is often where faith is stirred in us to function in them.

¹ ***Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant... (1 Cor. 12:1)***

- B. We will never function in the spiritual gifts until we earnestly desire them. As we seek God's face we can experience intimacy with Him; as we seek His hand we can release His power. We desire the spiritual gifts by praying for them and using them in the day of small beginnings.

³¹ ***Earnestly desire the best gifts. ^{14:1} Desire spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy...***

³⁹ ***Desire earnestly to prophesy... (1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1, 39)***

- C. Everyone is called to prophesy and function in the gifts of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is stirring up the Church in faith to operate in His power as a lifestyle. It is time to begin to walk in new adventures in God as we pray for the sick and needy. Today, is the day of salvation (1 Cor. 6:1).

¹⁷ ***In the last days...I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams... (Acts 2:17)***

⁵ ***I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied... ³¹ You can all prophesy. (1 Cor. 14:5, 31)***

- D. The prophetic spirit is manifested in us in dramatic ways as well as subtle ways. The dramatic ways include dreams, visions, angelic encounters, hearing the audible voice of God, etc. The subtle ways are the most common. They include receiving faint impressions such as:

1) ***Mental pictures***: reoccurring impressions or pictures in our minds that indicate how the Lord will touch others by imparting His grace or healing to them.

2) ***Emotional stirrings***: feeling various emotions like joy, sadness, or a burden for a person or a ministry as an indicator that the Lord will touch others related to that emotion or burden.

3) ***Sympathetic pains***: feeling pain in a specific part of our bodies as an indicator that the Lord desires to heal the disease or pain that others are feeling in that particular part of their body.

4) ***Physical sensations***: experiencing the Spirit's presence (heat, energy, fire, wind, etc.) in a specific area of our bodies or through our five senses (e.g. smell or taste) as an indicator that the Lord desires to touch others in a way related to the physical sensation that we received.

- E. We must be intentional about receiving the Spirit's prophetic leading when we gather in large or small groups or in social gatherings. We do this simply by asking the Holy Spirit, "***What are you doing or saying?***" He will often answer by giving us faint prophetic impressions. One simple phrase from the Spirit gives us a "hint" as to what He will do. It is like a key that opens a door.

¹⁹ ***Jesus answered... "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner."* (Jn. 5:19)**

II. HOW TO GROW IN THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

- A. We need a right perspective of how the gifts function so that we value them.
- B. ***Principle:*** The demonstration of the Spirit's power often follows the ***declaration of God's word*** from the lips of a believer. The Spirit moves as we ***speak words*** that agree with God's will.
- C. First, we function in the gifts by ***giving expression to impressions that the Spirit gives us***. The impressions that we speak must honor the Scripture. As we pray Spirit-inspired impressions over the people, we release the power of God to them. We exercise our faith by giving expression to the impressions of the Spirit. These impressions are like a key that unlocks a door.
- D. The gifts often begin as the still small voice of God or as a subtle impression of the Spirit to our spirit. It can be so subtle that many do not value it. Thus, they ignore it as they wait for an open vision. If they understood the value of God's small voice in them, then they would be attentive.
- ¹¹ Behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. (1 Kgs. 19:10-12)***
- E. Ask the question: "Spirit, what are you saying or doing?" The simple act of asking makes us receptive and attentive to what He is doing. This question postures us to receive the Spirit's impressions or the prophetic whisper of God in our heart.
1. I compare functioning in the prophetic to putting up the sail in a boat on a lake on a calm day. When it seems there is no breeze, the sail catches even the most gentle breeze that barely moves the boat. Yet, it moves! A similar dynamic occurs when we ask Jesus what He is doing.
 2. When we receive even the most subtle impression of the Spirit, it can move our heart in faith just enough that we might release the power of God to touch others. Put your sail up by saying, "Holy Spirit, what do You want to do or say through me today?"
- F. We often do not have prophetic impressions simply because we do not ask for them (Jas. 4:2). Ask the Lord what He would do if we gave Him room. Remove all limitations rooted in unbelief.
- G. Second, ***dial down emotionally*** or quiet our souls so we can "listen," or discern the impressions of the Spirit, when we are praying for people. This is opposite to stirring our souls up with fervor when ministering to people. Don't "preach your prayers" over people that you minister to.

- H. Third, we must **value the power of God** even when it is released in small measures. We must not despise the smaller measures. It is still God's power that works when even 10% of someone's headache is healed. It is not the work of the devil or human ability. We must honor it as such and not despise it. We are grateful for every good thing from God's hand.
- I. In our pride, we can easily despise the smallness of God's power in our ministry. Some are only interested in God's power when it is manifest as an unusual and dramatic measure. They are zealous to function in healing and the prophetic spirit only when there is a great measure of power released. In other words, they want to walk in the prophetic on their terms. It takes humility to walk with God on His terms of being faithful and grateful in the days of smallness.
- J. Fourth, do not be preoccupied with the **fear of missing** it. We should be more concerned with never functioning in the gifts! The more important question is not "What if I miss it?" but rather "What if it is God and I miss a chance to release His power to someone in need?"
- K. Fifth, be **supernaturally natural** by using softer language when you are not sure if the impression you received is from the Lord. For example, we do not have to say, "Thus says the Lord: God will heal you today." We can simply say, "I want to pray for you; I believe God wants to touch you." If we are wrong we will not hurt anyone if we use softer language when uncertain.
- L. Do not feel pressure to come up with something. Our responsibility is to be open to the Spirit.
- M. Why do believers neglect to prophesy? It takes love and spiritual vigor to prophesy often. Why? It requires **attentiveness** to the Spirit to receive small impressions from Him. It also requires **energy** and that we take **risks** to act on the impressions. It is easier to draw back from all this.
- N. There is an intensity involved in being continually available to the Spirit. To be attentive implies refusing the indulgence of anxiety and self-pity that cause so much emotional traffic.

III. THE NINE MANIFESTATION GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

- A. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for the profit of others (v. 7, 11).
⁷ The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ The Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually... (1 Cor. 12:7-11)
- B. All these gifts are supernatural, not natural. There are three recognized categories of the gifts.
Gifts of revelation reveal something: word of wisdom, word of knowledge, discerning of spirits.
Gifts of power do something: the gift of faith, working of miracles, and gifts of healings.
Gifts of inspiration say something: prophecy, tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

IV. GIFTS OF REVELATION: GIFTS THAT REVEAL SOMETHING

- A. **Word of knowledge** (Jn. 4:18; Acts 5:1-10; 9:10-12; 10:9-20; Rev. 2-3): revelation with information related to the past or present. It is not called the gift of knowledge. He reveals a word or “fragment” of information related to people, places, or things. It can be manifested through a vision, angel, dream, or gift of prophecy. The gifts often operate together.
- B. **Word of wisdom** (Acts 9:10-16; 8:26-29; 11:28-30; 21:10-11): revelation with information related to the future. It is not called the *gift* of wisdom.
- C. **Discerning of spirits** (Acts 9:3-8; 16:16-18): insight into the spirit world. It is to discern or perceive a spirit or the spirit realm, both good and bad. It is not called the *gift* of discernment. It is more than psychological insight or pointing out people’s tendencies and faults.

V. GIFTS OF POWER: GIFTS THAT DO SOMETHING

- A. **Working of miracles**: It is a manifestation of the Spirit to work an instantaneous miracle. A miracle is a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature. This gift works actively. Jesus turned the water into wine (Jn. 2) and fed the 5,000 (Jn. 6:6-14).
- B. **Gift of faith**: It is a manifestation of the Spirit to receive a miracle of protection, direction, etc. Daniel passively received a miracle in the lion’s den (Dan. 6:16-23) as Paul did in a storm (Acts 27) and Elijah did when fed by ravens (1 Kgs. 17:2-6). As this gift functions, things come your way that you could not make happen: exact numbers in financial issues or divine appointments. The gift of faith **protects** us in danger. The working of miracles **changes** the circumstances causing the danger. Paul was protected in a storm. Jesus rebuked the storm, causing it to change.
- C. **Gifts of healings**: In the original Greek, both "gifts" and "healings" are in the plural. It is the only gift of the Spirit in the plural. Healing is a process, whereas miracles are instantaneous.

VI. GIFTS OF INSPIRATION: GIFTS THAT SAY SOMETHING

- A. **Gift of prophecy**: inspiration to edify, exhort, and comfort people (1 Cor. 14:3) vs. direction, etc.
- B. **Different kinds of tongues**: tongues of men and angels (1 Cor. 13:1). There is a difference between the gift of tongues for the body and for private devotion (1 Cor. 12:30; 14:2-4).
² He who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries...⁴ He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself... (1 Cor. 14:2-4)
- C. **Interpretation of tongues**: interpretation of God’s burden, not only a translation of a language.