

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Gifts of the Spirit

Lesson One

READ: The Gifts of the Spirit, Pages 1-9

THINK: There are nine gifts of the Spirit which are available to the Spirit-filled believer. There are people who would try to invent new gifts in order to appear more spiritual, or to deceive the people of God. There are others who would try to decrease the number of gifts available. These people claim that certain gifts, for example the Gift of Diverse Kinds of Tongues, are no longer available to the church. And some go so far as to say that none of the gifts are still in operation.

It is clear from church history that such occurrences as miracles, prophecies, speaking in tongues, etc., were uncommon after the first century, and nearly unknown by the end of the second century. The "age of miracles" was apparently over. But was it God's idea that the miracles should cease, or was it the church's? (You may wish to review the first and second chapters of the book of Joel, as well as your Student's Handbook, for more information on the reasons why the gifts fell into disuse.)

The intention of God in regard to miracles is made clear in the following scriptures: Mk. 16:17-18; Jn. 14:12; Acts 1:8. For those who knew the power of God, the age of miracles never ended. Every time in history that the Apostolic Church gained a foothold against apostasy, signs and wonders were seen. And today, as the message of the apostles is brought to every nation, the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, and the dead are raised. Prophets declare the words of the Lord, and unlearned men and women speak fluently in languages they have never heard before.

WRITE: Hypothetical case: A person has just spoken in tongues for the first time. We may assume that this person a.) has the gift of tongues; or b.) has received the baptism of the Holy Ghost; or c.) both; or d.) neither.

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Lesson Two

READ: The Gifts of the Spirit, Pages 10-16

THINK: The Word of Knowledge is one gift that has frightened many a Christian. The possibility of someone in the church suddenly "knowing" a secret you've hidden for years is a fearsome thing. And rest assured, those things which are hidden will be made known (Mt. 10:26; Lk. 8:17; Lk. 12:2). If there is hidden sin, it will be brought out. How much better it would have been if the sinner had repented privately! Then the information would not have been revealed. But hidden sin must be brought out, confessed, and repented of. Failure to do so would be disastrous, not just for the one who has sinned, but for the whole church. Israel once lost an important battle, and people died, all because one man sinned (Joshua 7:1-26). The parallel for us is this: If there is sin hiding in the church, restoration of the Apostolic Church will be held back. God will be forced to pass judgment on the one who sinned. Acts 5:1-11 shows us how terrible a thing it is when God's judgment falls.

It can well be imagined what would happen if this gift were to fall into the wrong hands. You may be sure, however, that God is not going to impart the Word of Knowledge to a gossip or busybody, but only to someone with sufficient spiritual maturity to know what to do with the information. (Note: Unfortunately, there are some who have received this gift who misuse it, causing shame and embarrassment to others, in an attempt to make themselves appear more spiritual. Once God gives a spiritual gift, He will not take it back. This has sadly resulted in some misuse. If God gives someone a word of knowledge about someone else, it is so the recipient of the word can help that person... privately. It is **not** supposed to be announced from the pulpit!)

WRITE: Give one example each of the operation of the Word of Knowledge, the Word of Wisdom, and Discerning of Spirits. (These examples may be either real or hypothetical. We just want to be certain you understand the operation of these gifts.)

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Lesson Three

READ: The Gifts of the Spirit, Pages 17-34

THINK: How do we know that the speaking in tongues of Acts 2, Acts 10, and Acts 19 was not the Gift of Diverse Kinds of Tongues? How can we prove that this was an entirely different type of tongues?

Let us turn to the book of I Corinthians and read the rules that govern the use of the Gift of Diverse Kinds of Tongues: Chapter 14, verses 27 and 28. The rules? Only two or three per meeting were to speak in tongues, by course (that is, one at a time), and there must be an interpretation after each message in tongues.

Now, let us examine what happened on the day of Pentecost: One hundred and twenty men and women were gathered together in the upper room (Acts 1:13-15). They were ALL filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak in other tongues (Acts 2:1-4). They all spoke simultaneously, and were subsequently accused of being drunk (verse 13). Although their words were understood by the visitors to Jerusalem, no interpretation was given (verses 7-11).

In the home of Cornelius (Acts, chapter 10) were gathered Cornelius and Peter, the family and friends of Cornelius, and the Jewish Christians who came with Peter. Peter preached to the whole group, and while he was still preaching, the Holy Ghost fell on all of them. The Gentiles began to speak in tongues. They spoke simultaneously, and without benefit of interpretation (Acts 10:44-46).

In Acts 19, approximately twelve disciples of John the Baptist, upon hearing the full Gospel, were re-baptized in Jesus' Name, and received the Holy Ghost. All twelve began to speak in tongues (verse 6). Note that they also prophesied. If an interpretation to their tongues had been expected, nobody would have known that they prophesied, since their prophecies would have been taken for interpretations. But no interpretation is expected for this type of tongues.

Our conclusion must be either that the occurrences of Acts 2, Acts 10, and Acts 19 were out of divine order, or that this type of speaking in tongues was not the gift Paul was teaching about in I Corinthians. Since we know that God is not the author of confusion, we must admit that speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance (that is, as evidence of receiving the Holy Ghost) is not the same as the Gift of Diverse Kinds of Tongues.

WRITE: Read I Corinthians, chapters 12 and 14. Take each verse that mentions tongues, and try to decide whether it is speaking of tongues as evidence of Spirit baptism, the Gift of Tongues for personal edification, or the Gift of Tongues for church edification.

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Lesson Four

READ: The Gifts of the Spirit, Pages 35-44

THINK: More than any of the others, it is the three gifts of action, the Gift of Faith, the Gifts of Healing, and the Working of Miracles, that will make a profound impression upon our unbelieving world. The human race has not changed. People today demand the very same thing of us that the people of first century Israel demanded of Jesus: A sign (Mt. 12:38-40; 16:1-4; Mk. 8:11-12; Lk. 11:16,29-30; Jn. 2:18; 6:30; I Cor. 1:22-24).

What our world asks of us is not words. They've had enough of words. They can't turn on their radios or TVs without being bombarded by words. The airwaves are full of smooth-talking preachers with bouffant hairdos, expensive suits, and words: Words of condemnation based on their own version of morality. Words of love unsupported by any action. The people have heard words until their ears are full and they can hear no more.

No, it isn't words they need. They will never believe we love them until we live a life that proves it. And they will never believe the power of God until they experience it. What we need within the church today is a powerful demonstration of the Spirit of God. Our churches should be a mirror image of the first century church. And until our churches are genuinely Apostolic, we won't see it. We won't see the lost saved. We will see only lost, lonely, discouraged people walking blindly to their destruction, unaware that they are loved.

If that thought alone doesn't tear into your soul and give you an almost indescribable measure of sadness, then perhaps you need to reevaluate your calling. Do you have a burden for the lost?

Some years ago, there was a TV evangelist, who, at the close of his show, made the following comments to his audience: "Well, my friends, all I can tell you is that if you don't come to Jesus you'll burn in hell for eternity." He was smiling. He was almost laughing. It was somehow funny to him. His guests, other preachers, sat on the platform with him. They, too, smiled at his words. But the very thought of anyone being lost and burning in hell should be enough to reduce any true man or woman of God to tears. It should be enough to drive a minister to his or her knees, crying out to God for mercy for the people (Joel 1:13; 2:17). The minister who could laugh and smile at such a time does not love, and has no burden, no calling.

WRITE: Final exam for Gifts of the Spirit follows this lesson.

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Examination SG-1

1. How many Gifts of the Spirit are there? How many are available today?
2. Into what three categories may we divide the Gifts?
3. Name the Gifts, and tell which category each belongs to.
4. The Lord just revealed to Sister Jones that Brother Smith is involved in serious sin. Which Gift was in operation?
5. Brother Thompson is kneeling at the altar after service, and is speaking quietly in an unknown tongue. Is an interpretation required?
6. Sister Andrews is despondent because the church she pastors is having trouble meeting its mortgage payment. Sister Michelle, a young saint in the church, tells Sister Andrews that God is going to provide not only the late payment, but also all the other payments, within a short period of time. Her words seem impossible, but something in them greatly encourages Sister Andrews, and she finds herself believing Sister Michelle. Three days later, through an anonymous donation, the church's mortgage was completely paid off. Through which Gift was Sister Michelle able to inspire her pastor to believe?

7. After being prayed for, Sister Alice's ulcer began to heal, and was totally healed in a week. Which Gift was used?

8. Brother Ray witnessed a serious auto accident on his way to church. A child's arm was completely severed. Brother Ray put the arm in its proper place, and began to pray. Before a dozen spectators, the child's arm was instantly re-attached. Which Gift did Brother Ray use?

9. A man visiting a church service begins to scream obscenities during the pastor's preaching. Sister Ann, the choir director, whispers to the pastor that the man is possessed by a demon of hatred. Which Gift does Sister Ann have?

10. The choir has just sung, and the congregation is worshiping enthusiastically. Suddenly, the room grows quiet, and Brother Bobby begins to speak in a loud voice. He begins with the words, "This is what the Lord says . . ." Which Gift is in operation?

Student's name

Date