

Spiritual Gifts (continued)

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“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren,
I do not want you to be ignorant:” ■ I Cor. 12:1

Now, I'd like to continue on today speaking about what I wrote a few weeks ago concerning spiritual gifts. The Apostle Paul, writing under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was having to deal with a serious problem in the Corinthian Church – the lack of understanding and the misuse of spiritual gifts. As I said before, the Church, both collectively and individually is weak because of this same thing today.

It seems quite apparent that the lack of understanding in this church about spiritual gifts was creating a huge problem – it was leading to misuse. Notice verse 3, “..no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.” Apparently, at least one person was standing up and prophesying that “Jesus is accursed” and I think we all know what spirit that was. But notice also, Paul said, “No one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.” Yet, in many churches today, if not most, this is happening because people are not brought to the Lord by conviction of the Holy Spirit. This is why we never, for the most part, see the glorious conversions we used to see where people ran to the altar under heavy conviction of sin by the Spirit of God. Today most major ministries preach “another gospel”; a gospel where “we don't want to embarrass anybody” with their sin and we only allow a spiritual gift such as prophecy to operate if it's a “good” word. Yes, many ministries today have taken upon themselves the responsibility to determine whether a spiritual gift in operation is really from the Holy Spirit and to censor anything “bad” such as a judgmental word to repent that they deem not from God. God help us.

How would you like to receive a wonderful spiritual gift such as The Gift of Working of Miracles and immediately after you receive this gift you pray for three people in wheelchairs and they all get up and walk? Well, this happened to a man at a church in Oklahoma where we ministered in 2005. It can happen for you as well if you will obey the Scriptures and “earnestly desire spiritual gifts.”

As I said before, I want to encourage you to develop your spiritual gifts that the Lord placed in your spirit when He created you. He is going to hold you accountable for their proper use. This teaching will help you understand how to do this from Jesus' own ministry. Let's look at Him because He is always the perfect pattern for us to follow.

“Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue.

And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, ‘Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed By His hands! Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?’ And they were offended at Him.” ■ Mark 6:1-3

Why were they offended at Him? I wrote an article for this website in October, 2007, titled, *The Spirit of Offense*. I discussed how we’ve observed this spirit working against our ministry just like it did against Jesus and just like it will with you if you’re truly called of God. Normally, it begins to manifest when you tell people the truth and they don’t want to hear it. They have to find some way to reject the truth so they become offended at the messenger. It was true also of most of the prophets of the Old Testament. Another way it operates is to cause people not to keep their word or commitment to you. If they’ve made you and the Lord a promise that they don’t want to keep (and the devil doesn’t want them to keep) then they will often become offended at you to justify breaking their promise.

Notice the other effect of offense, it keeps people from being able to receive from you. Most of the Pharisees, Saducees and Lawyers of Jesus’ day died and went to hell simply because they became offended at the Word of Life that He was and that He spoke. Incredible!

But I want you to notice something very evident from these three verses from Mark concerning Jesus. Sure, they became offended because, after all, we know this guy; he’s the carpenter Joseph’s son; we know the entire family of mother, brothers and sisters. But yet they acknowledged that something was different about Him; He was *not* the same Jesus that they spoke about. The carpenter’s son had never spoken with such wisdom nor had he performed all these works of power when he lived among them.

You see, their problem was they had no spiritual discernment; they couldn’t see with *The Eye of the Eagle* that this was not the same Jesus that was raised to manhood among them. He was different! He had been baptized by the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:4-11). It was this spiritual experience that changed Jesus the Man. The Holy Spirit brought spiritual gifts just like He will do for you that will enable you to do works of power just like Jesus did.

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.” ■ Acts 10:38

But I want to return to Mark’s gospel to point something out to you that will help you. You’ll notice that immediately after Jesus received the Spirit Baptism in the River Jordan that the Scriptures say,

“And immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness. And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan ...” ■ Mark 1:12-13

Now Mark doesn’t give the temptations as they are listed in the other gospels. But they were temptations of the flesh and soul. I devoted a chapter in *The High Calling of God* to

“Qualifications for ministry.” Jesus said, “Many are called but few are chosen.” The Spirit of the Lord told me in Africa in 1989 that the reason they’re not chosen is “because they’re not willing to pay the price.” There’s a price to be paid for the anointing in character development, subduing the flesh and soul, integrity, always doing what’s right no matter what the cost, always “speaking the truth in love” and many other things.

Jesus just like Moses before Him and Paul after Him as well as you and I all have to go through the desert or wilderness experience. It’s here that you must fight the devil who will contest your ministry and spiritual gifting. It’s here in the desert that you must develop *The Eye of the Eagle* – your spiritual eyesight and hearing so that your spirit is stronger than the flesh and the soul. Had Jesus not done this He could not have withstood the temptations against His flesh and soul.

Notice Jesus’ primary weapon – the Word. “It is written,” He responded to the devil over and over again. It’s the Word and faith along with prayer that develops our spirits. That’s why the Lord showed me in 1997 that if a Christian doesn’t spend a great deal of time in the Word then they “will only have a 25% chance of fulfilling God’s perfect will for their life.”

Are you passing God’s tests in the wilderness? If you still feel like you’re in the wilderness then perhaps you need to spend more quality spiritual time in the presence of the Lord to develop your spirit and spiritual gifting. If we can help you in any way let us know.

Twenty years ago in Africa the Lord gave me a detailed blueprint very similar to a university for building Training Centers to teach and train people to have *The Eye of the Eagle* through Schools of the Holy Spirit and to train Five-fold ministers. We began these in Africa and have been waiting for God’s direction for such a facility here in the USA; it was also prophesied over us in 1989 and we feel that the timing is near. We would appreciate your prayers concerning this and where it’s to be located.

Maranatha.