

When I first became a Christian, I decided then that the Lord's business was more important than mine. And when my church met in business session, I don't have to go all over that each month, I will be there. I settled it at the start--he had the right attitude. If church members everywhere would settle the matter of their attendance on that basis instead of fighting the battle each Sunday whether to go or stay - they could use their energy for other battles. Which they have to win. Not only in their own lives but in prayers for others.

I say that the Holy Spirit gives gifts only if you make Jesus Lord will you have this settled.

You cannot use these gifts properly nor can you even be aware of them, unless you have found the secret.

Let me give you three points, on this matter.

First, penitent. Yes, there must be first of all repentance in your heart. In Paul's letters, one single act of repentance was not enough to insure the infilling of the spirit. But it needed to be a life-long proposition. I Tim. 1:16. The Christian should live in a state of repentance - that is, he should take sin seriously. On the basis of this - the life lived in the context of the holy God. Sin was exposed again and again in the New Testament.

According to the Spirit, there was no difference between the action of Moses in his righteous anger against sin of the golden calf, and Paul in his zeal against sin and sinners in the church of Jesus Christ.

There was a demand that Christians be disciplined people. And that they drive out the wicked persons from among them. I Cor. 5:13, 11, 12.

The Christian must walk in the light and the spiritual gifts that are handed him will only come when there is repentance.

✓ Second, practice. Genuine practice. This is also a requirement. The exercise of spiritual gifts. Lay not only in the matter of repentance but in daily walking. In the life and the presence of God.

○ If you are longing to see the spirit and the power of God demonstrated, in your Christian life, above all else you must walk in the light. This means that you must surrender to the holiness of God. Where repentance is absent - you need not go farther. Jesus went so far, if your eye cause you sin, pluck it out and throw it away. And then you will be on a firm foundation.

✓ Third, profound love. Also, those who would have the gift of the spirit, must be possessed with a consuming love. Sacrifice themselves for Jesus Christ and for others. The whole context of their life must be one of sacrifice. That spiritual gifts are to be seen. Think about Paul insulted, abused, thrown out of his city, beaten, outlawed, despised, rejected. Again and again they seek his life. But he had one answer, and that was love. He never tired of loving and suffering.

The picture painted for us in the New Testament is constantly that of men who were forgiven of sin, who were sacrificial in their living, and who possessed the mainspring of love.

The holy spirit comes to us and wants to endow us with his gifts. He plainly requires that we adopt this pattern. And that we make aim our earnest desire.

It is so true, we seek our own advantage. We allow ourselves to become embittered, inconsiderate.

If it is possible for us to work for the kingdom of God, in the power of the Spirit - if we leave no room for him. Or if we resist his work against our self-centeredness. Is it possible to say, I have the holy spirit and his gifts. And at the same time reject him who does his work of transformation.

Most people like to live a life of victory. There is a thrill in that. We want continuous victory. But we forget that victory means opposition.

In the seminary once, the professor said, to some students that needed a degree - entitle MS degree. One that really counted and was worth all others. A student looked at him and said, what is that degree - MS stands for master of the situation. That degree crowns them all. I think that is very true. Life is made up of situations. One after another. And a man who has graduated master of the situation, who speaks in the spirit of God - can say, Jesus is Lord.

And the Holy Spirit is with the Lordship of Jesus.

Yes, the giving of spiritual gifts by the Spirit will continue until the job is done. If you place a piece of metal in the flame and the metal is transformed

2 Tim. 4:20 - we read that Paul left a man, Trophimus ill at Miletus.

1 Tim. 5:23 - and 2 Cor. 12:7 - you know that Paul suffered a thorn in the flesh. So in the New Testament church, it shows us that Christ can be glorified, through healing. And through patience in suffering that is willingly born out for the love of God. One can never say that Christ ought to heal every case and every sickness that we see today.

In one old writing, we are told, it said - honor a physician. With the due honor unto him for he uses what you may have of him. For the Lord has created him. For of the most high comes healing. The Lord creates medicine out of the earth. The Lord gives men wisdom to use this.

So, healings were somewhat common place - if a Jew was ill, he was more likely to go to the Rabbi. Than to the Doctor. People went to temples usually. And sometimes spend the whole night to be healed. And so on.

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Fifth, miracles. I think there is more in this than just super-natural power that may be possessed by Christians. But modern day miracles are performed. These include the operation of the spirit. Jesus fulfilled this promise. He said in my name, there will be those who will cast out demons. If they drink deadly things it will not hurt them. Paul's own experience with the vipor. The poisonous snake in Act 28:5.

There were miracles in evidence with Moses. When Moses conducted the plagues in Egypt and Jesus who cast out demons in Matt. 10:1. Now in John 14:12, Jesus said, he that believeth on me, the works that I do - shall he do also. And greater

works than these, shall he do because I go unto my father. So miracles take place today. Sometimes a miracle takes place when an individual life is changed. When people say it is impossible and yet a great revolution takes place in this man's life. Many illnesses, mental illnesses, some that are attributed to demons. This, my friends, is the working of miracles. It is the word of power. Enabling one to bestow something in the way of supernatural works and triumphs. Where they had once known failure.

Sixth, prophesy. This is not mainly foretelling. But as I understand the word correctly, in its Bible uses - it is not so much foretelling the future, as (forth telling) the present. Seeing the world in which we live in the light of the word of God. And bringing the Scriptures to bear upon any generation with absolute Heavenly authority. Thus saith the Lord.

Now this is a gift - not of man. But in the power of the spirit. And we might use another word to describe prophesy to mean preaching. Telling what he knows. The prophet is a man who lives close to God. That he knows God's mind and heart, and will, and intent - and so can make them known to men. Because this is the prophet's function. There are two things that a prophet does.

First, he brings rebuke and warning. He tells men that their ways and actions are not in accordance with the will of God. And that's the task of preaching.

Secondly, he brings advice and guidance. Seeking to direct men into the way in which he knows that God wishes them to go. Now Paul goes on to mention this ability that is given of the Lord.

use the gift of prophesy. Through the Holy Spirit, to reveal to his church on earth, what moves his heart. John 16:13-14. So prophesy expresses Christ's heart. His spiritual body and Paul exhorts the Corinthians to earnestly desire the spiritual gifts - that one of prophesy. I Cor. 14:1, 14:39.

The name prophet appears 144 times and the verb, to prophesy, 28 times - and the word prophecy, 19 times. Therefore the role and the gift in the New Testament is in keeping with what we find in God's word.

In the Old Testament, Prov. 29:18 says, where there is no prophesy, the people cast off restraint. Prophesy includes the uncovering of sin. Jesus, when he was on earth - looked into the hearts and the secret thoughts of men. And this was a shattering experience for the Disciples in the case of Ananias. Acts 5.

The fear of God grips Christian congregations a fresh. The horror of sin comes over people when they are convicted in the light of truth. They are shocked and led to repentance. What a gift this is. It is indeed a gift of grace. It frightens the unbeliever as well as the believer. Whose likes towards sin because it discloses hidden things and brings to life.

Among the rich content of the gift of prophesy, in the book of Rev., we see what is going to take place in the hereafter. Rev. 1:19. But yet, there is more to the gift of prophesy. The ability to see the past, the presence, and the future with the eyes of God. Oh how we need prophets in this present time. Often indeed, the whole church, the nation, and the whole world needs to be touched by this sacred gift.

And there is a distinction between false prophets and prophesy that agrees with the Scriptures because the gift of prophesy is the mouth piece of God. And it is of great importance in his church.

Seventh, discerning spirits. The life of the church was endangered by false teachings. But also through the misuse of spiritual gifts. We are told of lying prophets and false apostles. The gift of discerning spirits was therefore something that the church needed. It enabled men to discern those who were holding the form of religion but denying the power of it. 2 Tim. 3:5. This gift was an ability to distinguish between truth and error. Was there ever a time like this when there was so much error - being clothed in sheeps clothing for the truth. There are so many cults and isms that are attracting religious frustrated people today. That no wonder we have such confusion. Because people cannot grasp truth as the church presents it, to the mysteries of appealing cults that are filled with error. And this tries to get into the church. Every church needs those that have the gift of discerning the truth.

The New Testament church was like that. There were wolves in sheep's clothing. Laying waste the church - 2 Cor. 11-15. They disguised themselves as being pious. With the language of angels.

Paul had to go against this quite often. The Satanic people which indicated that their spiritual gifts had been adulterated and had come from other sources.

Now the spiritual man judges all things. I Cor. 2:15. He seems to have the right judgement in every kind of situation. While the person who lacks the gift of

TONGUES - V. 10

Diverse kind of tongues. Now the matter of tongues and tongue speaking is a subject unknown in the New Testament. Outside of the book of Acts and I Cor., and Mark 16:17. In Acts 2:4, 10:46, 9:16. We read of other tongues. I Cor. 12-14, we have the matter of tongues in Corinth.

Dr. Hobbs said there is no Greek term in the New Testament for unknown tongues.

Luke claims that each of the pilgrims at Pentecost understood in his own dialect. V. 8.

With the gift of the Holy Spirit there was certain visual signs. Like a mighty rushing wind and tongues of fire. It was the Holy Spirit who gave them utterance as they began to speak in other tongues. Acts 2:1-4. Peter rejected as unfounded the charge of drunkenness. Which was identified with the experience. He said it was the promise that had been fulfilled and found by the prophet Joel. The outpouring of the spirit in the last days. Chapter 2:15. Peter interpreted this as a sign designed to leave men to call upon God that they might be saved. 2:17-21.

Luke uses tongues and dialects as equivalent - Chapter 2:4-8.

He uses dialects for known languages. Chapter 1:19, 2:6, 8. In 1:19 dialects also.

Luke's real emphasis in V. 2 is upon the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Secondarily upon tongues.

He seems to give a parallel of the Gospel. As he traces the birth and the mission of Jesus to the Holy Spirit, Luke 1:15-35, 41, 67. Acts 2:26, 3:22, he traces

the birth or impowering of the church for its mission to the Holy Spirit.

Twice only outside of chapter 2 - are tongues mentioned in Acts. Chapter 10:46, Chapter 19:6. The primary emphasis is on the Holy Spirit. The gift of tongues being one manifestation of the spirit's presence.

Luke's three references to the gift of tongues fall at important places in the Gospel. Note first, the Jews in Jerusalem at Pentecost. Chapter 2.

Second, to the Gentiles, the household of Cornelius at Caesarea - Chapter 10.

Third, to the followers of John the Baptist in Ephesus who needed to go on to Jesus Christ. Chapter 19.

Now the nature of tongues at Caesarea and at Ephesus is not clear. Whether, like the understandable tongues at Pentecost, or the unintelligible tongues at Corinth. There was no apparent language barrier in Caesarea and Ephesus. For they were speaking in tongues extolling God. 10:46. 19:6 - They were prophesying. It implies that it was intelligible speech. But in I Cor. 14 - the prophesy is distinguished from tongues. I Cor. 12-14 we find tongues that is something that is unique at Corinth. Not only are tongues not attributed to Jesus, but he scorned babblings as pagan and improper. Matt. 6:7. Matt. 27:14, Mark 15:4. John 19:9. Never did Jesus break out in an unintelligible utterance. He groaned at the grave of Lazarus. John 11:33. But this is not Glossolalia. When Jesus spoke, it was in the language of the people before him. It was direct. It was simple in statement. It was profound in meaning. It was straight forward. Just as the Beatitudes or the Parables.

It is remarkable that of all of Paul's letters, that only in I Cor. is there any trace of Glossolalia. Paul made much of the Holy Spirit but little of tongues. If you will read the book of Romans, you'll read of the attention that he gives to the Holy Spirit. Chapter 5:5, 7:7, 8:2, 6-14, 14:17. He never mentions tongues Galatians has instructions for those who are spiritual. 6:1 And describes the fruit of the spirit. 5:22. Nothing about tongues.

Why Corinth. It was an ultra pagan nature of Corinth. The history of religious festivals were well known. Sometimes, in their heathen temple they conducted torch light festivals. And on mountain tops or slopes marked by loud instrumental music. While dancing and shrill crying. And they continued. Many of them women. Some of them carrying snakes. Sacred to their gods. And finally attaining a sacred frenzy, they would fall upon their beast and devour it. This was sacred madness.

The union with their God was their enthusiasm. Standing outside of one's self.

Now scholars are in full agreement. That the church of Corinth was marked by enthusiasm. And what was prized was a spirituality with gave freedom. Sometimes it was interpreted as sexual license. 5:1.

The problems at Corinth can hardly be over looked that it was in the church. Their conduct was most disgracefull. Tongues were most prized.

It does not follow that tongues and disorderly conduct necessarily go together. At Corinth, this was the case.

One at a time, and not more than two or three and then only if there be an interpreter. Somebody who can make some sense of it. I Cor. 14:27. This problem brought divisions, factions, and favorite heroes. There was a shocking story - a man living with his father's wife. And the church gloried in this and they

practiced law suits. And they had all sorts of marital problems plaguing the members. 7:8-10.

Now the gift of tongues. That Paul is speaking about here is they are not to be competitors. But each has its rightful place. Just as each member of the body has its rightful place in the function of the body. Paul even speaks of tongues - passing on. Or he says sounding brass and clanging cymbals.

The one speaking with a tongue may build himself up. 14:4. This is in sharp contrast to the one who has the gift of prophesy. Inspired preaching can build up the church. Paul can justify tongues only if there is an interpreter which is the last gift, which makes sense of the utterance. So that the church may be edified. 14:5.

Paul restricted the matter of tongues to his private life - he did not impose it upon the church. V. 19. He says a bugle giving no meaningful signal for the soldier who heard it in V. 8. The chief threat of tongues in the church is serious because there was selfish pride and denial that said it had any positive ministry or edification. It was competitive and brought disunity and alienated outsiders. Now modern tongues are not Pentecostal. That is not to say that the moral failures of Corinth characterized tongue speakers and their groups today. But the unintelligible characters of the modern group follows the Corinthian pattern.

And not the Pentecostal one.

There was pride, competitiveness, division, also closely related to the modern movement.

Now, Dr. Hobbs says he cannot commend the modern tongues. He felt that the

New Testament and subsequent history would warrant against the extremely limited values. And the high risk of it.

Those who believe in tongues, have a right to advocate them. By the same token, those who see the dangers have the right to see the voice of warning. When one enters the religious market to sell, he may not cry unfair if his wares are challenged.

But the greatest gift of the spirit, is the one enabling one to call Jesus Lord.)

Why should Paul have to issue this warning. How could anyone in the church of Corinth possibly say - Jesus be cursed. Who was an enthusiast or a self-styled spiriter.

the spirit, goes astray in his judgement. He cannot distinguish between that which is flesh and that which is spirit.

Now the error that tries to get into the church - the basic measure of any teaching is what it says about Christ. Now if there is any man-made ideas attached to it, you may be sure that it is not of the Lord. The Spirit enables you to know what is wrong and what is right. And what is the spirit of error. And this power is one of the gifts.

V. 10 - Tongues. He says, the gift of diverse tongues. Now this is the last in the order of gifts. And probably least in importance - nevertheless, it is a gift of the spirit. Unquestioning it is to be used as the purpose of praise.

In adoration of the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Blackwood, A Woman Thru "Hallelujah"

windows rattled, other side of town - never heard her say kind word about anyone - not stupid, point out faith neighbors, accuracy - seldom had her tongue for love!

Now this problem was great and caused much perplexity in the church at Corinth. Although it still exists even in this country, it is for the most part alien from our experience. What happened was this - at a service of the church, someone would fall into an ecstasy and would pour out a torrent of unintelligible sounds. In his own language. It seems that this was a highly coveted gift and they supposed that it was directed by the influence of the spirit of God. Sometimes a person was so moved in this time, that it brought great confusion.

What Paul is talking about is, at Pentecost, the group received the power, the gift to speak in new languages. The evidence of the coming of the Holy Spirit in the fellowship in Cornelius house. They began to speak in a new tongue. That is exactly what happened at Pentecost.

The believers were given the ability to preach in a language that they had never before studied. In Jerusalem, at this time, there were people who spoke various languages. They were privileged to hear the Gospel in their native tongue. By one who had never spoken it before.

It would have been foolish to have spoken unto those heathen and pagan individuals something that was unknown.

Nineth, the interpretation of tongues. Now this was the ability to interpret in a familiar language that which was being said in a foreign language.

Now that is where the problem comes in in some churches today. Who try to speak in some tongues - and there is no one to interpret. The crowds were arrested because they heard in their own language. The wonderful works of God. That was a peculiar gift. Now I am not saying that it is never bestowed today. It was common in the early days of the church. But the interpretations - there were some with gifts who could explain to the common ordinary woman or man, what was being said.

For example today, there are those who interpret for speakers who go abroad or for those who come to our land. Individuals who are gifted at listening to a language and then interpreting that language. Billy Graham has often spoken and preached with an interpreter. This is a gift.

IV. PROVIDING GIFTS - V. 11.

Now let us notice how this all ends. But all these worketh, one in the same spirit

- dividing to each one, several even as he will.

We have no right to say we want such and such a gift. It is as he wills. It is the spirit that bestows this gift to us.

Love is the greatest thing in the world. And faith is the greatest power in the greatest power in the world. And there is something that we need to say. Dr. Redpath says, no one has all of the gifts. Because you have one of them - you are not entitled to become a spiritual aristocrat. Because somebody else does not have your gift - don't demand it.

Now some may think in order to be spiritual - they must be healers. Or to be spiritual they must speak in some unknown language or tongue. Now be careful when you criticize those who may have some other gift than your own. But remember this, God gives each one of his children one or more of these gifts. And it is for the good, not to make him clever - but to benefit others and for the church.

Providing the gift is the work of the Holy Spirit. He provides very clearly for each Christian.

Often we find dissatisfaction among Christians at this very point. After coming to know Jesus Christ as Saviour, perhaps somebody tells them something is happening. In many cases, people say what you need to do is be filled with the Holy Spirit. Or you have not had the baptism of the spirit.

I am convinced that this dissatisfaction comes because people do not entirely give their life unto the Lordship of Christ when they come. Being filled with the