

DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT – Part 3

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out upon those gathered in Jerusalem.

1. The Old Testament promised an outpouring of God’s Spirit in the last days (Joel 2:28-32; cf. Jer 31:31-34). Jesus repeated that promise in Acts 1:4-5.
2. **The Pentecost marked**
 - a. the beginning of “the last days” – the world history before Christ’s return, and;
 - b. a tremendous enhancing of the Spirit’s ministry and experience as a believer, as compared to the Old Testament era.

What was the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?

[*IVP’s New Dictionary of Biblical Theology, Ed. T D Alexander, D A Carson*]

1. **God the Spirit was also involved in creation**, together with God the Father and God the Son. Gen 1:2 “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Ps 104:30 “Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created.” The Spirit moved over the water and brought order and structure out of the yet unordered universe.
2. **God’s Spirit empowered Israel’s prophets & servants.** Ezekiel (Ezek 11:1), Samson (Judges 14:6, 19), Othniel (Judg 3:10), Gideon (Jud 6:34), Jephthah (Jud 11:29), Moses (Num 11:17,29) & Joshua (Num 27:18); 70 elders (Num 11:25-29); and craftsmen of the tabernacle and its furnishings (Ex 28:3, 31:3, 35:31).
3. **God’s Spirit is a channel of communication between God and man.**
 - a. The Spirit of prophecy made known God’s will and wisdom to His people through dreams, visions or words. Ezek 11:5-25, 5 And the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, *every one of them*... 14 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, ... 16 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. 17 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. ... 19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: ... 24 Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me.
 - b. Zech 7:12 “Yea, they made their hearts *as* an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.”

C. THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Our heavenly Father has given us spiritual gifts to serve others so that we can contribute to the fulfillment of His plan in the work of the local church.

1. Introduction [*IVP’s New Dictionary of Biblical Theology, Ed. T D Alexander, D A Carson*]

- a. There is no precise Hebrew/Greek equivalent to the English phrase ‘spiritual gifts’. For example, the Greek *charismata pneumatika* appears nowhere in the LXX (Septuagint) or the New Testament, though the singular occurs once in Rom 1:11: “For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual (pneumatikon) gift (charisma), to the end ye may be established;” Some English versions use ‘spiritual gift(s)’ in 4 other places to translate some other Greek word:
 - 1 Cor 1:7 the Greek noun *charisma* (literally *gift*) was translated as ‘spiritual gifts’;
 - 1 Cor 12:1 & 14:1 *pneumatika* (literally ‘spirituals’, or ‘spiritual things/workings’)
 - 1 Cor 14:12 *pneumata* (literally ‘spirits’).
- b. **Spiritual gifts** are the *manifestation of the Spirit in enabling God’s people for the service of God*. These are not natural talents, skills or abilities possessed by believers and

unbelievers alike, but are sovereignly and supernaturally bestowed by the Holy Spirit on all believers.

c. **All true believers have received spiritual gifts from the Lord.** Eph 4:7 “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.” 1 Cor 12:7 “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” 1 Pet 4:10-11 “As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

d. **Four lists of spiritual gifts** are found in the following passages:

Rom 12:6-8	1 Cor 12:8-10	1 Cor 12:28-30	Eph 4:11
Prophecy	Word of wisdom	Apostles	Apostles
Serving	Word of knowledge	Prophets	Prophets
Teaching	Faith	Teachers	Evangelists
Exhortation	Healing	Miracles	Pastors-teachers
Giving	Miracles	Healings	
Leading	Prophecy	Helps	
Mercy	Distinguishing spirits	Administration	
	Tongues	Tongues	
	Interpreting tongues	Interpreting tongues	

2. **Purpose of Spiritual Gifts.** [Wayne Mack & David Swavely, *Life in the Father’s House*]

Eph 4:11-12 “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

a. **For the building up of the Church.**

- Leaders are to use their gifts to equip the saints. Many believers assume that they have paid their pastors to do all the evangelism, counseling, visiting, planning, praying, teaching and preaching ministries of the church. But that is not God’s intent. He has given pastors and leaders (elders and deacons) to train the saints to perform those ministries to serve others in church. Each believer is a priest and minister before God. The pastors and leaders are there primarily to help you to be effective in your service.

b. **For serving others.**

- Every Christian should exhort others. Heb 3:13 “But exhort one another daily”
- Do good to all when there is opportunity. Gal 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

3. **Why so many different gifts?**

a. **Every gift is unique and important.**

- Each member of the body is indispensable in His kingdom plan. Every believer receives spiritual abilities according to the measure of Christ’s gift.
- “Scripture says that the Lord has measured out the gifts He has given to the church. He knows just what He wants to produce in the church He is building to get the job done. He measures out the gifts He gives so that there will be no resource lacking in any particular body of believers. He has given you exactly the right kind and amount of giftedness so that you can honor Him and help your church to be everything it has been designed to be.” – Wayne Mack & David Swavely, *Life in the Father’s House*, 121.

b. **Gifts are to be used for the benefit of the church.**

- 1 Cor 12:7 “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” Hence, every believer plays a very important role in the growth of a church. You will hurt yourself and the body of Christ as a whole if you do not faithfully exercise your giftedness. Just as one forgotten piece of cloth can destroy a dress, and one missing ingredient can ruin a cake, so one ineffective Christian can keep a local church from functioning according to the biblical pattern.

c. **Not all officers with the same gift have the same level of giftedness.**

- Eph 4:11 says that God has given us pastors and teachers to the church. But we should not expect all pastors to have the same abilities in preaching and counseling. Rather than comparing one pastor with another, we should rather thank God for the abilities

each of your pastor have and help each make the most of them.

- “As if every ship did draw a like depth of water. Yet all sorts of ships carry their passengers safe to their haven. So in pastors. Every one doth not have a like insight into doctrine. Yet all can be instruments of God to your salvation.” Paul Bayne.
- d. ***The Spirit determines which gift(s) a believer should have.***
 - 1 Cor 12:8-11 “8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”
- e. ***Spiritual gifts are not an indication of maturity.***
 - The Corinthians believe that a gift such as tongues demonstrated the Spirit’s presence in a more remarkable way. Paul rejects any such idea. As gifts are derived from God by grace, there is no place for any human boasting. 1 Cor 12:11 “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”
- f. ***It keeps us from pride & despair.***
 - It keeps us from pride because we are not better than another Christian, but gifted differently so that everyone contributes to the work of the church in a unique way/area.
 - It keeps us from despair because I don't have to serve in my area of weakness, as God has called others who are gifted in that area to serve there.

4. **Outcome of using our gifts.**

Ephesians 4:13-16 “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

- a. ***The church may be united & loving (13a, Eph 4:13).***
 - Spiritual gifts will continue to be exercised until we are united in the faith. Many church splits occur because spiritual gifts are not practiced in a biblical manner. People not involved in ministry are critical of others who are serving, leading to discouragement, conflict and division. But when church members serve one another through the power of the Spirit, out of love and thanksgiving, complementing one another’s gifts, people are drawn closer together.
- b. ***The church may be mature and wise (13b, 14-15).***
 - We must grow in maturity, be rooted in our faith, and unwavering in our commitment to God in order to avoid being easily swayed by false doctrine and deception.
- c. ***The church may be a more effective witness (13c, 15-16).***
 - When members of the church use their unique gifts to serve others, the members will grow in knowledge and maturity. Non-believers who hear the faithful preaching of the biblical gospel will be saved and added to the church.

5. **How to discover our spiritual gifts?**

- a. ***Study the Bible.*** Read passages (Eph 4, Rom 12:3-8, 1 Cor 12; 1 Pet 4:10-11) on gifts.
- b. ***Pray.*** 1 John 5:14 says “if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:”
- c. ***Examine your motives.*** Seek God’s will with a humble heart and be willing to do what God wants you to do, rather than serve to be admired by people, or to boost your ego.
- d. ***Evaluate your abilities*** (Rom 12:3). List under 4 headings:
 - Can do: ways that you know you are able to serve.
 - Have done: ways that God has used you already in the body of Christ.
 - Doing better: areas of service in which you are improving.
 - Want to do: ministries you would like to be involved in.

- e. *Ask others* - mature Christians who know you well and will give you objective, honest answers. Prov 11:14 “Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.” Prov 15:22 “in the multitude of counsellors they are established.”
- f. *Prayerfully consider opportunities to serve.* When opportunities arise, pray for discernment whether you have a gift in that area, check your motives, obtain affirmation from other mature Christians that this is a ministry that matches your giftedness, then start serving in that area. As you serve, God will reveal to you whether the choice was right.

6. Are all the gifts still in existence?

- a. *Miracles, healings, tongues (languages) and interpretation of languages are temporary gifts limited to the apostolic age and have, therefore, ceased with the passing of the apostles.* Their purpose was to authenticate the apostles and their message as the true Word of God, until God’s written word was completed and became self-authenticating.
- b. *Miracles* occurred during the exceptional days of Moses, the prophets, Christ, and the Apostles for the purpose of (i) introducing a new era of revelation of Moses, the prophets, Christ and the Apostles; (ii) authenticating the messengers of revelation. Moses (Ex 4:1-9), Elijah (1 Kg 17:23-24), Jesus (Jn 10:24-25, Acts 2:22) and Apostles (2 Cor 12:12). The ability to perform miracles has been withdrawn because it has fulfilled its purpose. The prophetic ministry ceased when the Bible was completed (1 Cor 13:10).
- c. *Today we do not have Apostles* who founded the church (Eph 2:9-10), were eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 9:1, 15:7-8; Acts 1:21-26), chosen personally by Christ (Mt 10:1-4), and performed authenticating miracles and signs (Mk 16:17-20 cf. Acts 2:43, 5:12, 14:3, 15:12, 19:11-12). No one today can claim to have the above qualifications. The Apostles were a unique group of people appointed by the Lord to carry out His will during a specific period of time.

D. OFFENCES AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Offenses Committed by the Unbeliever.

- a. *Resisting* the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51, 6:10).
- b. *Insulting* the Holy Spirit (Heb 10:29).
- c. *Blaspheming* the Holy Spirit – the unpardonable sin (Mt 12:31-32, Mk 3:22-30, Lk 12:10). This is the most grievous sin of all, for which, Jesus says, there is no forgiveness.

2. Offences Committed by the Believer

- a. *Grieving* the Spirit by our bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour [foolish talking] and evil speaking (Eph 4:30, 31), our works of the flesh (Gal 5:17-19). If we stubbornly continue in our sin, the Spirit’s grief turns into vexation (Isa 63:10).
- b. *Lying to* the Spirit: Ananias (Acts 5:3, 4) and Achan (Joshua 7).
- c. *Quenching* the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19) by our disobedience, willful sins.