The Holy Spirit and His Gifts

By

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Chapter 1 My Pentecostal Experience

Raised From the Bed of Sickness

I was born again on April 22, 1933, at twenty minutes to eight o'clock in the south bedroom of 405 North College Street in McKinney, Texas. I was raised up from the bed of sickness on the second Tuesday of August 1934, after spending sixteen long months flat on my back with two terminal organic heart conditions and an incurable blood disease. And my body was almost totally paralyzed.

When I first started reading the Word of God on the bed of sickness, Grandma would prop the Bible up in front of me as I lay there on my bed. I could only read for about ten minutes at a time — after that I could hardly see. Then that was all I could read for the day.

The next day I would read for another ten or fifteen minutes. After a few weeks of reading like that, I got so I could read for an hour at a time; eventually I could read for as long as I liked.

As a child, I had been brought up going to Sunday school; I can't remember the first time I went to church. Nor can I remember the first time I ever read the Bible. It seemed I had prayed all of my life, yet I had never been born again until April 22, 1933.
You see, you can be religious and yet not really be a born-again child of God. But when you are born again, the very same Bible that you have been reading looks different. The Bible becomes clear and easy to understand when you are born again. And as I read Grandma's Bible, I found that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8).

The doctors had said I could die at any time, so when I began reading the Bible, I began reading in the New Testament. I reasoned, I might not be alive ten minutes from now, so I will utilize this ten minutes, or whatever time I have, and I will start reading in the New Testament.

I began reading in Matthew 1:1. When I got to Mark 11:24,I read, ". . . What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." From the first time I read that verse, I never forgot it. I didn't take time to memorize it; it just branded itself on my mind, so to speak, because Mark 11:24 was my answer for healing.

MARK 11:23,24
23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, B e thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.
24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

However, immediately after I read Mark 11:23 and 24, the devil hopped on my shoulder and said, "Yes, but divine healing has been done away with, you know."
I said, "Well, thank God, faith hasn't been done away with! This scripture says, '. . . What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe . . .' (Mark 11:24). I have never heard anyone say that believing and faith have been done away with."

"Yes, but healing has. You know all that healing business has been done away with."
I said to the devil, "What about Mark chapter 5? In Mark chapter 5, Jesus said to the woman with the issue of blood, '. . . Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole . . .' [Mark 5:34]. Mr. Devil, if her faith made her whole, my faith will make me whole." And, thank God, it did!

At that time, I didn't know of anyone else in the whole world who believed in divine healing besides me. There was no Full Gospel church in my town at the time, and I had never heard healing preached. There weren't any Christian radio programs such as we have today; at least, if there were, I didn't know about them.

After my healing, I began my ministry just as a young Baptist boy preacher. When I heard that Full Gospel people preached on healing too, I began to fellowship with them because fellowshipping with those of like-precious faith was just like getting a spiritual shot in the arm. It built up my faith.

The Full Gospel folks preached some things I didn't quite understand or altogether agree with at that time, such as the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but I put up with that to have a little fellowship around the doctrine of healing!

God Is Not Nervous!

I wasn't used to church services where everyone would pray all together at one time, and this bothered me at first. I started to say something about it a time or two to straighten these Full Gospel folks out. In fact, I once heard someone else tell them, "Now God's not hard of hearing, you know."

But the Full Gospel folks just replied, "He's not nervous either!"
When these Full Gospel folks invited Christians

to come and pray at the altar, I would go forward to pray with them. But I would get as far away from them as I could because they bothered me all praying at the same time like that. I would get off in the corner somewhere and pray quietly.

However, after a while the thought occurred to me, These folks knew about divine healing and my church didn 't. They might know something more here in this area of praying than I do too. So I decided I would read through the Book of Acts and see how the Early Church prayed.

As I read, I couldn't find one place where they called on "Deacon Brown" or "Sister Jones" to lead in prayer while everyone else remained silent. Instead, I found to my utter amazement that the Early Church all prayed at the same time!

ACTS 4:23,24
23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.
24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God WITH ONE ACCORD....

The thing that cinched it with me was when I got down to Acts chapter 16 where it says that Paul and Silas were in jail. Their backs were bleeding; their feet were in stocks. Yet at midnight they prayed and sang praises to God. And the Bible says, ". . . and the prisoners heard them" (Acts 16:25). Until that time, I had believed in praying to God, but I believed in being quiet about it. But then I saw that Paul and Silas didn't pray quietly, not even in jail.

The next time I went to the Full Gospel service and they called us to the altar to pray, I got right in the middle of them and lifted my voice just like they did. When I did, I felt a release in my spirit. The Word of God will set you free. Jesus said, ". . . ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). God's Word is truth, and it will set you free.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

These Full Gospel folks preached something else I couldn't quite accept — the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in other tongues. I believed in the Holy Ghost and in the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I knew I hadn't received the baptism in the Holy Ghost, but I believed in it. But that "tongues" business — that was a bitter pill for me to swallow.

I had been warned against speaking with tongues. But fellowshipping with Full Gospel people who did speak in tongues was kind of like one fellow down in East Texas said: "It's like a slippery creek bank. You keep fooling around it long enough and you'll slip in."

As a young boy preacher and pastor of a community church, I meditated and thought on the scriptures concerning the Holy Spirit, and I came to the conclusion that these Full Gospel folks were wrong about tongues. I concluded that tongues weren't necessary; they weren't for us today.

I decided that believers could receive this enduem ment of power — the baptism in the Holy Ghost — without speaking in tongues. That was my own opinion, of course. It certainly wasn't Scripture.

I said to the Lord in my heart, "Lord, I know these folks are good people. They are thoroughly saved — born again — and they knew about divine healing when my church didn't. I certainly do believe in the Holy Ghost. And I believe in the infilling of the Holy Ghost, the enduement of power from on High.

Then I said to the Lord, "I sense a lack of power in my own life, and I know I need the infilling of the Holy Ghost. And I expect to receive, all right. But I am of the opinion that tongues don't go along with the baptism in the Holy Ghost, and that they are not for us today."

Immediately the Lord spoke to my heart. I knew it was the Holy Spirit speaking through the Word of God. That same still small voice that had brought me off a bed of sickness and into divine healing asked me, "What does Acts 2:39 say?"

I quoted the scripture, "For THE PROMISE is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

Then the still small voice said, "What promise is that?"
I said, "The last part of Acts 2:38 says,'. . . and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' So the reference here is to the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost." Then I hastened to add, "But, Lord, I believe in the Holy Ghost. It's tongues I am not sure about." (I had changed it a little bit this time to "I'm not sure.")

The Holy Spirit always leads us in line with the Word of God. The Word and the Spirit agree (1 John 5:7,8). I am not in favor of just following voices, because you can go wrong following voices; you can follow the wrong voice (1 Cor. 14:10). But you can never go wrong following the voice or the leading of the Holy Spirit because He will always lead you in line with the Word of God (John 16:13; 1 John 5:6-8).

Jesus said, ". . . he [the Holy Spirit] shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:14). And ". . . he shall not speak of himself [But, thank God, He does speak!]; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak . . ." (John 16:13).

Every born-again believer has the Holy Ghost in a measure through the new birth (John 3:5-8; John 4:14). But this is not the same as the baptism in the Holy Spirit — the enduement of power from on High that Jesus talked about in Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8, and John 7:38. Just because someone is born again doesn't mean he is filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Work of the Holy Spirit in the New Birth

There is the work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth, as we can see by the following scriptures.

JOHN 3:5-8
5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of THE SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is BORN OF THE SPIRIT is spirit.
7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be BORN AGAIN.
8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is BORN OF THE SPIRIT.

ROMANS 8:16

16 THE SPIRIT itself I Himself] beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

The Work of the Holy Spirit In the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

From these scriptures, we can see the work of the Holy Ghost in the new birth. But there is also a work of the Holy Spirit that God desires to perform in the life of every believer subsequent or following the new-birth experience, and that is called the infilling of the Holy Spirit or the baptism in the Holy Spirit. That is what Jesus was talking about in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:8.

LUKE 24:49
49 And, behold, I send THE PROMISE OF MY FATHER upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be ENDUED WITH POWER FROM ON HIGH.
ACTS 1:8
8 But ye shall receive power, AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

I had told the Lord that I believed in the baptism of the Holy Ghost, but that I wasn't sure about the tongues part. The Lord spoke to me again, "What does Acts 2:4 say?"

Of course, I could quote these scriptures from the Book of Acts, but just because you have the Word in your head does not mean that you really know what it means. In other words, you need to have the revelation of God's Word in your spirit to really know and understand what it means.

I quoted Acts 2:4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." I got that far and said again, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak. .. ."

Then I exclaimed, "Oh, I see it! I see it! It says, '. . . they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak WITH OTHER TONGUES' [Acts 2:4]. And when I get filled with the Holy Ghost, I will begin to speak with other tongues too! Lord, that settles it. I am going right down to the Full Gospel preacher's house and receive the Holy Ghost."

'Tarrying' Is Not a Formula For Receiving the Holy Spirit

I then walked over to the parsonage and knocked on the door. The Full Gospel pastor came to the door. I said to him, "I've come to receive the Holy Ghost."

He said, "Son, you need to wait." (From that day until this I have never been able to figure out why anyone would ever tell someone to wait to receive the Holy Ghost!)

Someone may ask, "Haven't you ever read in the Bible where it says to tarry? And everyone knows that 'to tarry' means to wait." Yes, but that is not a formula for receiving the Holy Ghost, because Jesus actually said, ". . . TARRY YE IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

It was just as necessary for that group, the 120 who gathered in the Upper Room, to be in Jerusalem as it was that they wait or tarry. So if waiting were a formula for receiving the Holy Ghost, then why take the word "Jerusalem" out of this verse?

In other words, if it's still necessary for us today to wait or to tarry in order to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, then it must be necessary for us to go to Jerusalem to do it!

Also, the 120 people in the Upper Room weren't waiting in the sense that they were getting ready and preparing themselves to be filled with the Holy Ghost. No, they were waiting for the Day of Pentecost to come. The Holy Ghost could not be given until then.
If they had been waiting and preparing themselves before they could receive the Holy Spirit, the Bible would have read, "When they were ready, they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." But it doesn't read that way.

In Acts 2:1 and 4, the Bible says, "And when THE DAY OF PENTECOST WAS FULLY COME . . . they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. . . ." (We will cover whether it is scriptural to tarry to receive the Holy Spirit in greater detail in Chapter 6 of this study course.)
Someone said, "But waiting gets you ready to receive the Holy Ghost." No, it doesn't. Getting saved gets you ready. The Bible mentions the only requirement for receiving the Holy Ghost. It says, ". . . the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

In other words, the promise of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is for as many as have received Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Any Believer Can Receive the Holy Spirit

By saying a person has to wait in order to receive the Holy Spirit, people are really saying a person has to clean himself up first. But you can't clean yourself up except through repentance of unconfessed sin (1 John 1:9). The blood of Jesus Christ is what cleanses believers from all sin (1 John 1:9). If you are blood washed, you are ready right now to receive the Holy Spirit. If a person who is saved is sincerely seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit, he can receive.

LUKE 11:9-13
9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.
10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.
11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?
12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?
13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give THE HOLY SPIRIT to them that ask him?

Biblical Example of Believers Receiving The Holy Spirit Without Tarrying

Any believer can ask the Father for the Holy Spirit and receive this precious Gift without tarrying or waiting. For instance, after Cornelius and those in his household were saved, they did not have to wait to receive the Holy Spirit.

In fact, they were not only saved but they were filled with the Holy Ghost almost at the same time (Acts 11:14,15). In other words, after salvation, they didn't have time to get "ready" to receive the Holy Spirit; they didn't wait or tarry for the Holy Ghost. They received the Holy Spirit immediately without having to get "ready" (Acts 10:30-48).

In recounting this experience to the apostles and brethren in Jerusalem, Peter explained that those in Cornelius' household received the Word that was preached to them and were saved. Then they were immediately filled with the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 11:11-15
11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesa area unto me.
12 And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house. ...
13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;
14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be SAVED.
15 And as I [Peter] began to speak, THE HOLY GHOST FELL ON THEM, as on us at the beginning.

Also, there is something in Acts 10:45 and 46 that tells us that speaking in tongues goes hand in hand with the baptism in the Holy Ghost.

ACTS 10:45,46
45 And they of the circumcision which believed [the Jewish believers] were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.
46 FOR THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK WITH TONGUES, AND MAGNIFY GOD....

You see, if it hadn't been for the evidence of speaking with tongues, the Jewish believers would never have accepted the Gentiles into the Church, because speaking in tongues is what convinced the Jews that the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles! It was strictly a Jewish Church up until then.

Even Peter himself didn't know that the Gentiles could be saved until he had the vision which is recorded in Acts chapter 10. When the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Gentiles, it astonished the Jewish believers who accompanied Peter to Cornelius' house.

Why Wait To Receive a Gift?

Thank God, God showed me His Word on the subject, so I knew I didn't have to wait or tarry before I could be filled with the Holy Spirit. I saw in God's Word that if believers in the Book of Acts didn't have to wait to receive the Holy Spirit, then I didn't have to wait either.
I also knew that when I received the Holy Spirit, I would speak in tongues. When I told this Full Gospel pastor, "I've come here to receive the Holy Ghost," and he said to wait, I blurted out, "But it won't take me long to receive!"

The church was having a revival service that night, and it was then already 6:00 in the evening, so he wanted me to wait and seek for the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the service.
But I knew I would have to wait until after 7:00 when the service started. Then I would have to wait until the preliminaries were over. And then I would have to wait until the preaching was over. In other words, it would have been about 9:00 that evening before I could have gotten to the altar. But why wait to receive a gift?

I have now been associated with Full Gospel folks for many years, and in all that time, I have never told anyone to wait to receive the Holy Spirit, or for that matter, to wait for anything that God freely offers us in His Word.

If someone says he wants to get saved, you don't say, "Wait and come to church Sunday and then seek salvation." If someone wanted you to pray for his healing, you wouldn't say, "Wait." No, sick people want to get healed immediately, especially if their bodies are in pain. Salvation is a gift; healing is a gift; and so is the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Because of my obvious eagerness, the pastor said reluctantly, "Well, come on in then."
I stepped in the door and the pastor said to me, "I know you can receive the Holy Ghost right away because we read about it in the Acts of the Apostles. But when you have to wait a long time before you receive the Holy Spirit, the experience means so much more to you."

The pastor continued, "Take me, for instance. It took me three years and six months to receive the Holy Ghost. Oh, I waited and I waited; I tarried and I sought. Now that I've finally received, the Holy Ghost really means something to me."

I said, "Well, poor old Paul didn't know that. I wish you could have gotten to him and told him about waiting. He didn't know that, because he received the Holy Ghost immediately when Ananias laid hands on him [Acts 9:17,18]. Paul didn't wait or tarry or seek."

I continued, "But then, all Paul ever did was write about half the New Testament! Of course, he did more single-handedly in the years of his ministry than any denomination has done in five hundred years put together. But if you could have gotten to him and told him to wait for three years and six months to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, then maybe the Holy Ghost would have meant something to him too!"

I went into the living room and knelt down in front of a large chair. I just closed my eyes and shut out everything around me, and I lifted my hands to God. No one told me to do it, but I just lifted my hands (that's pretty good for a denominational boy).

I said, "Dear Lord, I've come here to receive the Holy Ghost." I repeated in my prayer what I had just learned from Acts 2:39 and Acts 2:4.

Then I said, "Your Word says that the Holy Ghost is a Gift. Therefore, I realize that the Holy Ghost is received by faith. I received the gift of salvation by faith. I received healing for my body by faith. Now I receive the gift of the Holy Spirit that You offer by faith too."

God Has Already Given the Holy Spirit: Believers Need Only To Receive This Gift
There is something here that folks need to see: The Holy Spirit was given on the Day of Pentecost, and He has been here ever since! God hasn't given Him to anyone since the Day of

Pentecost. God gave the gift of the Holy Ghost once on the Day of Pentecost, and He never took back that gift. Now it is just a matter of folks receiving Him.

I can't find in the Acts of the Apostles where the disciples ever asked anyone, "Has God given you the Holy Ghost?" But I do read where Paul asked, "Have you received the Holy Ghost?" (Acts 19:2). In other words, the emphasis is not on God's giving because He has already done that. The emphasis is on man's receiving.

In the life of Jesus, we see an example of man receiving what God has already provided — the Holy Spirit: "Therefore [Jesus Christ) being by the right hand of God exalted, and having RECEIVED of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost..." (Acts 2:33).
Jesus received of the Father ". . . the promise of the Holy Ghost. ..." And after Jesus received the promise of the Holy Ghost, the Bible says He "... hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:33).

The Ephesian Disciples

We see another example of man receiving what
The Holy Spirit and His Gifts
God has already provided — the Holy Spirit — in Acts 19

ACTS 19:1,2
1 ... Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,
2 He said unto them, Have ye RECEIVED the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

When Paul came to Ephesus, he didn't ask the question, "Has God given you the Holy Ghost?" He asked, ". . . Have ye RECEIVED the Holy Ghost since ye believed?. . ." (Acts 19:2).

The Samaritan Christians

We see in the account in Acts chapter 8 that after the Samaritans were born again, it was only a matter of their receiving the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 8:14,15
14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God[concerning salvation], they sent unto them Peter and John:
15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might RECEIVE the Holy Ghost.

Notice that it says ". . . that they might receive the Holy Ghost" (v. 15). Peter and John didn't pray that God would pour out the Holy Ghost on them. They prayed that the Samaritans might receive the Holy Ghost. Acts 8:17 says, "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

Saul of Tarsus

Saul was born again on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:4-8). God sent Ananias to lay hands on Saul that Saul might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 9:17
17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou tamest, hath sent me, THAT THOU MIGHTEST receive thy sight, and BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST.

Ananias didn't say, "God has sent me to pray for you that He would give you the Holy Ghost." And Ananias didn't say, "God has sent me to pray for you that He would pour His Holy Ghost out upon you." Ananias said, ". . . [JesusI hath sent me, that thou mightest . . . be filled with [receive] the Holy Ghost" (Acts 9:17).
You don't pray that God would send salvation and save someone; God has already done that through Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. You pray for that person to receive salvation. You don't pray that God would send healing and heal someone. You pray for that person to receive healing. There is nothing wrong with the sending end. If people fail to receive something God offers, the problem is not with God; something is wrong on the receiving end.

The Sending End or the Receiving End?

A number of years ago, a minister friend of ours was going out West to visit a relative who was dying of cancer. She was the wife of another minister. My wife and I felt led to go out there with him to pray for her.

After we arrived, we all prayed for two days and nights for this minister's sick wife. We ate only one meal a day. We slept only three or four hours a night, getting up early in the morning to go into the room to pray where the woman was bedfast.

On the second night I said to my friend, "Something is wrong. I have been saved for sixteen years and healed for fifteen years, but never have I prayed this long for anything without getting an answer, and I hate to start now.

"Something is wrong with our praying," I said. "What I mean is this: In this little town there is only one radio station. If the radio in your car failed to pick up the local station, you wouldn't phone or write a letter to that station and say, 'You'd better have your radio station fixed. My radio won't pick up the broadcast.'

"Nothing would be wrong with the sending end. You would have to work on the receiving end. So in the morning when we go into that room, let's concentrate on the receiving end."

The next morning when we gathered at the woman's bedside for prayer again, I told everyone that we were missing it somewhere — that the fault was with us and certainly was not with God. The woman on the bed began to cry and said, "Oh, the trouble is with me. I have failed."

I said, "Wait a minute, Sister. Don't condemn yourself, because if you do, you can talk yourself right out of faith. Maybe you have failed. Who of us hasn't? But you asked the Lord to forgive you, didn't you? And First John 1:9 says, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' So if you've repented and have asked God to forgive you, He has forgiven you and cleansed you from all unrighteousness. You can stand in the Presence of God as though you have never done anything wrong."

I explained, "When I say something is wrong on the receiving end, I don't mean there is some terrible sin. I just mean that somehow we have not gotten in a receptive 'mood,' so to speak, for it is a matter of receiving the healing that is already yours.

"In other words," I continued, "your healing was already paid for on the Cross; therefore, we don't have to talk God into the notion of healing you." After explaining a little more about her redemptive rights in Christ, we began to pray.

The woman who was dying with cancer was saved, filled with the Holy Ghost, a pastor's wife, and a Sunday school teacher. But we discovered she had much doubt and fear. In fact, doubt and fear was hindering her from receiving the healing that God had already so graciously provided for her in redemption.

When we prayed and believed God and dealt with the real problem, we got results. In this case, God directed me to cast a spirit of doubt and fear out of the woman. (The evil spirit was not in her spirit because she was a believer, but it was affecting her mind — her thinking.) When I cast that evil spirit out of her mind, the woman immediately raised up in bed and began to praise God. She got up and went into the living room and knelt down and praised and thanked God. That afternoon she ate dinner with us.

The Holy Spirit Gives the Utterance

I said all that to say that the problem is never on the sending end — with God. If there is a problem, it is always on the receiving end — with us. We must just learn to receive freely the blessings God has so graciously bestowed upon us in our redemption, which includes the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

So as I knelt in that Full Gospel parsonage in April 1937, I said to the Lord, "Lord, the Holy Ghost is a Gift. I received salvation by faith. I received healing for my body three years ago by faith. Now I receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by faith. And I want to thank You now, Heavenly Father, because I receive the Holy Spirit."

Then I said to the Lord, "By faith I have now received the Holy Ghost. Thank God, He is in me, because Jesus promised that in His Word. And I say it with my mouth because I believe in my heart that I have received the Holy Ghost. Now I expect to speak with tongues because believers spoke with tongues on the Day of Pentecost. And thank God, I will, too, as the Holy Ghost gives me utterance."

After I had prayed that, because I was grateful for the Holy Ghost that I had just received and for the speaking with tongues that God was going to give me, I said, "Hallelujah, hallelujah." But I had never felt so "dry" in all my life saying that word.

Feelings and faith are far removed from each other; in fact, sometimes when you feel as if you have the least faith, that is when you have the most faith because you do not base your faith on feelings. So I said, "Hallelujah" about seven or eight times, even though it seemed as if that word was going to choke me!

About the time I had said "Hallelujah" seven or eight times, way down inside of me, in my spirit, I heard these strange words. It seemed as if they were just going around and around in there.

It seemed to me that I would know what they would sound like if they were spoken, so I just started speaking them out!

So about eight minutes from the time I first knocked on that pastor's door, I was speaking with tongues! The pastor had said, "Wait," but instead of waiting, I spent that hour and a half before the church service speaking in tongues! It is much better to wait with the Holy Ghost than to wait without the Holy Ghost!

I believe in waiting on God, of course. We should have tarrying meetings for people who are Spirit filled. It is more wonderful to tarry and wait in God's Presence after you've been filled with the Holy Ghost than it is to wait in God's Presence before being filled with the Holy Spirit. Also, notice that you don't speak in tongues, and then know you have the Holy Ghost. No, you know you have the Holy Ghost first, and then you speak in tongues. Notice Acts 2:4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. ..."

If we stop reading there, we would know that they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. But if we continue reading, we find, ". . . and [they] began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). Speaking with other tongues was a result of those believers having received the Holy Ghost. You receive the Holy Ghost first; then you speak in tongues.
During that hour and a half that I was speaking in tongues, I had a glorious time in the Lord. You see, speaking in tongues edifies you. First Corinthians 14:4 says, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself . . ." Therefore, speaking in tongues is a means of spiritual edification or building up.

Linguists tell us that there is a word in our modern vernacular that is closer to the meaning of the Greek word than "edify" and that is the word "charge." We charge a battery; we build it up.

JUDE20
20 But ye, beloved, BUILDING UP YOURSELVES on your most holy faith, PRAYING IN THE HOLY GHOST.

In other words, when a person prays in the Holy Spirit, he charges himself up. He builds himself up like a battery that is charged or built up. Edifying yourself by speaking in other tongues is just one of the many blessings that God has provided through the baptism in the Holy Ghost. And this wonderful blessing, this glorious gift of the Holy Ghost, is available to every born-again believer.

Chapter 2 The Holy Spirit in the Denominational Church

In times past, it has been my privilege to speak on the subject of the infilling of the Holy Spirit, or the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to Full Gospel groups and to conduct special services all over the country. A great number of people have always been filled with the Holy Spirit in these services.

A move of God that we now call the Charismatic Movement took place during the '60s and '70s. That move of God was characterized by thousands of believers in denominational churches being filled with the Holy Spirit. In my own ministry, this was a time when I saw hundreds of denominational people receive the Holy Ghost.

For instance, in just three Bible classes I conducted once at a convention in Texas, more than one hundred people were filled with the Holy Spirit. In these classes, a denominational minister and his wife received the Holy Spirit and upon returning to their church in Florida, they sent me their church bulletin. In it they openly announced they had received the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues.

I also noticed in the bulletin that the chairman of the board of their church had also given his testimony about being filled with the Holy Ghost and speaking with tongues. There were more than five hundred people attending Sunday school in this church. And the people were telling the full-gospel story!
Another denominational minister and his wife also received the Holy Ghost at this convention. And a minister from Chicago from still another denomination also received the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Two ministers from a very conservative denomination also attended that convention. There are several different branches of this particular denomination, just as there are in other denominations and among Pentecostals.

All of the different branches of this particular denomination were conservative, but some were ultraconservative. One of these two ministers attending the convention in Texas was from an ultra-conservative branch. The one who was conservative received the baptism of the Holy Spirit right away, but the ultraconservative minister didn't receive until the last day of the meeting.

What bothered this ultraconservative minister and hindered him from receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit was that he didn't believe in women preachers. And the first time he came forward to receive the Holy Ghost, two women preachers approached him to pray with him.

(Many times it seems to work that way, doesn't it? God doesn't want us to be prejudiced about anything! He wants us to be in agreement with His Word.)

Because of this minister's preconceived ideas that women shouldn't be preachers, this took him aback and hindered him from receiving the Holy Spirit. He asked me, "Do I have to believe in women preachers before I can receive the Holy Ghost?"

I said, "No, you don't. At one time, I didn't believe in women being preachers either. But if you let it bother you, it can hinder your faith and therefore hinder you from receiving the Holy Spirit."

And we must remember, too, that when we do receive the Holy Spirit, that doesn't mean we know everything. In some of these areas, the Holy Spirit will change our thinking because the Bible says He will guide us into all truth (John 16:13).

For example, Peter and all of the apostles had been filled with the Holy Ghost for ten years, but they still didn't know the Gentiles could get saved. They didn't receive that revelation until Peter saw the vision while praying on the housetop, and God spoke to him and said, ". . . what God hath cleansed, that call not common" (Acts 10:15). Then Peter was sent to preach the gospel to Cornelius and his household, who were Gentiles (Acts 10:1-45).

So I said to this minister, "As long as you let women being preachers bother you, it will hinder you. The devil will use anything he can to get your mind off of God and on something else to try to bring you into confusion. Just stay open to God and let Him tell you whatever He wants to tell you. If you knew everything you should know and if you were everything you should be without the Holy Ghost, what would you need Him for?"

This minister finally received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. And, sure enough, when he was filled with the Holy Spirit, it was a woman preacher who prayed with him! After he was filled with the Holy Ghost, he said, "Now I believe in women preachers!" It didn't take him long to change his mind.

Actually, when you get filled with the Holy Ghost, you will see that a lot of things you thought were so important, aren't so important after all. And a lot of your prejudices and preconceived notions will fall away to the truth of God's Word as you get your mind renewed (Rom. 12:2).

This minister went back home and within one month's time he had gotten sixteen believers filled with the Holy Ghost. Particularly in the days of the Charismatic Movement, one saw denominational people get filled with the Holy Ghost. That number is still multiplying even today. For instance, with just this one man in a few days' time after he was filled with the Holy Spirit, the number of believers filled with the Holy Spirit was multiplied by sixteen. I rejoice in what God is doing in these days!

To be honest, as a young preacher I didn't believe I would live to see the supernatural in demonstration as I saw it during the Charismatic Movement of the '60s and '70s. If someone had told me years ago about what would be happening now, it would have been beyond my comprehension. Years ago, I never would have believed certain things to be possible that have happened even in my own ministry!

For example, a minister from the denomination I came from was filled with the Holy Ghost. He was the pastor of a church with two thousand members enrolled in the Sunday school program alone. This pastor's deacon was also filled with the Spirit.

In fact, this deacon was filled with the Holy Ghost first. Then the deacon kept talking to the pastor about it and finally got him to attend a Full Gospel meeting. The pastor saw what the Bible has to say about the Holy Ghost and was filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues!

This deacon's brother was a member of a Pentecostal church and had been for nearly twenty years, but he had never received the Holy Ghost. The pastor and the deacon brought the deacon's brother to the meeting so he could be filled with the Holy Ghost too.

It used to be the other way around: Pentecostal people usually got denominational people filled with the Holy Ghost! But we have lived long enough to see things change because now sometimes denominational people are the ones getting Pentecostal church folks filled with the Holy Ghost!

I preached a meeting in a denominational church in Texas once where ninety-five percent of the church received the infilling of the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues. It was a glorious service filled with thrilling testimonies, and the service had that warm glow to it like Pentecostal services of years ago.

It was wonderful and refreshing to be a part of what God was doing during the Charismatic Movement. And I'm glad I am a part of what He is doing today!

Denominational Differences Don't Matter

We should share this wonderful experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit with everyone who is hungry for God. For example, if someone fell overboard and I had a lifesaver, I wouldn't ask him what church he belonged to before I threw him the life-saver! And if he didn't belong to my church, I wouldn't refuse to throw him the lifesaver either!

If people are drowning, they need help. If people are lost, they need salvation. And if Christians are hungry for a deeper walk with God, they don't have to become a member of any particular church before they can be filled with the Holy Spirit!

The Holy Spirit is a Gift. We should just get believers who are hungry for more of God filled

His children to experience. Jesus said, ". . . If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (John 7:37). In the infilling of the Holy Spirit, one can drink of the rivers ofliving water until he gets full!

Someone asked, "How can you tell when you get full of the rivers of living water; that is, after you are filled with the Holy Ghost?"

Acts 2:4 tells us how we know when we are filled: ". . . they were all FILLED with the Holy Ghost, AND BEGAN TO SPEAK WITH OTHER TONGUES...." If you are a believer, it is just as simple as Jesus said it is in John 7:37. Just come and drink and keep on drinking until you get full. And when you get full, you will start speaking with other tongues. That is the initial sign or evidence that you are filled with the Holy Spirit.

Speaking in Tongues Is Not The Evidence of the New Birth

So you see, on one hand, an extreme teaching in many denominations is that when a person gets saved, that person has all the Holy Spirit there is to have. However, on the other hand, an extreme teaching and error in some Full Gospel circles is that no one is really saved unless he has spoken in tongues. But speaking in tongues is not an evidence of the new birth; it is an evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

We know that the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues is not for the world — for unbelievers — because of something Jesus said in John 14:16,17.

JOHN 14:16,17
16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;
17 Even the Spirit of truth [the Holy Spirit]; WHOM THE WORLD CANNOT RECEIVE, because it seeth him not, nei ther knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be IN you.

Jesus said that the world cannot receive this experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Now God does have a gift for the world, and that gift is salvation. The Heavenly Father has another gift for His children, and that is the gift of the Holy Ghost.

LUKE 11:13
13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

God isn't the Father of everyone. He is the Father of those who have been born again and recreated in His image and likeness (2 Cor. 5:17). We hear a lot about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and that God is the Father of all of us as humans and that we are all brothers. But that isn't true.

In John 8:44, Jesus said to the Pharisees, the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, "Ye are of your father the devil. . . ."So you see, God is only the Father of those who have been born again. And to those who have been born again, God the Father gives the gift of the Holy Ghost.

New Wine: A Type of the Holy Spirit

MARK 2:21,22

21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old gar-ment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

22 And no man putteth NEW WINE into old bottles: else the NEW WINE doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but NEW WINE must be put into new bottles.

Jesus said that no man puts new wine in old bottles. Back then, people used animal skins as bottles to hold wine, and they supposedly could use those skin bottles only once because if they let them lay longer than about a year, the skins would dry up and crack. Then if new wine was put in them, the skin bottles would burst.

In the Scriptures, wine is a type of the Holy Ghost. And God couldn't give the Holy Ghost in His fullness to a person unless he was made a new creature. (Thank God, through Jesus Christ, man can be made a new creature in Him!)

Jesus said if you put new wine in old wineskins, the wineskins will burst (Matt. 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37). If He put the Holy Ghost into folks who had not been born again, they would burst; they would not be able to contain Him!

A person must become a new creature before he can be filled with the new wine — the Holy Spirit. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature . . ." (2 Cor. 5:17). When you have been made a new creature, you are ready to be filled with the new wine — the Holy Spirit.

Born-Again Samaritans Were Filled With the Holy Spirit

The scriptures that helped me see the truth of God's Word that the new birth and the baptism of the Holy Spirit are two separate experiences are found in Acts 8:5 and 12.

ACTS 8:5,12

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them....

12 But when they BELIEVED Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Were these Samaritans saved? According to Jesus they were. He said, ". . . Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15,16).

Notice Acts 8:14: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John."

Then in the first Epistle of Peter, we read, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (1 Peter 1:23). These Samaritans had received the Word of God, so according to Peter they were born again. Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ to them. The Samaritans believed on Jesus and were baptized. They were saved.

As a denominational preacher years ago, these scriptures in Acts 8:5 and 12 helped me to see that if you were saved, you had experienced the working of the Holy Ghost in your life, but you had not actually received the infilling of the Holy Ghost. For in these scriptures, we see that the Early Church believed that receiving the Holy Ghost is an experience subsequent to or following salvation.

We know this because the Bible says, ". . . when they [Peter and John] were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:15). The disciples didn't pray for the Samaritans to get saved. The Samaritans were already saved. Peter and John prayed that the Samaritans might receive the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Spirit: God's Giving vs. People's Receiving

As I discussed in Chapter 1, there has also been much misunderstanding in the Body of Christ on the question, Does God give the Holy Spirit to believers? Or do believers merely receive the Holy Spirit because God has already given Him on the Day of Pentecost? Let me point out again that Peter and John did not pray that God would give the Samaritans the Holy Ghost. Peter and John prayed that the Samaritans might receive the Holy Ghost.

Very often we pray, "Dear Lord, save souls at this service tonight. Dear God, heal the sick at this service. Fill believers with the Holy Ghost." However, I can't find in the Acts of the Apostles that the New Testament Church ever prayed that way. We should pray according to the Word of God.

I pray for folks, not that God would save them, for He has already done something about saving them. He sent His Son to die for all mankind. God has already purchased salvation for everyone who has ever lived or who shall ever live on the earth.

But it is not going to do a person any good unless he accepts salvation. That is the reason He told us to tell people the good news of the gospel. Scripturally, we should pray that people will receive that which has already been purchased for them and freely offered to them.

I don't pray that God will heal people. I pray that people will receive the healing that God freely offers. I do not pray that God will fill people with the Holy Ghost. I pray, like Peter and John did, that believers might receive the gift that God offers — the precious Holy Spirit.

Notice in Acts 8:17, "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." It doesn't say, "Then laid they their hands on them and God filled them with the Holy Ghost." It says, ". . . and they RECEIVED the Holy Ghost."

The Ministry of Laying On of Hands

There are many in the Church today who do not understand the doctrine of laying on of hands which is taught in the Word of God (Heb. 6:2). But I believe that we are in good company with Peter and John, so I follow that same practice; I lay hands on people that they might receive the Holy Ghost.

We lay hands on people to receive the Holy Spirit in faith because it is scriptural. But some in the Body of Christ also have a ministry along this line. We saw that the apostles sent Peter and John to Samaria because they had a ministry along this line. Some have a ministry along lines that others do not. God anoints us to minister according to His calling on our lives.

Simon the sorcerer offered Peter and John money and said, ". . . Give me also THIS POWER [ability], that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:19). Some have thought that Simon tried to buy the Holy Ghost. He didn't. He tried to buy the ability to lay hands on people and have them receive the Holy Spirit. Peter said to him,". . . Thy money perish with thee, because thou bast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money" (Acts 8:20).

There are at least four different Greek words translated "gift" in the New Testament. The particular Greek word used here in Acts 8:20 means a gratuity. In other words, the Holy Spirit is a free gift given to believers. The ministry of laying on of hands for the believer to receive the Holy Spirit cannot be purchased with money. Peter and John were endowed or gifted by God to lay hands on folks to receive the Holy Spirit.

Many years ago the Lord told me that He had given me that ministry. Immediately I started laying hands on people, and as I did, instantly I could also tell what was wrong with them — why they weren't receiving from God. That also goes along with the ministry of the prophet that He gave me.

Did the Baptism in the Holy Spirit 'Pass Away' With the Last Apostle?

Another extreme teaching in the Church is that the baptism of the Holy Spirit passed away and ceased when the last apostle died. Those who believe this say that the apostles received the Holy Ghost and consequently they were the only ones who could in turn pass on the Holy Ghost to others.

Supposedly then, as this "theory" goes, those folks who received the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the apostles' hands could not pass the Holy Ghost on to anyone else. People who teach this say that when the last apostle died, being filled with the Holy Spirit also ceased since there was no one else to "pass on" the Holy Spirit.

As this theory goes, that was why Philip didn't try to pass the Holy Ghost on to the Samaritans; he couldn't since he wasn't one of the original twelve apostles. People who believe this say that's why Philip had to call on Peter and John to lay hands on the Samaritan converts — because Peter and John were apostles and Philip was not an apostle.

This theory, however, could not be true because if we can find one layperson in the Bible who laid hands on another believer to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, we would know with a certainty that this theory is not true.

In Acts chapter 9, we find such an example of an ordinary believer — a layperson — who laid hands on another believer to receive the Holy Spirit. His name was Ananias. Ananias wasn't an apostle. He was just a disciple, a layman. Yet God used him to lay hands on Saul (later named Paul) to receive the Holy Spirit shortly after Saul's conversion on the Damascus road.

ACTS 9:10-12,17

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.
11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth.
12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and PUTTING HIS HAND ON HIM, that he might receive his sight... .
17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou tamest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST.

Ananias knew nothing at all about Saul's present spiritual condition and recent conversion other than what the Lord revealed to him supernaturally. The Lord spoke to Ananias supernaturally in a vision and told Ananias that Saul was praying, and that Saul had had a vision and had seen a man named Ananias coming to minister to him. In other words, Ananias was supernaturally directed by God to minister to Saul and lay hands on Saul to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

As we've seen, the Scriptures declare that the gift of the Holy Spirit is for all who believe (Acts 2:39). The Holy Spirit is God's Gift to believers today as much as He was God's Gift to the believers in the Early Church.

And we have also seen that laying hands on believers to receive the Holy Spirit has not been done away with and is a biblical practice to this day as we observe how God is moving among His people regardless of denominational boundaries, we can understand more clearly God's desire that all of His children receive the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 3: Two Separate Experiences: Salvation and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

In Acts chapter 8, the ministry of Philip in Samaria is recorded. As we study this account, it becomes evident that salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit are two separate experiences.

ACTS 8:5-8,12-17
5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and PREACHED CHRIST unto them.
6 And the people with ONE ACCORD GAVE HEED UNTO THOSE THINGS which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.
7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.
8 And there was great joy in that city... .
12 But when they BELIEVED Philip preaching THE THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, they were baptized, both men and women.
13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, behold-ing the miracles and signs which were done.
14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD [con-cerning salvation], they sent unto them Peter and John:

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST:
16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS.)
17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST.

Philip (who was later called Philip the evangelist in Acts 21:8) had a marvelous ministry in Samaria, as stated in verses 7 and 8: "For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city."

Mighty miracles were constantly being manifested in Philip's ministry and many people were being saved. Yet notice that in Acts chapter 8, not one person received the Holy Spirit under Philip's ministry. Evidently, that was not a part of Philip's ministry, but getting folks saved and healed was.

However, the Bible says that when the apostles at Jerusalem heard about the wonderful things God had done through Philip's ministry in Samaria, they sent Peter and John to lay hands on the new Samaritan converts so that they might receive the Holy Ghost.

There is no record that any upon whom Peter and John laid their hands failed to receive the Holy Ghost because Peter and John had more of a ministry along this line. The Bible says, "Then laid they [Peter and John] their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:17).

These verses of Scripture helped me as a young minister in a denominational church to see that there is an experience subsequent to or following salvation, called the infilling or the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I had been taught that when you are saved, you have the Holy Spirit.

That is true in one sense because the Bible says that in the new birth we are born of the Spirit of God (John 3:3-8). But my denomination taught that when you are born again, you have all the Holy Ghost there is to have However, these Samaritans in Acts chapter 8 were saved or born again by the Spirit of God (vv. 12,14), as we will plainly see from the scriptures in a moment. But the apostles didn't seem to think they had all of the Holy Ghost there was to have because they sent Peter and John to them so the Samaritans could receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Therefore, salvation and receiving the infilling or the baptism of the Holy Spirit are two separate experiences.

The Samaritans Born Again Under Philip's Ministry

Now let's go back and look at the scriptures which prove conclusively that these Samaritans were born again under Philip's ministry, so we can see that being born again and receiving the Holy Spirit are two separate experiences.

We remember that Jesus told us in the Great Commission that salvation comes through the preaching of the gospel, the Word of God.

MARK 16:15,16

15 ... Go ye into all the world, and PREACH THE GOSPEL to every creature.
16 He that BELIEVETH and is baptized shall be SAVED; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

First Scriptural Witness

ACTS 8:5
5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and PREACHED CHRIST unto them.
The Bible says that Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans. Preaching Christ is preaching the good news of the gospel of salvation through Jesus.

Preaching Christ is obeying the Great Commission that Jesus gave to the Church.
These Samaritans believed the gospel message Philip preached: "And the people with one accord GAVE HEED UNTO THOSE THINGS WHICH PHILIP SPAKE ..." (Acts 8:6). So according to what Jesus said in Mark 16:16, the Samaritans were saved.

The Bible says to let every truth be established in the mouth of two or three witnesses (2 Cor. 13:1), so let's look at another scriptural witness which proves these Samaritans were born again.

Second Scriptural Witness
The Bible says we are born again by the Word of God. The Book of Peter says we are born "... not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, BY THE WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth for ever" 1 Peter 1:23).

Our scripture in Acts 8:14 says, "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD. ..." Therefore, as our second scriptural witness, we have proof that the Samaritans were genuinely saved because they had received the incorruptible Word of God preached by Philip.

Third Scriptural Witness
The third scriptural witness is that the apostles recognized that the Samaritans were saved: "Now when the apostles . . . heard that Samaria had RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD" (Acts 8:14). So we see that the Samaritans were saved under Philip's ministry.

These Samaritans had received the Word of God concerning salvation, but the Bible says they had yet to be filled with or baptized in the Holy Spirit: "For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16).

There is a work of the Holy Spirit that takes place in the new birth, but that is not called the baptism in the Holy Spirit or receiving the Holy Spirit. That is called being born again, being born of the Spirit of God, receiving salvation, or receiving eternal life (John 3:3-8).

Then there is an experience following salvation called the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5). It is also referred to as receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15), or being filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4), or being endued with power from on High (Luke 24:49).

The Samaritans Received the Holy Spirit

Peter and John were sent down to Samaria for the specific purpose of praying for the Samaritan believers to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 8:14-17
14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God [that they w ere born again l, they sent unto them Peter and John:
15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST:
16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)
17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST.

Some might ask why Peter and John had to go pray for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Ghost? Why couldn't Philip have prayed for them just as well? But we must remember that we each have our place in God's plan. We must each find that place and do what God wants us to do. God has special ministries. He didn't call all of us to minister the same, and He didn't give all of us the same gifts or ministry.

Philip had a mighty ministry, but it was in the Lord's plan to send Peter and John to lay hands on the new converts so they could receive the Holy Ghost. As I said previously, while it is true any Christian can lay hands on another believer in faith to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it is also true that some members of the Body of Christ have more of a ministry and more of an anointing along this line

Philip, for example, had more of a ministry of bringing people into salvation and of ministering healing. As we saw in Acts 8:12, when Philip preached the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ, people were saved. And there were also many healings under Philip's ministry (Acts 8:6,7).

Peter and John, on the other hand, had a ministry more along the line of bringing believers into the baptism of the Holy Spirit; when they laid their hands upon the Samaritans, these new converts received the Holy Ghost.

ACTS 8:17-19
17 Then laid they [Peter and John] their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.
18 And when Simon SAW that through laying on of the apos tles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,
19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

Evidence the Samaritans Received The Holy Spirit

Some who object to speaking with tongues say, "It's true the Samaritans received the Holy Ghost, but they didn't speak with tongues." There isn't any proof, however, that the Samaritans did not speak with tongues. In fact, Church historians agree that all of the Early Church fathers concur that the Samaritans did speak with tongues.

It is apparent that the Samaritans must have spoken in tongues, for the Bible says, ". . . Simon SAW that through the laying on of the apostles' hands THE HOLY GHOST WAS GIVEN ..." (Acts 8:18). What did Simon see? You certainly can't see the Holy Ghost, for He is a Spirit and cannot be seen with the physical eye.

Therefore, there had to be some kind of physical sign or evidence whereby Simon would know that the Samaritans had received the Holy Ghost. There had to be something that would register on Simon's physical senses whereby he could tell that the Samaritans had received the Holy Ghost. Simon didn't receive the Holy Ghost himself, but he could see that these others had received Him.
One minister said to me, "It may have been that Simon just saw that the Samaritans were full of joy." This couldn't explain it, however, and joy couldn't be the sign that Simon had seen, because the believers were already filled with joy when Philip preached Christ unto them.

ACTS 8:5,8
5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and PREACHED CHRIST unto them....
8 And THERE WAS GREAT JOY IN THAT CITY.

Therefore, the Samaritans already had great joy, so that could not have been the sign or evidence which Simon saw that indicated the Samaritans had been filled with the Spirit.
As I said, since the Holy Ghost can't be seen with the physical eye, there had to be some kind of sign that would cause Simon to know that these Samaritans had received the Holy Ghost when Peter and John laid hands on them.

All evidence indicates that the sign that was manifested was speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues was the sign that convinced Simon beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Samaritans had received the Holy Ghost (we discuss the Bible evidence for receiving the Holy Spirit in Chapter 9).

Two Separate Experiences: Saul's Conversion and Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The passage in Acts chapter 9 which records Saul's baptism in the Holy Spirit also shows us that receiving salvation and receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit are two separate experiences.

We know that Saul was already born again when Ananias came to lay hands on him, but Saul had not yet received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Saul's Conversion

We know Saul had already been converted or born again on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:1-9) for three reasons. First, in Acts 9:15,16, Jesus, speaking to Ananias in a vision, called Saul His chosen vessel.

ACTS 9:15,16
15 But the Lord said unto him [Ananias], Go thy way: for he I Saul] is a CHOSEN VESSEL UNTO ME, to bear MY NAME before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:
16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for MY NAME'S SAKE.

Second, we know Saul was saved because when Ananias entered the house where Saul was staying, Ananias greeted Saul by calling him "Brother Saul."

ACTS 9:17
17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him [Saul] said, BROTHER SAUL, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou might est receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.
Ananias recognized that Saul was already a Christian brother in the faith.
Third, we also know Saul was already saved when Ananias came to lay hands on him to receive the Holy Spirit because the Bible says in Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Saul called Jesus, "Lord" in his conversion on the Damascus Road.

ACTS 9:3-6
3 And as he [Saul] journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:
4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?
5 And he said, Who art thou, LORD? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.
6 And he trembling and astonished said, LORD, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

However, even though Saul had received Jesus as his Lord, Saul was not yet baptized in the Holy Spirit. As we have seen, Saul was not baptized in the Holy Spirit until Ananias came and laid hands on him to receive the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 9:17
17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house: and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST.
So we see that salvation and the baptism in the Holy Ghost are two separate experiences.
The Gentiles of Cornelius' Household: Salvation and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit
We also have other scriptural accounts of those who were saved and then immediately following salvation, they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
We find one such example in the very next chapter, Acts 10, where the Bible gives us Peter's account of his visit to Cornelius' household. The men of Cornelius' household were all Gentiles, and they were not saved until Peter came and preached the gospel to them.
In Acts chapter 11, Peter recounts his visit to Cornelius' household to the brethren in Jerusalem.
ACTS 11:13-15
13 And he [Cornelius] shewed us [Peter and the six Jewish brethren] how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be SAVED.
15 And as I began to speak, THE HOLY GHOST fell on them as on us at the beginning.
According to Peter's account, these Gentiles received salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit almost simultaneously. (Actually, the best time for someone to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit is when he is first saved J Notice that no one in Cornelius' household failed to receive the Holy Spirit.
Notice, no one laid hands on these Gentiles. They all received the Holy Spirit about the same time. And, again, not one person failed to receive the Holy Spirit.
Actually, speaking with tongues is what fully convinced Peter's company — the Jewish believers who accompanied Peter — that these Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit. The Jewish believers were astonished that the Holy Ghost was poured out on the Gentiles.
ACTS 10:45,46
45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
46 For they heard them speak with TONGUES, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,
Also, as we mentioned earlier, there is no suggestion of waiting in order to be filled with the Holy Spirit.
The Ephesian Disciples: Salvation and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit
We find another example in the Bible showing that salvation and the baptism in the Holy Spirit are two separate experiences.
ACTS 19:1-7
1 And it came to pass, that, while A pollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Eph esus: and finding certain disciples,
2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.
3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.
4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.
5 When they heard this, they were baptized IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS.
6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, THE HOLY GHOST CAME ON THEM; and THEY SPAKE WITH TONGUES, and prophesied.
7 And all the men were about twelve.

These Ephesian disciples were also all Gentiles. They had all been followers of John the Baptist, but they hadn't heard that Jesus had come, and therefore they had never been saved and baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. They had been baptized in the Name of the Father according to John's baptism.

We must understand that news didn't travel then like it does now. Back then, you could live your entire life and die, and something newsworthy could have taken place a hundred miles from you, and you would probably have never known about it because in that day news only traveled by word of mouth.
These folks had heard John the Baptist preach and tell that One was coming who would save them from their sins and baptize them in His Holy Spirit. They believed John's message and were baptized by John. But they had never heard that Jesus had come. They were walking in all the light they had, of course.

Then here in Acts chapter 19, we see that Paul came to Ephesus and told these disciples that Jesus the Promised One, had come and that Jesus had died on the Cross and had risen again.

Paul explained to these believers in Ephesus that the One whom John said would come after him had come, and that now they should believe on Jesus, and be saved. So when Paul came to these Ephesian disciples, he then baptized them in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and they were born again (Acts 19:5; Gal. 3:27).

But Paul didn't stop there. He also wanted them to be filled with the Holy Spirit, so he laid hands on them to receive the Holy Spirit. When he did this, the Holy Ghost came upon them, ". . . and they spake with tongues . . ."(Acts 19:6).

These Ephesians, who were brand-new converts, received the Holy Spirit when Paul laid hands on them. All of them received the Holy Spirit without
exception. Again, there is not one suggestion of tarrying or waiting to receive the Holy Spirit. In conclusion, let us sum up two important thoughts. First, as we have seen, salvation and the baptism in the Holy Spirit are two separate experiences, although the Holy Spirit is involved in both supernatural events.

Second, in all of these scriptures we have examined, there is no suggestion that the people in the Early Church were ever taught to tarry or to wait before they could be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Let's find out what the Bible says about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Bible should be our example in everything we do; not tradition, nor the opinion of men. Believers can receive this wonderful experience of the infilling of the Holy Spirit the Bible way!

Chapter 4 The Holy Spirit Within: His Indwelling Presence

In this lesson we will deal with the subject of the indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer in the new birth.

JOHN 14:16,17
16 And I will pray the Father, and HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER, that he may abide with you for ever
17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and SHALL BE IN YOU.

In this lesson I want to focus our attention on that last phrase of John 14:17: ". . . for he dwelleth with you, and shall be IN you." Being born again is not just an experience; rather, it is receiving the indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit, a Divine Personality, who comes to make His home in us.

There is no need for any believer ever to feel comfortless, bereaved, or forlorn. Christ's purpose in sending the Holy Spirit was so that the Holy Spirit, a Divine Personality, might come to live in us and be in us.

God For Us, With Us, and In Us

The New Testament gives us three relations that God sustains toward man. First, God is for us. Second, God is with us. And third, God is in us.
To have God be for us guarantees our success: ". . . If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31). If God is on our side, we are sure to win in life. If God is for you, and you know that He is for you, you become utterly fearless in life.
No matter how difficult the situation may be, no matter how dark the clouds that hang upon the horizon of your life may be, you are calmly assured that you must win in every circumstance because God is for you.

There can be no defeat if the Lord is for us. And, thank God, He is for us. If God be for us, who can be against us?

You can also have the assurance that not only is God for you, but in every place in life and in every situation, God is with you. No matter what the circumstances may be, if you are a Christian, the Lord is with you.

The knowledge of the Word of God along this line should certainly cause our hearts to leap for joy within us, and buoy our spirits up in faith and confidence.
Under the New Testament or New Covenant, the Bible says we have a better covenant established on better promises (Heb. 8:6). Under the covenant in the Old Testament, God was for Israel and with Israel, but He was not in Israel.

However, in the New Testament, God is with us and for us, but we also have something better — God is in us. God is actually making His home in our bodies as His temple (1 Cor. 6:19).

Believers Are the Temple of the Holy Spirit

Of all the mighty truths in connection with our redemption, this is the apex of the reality of our redemption: that after God Himself recreated us and made us new creatures in Christ and made us His own, then He, in the Person of the Holy Ghost, makes our bodies His home!

1 CORINTHIANS 3:16
16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that
THE SPIRIT OF GOD DWELLETH IN YOU?
1 CORINTHIANS 3:16 (Amplified)
16 Do you not discern and understand that you [the whole church at Corinth] are God's temple (His sanctuary), and that God's Spirit has His permanent dwelling in you — to be at home in you [collectively as a church and also individually]?
1 CORINTHIANS 6:19
19 What? know ye not that your body is THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST which is IN YOU, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?
1 CORINTHIANS 6:19 (Amplified)
19 Do you not know that your body is the temple — the very sanctuary — of the Holy Spirit who lives within you, whom you have received [as a Gift] from God? You are not your own?
2 CORINTHIANS 6:16
16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for YE ARE THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD; as God hath said, I will dwell IN THEM, and walk IN THEM; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

2 CORINTHIANS 6:16 (Amplified)
16 What agreement (can there be between) a temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in and with and among them and will walk in and with and among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Through the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the Godhead, God Himself indwells the believer through the new birth experience. No longer does God dwell in the earth-made Holy of Holies. Our bodies have become His temple.

The Holy Spirit and His Gifts

You see, in the Old Testament, under the Old Covenant, God's Presence was kept enclosed in the Holy of Holies. No one dared approach the Holy of Holies except the high priest, and he did so only with great precaution. If anyone else dared to intrude into the Holy of Holies, that person would fall dead.

Also, it was necessary that every male in all of Israel present himself at least once a year at Jerusalem, because that was where God's Presence was in the Holy of Holies. And the high priest was designated by God to go into the Holy of Holies to offer sacrifices and to make atonement for the sins of the people.

But on the Cross just before Jesus died, He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). He was not referring to the New Covenant when He said, "It is finished." He was talking about the Old Covenant being finished.

The New Covenant wasn't instituted and ratified until Jesus was raised from the dead ascended on High and entered into the heavenly Holy of Holies with His own blood (Heb. 1:3;10:12). Once Jesus obtained eternal redemption for us, as Hebrews declares, then and only then were the terms of the New Covenant consummated and ratified.

Hanging on that rugged Cross on Golgotha's rugged brow, Jesus said, "It is finished." The Word tells us that at that moment the curtain that partitioned off the Holy of Holies in the Temple was rent in two from top to bottom (Matt. 27:51).

Jewish historians tell us that curtain was forty feet wide, twenty feet high, and four inches thick. When Jesus Christ was crucified on the Cross of Calvary, God sent His messenger to rend that curtain in the Holy of Holies from top to bottom, signifying that the Old Covenant was finished and that God's Presence would no longer be kept shut up in the man-made Holy of Holies. Under the New Covenant, God would dwell in the believer (Jer. 31:33,34;Heb. 8:6-3;10:1-17).

Notice that the curtain was not ripped from the bottom to the top as might happen if that curtain were ripped by some human agency. No, the curtain was ripped from top to bottom, indicating that it was not of human agency.
When that happened, God's Presence which had been kept in the Holy of Holies, moved out of that earth-made Holy of Holies and God has never dwelt in an earth-made Holy of Holies since.

Because God now makes His abode in believers, when we call a building the house of God, we are partly correct and partly incorrect, according to what we mean by that statement.
If we mean the building is the house of God because God lives and dwells there, we are wrong. God does not dwell in a building. But if we mean that the building is God's house because it is dedicated to the service of the Lord, then we are right — it is a house of God. But God doesn't live in a building made with hands. He lives and dwells in us through the power of the Holy Spirit!
Relatively few Christians are really conscious of God in them — dwelling in their hearts and bodies as His temple. If men and women were conscious of God in them as His temple, they wouldn't talk and act as they sometimes do. Some Christians constantly talk about their lack of power, and their lack of ability. But if they realized that God is in them, they would know that there is nothing impossible to them.

Instead of believing what the Bible says, too many believers believe only what they feel. For example, when people are born again, they feel wonderful. But many times, later they will say, "I had a marvelous experience when I was saved, but God must have left me because I don't feel now as I did then."

However, Jesus said, ". . . that he [the Holy Spirit] may abide with you FOR EVER" (John 14:16). The Holy Spirit didn't come as a guest to stay for just a few days. He didn't come on a vacation to dwell inside of you for just a short time. He came to dwell in you to be at home in you forever. The Holy Spirit's home in this life is in your body — God's temple.

The Bible says, ". . . all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). The reason that all things are possible to him who believes is that God our Father planned that the believing one should have God Himself living in him through the indwelling Presence of the Holy Ghost. And with God in the believer, nothing is impossible!

Greater Is He That Is in You

First John 4:4 says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because GREATER IS HE THAT IS IN YOU, THAN HE THAT IS IN THE WORLD." Who is the "he" that is in the world? That is Satan, the god of this world.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:4
4 In whom THE GOD OF THIS WORLD hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

But He who is in you - the Holy Ghost —- is greater! The Greater One is in you if you are born again. God Himself in the Person of the Holy Spirit lives in the born-again believer. All that God could possibly be to you and do for you, the Holy Ghost through His indwelling Presence is to you and for you and in you.

If we were really conscious of the Greater One in us, then we would have no fear of the devil. We would have no fear of "he that is in the world" because "He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world."

John said, ". . . greater is he that is IN YOU . . ." (1 John 4:4). Going back to John 14:16, we hear Jesus say, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."

Then in the last part of verse 17, Jesus said, ". . . he . . . shall be IN YOU." That is exactly what John was saying in First John 4:4 too: ". . . greater is he that is IN YOU, than he that is in the world."

Some people say, "I have a poor memory and just can't remember things well. I can't remember scriptures."

I tell them, "Why don't you quit trying to remember scriptures, and look to the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, and expect Him to bring whatever you need to your remembrance."
You see, it's one thing to try to do something mentally yourself; it's another thing to trust Him — the Greater One — who is in you.

He is everything in us that the Scriptures say He is. He'll do everything in us the Word says He will do. And He will be everything in us the Word says He will be.

A Thousand Times Bigger on the Inside!

Smith Wigglesworth, a man of God who was used mightily of the Lord to preach faith and perform miracles of healings, said in his book, Ever Increasing Faith, "I am a thousand times bigger on the inside than I am on the outside."

I hadn't been in Pentecost very long when I read this, and this statement was hard for me to understand because my mind wasn't renewed sufficiently with the Word.

I knew there was an outward man and an inward man, of course. The inward man is our spirit — the man that is on the inside. After I read that statement by Wigglesworth, I laid the book down and wondered how in the world a man could be a thousand times bigger on the inside than he is on the outside. I thought, for example, How could you put a big pot in a little pot? For example, if your foot were ten times bigger than your shoe, how could you put your foot in your shoe? If a man were a thousand times bigger on the inside than on the outside, the outside would just burst wide open.

In the nighttime this statement Wigglesworth had made would come to me, rolling over and over in my mind. The Holy Ghost was bringing it to my remembrance. So I determined to read that chapter in Wigg glesworth's book again, asking the Holy Spirit to give me insight into what Wigglesworth was saying.

In the book, I came upon the scripture, ". . . greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). I began to see it then. With this enlightened understanding I felt Wigglesworth should have said, "I am a million times bigger on the inside." That still wouldn't have done it justice because God is infinitely bigger than we can think or imagine.
Someone asked Wigglesworth, "What is your secret to the great place of spirituality you have attained?"

His answer was, "All I ever did was to remember that greater is He who is in me than he who is in the world."

Dare to act on that scripture!

This doesn't belong only to preachers. It is not just preachers who are a thousand times bigger on the inside than they are on the outside. It is not just preachers who have the Holy Ghost in them.

John was writing to lay members when he said, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because GREATER is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). You are not left helpless in this life. The Greater One is in you.

The Role of the Holy Spirit Within

We saw how the Holy Spirit came to dwell in us. Let's look now at what He is going to do in us. The Holy Spirit Within Results in the Fruit of the Recreated Spirit

It is significant to notice in the Scriptures that there are two groups of nine in connection with the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer:

1. The nine fruit of the Spirit, which are a result of the Holy Spirit's indwelling Presence.
2. The nine gifts of the Spirit, which are a result of the Holy Spirit's infilling power.

We will discuss the nine gifts of the Spirit in the baptism or the infilling of the Holy Spirit in Chapter 5. But let's look first of all at the nine-fold manifestation of the fruit of the born-again human spirit that is a result of the Holy Spirit's indwelling Presence. Paul lists them in Galatians 5.

GALATIANS 5:22,23
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is LOVE, JOY, PEACE, LONG-SUFFERING, GENTLENESS, GOODNESS, FAITH,
23 MEEKNESS, TEMPERANCE: against such there is no law.

In John 15:5, Jesus told the disciples, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. ..." Now where does the fruit grow? It grows out on the branches!

This fruit, then, that Paul is talking about in Galatians 5 is the fruit of the recreated, born-again human spirit, growing within the believer's life as a result of the life of the Holy Spirit within. We see a biblical example of the fruit of the born-again human spirit in Luke 24:51-53 before the Day of Pentecost when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit.

LUKE 24:51-53
51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.
52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem WITH GREAT JOY:
53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

According to Galatians 5:22, joy is a fruit of the born-again, recreated human spirit. We see in this passage in Luke 24 that the disciples had great joy, but they were not yet filled with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the fruit of the spirit could not be a result of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, for the Day of Pentecost had not yet come.

This scripture shows that the disciples already had one of the fruit of the spirit, joy, before they were endued with power from on High. In fact, they had great fruit because the Bible says they had great joy (v. 52)!

As we yield to God and obey His Word, the life of the Holy Spirit within us causes us to grow continually in love, joy, and peace, as well as the other fruit of the spirit. So we can see that one of the main purposes of the indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is for fruit bearing.

The Holy Spirit Within: Our Helper and Comforter

We notice in The Amplified version of John 14:16-18 that the Holy Spirit is a Comforter, a Counselor, a Helper, an Intercessor, an Advocate, a Strength-ener, and a Standby.

JOHN 14:16-18 (Amplified)
16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another COMFORTER (COUNSELOR, HELPER, INTERCESSOR, ADVOCATE, STRENGTHENER and STANDBY) that He may remain with you forever,
17 The Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive (welcome, take to its heart), because it does not see Him, nor know and recognize Him. But you know and recognize Him, for He lives with you [constantly] and will be in you.
18 I will not leave you orphans — comfortless, desolate, bereaved, forlorn, helpless — I will come [back] to you.

Notice Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be a Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener, and a Standby. We don't need anything more than that. Many believers have missed the reality of what the Holy Spirit came to do in us on a continual basis. Too often when some people need help, they just run around frantically — almost in a frenzy — just trying to find someone to pray for them. They cry first on one person's shoulder and then on another's, shed a few "crocodile" tears, and quote a few scriptures. But when they are alone, they are in just about the same mess they were in to begin with. They forget that on the inside of them, they have a Helper. They don't have to pray for a Helper: they already have the Helper in them.

Jesus said in John 16:7 that the Holy Spirit would be our Comforter. Jesus also said, ". . . It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you" (John 16:7).

The Holy Spirit Within: Our Guide in the Affairs of Life

The Holy Spirit is also our Guide. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth . . ." (John 16:13). Not only will He guide us into all truth, but Jesus said speaking to God the Father, " . , Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). The Holy Spirit will also guide us into the truth of God's Word.

The Holy Spirit will guide us in all the affairs of life. "For as many AS ARE LED by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). No one can be guided or led, however, without placing themselves in the hands of the Guide.

In other words, it is useless to pray to God, "Lord, guide me. Give me directions," unless you are going to allow yourself to be guided.

By way of illustration, when we go some place and a guide is there to escort us, if we don't follow the guide, there would be much that we wouldn't understand and we might even get lost. The guide is there to explain certain things to us and to show us the way to go.

Certainly no one would want to go through Carlsb sad Caverns, for instance, without a guide It is pitch black inside those caverns. We would never get out of the Carlsbad Caverns if we failed to follow the guide. But the guide knows right where to turn on the lights. (Thank God, the Holy Ghost knows right where to turn on the lights!)

That is the reason many folks have gotten into such a mess in life — they were not following the Guide. The Holy Spirit will guide us, but in order to be guided in life, we have to put ourselves into His hands.

When you have guidance, you can be prepared ahead of time, for the Bible says the Holy Spirit will show you things to come (John 16:13). He will guide you into all truth, and He will also guide you and lead you in all the affairs of life.

During the many years I have traveled on the evangelistic field leaving my wife and small children at home, I have depended upon my Guide, the Holy Spirit. And He has always warned me ahead of time of a need in my family. Although many times I had no communication with my family, I always knew by the Spirit of God when a member of the family was sick.
The Holy Spirit is not in me to help me just because I am a preacher. If you are a believer, He is in you to help you too. And if you will learn to listen to Him and look to Him, He will guide you.

Knowing on the Inside of You What To Do

Under the Old Covenant in Jeremiah 31:33, God speaks of the New Covenant that He would be establishing with His people. This verse gives us a clue as to how believers are to be guided under the New Covenant.

JEREMIAH 31:33
33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I WILL PUT MY LAW IN THEIR INWARD PARTS, and WRITE IT IN THEIR HEARTS; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

This Old Covenant promise was fulfilled in the new birth ¦— in the recreation of man's spirit.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17
17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Where does God make us a new creature? In our hearts or spirits by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).

God said He would put His law in our "inward parts" — in our hearts or spirits. It is by the Holy Spirit that God's laws are written in our hearts (2 Cor. 3:3).

Also, because you are born again, you will know by the Holy Spirit living on the inside of you what to do in every situation in life, for He is our Guide into all truth (John 16:13). Just look on the inside; check to see what the Holy Spirit within your human spirit is leading you to do (Rom. 8:14).

The trouble with many folks is that instead of looking to the Holy Ghost within them to guide and lead them, they are looking on the outside for their answer. They are running around looking for another person to give them the answer they need.

Let me give you an example of someone who just needed to "look on the inside" to the Holy Spirit who dwells within. We were holding a Faith Seminar in Ohio, and after one of the morning services, a man came up to me and said, "Brother Hagin, I want you to pray for me." The man explained his prayer request. "For several years," he said, "I was a member of a church here in town.

"I had a disagreement with the pastor," the man continued, "and ended up leaving the church. Since then we've gotten our disagreement all straightened out and we're good friends. But for seven years now I've been going to another church."

The man said, "Recently there have been some developments at the church where I have been attending. The pastor has left and I have felt like leaving too.

"So I don't know what to do," this man concluded. "I don't know whether I should stay at this church I've been attending, find a new church, or go back to the church I left seven years ago. I want you to pray that the Lord would guide me."

I said, "All right, we'll just agree together that you will understand what God is saying to you because John 16:13 says the Holy Spirit is our Guide, and Romans 8:14 says that as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God."

And so I laid my hand on his forehead, and began to pray. I had only prayed a few words when the Spirit of God on the inside of me said, "Ask him what he's got in his heart."
You see, that is where the Holy Spirit is, in your heart or your spirit. That is where you are going to find the guidance you need. The Bible says, "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord. . ." (Prow. 20:27).

I stopped praying and I said to the man, "Open your eyes and look at me."

He opened his eyes and I said, "Dear brother, look right down in your heart, your spirit. Don't look at me. Don't look up to your head. Look right down on the inside of you."

You see, when the Bible talks about your heart, it is not talking about the physical organ that pumps blood through your body and keeps you alive.

Romans 10:10 says, ". . . with the HEART man BELIEVETH unto righteousness. ..." Well, you couldn't believe with your physical heart any more than you could believe with your physical

nose or your physical foot! No, the heart is used as an illustration of the heart of man, the spirit of man.

"Look down in your spirit," I told him. "What does your spirit tell you?"

When I said that, he responded, "I'm going to have to go back to the church I used to attend." I answered, "That's the answer. Go on back to that church then." That man knew the answer in his heart all the time.

Many times things will happen in your life, some good and some bad, and afterwards you will say, "I knew what to do all the time."

Where did you know it? You knew it on the inside of you. Why didn't you listen? It would save you many problems if you would learn to listen to your spirit. For the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord (Prov. 20:27). The Holy Spirit is dwelling in our spirits, and He is our Guide.
The Holy Spirit Within: Testifies of Jesus

In the Book of John, Jesus spoke of another role of the Holy Spirit as He dwells within believers. The Holy Spirit always lifts up the Word of God and the Name of Jesus and testifies of Jesus.

JOHN 15:26
26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proc ceedeth from the Father, HE SHALL TESTIFY OF ME.
Now notice John 16:14: "HE SHALL GLORIFY ME: for he shall receive of mine, and shall SHEW IT unto you." And in John 14:26, Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be our Teacher.
JOHN 14:26
26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, HE SHALL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS, and bring all things to your remembrance, WHATSOEVER I HAVE SAID UNTO YOU.

In other words, the Holy Spirit will make Jesus and the things of God real to you. And when you need it, He will bring to your remembrance the Word of God that you have hidden in your heart (Ps. 119:11).

The Holy Spirit, our Helper, has made His home in us as believers. All that we could ever need Him to be for us, He is. He is our Comforter, our Guide, our Counselor, and our Teacher. He is the Greater One in us who puts us over in life.

If we are conscious of Him who dwells within us and if we believe God's Word, then no matter what or whom we face in life, we will have no fear. The Greater One who lives in us is greater than he who is in the world! He will put us over in life!

1 Smith Wigglesworth, Ever Increasing Faith (1924; Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1971), p. 95.

Chapter 5 The Holy Spirit Upon: His Infilling Power

In Chapter 4 we discussed the indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit. But there should be a twofold work of God in the life of the individual believer. God desires for every one of His

children to experience this dual working of the Spirit of God in their lives: The Holy Spirit within (indwelling) in the new birth. And the Holy Spirit upon (infilling) in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In John 14:16,17, we saw that Jesus promised the indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit when He said, ". . . I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter. . . . he dwelleth WITH you, and shall be IN you."

At the time Jesus was saying this, the Holy Ghost was not yet in the disciples, nor in any of the followers of Jesus. But Jesus' promise in John 14:16,17 was that under the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit is to be in all believers. Jesus said to His disciples, ". . . he [the Holy Spirit] dwelleth WITH you, and shall be IN you" (v. 17).

Jesus' promise to the disciples of the indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled in John 20:21,22 when the resurrected Savior breathed on them and said, ". . . Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

When Jesus said that, He was referring to receiving the Holy Spirit in the new-birth experience. That was when the disciples were born again; that was when they were regenerated by the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5).

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

However, then as a separate and subsequent experience, Jesus promised His disciples and all believers the enduement of power from on High.

LUKE 24:49
49 And, behold, I send the PROMISE OF MY FATHER upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until YE BE ENDUED WITH POWER FROM ON HIGH.

In this passage, Jesus is referring to a different working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers — the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon believers to receive an enduement of power from on High.

ACTS 1:5,8
5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST not many days hence....
8 But ye shall receive POWER, AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The Holy Spirit Upon

Notice the use of the word "upon" in both Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:8, referring to the baptism in the Holy Spirit: ". . . I send the promise of my father UPON you. . . ,"and ". . . ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come UPON you...."

There is a work of the Holy Spirit that God desires in the lives of believers: This is the Holy Spirit coming upon believers to endue them with power from on High.

Just as the Spirit within in the new birth is a definite experience, so there is also a genuine infilling of the Holy Spirit which believers can receive today, which is also a definite experience. On the Day of Pentecost, God gave this outpouring of the Holy Spirit not only to the 120 who were gathered in the Upper Room (Acts 2:1-4), but to the Church — to all who would believe in Jesus.

As I pointed out in the previous lesson, it is not a matter of the Father's giving believers the Holy Ghost. God has already given the Holy Ghost to the Church on the Day of Pentecost. No, it is a matter now of believers' receiving the Holy Ghost.

The world — unregenerated sinners — cannot receive the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth. The world can receive the new birth, however. Sinners can receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and be born again. But the experience of the infilling of the Holy Ghost is only for believers.

Jesus called the outpouring of the Holy Ghost "the promise of my Father" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4). Peter also spoke of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, using the phrase "the promise of the Holy Ghost," and "the gift of the Holy Ghost."

ACTS 2:32,33
32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.
33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father THE PROMISE of the HOLY GHOST, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

ACTS 2:38,39
38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.
39 For THE PROMISE is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Jesus promised in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:5,8 that the Holy Ghost would be given that believers might be "endued with power from on High." Then on the Day of Pentecost, God shed forth the Holy Spirit as He came upon believers (Acts 2:33). And the Holy Spirit has been here ever since for believers to receive.

When the Church Began

Some people have said, "The Church began on the Day of Pentecost." But the Bible doesn't teach that. The Church actually began when Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:22). This is when the Holy Spirit indwelt the disciples and did His work of recreating their spirits and making them new creatures on the inside (2 Cor. 5:17).

Before Jesus breathed on His disciples, the disciples had a promissory note on salvation (John 14:16,17,23), but they weren't born again. Until Jesus breathed on the disciples, the Holy Spirit had not yet been given to bring people into the new-birth experience, because Jesus had not yet redeemed mankind through His death, burial, and resurrection (John 7:39).

But then in John 20:22, the resurrected Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, ..."Receive ye the Holy Ghost." As you study the Scriptures it becomes evident that something transpired within the disciples at that time.

The disciples had just watched their Master die on a cross and they had buried Him. They were a confused, mystified group of people. But after meeting with the risen Christ and having the Holy Spirit imparted to them in the work of the new birth, the disciples were changed. We know that something happened to the disciples when Jesus breathed on them because after Jesus ascended, even before the Day of Pentecost, the Bible says that the disciples returned to Jerusalem with " . . .GREAT JOY: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God" (Luke 24:52,53). They were a changed group of people because they had been born again.

Therefore, John 20:22 records the beginning of the Church, for that is when the disciples were born again.

Born Again, but Waiting for the Outpouring

These same men that received the Holy Spirit when Jesus breathed on them were all there in the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost, along with the rest of the 120 mentioned (Acts 1:13-15). These same

disciples were waiting in the Upper Room to receive the outpouring of the Holy Ghost; to be baptized with the Holy Ghost; to be endued with power by the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49). These are all describing the same New Testament experience — the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

There Is More To Receive of the Holy Spirit After the New Birth

If the disciples had heard some of these modern-day theologians and preachers who say that a believer receives all of the Holy Spirit at the new birth, then the disciples never would have gone to wait in the Upper Room for the promise of the Holy Spirit and the enduement of power from on High.

They would have said, "Jesus breathed on me and I received the Holy Ghost, so I've got Him! Therefore, I've got all of the Holy Spirit there is to get. That's all there is to it, period!" But as we will see, that isn't all there is to it, praise God!

'Are You Hungry for More of God?'

A number of years ago, I was speaking at a Full Gospel Businessmen's Convention. One of the other speakers, a Spirit-filled Episcopal priest, related an experience he had with a denominational minister who believed that a person receives all of the Holy Spirit there is to receive in the new-birth experience.

This Episcopal priest was speaking at a meeting about this experience of being baptized with the Holy Ghost and speaking with other tongues. In the middle of the sermon, the denominational minister jumped up and ran down the aisle to where the priest stood. The denominational minister said to the priest, "I want you to know that I'm just as much filled and baptized with the Holy Ghost as you are, and I don't speak with tongues. I don't plan to ever speak in tongues either!"

The Episcopal priest smiled and said kindly, "Well, fine, Brother. If you're satisfied with your Christian walk, then I'm satisfied. But may I ask you a question?"

The denominational minister said yes and the priest said, "On the inside of you, do you have all of God you could ever want to have? Do you have all you need? Are you hungry for any more of God?"

The minister said, "Well, yes, I'm hungry for more of God."

The Episcopal priest said, "If you will just kneel down right here, I will lay my hand on you and pray that God will satisfy your hunger."

The denominational minister knelt down and the priest laid his hand on him and said, "God, satisfy his hunger." And the minister immediately began speaking in tongues! Hallelujah! There is more of God to receive through the baptism of the Holy Spirit!

Wigglesworth's Testimony Of Being Filled With the Holy Spirit

Over the years I've read in various accounts of Smith Wigglesworth's baptism in the Holy Spirit. Before Wigglesworth was baptized in the Holy Ghost, he wanted to argue with anyone who said he needed to receive more of the Holy Ghost. He told them, "I've got the Holy Ghost; it's these tongues I want."

People would tell him, "No, you need the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and then you'll speak in tongues." But Wigglesworth didn't want to accept the possibility that there was more of the Holy Spirit to receive than he already had by being born again.

However, Wigglesworth was determined to "receive those tongues." He was at the end of some meetings and preparing to get on the train to go back to his home. He decided to visit a Spirit-filled Episcopal priest's home before he left.

The priest was out making a pastoral call when Wigglesworth got there. But the priest's wife told Wigglesworth, "Come on in and I'll pray for you."

Wigglesworth said, "I want you to pray that I will receive those tongues."

The priest's wife said, "You don't want tongues; you want the Holy Ghost! You receive this experience of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the tongues will be a part of that experience. But don't seek tongues. Seek the Holy Ghost. Seek Jesus who is the Baptizer in the Holy Ghost."

"But I already have the Holy Ghost!" Wigglesworth argued. "I know what I want!"

"Be quiet, shut your eyes, and I'll pray for you!" the priest's wife said. So she laid her hands on Wigg glesworth's head as he knelt there and she prayed, "Oh Lord, help this poor fellow. Forgive him and baptize him in the Holy Ghost."

About that time someone knocked at the door and the priest's wife went to answer it. While she was gone and Wigglesworth was kneeling there alone, suddenly with his eyes shut he had a vision.

In the vision, Wigglesworth saw the empty cross and the glorified Savior. He was conscious of the cleansing of Jesus' precious blood, and he began to cry out, "Clean! Clean! Clean! I'm clean through the blood! Through the blood, I'm clean!"

About that time Wigglesworth realized he wasn't saying "clean" anymore; he was talking in some kind of strange language! And he traveled back home speaking with other tongues. 1 After Wigglesworth was baptized in the Holy Ghost, he would tell people, "I used to have an argument, but now I have an experience inside the Bible and outside the realm of argument!" He found out there was more to receive of the Holy Spirit after being born again.

Speaking in Tongues Is Not Evidence Of the New Birth

As I said, one extreme is believing a person has all of the Holy Spirit there is to have in the new birth. On the other extreme, some people think that a person doesn't have the Holy Ghost in his life at all until he speaks in tongues. These people would say the disciples did not receive the Holy Ghost at all in the new birth when Jesus breathed on them. They believe the disciples didn't have the Holy Ghost until they spoke in tongues.

But speaking in tongues is not the Bible evidence for the new birth. It is the Bible evidence for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as we will later discuss in detail. Only believers can receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the disciples had to be born again before they could have been baptized with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:4).
So did the disciples receive the Holy Ghost in the new birth as recorded in John 20:22, or not? If they didn't, then Jesus sure did pull a funny trick on them. He sure did fool them when He said that to them! No, when Jesus said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," He meant what He said! The disciples received the Holy Spirit in the new-birth experience at that moment. This is when the disciples were born again, yet fifty days later they gathered with other believers in the Upper Room to be endued with power from on High by the same Holy Spirit.

It Is the Same Holy Spirit In the New Birth and In the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

I knew as a young Baptist boy preacher that I had been born of the Spirit when I was born again (Rom. 8:16). But I didn't know the Bible that well back then, and I didn't understand that there was also the promise of a dual working of the Holy Spirit. in the believer's life (Luke 24:49).

Some Pentecostal folks I knew made it sound like you didn't have the Holy Ghost in any measure until you spoke with tongues. So from listening to them, I thought that I was going to receive another "Spirit" when I got baptized in the Holy Ghost.

When I was baptized in the Holy Ghost and began to speak in other tongues, I said, "Why, this is the same Spirit I've had all the time. It's the same Holy Ghost! There aren't two Holy Ghosts — there's just one! He's not twins!"

Before I got baptized in the Holy Spirit, some of my Baptist colleagues would warn me about associating with Pentecostal people. They would say, "Now those are good people all right. They live better lives than people do in our church. But that speaking in tongues is of the devil!" I wouldn't say much when they said that, but I would think, Isn't it strange that people can get something from the devil that will help them live better lives!

One man in particular, a graduate of a Baptist seminary, had warned me again and again about Pentecostal people and speaking in tongues. After I had been baptized in the Holy Spirit, I rushed over to see him.

He gave me the same warning that he had given me many times before: "I want to warn you, Kenneth, about going around with those Full Gospel people. That speaking in tongues is of the devil!"

I told him, "Well, if it is, then the whole Southern Baptist movement is of the devil!"
"What are you talking about?" he asked, surprised.

I said, "I got baptized with the Holy Ghost in the Full Gospel pastor's house. I didn't get any new Spirit. The same Holy Spirit that I received in the new birth in the Baptist church is the same Holy Spirit that gave me utterance in other tongues!"

I had just discovered what the Bible had taught all along. Just like the disciples in Acts 2:1-4, I had received an enduement of power from on High from the same Holy Spirit who had recreated my spirit when I was born again.

The Holy Spirit Upon: The Gateway Into the Supernatural

As we discussed in Chapter 4, the Bible teaches that there are two groups of nine in connection with the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. First, there is the ninefold manifestation of the fruit of the born-again human spirit that Paul lists in

Galatians 5:22,23. The fruit of the spirit is the result of the Holy Spirit's indwelling Presence. We find a second ninefold group in connection with the Holy Spirit in First Corinthians 12:7-11. These are the nine manifestations of the Holy Spirit known as the gifts of the Spirit. The gateway into these nine supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit is the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking with tongues.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:7-11
7 But the MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT is given to every man to profit withal.
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;
11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Therefore, speaking in tongues eliminates selfishness and praying outside of the will of God because when we pray in tongues, we are praying the perfect will of God.

Reason Number 5

The fifth reason believers should speak with tongues is that it helps them learn to trust God more fully. It builds one's faith to speak in tongues. The Bible says, ". . . building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 20).

Speaking in tongues stimulates faith and helps us learn how to trust God more fully. For example, faith must be exercised to speak with tongues because the Holy Spirit supernaturally directs the words we speak. You see, we don't know what the next word will be — we have to trust God for that. And trusting God in one area helps us learn to trust Him in another area. As a young denominational minister I was pastor of a community church, and there was a fine Christian woman in our church who dearly loved the Lord. But she was afflicted in her body with sickness. She had an ulcerated stomach, and the doctors feared that it would lead to cancer of the stomach. Her husband made good money, but he had spent everything he had on doctor bills until finally they didn't even own an automobile. He had spent thousands of dollars.

This woman received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and shortly after that I visited in their home again. I noticed that she could eat almost anything, whereas before she could eat only a little baby food and milk, and had even had difficulty keeping that in her stomach.

She told me, "I not only received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues, but I received my healing as well. I am perfectly healed."

I have seen this happen many times. What is the connection? We know that receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost doesn't heal you. However, speaking with tongues helps you to learn how to trust God more fully in other areas of life — including in the area of healing.

Reason Number 6

The sixth reason every Christian ought to regularly speak in tongues is that speaking in tongues is a means of keeping us free from the contamination of the ungodly and profane elements of the world. For example, there is much vulgar talk that goes on around us on the job or out in public. But we can speak in tongues to ourselves (1 Cor. 14:28).

In other words, if you can speak in tongues to yourself and to God in church, then you can speak in tongues on the job, too, in a way that won't disturb anyone. In the barber shops, for instance, if the men are telling jokes that are not edifying, I just sit there quietly and speak to myself and to God in tongues.

Riding the train, bus, or airplane, you can speak to yourself and to God. On the job you can speak to yourself and to God. Speaking in tongues to yourself and to God is a means of keeping yourself free from the contamination of the world.

Reason Number 7

The seventh reason every believer should speak in tongues is that it provides a way for things to be prayed for about which no one thinks to pray, or is even aware of. We already know that the Holy Spirit helps us pray for things we do not know how to pray for as we ought. In

addition, the Holy Spirit, who knows everything, can pray through us for things about which our natural mind knows nothing.

When a missionary to Africa was speaking at a missionary conference in England once, a woman asked him, "Do you keep a diary?"

When he replied that he did, she said, "Two years ago I was awakened in the night with a burden to pray. I got out of bed and I was speaking in tongues before I ever got down on my knees."

She continued, "I prayed for an hour in tongues. It just seemed as if I was wrestling in the spirit. I didn't know what I was praying for, but as I finished praying, I had a vision in which I saw you in a little old grass thatched hut. There weren't any other white people there. The natives were gathered around you, and you were extremely sick. Then you died. The natives pulled a sheet up over your head and went outside of the hut.

"Suddenly," she said, "I saw you come out of the hut and stand in their midst, and they all rejoiced! Did anything like that ever happen to you?"

In response, he asked her, "Do you keep a diary?"

"Yes," she answered.

"Bring your diary this afternoon and I will bring mine, and we can compare notes," he said. They had never had any connection with one another before this time; this woman only knew that this man was a missionary.

Comparing their diaries and making allowances for the differences in time between the countries of England and Africa, they learned that the time of the woman's prayer burden coincided exactly with the time when the missionary was sick with a deadly fever.
The missionary related that his partner had gone to a neighboring village and he had been left alone with the natives. Things happened just as she saw them. The missionary had died, the natives saw him die, and they pulled a sheet over his head. Then suddenly the missionary rose up well because of the power of God made available through this woman's praying in other tongues.

In 1956 when my wife and I were in California ministering, I was awakened suddenly in the night. It was as if someone had laid a hand on me. I sat bolt upright in bed, my heart beating fast as though I were afraid.

I lay back down and said, "Lord, what is the matter? I know something is wrong somewhere." It was as if the Spirit of God had awakened me.

I said, "Holy Spirit in me, You know everything. You are everywhere. You are everywhere present at once, as well as dwelling within me. Whatever is the matter, please give me utterance to pray about it."

Then I began to pray in tongues, and I lay there and prayed quietly to God for about an hour. Then I began to laugh and sing in tongues. When you pray this way, always continue praying

until you have a note of praise or victory. Then that means whatever it is you were praying about has been prayed through.

When I got that note of victory in my praying, I knew that what I had been praying about had been prayed through. I had the answer, so I went back to sleep.

As I slept, I dreamed that I saw my youngest brother in a motel in Louisiana. I saw him awaken at midnight. I saw someone summon the doctor, and

I saw an ambulance come. I saw them put my brother in an ambulance, and I saw the red light flashing as they took him to the hospital.

In the dream I stood in the corridor of the hospital just outside his door. When the doctor came out, he pulled the door closed behind him and then he saw me standing there. He shook his head and said to me, "He's dead."

In the dream I said, "No, doctor, he is not dead. The Lord told me he would live and not die The doctor became angry and said, "I know when people are dead. I have pronounced many hundreds of people dead." He grabbed me by the hand and said, "Come, I'll let you see for yourself."

He opened the door, led me to the bed, and jerked the sheet from my brother's face. When he did, he saw that my brother was breathing and his eyes were open.

The doctor said, "Why, you knew something I didn't know! He is alive, isn't he?" I saw my brother rise up well. Then that was the end of the dream. I knew that was what I had prayed about.

Three months later we came back to Texas. My brother stopped by to see me and said, "I nearly died while you were gone."

"Yes, I know," I said. "You were down in Louisiana, weren't you? It was in the nighttime and you had an attack and you were taken to the hospital in an ambulance."

"Yes. How did you know?" he asked.

When I told him about my burden for prayer followed by the dream, he said, "It happened just like that. They told me that for about forty minutes there at the hospital, the doctor thought I was dead."

Praying in the Spirit provides a way for things to be prayed for that people wouldn't know anything about in the natural. The Holy Ghost, however, knows everything. And He is our Helper in prayer.

Reason Number 8

Paul says in First Corinthians 14:21, ". . . With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people. ..." Paul was saying this in reference to Isaiah 28:11 and 12. And this passage in Isaiah gives us the eighth reason that every Christian should speak in tongues.

ISAIAH 28:11,12
11 For with stammering lips and ANOTHER TONGUE will he speak to this people.
12 To whom he said, THIS IS THE REST wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and THIS IS THE REFRESHING: yet they would not hear.

What is the rest? What is the refreshing? Isaiah 28:11 and 12 says the rest and the refreshing is speaking with other tongues.

Sometimes the doctor recommends a rest cure for exhaustion or for some sicknesses. And often when you take a vacation, you have to come home and rest before you go back to work! But I know the best rest in the world! Isn't it wonderful that we can just take this "rest cure" every day? The Bible says, ". . . This is the rest . . . this is the refreshing . . ." (Isa. 28:12). We need this rest in these days of turmoil, perplexity, and insecurity.

Reason Number 9

The ninth reason we are to pray in tongues is to give thanks to God.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:15-17
15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.
16 Else when thou shalt BLESS WITH THE SPIRIT, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy GIVING OF THANKS, seeing he under-standeth not what thou sayest?
17 For thou VERILY GIVEST THANKS WELL, but the other is not edified.

When Paul said, ". . . he that occupieth the room of the unlearned. . . ," he was referring to those who are unlearned in spiritual things.

Let me illustrate these verses of Scripture. For example, if you invited me to dinner and said, "Brother Hagin, please say the 'thanks' for the meal, if I prayed in tongues, you wouldn't know what I said. You wouldn't be edified.

Therefore, Paul said in a situation such as this, it would be better to pray with the understanding. If I did pray in tongues, I should interpret it so you would know what was said. Then you could be edified too, for Paul said, ". . . thou eerily giuest thanks well, but the other is not edified" (1 Cor. 14:17).

In other words, praying in tongues is the best way to give thanks. But in the presence of people who are unlearned, pray also with your understanding so they can be edified. Offering your thanks in your understanding allows people to be edified because then they will understand what you are saying.

Pay special attention to what Paul said in First Corinthians 14:17. He said praying in tongues provides the most perfect way to pray and to give thanks to God. Paul said when you offer thanks in other tongues, ". . . thou verily givest thanks well. . ." (1 Cor. 14:17).

Reason Number 10

The tenth reason why every believer should speak with tongues is found in James 3:8. "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Yielding your tongue to the

Holy Spirit to speak with other tongues is a big step toward being able to fully yield all of your members to God; for if you can yield your tongue, you can yield any member of your body to God.

Speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. God has given us this wonderful spiritual gift to bless us, edify us, and refresh us throughout our lives on this earth. Let's receive what God has provided, and enjoy the benefits of speaking in tongues!

1 Howard Carter, Questions and Answers on Spiritual Gifts (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Harrison House, Inc., 1976), p. 120.

Chapter 10 Seven Steps To Receiving the Holy Ghost

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.
— John 14:16,17

This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

— Acts 2:32,33

This lesson has a twofold purpose: Number one is to help those who have not yet received the infilling of the Holy Ghost. Number two is to help Spirit-filled believers pray with those who are seeking to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Any layperson can take the following seven steps and help any Christian get filled with the Holy Ghost without any tarrying or waiting.
I was preaching in a certain meeting once where about sixty-five people had been filled with the Holy Ghost. In one of the daytime services, someone asked, "What are we going to do when you leave, Brother Hagin?"

You see, all that the people had known in the past was to struggle and struggle in order to get believers filled with the Holy Ghost. One of the women who was an outstanding altar worker said, "In every meeting, I always pray with people to receive the Holy Spirit until my throat almost gives out. And after the meetings sometimes I've had laryngitis for a month."
I told them about these seven steps to receiving the infilling of the Holy Ghost. That night seven believers came forward to receive the Holy Ghost, but I didn't pray for them. Instead, I prayed for the sick who came forward for healing and sent these seven people into a prayer room, telling the altar workers, "All right, go back there and get them filled, following the instructions I gave you earlier today."

They went to the room and came out in ten minutes' time with six of the seven having been filled

with the Holy Ghost! They apologized for not getting the seventh one filled, but it turned out that he wasn't even a Christian, and he didn't want to get saved. You see, you can't get the Holy Ghost without getting saved first.

One of these workers was so thrilled to learn how to help people receive the Holy Ghost that she could hardly wait to go visit her mother who lived some distance away and help her be filled with the Holy Spirit. "Mama has been seeking the baptism for nineteen years," she told me, "but now I know she will receive."

Several months later I was back in the same church to hold meetings again, and this woman told me, "I drove about one hundred and fifty miles to my mother's home, and Mama was outside waiting for me. I said, 'Mama, just come on into the house. I can't stay long. I'm going to have to get back home. I only have time to attend to the business I came for — to get you filled with the Holy Ghost.'"

"But, you know, I have been seeking a mighty long time," her Mama answered.

The woman related, "I told her, 'I know it, Mama, but now you are going to receive.' We went into the house and I said, 'Just sit down and open your Bible to Acts chapter 2.' I sat down on the seat next to her and spent ten minutes with her just sharing the Word. Then I laid hands on her and she received the Holy Spirit and started speaking in tongues!"

The Seven Steps To Receiving the Holy Spirit

I list here the same seven steps which I have used in my revival meetings across the country to help believers receive the Holy Spirit.

Step Number 1

Help the believer see that God has already given the Holy Spirit and that it is now up to that person to receive God's free Gift.

Above everything else, help the believer see that he is not to beg God to fill him with the Holy Spirit. The promise that the Holy Spirit was to be given was fulfilled in Acts chapter 2. The Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, and He has been here ever since. After that time God hasn't given the Holy Spirit to anyone. Now people simply have to receive the Holy Spirit. For instance, let's look at what the Apostle Paul said some years after the incidents recorded in Acts chapter 2.

ACTS 19:1-6
1 ... Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,
2 He said unto them, Have ye RECEIVED the Holy Ghost since ye believed? [He didn't say, "Has God given you the Holy Ghost?" He said, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost?"] And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.
3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.
5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.
6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Paul didn't tell these disciples to pray that God would give them the Holy Ghost. The Bible says, ". . . the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:6).

Notice also Acts chapter 8 which occurred some years after the Day of Pentecost.

ACTS 8:14,15
14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD [concerning salvation], they sent unto them Peter and John:
15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might RECEIVE the Holy Ghost.

The apostles didn't pray that God would give the Samaritans the Holy Ghost. They prayed that they might receive the Holy Ghost: "Then laid they their hands on them, and they RECEIVED the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:17).

God hasn't given the Holy Ghost to anyone since the Day of Pentecost, but people have received Him. The Holy Ghost is already here for believers to receive.

Step Number 2
Show the person who has come to receive the Holy Ghost that anyone who is saved is ready to immediately receive the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 2:37,38
37 Now when they [the unsaved multitude who gathered as a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and to whom Peter had preached quoting Joel's prophecy] heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?
38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Verse 38 shows us that anyone who is saved is immediately ready to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Some people think there are certain things they have to do to qualify to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. For example, some think they have to make restitution for past sins. One fellow in east Texas once said, "I had to return a pig that I had stolen before I could get the Holy Ghost."

It is true that sin which has not been confessed can hinder people from receiving the blessings of God. However, if folks are saved and walking in fellowship with God, they couldn't possibly be any cleaner than they are right then. Once we confess our sins, the blood of Jesus Christ

cleanses us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). I believe that saved people go to heaven when they die. And if they are good enough to go to heaven, they are good enough to have a little bit of heaven in them here on earth!

Some people think they have to follow certain standards of dress in order to receive the Holy Spirit. For example, we were preaching at a certain place and in the meeting a woman came forward to receive the Holy Spirit. She did receive and spoke with tongues for fifteen or twenty minutes.

Afterwards, she was sitting down and praising God in English. One fellow walked over to her and thought she hadn't received because he hadn't heard her speaking in tongues. He also noticed that she was wearing a wedding ring and he said to her, "Sister, if you will take that wedding band off, God will fill you with the Holy Ghost."

I whispered to him, "Brother, you are too late. He has already filled her, wedding band and all." You see, some people have the mistaken idea that they have to court God's favor in order to get Him to do something for them. All we have to do is to be saved and walk in the light of salvation. A person who is out of fellowship, of course, would have to come back into fellowship with Him.

As I said, some people have imagined that one has to be perfect before he can get the Holy Ghost. However, even the great Apostle Paul said he wasn't perfect. Yet we know he had the Holy Spirit.

PHILIPPIANS 3:12,13
12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. . ..
13 ... I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.

Seven Steps To Receiving the Holy Ghost

If you could do everything you ought to do and be everything you ought to be without the Holy Ghost, what would you need Him for? If you can do everything for yourself, why do you need the Holy Ghost?

Carnal Christians (or Christians who are sense-ruled or dominated by the flesh) can be filled with the Holy Ghost. How do we know that? Because the Bible says the Corinthian Christians were carnal, and yet Paul prayed for them that they would come behind in no gift (1 Cor. 1:7). He was not endorsing carnality, to be sure. He was trying to get them to grow up in God and outgrow carnality. But as believers yield to Him, the Holy Ghost will help them grow out of carnality.

Baby Christians can be filled with the Holy Spirit. Carnal Christians and baby Christians — indeed, all believers — greatly need to be filled with the Holy Spirit because then they will receive power that will help them (Acts 1:8). Also, if they will walk in the light of God's Word and be led by the Holy Spirit, He will lead them into all truth and help them to outgrow some things in their lives which have perhaps hindered their Christian walk (John 16:13). Therefore, if a person is saved, he is ready to receive the Holy Ghost now. Always lead the believer who is seeking the Holy Ghost to see that truth.

Step Number 3

Tell people that when you lay hands on them, they are to receive the Holy Ghost.
Anyone can lay hands on another in faith, for God honors faith. However, there is also a ministry of laying on of hands, and some are used along these lines more than others. But anyone can lay their hands on a person in faith as a point of contact, and tell them, "This is the time — right now — that you are to receive the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost is received by faith, and faith is always "now" or present tense (Heb. 11:1).

Step Number 4

Tell the candidate what to expect as he receives the Holy Spirit; otherwise, he won't know what is happening when the Holy Spirit begins to move on him.

Tell the candidate that he is to expect the Holy Spirit to move upon his vocal organs and put supernatural words on his lips which he will have to speak out himself in cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

Remember, the person is the one who does the actual speaking, not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives the utterance, but man does the actual speaking.

Some people have taught things that are unscrip-tural for so long that it is hard for them to break the habit of teaching them. For example, I have seen someone about to speak with tongues; the Spirit of God would be moving on his lips and vocal cords. Then I would hear someone say to him, "Let the Holy Ghost talk." But it is not the Holy Ghost who is to do the talking. It is the person receiving the Holy Ghost who is to do the talking.

Now it is all right to tell the person to yield to the Holy Ghost. But notice again Acts 2:4: ". . . they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and [they] began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Notice, they were all filled and they began to speak. In other words, the Holy Spirit gives the utterance; the person who is receiving the Holy Spirit does the speaking.

Many people have thought, If I do the speaking, that would just be me. Well of course, it will be you talking. It sure won't be me! And it sure won't be the person praying with you who will be doing the talking. Anytime you ever speak with tongues, it will surely be you doing the talking. But the Holy Ghost gives you the utterance, and it is a supernatural utterance.

The point is this: the Holy Ghost doesn't take you over, so to speak, and force you to do anything. But you can respond to Him and follow His promptings. He will give you the utterance, but you do the talking. Nowhere in the Bible do we find that the Holy Ghost spoke in tongues. Every scripture reference tells us that the person receiving the Holy Ghost does the talking and speaks the supernatural utterance — tongues — the Holy Spirit gives him.
Let's look at what the Scriptures say about the believer's role in speaking in tongues and the Holy Spirit's role in giving the utterance.

ACTS 2:4
4 [They] began to SPEAK with other tongues, as THE SPIRIT gave them UTTERANCE.

ACTS 10:46

46 For they heard THEM SPEAK with tongues, and magnify God... . ACTS 19:6
6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, THE HOLY GHOST CAME ON THEM; and
THEY SPAKE with tongues, and prophesied.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:2,4,5
2 For HE THAT SPEAKETH in an unknown tongue speak-eth not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit HE SPEAKETH mysteries... .
4 HE THAT SPEAKETH in an unknown tongue edifieth himself. . . .
5 I would that YE ALL SPAKE with tongues....

1 CORINTHIANS 14:14,15,18
14 For if I PRAY in AN UNKNOWN TONGUE, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.
15 What is it then? I WILL PRAY with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding. .. .
18 I thank my God, I SPEAK with tongues more than ye all.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:27,28
27 IF ANY MAN SPEAK in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.
28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church....

Notice that every one of these scriptures shows

that in receiving the Holy Ghost and in praying in tongues and in ministering tongues in public assembly, it is always the person himself that does the actual speaking. But the Holy Spirit gives the supernatural utterance.

When I tell this to people who have been seeking the Holy Ghost for thirty or forty years, they often look at me in amazement and say, "If I had known that, I could have been speaking in tongues for the last thirty years. I had the urge — I had the prompt-ing all the time. In fact at times, it was all I could do to keep from speaking in tongues, but I was waiting for the Holy Ghost to come and take my tongue over."

Some people think that the baptism in the Holy Ghost is as if someone swallowed a small radio. And then when God gets ready, He just turns on "the radio" and it starts playing or speaking automatically. However, the Holy Ghost gives you the utterance, but you do the talking.

When the Spirit of God is moving on your tongue and lips, what you must do is lift your voice and put sound to it. If you will obey those promptings of the Holy Spirit, you will find yourself speaking with tongues. You see, you must cooperate with the Holy Ghost. Speaking with tongues isn't entirely you, and it isn't entirely the Holy Ghost. Speaking with tongues is a cooperation between you and the Holy Ghost.

Step Number 5

It may be necessary to help some folks get over their fears first before they can receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Many seekers have been told by well-meaning people that they might get something that is false or counterfeit when receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. I have heard people say, "You know, there is a wrong spirit as well as a right one. I want to be certain and be sure I get the right thing."

When 1 hear people talk like that, I point out

Luke 11:11-13 to them.

LUKE 11:11-13
11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?
12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?
13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: HOW MUCH MORE SHALL YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER GIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THEM THAT ASK HIM?

Jesus was saying in this passage of Scripture, "If your child asked you as a parent for bread, would you give him a stone? If your child asked you for a fish, would you give him a serpent? If your child asked you for an egg, would you offer him a scorpion?"

No, of course you wouldn't. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13). We can be assured that God will not give His children a counterfeit when they ask Him for the Holy Spirit.

It is a different thing entirely, of course, when a sinner is seeking the Holy Spirit because the sinner cannot receive the Holy Spirit (John 14:17). But if a person who is a child of God is seeking the Holy Spirit, he is not going to receive an evil spirit.

Notice that the words "serpent" and "scorpion" are used here in Luke chapter 11. Turning to Luke 10:19, we read that Jesus said, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. . . ."

Jesus used the terms "serpents" and "scorpions" to talk about evil spirits. So He said in Luke 11 you are not going to get a "serpent" or a "scorpion" when you ask for the Holy Spirit. If you are a child of God and you go to your Heavenly Father to receive the Holy Ghost, then that is what you are going to get — the Holy Ghost.

When I have given these scriptures to those who have been misled by false teaching, I have seen them immediately begin to speak with tongues. They later told me, "If I had known that, I could have been speaking with tongues and could have known the fullness of the Spirit for many years. But I was afraid I might get a wrong spirit." Thank God, we can be relieved of our fears through the Word of God.

Step Number 6

Tell the candidate to open his mouth and be ready to use his own mouth and vocal chords, for the Holy Spirit will give the utterance, but he must yield and give voice to that utterance. At the same time

the believer should tell God in his heart, "I am receiving the Holy Spirit right now by faith."
I like to absolutely insist that people not speak one word in their natural language. And I will give Scripture further in this lesson why a person receiving the Holy Spirit shouldn't speak one word in his natural language.

Then when the Holy Spirit begins to move upon the believer, I tell him to lift his voice and speak out whatever utterance is given to him by the Holy Spirit, regardless of what it sounds like.

I tell the candidate to begin to speak the words and the language the Holy Spirit gives him, continuing to praise God and speak to God with those supernatural words until the language becomes more and more fluent.

When that person can hear himself speak in tongues in a distinct language, he will have assurance and confidence that he has received the Holy Ghost.

JOHN 7:37-39
37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him COME UNTO ME, AND DRINK.
38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, OUT OF HIS BELLY [spirit] SHALL FLOW RIVERS OF LIVING WATER.
39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

The Bible says the Holy Spirit will come to us as the rain. And Jesus said in John chapter 7 that we are to come and drink of the Holy Spirit.

In other words, Jesus said receiving the Holy Ghost is like drinking water. That is, the same principle is involved. The point is no one can drink with their mouth shut. And in the same way, in order to receive the Holy Spirit, a person must put action to his faith and give voice to the unction of the Holy Spirit; he can't do that with his mouth closed. Remember, the Holy Spirit gives the utterance; the person does the actual talking.

Secondly, no one can drink and talk at the same time. I have seen people come to receive the Holy Spirit and open their mouth in faith. I have never seen anyone who opened his mouth in faith to receive the Holy Spirit who didn't receive as quickly as you can snap your finger.
I have seen thousands upon thousands of folks filled with the Holy Ghost — preachers and pastors of every denomination, doctors, lawyers, school teachers, college professors, laborers, farmers, and people from every walk of life.

Once I saw five businessmen come down the aisle in one of my meetings to receive the Holy Spirit. They all opened their mouths in faith that they were going to receive the Holy Spirit, and they were all filled too!

That's scriptural because Jesus said, "Come and drink" (John 7:37). If you will act on God's Word, He will honor His Word, and you can receive the Holy Ghost or whatever it is that He has promised.

Step Number 7

Keep the candidate from being distracted.

For instance, don't permit a crowd to gather around the candidate, giving instructions all at once. This will confuse a person. I like to have only a few workers whom I have specially instructed to help folks receive the Holy Spirit.

Many times folks are a little slow about yielding to the Spirit, but if someone is there to help encourage them to yield to the Holy Spirit, people can more readily receive.

For example, when going swimming, sometimes it is hard to get some folks in the water, but if you will take the lead and get in the water and swim around and say, "The water sure feels good," they will be encouraged to get in the water too.

Similarly, sometimes you can simply speak in tongues yourself after praying with the candidate, and this will encourage the candidate to "follow you into the water," so to speak — into the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

I have been in Full Gospel circles more than fifty years, and I have seen nearly everything happen you can mention when people were seeking the Holy Ghost (and a lot I don't want to mention).

For example, I have seen dear folks at the altar seeking the Holy Spirit while someone on one side of them was yelling in one ear, "Hold on Brother, hold on."

Someone else might be hollering in the other ear, "Turn loose, Brother, turn loose." Someone kneeling right behind them would be patting him on the back hollering, "Let go, Brother, let go." Then someone sitting right in front of them would be shouting something else at the top of his voice.

Many have still received the Holy Spirit this way, not because of this kind of behavior, but in spite of it! However, even though multitudes have received, many honest and sincere believers have been driven away. We will see more folks filled with the Holy Spirit if we will follow scriptural practices.

Therefore, don't allow several people to crowd around candidates who are seeking the Holy Spirit. And don't allow more than one person to give instructions at one time, because that would cause the candidate to become confused. Let one person instruct him how to yield to the Spirit.

If others are standing nearby, have them pray quietly in tongues, not in their own language. If people are praying in their own native language, that person receiving the Holy Spirit can hear what they are saying, and it will distract him. In other words, he might get his mind on the others and what

they're saying. And many times people will not yield to God if they are listening to what people around them are saying.

You will find that by following these seven steps, you will help believers receive the Holy Spirit immediately without tarrying. As you assist believers in receiving the Holy Spirit, you will feel personally blessed and rewarded for your part in their receiving this wonderful gift of the Holy Ghost.

Chapter 11 The Gift of the Word of Knowledge Part1

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.
Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.
Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit

And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.
But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE by the same Spirit;

To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
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.

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

For the body is not one member, but many.

— 1 Corinthians 12:1-14

Don't Be Ignorant of Spiritual Gifts

Paul said by the Holy Spirit to the Church at Corinth, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I WOULD NOT HAVE YOU IGNORANT" (1 Cor. 12:1). If the Spirit of God through Paul said that He didn't want the Church at Corinth to be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts, then I certainly do not believe He wants the Church today to be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts.
However, a gross ignorance does exist concerning these things. In some places people know nothing at

all about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, or even that such gifts exist. They think these gifts have been done away with. In other places people know something about the gifts of the Spirit, but their knowledge is very limited.

Spiritual Gifts Will Exalt Jesus

Paul also said to the Church at Corinth, "Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led" (1 Cor. 12:2). These folks had previously worshipped idols and in this idol worship, motivated by the wrong spirit, they would say a lot of things that were in error.

For instance, Church history tells us that some of these folks would come into the Christian assembly and when the Spirit of God began to manifest Himself, these people would yield to a wrong spirit and say things under the influence of the wrong spirit.

In fact, some of them would even rise up in the services when the gifts of utterance were in operation and they would say that Jesus was accursed. And the Bible says that no one speaking by the Spirit of God would call Jesus accursed.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:3
3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that NO MAN SPEAKING BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD CALLETH JESUS ACCURSED: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

No, Paul said that when the Holy Spirit is in manifestation, He will make Jesus Lord. If an utterance gift, that is, a vocal gift — prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, or the interpretation of tongues — is in manifestation, then, of course, it will be clear by what is said that Jesus is Lord.

If the other gifts are in manifestation, they will always uplift the Lordship of Jesus, not the lordship of some man. They will not attract attention to some man, but rather to Christ.
You can be sure that if someone is operating in what appears to be one of the vocal gifts, and calls Jesus accursed or speaks against Him in any way, then he's not speaking by the Holy Spirit.

Then Paul said in First Corinthians 12:3 that no man can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. In other words, Paul was saying that if someone is speaking by the right spirit — by the Holy Spirit — then what he says will exalt the Name of Jesus.

Once in a meeting while I was praying for folks for healing, I sensed that someone in the prayer line had a wrong spirit. I knew within my own spirit who this person was before she ever stood in front of me to be prayed for.

When she stepped up in front of me for prayer, I asked her, "Are you a Christian?" She replied that she belonged to a particular church.

I said, "Well, you can belong to any church and still not be a Christian. You have to be born again."

"Oh, I am saved and filled with the Holy Ghost," she said. "Do you want to hear me speak in tongues?" Then she started saying something that sounded like tongues.

I said, "Sister, say this prayer after me from your heart." I prayed a prayer to God the Father and she repeated the words after me. Then I said, "I acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as Your Son, and I acknowledge that He is come in the flesh."

But when I said that, she said, "Jesus Christ is not Your Son and He is not come in the flesh." It was immediately apparent that wasn't the right spirit speaking.

Those tongues she was rattling off — some kind of "gibberish" — weren't given by the Spirit of God. I tried two or three times to get her to repeat that prayer after me. Finally, she said, "Something on the inside of me won't let me say what you said."

"I know it," I said. "Do you want to be free from it?"

"I sure do!" she answered. I cast that spirit out of her in the Name of Jesus. Then I had her pray the sinner's prayer and she was born again. She was then filled with the Holy Spirit and went home speaking in tongues.

This woman was saying, "I am saved, I am born again, and I am filled with the Holy Ghost," but she wasn't at all. People can make a lot of statements, but that doesn't necessarily make them true. When the Spirit of God is in manifestation, He will make Jesus Lord. The wrong spirit won't acknowledge that Jesus is Lord and won't say that Jesus is Lord.

Gifts, Administrations, and Operations

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-6
4 Now there are diversities of GIFTS, but the same Spirit.
5 And there are differences of ADMINISTRATIONS, but the same Lord.
6 And there are diversities of OPERATIONS, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

There are two lines of thought on this particular passage of Scripture in First Corinthians chapter 12. One line of thought says that the gifts of the Spirit are administered to different people in different ways. According to this line of thought, that is what First Corinthians 12:6 means by, "And there are diversities of operations. . .."

In other words, there are those who think that diversities of operations in First Corinthians 12:6 means that the gifts of the Spirit will operate in different ways and not always in the same way through various people.

The other line of thought, however, says that diversities of operations is not referring to gifts at all. These people maintain that just as there are different gifts of the Spirit, there are also different administrations of the Spirit, as well as different operations.

In other words, they say that Paul was talking about three different things in First Corinthians 12:4-6, not just gifts. He was talking about gifts, administrations, and operations.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:7
7 But the MANIFESTATION of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

Notice Paul was calling the gifts of the Spirit

manifestations. And he said, ". . . the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (1 Cor. 12:7). Paul was making the distinction here that "gifts" of the Spirit aren't gifts in the sense that the believer owns and operates the gift whenever he wants to. They are gifts of the Holy Ghost, manifested through individual believers as the Spirit of God wills. The gifts of the Spirit aren't just given for the individual, but they are given in order to profit the whole local assembly or local body of believers.

The Nine Gifts Categorized

1 CORINTHIANS 12:8
8 For to one is g i v en by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE by the same Spirit;

Paul goes on to list nine manifestations or gifts of the Spirit. The nine manifestations or gifts of the Holy Spirit are generally divided as follows:

Three revelation gifts

Spiritual gifts that reveal something:

The word of wisdom
The word of knowledge
The discerning of spirits

Three power gifts Spiritual gifts that do something:

The gift of faith
The working of miracles
The gifts of healings

The Gift of the Word of Knowledge

Three utterance or inspirational gifts Spiritual gifts that say something:
Prophecy
Divers kinds of tongues
Interpretation of tongues

Very often these gifts work together, as tongues and interpretation work together. But we divide them as they are divided here in First Corinthians chapter 12 in order to distinguish them and to talk about them.

We can readily see that very often these gifts of the Spirit are in manifestation together. For example, sometimes what we call prophecy is actually a word of wisdom that is being given forth. It is not really the simple gift of prophecy at all because the simple gift of prophecy has no revelation; that is, no foretelling or element of prediction with it. The simple gift of prophecy brings edification, exhortation and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3). (We'll discuss this in greater detail in Chapter 13.)

These gifts are listed in the order of their importance. Of the three gifts of revelation, the word of wisdom is the best gift because it brings supernatural revelation of the plan and purpose of God.

Of the three gifts of power, the gift of faith is the best gift because it is the supernatural ability to work a miracle.

Of the three gifts of utterance, the gift of prophecy is the best gift because it is complete in and of itself and it brings edification, encouragement, and comfort to the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 14:3).

The Bible does say to seek earnestly the best gifts (1 Cor. 12:31).

The word of wisdom is the best gift of all, because as I said, it brings revelation about the divine plan and purpose of God. Although the word of wisdom is mentioned first, we will study the word of knowledge first because after discussing the word of knowledge, I think we can better understand the gift of the word of wisdom.

The Gift of the Word of Knowledge

Notice that this gift is called "the word of knowledge." It is not "the gift of knowledge." There is no such thing as a spiritual gift of knowledge. There is, however, a spiritual gift, called the word of knowledge. The word of knowledge is the supernatural revelation by the Holy Ghost of certain facts in the mind of God.

God is all-knowing. He knows everything. But He doesn't reveal everything He knows to man. He just gives him a word or a part of what He knows. A

word is a fragmentary part of a sentence, so a word of knowledge would simply be a fragmentary part of the entire knowledge or counsel of God. God is all-knowing. He has all knowledge. But He doesn't impart all of His knowledge to us; He imparts a word of knowledge to us — just what He wants us to know at a given time.

The Word of Knowledge Is Not Natural Knowledge

This word of knowledge is a supernatural manifestation as are all of these gifts of the Spirit. None of them are natural gifts; they are all supernatural gifts. Since one of them is supernatural, they all are supernatural. If one of them were natural, then all of them would be natural.

There are those who say that this gift of the Spirit — the word of knowledge — refers to natural knowledge. If that were true, then all the gifts of the Spirit would be natural, not supernatural. If that were true, for example, then the gifts of healings would not be supernatural healing, but simply healing through what people have learned and achieved through medical science. We certainly believe in medical science and thank God for all it can do. But this passage of Scripture is talking about gifts of the Holy Spirit — supernatural knowledge and supernatural healing and so forth.

If these gifts of the Spirit were only natural gifts, divers kinds of tongues would simply refer to speaking different languages that were learned naturally. Then folks who wouldn't even be saved would have that gift.

However, we know that divers kinds of tongues are supernatural. Divers kinds of tongues is the gift of the Spirit enabling one to speak in languages he has never learned, given by the Holy Spirit.

It stands to reason that if some of the nine gifts are supernatural, then all of the nine gifts of the Spirit are supernatural. Therefore, this gift of the word of knowledge is not natural knowledge, but is supernatural knowledge. It is supernatural revelation of certain facts in the mind of God. Confusing this gift with natural knowledge, some have said, "We don't need some of these lesser gifts. We have the gift of knowledge." The knowledge that they were bragging about was intellectual knowledge; knowledge they had gained themselves apart from the Holy Ghost and apart from the Word of God. That is not what this scripture in First Corinthians 12:8 is talking about at all. The word of knowledge is a supernatural gift.

The Word of Knowledge Is Not A Profound Knowledge of the Bible

Also, this gift of the word of knowledge is sometimes confused with a profound knowledge of the Bible. A minister once tried to tell me that he had the word of knowledge because he had studied the Bible so much.

It is certainly true that God will help us understand His Word, but that is not a supernatural gift. The gift of the word of knowledge can work in connection with the Bible, however. For example, God does reveal things in connection with His Word that we didn't know. But if that were all there is to the word of knowledge, we wouldn't have to study because the word of knowledge is supernatural revelation by the Holy Ghost of certain facts in the mind of God. However, Paul told the young minister Timothy to study.

In his letter to Timothy, who was the pastor of a New Testament church, Paul said, "STUDY to shew thyself approved ..." (2 Tim. 2:15). So that kind of knowledge — a profound knowledge of the Bible — comes by studying, but the word of knowledge comes by a supernatural revelation.

The Word of Knowledge Is Not Knowledge of God Through Close Communion With Him

Another mistaken idea about the gift of the word of knowledge is that the word of knowledge is the knowledge that comes by walking closely with God. One does gain a real knowledge of God by walking with Him, but that is different from a supernatural impartation of knowledge of certain facts in the mind of God.

In the Old Testament, we read the story of how God spoke to the boy Samuel (1 Sam. 3:4-10). Samuel was in the temple helping the old prophet Eli.

One night Samuel heard a voice call his name. Thinking it was Eli calling him, he got up from his bed and went to him. Eli told him he hadn't called, so Samuel went back to bed. Just about the time Samuel had gotten settled, he heard a Voice saying, "Samuel, Samuel."

Again he ran to Eli, and again Eli sent him back to bed. When this was repeated for the third time, Eli realized that God must be talking to the boy, and Eli told him to answer the next time the Voice called. When God called to Samuel again, Samuel answered ". . . Speak; for thy servant heareth" (1 Sam. 3:10).

Eli had been walking with God, but he hadn't been as faithful to God in rearing his children as he ought to have been. He knew about the things of God, of course, but he didn't hear God's voice that night — Samuel did. So we see that this kind of knowledge doesn't necessarily come by a longtime experience of walking with God.

As I mentioned previously, there is a knowledge of God that is obtained by walking with Him, just as we walk with a friend or family member and become better acquainted with him or her. As we walk with God, certainly our knowledge of Him increases, but this is still not a spiritual manifestation of the gift of the word of knowledge.

Biblical Examples of the Word of Knowledge

Let's look at some biblical examples of the gift of the word of knowledge in operation in the New Testament.

The Word of Knowledge to John

For instance, on the Isle of Patmos, John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day and Jesus appeared to him in a vision (Rev. 1:10-20). Here we will learn something about how this word of knowledge will come.

As in this particular instance with John the apostle, the word of knowledge might come through a vision. Jesus revealed to John in a vision the condition of the seven churches in Asia Minor, as recorded in the Book of Revelation.

Although there is a prophetic message for us today in this revelation, these seven churches actually existed at that time in Asia Minor. John, exiled to the Isle of Patmos, couldn't possibly have known what was going on in these cities or churches, but Jesus revealed to him their spiritual condition. That was a word of knowledge.

Word of Knowledge to Ananias

Another example of this gift in operation is found in Acts chapter 9. "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision . . ." (Acts 9:10). Here the word of knowledge came to a layman through a vision.

Ananias wasn't an apostle, as was John. He wasn't a pastor or evangelist or teacher. The Bible calls him a disciple. He was just a member of the church at Damascus. If the Lord wills, laymen as well as ministers can have a manifestation of the word of knowledge or any of the gifts of the Spirit.

ACTS 9:11,12
11 ... ARISE, AND GO INTO THE STREET WHICH IS CALLED STRAIGHT, AND ENQUIRE IN THE HOUSE OF JUDAS FOR ONE CALLED SAUL OF TARSUS: FOR, BEHOLD, HE PRAYETH,
12 And hath seen in a vision [Saul also had a like vision] a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

In a vision the Lord told Ananias what to do: ". . . Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth" (v. 11).

Ananias couldn't have known in the natural that in a certain house on a certain street a man named Saul was praying at that minute. Ananias couldn't have known that Saul had had a vision in which he had seen a man called Ananias coming in and putting his hands on him that he might receive his sight. Ananias couldn't have known this any other way than by supernatural revelation. He knew it by the word of knowledge.

Of course, God knew about everyone who was praying everywhere at that time, but He didn't give Ananias knowledge of everyone who was praying; He just gave Ananias knowledge about one man who was praying — Saul of Tarsus. That was a supernatural revelation of a certain fact in the mind of God. It was the word of knowledge which came to Ananias in a vision.
The Word of Knowledge to Peter

Another example is found in Acts chapter 10. Peter was in the town of Joppa.

Acts 10:9-19
9 ... Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour [about noon]:
10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,
11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:
12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.
13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.
14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.
15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.
16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.
17 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,
18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was sur-named Peter, were lodged there.
19 While Peter thought on the vision, THE SPIRIT SAID UNTO HIM, BEHOLD, THREE MEN SEEK THEE.

Peter received a supernatural revelation — a word of knowledge: ". . . Behold, three men seek thee" (Acts 10:19). Peter did not know there were three men who were seeking him (v. 19). He had fallen into a trance and had seen the vision of the sheet descending out of heaven. While Peter was thinking about what that vision meant, the Holy Spirit told him that three men were seeking him. The men were already standing at the gate. Peter hadn't seen these men. He had no way of knowing they were there except by the Spirit of God.

Modern Examples of the Word of Knowledge

This manifestation of the Spirit isn't just for the Early Church, but it is for us today. Many years ago, a Spirit-filled Baptist brother who was the president of his local chapter of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship and one of the executives for the com-pany he worked for, told me of an experience he. had along this line.

He related, "I passed by a large Roman Catholic Church in my automobile and something seemed to say to me to stop. I pulled into the church parking lot, stopped, and sat there praying for a little while. Then that something seemed to tell me that the priest would be praying in his office in the rectory and that I should go in, lay hands on him, and he would be filled with the Holy Ghost.

"I hesitated," the Baptist brother said. "I didn't want to make a fool of myself. I sat there and prayed a little while longer. Then I decided it wouldn't hurt just to go see if I could find him and see if God was really leading me."

Too many times folks get things messed up because they get ahead of God when He speaks to them instead of waiting and following Him softly and letting Him open the door.
The Baptist brother continued, "I finally found my way in and knocked on the door of the study. Someone invited me to come in. I opened the door to see a man sitting in a chair in front of a desk with some books opened in front of him. As I entered, the priest got up and greeted me and we introduced ourselves."

The Baptist brother said, "When the priest heard that I was the president of the local Full Gospel Businessmen's chapter, he immediately said, 'Praise the Lord! I was just reading about what God is doing these days by the moving of His Spirit! I was reading about this baptism of the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues, and the Lord just witnessed to my spirit that this is what I need."

The priest said to the Baptist man, "I am conscious of my own spiritual lack. Only ten minutes ago, I bowed my head on my desk and said, 'Dear Lord, I don't know any Full Gospel people. I don't know anyone in this town who has had this experience. Send somebody by to pray with me.' And here you are!"

That priest got down on his knees and I laid hands on him and he began speaking in tongues almost instantly, lifting both hands to heaven. Then the priest got up and hugged me because he was so grateful.

It was the word of knowledge in manifestation that revealed to this Baptist brother that there was a priest in that particular church who was praying to receive the Holy Spirit.
Word of Knowledge Used To Bless Others

I heard of a similar experience which happened to a group of women who would meet at a church to have a Bible lesson and then would go out and witness to people. They were more or less going in their own strength and were not accomplishing very much. They had been knocking on doors for a couple of weeks and talking to people, but they hadn't won anyone to the Lord.

One morning the pastor's wife suggested that they change their methods. Instead of reading something from the Bible, praying a little, and going out, she suggested they read the Bible and stay there to pray - maybe for an hour, maybe longer — until they definitely felt led to go out. "I believe we will get more done if we are simply led by the Spirit," she told them.
The next morning the women had been praying about an hour when the pastor's wife had a vision in which she saw a certain apartment house and felt impressed to go there. She took one of the women

with her, and when they arrived at the apartment and knocked on the door, someone inside said, "Come in." They pushed open the door and saw a woman lying on a bed in the corner. When the sick woman saw them, she started rejoicing and said, "I recognized you the minute you came in the door. I was praying at six o'clock this morning and in a vision I saw you come in and lay hands on me, and I was healed." The two women then laid hands on the sick woman and prayed for her in the Name of Jesus, and she was healed.

By natural knowledge the pastor's wife couldn't have known that woman was sick and that she was praying for healing; she didn't even know her. But while the pastor's wife was praying in the Spirit, the Holy Ghost gave her a word of knowledge. Now God knew where everyone was who was sick at that time, but He didn't tell the pastor's wife about every one of them; He just sent her to one. He gave her a word of knowledge in the form of a vision.

Sometimes the word of knowledge comes by an inward revelation. The word of knowledge can also come by an audible Voice, by the Spirit of God speaking to you. Also, the gifts of the Spirit often operate together. We just separate them in order to define them.

For example, as I said before, the word of knowledge may come through tongues and interpretation of tongues, or through the gift of prophecy. Or an angel might come to deliver a word of knowledge. A word of knowledge can also be accompanied by a word of wisdom. God has many means of doing things, including manifesting the word of knowledge in various ways. These examples also show us that what God did in Bible times, He is still doing in our modern times. It is amazing what is happening in the earth today. God is visiting hungry hearts everywhere. He is manifesting His power through the supernatural gifts of the Spirit, and one of these gifts is the word of knowledge.

Chapter 12 The Gift of the Word of Knowledge Part 2

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE by the same Spirit;

To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

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.

— 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

The Epistle of First Corinthians is not a letter written to just one person; it is a letter written to the entire Church at Corinth, as well as to the Church — the Body of Christ — in our day. Some folks have thought these verses applied to an individual person, but Paul was telling the entire Church to covet or desire spiritual gifts, because as an entire body of believers covets them, the Holy Spirit will divide the gifts of the Spirit to every man severally as He wills (1 Cor. 12:11).

As the Spirit Wills

Paul infers here that not every man is going to have all these gifts operating through him because he said, "For to ONE [not to everyone] is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to ANOTHER the word of knowledge . . ." (1 Cor. 12:8). Some people have taken this verse out of its setting and have thought the Bible was just telling individual people to desire all of these gifts, when actually Paul was telling the church as a group or body to covet them.
Lacking understanding, many people try to operate a gift of the Spirit themselves — without the unction of the Spirit of God. Perhaps a gift of the Spirit has manifested in their lives on occasion and they think, Now I possess that gift and I can operate it at will.

However, if people try to do that, they will invariably get into trouble, because they will be opening themselves up to satanic deception and to a wrong spirit. The gifts of the Holy Spirit operate as the Holy Spirit wills, not as we will (1 Cor. 12:11).

When you get away from the Word, then Satan can accommodate you, even with supernatural manifestations. Remember, the Holy Spirit operates in line with the Word of God, and the Word says His gifts operate as He wills.

If an entire local body of believers will covet the gifts of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit will divide to every man severally as He wills — not as I will, not as you will, but as the Spirit wills.
The Word of Knowledge Manifested In Different Ways

The gifts of the Spirit aren't just manifested in a public assembly, however. As I mentioned previously, the word of knowledge will sometimes manifest through a vision, through a dream, through a message from an angel, or through the gift of prophecy.

The word of knowledge can also be manifested through interpretation of tongues. However, interpretation of tongues is usually not the vehicle through which the word of knowledge manifests in public assemblies, except perhaps through the ministry gift of diversities of tongues (1 Cor. 12:28).

The reason for that is the ministry gift of diversities of tongues is more closely related to the office of the prophet. The prophet's ministry will more consistently manifest the revelation gifts.

Interpretation of tongues in the local body is usually the equivalent of simple prophecy (for edification, exhortation, and comfort) and contains no revelation in it.

The Word of Knowledge in the Old Testament

There were supernatural manifestations of the word of knowledge in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. In fact, all the gifts of the Spirit were in operation in the Old Testament except tongues and the interpretation of tongues. We will cover the reasons why these two gifts were not included when we study them in a later chapter.

We do find all the other gifts of the Spirit — the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, special faith, gifts of healings, working of miracles, prophecy, and discerning of spirits — manifested in the Old Testament. These gifts of the Spirit were manifested in the New Testament first in the ministry of Jesus. Then after the Day of Pentecost, the gifts of the Spirit, with tongues and interpretation of tongues as well, began to be manifested through Spirit-filled believers.

Let's look at the gift of the word of knowledge and how it was manifested in the Old Testament.
The Word of Knowledge To Samuel Regarding Saul's Donkeys

We find in the Old Testament how the gift of the word of knowledge was used to help recover lost property.

When Saul was out looking for his father's donkeys that had either strayed or were stolen, someone said to him, "Why don't you go ask Samuel? He would know where they are."

1 SAMUEL 9:3,5,6,15,16,19,20
3 And the asses of Kish Saul's father were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses. ...
5 And when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant that was with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave caring for the asses, and take thought for us.
6 And he said unto him, Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honourable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; perad-venture he can shew us our way that we should go... .
15 Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying,
16 To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be cap-tain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.. ..
19 And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me today, and tomorrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart.
20 AND AS FOR THINE ASSES THAT WERE LOST THREE DAYS AGO, SET NOT THY MIND ON THEM; FOR THEY ARE FOUND. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house?

Of course, Samuel only knew what God revealed to him, because if Samuel knew everything, that would make him omniscient or all-knowing. Samuel had a word of knowledge for Saul. He

said to Saul, ". . . The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?"(1 Sam. 10:2).

The Word of Knowledge To Samuel Regarding Saul

The word of knowledge also operated in the Old Testament to discover a man in hiding. Although Samuel had already anointed Saul to be king over Israel, when it came time to reveal him

as the king, Saul hid ". . . among the stuff. . ." (1 Sam. 10:22). When the people couldn't find him, they inquired of the Lord instead of sending everyone to look for him. (Many times that is the quickest way to find an answer.)

The people knew that the Lord knew where Saul was. And the Lord told them exactly where Saul was. When they looked where God told them to look, they found Saul. That was the word of knowledge in operation. Remember, the word of knowledge reveals certain facts in the mind of God.

The Word of Knowledge Manifested To Locate a Lost Daughter

Before we discuss other Old Testament examples of the word of knowledge in operation, let me give you a modern-day example of how God uses the word of knowledge to locate someone who is lost. That is scriptural, as we have seen in the examples of Samuel locating both Saul's donkeys and Saul himself when Saul was hiding.

I was teaching on the subject of the gifts of the Spirit in a church in 1943, when a couple asked me if the Lord could show them how to find their lost daughter.

This daughter had been involved with a gang when she was sixteen years old, and when she disappeared, the police thought the gang had killed her. Twenty-two years had gone by and in the meantime her mother and daddy, brothers, and sisters had all gotten saved and filled with the Holy Ghost.

The family, with the exception of her mother, had all given the girl up for dead. The mother kept saying that something on the inside of her told her the girl was still alive.
After I taught on the gift of the word of knowledge, the couple asked me, "Doesn't God know where our daughter is or whether or not she is alive? Would it be all right for us to pray about it?"

I said, "Surely," and while they were praying about it one day in the church, one of the women present had a vision. She saw a woman, now thirty-eight years of age, in a garage apartment with two children, a boy and a girl. She saw the woman chained and held captive in that apartment. Then in the vision she saw a letter come and she saw the girl's father going to the post office to get the letter. Later, the woman told the couple about her vision and said that within thirty days they would receive a letter saying their daughter was alive.

At the end of thirty days, the father went to the post office and got a letter from his daughter who had been missing and presumed dead for twenty-two years. She was in Houston, Texas. The letter began, "Dear Mom and Dad, I don't know whether you are alive or not, but if you are

and answer this, I will come and see you. I am alive and well, and will explain everything to you when I see you."

The daughter was reunited with her parents and her entire family. One Sunday morning soon after that, the daughter came to our service, together with her two children and her parents. That morning she and her son were saved, and her daughter was saved later.

The woman had told her parents, "Twenty-two years have come and gone since I was taken away. The law was cracking down on the gang I was in and because I was just sixteen, the gang was afraid I would squeal on them."

This woman continued, "One of the boys knew this so he took me and ran away with me. We eventually got married, but I knew enough about him to send him to the electric chair, so he just kept me prisoner for a number of years. He would chain me before going to work every morning. I could get around the apartment, but I couldn't get out."

For twenty-two years these parents didn't know that God could really tell them about their daughter who was missing. They hadn't even thought to pray about it. But after hearing teaching along this line, they, along with others, were inspired to pray about it, and as they prayed God gave them a word of knowledge revealing that the woman was alive. God also gave them a word of wisdom (which we will discuss in the next chapter) indicating that they would hear from her in a short time.

The Word of Knowledge to Elijah

Then we see that the word of knowledge was manifested to enlighten and to encourage a discouraged servant.

Elijah had a great time up on the mountaintop when he prayed the fire down from heaven (1 Kings 18:37,38). But when someone told him, "Queen Jezebel said that about this time tomorrow she is going to take your head off your shoulders" (1 Kings 19:2), Elijah became worried and fearful.

He climbed under a Juniper tree and begged God to let him die. Later he said to God, "... I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the

sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kings 19:14). In other words, Elijah was saying, "Everyone is backslidden but me. Everyone has bowed their knee to Baal, and I am the only one left."

But God gave Elijah a word of knowledge that encouraged and enlightened him.

God said, "No, you aren't the only one left. I have seven thousand people reserved to Myself' (1 Kings 19:18).

Elijah couldn't have known that any other way. I am sure it encouraged him to know that he wasn't the only one left; that God had seven thousand who hadn't bowed their knees to Baal. The Word of Knowledge To Elijah Regarding Gehazi

The word of knowledge was also used in the Old Testament to expose a hypocrite.

When Naaman was healed of leprosy and wanted to give the prophet Elisha changes of raiment and silver and gold, Elisha refused it. But his servant Gehazi ran after Naaman and lied to him.

2 Kings 5:21-24
21 So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well?
22 And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments.
23 And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him.
24 And when he came to the tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed.

Naaman was so thrilled to be healed that he gave him twice the amount of money Gehazi asked for, and Gehazi hid it because he was a thief as well as a hypocrite and a liar.
When Elisha asked Gehazi where he had been, he said, ". . . Thy servant went no whither" (2 Kings 5:25).

Elisha said, ". . . Went not mine heart [or spirit] with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? . . ." (2 Kings 5:26).

How could Elisha be sitting in his own house and yet know what was going on several miles away? God revealed it to him through a word of knowledge. God gave Elisha a supernatural revelation of what had happened, and it exposed Gehazi, a hypocrite.

The Word of Knowledge To Elisha Regarding Syria

Also in the Old Testament, a word of knowledge was given to warn a king of the enemy's plan of destruction.

2 KINGS 6:8-12
8 Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.
9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.
10 And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.
11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?
12 And one of his servants said, None, my lord, 0 king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

Every time an enemy would set up an ambush-ment against Israel, the prophet of God would tell Israel their plans. Finally this king got his servants together and said, "We must have a traitor among us who is giving us away" (2 Kings 6:11).

The servants replied, "No, it is not us. A prophet of God in Israel tells the king of Israel what you speak in your bedchamber." That was a supernatural revelation that God gave the prophet Elisha to warn him of the enemy's plan to harm Israel.

The prophet couldn't have known what the king had said in his bedchamber and what he was plotting because he wasn't there. No, the plans were revealed to him supernaturally by the word of knowledge, and it saved Israel from danger.

The Word of Knowledge in the New Testament

Now let's look at some other examples of the word of knowledge in operation in the New Testament. First of all, we see an example of the word of knowledge operating in Jesus' ministry when He ministered to the Samaritan woman in John chapter 4.

The Word of Knowledge to Jesus Regarding the Woman at the Well

In dealing with the woman at the well in Samaria recorded in John chapter 4, Jesus operated in the word of knowledge to convince a sinner of the need of a Savior.

JOHN 4:7,9,10,13-19,25,26
7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water:

Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. ...

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.
10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. . ..
13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:
14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.
15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.
16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.
17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:
18 FOR THOU HAST HAD FIVE HUSBANDS; AND HE WHOM THOU NOW HAST IS NOT THY HUSBAND: in that saidst thou truly.
19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.. . .
25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

Jesus asked this woman for water. She asked Jesus who He was and He replied, ". . . If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (John 4:10).

Jesus said, ". . . the water that I shall give . . . shall be . . . a well of water springing up into ever-lasting life" (John 4:14). This Samaritan woman wanted that water. "Give me this water, so I won't have to come here and draw," she said, thinking about the water in the well.
Then Jesus told her to go get her husband. When she said she didn't have a husband, He said, in effect, "You are right about that. You have had five husbands, and the man you are living with right now isn't your husband" (John 4:17,18). Jesus knew that by an inward revelation — a word of knowledge — and used this gift to bring this woman to salvation.
The Word of Knowledge To Peter Regarding Ananias and Sapphira

In the New Testament, the word of knowledge was also used to reveal corruption in the local church.

In Acts chapter 5, we read that Ananias and Sap-phira had lied to the church and to the Holy Ghost.

ACTS 5:1-4
1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.
2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.
3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, AND TO KEEP BACK PART OF THE PRICE OF THE LAND?
4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

It would have been all right if Ananias and Sapphira had sold their property and given only half of the money to the church, but they lied about it. They kept back part of the money for themselves and said they were giving the entire profit from the sale of the land to the church. As Ananias laid the money at the apostles' feet, Peter must have asked Ananias something such as, "Is this the price of the land?" When Ananias said that it was, Peter asked, ". . . why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost..." (Acts 5:3).

The entire transaction was revealed to Peter through a word of knowledge. Ananias' wife Sapphira came in and the same thing happened. And both of them fell dead the same day.
My Experiences With the Word of Knowledge

I have had many experiences in my own ministry in which the Lord used me in the word of knowledge. A couple of weeks after I was baptized in the Holy Ghost, the gift of the word of knowledge began to operate through me.

The first manifestation occurred when I was dismissing a service one night. I closed my eyes to offer the benediction. As I did, a quick vision appeared before me.

I saw a person in that congregation who I knew by the Holy Spirit was a new convert. In the vision, I saw the people she had been with the night before and what she had done. She was less than a month old in the Lord and had been forced by two other people to do something that was wrong.

I knew by revelation — by the word of knowledge — that this woman felt that God didn't love her anymore because she had sinned. She had

decided that once she left this service, she would never go to church again because she had failed.

This was a spiritual vision that came to me in a second of time. I spoke to the congregation in such a way that no one else would know what had happened, but that this woman would know that God loved her and was dealing with her.

Before I finished speaking, this woman ran to the altar crying. I knew she was saved, but she hadn't been filled with the Spirit. By the time her knees hit the floor, she received the Holy Ghost. She found out how much the Lord did love her!

Another instance in which the Holy Spirit spoke to me by the word of knowledge concerning a new convert, occurred in the last church I pastored. While I was shaving one morning, the Holy Spirit said to me, "I want you to go pray for So-and-so. He has sinned."

This new convert was a forty-three-year-old man, but he had just gotten saved two weeks before. He had lost his temper on the job and the Holy Spirit showed me that he had sinned and that now he was home in bed. He had gotten sick as a result of losing his temper. The Lord wanted me to go restore him.

Here was a man in need, and the Spirit of God knew all about it. No doubt there were other people in my congregation who were in need, but God didn't send me to minister to all of them. He sent me to minister to this man, and we did get him restored.

While I was ministering in a church in Lubbock, Texas, years ago, the Spirit of God moved upon me just as I finished my message. I suddenly found myself saying to quite a large fellow whom I had never seen before, "You — standing in the back next to the aisle. Step out into the aisle."

This man was quite tall and wore cowboy boots which made him even taller. He was as far back in the church as he could get. Without question or hesitation, he stepped into the aisle. I heard myself say to him, "Before you came to church tonight you said to your wife. . . ," and I began to tell him exactly what he had said to her. He had not wanted to come to church. Before I finished speaking, he began to cry and sob. God revealed the secrets of his heart through the word of knowledge.

This man ran down the aisle and slid into the altar. He had never been saved in his life. His wife was saved, but he fought her about salvation and the things of God. However, as the secrets of his heart were manifested, he repented and was born again.

I would not have known what he had said to his wife just before they came to church any other way than by the Spirit of God. God used that supernatural manifestation of the Spirit to bring this man to Him.

I remember when we were pastoring our last church, my wife and I took our fifteen-year-old niece into our home to help her. My sister's home had been broken by divorce and she had to go to work to make a living. Her five children were left alone too much of the time, and as a result, this fifteen-year-old girl got into bad company. I had to get permission from the judge to get custody of her because she had gotten involved with a gang and was about to get into trouble with the law.

My niece wasn't a Christian, and she was stubborn and hardheaded. For example, when we would pray and read the Bible every morning with our children before they went to school, she would just stand by the door and watch.

I didn't try to force her to do anything; I just let her stand there if she wanted to. After a while she would sit down when we prayed, and later she even began to get on her knees and join with us as we prayed.

We laid down certain rules for her to follow. For example, she could date only on weekends, and she was always to tell us where she was going. I told her, "I am going to put confidence in you. But the minute you betray my confidence, these privileges are over."

She was taking a home economics class in school and once as an assignment, her class was to prepare a meal for the entire school board. One Tuesday evening she said, "We are supposed to meet at a friend's house tonight to discuss what we are going to do and how we are going to decorate the hall." I knew in my spirit that part of what she was saying was true and part of it wasn't true.

I said, "All right, but you must be home this evening at 10:00. Also, don't drive up in front of the parsonage with some boy and sit there with him in the car. The living room is open and you can come inside and sit with him, but don't sit outside in the car."

Ten o'clock came that night and she wasn't home. I went to bed and was lying there meditating with my eyes closed, when suddenly I had a vision. I saw my niece over at her girlfriend's house. I saw her dancing with other teenagers; in fact, she was teaching them some new dance steps. Then at about 11:00 in the evening, my niece and a boy drove up in a car and stopped the car in front of the house. My niece sat out in the car until 11:30 that night before she finally came in.

I didn't say anything to her that night. Neither did I mention it the next morning at the breakfast table. I didn't say a word about it until Friday when

she said, "I'm going to run down to the drugstore with a young man to get something to drink." "No," I said, "you aren't going anywhere. You are grounded for thirty days. You are not to go anywhere except to school and church."

"Well, I would like to know why," she retorted.

I said, "I told you if you didn't betray my confidence, I would put more trust in you. However, you did betray my confidence. I told you to be home at 10:00 last Tuesday night and you didn't come in until 11:30."

"Well, we were late getting our plans made," she said.

I said, "You sat out in front of the parsonage for thirty minutes. Besides that, you were over there teaching those young folks new dance steps."

"Who told on me?" she asked.

"The Holy Ghost told me. I was lying in bed with my eyes closed when suddenly in a vision, I was over at your girlfriend's house. I will tell you exactly how the furniture was arranged." As I told her how it was arranged, her eyes got big and she began to stammer and stutter. I said, "The Lord didn't lie on you, did He?"

"No," she said, "He didn't lie. But they didn't know some of these new steps and I just thought I would show them."

I said, "But you have betrayed my confidence, so for thirty days you won't go anywhere except to school and to church." Before the thirty days were ended, she was saved and baptized with the Holy Ghost, and she hasn't been in trouble since then.

The Word of Knowledge As an Aid to Prayer

One of the greatest areas where the word of knowledge can be used is as a mighty aid in effectual prayer, either for God's servants in distress or for those in need of spiritual help. I once read of a minister and his wife who took a teenage boy into their home after their own daughter was grown and had become a missionary. They wanted to help this boy because he had no parents. They got custody of the boy through the judge because he had been in some trouble and had become a ward of the court.

The boy got saved and was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he did all right in his Christian walk for a while. After he finished high school, however, he had a tendency to fall back into some of his old ways, and this caused great grief and concern to the minister and his wife.

One day the boy went to look for a job. The pastor's wife was at home washing dishes when suddenly she felt compelled to pray. She didn't know what it was all about, but she stopped right in the middle of her work and began to pray fervently.

While praying in the Spirit, this mother had a vision and saw the young man downtown and he was about to go into a pool hall. In those days pool halls were dark dives. She was concerned and prayed earnestly for him.

Then in the vision, she saw him as he got about three feet inside the door. Suddenly he stood up straight, turned around, walked back out the door, and continued walking down the street. Then the vision ended. She began to sing and rejoice in the Spirit because she knew she had won a victory. Then she got up from praying and went back to finish her dishes.

That afternoon the boy came in, kissed her on the cheek, and said, "Well, Mom, I won a great victory today, and besides that I got a job."

She said to him, "I'll tell you what victory it is that you won today." And she told him how he had started to go in the pool hall and how he stepped three feet inside, then turned around and went back out.

He said, "That is exactly what happened!" That was a supernatural revelation of the word of knowledge and it was a mighty aid in prayer. This mother wouldn't have known those details except by the Spirit of God.

We all need the gifts of the Spirit in operation in every area of our lives. Parents of teenagers especially need the Holy Spirit's guidance and the operation of the gifts of the Spirit in these troubled times.

The word of knowledge can also be used to reveal sickness and the presence of an evil spirit. For instance, in my own ministry I would sometimes know by a word of knowledge that an evil spirit was oppressing the body of someone who was sick. (Of course, if the person I was ministering to was a believer, the evil spirit would not be in the person's spirit; it would only be in his body.) I would speak to the spirit and command it to leave in Jesus' Name and the person would be healed.

A Mentally Ill Person Set Free By the Word of Knowledge

Many times an evil spirit is involved in cases of mental illness, although this is not always true. A person can be sick mentally just as he can be sick physically.

Now every time a person has a stomachache, for

example, that doesn't mean an evil spirit is oppressing him or that a demon is present in his body. There could be any number of natural reasons why a particular physical ailment exists. But on the other hand, an evil spirit could also be present and could be enforcing the sickness or disease. The same is true with mental illness.

The first experience I ever had along this line occurred while my wife and I were pastoring a church in Texas. A woman brought her sister home on a furlough from a mental asylum. The doctor had told the woman that her sister would never be right in her mind and that she would always need institutional care.

This mentally ill woman had been violently insane. She had tried to kill herself and others, and for more than two years she had been locked away in a padded cell. As a result of having no exposure to sunshine and very little exercise, her general health had deteriorated.
The doctors said they didn't believe she would ever be violent again but that she would always need institutional care. They allowed her sister to take her home on a two-week furlough so she could walk in the sunshine and get some exercise.

However, if the sunshine, exercise, and change of environment didn't improve her health, the doctors said she wouldn't live much longer. She had wasted away to almost nothing.

Her sister brought her over to the parsonage, and as we were praying, the Spirit of God told me to go and stand in front of her and say, "Come out, thou unclean spirit in the Name of Jesus."

I hadn't done anything like that before in my life. For several years I had been acquainted with this area of the supernatural in praying for folks for healing. But operating in the gifts of the Spirit in this area was new to me, and I was reluctant. I wanted to be sure the Lord was talking to me, and yet I sensed He was.

After some persuasion I stood in front of the woman and said, "Come out, thou unclean spirit in the Name of Jesus." You see, it was revealed to me that her trouble was caused by an unclean spirit.

This revelation came by a word of knowledge, not the discerning of spirits, because I didn't see any spirit (we'll discuss the gift of discerning of spirits in Chapter 14).

But the Holy Spirit did give me knowledge of the presence of an evil spirit causing the insanity. No matter how the presence of an evil spirit is revealed in another person, it still takes faith to deal with it, and many times the gift of faith will be in operation.

For instance, when I said, "Come out, thou unclean spirit in the Name of Jesus," there was no visible manifestation. As far as I could see, there was no change in the way the woman looked or behaved. Her eyes didn't look any different; she was just as she had been. Yet I knew that the command of faith was spoken and that the woman was delivered.

Forty-eight hours later this woman's sister called, saying, "Brother Hagin, pray! My sister is having a terrible attack like she did when she first lost her mind."

That news didn't bother me a bit because on the inside of me there was a supernatural faith or knowing that sustained me which was beyond me from a natural standpoint. It was more than ordinary faith — it was the gift of faith in operation. We'll discuss the gift of faith in chapter 15. Casually, I said to her, "Don't worry. I spoke the word of faith and it has to be. The devil knows he has to go. Have you ever read in the Bible where Jesus told an evil spirit to leave a person, and sometimes before the evil spirit would leave, he would

throw the person down and tear him [Mark 1:261? The devil knows he has to go. When that attack is over, that evil spirit will be gone and your sister will never have another attack. She will be all right."

Sure enough, when that attack was over, that woman's mind was clear. They had to take her back to the institution because she was still a ward of the asylum, but the psychiatrist examined her and dismissed her. He pronounced her well. That was many years ago, and we had contact with her after that and she was still well.

This was a manifestation of the word of knowledge and the gift of faith operating together to set this woman free.

Remember, the revelation that the word of knowledge brings is never future tense — it's present or past tense. The word of wisdom, on the other hand, reveals plans and purposes concerning the future.

By the manifestation of the gift of the word of knowledge, the Church can be purified, the distressed comforted, the saints gladdened, lost property recovered, the enemy's plans defeated, and the Lord Jesus Christ glorified.

Chapter 13 The Gift of the Word of Wisdom

But the manifestation of the Spirit is givenn to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit THE WORD OF WISDOM; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
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.
— 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

In studying the nine gifts of the Spirit, we can see from the Scriptures that all of these gifts work according to "... that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (1 Cor. 12:11).

The Holy Spirit Distributes Spiritual Gifts as He Wills

Let me emphasize again that as a church — a local body of believers — we are to desire that these gifts be made manifest among us, and we are to leave it up to the Holy Spirit to use whomever He wills. He will not use everyone the same way.

The Bible plainly states that the Holy Spirit divides the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit to every man severally as He wills. Someone may want to be used in a certain gift; however, this may not be what God wills for him. We must stay open to God and let His will be done, even in the area of spiritual gifts. We get into trouble many times by wanting to do something ourselves and to have what we want instead of what God wants.

For example, not everyone will have all of these manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit in his life for the simple reason that the Bible says, "For to ONE is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to ANOTHER the word of knowledge by the same Spirit"(1 Cor. 12:8). It is quite obvious, then, that all the gifts aren't given to everyone.

As the Body of Christ, let us desire these manifestations and then let the Holy Spirit manifest Himself in our midst as He wills. That way we will be scripturally based. Some of our wrong thinking keeps us from the best that God has for us, so let's stay with the Word.
The Gift of the Word of Wisdom

Regarding t he scripture, ". . . to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:8), people sometimes call these the gift of wisdom or the gift of knowledge. That is not correct, however. We must call spiritual gifts what the Bible calls them or we will become confused.

For example, if you called a dog a cat, people would say you were confused. The gift of the word of knowledge is not the gift of knowledge, and the gift of the word of wisdom is not the gift of wisdom any more than a dog is a cat.

First Corinthians 12:8 is not talking about natural wisdom and knowledge in the general sense. It is talking about just what it says — the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge. And these gifts of the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge are given supernaturally. They are not natural gifts.

God has all knowledge. He knows everything, but He never reveals to anyone everything He knows. He just gives various people a word, a part, or a fragment of what He knows. A word of knowledge, for example, is just a fragmentary part of God's knowledge.

And so it is with the gift of the word of wisdom; it is not the gift of wisdom, it is the word of wisdom. God has all wisdom and all knowledge. But He only reveals a part of it to man — that which He wants him to know at a given time.

The Word of Wisdom Is Not Wisdom in the Affairs of Life

The word of wisdom is confused many times with simple wisdom in the affairs of life, but simple wisdom in the affairs of life is not a spiritual gift. In the beginning of Joshua's ministry, God told him that the key to his success would lie in meditating on the Word of God, and that is how Joshua was to obtain wisdom in the affairs of life.

JOSHUA 1:8
8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Another translation says, "Thou shalt make thyself prosperous and thou shalt be able to deal wisely in the affairs of life." There is a wisdom that is gained through the knowledge of God's Word, but that is not the supernatural manifestation of the gift of the word of wisdom.

Some people think that Solomon's wisdom was a manifestation of this word of wisdom, but it wasn't. Solomon's wisdom was given to him by God, just as we read in James 1:5: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

God has promised that this wisdom, which I simply call general wisdom to deal in the affairs of life, is available to everyone who will ask for it. God will impart wisdom, but that is not a supernatural manifestation of the word of wisdom.

In writing to the Church, James said that if any lack wisdom, let him ask God for it (James 1:5). So we see that this general wisdom to deal wisely in the affairs oflife will be given to anyone who asks for it.

The wisdom that James is talking about is the wisdom to deal wisely in the affairs of life and the wisdom to know how to conduct yourself as a Christian.

However, when God sees fit to reveal His own mind and purpose and plan to man in a supernatural way, He does so by this supernatural manifestation of the word of wisdom.
The supernatural manifestation of the gift of the word of wisdom is not given to everyone. Paul said in First Corinthians 12:8, "To one is given the word of wisdom." This verse says the manifestation of the word of wisdom is given to one; not to all, stating that spiritual gifts are divided severally as the Spirit wills. This infers that not everyone is going to have these manifestations.

The Word of Knowledge vs. The Word of Wisdom

I said that the word of knowledge is a supernatural revelation by the Spirit of God concerning certain facts in the mind of God — facts about people, places, or things in the past or present. The word of wisdom is a supernatural revelation by the Spirit of God concerning the divine purpose and plan in the mind and will of God. The word of wisdom is the best gift because it is a revelation concerning the plans and the purposes in the mind of God.

The difference between the two gifts — the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom — is that the revelation the word of knowledge brings is always present tense or concerning something that has happened in the past. On the other hand, the word of wisdom always speaks of the future.

The Word of Knowledge and the Word of Wisdom Can Operate Together

We divide the two gifts of the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom and deal with them singularly. However, as I mentioned, very often spiritual gifts operate together.
We see these two gifts of the Holy Spirit —¦ the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom — in operation throughout the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament.

In particular, we can see how the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge flowed together as the prophets prophesied. The Old Testament prophets often operated in these gifts along with the gift of prophecy.

The Old Testament prophets not only prophesied about the present, which is the word of knowledge in operation, but they also prophesied about things in the future, which is the word of wisdom in operation. And their prophecies foretold of events in the near future as well as events in the distant future, including the New Covenant and the coming Messiah.
Prophecy Can Be a Vehicle Through Which Other Gifts Can Flow

The prophet of the Old Testament had to have

the word of wisdom in manifestation in his ministry to be able to stand in the office of the prophet because he made predictions concerning the future, and the simple gift of prophecy does not include with it the element of predicting or foreseeing into the future. The prediction the Old Testament prophet gave, even though it came by prophecy, was actually a word of wisdom in operation.

For example, you may ride in an automobile, but that doesn't make you an automobile. In other words, sometimes a word of wisdom is conveyed through the vehicle of prophecy, but it really isn't prophecy in and of itself. It is a word of wisdom. In other words, prophecy can just be the vehicle through which the word of wisdom comes.

The simple gift of prophecy as listed in First Corinthians 14:3 is given for ". . . edification, and exhortation, and comfort." There is no element of prediction or foretelling in the simple gift of prophecy whatsoever. Therefore, you can tell when an utterance is no longer just the simple gift of prophecy in operation because it will include some revelation in it.

When these elements of prediction and foretelling are in operation in one who is in the ministry (particularly in the office of the prophet), although the pre-

diction may come by prophecy, it is really a word of wisdom in manifestation. This is particularly true if the prediction comes through a minister who stands in the office of the prophet. Prophecy, then, is just the vehicle through which the word of wisdom comes.
A word of wisdom may be manifested through the vehicle of prophecy in any Spirit-filled believer's life in his own private prayer life, as the Spirit wills, as the believer prays out the plan of God for his own life (John 16:13,14). We will discuss this in greater detail in Chapter 18. However, that is not to say that the word of wisdom will be manifested in the believer's life in public ministry through prophecy.

In public ministry, the word of wisdom or any of the revelation gifts coming through the vehicle of prophecy, especially on more of a continual basis, will normally come through the office of the prophet. Revelation gifts can also come through those who are called to the fivefold ministry, but will more frequently manifest in the office of the prophet.

If a person is just used in the simple gift of prophecy but does not have these revelation gifts in operation, then his prophesying is the simple gift of prophecy in demonstration. And it is used to bring edification, exhortation, and comfort — not revelation.

Therefore, the word of wisdom can come through the vocal gift of an utterance — through prophecy or through tongues and interpretation. The word of wisdom can also come through a vision or by a dream. For instance, in the Old Testament, Joseph received a word of wisdom through a dream which revealed to him God's plans and purposes for Joseph's future.
Moses received the revelation of the Law by an audible Voice as God gave him the Law. The Law concerned God's purpose for Israel; therefore, this was the word of wisdom in demonstration.

Also, the prophets of the Old Testament who prophesied concerning Israel's future — even things that are yet to be fulfilled — did so by the word of wisdom. The Old Testament prophets prophesied it, but it was a word of wisdom that was actually manifested because it foretold future events.

The Word of Knowledge and the Word of Wisdom Operating Together in The New Testament

John on the Isle of Patmos

An example in the New Testament of the gifts of the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom operating together is found in the Book of Revelation.

As we pointed out in the previous lesson, when the Lord spoke to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos, it was in the form of a vision. Jesus appeared to him in this vision and told him about the present condition of the seven churches in Asia Minor. The condition of those seven churches was a manifestation of the word of knowledge.

The present condition of these churches was revealed to John through a word of knowledge in a vision. Then the Lord went on to give John a word of wisdom. The Lord told each one of the churches what to do in the future, according to His plans and purposes for them.
Ananias

We also studied about a man named Ananias, as recorded in Acts chapter 9.

ACTS 9:10-16
10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.
11 And the Lord said unto him, ARISE, AND GO INTO THE STREET WHICH IS CALLED STRAIGHT, and ENQUIRE IN THE HOUSE OF JUDAS FOR ONE CALLED SAUL OF TARSUS: for, behold, HE PRAYETH,
12 AND HATH SEEN IN A VISION A MAN NAMED ANANIAS COMING IN, AND PUTTING HIS HAND ON HIM, THAT HE MIGHT RECEIVE HIS SIGHT.
13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:
14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.
15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: FOR HE IS A CHOSEN VESSEL UNTO ME, TO BEAR MY NAME BEFORE THE GENTILES, AND KINGS, AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL:
16 FOR I WILL SHEW HIM HOW GREAT THINGS HE MUST SUFFER FOR MY NAME'S SAKE.

Here we see the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge working together. The word of wisdom revealed to Ananias the plan and purpose of God, and the word of knowledge revealed specific facts to Ananias. It was God's plan for Ananias to go inquire for Saul. But the word of knowledge revealed exact facts as to where to go, even to the name of the street to go to, the very house to go to, and the person in the house to whom he was to speak (v. 11). The Lord even told Ananias that Saul was praying: ". . . for, behold, he [Saul] prayeth . . ." (v. 11). This was all knowledge of present-tense facts.

It was also revealed to Ananias that Saul ". . . hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight" (Acts 9:12). That was a revelation, given by a vision, to Ananias concerning facts about Saul; therefore, it was a word of knowledge.

Then Ananias said to Jesus in this vision, ". . . Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name" (Acts 9:13,14).

In response to that, the Lord spoke to Ananias again in the vision and gave him further revelation. This second revelation was a word of wisdom because it revealed God's plan and purpose: "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: FOR HE IS A CHOSEN VESSEL UNTO ME, TO BEAR MY NAME BEFORE THE GENTILES, AND KINGS, AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL" (Acts 9:15).

That was a revelation concerning the plan and the purpose of God. It was a revelation of what Paul was eventually going to do for the Lord. It was a word of wisdom because it looked toward the future and revealed the plans and the purposes of God.

You see, God planned to use Paul in the future "to bear His Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15). God said, ". . . he is a chosen vessel unto me . . ." (Acts 9:15), That is a revelation of the future. It revealed God's plan and purpose for Paul in the future. We call that a word of wisdom.

In giving Ananias further revelation, God also said, "For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16). Now that didn't mean Paul was going to be sick, but that he would suffer much persecution and hardship in his circumstances and surroundings. And he did (2 Cor. 11:23-33). That also was a word of wisdom.

Paul was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19). Almost everywhere he went, there were people who became stirred up by Satan to oppose him. So we see that Paul did suffer many things for God. This aspect of Paul's future was a revelation given to Ananias, and it was a manifestation of this supernatural gift called the word of wisdom.

Philip

In Acts chapter 8 we see an example of the gifts of the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom operating together through a layman, Philip. At this time, Philip was still a deacon; he had been

appointed to serve tables (Acts 6:2,3). God later moved him into the office of the evangelist (Acts 21:8).

A great persecution arose against the Early Church, and the Christians were scattered abroad. And as they were scattered, they went everywhere preaching the gospel. The preaching of the gospel wasn't limited to just the preachers of the day, however. The laity of the Early Church — believers — were also scattered abroad and preached the gospel.

The apostles were the only ministers the Early Church had at that time, and they remained in Jerusalem. But everywhere these laymen went, they told about Jesus: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them" (Acts 8:5).

After Philip's ministry to the Samaritans recorded in Acts 8:26, the Bible tells us an angel appeared to Philip to give him a message from the Lord.

Remember, we discussed how the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom can be

manifested through various means, such as: the audible Voice of the Holy Spirit, a dream, a vision, a message from an angel, tongues and interpretation, or prophecy. God has various vehicles through which He manifests the gifts of the Spirit.

In Philip's case in Acts 8:26-29, the word of wisdom came through a message by an angel.

ACTS 8:26-29
26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, ARISE, AND GO TOWARD THE SOUTH UNTO THE WAY THAT GOETH DOWN FROM JERUSALEM UNTO GAZA, WHICH IS DESERT.
27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,
28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.
29 THEN THE SPIRIT SAID UNTO PHILIP, GO NEAR, AND JOIN THYSELF TO THIS CHARIOT.

The angel gave instructions regarding God's plan for Philip's immediate future. The angel said, "Go down to the desert" (v. 26). This was just a fragment or a "word" of the plan of God for Philip's life — a word of wisdom about something that was to transpire in the near future. Philip obeyed and went to the desert, where he saw an Ethiopian eunuch. Then a word of knowledge was given to Philip by the Voice of the Holy Spirit: ". . . Go near, and join thyself to this chariot" (v. 29).

God was giving Philip a present-tense fact — in this case, a present-tense instruction, to join the eunuch's chariot. This instruction was only a fragment or a "word" of knowledge from the mind of God to Philip at that time.

In this passage Philip was given both a word of wisdom through a message from an angel and a word of knowledge by the Voice of the Holy Spirit. Through the manifestation of two of the revelation gifts, God gave Philip instructions about what to do.

God gives instruction to each of us as believers, as He guides and leads us by the inward witness. But here Philip received instructions by spiritual gifts in operation through the manifestation of the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge.

However, it is important to note that even though the instructions were more spectacular than the inward witness or inward voice of the Holy Spirit that every believer has, Philip still had to obey God's instructions given through the word of knowledge by faith.

As I mentioned previously, these revelation gifts given supernaturally by God are only a word of knowledge and a word of wisdom. They are only a fragment of the knowledge and wisdom of God.

By way of illustration, if you needed legal advice concerning a particular situation in the present or in the future, you'd call your lawyer. But your lawyer wouldn't give you all the legal wisdom he has because you wouldn't need all of it. He would only give you a word or a fragment or a part of the legal wisdom he has that applies to your particular case. That would really be all you needed at the time.

Similarly, Philip only needed a part of God's wisdom and instruction, so God used an angel to give Philip a word of wisdom — a revelation concerning a part of God's plan and purpose for Philip's life — to go to the desert. And as a result, this Ethiopian received Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord!

Old Testament Examples of The Word of Wisdom

Now let's look at some examples of how the gift of the word of wisdom was manifested in the Old Testament.

The Word of Wisdom to Noah

This gift of the word of wisdom was also used to warn people concerning future judgment or peril. Noah received a word of wisdom, for example, concerning peril and future judgment on the world through a flood, and he built the ark to save his household (Gen. 6:13-18).
If Noah could have gotten any of the other people

to believe him, they could have been saved too. The same was true concerning Lot and his family who were saved when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:29). And the word of wisdom was used to warn and to save a number of others in the Old Testament too.

The Word of Wisdom to Joseph

The manifestation of the word of wisdom was given in the Old Testament to reveal God's plan to those He was going to use in the ministry. For example, God spoke to Joseph through dreams concerning Joseph's own future.

Joseph's jealous brothers tried to dispose of Joseph, but God rescued him and fulfilled His plan for Joseph's life. Although Joseph was put in jail for a number of years and suffered numerous other hardships, he was finally made prime minister of the land of Egypt. And the time came when all of his brothers did bow down before him, as predicted in his dream (see Genesis chapters 37 through 50).

When I think about the story of Joseph, I think about the magnanimity of his soul. Under similar circumstances, how many others would have said to their brothers, "Well, what do you think about your baby brother now?" or "I told you so." But Joseph was not arrogant or overbearing. Even as the second in authority under Pharoah, Joseph was a humble man with a noble and forgiving spirit; he didn't seek revenge. Nor did he even blame his brothers or scold them at all. He simply told them, "God just sent me before you to preserve the posterity of our people" (Gen. 45:5-8). Joseph knew about his calling and God's plan and purpose for his life through the word of wisdom.

The Word of Wisdom in the New Testament

We can also see examples of the word of wisdom in operation in the New Testament.
Agabus the Prophet

In the Book of Acts, we read that Agabus had prophesied and foretold that a drought and famine was coming (Acts 11:28). The people believed him because he was a man of integrity and had a proven ministry.

When Agabus prophesied about the drought, the people began immediately to make preparations in order to help the saints who lived where the drought was coming.
The Holy Spirit and His Gifts

In Acts chapter 21 we read again about the prophet Agabus. Paul and his company (among whom was Luke, the writer of the Book of Acts) were at Philip's house.

ACTS 21:10,11
11 And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus.
11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, THUS SAITH THE HOLY GHOST, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

Notice that the Holy Spirit revealed something through Agabus. When any revelation is given by the unction of the Holy Spirit, it is always a word of wisdom, a word of knowledge, or discerning of spirits because these are the only three gifts of revelation. No others are listed in the Bible.

Note also that the spiritual gift demonstrated in Acts 21:11 was not a word of knowledge because it told of something that would take place in the future. The word of wisdom tells about something that is going to happen.

A word of knowledge has to do with the present and the past, but God in His divine wisdom knows all about the future, and He imparts certain facts about the future to man through the word of wisdom.

ACTS 21:12,13
12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.
13 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

After Paul made this statement, Luke recorded: "And when he [Paul) would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done" (Acts 21:14). What Agabus revealed by the Spirit of God was a revelation of the will of God that was to happen in the future; therefore, it was a word of wisdom. And it came to pass.

As I've said elsewhere, the word of wisdom may have been delivered through the vehicle of prophecy. Or when Agabus said, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost," he may just have been reporting what he had already received from the Lord. But whether it came through the vehicle of prophecy or not — it was a word of wisdom being delivered.

The Word of Wisdom to Paul

The word of wisdom is also given to assure of coming deliverance in the time of calamity. Paul went aboard a ship when he was on his way to Rome to appeal his case to Caesar and a violent storm arose. He had a word of wisdom for those on the ship before they ever set sail. He said, ". . . I per-ceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage . . ." (Acts 27:10). But the south wind was blowing softly at the time, so they went ahead and set sail.

If those on the ship had listened to Paul, they would not have lost their ship and all their merchandise. Failing to heed his warning, however, they eventually had to throw everything overboard. Finally, all hope that they should be saved was gone. But in the midst of such calamity, Paul stood his ground because he had heard from heaven.

ACTS 27:23,24
23 ... there stood by me this night the ANGEL OF GOD, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 Saying, Fear not, Paul . . . GOD HATH GIVEN THEE ALL THEM THAT SAIL WITH THEE. Paul said, "The ship will be lost, but if you listen to what I say and remain with the ship, you will not die."

You see, they were about to leave the ship, but because of the revelation Paul brought forth from the angel of God, everyone stayed with the ship, and not one of them perished. This wisdom concerning the future Paul had was by supernatural revelation. God revealed it to Paul, and Paul in turn revealed to those who were on the ship with him what was going to happen. Even though an angel delivered the message or revelation, it was a supernatural revelation from God.

Conditional Words of Wisdom

There were some incidents in the Old Testament when a prophet received a word from God which did not come to pass. Some manifestations of the word of wisdom are conditional, depending upon the person's obedience.

For example, in the case of Hezekiah the king, God told Isaiah to go and give him a word of wisdom concerning the future — the plan and purpose of God for Hezekiah's life under the present conditions. Isaiah was to tell Hezekiah, ". . . Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live" (2 Kings 20:1).

Isaiah delivered the message and then went his way. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, repented of his wrongdoings, cried and prayed to God, and reminded God that he had walked before God wholeheartedly in times past. He told God that he had kept His commandments even though he had missed it in certain areas. And Hezekiah repented.

Then before Isaiah even got out of the courtyard, the word of the Lord came to Isaiah again, telling him to go back and give Hezekiah another word of wisdom. It was a word of wisdom because it still concerned the future. God said to Isaiah, TeH Hezekiah I am going to give him fifteen more years" (2 Kings 20:5,6).

This first prophecy or word of wisdom, and even the second prophecy or word of wisdom which were given to Hezekiah, were conditional.

According to the first word of wisdom, under the existing conditions, Hezekiah was going to die. This promise was conditional, however. In other words, if Hezekiah had not repented, he would have died.

According to the second word of wisdom, Hezekiah would be spared and fifteen years would be added to his life. And it may have been that Hezekiah could have changed the latter part of this word of wisdom regarding the fifteen years that were to be added to him, just as he had changed the first part (Isa. 43:26).

Jonah

God spoke to the prophet Jonah and gave him a word of wisdom that Nineveh was going to be destroyed if the people of that great city did not repent and turn to God. This was a word of wisdom that Jonah received concerning the plans and purposes of God, and it was concerning a future event — the destruction of Nineveh.

Jonah didn't care whether Nineveh was destroyed or not, and as a result, he didn't want to go and warn the people. God dealt with him in the belly of a great fish, however, and he went and preached to the people of Nineveh, warning them of impending judgment if they didn't turn to God (Jonah 3:4).

The word Jonah gave to the Ninevites was conditional: if they repented, they would be spared. If they failed to repent, Nineveh would be destroyed. The people of Nineveh repented and judgment didn't fall on Nineveh in that generation, although it eventually did come (See the Book of Nahum).

The Word of Knowledge and the Word of Wisdom To Help a Fellow Minister

An example of a conditional word of wisdom was manifested through me years ago. The Lord through an audible Voice gave me both a word of knowledge

and a word of wisdom. I had just been talking with a minister, and he had shown me his new building which would seat about four thousand people.

As I got in my car to leave, the Spirit of God said to me, "Go tell him that he is going to die unless he judges himself on three things: number one, his diet." This minister was greatly overweight and would practically eat anything he could get his hands on. You know, a person can actually "dig his own grave with his teeth."

"Number two," the Lord said, "he must judge himself on money." You see, preachers can become so money-minded that money can be first with them rather than God.

"Number three, he must judge himself on love." This minister needed to walk in love toward fellow ministers.

Here was an example of both the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom operating together. This word from the Lord spoke plainly about a present-tense condition that existed in this minister's life: the minister had not been judging himself. But it also included a word of wisdom: he would die unless he judged himself.

First Corinthians 11:30,31 says, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."

Paul inferred that those people who were physically weak and sickly and who died prematurely could have lived if they had judged themselves. Any of the things this minister was doing would not have kept him out of heaven, but they would rob him of his blessings down here.
This was a revelation concerning a present-tense fact: this minister should judge himself. It was also a revelation concerning the future. If he failed to judge himself, he was going to die. He didn't judge himself, and he died.

Thank God, we can and do hear from heaven through the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit. But we need to take very seriously God's messages to us that come through these gifts. How desperately we need supernatural manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit today, such as the gift of the word of wisdom. As we learn to yield to God, His plans and purposes will be revealed to us through the word of wisdom as His Spirit wills.

Chapter 14 The Discerning of Spirits

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
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.

— 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

Our previous lessons have dealt with two of the three gifts that reveal something: the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge. In this lesson we will cover the third revelation gift: the gift of discerning of spirits.

The most important of the three revelation gifts, of course, is the word of wisdom. Listed in the order of their importance, the revelation gifts include: first, the word of wisdom. Second, the word of knowledge. And, third, the discerning of spirits.

Everything within the realm of knowledge, whether facts, events, purposes, motives, origins, or destinies — human, divine, or satanic; natural or supernatural; or past, present, or future — comes within the focal range of one or the other of these three revelation gifts.
The gifts can include in their comprehensive scope all that God knows. And there is nothing that God knows that may not be made known to man as the Spirit wills through the agency of one or more of these three revelation gifts.

The word of wisdom gives us the revelation of the plans and purposes in the mind of God. You could understand why that would be the greatest of all of these gifts. Naturally, it would be more important than anything else in all the world to have a revelation of the plans and purposes in the mind of God.

The word of knowledge gives us the revelation of facts that are now or that have been.
The discerning of spirits gives supernatural insight into the spirit world. "To discern" means to perceive by seeing or hearing. Therefore, discerning of spirits is the same as seeing or hearing in the realm of spirits.

The discerning of spirits actually has a more limited range of operation than the other two revelation

gifts, the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge. That is because its revelation is limited to a single class of objects — spirits.

The revelation that the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge brings is broader and applies to people, places, and things. The discerning of spirits gives us supernatural insight only into the realm of spirits. Remember, the discerning of spirits is seeing or hearing into the spirit world. It also reveals the kind of spirit that is in operation behind a supernatural manifestation.

What the Discerning of Spirits Is Not

Someone has said that the best way to find out what something is, is to find out what it is not. So let's discuss what the discerning of spirits is not. It is not discernment. I've heard people say, "I believe I have the gift of discernment."

Actually, there is no such thing mentioned in the Bible as the gift of discernment. It is the discerning of spirits. Many times what people call the gift of discernment is really the gift of the word of knowledge in operation.

In other words, sometimes people know things by the Spirit of God and call it discernment. But that doesn't mean it is really discernment. It is actually the word of knowledge in operation. Also, the discerning of spirits is not a kind of spiritual mind reading. And the discerning of spirits is not psychological insight, nor is it mental "penetration." It is not the power to discern the faults of others.

You will find that the power to discern faults in others is possessed not only by believers but by unbelievers as well. You don't even have to be a Christian to have that "gift"! As a matter of fact, the power to discover or discern the faults in others is absolutely forbidden in the Scriptures. "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1).

One purpose of the baptism in the Holy Ghost is to destroy this "gift" of discerning faults in others, which is nothing more than criticism, and then to replace it with the sweet gift of gentle forbearance. The gift of discerning of spirits is not faultfinding. If those who think they have the "gift" of faultfinding would just turn that "gift" on themselves for about fifteen seconds, they would never use it again.

Therefore, the discerning of spirits is not a spiritual gift to uncover human failures. Christians should walk in love, and the Bible says love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8). Paul, writing to the Church at Ephesus, said, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32). Paul was talking here to Christians.

No, the discerning of spirits is not discerning of character or faults; it is not even the discerning of people. It is called the discerning of spirits, and it deals with spirits that exist in the spirit realm, whether they are divine, satanic, or human.

Discerning of Spirits Is Not Simply Discerning of Devils

Let me point out that this gift of discerning of spirits is not just the discerning of devils, nor is it the discerning of just evil spirits.

To say that the discerning of spirits has to do only with devils is misleading. This gift has to do with the entire class of spirits, including good spirits, bad spirits, and human spirits. It is supernatural insight into the realm of spirits. The discerning of evil spirits is included, of course, but too many times folks have thought that seeing demons and devils is all this gift encompasses and they have been misled.

Maintain Balance In Dealing With Demons

The way that some people teach about demons and casting out demons troubles me because it is not actually in line with the Word of God, and it binds people instead of delivering them. For example, many things that people say are the devil, aren't the devil at all; they are works of the . The works of the flesh are listed for us in Galatians 5:19-21.

GALATIANS 5:19-21
19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, unclean ness, lasciviousness,
20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
21 Envy ings, murders, drunkenness, re vellings, and such like....

Envy is mentioned in this passage of Scripture as a work of the flesh. Yet when someone has a problem with envy, many times someone wants to cast the devil out of him! Hatred is also mentioned as one of the works of the flesh, but we wouldn't necessarily cast a demon of hatred out of a person. No, we have the flesh to deal with. And we are told in the Word how to deal with it. We are to crucify or mortify the deeds of the flesh (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5).
We need to be careful about these things. We need to be scriptural and believe the truth of God's Word and practice it! We need to be careful to follow what the Word says if we are to receive lasting results. It is just like any other Bible doctrine. If you overemphasize any one Bible doctrine to the exclusion of others, you can go to the extreme and get out of balance. I always pray, "God, help me to stay balanced in my ministry."

For example, we know that water baptism is a scriptural doctrine. Yet there are people who have even distorted the doctrine of water baptism and have gotten out of balance. They tell people that if they are not baptized in water, they are not saved. Some will even tell people that water baptism is what saves them! Then there are others who will tell people that unless they are water baptized according to a certain formula or ritual, they are not saved.
I even heard one man on the radio say, "I don't care how many of you have been baptized in the Name of Jesus only, you are not saved unless I did it. I am the only one authorized to do it, and none of you will go to heaven unless I baptize you in water in the Name of Jesus." That's ridiculous! But, you see, this man had gotten off into extremes. He wasn't following the Word and he got into error.

I believe in water baptism, but even if you take water baptism or any Bible doctrine for that matter to the extreme, you can certainly do more harm to people than good. I also believe in the reality of evil spirits, and I believe we need to know something about them and how to deal with them. But if you take it to the extreme, you can do more harm than good; you can begin to believe that everyone has a devil in them.

Some people become more devil conscious than they are God conscious. As a result, they give place to the devil and he defeats them in life. But Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

As I have already said, many things that happen which people are calling the devil are not the devil at all. Certainly, the devil may take advantage of a situation where the works of the flesh are being manifested. But if you will deal with the flesh, the devil won't have anything to work with.

If you will do what the Bible says, if you will ". . . present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable [or spiritual] service" (Rom. 12:1) and "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin . . " (Rom. 6:13), the devil won't be able to have any place in you.

It is certainly true that there are those who are bound by the enemy, and of course all bondage is of the devil, either directly or indirectly. That doesn't always mean there is a direct presence of an evil spirit, but an evil spirit could be enforcing the problem.

And at times when an evil spirit is the direct cause of a problem, a believer might see the evil spirit that is affecting the situation when the gift of discerning of spirits is in manifestation by the Holy Spirit. But as I said before, the discerning of spirits encompasses much more than just the discerning of evil spirits.

Discerning the Similitude of God

Also included within the scope of this gift is seeing the similitude of God. For example, Exodus 33 records an account of God allowing Moses to see into the realm of spirits to behold the similitude of God.

EXODUS 33:20-23
20 And he [the Lord] said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.
21 And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock:
22 And U shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put t hee r in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:
23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.

Moses was seeing in the spirit realm. He was able to discern the similitude of God by the manifestation of this gift of the Spirit.

Another instance of a person seeing the similitude of God is found in Isaiah 6. The prophet Isaiah said, "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.. ."(Isa. 6:1).

Throughout the Word of God we read about those who in vision form have been able to see the similitude of God through the gift of discerning of spirits. They didn't see God, but they saw the similitude of God. As He was revealed in vision form, they were seeing into the spirit world. That was a manifestation of discerning of spirits. So we see that the discerning of spirits isn't just seeing into the realm of evil spirits.

Discerning the Risen Christ

Through the discerning of spirits, or seeing into the spirit realm, one could also discern the risen Christ. No one has actually seen Jesus in His physical

flesh and bone body (Luke 24:39) since His ascension and seating on High (Acts 1:9; Heb 1:3) because He is now seated on the right hand of the Father where He ever lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25).

Therefore, since Jesus' ascension and seating on High, no one has ever seen Him except through the gift of discerning of spirits.

But through this supernatural gift of the discerning of spirits, some people have been able to see into the spirit realm and have seen the Risen Lord.

All such visions would be a manifestation of the gift of discerning of spirits. This gift of the discerning of spirits, however, might bring with it a word of wisdom or a word of knowledge. But the vision itself would be the discerning of spirits because the person would at that time be seeing into the spirit world.

Remember, the gift of the discerning of spirits is supernatural insight into the spirit world where there are divine spirits as well as evil spirits. Also, the discerning of spirits can be manifested to reveal the human spirit; that is, the good or evil tendencies of the human spirit. Discerning of spirits, then, deals with three kinds of classes of spirits: divine, satanic, and human.
So you see, discerning of spirits may be discerning the similitude of God, discerning the risen Christ, or even the discerning of the Holy Spirit.

Discerning the Holy Spirit

For instance, John, in his vision on the Isle of Patmos, saw the Holy Spirit as seven spirits before the throne of God (Rev. 4:5). That simply meant that in the spirit realm John was seeing these seven aspects of the Spirit of God.

The discerning of spirits can also reveal cherubim, seraphim, archangels, or a host of God's angels. It could reveal Satan and his legions. Discerning of spirits can reveal the power, whether good or evil, that may be enforcing a supernatural manifestation or influencing a type of behavior.

Discerning the Spirit Behind an Operation

Supernatural manifestations can come from different sources. In fact, many things that seem miraculous or supernatural to us actually do not come from God. We must remember that Satan is also a supernatural being. Too many times folks are ready to follow anything that is supernatural or spectacular, whether it is proven by the Scriptures to be of God or not.

It is good to have a genuine manifestation of the Spirit of God, but we must realize that all supernatural manifestations are not necessarily a demonstration of the Spirit of God. If the discerning of spirits is in operation, we can know the spirit behind a given manifestation or operation.

An example of this is found in Acts 16. Here Paul dealt with an evil spirit behind an operation. When the maiden who had the spirit of divination followed Paul and said, ". . . These men are

the servants of the most high God, which chew unto us the way of salvation" (Acts 16:17), Paul finally turned to her and spoke directly to the spirit. He didn't deal with the woman at all. It was probably the gift of discerning of spirits in operation because Paul spoke directly to the spirit; Paul was possibly talking to a spirit that he saw.

He spoke to the spirit and commanded it to come out of her. After that, the maiden couldn't tell fortunes any more. Paul dealt with the spirit involved, not the person.

The Inward Witness As Our Guide

On the other hand, without even having the discerning of spirits in manifestation, if we know the Word of God and if we are walking in the Spirit, we will have an inward witness if someone is operating by a wrong spirit. The Holy Spirit on the inside of us, in our spirits, will warn us if we are at all sensitive to Him.

I once knew a highly esteemed Bible teacher who was deceived by a preacher who was simply not right with God. Much of what the preacher was teaching was error and was not biblical. Unfortunately, this well-known Bible teacher also influenced others to believe in and follow this fellow's teaching.

Eventually, this Bible teacher began to see that some things about the preacher's doctrine weren't right. However, many times in such cases it is too late to rescue others because they've already been ensnared by the false teaching.

This Bible teacher finally went to the preacher and told him that some of the things he was preaching were not in the Bible. The preacher replied, "Brother, you won't get what I am teaching in that thing [referring to the Bible]. I am beyond that."

"Then you are too far out for me," said the Bible teacher and he broke his association with him. The Bible teacher was enlightened enough to get away from this false teacher, but unfortunately he had influenced others to believe this man and what this man was teaching.

One woman who had just been saved and who had recently converted from Buddhism said, "The first time I was in that preacher's meeting, the Spirit of God on the inside of me said, 'You get up and get out of here; that teaching is not right.'"

This new convert knew nothing about the Bible; she was just a few weeks old in the Lord. Yet, on the other hand, here was a well-known Bible teacher who had been in Full Gospel churches for thirty-five years and he was taken in by this preacher's false doctrine.

This is an example of how we can fail to follow that urging or witness on the inside of us which is the leading of the Holy Spirit. God communicates with our spirits, and our spirits know things our heads don't know. In the natural, this woman who was a new convert didn't know anything about this false teacher or whether or not what he was teaching was right because she was a baby Christian. She wasn't like some folks who think they know everything when they really don't. She was just depending on the Lord, and she had learned to depend on what she heard down on the inside of her spirit.

We don't need the discerning of spirits to know when something is out of order. We ought to know God's Word well enough for ourselves to know when something doesn't line up with the

Word of God. And we ought to be led by the inward witness. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

This verse implies that all the sons of God can be led by the Spirit of God. But the Scriptures certainly don't imply that all the children of God will have the gift of discerning of spirits operating in them because we read, "For to ONE is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge [or any gift of the Holy Spirit] by the same spirit" (1 Cor. 12:8). That verse doesn't say or even imply that everyone would have these gifts in manifestation in their lives. But Romans 8:14 does imply that every believer can be led by the Holy Spirit. We need to distinguish the difference.

You see, we can have some facts regarding the spirit world revealed to us by the discerning of spirits. Other facts are revealed to our spirits by the inward witness of the Holy Spirit. He is our Guide. But the inward witness is not the same as seeing into the spirit world — the discerning of spirits.

The Word of Knowledge vs. The Discerning of Spirits

Another way that the Holy Spirit reveals facts to us about the realm of the spirit is through the gift of the word of knowledge. Howard Carter, who made a thirty-year study of the gifts of the Spirit, said that the word of knowledge gives one a revelation of anything that can be classified as existing or having existed. The fact of a spirit possessing a body could be revealed by the gift of the word of knowledge, but the person wouldn't have a vision of the spirit; he would not discern the evil spirit.

In other words, if you discerned a spirit, you would see the spirit, because the discerning of spirits is seeing into the spirit realm. If the word of knowledge is in operation, you may know that a spirit is present or is involved in a particular situation, but you wouldn't see the spirit. Remember, the word of knowledge is revelation by the Holy Spirit of certain facts in the mind of God.

The Spirit of God may impart a word of knowledge to us to let us know if someone is operating by another spirit and not by the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has done so with me.
Evil Spirit Revealed By the Word of Knowledge

In my own ministry, when praying for folks, I would sometimes know facts supernaturally before I had ever had any kind of a manifestation of discerning of spirits. I knew them by the gift of the word of knowledge. No one will know these things every time they are ministering to someone, because these manifestations are given as the Spirit wills.

One time a man was invited to the platform to speak for a few minutes in a church where I was conducting a meeting. I had heard that this man was not living right. Of course the Bible tells us that by their fruits we shall know them (Matt. 7:20).

As I sat on the platform while this man got up to say a few words to the congregation, I heard the Voice of the Holy Spirit say, "He has a familiar spirit." I looked behind me. I already knew that no one was sitting behind me; yet the Voice was so real I looked behind me. It was the Holy Spirit speaking to me.

Many folks thought this preacher operated in the word of knowledge because he could tell people many things about themselves. He could give them their names and addresses; he could tell them how much money they had in their purses or billfolds. He could even sometimes tell them what they had in their pockets.

But the Spirit of God said to me, "He has a familiar spirit." In the Old Testament God talks about familiar spirits and forbids the people of God to have anything to do with them. Familiar spirits are familiar with people and they can pass on information about one person to another.
Evil Spirit Revealed By Discerning of Spirits

The Lord appeared to me in a vision one time and said, "I am going to teach you about the devil, demons, and demon possession. From this night on what is known in My Word as the discerning of spirits will operate in your life when you are in the Spirit."

Of course, the vision itself — seeing Jesus — was a manifestation of the discerning of spirits because I saw Jesus. I was seeing into the realm of spirits. That's discerning of spirits.
After that visitation from the Lord, the first such manifestation occurred in a meeting in Tyler, Texas. The pastor told me about his niece who had cancer of the left lung. The doctors had wanted to operate on her, but she wouldn't submit to an operation. The malignancy had spread to her other lung as well, and then it was too late for an operation even if she had wanted one. She was bedfast and had wasted away to nothing although she was being fed six times a day. They got her out of bed and brought her to church on Tuesday and Friday nights of the first week of meetings I was holding there. Tuesday and Friday were the healing meetings, and I prayed for her. They brought her again on Tuesday and Friday nights of the second week, and I prayed for her again.

On Tuesday night of the third week they brought her again, and she happened to be the first one in the prayer line. I laid hands on her and suddenly everyone and everything else in the room seemed to disappear. I was enveloped in a cloud and all I could see was myself and this young woman standing in a circle of light.

I was seeing into the realm of the spirit. I saw a demon or an evil spirit hanging on to her body over her left lung. I knew it was the cause of her physical condition and that it had to be dealt with. I commanded the demon to leave her in the Name of Jesus. In the realm of the spirit I saw this evil spirit and I heard him speak. No one else saw or heard anything.

This was a manifestation of the discerning of spirits, because I saw into the realm of spirits. When I commanded the demon to leave, he fell off of that woman's body and fell down on the floor. Then he just lay there and whimpered and whined like a whipped pup. He said, "I don't want to leave, but I know I have to if you tell me to."

I said, "Not only must you leave her body, but you must also leave these premises." He ran down the aisle and out the door of the church, and the woman was healed.

This woman went to the doctor the very next day and asked him to take X rays of her lungs. He said that wasn't necessary; they already had sufficient X rays of her lungs. "But something has happened to me, and I want you to take them again," she said.

They finally took the X rays, and they confirmed that something had indeed happened! "Your lungs have cleared up!" they said. "There's no more cancer!" The doctors wanted to run more tests, and after they did, they said her lungs were completely clear and all the other tests also proved negative.

The doctors asked her, "What happened to you?" When she told them how God had healed her, they said, "We don't know how it happened, but we know what has happened. The cancer was there, but now it is gone."

The doctors said they would give her a written affidavit that she had had cancer of the lungs, but that she no longer had it. These doctors were not against healing; doctors are in the healing business. And they are glad to see people delivered.

Three weeks later the pastor told me that his niece had gained sixteen pounds. That was many years ago, and in talking to this pastor years later, I found she was still well.
Howard Carter also said concerning this subject of a spirit being revealed through the word of knowledge versus the discerning of spirits:

If one was informed about a spirit but had no vision of the spirit, he would not discern it. By the discerning of spirits we see beyond the sphere for which we have been created, since we are natural beings. It is only by the revelation of the Holy Spirit that we can perceive the beings that live in the spirit world.

The realm of the spirit is very real, although we cannot perceive it with our natural senses. God has provided the gift of discerning of spirits to give the Church supernatural insight into this spiritual realm, as His Spirit wills.

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Chapter 15 The Gift of Faith

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

TO ANOTHER FAITH by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
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.
— 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

As I've mentioned in a previous lesson in this series, the nine manifestations or gifts of the Holy Spirit can be divided into three categories: Three spiritual gifts reveal something. Three spiritual gifts do something. And three spiritual gifts say something.

The three spiritual gifts that reveal something include: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the discerning of spirits.

The three spiritual gifts that do something, or the three power gifts as they are often called, include: the gift of faith, the gifts of healings, and the working of miracles.

The three inspirational gifts or vocal gifts — the spiritual gifts that say something include: the gift of prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues.

Gifts of the Spirit Are Supernatural

As I mentioned in previous lessons, all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are supernatural; they are not natural. Every one of them is a supernatural manifestation of the Spirit of God.
There are Bible teachers who say that some of the gifts of the Spirit are natural and some of them are supernatural. But if one of them is supernatural, then all of them are supernatural. Every single one of the gifts of the Spirit listed in First Corinthians 12:8-10 is a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

For example, speaking in tongues is supernatural, not natural. Speaking in your own language isn't supernatural because you were taught how to speak that language. But you were never taught how to speak in tongues. Tongues — the supernatural utterance of the Holy Spirit — was divinely given when you received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

It is true that in our own individual lives, the Spirit of God will lead and guide us in ways that are supernatural, because the Bible says we are led by the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:14). It is also true that everything God does is in a sense supernatural. But not everything God does would necessarily be a manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit in operation.

For example, in my own spirit I may have an inward witness to do or not to do something. And although that witness is supernatural, it is not a manifestation of one of these gifts. The inward witness is simply a matter of being led by the Holy Spirit, and every believer should be led by the Holy Spirit in their everyday Christian walk (Rom. 8:14).

I often receive guidance from God by an inward witness. Sometimes in praying for guidance, I am impressed in a certain direction. That doesn't mean I have a supernatural manifestation of a gift of the Spirit. I just have an inward impression or witness. That is the Holy Spirit leading and guiding me.

Sometimes when people have asked me to pray for them for direction, I have asked them, "What is your heart telling you?"

Very often they have laughed and said, "Well, I guess I really knew on the inside of me all the time what I ought to do."

This guidance by the inward witness is not a supernatural manifestation of a gift of the Spirit in operation; it is simply an example of being led by the Holy Spirit.

Wherever there is a supernatural manifestation that reveals something, that manifestation would be one of the revelation gifts in operation — the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, or the discerning of spirits.

The Gift of Special Faith

In previous chapters, we covered the revelation gifts of the Holy Spirit: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the discerning of spirits.

Now let's study the three power gifts of the Holy Spirit: the gift of faith, the working of miracles, and the gifts of healings.

In this lesson, we will discuss the first of the power gifts: the gift of faith. The Amplified Bible reads, "To another (wonder-working), faith . . ." (1 Cor. 12:9). This gift of the Spirit is also called special faith.

The Gift of Special Faith Is Not the Same as Saving Faith

Every believer already has general faith or saving faith, which is also a gift. Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." The faith that you are saved by is a gift of God, but it is not one of the nine gifts of the Spirit. Saving faith is given to you through hearing the Word, because the Bible says, "So then faith [saving faith] cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).
The faith which we are talking about in this lesson — special faith — is something other than general faith or saving faith. It is a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit whereby a believer is empowered with special faith, or wonder-working faith, and it is beyond simple saving faith.

The gift of faith is the greatest of the three power gifts. And this gift is miraculous just as the rest of the gifts of the Spirit are miraculous.

The gift of faith is a gift of the Spirit to the believer in order that he might receive miracles. The working of miracles, on the other hand, is a gift of the Spirit given to the believer that he might work miracles. One gift receives, the other does something.

Notice the Bible says, "To another the WORKING of miracles . . ." (1 Cor. 12:10). In other words, when you receive a miracle, you don't work the miracle. But when you perform a miracle by the unction of the Holy Ghost, you are working a miracle by this supernatural gift of the Spirit, the working of miracles.

These power gifts are very closely associated one with another and many times work together. The same is true of the revelation gifts; they also are closely related and work together as do the utterance gifts.

It is also important to note that all of the gifts of the Spirit operate by faith — by ordinary faith on the part of the believer through which the gift is being manifested. In other words, a person must step out in faith and yield to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. That's where simple faith is involved. This ordinary faith is the faith that comes by hearing God's Word. Therefore, the gifts of the Spirit do not operate by the gift of faith, but they do operate by general or ordinary faith. Remember, the Bible says, ". . . Ifthou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23).

As we said, the gift of faith, one of the nine gifts of the Spirit, is separate and distinct from the simple

gift of saving faith. The gift of faith — special faith — is also distinct from the faith that is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). We read about the fruit of the Spirit, one of which is faith, in Galatians chapter 5.

However, in the original Greek, the word "faith" in Galatians 5:22 could be translated faithfulness. The fruit of the Spirit are for character; the gifts of the Spirit are for power. Fruit is something that grows. Faith — or faithfulness — is a fruit that grows in the life of a Christian to establish him in godly spiritual character.

But the gift of faith is a special gift which is given supernaturally by the Spirit of God, as He wills. Those who operate in special faith, the gift of the Spirit, can believe God in such a way that God honors their word as His own, and miraculously brings to pass the desired result. Thus, we learn that there are different kinds of faith. Saving faith brings one to salvation. Faith, or faithfulness, the fruit of the Spirit, comes after salvation. And the manifestation of the gift of special faith can come as a gift of the Spirit after one receives the baptism in the Holy Ghost. However, the gift of faith which is a gift of the Spirit, operates as He wills, not as we will. Faith, like prayer, is something that is easily confused in the minds of some people. Many times we just put all kinds of faith in the same sack, so to speak, mix them up, and shake them all out together. But we must differentiate between saving faith, or the general faith that every believer has, and this special faith that God gives on certain occasions.

Referring to general or saving faith, I have heard people say, "Well, if God gives me faith I will have it, and if He doesn't I won't." They read the scripture, "To another [is given] faith ..." (1 Cor. 12:9), and they think that is the way all faith works.

However, as we have already proven, this special faith, this gift of faith, is not the same saving faith or general faith which one needs in order to be saved. And special faith is not the faith needed for believing God to have your needs met according to His Word. The faith for believing God for your needs to be met comes by hearing the Word (Rom. 10:17), and every believer is given a measure of that kind of faith (Rom. 12:3).

Also, as I already pointed out, this gift of faith is not the fruit of faith that grows in a person's life to develop character in Christian living.

Special faith is not the general faith by which we ordinarily receive answers to prayer. We know that we are saved by general faith; we know that we receive the baptism in the Holy Ghost by faith — general faith. We know that we receive answers to prayer by this kind of ordinary or general faith because Jesus said, ". . . What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them"(Mark 11:24).

Many of us have received many answers to prayer just through faith even before we ever received the baptism in the Holy Ghost. These answers came because we believed God and appropriated the promises in His Word by faith. But that is still not this gift of faith as described in First Corinthians 12:9.

If the gift of faith had to be in manifestation in order to get an answer to prayer, to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, to receive healing for your body, or to have a financial need met, then you could never get your prayers answered until after you got saved and received the baptism in the Holy Ghost. Yet many of us, including myself, did receive healing before we

ever received the baptism of the Holy Ghost; we received healing by exercising simple faith in what God's Word says.

Also, if these general answers to prayer were the result of the gift of faith in operation, then not everyone — even if they had the baptism in the Holy Ghost — would be able to obtain answers to prayer, because not everyone will have this gift operating in them. Remember, the Bible says, "For to ONE is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom. . . . To another faith by the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:8,9).

Therefore, if we had to rely on this gift of faith to get our prayers answered, then not everyone could get their prayers answered, and we know that is untrue.

But there is a faith — I call it a general faith — that all believers have that can be increased by feeding on the Word of God and exercising it in the arena of life. We can all have an ever-increasing faith. The gift of faith, however, is a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit given as the Spirit wills.

The Gift of Faith vs. The Gift of the Working of Miracles

The gift of faith is also distinct from the working of miracles, although both gifts produce miracles. One of them is active and the other is passive.

The working of miracles is active; it actively works a miracle. The gift of faith doesn't work a miracle, but passively receives a miracle.

In other words, the difference between the working of miracles and the gift of faith is that the gift of working of miracles actively does, and the gift of special faith passively receives. When Daniel was in the lions' den, he received a miracle. In those days as well as throughout history, there have been those who were thrown to the lions and the lions devoured them. Why didn't the lions devour Daniel? The Bible says that ". . . Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God" (Dan. 6:23). There is no doubt that God gave Daniel special faith, a special manifestation of this gift of the Spirit, to receive deliverance. Daniel didn't do anything. He just lay down and went to sleep. His faith was pas-sive rather than active, yet he received a miracle.

We see Jesus exercising this gift of faith as He slept in the back of the ship during a raging storm (Mark 4:38). Someone might argue, "Yes, but that was Jesus. He is the Son of God." However, Jesus never did anything except by the power of the Holy Ghost. Jesus voluntarily stripped Himself of what power He had as the Son of God when He came to the earth (Phil. 2:7). Jesus was just as much the Son of God before the Holy Ghost came upon Him and anointed Him as He was after He was anointed. Yet because He stripped Himself of that power vested in Him as the Son of God when He came to the earth, Jesus never worked any miracles prior to the time He was baptized by John and the Holy Ghost came upon Him. You see, when Jesus was on the earth, He ministered only as a man anointed by the Holy Ghost. If He had worked miracles by some power that was inherent in Him as the Son of God, He would not have told us we could do the works that He did. But Jesus plainly said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also. . ."(John 14:12).

But if Jesus did the works as a man anointed by the Holy Ghost, then certainly under the inspiration and anointing of the Holy Ghost, believers could do the same thing.

While the raging storm swept the sea and threatened the safe journey of the disciples to the other side of the lake, Jesus was asleep in the hinder part of the boat (Mark 4:38). He wasn't bothered by the storm. And while the lions roamed about in the den, Daniel lay down and slept in the face of danger in perfect peace and calm assurance. Why? Because Jesus and Daniel each possessed a faith beyond the simple general faith every believer can have through hearing the Word.

Throughout the Bible we see how the gift of faith worked primarily for people who were in danger. And through this gift of the Spirit, they possessed a calmness and quiet assurance that was supernatural.

The working of miracles employs faith that actively works a miracle. But the gift of faith employs faith that passively expects a miracle as a sustained or continuous action. That means when it is necessary, there is a duration to the gift of special faith — it is ongoing in its action.

When the gift of faith is in operation, it may be that nothing is seen at the time to confirm that the person has his answer. Therefore, special faith may carry over a long period of time and be sustained or continued in its action of passively receiving a miracle.

For example, it was by the gift of faith that the patriarchs of old would lay hands on their children and pronounce a blessing or curse on them which would sometimes come to pass many years later. We see this in the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This was the gift of faith in operation. By supernatural faith, special faith in operation, these patriarchs believed that what they said would come to pass, even if it took many years.

The gift of faith is a divine gift or enabling by the Spirit of God that causes what is spoken or desired by man, or spoken by God to ultimately come to pass. The human or divine miracle, utterance, certainty, cursing or benefit, creation or destruction, removal or change, will eventually come to pass when it has been spoken under the inspiration of this gift of special faith.

Wigglesworth and the Gift of Faith

Smith Wigglesworth said that if you will take a step of ordinary faith, when you come to the end of that faith, very often this supernatural gift of special faith will take over. One reason more folks don't see the manifestation of special faith operating in their lives is that they don't first use what faith they already have.

Under Wigglesworth's ministry, at least three different people were raised from the dead, and there were probably many more. One instance of a person who was raised from the dead was a man named Mr. Mitchell whom Wigglesworth personally knew.

One day when coming home from an open-air meeting, Wigglesworth learned that his wife, Polly, was at Mr. Mitchell's house. The day before when Wigglesworth had visited Mitchell, the sick man had been close to death.

As Wigglesworth hurried to Mitchell's house, he heard screaming coming from the house. On the way into Mr. Mitchell's room, he passed Mrs. Mitchell, who was crying, "He's gone! He's gone!"

Wigglesworth related his experience:

I just passed Mrs. Mitchell and went into the room, and immediately I saw that Mitchell had gone. I could not understand it, but I began to pray. My wife was always afraid that I would go too far, and she laid hold of me and said, "Don't, Dad! Don't you see that he is dead?"
But I continued praying. I got as far as I could with my own faith, and then God laid hold of me. Oh, it was such a laying hold that I could believe for anything. The faith of the Lord Jesus laid hold of me and a solid peace came into my heart. I shouted, "He lives! He lives! He lives!" And he is living today. '

Receiving the dead raised back to life again is beyond anyone's ordinary faith. In our ordinary faith, we could try what Wigglesworth did — we could pull someone off a deathbed and stand him up and tell him to walk, but that doesn't mean he would begin to walk. Why? Because it takes a supernatural manifestation of God's power to receive a miracle such as this.

The Power Gifts Often Work Together

As I have mentioned, the three power gifts — the gift of faith, the gifts of healings, and the working of miracles — will very often work together. In the case of raising the dead, all three of these power gifts — the gift of faith, the gifts of healings, and the working of miracles — operate together. This is one reason we don't see too many people raised from the dead; some of us may have one or more of these gifts operating in our lives, but not too many of us have all of them operating in our lives.

First of all, in raising the dead, it takes supernatural faith — the gift of special faith — to call a person's spirit back after it has left the body. Then it takes the working of miracles because the body would have started to deteriorate, as in the case of Lazarus (John 11:39).

Raising the dead also takes gifts of healings because if the person who was raised from the dead wasn't healed, whatever he died from would still affect his body and he would die again. So the person would have to be healed too. Therefore, all three of the power gifts are in manifestation when someone is raised from the dead.

Sometimes people have thought that it is the gift of faith in operation in the healing of the sick. But in the case of healing, it is the gifts of healings in operation. To cleanse a leper or to heal any incurable sickness, as well as cripples, the gifts of healings are in operation.

Casting Out Demons

Another area in which the gift of faith operates together with other gifts of the Spirit is the area of casting out evil spirits. In casting out demons, the gift of discerning of spirits and/or the gift of the word of knowledge, as well as the gift of faith, are in operation. If you don't discern or see the spirit, very often the presence of the evil spirit is revealed through the word of knowledge. But the gift of faith still has to be exercised in casting out the spirit.

We can't deal with the devil in our own strength. But God has given us His Word, His power, His authority, and all the spiritual equipment necessary to enforce Satan's defeat in our own lives. And a part of that spiritual equipment God has given us is this supernatural gift of faith.

So the gift of faith can operate, as I said, to cast out demons, to receive the dead raised back to life, and to supernaturally sustain a person beyond the ability of ordinary faith.
Purposes of the Gift of Faith

As I mentioned previously, the working of miracles is more of an act, whereas the gift of faith is more of a process. In other words, the working of miracles would perform a miracle, but the gift of faith would receive a miracle.

In summary, first, we've seen the gift of faith in operation in receiving blessings or the fulfillment of human utterances as in the cases of the patriarchs of old. As we said, many times when the patriarchs were ready to die, they would lay their hands on their sons and command blessings upon them, and whatever they said would come to pass. They did this by the supernatural manifestation of the gift of faith.

Second, we have seen how this gift of faith was manifested for personal protection in perilous circumstances, such as the case of Daniel in the lions' den.

Third, this gift of faith was manifested for supernatural sustenance in the time of famine. We can see this, for example, in the case of Elijah when he was fed by the ravens (1 Kings 17:3-6). Elijah's faith

had to be given to him supernaturally because it was beyond ordinary faith to believe that ravens would feed him. But they brought food to him morning and night.

Remember, ordinary faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). But the gift of faith is manifested by the Holy Spirit to enable a person to receive a miracle beyond the capacity of ordinary faith to receive.

Fourth, this gift of faith is manifested to raise the dead, as I have already pointed out.
Fifth, the gift of faith is employed in casting out evil spirits. When you cast out devils, you are trusting God to honor your word as His own.

Sixth, in some instances this gift comes into operation in the laying on of hands for people to be filled with the Holy Ghost.

GALATIANS 3
6 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

When Paul said to the Galatians, ". . . [he that] worketh miracles among you. . . ," he was referring to the working of miracles. But before that he said, "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit . . ." (Gal. 3:5).

Paul was talking about ministering the Spirit first and then he was talking about the gift of working of miracles. Then Paul adds, ". . . doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (v. 5). Of course, it is by the hearing of faith, which belongs to every believer. But some in the Body of Christ have more of a ministry along this line, and the gift of faith accompanies their ministry.

In other words, this gift of faith is in operation many times when it comes to ministering the baptism of the Holy Spirit to believers. This gift comes into operation with the ministry of laying on of hands; as I said, there are those who are supernaturally equipped with a ministry more along this line.

Of course, any believer can lay hands on people in general faith and appropriate God's promises from His Word, even in receiving the Holy Spirit. But when it comes to a manifestation of the Spirit of God ministered through one person to another, that is a gift of the Spirit in operation.

If you lay hands on someone for healing or for any other blessing without a gift of the Spirit in operation, that person can simply receive by faith whatever the Word promises. The laying on of hands then is simply a point of contact for the one receiving to release his faith in the promises in God's Word. And, of course, if the person receives the blessing by faith, that is still a demonstration of God's power.

God works through sovereign demonstrations of power and through supernatural manifestations in the gifts of the Spirit, as well as through simple faith in His Word. Therefore, this gift of faith can be in operation to minister the Holy Spirit to believers, imparting the fullness of God which is the promise of the Father, enriching the soul, and empowering one for spiritual service.

In summary, we can say that by the gift of faith the violence of fire has been controlled as in the case of Elijah (1 Kings 18:38). By the gift of faith, the miraculous has been supernaturally manifested and a man was supernaturally fed and sustained (1 Kings 19:4,6); another lived and labored for forty days without food or water and was sustained (Exod. 34:28). Angels have stood guard over the servants of God, protecting them because this gift was in manifestation; men have been delivered from the ferocity of beasts, such as Daniel in the lions' den (Dan. 6:22). The gift of faith brings an inward calm within the spirit of those through whom this gift is mani-

fested. For example, Peter, a man condemned to die, slept on the very eve of his execution, and he was delivered from death (Acts 12:6-11). And by this gift, a raging storm was stopped that threatened to wreck a ship at sea and destroy human life (Mark 4:39).

The gift of faith can expel unclean spirits from the bodies of men, which have been defiled by their presence. On the other hand, this gift can also be in operation in ministering the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Also by this gift of faith, we know that blessings can be pronounced which can miraculously and permanently change the entire course of one's life.

As we appropriate the Word of God concerning the gifts of the Spirit, there shall come more manifestations of the Spirit of God in greater frequency than in the past. And there shall be great manifestations of God's power through the gifts of the Spirit. In this day and hour in which we live, these gifts of the Holy Spirit are necessary to bring about that which God desires to do in the earth.

1 Smith Wigglesworth, Ever Increasing Faith (1924; Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1971), pp. 138,139.

Chapter 16 The Gift of the Working of Miracles

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;
To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
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.
— 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

After Paul listed the nine gifts of the Spirit as shown in the text above, he went on to say, "But covet earnestly the best gifts . . ."(1Cor. 12:31).

The 'Best' Gift Is the Gift Needed at the Time

Sometimes people become confused about what the best spiritual gift is. They miss the fact that under some circumstances, even the very best gift of all the spiritual gifts, may not be the best gift in a given circumstance or the gift needed at that particular time.

For instance, the word of wisdom, which is a divine revelation of the plan and purpose of God, is the greatest of all the gifts of the Spirit. However, if you are sick, you don't need that manifestation; you need a manifestation of the gifts of healings.

In other words, under that particular circumstance, the "best" gift would be the gifts of healings, not the word of wisdom. So, you see, the best gift, the word of wisdom, is not always what's needed in every situation and circumstance. In that sense, the best gift would really be the one that is needed at the time.

Find Your Place of Ministry

We look at Paul's letter to the Corinthians in which he said, ". . . covet earnestly the best gifts ..." (1 Cor. 12:31). Paul also said, ". . . desire spiritual gifts . . ." (1 Cor. 14:1). Paul was exhorting the Corinthians to desire spiritual gifts. Many times, we take this verse of Scripture personally and we think it means that each person is to desire spiritual gifts as his own personal possessions.

However, Paul was not writing this letter to an individual member of the Church of the Lord Jesus

Christ. He was writing to the whole Church at Corinth. He was telling them as a church, as a group, to desire these gifts. And this also applies to the Church, the Body of Christ today. Then if believers as a group would earnestly desire spiritual gifts to be manifested in their midst, the Holy Spirit would manifest Himself, "dividing to every man severally as He wills" (1 Cor. 12:11). The phrase, ". . . dividing to every man severally as he will" in First Corinthians 12:11, infers that each of us will not all have the same spiritual gift manifested through us at the same time.

At some time or another, those who are called to the fivefold ministry would have to be equipped with certain gifts of the Spirit in order to stand in certain offices. Therefore, those people have more consistent manifestations of these spiritual gifts than others in the Body of Christ. But no one will have all the gifts operating through him.

Too many times, we try to be a "jack-of-all-trades and master of none," spiritually speaking, instead of just staying in our places and using whatever gift God has given us, or instead of functioning in the ministry to which we were called. For example, many times people try to do the other fellow's ministry or job, or try to be used in a gift that someone else is used in.
I have heard people say, "If they can do that, so can I." That causes confusion in the Body of Christ, and will eventually lead to error.

By way of illustration, you would really have confusion in your own physical body if your foot said, "If the eye can see, so can I." Of course, your foot can't see; it can't fulfill the role of the eye. It's not supposed to. And conversely, the eye cannot fulfill the role of the foot.
I once attended a meeting conducted by Howard Carter, and after the service, a woman came up to him and said, "Brother Carter, I want you to pray for my healing."

He said to her, "Sister, go see my wife. I seldom lay hands on the sick for healing. That's not my ministry. I know any of us can pray in faith for those who are sick if no one else is present. "But God uses my wife in the gifts of healings," Rev. Carter explained. "That gift operates through her; it doesn't operate through me. God uses me in getting people filled with the Holy Ghost. I lay hands on people to be filled with the Spirit and seldom does one fail to receive. That's my ministry.

"The gift of faith operates through me, "Rev. Carter continued," and I impart the Holy Ghost to people through the laying on of hands. I seldom fail to get anyone filled with the Spirit, and she seldom fails to get anyone healed, so go see her."

Of course, God will honor the faith of people who will believe Him. But you can get things done more quickly by folks who are especially used along particular lines, because they are supernaturally endued with certain gifts of the Spirit. Naturally, then, they could get results quicker than others could.

The Working of Miracles Defined

In our studies on the gifts of the Spirit, we now come to the gift of the working of miracles. First of all, let us define the working of miracles. A miracle can be defined as a supernatural intervention by God in the ordinary course of nature.

As is the case with many words in the English language, when we use the word "miracle" generally speaking, it means one thing; but used specifically, it means something else. For example, sometimes the word "miracle" is used generally as a figure of speech. We talk, for instance, about miracle fabrics, miracle drugs, miracle detergents, and so forth.
In nature we might see a beautiful sunrise and say, "That's a miracle." We might look at a beautiful rose garden ablaze with glorious color, the perfume of the flowers ascending into the heavens, and say that it is a "miracle" of nature.

None of these things are a miracle specifically speaking, but generally speaking they are. In the magnificent sunrise, the sun is doing exactly what it ought to do according to the laws of

nature. The rose is doing exactly what it was meant to do according to the laws of nature. Therefore, specifically, these are not miracles because a miracle is a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature.

Another example of a natural miracle, or a miracle generally speaking, is the birth of a child. Sometimes the medical profession calls it the miracle of birth. Generally speaking, a natural birth is a miracle. But it is not a miracle in the specific sense, because it is an event occurring in the normal or ordinary course of nature.

The same is true in the spiritual realm regarding the "miracle" of salvation. Generally speaking, salvation is a miracle; but specifically speaking, salvation isn't any more a miracle than a natural birth is a miracle. In the supernatural realm, the new birth is

a very natural or normal occurrence. It is a supernatural act, but it is not the gift of working of miracles in operation.

So, generally speaking, as a figure of speech, both the natural birth and the spiritual rebirth of one's spirit are miracles. But specifically speaking, neither is a miracle because they are not a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature, neither in the natural realm nor in the spiritual realm.

The new birth is a supernatural act which takes place in the spiritual realm. We do not call that a miracle according to our definition of the word "miracle": a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature. What we call a miracle in the specific sense, is a supernatural act on a natural plane.

Therefore, the new birth is not a supernatural act in the natural realm; it is a supernatural act in the spiritual realm. The natural birth is in the natural realm. One is spiritual and the other is natural, and neither are miracles in the specific sense.

Every one of the gifts of the Spirit is miraculous; they are all supernatural. In the general use of the word "miracle," all gifts of the Spirit are miracles, not just the gift of the working of miracles. But specifically speaking, all of them are not.

When the working of miracles is in manifestation, there is a divine intervention in the ordinary course of nature. For example, the dividing of a stream by the sweep of a mantle is an example of the working of miracles in operation (2 Kings 2:14). After Elijah ascended to heaven in a chariot in the whirlwind, Elisha received his mantle and smote the Jordan River. Dividing the waters by a sweep of his mantle was the working of miracles because that was a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature.

In the area of healing, many times miracles are received, but this is not necessarily the working of miracles; they are simply called healing miracles. Everything that God does is miraculous in a sense, but receiving healing by supernatural means is not a miracle in the same sense that turning common dust into insects just by a gesture is a miracle (Exod. 8:16), or turning common water into wine just by speaking a word is a miracle (John 2:7-11). Those two occurrences are examples of the working of miracles.

Water turned into wine by the aging process, or the process of nature, is a natural phenomenon. But water turned into wine just by speaking a word, as Jesus did (John 2:1-11), is a miracle according to our definition — a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature.

A miracle, therefore, is a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature, a temporary suspension of the accustomed order, or an interruption in the system of nature as we know it, operated by the power of the Holy Spirit

Old Testament Examples Of the Working of Miracles

We've defined the working of miracles. Now let's look at examples from the Bible of this gift in operation.

Moses and the Israelites

This working of miracles was used time and time again for miraculous deliverance of God's people. We see this gift used in Egypt when God convinced Pharaoh to let Israel go (See Exodus chapters 7 through 14). A number of miracles were wrought during this time. When Aaron threw down his rod and it was turned into a serpent, for example, that was the working of miracles in operation (Exod. 7:9-12). When the dust was turned into insects (Exod. 8:16-18) and all the other plagues followed, this was the gift of the working of miracles in operation.

When the children of Israel came out of Egypt and approached the Red Sea, Pharaoh and his hosts were close behind, ready to recapture them and make them slaves again (Exod. 14:5-9). There the Israelites were with the wilderness on one side, mountains on the other, the sea in front of them, and the enemy behind them. It seemed hopeless.

But Moses looked to the Lord and the Lord told him to stretch forth his rod. Moses stretched it forth and the sea divided (Exod. 14:15-31). That was the working of a miracle. That was a divine intervention in the ordinary course of nature.

Actually, two gifts of the Spirit were in operation at the parting of the Red Sea. The working of miracles divided the sea, but what kept it divided? It took the gift of faith to do that. It took the gift of faith to sustain this miracle as an ongoing act.

God's people walked over dryshod to the other side. The enemy attempted to do the same, but the waters came together as they attempted to do so, and the Egyptians were drowned in the depths of the sea.

Elijah and the Widow

The working of miracles was also used in the Old Testament to provide for those in want. For exam-

ple, it was a working of miracles when the widow's cruse of oil didn't fail, but kept flowing out like a fountain of oil until it filled up every vessel she had, and still the cruse kept flowing with oil (1 Kings 17:8-16).

Working of Miracles in the New Testament

Now let's look at a few examples of the working of miracles in operation in the New Testament.

Jesus and the Feeding of the Five Thousand

We see the working of miracles in the New Testament when Jesus took the little boy's lunch and fed five thousand with it (John 6:5-14). I am sometimes amazed at the way some folks — even educated folks — try to explain away the Bible.

For example, I was reading after a fellow once who had all kinds of initials on the end of his name — X, Y, Z, Ph.D., and so on! Please understand that I am not against education. But sometimes people can educate their heads at the expense of educating their hearts.
This particular intellectual I was reading after was trying to explain away the miracles in the Bible. He explained the miracle of Jesus feeding the five thousand with the little boy's loaves of bread by saying, "The loaves of bread in those days were bigger than they are now"!
If he had really read this account in the Bible, he would have noticed that it was a little boy's lunch (John 6:9). In the first place, it is difficult to imagine that a little boy could have carried enough bread out there to have fed five thousand. In the second place, it is difficult to imagine that he had planned to eat alt of that for lunch himself!

No, it was the working of a miracle that fed five thousand with just a little boy's lunch. The disciples even gathered up twelve remaining basketfuls when they were finished eating (John 6:13)!

Ananias and Sapphira

This working of miracles was also used to carry out divine judgment, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10), because this was an example of divine intervention into the ordinary course of nature.

At one time, the Christians in the Early Church had sold all of their possessions and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. They owned everything in common. God didn't tell them to do it.

They evidently felt prompted by the Holy Spirit to do this, and it proved to be a wise move because within a few years the city was overrun, and they would have eventually lost everything they owned.

Ananias and Sapphira had sold their land, but kept part of the money they received. It would have been perfectly all right for them to have said to the disciples, "This is half of the money we received from the sale of our property."

God wasn't requiring them to give all their money to the disciples. There is nothing in the Scriptures that even infers that. It would have been fine if they had been honest and had said, "Here is half the money. We are going to keep the other half."

Ananias came in and laid his money at the apostles' feet, seemingly making the same consecration and dedication that the others had made. Peter asked, "Is that the price of the land?"

"Yes, that is the total price," Ananias answered in effect, but he was telling a lie because he had kept back part of it.

Peter knew through the operation of the gift of the word of knowledge that Ananias was keeping back some of the money. He said, ". . . why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost. . ." (Acts 5:3).

Ananias fell down dead, as a result of divine judgment that came through the working of miracles in operation. The disciples didn't even dismiss for his funeral, and no one went to tell Ananias' wife that he had died.

Three hours later Ananias' wife, Sapphira, came in (Acts 5:7). I don't know how long the service had been going on when Ananias arrived, but three hours later it was still going on. Once while listening to a sermon on Ananias and Sapphira, I heard the preacher say, "Sapphira came in about thirty minutes later."

About that time I thought, Wait a minute! And I read that verse again. It was three hours, not thirty minutes later, that Sapphira came in (Acts 5:7).

Later I pointed this out to that minister. He read it again, shook his head, and said, "I guess I got it confused with our services. If it had been in one of our churches today, if she had come in more than thirty minutes after the service had begun, there wouldn't have been anyone there!"

I believe that most of the time, this is true. However, where the gifts of the Spirit are in operation, I have seen people stay in church all day. Where God's Spirit is moving, folks are not in any hurry to leave.

Divine judgment came to Sapphira and she, too, fell down dead. The working of miracles was again used to carry out divine judgment (Acts 5:8-10).

Paul and Elymas

The working of miracles is also used to confirm the preached Word. When Paul was preaching in Cyprus, Elymas the sorcerer withstood him. Elymas was struck blind for a season through the power of God in the operation of the gift of the working of miracles. That was a supernatural sign to others nearby (Acts 13:4-12).

The Gift of Faith vs. the Working of Miracles To Deliver From Danger

This working of miracles is used to deliver people from unavoidable danger or harm. The gift of faith would carry a person through the danger with great peace and calm without the person's being harmed at all. But the working of miracles is different.

For instance, when Paul was shipwrecked, the storm did not cease until it "blew itself out" (Acts 27:1-44). Paul didn't stand up and say, "Storm, you stop!" But because God had spoken to him through a message from an angel of God, Paul had extraordinary faith to believe for divine protection. Paul passively received a miracle. That was the gift of faith in operation, and he received divine protection and safety for everyone on board the ship, although the ship itself was greatly damaged.

In another incident, however, when Jesus stood on that ship and said, ". .. Peace, be still. . ." (Mark 4:39), and the storm ceased, that was the working of miracles and those on board were delivered from danger.

As I previously mentioned, the difference between the gift of faith and the working of miracles is that the gift of faith receives a miracle and the working of miracles works a miracle. The working of miracles is used to display God's power and magnificence. In Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible, the Greek word for "miracles" in First Corinthians 12:10 is "dunamis," and can also be translated acts of powers.

In other words, the working of miracles could also be called the working of acts of powers. According to the Greek concordance, the Greek word also means, explosions of almightiness or impelling, staggering wonders or astonishments.

In other words, the Greek could read, "To another the working of impelling, staggering wonders or astonishments, or the outworkings of explosions of almightiness and acts of powers."

Gifts of Healings More Prevalent In the New Testament

Although in the Old Testament people were healed and the gifts of healings were in operation, gifts of healings were more commonly in operation in the New Testament than they were in the Old Testament.

On the other hand, the working of miracles was more prominent or more commonly manifested in the Old Testament than in the New Testament, with the exception of the gift of working of miracles in Jesus' ministry.

However, the working of miracles could possibly be included where it says, "And by the hands of the apostles were many SIGNS AND WONDERS wrought among the people . . ."(Acts 5:12). According to the Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, verse 12 says, "And many miracles and works were worked among the people by the hands of the apostles."

Although the Bible doesn't specify what signs and wonders or miracles and works these were, it does go on to tell us about some healings which occurred through the ministry of the apostles (Acts 5:15,16). These healings were not actually the working of miracles in demonstration but gifts of healings in operation. Any spectacular manifestation that has to do with healing is the gifts of healings in operation.

But it could be that because Acts 5:12 does not specify whether these signs and wonders were specifically miracles of healing or not, that this verse could refer to the workings of miracles by the apostles, particularly when the Greek does say that miracles and works were worked by the apostles. But, again, the Bible does not specify what miracles and works these were. Another example of the gift of working of miracles that is specifically mentioned in the New Testament is found in Acts 8.

ACTS 8:5,6
5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.
6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the MIRACLES which he did.

The passage goes on to tell about some of the miraculous healings which took place. However, again, that would not be the same as the gift of the working of miracles. It could be

that verse 6 is talking about miraculous healings, or it could be that it is talking about some other miracles that were wrought.

The Bible does not specify what miracles were wrought, except to say, ". . . hearing and seeing the MIRACLES which he did" (Acts 8:6). So it could also be that some miracles were wrought that weren't healings. If so, that would be the gift of the working of miracles in operation.
We see other passages in the New Testament where the working of miracles is also directly mentioned.

ACTS 6:8
8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and MIRACLES among the people.
ACTS 15:12
12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what MIRACLES and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.
ACTS 19:11
11 And God wrought special MIRACLES by the hands of Paul:

The word "miracles" in Acts 6:8 and Acts 19:11 is the same Greek word, "dunamis," meaning acts of power (Young's) or mighty, wonderful works (Strong's).

The word "miracles" in Acts 15:12 is the Greek word "semeion," which according to Vine's Expository Dictionary, translates as a sign, mark, or token and "is used of miracles and wonders as signs of divine authority." '

The Importance of the Working of Miracles

Howard Carter said in his book, Questions and Answers on Spiritual Gifts: "The working of miracles is a very important manifestation of the Spirit. It is the mighty power of God flowing through a person." 2

We might say that when this gift is in manifestation through a believer, he participates in the same power of God that was in manifestation when God created the world

God certainly worked a miracle when He spoke the earth and the world into existence. When the Lord permits a person through the power of the Holy Spirit to speak a word, and the miraculous occurs, then the same God who created the world is allowing some of His omnipotence to be manifested through that person. But, remember, these gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of the working of miracles, operate as the Spirit wills.

By the working of miracles, a nation was plagued to ensure the deliverance of God's people and to bring Him glory (Exod. 7:12). By the working of miracles, the shadow cast by the sun went back ten steps on a sun dial as a sign that King Hezekiah would live and not die (Isa. 38:1-8).

Through the working of miracles, suddenly and astonishingly a rod that was thrown to the ground miraculously became a serpent (Exod. 7:10). Through the working of miracles, fire flashed from the sky and consumed a sacrifice as well as the altar upon which it had been sacrificed (1 Kings 18:38). One time through the working of miracles, a prophet even made it thunder and hail (Exod. 9:23).

By the working of miracles through Samson, even lions were overcome and were slain. In the case of Daniel, however, the lions were not overcome and slain. Instead, an angel came down and shut the lions' mouths. Daniel received his miracle through the gift of faith in operation. He lay down and went to sleep among those hungry, ravenous lions and was kept in perfect safety.

The Bible says that when Daniel came out ". . . no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God" (Dan. 6:23). That kind of faith to receive a miracle is beyond the ordinary faith that every Christian possesses (Rom. 12:3). It is the gift of faith in action. Remember, the gift of special faith receives the miracle; the gift of the working of miracles does the miracle.

Through the working of miracles, loaves were multiplied (Matt 14:17-21; Mark 6:38-44; Luke 9:13-17; John 6:9-14).

Through the working of miracles, a solid iron axe head was made to float in water as if it were a piece of wood (2 Kings 6:5-7).

Through the working of miracles, the raging force of a storm was quieted (Mark 4:37-41; Luke 8:23-25).

Through the working of miracles, a multitude of fish filled the disciples' net when they let it down at Jesus' instruction (John 21:6-8,11).

Through the working of miracles, the widow's small pot of oil became a fountain of oil and provided sustenance for her and her son (2 Kings 4:1-7).

The Gift of Working of Miracles Is for Us Today

Someone said, "But the working of miracles is not for us today." Who said so? The Bible certainly does not say that (1 Cor. 14:1). Some answer, "Well, if the miraculous were for us today, then we would have it operating in our midst." But I say, if God says we can have the miraculous operation of spiritual gifts,

then we ought to have them!

Full Gospel people often criticize denominational churches because many of these churches, while claiming to believe certain fundamental truths, in reality know little about them. For example, although church doctrine may state a belief in the new birth, the majority of their members and many of their pastors may have never experienced the new birth.

I once heard an example of this kind of problem. A woman left a certain church to join the church her husband attended. Shortly thereafter, she was born again. When she later saw her former pastor, she asked him, "Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ personally?"

"I know about Him, just as I know about George Washington," he replied. "I know Him as a historical person just like I know Abraham Lincoln as a historical person. I read about Lincoln in history books. And I read about Jesus in the Bible

This woman began to talk to her former pastor about becoming personally acquainted with Jesus Christ and having the peace of God in his heart through the new birth.

He asked, "Can I really have that?" She assured him he could. Then she prayed with him to receive Jesus Christ as his Savior. The doctrines of his particular church stated a belief in a born-again experience, yet here was a pastor who had never experienced it!

I spoke to a prominent minister years ago who had retired from the ministry. He was about seventy-two years old at the time, but he was doing more for God than he had ever done in his life in the ministry. He told me that since he had retired, he had gotten saved. He had spent his whole life in the ministry and had never been saved!

Although Full Gospel people sometimes criticize other churches for their failure to put into practice what they have on paper as doctrinal tenets, Full Gospel churches can be guilty of the same fault. Many Full Gospel churches that claim to believe in the gifts of the Spirit don't have them in operation in their churches. We not only need to believe in the gifts of the Spirit, but we need to have them in manifestation in our churches too.

Desire Earnestly Spiritual Gifts

Why don't we have more manifestations of spiritual gifts then? Because we are not meeting God's conditions. God said, ". . . covet earnestly the best gifts . . ." (1 Cor. 12:31). If we as a local church, for example, don't have spiritual gifts in manifestation among us, it is because we are not coveting and desiring these things as we should.

I am thoroughly convinced that as we covet spiritual gifts and earnestly desire them, they will be more in manifestation than they have ever been. But it is not going to come just because we sit around and talk about it and just wish we could see them in demonstration.
God said to desire spiritual gifts. If someone really desires something, he is going to make some effort in that direction in order to see what he desires come to pass.

Paul said, "But covet earnestly the best gifts ..." (1 Cor. 12:31). The dictionary defines "covet" as to desire earnestly. In other words, Paul said to desire earnestly spiritual gifts.
Many people have desires, but they are not very earnest about making sure those desires are fulfilled. But let's desire gifts of the Spirit to be made manifest among us.

Let's covet them as a body of believers — as a group — and let's pray for them to be manifested in our midst. It is all right to pray that the mighty Holy Ghost will manifest Himself among us dividing to every man severally as He wills according to the Scripture(1 Cor. 12:11).

Let's pray that these gifts of special faith, the working of miracles, and gifts of healings, and all the gifts of the Spirit will be more in operation in our midst than they have been.
Let me encourage you as a believer to start praying for the fullness of the spiritual gifts to be in manifestation. That is not a prayer to pray once and then quit.

But daily say to the Lord: "Lord, these manifestations of your Holy Spirit are for us today. You haven't taken them out of the Church. You said these gifts are given to the Church; they belong to us and we ought to have them in manifestation. We pray, Lord, that they will be in

manifestation in our midst." Then as a body of believers, let's covet them; let's desire spiritual gifts earnestly.

This working of miracles "is indeed a mighty gift, glorifying the God of all power," as Howard Carter said, and "stimulating the faith of His people and astonishing and confounding the unbelief of the wicked." 3

I am convinced that in this hour, God wants this gift of the working of miracles to be more in prominence, for what "explosions of almightiness" that would be as a sign to the unbeliever and as a mighty demonstration of God's power to all. What it would do for the Body of Christ in this final hour of God's outpouring upon the earth!

1 W. E. Vine, Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1985), p. 412.
1 Questions and Answers on Spiritual Gifts, p. 63.
:> Ibid., p. 64.
Chapter 17 Gifts of Healings

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

To another faith by the same Spirit; TO ANOTHER THE GIFTS OF HEALING BY THE SAME SPIRIT;

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.

— 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

The gifts of healings are manifested for the supernatural healing of sickness and disease without any natural source or means. As I've mentioned, every one of these nine gifts of the Spirit are supernatural.

Some gifts are more spectacular in demonstration than others, but they are all supernatural. We may have some difficulty, because of our limited knowledge, in defining some of the other gifts. But I think we should have little difficulty defining this gift, the gifts of healings.
Most of us basically understand the subject of healing. Healings were, of course, in prominence, in Jesus' ministry as He walked on the earth. Jesus had a healing ministry, and He also gave authority to His disciples to heal the sick (Matt. 10:8). Healing the sick is also included in the Great Commission (Mark 16:18).

Gifts of Healings: Not Medical Science

First, I want to emphasize the supernatural character of the gifts of healings. The gifts of healings have nothing to do with medical science or human learning.

Luke, who was a medical doctor, was with Paul on many of Paul's missionary journeys. Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles as well as the Book of the Bible that bears his name. Luke was with Paul when he was shipwrecked and they were on the Island of Melita.

Nothing at all is said to the effect that Luke ministered to the folks on that island with his medical knowledge. But the father-in-law of the chief man of the island was sick, and Paul laid his hands on him

and he was healed. He was healed by the supernatural power of God. This was the gifts of healings in manifestation.

Then the islanders brought the sick from all over the island, and Paul ministered to them, and they were healed.

Certainly I believe in medical science, and I thank God for what it can do. I am certainly not opposed to doctors, but some people confuse medical science with the gifts of healings.
I heard someone say on the radio one time that the gifts of healings were what God had given doctors and medical science. But the gifts of healings are not doctors and medical science. If that is God's method of healing, then doctors ought not to charge anything; medical treatment ought to be free because the Bible says, ". . . freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8). However, as anyone who has had any experience with doctors knows, medical treatment is not free. Also, if doctors and medical science were God's method of healing, medical treatment would always be free from errors; doctors would make no mistakes. However, we know that this is not true either. Doctors and medical science are natural means of healing. The gifts of healings and other methods of divine healing are supernatural.

I would not speak disparagingly about doctors, hospitals, and medical science because they do much good for humanity. I thank God for the number of good Christian physicians who have the best interest of their patients at heart and who minister to them with their natural human ability as a trained physician.

But the healing that is supernatural doesn't come by diagnosis or by prescribing treatment. Divine healing comes by laying on of hands, anointing with oil, or sometimes just by speaking the Word, just to name a few examples from the Word of how healing is ministered.
I believe in natural healing and I thank God for it. I think one of the greatest areas in medical science, and one in which the greatest strides have been made, is in the field of preventive medicine. But not only do I believe in natural healing, I also believe in supernatural, or divine healing.

Gifts of Healings Prominent in The New Testament

It will help us to understand the operation and the purpose of these gifts of healings by looking at some of their uses in the Scriptures. We know, first of all, that the purpose of these gifts is to deliver the sick and to destroy the works of the devil in the human body. And the Bible is full of such examples.

We have discussed the working of miracles and the fact that the working of miracles is more prominent in the Old Testament than in the New Testament. It is just the opposite with the gifts of healings. The gifts of healings are more prominent in the New Testament than in the Old Testament.

In the New Testament, there aren't many records of the gift of the working of miracles in operation. There were a few instances in the ministry of Christ and less in the Acts of the Apostles. But in the New Testament, there are many examples of the gifts of healings in operation.

Jesus Ministered as a Man Anointed by the Holy Spirit

Jesus Himself ministered not as the Son of God but as a man anointed by the Holy Ghost. Jesus was just as much the Son of God when He was twenty-five as He was the Son of God when He was thirty years old. Yet at twenty-five years old, He had not healed a single person; not one miracle of healing had been wrought under His ministry prior to His receiving the anointing of the Holy Spirit at the age of thirty.

And Jesus was just as much the Son of God when He was twenty-nine years old as He was when He was thirty. Yet at the age of twenty-nine, not one single person was healed in His ministry, nor had He wrought one miracle of healing.

Even when Jesus was thirty years of age, on the day before Jesus was baptized by John in the River Jordan and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him to anoint Him to minister, Jesus was just as much the Son of God as He was after His baptism.

Yet until Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit, He never healed a single person. Before Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit, there was no manifestation of the power of God operating in His ministry. It was only after the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove in order to anoint Him to minister that the gifts of the Spirit began to be manifest in His ministry. In fact, Jesus Himself said, ". . . the Father that dwelleth in me, HE doeth the works" (John 14:10). He never did claim to do them Himself or on His own. He said, "My Father in Me, He does the works." How did He do them? Through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus stood up and read in His hometown synagogue, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me . . ." (Luke 4:18). Then Peter, preaching to Cornelius and his household, said, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him "(Acts 10:38). Although Jesus had always been the Son of God, He never healed anyone until after He was anointed with the Holy Ghost and power.

This should prove conclusively that Jesus didn't heal the sick by some power that was inherent in Him as the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity. Rather, He healed the sick just as anyone else called of God would minister to the sick today — by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, by the manifestation of these gifts of healings, and by the preaching of the Word of God. The Word of God tells us in the Book of John that Christ had the Spirit without measure (John 3:34). Therefore, we would see a full manifestation of spiritual gifts operating in Jesus' ministry that we wouldn't see in anyone else's ministry because, as John 3:34 infers, Jesus had the Spirit without measure. No other person has the Spirit without measure.

However, it seems to me that John 3:34 infers that the entire Body of Christ has the same measure of the Spirit collectively as Jesus had individually. Therefore, just one person would not have the same measure of success in ministering even the gifts of healings that Jesus had in His earth walk because He had the Spirit without measure.

Having the Spirit without measure, Jesus would have the manifestation of all the gifts of the Spirit in His earth walk, except tongues and interpretation, which are exclusive to the dispensation of the church age which Jesus ushered in. Of course, all the gifts of healings would be included in the spiritual gifts which were manifested in Jesus' ministry.

The Gifts of Healings

I want to point out a few verses in First Corinthians chapter 12. In verses 9, 28, and 30 the gifts of healings are mentioned.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:9,28,30
9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the GIFTS OF HEALING by the same Spirit.... 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then GIFTS OF HEALINGS, helps, governments, diversities of tongues....
30 Have all the GIFTS OF HEALING? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

Notice in verse 28, both the words "gifts" and "healings" are plural, and this is the way it should be listed in every one of the verses where this gift is mentioned.

In the Greek verse 28 is "... gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." And according to Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, the word "healings" is plural in the Greek in verses 9, 28, and 30.

Notice that this is the only one of the spiritual gifts listed in First Corinthians 12 that is in the plural — gifts of healings. All the other gifts of the Spirit are singular, except tongues, which will be covered in a later lesson.

Why are they "gifts of healings" and not the "gifts of healing"? The Bible doesn't specifically say, but I have an opinion which I believe is well-founded as to why this is so. I don't think any of us could know for sure scripturally because the Scriptures don't specifically tell us. However, it may be that there are gifts of healings because there are different kinds of diseases and one gift wouldn't heal every kind of disease.

For example, I have noticed in my own ministry, as well as in the ministry of others who have these gifts of healings in operation in their lives and ministries, that when it comes to healings, in some areas I have more success than in other areas. Other ministers have concurred that this is also true in their ministries.

For instance, other ministers have told me that there are certain kinds of diseases they seldom get people healed of in their ministry, and yet, when it comes to other diseases, nearly every person they pray for is healed.

Of course, this is not to negate the fact that believers can be healed on their own faith in God's Word. And yet we must also recognize that there are those in the Body of Christ who are endued with particular spiritual gifts, such as gifts of healings.

For instance, in my own ministry, ruptures, growths, hernias, or lumps of any kind are almost always healed when I pray for people. I once kept a record in every meeting I had over a

period of several years. And in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred, these types of afflictions were eventually all healed.

Some of the growths disappear within a month. Others sometimes take several months before they completely disappear. But in most cases these growths disappear and the people are healed. That is a manifestation of the gifts of healings.

One fellow who was greatly used of God in praying for people who were deaf, said by his own admission that he very seldom got any other type of malady except deaf folks. I watched him several times in various meetings, and I never saw a deaf person fail to receive healing under this man's ministry.

In the ministry of Jesus, every manner of sickness and every manner of disease was healed (Matt. 9:35). That's because Jesus had the Spirit without measure and all the gifts of healings were in manifestation in His life and ministry.

Gifts of Healings vs. Receiving by Faith

There is a difference between receiving healing through the manifestation of gifts of healings and just simply receiving healing by our own faith in God's Word. God has taught me through the years the difference between the two. Both are scriptural ways to receive healing.

When I received healing for my own body, for example, no one laid hands on me. In fact, I didn't really know there was any church group that believed in divine healing. I didn't know there was such a thing as a Full Gospel movement.

But as a Baptist boy on the bed of sickness, I read Grandma's Methodist Bible and I was healed, not just because I believed in divine healing necessarily, but because I acted on and stood on Mark 11:24: ". . . What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

So I prayed and began to say, "I believe I receive healing for my deformed heart. I believe I receive healing for my paralyzed body. I believe I receive healing from the top of my head to the soles of my feet." And God's healing power was manifested in my body.

My healing came because I acted in faith on God's Word. You can do the same thing. God's Word will work for you if you believe and act on it. Gifts of healings are manifested through another person to you. All healings are done by God, of course, but the difference is in the channel through which healing is manifested.

Someone has said that any time you receive healing, it is done by the gifts of healings in operation. In one sense of the word "gift," healing by any method is a gift because anything you get from God is a gift generally speaking.

However, all healing is not necessarily the gifts of healings in manifestation. My own healing, for example, was manifested as I believed God's Word and acted on it in faith.

Ministering by the Gifts of Healings

Look again at First Corinthians 12:28: "And God hath set some in the church. ..." Paul was not talking here about spiritual gifts, or the gifts of the Spirit when he said, "And God hath set

SOME in the Church. . . ." He was talking about men and women who were equipped with spiritual gifts and ministries.

The "some" that were set in the church includes ". . . first apostles . . ." (1 Cor. 12:28). "Apostles" isn't an individual gift that someone might receive; it is a ministry gift to the Church. "Some" also includes ". . . secondarily prophets . . ." (1 Cor. 12:28). That is a ministry, not to bless an individual, but it is a ministry that is given to bless the whole Church, the Body of Christ.

First Corinthians 12:28 says, ". . . thirdly teachers. . . ." The teaching gift is not something that is given to bless the one who ministers in that anointing. It is a gift that is given to enable a person to bless others. It is a ministry gift to the Body of Christ.

Paul went on in this passage to talk about the working of miracles: ". . . after that miracles . . ." (1 Cor. 12:28). He was saying that there are some people in the ministry who are equipped with the working of miracles in their ministry. That verse continues: "... then gifts of healings . . ."(1 Cor. 12:28).

Then Paul asks the question, "Are all apostles? . . ." (1 Cor. 12:29). In other words, Paul was saying, "Does everyone have the ministry of an apostle?" The answer is no. ". . . are all prophets? ..." [No.]". . . are all teachers? . . ."The answer is no.

Not everyone has the ministry of a teacher to the Body of Christ. Certainly, we could all teach to the extent of our knowledge, but that's not the ministry gift of the teacher. There are those whom God has put in the Church who are equipped by the Holy Spirit with a teaching gift.
I wasn't always a teacher. In fact, for the first nine years of my ministry, I was strictly a preacher. I liked to preach. I was a sermonizer and I had received a great heritage and background along this line from the Southern Baptists. I could read Spur-geon's sermons and preach them just as he did. I loved to preach, but I did not like to teach.

In my pastoral work, it was customary many times for me as the pastor to teach the Sunday School class in the main auditorium, which was attended by folks thirty-five years old and older. I didn't like that.

Sometimes I would wait until Sunday morning to prepare for it, because I knew I could read the lesson and get up and recite it without a lot of study. I took time to prepare my sermons and get ready to preach for my church services, but I just didn't do much about preparing when it came to teaching. I never was so glad about anything in my life when that Sunday morning ordeal was over.

But in May 1943 in the parsonage of the church that my wife and I pastored in Farmersville, Texas, God gave me a teaching gift. I knew what it was when it came. I didn't have it before, but I knew when I got it. It was just as real to me in the Spirit, as it would have been in the natural realm if someone had handed me a $500 bill.

Teaching is a ministry. It wasn't given to me for my individual benefit: it was given to make me a blessing to others. The same is true of the working of miracles and the gifts of healings and of all the ministry gifts.

As we've seen, in First Corinthians 12:29, Paul asks, "Are all apostles? ..." Of course not. ". . . are all teachers? . . ." The answer is no. Everyone doesn't have a teaching ministry. I didn't for years. I would teach when I had to, but I didn't have that ministry. Then Paul asks, ". . . are all workers of miracles?" Well, it is quite obvious that all are not workers of miracles.
Then in verse 30 it says, "Have all the gifts of healing? . . ." No, all people do not have the gifts of healings. This scripture refutes the idea that if a person receives healing, he has also automatically received the impartation of the supernatural gifts of healings — a gift of the Spirit to minister healing to others. And this scripture refutes the idea that a person is necessarily always healed by gifts of healings; he could be healed on his own faith in God's Word.
So First Corinthians 12:28 isn't referring to a healing that is given to a person to bless him; it is a ministry of healing given to bless others.

Any healing from God is a gift, of course. In fact, anything we receive from God — any blessing — would be a gift. But these gifts of the Spirit are supernatural manifestations of the Spirit, and gifts of healings are one such operation manifested to someone through another. Gifts of healings are one way of receiving healing. But as I've said, there are ways of receiving divine healing other than by the manifestation of the gifts of healings.

As a Baptist boy preacher, I would preach on faith and prayer. I wasn't conscious of any kind of anointing or any manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit in operation as I ministered to people. I would just pray for people in faith and God would honor faith because God honors faith in His Word. Therefore, people were healed.

Later I learned that there were others preaching divine healing besides me. They called themselves "Full Gospel." I would fellowship with them, and soon afterwards, I got the baptism of the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues.

I continued to pray for the sick by the laying on of hands and by the anointing with oil. In 1938 I accepted the pastorate of a little Full Gospel church in the blackland of north central Texas. While in prayer late one night, the Lord said to me through the Spirit, "I have given thee gifts of healings and have sent you to minister to the sick."

As a pastor, I had been anointing people with oil and praying for them in faith for healing by the laying on of hands. Up to that time, there had been no manifestation of the gifts of healings through me. Many times people would be healed because they got in agreement with me, and we were acting in faith on God's Word.

But after the Lord spoke to me concerning my ministry to the sick, I became conscious of this other "something" working in my ministry, and there would be a manifestation to other people through me. And I really didn't do anything about it except to yield to the Spirit. Then I saw the difference

between healing by simply believing God's promises and by the operation of the gifts of healings.

People can be healed directly by believing God for themselves. Many are healed as I was, simply by believing God. But when it comes to the gifts of healings, there is a special manifestation of the Spirit through one person to another person who is in need.

When people ask me to minister to them, all I can say is that I will minister to them with all the ability I have and with all that God gives me. But we don't operate the gifts of the Spirit as we will; it is as the Spirit wills.

However, if there is no gift of the Spirit in manifestation, people can always be healed and set free based on the Word of God. The Bible says it is the anointing, or the power of God, that breaks the yoke (Isa. 10:27). The anointing is on the Word of God.

That's why it is so important for believers to be members of a local body — a local church — where the Word of God is preached and where God moves by His Spirit. Also, I have found that when the Spirit of God is moving, it is a whole lot easier to receive whatever it is you need from God than it is at other times

However, that still does not eliminate receiving healing on your own by simple faith in God's Word because the Bible says, ". . . by whose [Jesus'] stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Thank God for His Word and for the privilege of believing and acting upon His Word. Thank God, too, for supernatural manifestations and for gifts of healings.

Chapter 18 Gift of Prophecy

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
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.
— 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

As I explained earlier, the simplest way to describe the gifts of the Spirit is to say that three of them say something. Three of them do something. And three of them reveal something.

Three gifts of utterance that say something:
Prophecy
Divers kinds of tongues
Interpretation of tongues

Three gifts of power that do something:
The gift of faith
The working of miracles
The gifts of healings

Three gifts of revelation that reveal something:
The word of wisdom
The word of knowledge
The discerning of spirits

In this lesson, we will begin our discussion of the three gifts of inspiration or utterance. Of these three gifts, prophecy is the most important. Of course, the reason it is the most important is that it takes the other two inspirational gifts — divers kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues — to equal this one gift.

The Bible says, ". . . greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret ..." (1 Cor. 14:5). This infers that to speak with tongues and to interpret the tongues is equivalent to prophecy. Therefore, prophecy is really the most important of these three gifts of inspiration or utterance in that it does not require another gift to complete it.
Prophecy is supernatural utterance in a known tongue.

Divers kinds of tongues is supernatural utterance in an unknown tongue.
Interpretation of tongues is a supernatural showing forth of that which has been said in an unknown tongue.

The Hebrew meaning of the phrase, "to prophesy" is to flow forth. It also carries with it the thought: to bubble forth like a fountain, to let drop, to lift up, to tumble forth, and to spring forth. The Greek word that is translated "prophesy" means to speak for another. So "prophesy" can mean to speak for God or to be His spokesman.

In First Corinthians 14:1 we read: "Follow after charity [love], and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may PROPHESY." We are told to desire spiritual gifts, but especially that we might prophesy. That doesn't mean we are not to desire the other gifts, but we are to especially desire to prophesy.

Again, at the end of First Corinthians chapter 14, Paul repeated, "Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy ..." (1 Cor. 14:39). Paul was writing by the inspiration of God. We could say it this way: God through Paul spoke to the Church at Corinth (and it applies to the Church everywhere) to desire spiritual gifts, but rather that we may prophesy (1 Cor. 14:1,39).
Foretelling vs. Forth Telling

The simple gift of prophecy should not be confused with the prophetic office or with prophetic utterance that may come forth in the prophet's ministry. Paul said, "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to EDIFICATION, and EXHORTATION, and COMFORT" (1 Cor. 14:3).

Thus, we can readily see that in the simple gift of prophecy there is no revelation. The simple gift of prophecy is given for edification, exhortation, and comfort. In the office of the prophet, however we very often find that revelation or foretelling does come forth, even through the vehicle of prophecy.

It is also interesting to note the difference between prophecy in the Old Testament and prophecy in the New Testament. In the Old Testament prophecy was essentially foretelling, but in the New Testament we see that the gift of prophecy shifts strongly to forth telling.
Prophesying Is More Than Preaching

Some people think that "to prophesy" means to preach. All inspired utterance is prophecy in some form or another, but the spiritual gift of prophecy isn't preaching. Sometimes there is an element of prophecy in preaching when a person is anointed by the Spirit and is inspired to say

things spontaneously that come from his spirit rather than his head. But that is only one phase of the operation of the gift of prophecy.

I have heard people say, "I was witnessing to someone about the Lord and I said things to them that were in line with the Word but that were beyond my own thinking. I didn't think it and it didn't come out of my mind. I was just inspired by the Holy Spirit to say it." That is a part of the operation of this gift of prophecy because prophecy is inspired utterance. The gift of prophecy goes beyond speaking by our own reasoning processes and intellect.

"To preach" means to proclaim, to announce, to cry, or to tell. The scriptural purpose of the gift of prophecy is different from the purpose of preaching.

For example, Jesus didn't say that men would be saved by the foolishness of prophesying, but by the foolishness of preaching (1 Cor. 1:21). The supernatural gifts of the Spirit are given to arrest people's attention, not to save them. Even on the Day of Pentecost when people were speaking in tongues, none of those standing by listening got saved until Peter got up andpreached to them (Acts 2:14-41).

The Gift of Prophecy vs. The Office of the Prophet

As we have said, the gift of prophecy should not be confused with the prophetic office. The simple gift of prophecy has no revelation in it. Rather, it speaks unto men for their edification, exhortation, and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3); it is to edify the Church (1 Cor. 14:4).

Notice that in First Corinthians 14:1, Paul was telling the whole Church at Corinth to covet to prophesy and to desire spiritual gifts, ". . . but rather that ye may prophesy." Yet in First Corinthians 12:28, Paul said that all are not prophets. If prophesying made a person a prophet, then Paul would be contradicting himself. In other words, the fact that the gift of simple prophecy operates through a person doesn't make him a prophet.

For example, a rich man has money. Most of us have at least some money, even if it's only a few cents, but that doesn't make us rich. By the same token, a prophet would of course prophesy, but a person who prophesies wouldn't necessarily be a prophet.

Also, a prophet would have more of the gifts of the Spirit in operation than just the gift of prophecy.

He would have revelation gifts operating along with prophecy for the simple reason that Paul says in First Corinthians 14:29 and 30, "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be REVEALED to another that sitteth by [that is, another prophet], let the first hold his peace."

Here Paul is talking about revelation. "If any thing be REVEALED . . ." (v. 30). Therefore, the prophet would have other revelation gifts operating in his ministry, as well as the gift of prophecy.

To constitute standing in the office of the prophet, a person needs to have at least two of the revelation gifts operating on a continual basis in his life and ministry, plus the gift of prophecy. In other words, for a person to stand in the office of the prophet, he would need to be called to the fivefold ministry as a preacher or teacher of the Word (Eph. 4:11,12), and have two of the

three revelation gifts — the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, or the discerning of spirits ¦— plus prophecy operating consistently in his ministry.

Therefore, we should not confuse the office of the prophet with the simple gift of prophecy which we are all told to covet: "Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy . . ."(1 Cor. 14:39). We can all have the gift of prophecy because God wouldn't tell us to covet something that wasn't available to us, nor to desire something that we couldn't have (1 Cor. 14:1,5,39). Yet all will not have all the gifts of the Spirit operating in their lives and ministries.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:1,5,39
1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may PROPHESY....
5 1 would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye PROPHESIED: for greater is he that PROPHESIETH than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying....
39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to PROPHESY, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

We can all prophesy, but we can't all be prophets. And although we can all prophesy, we must also realize that prophecy through the office of the prophet carries more authority than the simple gift of prophecy would operating through the laity.

New Testament Example Of the Gift of Prophecy

In Acts chapter 21, we see a scriptural illustration of some believers who had the gift of prophecy operating in their lives.

ACTS 21:8,9
8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.
9 And the same man I Philip i had four daughters, virgins, WHICH DID PROPHESY.

All four of Philip's daughters had this simple gift of prophecy operating in their lives. They must have prophesied in the services held in their house because otherwise Paul and his company would not have known that they prophesied.

Philip's daughters spoke to the whole company to edification, exhortation, and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3). However, when the prophet Agabus came, he had a message from the Holy Spirit on a higher order, which brought revelation.

New Testament Example of The Prophet's Ministry

ACTS 21:10,11
10 And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus.
11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

Agabus wasn't necessarily prophesying here in the sense that we normally think of the gift of simple prophecy. He just had a message from the Holy Ghost. He had a message that had some revelation with it — the word of wisdom.

However, no definite direction was given to Paul in this message in the sense that Agabus didn't tell Paul to go or not to go to Jerusalem. That decision was left up to Paul. Agabus just told Paul what was going to happen in the near future should he go to Jerusalem.
There are two possible ways of interpreting the word of wisdom that Agabus had for Paul. One, it was a word of wisdom delivered through the vehicle of prophecy. Two, Agabus was just reporting the word of wisdom he already knew by the Spirit of God.

Therefore, we see that the prophet may prophesy, but the message he brings may not be simple prophecy at all. In other words, the message the prophet gives may come through the vehicle of prophecy (inspired utterance), but the message may actually be the revelation gifts in operation, such as the word of wisdom or the word of knowledge.

Or the prophet may just speak what he has already previously received from the Lord, reporting, "Thus saith the Lord," and the message may actually be other gifts of the Spirit in operation, such as the word of wisdom.

Therefore, in Acts 21:10,11, one of the revelation gifts — the word of wisdom — may have been manifested through the gift of prophecy. In that case, prophecy would just be the vehicle through which the word of wisdom came.

As I said, the other possibility is that when Agabus gave the word of the Lord to Paul, he was only reporting the word of wisdom he already knew by the Spirit, saying, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost," and was not literally speaking under the unction of prophecy.

Misuses of the Gift of Prophecy

The misuse of the gift of prophecy can cause confusion among believers. If folks would use prophecy as the Scripture teaches, it would be a great blessing to the Body of Christ. But some people hear a minister who operates in the prophet's ministry bring forth revelation and they think they can do that too. So they try to bring forth some foretelling instead of just forth telling, and they get into trouble.

A woman once told me: "I attend a prayer group where all they do is lay hands on one another and prophesy. But if anything has ever come to pass, I don't know it. They laid hands on me and prophesied that my mother was going to die within six month's time, but it's been longer than that and she hasn't died yet."

The woman continued, "Then they prophesied that my husband was going to leave me within the year, but it's been longer than that and he hasn't left me yet. We have a good marriage. They have prophesied a lot of other things, too, none of which has happened."

These people were misusing whatever gift they may have had. But if people would just stay with the simple gift of prophecy, "speaking unto men to edification, to exhortation and to comfort," they would be fine.

Certainly, there are those who stand in the prophet's ministry who sometimes minister along the line of foretelling or prediction. There are others who operate in other gifts of the Spirit such as a word of wisdom or a word of knowledge, which may also come forth in prophecy.

However, those who operate in the word of knowledge or the word of wisdom through prophecy do not necessarily stand in the office of the prophet, because, as we saw earlier, there are other qualifications needed to stand in that office. Also, revelation gifts are ministered more on a continual basis in the office of the prophet.

The Simple Gift of Prophecy Is Not Prediction

Many people think the gift of prophecy is prediction. The simple gift of prophecy, however, is not prediction but is speaking unto men ". . . to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3).

When it comes to the gifts of the Spirit, you don't have them when you are born into this world. You must first be born into the Kingdom of God through the new birth (2 Cor. 5:17), and then you must receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4).

Then the Bible says the Holy Spirit divides the gifts of the Spirit to every man severally as He wills (1 Cor. 12:11). Also, you must then be in the Spirit for the gifts of the Spirit to operate; gifts of the Spirit do not operate in the flesh. In other words, you must wait upon the unction of the Holy Spirit for the manifestation of spiritual gifts. That is not something we do apart from God.

It is amazing how many people have followed the wrong teaching along this line. But there is no use in backing off from the real and the genuine because of the counterfeit. No, that is all the more reason we need to allow the Holy Spirit to demonstrate the genuine gifts of the Spirit through us and show people from the Word of God what is genuine.

It is unfortunate that even some Christians are misled about spiritual gifts. For example, one fellow told me that before he went to work every morning, he waited for the Lord to give him a word of prophecy to know which tie to wear. God is not interested in which tie you wear! That wasn't a word of prophecy; actually he was opening himself to deception by the devil. Someone once wrote asking me to prophesy to him which church he should attend. This is unscrip-tural! Each believer has the Holy Spirit as a Guide and Counselor on the inside (John 16:13). And the primary way God leads His children is by the inward witness (Rom. 8:14), not by someone else prophesying to them.

On another occasion while I was holding a meeting in Colorado, some folks from New York called the owner of the motel where I was staying at 4:00 in the morning and said that it was an emergency and they needed to talk to me.

My wife and I had no phone in the room where we were staying, so the owner came knocking on our door. He said I had a telephone call. I got out of bed and about half awake, I put my shirt on and started out the door to the motel office. My wife called out to me, "Honey, aren't you going to put on your pants?" Only half awake, I hadn't realized that I wasn't wearing them! I went back and put on my pants.

When I answered the phone, the person on the other end said, "Brother Hagin, we are having an all-night prayer meeting and we just got to thinking we would call you and see if you had a word for us." She meant a word of prophecy. Well, I had a word for them, all right, but it wasn't a word of prophecy! And I didn't give it to them because it wouldn't have been from the Lord — it would have been from my flesh!

Sometimes God may use you to give a word to someone, but that doesn't mean you can just turn the gifts of the Spirit on and off whenever you want to. Let's realize that what we have is from and by the Spirit of God, and let's minister what we have according to the direction and unction of the Spirit of God.

Manifestations of the Holy Spirit In Corporate Worship

We find additional instruction regarding this use of the gift of prophecy in First Corinthians 14:26.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:26
26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

This scripture shows us that the Spirit of God is more apt to move when folks come together in the Name of Jesus to worship. The Spirit of God manifests Himself more readily in an atmosphere of worship and praise where God is being glorified.

For example, in my ministry I always get greater results when I pray for people under the anointing. Whether praying for the sick, praying for people to be filled with the Holy Spirit, or praying for the needs of the people, I have found that it is better to pray for the people after the Word has gone forth. Then I am usually more anointed to minister. That is why I pray for people many times at the conclusion of the service

Some want to rush in and be prayed for right away, but when we come together in the Name of Jesus, worshipping God and teaching the Word, we are often in a much better spiritual attitude to believe God and to receive from Him. And the gifts are more likely to be manifested in an atmosphere of praise and worship.

The Holy Spirit Manifests Himself As We Seek the Lord

We find another indication about the kind of atmosphere the Holy Ghost manifests Himself in as we read Acts 13:1: "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers. . . ,"and it goes on to list the names of five men.

ACTS 13:1-4
1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.
2 AS THEY MINISTERED TO THE LORD, and fasted, THE HOLY GHOST SAID, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.
3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.
4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed....

Notice that it was as they ministered to the Lord and fasted that the Holy Spirit manifested Himself.

But notice in Acts 13:2, the Scripture doesn't say that the Holy Ghost just witnessed to the disciples' spirits about separating Barnabas and Saul unto the ministry. It says the Holy Ghost said something. He said ". . . Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

The Holy Ghost said something through one of the prophets because it is through this ministry gift, the office of the prophet — those who are especially equipped with certain revelation and utterance gifts — that the Holy Ghost normally speaks. Otherwise, the Holy Spirit leads by an inward witness, which every believer has (Rom. 8:14).

Notice something else in this passage. This wasn't when Barnabas and Saul were called to the ministry; they had already received the call to the ministry because the Holy Spirit said, ". . . for the work whereunto I HAVE CALLED THEM" (v...forthe. 2). That's past tense.

Therefore, Barnabas and Saul had already received the call to the ministry from God in their own private lives. In other words, they weren't receiving their call to the ministry through a . The Holy Spirit was merely confirming that call through a prophet.

Caution Needed With Personal Prophecies

Let me stress that we need to be very careful about personal prophecies. Lives have been ruined and many unfortunate things have happened through misuse of personal prophecies. I have to be very careful myself because God uses me from time to time prophetically in this way. But over the years I have seen so much error in the area of personal prophecy that it almost makes a person want to draw back from the genuine prophetic ministry. I have to watch myself in order not to pull back too far the other way and not yield to the Spirit of God to be used the way He wants to use me.

Simple Prophecy Edifies, Exhorts, and Comforts

1 CORINTHIANS 14:3
3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edifica(ion, and exhortation, and comfort.

If we keep in mind the scriptural use of prophecy, we will not get offdoctrinally in this area. The simple gift of prophecy is given to speak to people super-naturally - to edify the church: ". . . he that prophesieth edifieth the church" (1 Cor. 14:4).

This gift of prophecy is also given to edify the Church through exhortation. In the Greek, the word "exhort" in First Corinthians 14:3 means a calling nearer to God or an invitation. First Corinthians 14:3 also says the gift of prophecy is given to comfort. Much of what some people call "prophecy" never comforts anyone; rather, it discomforts them.

Therefore, it could not be this bona fide gift of the Spirit in operation because the gift of prophecy is given for edification, exhortation, and comfort. We might find, however, that the revelation given forth in a prophet's ministry may sometimes be discomforting because it sometimes brings with it correction or conviction of sin. But the simple gift of prophecy only ministers edification, exhortation, and comfort.

For example, once while teaching a faith seminar in Phoenix, Arizona, I discerned an evil spirit in a fellow sitting near the front of the church. I knew he had a wrong spirit and would disrupt the service if given an opportunity.

I tried to keep from pausing in my sermon long enough to give him a chance to break in. However, at the conclusion of the message he leapt to his feet, threw up his hands, and started telling the congregation everything he thought was wrong with them.

This fellow did everything except what the scriptural use of the gift of prophecy should do. Instead of edifying the people, he tore them down. Instead of exhorting or calling them nearer to God, he drove them, away. Instead of comforting them, he discomforted them.

Realizing that he might be mentally unbalanced, I tried to bear with him somewhat, remembering the following passage of Scripture:

1 THESSALONIANS 5:14-21
14 ... comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.
15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.
16 Rejoice evermore.
17 Pray without ceasing.
18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.
19 Quench not the Spirit.
20 Despise not prophesy ings.
21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

It was necessary for Paul to give these instructions because the Church at Thessalonica had so much misuse of the gift of prophecy that these folks almost despised it. Therefore, Paul, writing by the Spirit of God, had to instruct them, "Despise not prophesy ings" (1 Thess. 5:20). However, those who go around telling everyone what is wrong with them and tearing people down, supposedly operating in the gift of prophecy as this fellow in my meeting did, are not operating in the bona fide gift of the Spirit of God.

A woman once came to me and thanked me after I corrected her for her misuse of the gift of prophecy. Teachable people like to know when they are wrong and appreciate godly correction. She said, "I can see that I misused what I had. God uses me in prophecy sometimes, but I see now that what I was trying to do was to get everybody in line through prophecy."

She had been trying to regulate people's lives through the gift of prophecy; she was trying to make all women dress as she dressed. But she had some strange ideas about dress and about a number of other things! Comfort, not correction, is the purpose of this simple gift of prophecy.

Prophecy in One's Prayer Life

The gift of prophecy, like tongues, has to do with more than just public utterance. Prophecy can be used in one's prayer life too. For example, in the

Book of Psalms, prophecy was used in prayer and praise to God. As a matter of fact, the whole Book of Psalms was given by the spirit of prophecy. The Psalms were Israel's prayer and songbook. Some of the psalms are prayers that were given by inspired utterance.
We can see prophecy being used in the believer's prayer life in the New Testament too. For example, in Ephesians 5:19, believers are encouraged to speak to themselves ". . . in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." That is the gift of prophecy in operation.

Many times while praying, a person can speak in tongues and then speak out things by the Spirit of God. Speaking with tongues is the beginning of the things of the Spirit, because speaking with tongues is the door into the supernatural. And we know that the gift of tongues is given to every Spirit-filled believer as the evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit.
Also, Jesus didn't say that just a few disciples should speak with tongues. He said that all believers should speak with tongues: "And these signs shall follow them that believe . . . they shall speak with new tongues" (Mark 16:17).

But God wants every Spirit-filled believer to do more than speak with tongues. He wants us to be able to interpret what we pray in tongues, as the Spirit leads. "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret" (1 Cor. 14:13). God wouldn't tell us to pray for something we couldn't have. Of course, it is not necessary to interpret everything we pray in the Spirit in our own private prayer life.

And then, of course, there is also the public use of the gift of interpretation of tongues. That is to be used in the local assembly: "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret" (1 Cor. 14:27). Not every believer will have this gift; not every believer will minister publicly in the gift of interpretation of tongues.

And God also wants us to prophesy in order to bring comfort and encouragement to the Body of Christ because the Bible plainly says, ". . . desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy . . . he that prophesieth edifieth the church" (1 Cor. 14:1,4). Through this gift of prophecy we can speak super-naturally, not only unto believers and for our own personal benefit, but we can also speak supernatu-rally unto God (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

Prophesying in your own personal prayer life begins with speaking in other tongues (1 Cor. 14:2). In my own experience, for example, as I pray in other tongues, my spirit is in direct contact with God, yet I am communicating with Him in a tongue that is unknown to me.

When you are speaking in tongues, that is a supernatural utterance in an unknown tongue. Paul said when we pray in an unknown tongue, our understanding is unfruitful, unless we interpret what we are praying (1 Cor. 14:14,15). In other words, we don't always know what we are praying about when we pray in other tongues. However, when you pray with prophecy, you can listen to yourself speak in a known tongue and, therefore, you can know what you are saying.

Very often praying in tongues is a springboard to go into prophecy in prayer. Remember, prophecy in its broadest sense is inspired utterance. For example, sometimes I pray about certain things with my own understanding, which may not necessarily be inspired utterance at all. I may just be praying as well as I know how to about the situation in my own understanding

— in my own native language. (Of course, one can also pray in one's understanding in his own language in the Spirit; that is, inspired and directed by the Holy Spirit.)

Then as I pray about the situation awhile in tongues, many times I move over into prophecy — inspired utterance. Then as I pray by inspired utterance, I can actually be praying out the plan of God by inspired utterance as the word of wisdom (John 16:13; Cor. 14:1-5 Amplified) manifests through the gift of prophecy in my private prayer life. This can happen in the private prayer life of any Spirit-filled believer.

Praying in prophecy can carry with it a more authoritative anointing because you can actually be praying out the word of wisdom in prayer through the vehicle of prophecy. Praying out the word of wisdom through prophecy lifts you above where you were before in prayer and many times reveals to you a part or a fragment of the plan of God — a "word" of wisdom. You are actually praying out the plan and purpose of God for your own life in prayer (John 16:13,14). However, a distinction must be made between praying out the plan of God in one's own private prayer life by the word of wisdom through the vehicle of prophecy, and in the word of wisdom manifesting through a believer in prophecy in public ministry.

Any believer can pray out the plan of God for his own life (John 16:13,14) either in tongues or as the Spirit wills, in prophecy. But that is distinct and separate from public ministry. Because the Holy Spirit may show the believer things to come in private times of prayer, does not necessarily mean that the word of wisdom will operate through the believer publicly.

Also, we must realize that the word of knowledge or the word of wisdom may operate in the believer's life in prayer, but that doesn't make him a prophet. There is a difference between the believer who may operate in these spiritual gifts in his own private prayer life, and one who stands in a fivefold office (such as the prophet) through whom the Holy Spirit manifests spiritual gifts in public ministry.

Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs By the Gift of Prophecy

Paul said, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). Then in the next verse he said, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

We read in Acts chapter 13 that the disciples ministered to the Lord. This was perhaps one way that they ministered to the Lord — by singing and making melody in their hearts to Him. Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are not songs that are sung out of a songbook. They are songs given by the inspiration of the Spirit of God. A psalm is a spiritual poem or an ode. It can be recited or chanted or sung. The hymn and the spiritual song are, of course, sung. One who is given more to singing would probably sing the psalms and hymns given to him by inspiration of the Spirit.

Psalms and hymns come through the spirit of prophecy as an inspired utterance, and therefore could also come through the vehicle of tongues and interpretation.

I am not a singer. Therefore, when I get psalms, particularly during times of stress or strain or when I am going through a crisis, I just recite them. Sometimes I will speak in psalms all night long to myself and to the Lord, one right after another.

These psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are given spontaneously by the inspiration of the Spirit. They are a demonstration of the gift of prophecy or its equivalent tongues and interpretation in manifestation. These psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs can be used to comfort us in times of tests or trials.

Paul writing to the Church at Colossae even further said, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. . ."(Col. 3:16).

Another interesting thing to note is that the order of the services in the Early Church evidently differed from ours in that believers went to church because they had something, not just to get something.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:26
26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation....

Why did they have a psalm they could share with one another? Because they had been speaking in psalms to the Lord; they had been edifying themselves at home.

The Book of Psalms in the Old Testament were not written to us in the same way the Epistles were written directly to us — the Church. We read the psalms and they bless us and encourage us because they are inspired by the Spirit. There is some revelation in some of these psalms concerning prophecy of the coming Christ and of things pertaining to the future and to the Church. But many of the psalms were given to David, for example, when he was going through a certain test or trial in his life.

For instance, one time Saul sought to kill David. While hiding in a cave, David got a psalm by the spirit of prophecy, and it was given to him personally to encourage him. It encouraged him then, and those psalms encourage us, too, when we are facing tests and trials in life.

So we can see why Paul said to the members of the Church at Corinth, and to Christians everywhere, to covet to prophesy, for in this way they can talk to God supernaturally and to themselves in a known language. There is a fellowship in the Spirit that comes through using prophecy in prayer that is beyond what we've previously experienced.

God's Word teaches that all Spirit-filled believers should not only speak with tongues when they are initially filled with the Spirit, but they should continue to speak with tongues as a continual experience, after they are filled with the Spirit. The Word also teaches that all Spirit-filled believers should be speaking to themselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
If we follow Paul's admonition today and covet to prophesy, we, too, can speak to ourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Begin to covet to prophesy because the Word of God encourages believers to do so.

First Corinthians 12:31 says, ". . . covet earnestly the best gifts. ..." As you do, then you will be able to speak supernaturally to the Body of Christ God's words of edification, exhortation, and comfort as the Spirit wills. You will also be able to speak supernaturally through the gift of prophecy in your private prayer life, edifying yourself and worshipping God in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

Chapter 19 The Gift of Divers Kinds of Tongues

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;
To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
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.
- 1 Corinthians 12.:7-11

In our study of the gifts of the Spirit, we come to the subject of divers kinds of tongues. The word "divers" in First Corinthians 12:10 is italicized, which means that it was added by the translator.

Actually, this verse reads, "... to another, kinds of tongues. . . ." However, in another scripture, Paul said that God set in the Church diversities of tongues (1 Cor. 12:28); therefore, we would not be out of line scripturally to say "divers" kinds of tongues, or different kinds of tongues. This utterance gift of tongues is an important gift in that tongues is the door into the supernatural. This doesn't necessarily mean the gift of tongues is the best gift, for as we indicated previously, the best gift is the gift needed at the moment.

Tongues: The Most Prominent Gift

Of the three vocal gifts, or as they are sometimes called, the gifts of utterance or inspiration — the gift of prophecy, divers kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues — the gift of tongues is the most prominent.

A question often asked by those in denominations is, "Why do Full Gospel people place such emphasis on tongues?" The answer is, "We do not." There are several reasons why it may seem that we do.

First, we are often questioned about tongues and are therefore drawn into discussions about tongues.

Second, speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence when people are baptized in the Holy Ghost. Third, utterance in tongues in public assembly is the most frequently manifested gift of the Spirit.

Fourth, tongues and interpretation of tongues are distinctive to the Church Age. Therefore, they are more in operation.

We see all the other gifts of the Spirit in operation in the Old Testament — the word of wisdom,

the word of knowledge, special faith, gifts of healings, working of miracles, prophecy, and discerning of spirits — all the gifts of the Spirit except for tongues and interpretation of tongues.

And in the ministry of Jesus, too, we see all the gifts of the Spirit in operation except for tongues and interpretation of tongues; you won't find tongues and interpretation of tongues in operation in His ministry.

The fifth reason why it seems that Full Gospel people emphasize tongues so much is that Paul gave prominence to tongues. One reason he did was that then, just as now, speaking in tongues was widely misunderstood.

The Gift of Tongues Is a Supernatural Sign

Divers kinds of tongues is supernatural utterance by the Holy Spirit in languages never learned by the speaker, nor understood by the speaker, nor necessarily always understood by the hearer. Speaking with tongues has nothing whatsoever to do with linguistic ability; it has nothing to do with the mind or the intellect of man. It is a vocal miracle of the Holy Spirit.

We might ask, "What is the good of speaking with tongues?" Jesus said in Mark 16:17, ". . . these signs shall follow them that believe . . . they shall speak with new tongues."
One preacher, endeavoring to explain that, said, "This just means that a fellow who used to curse and tell lies and vulgar jokes doesn't do that anymore; he speaks with a new tongue."
This argument, however, is a little thin because in reading the entire context of the following passage of Scripture, we see that every one of these signs is supernatural.

MARK 16:15-18
15 .. (.Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.
17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils [exercise authority over demons and evil spirits in His name]; they shall speak with new tongues;
18 They shall take up serpents [meaning believers won't be harmed if they do so accidentally, as Paul did on the island of Melital; and if they drink any deadly thing [accidentally], it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Any thinking person could see that if the other four of these signs — casting out devils, taking up serpents, drinking any deadly thing without suffering harm, and laying hands on the sick — are supernatural, surely the fifth sign, speaking in tongues, is also supernatural.

Therefore, one reason we speak in tongues is that Jesus said this is one sign which should follow believers. Also, tongues is the scriptural, initial evidence also of the baptism in the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4).

The Gift of Tongues Is Unique To This Dispensation

One preacher disagreed with speaking in tongues, saying, "John the Baptist had the Holy Ghost and he didn't speak with tongues. Prophets of the Old Testament had the Holy Ghost, but they never spoke in tongues. So why do we need to speak in tongues?"

But we must remember that John the Baptist ministered as a prophet under the Old Covenant. Prophets under the Old Covenant had not been born again. They did not have a recreated

human spirit; they had never been made a new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) because Jesus had not yet come in His death, burial, and resurrection to redeem mankind.

Therefore, prophets under the Old Covenant did not have the infilling of the Holy Spirit in the same way that a born-again, Spirit-filled believer does living under the New Covenant. Under the Old Covenant, the Holy Spirit came upon those who stood in the offices of the prophet, priest, and king to enable them to fulfill their offices or ministries, but He did not indwell and infill them in the same sense that He does the born-again, Spirit-filled believer living under the New Covenant.

We are not living under the Old Covenant. What happened under the Old Covenant was written as an example for us now, but that doesn't mean we are to try to live like they did under the Old Covenant. We want the Holy Ghost and His gifts manifested in our lives according to the dispensation in which we live. And the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues are unique to the dispensation of the Church Age.

John the Baptist was still under the Old Covenant. He was a prophet under the Old Covenant. Jesus Himself said concerning John the Baptist, ". . . Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he"(Matt. 11:11).

Therefore, we have to start with the Acts of the Apostles. We can't go back to the Old Covenant to pattern our lives because we are not living under that covenant.

We have a better covenant established on better promises (Heb. 8:6), particularly in the area of the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Tongues Is the Evidence Of Being Filled With the Spirit

Having been taught in a denominational church that when one is born again he receives the Holy Ghost, and that is all of the Holy Ghost there is to receive, I decided as a young boy pastor to find out about this for myself. I went to the Bible for my answer.

I believed that I was preaching in my church the same new birth that they preached and experienced in the Acts of the Apostles. I believed and still do believe that I was preaching the same water baptism that they preached and practiced in the Acts of the Apostles. I believed and still do believe that I was teaching and observing the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion just as the Early Church did.

I wanted to be scripturally based and New Testament taught and follow biblical doctrinal practices, so I simply went to the Acts of the Apostles to satisfy my own mind.

As I examined the scriptures closely in the Book of Acts, I found that there are five recorded instances where believers received the Holy Spirit.

These five instances, discussed in Chapter 8, are sufficient to show us a pattern of the Holy Spirit's dealing in the Early Church: people were saved and subsequently filled with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. This is a pattern for us living under the same covenant today. God desires that every believer be filled with the Holy Spirit — the enduement of power from on High (Luke 24:49). Let's review these five instances once more.

1. Acts 2:1-4
The 120 on the Day of Pentecost: These were men and women, including Mary, the mother of Jesus. Gathered in the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost, they were filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

2. Acts 8:5-17
The Samaritans: Saved under Philip's ministry, they received the Holy Spirit when Peter and John laid hands on them. Simon saw physical evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit, which was probably speaking in tongues.

3. Acts 9:3-18
Saul (later called Paul): When Ananias laid hands on him, Paul received the Holy Spirit. We know Paul spoke in tongues because later he wrote to the Church at Corinth, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye r. 14:18).

4. Acts 10:44-46
Cornelius and his household: This incident occurred years after the Day of Pentecost. As Peter was preaching the gospel to these first Gentile converts, they were all saved (Acts 11:14) and filled with the Holy Spirit, and spoke with other tongues.

5. Acts 19:1-7
The Ephesian disciples: This incident occurred many years after the Day of Pentecost. These Ephesian disciples were saved and baptized in the Name of Jesus after Paul explained the gospel to them. Then when Paul laid hands on them, they were immediately filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke with other tongues.

Thus, in the Bible in the Acts of the Apostles, we see that over many years there are three recorded incidents of believers receiving the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking with tongues. And twice it is inferred that the evidence for believers receiving the Holy Spirit was speaking in tongues. We should expect to have the same witness of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in evidence today.

Purposes of Speaking in Tongues

We talked in detail in Chapter 8 about the reasons for speaking in tongues. Let's briefly go over a few of those reasons again.

Initial Evidence of Receiving the Holy Spirit

Speaking in tongues is the initial evidence or sign of the Holy Spirit's infilling Presence (Acts 2:4). I believe, of course, that there are other evidences that will follow, but this is the first or initial physical evidence.

Speaking Mysteries Supernaturally to God

Paul gives another reason for speaking with tongues in First Corinthians 14:2: "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but UNTO GOD: for no man understandeth him; howbeit IN THE SPIRIT HE SPEAKETH MYSTERIES" (1 Cor. 14:2).

Moffatt's translation reads, "... he is talking of divine secrets. . . ." Therefore, one reason for speaking with tongues is so that men may speak mysteries supernaturally to God: ". . . he . . . .peaketh not unto men, but UNTO GOD . . ." (1 Cor. 14:2).

I remember as a young Baptist pastor, my heart longed to fellowship supernaturally with God. I sometimes prayed several hours at a time, but I always went away feeling somewhat cheated in my spirit. My spirit hadn't said what it wanted to because I was praying mostly out of my head — my own understanding — and I was not able to fully express my heart supernaturally to God that way.

One of the great benefits of being filled with the Spirit and speaking with other tongues is that we can talk to God supernaturally. It is your spirit, by the Holy Spirit within you, talking to God: "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful" (1 Cor. 14:14). The Amplified Bible says, ". . . my spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays ..." (1 Cor. 14:14).

Magnifying God

Another scriptural purpose of speaking in tongues is to magnify God.

ACTS 10:45,46
45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished . . . because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.
46 For they heard them SPEAK WITH TONGUES, AND MAGNIFY GOD....

So, you see, speaking in tongues is a means of magnifying God.

Edifying Ourselves

Still another scriptural purpose for speaking with tongues is to edify ourselves. In First Corinthians 14:4, Paul makes the statement that "He that speak-eth in an unknown tongue EDIFIETH HIMSELF. . . ."To edify means to build oneself up.

Then in verse 18, Paul said, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all." In other words he said, "I thank God I edify myself more than ye all." If Paul needed this edification, we need it too.

Jude also links praying in tongues with spiritual edification.

JUDE 20
20 But ye, beloved, BUILDING UP YOURSELVES on your most holy faith, PRAYING IN THE HOLY GHOST.

Praying in the Spirit

Jude instructs believers to "pray in the Holy Ghost." Paul uses a similar phrase in his letters. Writing to the Church at Ephesus, Paul said, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication IN THE SPIRIT. . ." (Eph. 6:18). What does it mean to "pray in the Spirit"?

One meaning of "praying in the Spirit" is found in First Corinthians 14:2, where Paul says, "For he that speaketh in an UNKNOWN TONGUE speaketh not unto men, but unto God . . . howbeit IN THE SPIRIT he speaketh mysteries." As I mentioned earlier, praying in the Spirit also can mean praying in your understanding as the Holy Spirit inspires you.

Be Being Filled With the Spirit

Paul also encouraged the saints at Ephesus to edify themselves, for in Ephesians 5:18 he says, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT." Remember that this letter was written to Spirit-filled believers, because we read in Acts chapter 19 that Paul came to Ephesus, and there he found these disciples and laid hands on them. The Holy Ghost came on them and they spoke with tongues (Acts 19:1-6). In Ephesians 5:18, Paul is later writing a letter to that same church, and he said, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18).

Greek scholars tell us that a more literal translation would be,"Be being filled." In other words, we should maintain a continuous experience of being filled up to overflowing with the Holy Spirit. It is one thing to be filled with the Holy Ghost initially; it is another thing to stay continually filled with the Holy Ghost.

Beginning in verse 19, Paul lists the characteristics of the Spirit-filled life.

EPHESIANS 5:19-21
19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, SINGING AND MAKING MELODY IN YOUR HEART TO THE LORD;
20 GIVING THANKS ALWAYS for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jes us Christ;
21 SUBMITTING YOURSELVES ONE TO ANOTHER in the fear of God.

Those believers who are continually being filled with the Holy Spirit have a song in their heart; they are always giving thanks to God; and they have a submissive attitude. They sing and make melody in their hearts to the Lord continually.

As we discussed in Chapter 18, the Lord wants us to maintain a continual experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. One way the believer does that is by speaking to himself in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in his heart to the Lord.

These psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are given by the inspiration of the Spirit of God. They come through the spirit of prophecy (Rev. 19:10), which may include tongues and interpretation.

Allowing Our Spirits Contact With the Father of Spirits

Another scriptural purpose for speaking with tongues is so that our spirits (as distinct from our minds or our own understanding) might pray. God is a Spirit, and He has provided a supernatural means whereby the human spirit can be in direct contact with the Father of spirits (Heb. 12:9).

Paul said, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, MY SPIRIT PRAYETH, but my understanding is unfruitful"(1 Cor. 14:14).

Paul also made reference to this in Romans 8:26: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

A more correct translation would be, ". . . with groanings which cannot be uttered in articulate speech." Therefore, praying in the Spirit provides a way whereby the Holy Spirit enables our spirit, apart from our understanding, to pray to God and commune with Him.

Spiritual Refreshing

Isaiah prophesied not only about the coming Messiah and the great plan of redemption which Jesus would consummate, but also about the Holy Ghost and speaking in other tongues.

ISAIAH 28:11,12
11 For with stammering lips and ANOTHER TONGUE will he speak to this people.
12 To whom he said, THIS IS THE REST wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and THIS IS THE REFRESHING....

There is a very real spiritual rest and a spiritual refreshing in communicating with God our Father, as our spirits pray distinct and separate from our understanding.

Interpreting Tongues In Our Private Prayer Life

Let us notice something else in this scripture in

First Corinthians 14:14,15.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:14,15
14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.
15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also.
Paul had just stated in First Corinthians 14:13, ". . . let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret."

Through the gift of interpretation of tongues, we may know by our understanding, as the Spirit wills, what our spirit prays. This is not always necessary, but it is available to us through a gift of the Spirit, the interpretation of tongues.

Years ago when I was filled with the Holy Ghost, I took First Corinthians 14:13 literally. After I was filled with the Spirit, although no one told me to, I found that I received spiritual blessing by continuing to pray in other tongues. Later as I studied the Word of God, I learned that this was scriptural.

Then when I read, ". . . let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret" (1 Cor. 14:13), I began to pray that I might interpret what I was praying about. I was sure God wouldn't tell us to pray for something we couldn't have.

That is when I first started moving in the gift of interpretation of tongues — in my own prayer life. As I interpreted some of the things I prayed, I began to know in my understanding what I had prayed about.

I am convinced that all believers, as the Spirit wills, can interpret their prayers. They may never be used, however, to interpret tongues in a church service because one use of interpretation of tongues is for private benefit, and another use of interpretation of tongues is for public ministry.
Tongues Is Primarily a Devotional Gift

In talking about the subject of tongues in general, let me say that tongues is primarily a devotional gift. We need to put emphasis on tongues where the emphasis belongs. That is what Paul was trying to do with the Church at Corinth by saying to them, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Cor. 14:18)

Paul was telling the Corinthians the purpose of speaking in tongues and what praying in tongues would do for them. Tongues is primarily a devotional gift to be used in one's prayer life for praising and worshipping God, for speaking mysteries to God, and for building oneself up on his most holy faith.

We should not be as concerned about ministering in tongues and interpreting tongues publicly as we should be about maintaining the blessing tongues produces in our personal prayer lives. However, as we are faithful to pray in tongues in our own personal prayer lives, that allows us to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit should He desire to use us in tongues and interpretation in the local church.

As mentioned earlier, Howard Carter spoke of the continual blessing that tongues are meant to be to believers in their individual prayer life:

We must not forget that speaking in other tongues is not only an initial evidence or sign of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, but it is also an experience for the rest of one's life to assist in the worship of God. It is a flowing stream that should never dry up, but will enrich your life spiritually. '

The Gift of Tongues in Public Ministry

In addition to praying in tongues in one's individual prayer life, it is also true that there is a public side to speaking in tongues. Paul said that not everyone would be used in what we call the public ministry of tongues, for he said in First Corinthians 12:30, "... do all speak with tongues? ..."

The obvious answer is no because in this verse Paul is talking about the public ministry of diversities of tongues which is a ministry gift denoting more the prophetic office, not the devotional gift of tongues.

Some take First Corinthians 12:30 out of its context and conclude that Paul was saying, "Speaking in tongues isn't for everyone. Therefore, you can be filled with the Spirit without speaking with tongues."

However, again, we must remember that here Paul is talking about the ministry gift of tongues, for he began by saying, "AND GOD HATH SET SOME IN THE CHURCH, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, DIVERSITIES OF TONGUES" (1 Cor. 12:28). Ministry gifts or offices are "set" in the Church by God; they are people called to the fivefold ministry.

Then he asked the question in First Corinthians 12:29 and 30, "Are all apostles? . . . fNo, all are not apostles:29and.) ... are all prophets? . . . [No, all are not prophets.] . . . are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? . . ." Of course, the answer is no.

Let's look a little further in verse 30: ". . . do all speak with tongues? . . ." The obvious answer is no. Paul was talking here about fivefold ministry gifts, just as he was talking about fivefold ministry gifts when he asked, "Are all apostles? . . ." (v. 29), and so forth.

Paul was again talking about the public ministry of tongues in First Corinthians 14:27 and 28: "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God."

In the Greek, the words "two" and "three" are personal pronouns and refer to people. Paul was simply saying that not more than two or three people should speak in a service.

In the next verse he said, "Let the prophets speak two or three . . ." (1 Cor. 14:29). There may be more prophets who could speak in the assembly, but in any one particular service, this verse says only two or three of them should do the talking.

This administration was given to prevent competitive utterances in the local body. The Bible gives us these instructions regarding the public ministry of the utterance gifts in order that ". . . all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40).

Prophecy Is Equivalent To Tongues and Interpretation

The church is edified when someone speaks with other tongues in the public assembly and there is an interpretation. Paul plainly stated that to prophesy — which is the equivalent of tongues and interpretation — is to speak unto men ". . . to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3).

Paul also said, ". . . greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, EXCEPT HE INTERPRET. . ."(1 Cor. 14:5). Paul was saying that if someone interprets what he gives forth in tongues, then the one who prophesies is not greater than the one who gives forth a tongue and interpretation. Paul was also saying in this passage that tongues with interpretation is equivalent to prophecy.

To illustrate this point, it takes two nickels to make a dime. Two nickels are not a dime, but they are equivalent to a dime. Paul was saying in effect that prophecy is like the dime, and tongues and interpretation are like the two nickels. In other words, they are equivalent.

Naturally, it would be better to have the "dime" (prophecy) than to have just the "nickel" (speaking with tongues) in the public assembly. But if interpretation went along with the tongues, then the two of them together would be equivalent to prophecy, the "dime."
As I said before, prophesying is not preaching per se. Certainly, there can be an element of prophecy in preaching sometimes because prophecy is inspired utterance. But in the specific sense prophecy is a supernatural gift that is manifested spontaneously as the Spirit wills.
If prophesying were just preaching, then you wouldn't have to make any preparation to preach. But you have to study in order to preach effectively. Paul said, "STUDY to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed ..." (2 Tim. 2:15).

You don't have to study to speak with tongues or to interpret tongues. You don't have to study to prophesy. That comes by inspiration of the Spirit.

Of course, when one is preaching under the anointing and suddenly he says something he hadn't previously thought of, that is the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And that kind of supernatural speaking has an element of prophecy to it because it is given by the inspiration of the Spirit.

When someone speaks with tongues and interprets the tongues, the church is edified. When used in line with the Word of God, speaking with tongues with the interpretation of tongues can convince any unbelievers who are present of the reality of the Presence of God, and that often causes them to turn to God and be saved (1 Cor. 14:22).

Speaking in Tongues in a Public Setting

Is there ever a time when it is appropriate to speak with other tongues in a public setting? We find a clue to the answer in Mark 16:17 and 18.

MARK 16:17,18
17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; the y shall speak with new tongues;
18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

First let's look at verse 17. Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils . . ." (Mark 16;Inmyname:17). Casting out devils can be done privately or, if necessary, publicly (although wisdom must be exercised if it is done publicly).

That same passage of Scripture continues, ". . . they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:18). Laying hands on the sick can also be done privately or publicly. Another sign that will follow those who believe is also stated: ". . . they shall SPEAK WITH NEW TONGUES" (Mark 16:17). As with the other two signs, speaking in tongues can be done publicly at times, as well as privately.

Of course, we don't want to have prolonged praying in tongues in public services because unless there is an interpretation, folks don't know what is being said and they won't be edified. However, it is all right to pray in tongues quietly at the altar as long as you desire, because you go there to get edified.

Also, if everyone in a service is worshipping God and praying in tongues, then it is all right for you to pray in tongues at that time too. As the congregation prays and worships God in tongues, I join in and pray that way too.

But when the congregation ceases praying, I cease praying. The congregation wouldn't be edified if I went on and on praying aloud in tongues. So we do need to know how to use what we have to the greatest advantage so that people are blessed and edified.

Private vs. Public Operation Of the Gift of Tongues

1 CORINTHIANS 14:18,19
18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

19 YET IN THE CHURCH I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.

In this passage, Paul was explaining the difference between tongues used as a devotional gift: ". . . I speak with tongues more than ye all" (v. 18), and tongues used in public ministry: "Yet IN THE CHURCH I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that... I might teach others .. ."(v. 19).

Tongues is not a teaching gift or a preaching gift.

This is not the purpose of tongues. For example, if I were to speak in tongues from the pulpit instead of teaching or preaching from the pulpit, it wouldn't edify the congregation at all. It would edify me, but not the hearers. Therefore, it is more profitable that I teach the congregation, not speak to the congregation in tongues.

Paul was not belittling tongues when he said, ". . . I had rather speak five words with my understanding . . ." (1 Cor. 14:19). He merely divided it as it should be divided. He said, ". . . I HAD RATHER speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue"(1 Cor. 14:19).

In other words, he was saying, "The congregation would get more good out of just those five words spoken in their own language than ten thousand words that I could speak in other tongues."

Every believer can pray to interpret his tongues in his own private devotions (1 Cor. 14:13). However, God will not use every believer in public utterance in tongues, for that is a gift and is not given to everyone: "But all these [spiritual gifts] worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, DIVIDING TO EVERY MAN SEVERALLY AS HE WILL" (1 Cor. 12:11).

As with every gift of the Spirit, the gift of tongues operates only as the Spirit wills. No one should try to operate this gift in the public assembly without the unction of the Holy Spirit. This is the mistake the Corinthians were making, and this is where many believers today often make a mistake.

As we have seen, God has given us instruction in the public use and operation of the gift of divers kinds of tongues. We need to obey those instructions. But most of all we need to exercise devotionbal tongues in our private prayer life on a consistent basis. As we do so, our spirits will be edified as we speak mysteries supernaturally to God.

Then we as a body of believers should covet the spiritual gifts earnestly, and as the Spirit wills, God will bring forth His messages to His people through the gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues.

1 Howard Carter, Questions and Answers on Spiritual Gifts, (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Harrison House, Inc., 1976), p. 120.

Chapter 20 The Gift of Interpretation of Tongues

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
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.
— 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

In studying these gifts of the Spirit, we have come to the end of the list: the gift of interpretation of tongues. First, we covered the three gifts of revelation or the three gifts that reveal something: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the discerning of spirits.
Then we studied the three gifts that do something, or the three power gifts: the gift of faith, the gifts of healings, and the working of miracles.

Now we will finish our study of the three utterance gifts or the three inspirational gifts, the three gifts that say something: prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues.
There has been a great deal of misunderstanding about the gifts of the Spirit. That is the reason Paul said, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I WOULD NOT HAVE YOU IGNORANT" (1 Cor. 12:1). As I said before, if God didn't want His people to be ignorant in the days of the Early Church, He certainly doesn't want His people to be ignorant today. Yet it is amazing the ignorance that exists among people of God concerning spiritual things.
Many people do not believe that any of the gifts of the Spirit are for us today. Some people believe that a few of the gifts are for us, but not all of them. However, if any of them are for us today, then all of them are for us today.

Also, the Bible says that the Holy Spirit gives these gifts to every man to profit (1 Cor. 12:7). God wants us to profit and spiritual gifts are one means whereby we may profit. I have never read anywhere in the Bible that He took them away from the Church. These gifts are rightfully ours today, and ignorance concerning them exists only because people do not understand what the Bible says aboutspiritual gifts.

The three utterance gifts — prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues — are very closely associated. In fact, as I've said, the Bible plainly tells us that tongues with interpretation is equal to prophecy: ". . . greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret. . ." (1 Cor. 14:5). Although spiritual gifts can be closely associated, we differentiate between them and list them separately so we can better define and understand them.

As we begin our study of the last of the three vocal or inspirational gifts, let us first define them. Prophecy is supernatural utterance in a known tongue.

Divers kinds of tongues is supernatural utterance in an unknown tongue.

The interpretation of tongues is the supernatural showing forth by the Spirit the meaning of an utterance in other tongues. Also, it is not translation of tongues; it is the interpretation of tongues.

The Gift of Interpretation of Tongues

The gift of interpretation of tongues is the least gift of all of the gifts of the Spirit because it depends upon another gift — divers kinds of tongues — in order to operate. It does not operate unless tongues have been in operation.

The purpose of the gift of interpretation of tongues is to render the gift of tongues understandable to the hearers so that the whole church congregation, as well as the one who gave the utterance in an unknown tongue, may know what has been said and may be edified thereby. Paul said,". . . greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, THAT THE CHURCH MAY RECEIVE EDIFYING" (1 Cor. 14:5).

But can't God speak to us in some other way in the public assembly? Yes, He can and does. We have other public messages given by the Spirit of God that are not interpretation of tongues; they are a manifestation of the gift of prophecy. For example, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are also given by the Holy Spirit through the gift of prophecy (we discussed this in chapter 18).

All these gifts operate by faith, but it takes more faith to operate in the gift of prophecy than tongues or interpretation of tongues. That is because those who operate in the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues have another person to lean on to complete the utterance. The person with the gift of tongues can lean on the one with the gift of interpretation of tongues, and vice versa. However, the one who has the gift of prophecy must have enough faith just to start giving what he has received (Rom. 12:6).

The Gift of Interpretation of Tongues In Our Private Prayer Life

In private prayer it is not necessary that everything we utter in other tongues be clear to our understanding, because Paul said, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful" (1 Cor. 14:14).

Therefore, it isn't necessary that everything I pray in tongues be clear to my understanding or be interpreted because I am not talking to myself, I am talking to God. What I pray in tongues is clear to God and that is sufficient: "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, BUT UNTO GOD: for no man understandeth him; how-beit in the spirit HE SPEAKETH MYSTERIES" (1Cor. 14:2).

Yet on some occasions God may desire that we interpret our prayers. Paul suggests this in First Corinthians 14:13: "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret."

There may be times, if it is as the Spirit of God wills, that we know what we are praying about in tongues in our personal devotions, and God will give us the interpretation. That is the way I first started interpreting tongues — in my private prayer life. I was simply praying in other tongues when suddenly I realized I was speaking in English, and I understood that I was interpreting what I had been praying about.

God knows what we are praying about because when we are praying in other tongues, we are talking to Him. But sometimes He wants us to know what we are praying about too.
For example, once before I was married, I was praying in the Spirit. I wasn't even thinking about getting married. I had been praying two or three hours in the Spirit when suddenly I

began to interpret part of my prayer. I realized then that I was talking to God about a wife, although from the natural standpoint, I hadn't been thinking or praying with my understanding along that line. I wasn't even concerned about getting married at that time.

I prayed in English, interpreting what I had been praying in tongues. As I did, by interpretation of tongues I knew in the Spirit that I would be married.

I knew who the girl was that I was going to marry, although at this time I had only had one or two dates with her. I also knew by interpretation that we would have two children; the first child would be a boy and the second would be a girl.

Naturally, after we were married and were expecting our first child, I told my wife, "It's a boy." We only picked out a boy's name. We didn't select any girls' names. Then when we were expecting our second child, I said, "This one is a girl." This is what I had learned in the Spirit even before we had been sweethearts.

So we see that there is a private side to the gift of interpretation of tongues that is of great importance to us personally.

There is also a public side to the manifestation of this gift. But not all of us will be used in this way. That will occur only as the Lord wills.

The Gift of Interpretation of Tongues In Public Ministry

1 CORINTHIANS 14:27
27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, LET IT BE BY TWO, OR AT THE MOST BY THREE, and that by course; and LET ONE INTERPRET.

In ministering publicly in tongues in any one service, Paul is saying here that it should be done by two or at the most by three people. In other words, only two or three people at the most should participate.

The meaning of this passage is made clearer in the New International Version.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:27 (NIV)
27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, two — or at the most three — should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret.

Some have asked the question, "Does that refer to three messages?" Actually we do not find the expression "messages in tongues" anywhere in the Bible. This is just a phrase that man has coined to try to explain this verse. A better term would be "utterance in tongues."
But this particular verse is talking about people, not messages or utterances: "If any MAN speak [not necessarily referring to the male gender but to any human being] . . . let it be by two, or at the most by three. . ."(ICor. 14:27).

Paul didn't actually say how much they were to speak or not to speak. He just said to let two or three people speak and let it be by course or in succession.

This implies that they shouldn't all speak at once. And it also implies that the same person might speak more than once.

Based on these scriptures, my suggestion to any congregation is that if three people have already spoken publicly in tongues, a fourth one should not join in and give out an utterance in tongues. If something else needs to be said, one of those who has already spoken should say it. That maintains good order and is consistent with this passage of Scripture where Paul was laying down principles of proper order for supernatural utterances in the local assembly. Notice that Paul said, " . . let one interpret" (1 Cor. 14:27). There is nothing in the Scriptures that would negate the thought that a person may speak with tongues and interpret the utterance himself.

In fact, one of those who is giving the message in tongues may certainly interpret it himself. Or there may be more than one person who could interpret it.

According to First Corinthians 14:13, those who speak in other tongues are instructed to pray for the gift of interpretation: "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret."

What Paul was saying here was that the reason a person is to seek for the gift of interpretation is not necessarily so that he can interpret publicly, but so that he can interpret his own prayers privately if God so wills. That would mean a great deal to his spiritual edification. Then if God did will to use him publicly, he would be equipped to operate in that realm as well.
Actually, in First Corinthians 14:27 when Paul said, ". . . let ONE interpret," he was admonishing us not to have competitive interpretations; that is, two or three people trying to outdo one another by interpreting an utterance. So there is nothing wrong with someone giving an utterance in tongues and interpreting it himself. That would not be unscriptural.
When someone is speaking with tongues, a person who is used often in the gift of interpretation of tongues should immediately begin to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's moving, if he is not already in tune with what the Holy Ghost is doing in the service. He should make himself available and be ready for the Lord to use him in the operation of that gift.
Sometimes I have waited on someone else to interpret, but they were waiting on me. Either one of us could have interpreted the message given in tongues, but we lost it because we didn't tune in to

the Holy Spirit; we were waiting for the other one to do it. Of course, we are not going to get things from God unless we are sensitive to Him.

This is the reason that sometimes we don't have an interpretation of a message when we should have. Sometimes when I have missed it, I've said to the person who had the message in tongues, "Please give that again and I will interpret it." Then when they started speaking, the unction came on me again — I got into the Spirit again — and God gave me the interpretation.

The Gift of Interpretation — Not Translation

As we mentioned earlier, the interpretation of tongues is not a translation. I am sometimes asked why it is that when someone speaks at length in tongues, an interpreter will occasionally give only a short message.

The reason for that is the interpretation is simply showing forth supernaturally by the Spirit of God the meaning of what was said in tongues, and it may not take as many words to declare what was said.

For example, someone may speak a short utterance in tongues and another will speak at length in interpretation. It may take longer to give the interpretation in order to show the meaning clearly. Therefore, we can see why this gift is called the interpretation of tongues and not the translation of tongues.

Also, very often when one is interpreting tongues, if that person is also used in prophecy, he may finish that interpretation and go into prophecy. I do this quite often.

Most people who are keen in the Spirit can recognize the difference because the minute prophecy begins, there is a little higher authority that can sometimes come with it. In other words, the words in prophecy can sometimes take on more authority and have a greater anointing. There can be more inspiration to it and people are blessed in a greater measure. Maintaining Good Order In the Public Use of Utterance Gifts

Paul devotes the entire chapter of First Corinthians 14 to the gifts of prophecy, and tongues and interpretation of tongues. In verse 33, he says, ". . . God is not the author of confusion ..." (1 Cor. 14:33).

Paul was saying that in the use, or rather the misuse, of prophecy, and tongues and interpretation of tongues there is sometimes confusion. I have been m some services where I have seen the misuse of these gifts and it has brought confusion to a congregation. (These were not my own services, as I usually try to bring out any errors and explain them to the people so they won't go home confused.)

This doesn't mean that the devil was necessarily working in the service. It just means that people can get things mixed up. If we will learn to stay in the Spirit and walk according to the Word, however, we will not operate in these gifts in confusion. God is not the author of confusion.

In this chapter we see such statements as " . . God is not the author of confusion . . ." (1 Cor. 14:33) and "Let all things be done decently and in order" (v. 40).

We know these verses refer to public services in the church because it said, "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God" (1 Cor. 14:27,28). One wouldn't be disturbing the service by just sitting there and talking quietly to God in tongues, but he would be edifying himself.

Sometimes we just need practical advice concerning these manifestations to help us maintain good order. Then even folks who come in to the service who aren't saved or who aren't familiar

with the operation of these gifts would understand and be impressed by the good order. More importantly, we would not grieve the Spirit of God. The Bible says, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God . . ." (Eph. 4:30).

The Holy Spirit has been grieved at times in some of our church services. He has been grieved because He wanted to manifest Himself and wasn't permitted to do so. And it grieves the Holy Spirit by the way some folks misuse the gifts of the Spirit and bring confusion to others.

All Things Done Unto Edifying

A final point I want to stress about tongues and interpretation of tongues is that Paul said, ". . . Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor. 14:26).

When the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues is manifested by the Spirit of God (and this is one way to judge if it is by the Holy Spirit or not), the utterance will be edifying, inspiring, and a blessing. Of course, if we ourselves are out of tune with the Spirit, we will not always be in a position to judge.

For example, once when I was a pastor, our church was participating with several other churches in a service nearby. I had been particularly busy all that day. I had been on the go all day long, and I hardly had time to pray at all. Then I just ran in, got ready for the service, and hurriedly drove to the church meeting. I was exhausted when I finally got there and sort of just sank into a pew.

God moved in a wonderful way in that service, but I couldn't enter into the blessing; I was just too tired. I knew that what was going on was right and that it was a blessing, but if I had been going to judge the moving of the Spirit that night, I would probably have said, "Boy, they are all out of tune but me." The truth was that I was out of tune with the Holy Spirit and with them. So it won't always be easy to judge spiritual things if you are out of tune with the Holy Spirit. This doesn't mean you are backslidden, but just that you are not able to enter into the moving of the Holy Spirit and of worship at that particular time.

Spiritual manifestations do need to be judged, however. And we do judge them, whether we do it publicly or not, because we either accept them or reject them. We can't always accept just any man's judgment, however; we only accept those who know the Word of God and who are sensitive to the moving of the Spirit.

We need to be very careful how we regard the gifts of the Holy Spirit in walking before the Lord. We need to stay open to the Spirit of God and to the move of God as we walk meekly, honorably, and reverently before the Lord.

Certainly, we need to invite the operation of the Spirit of God among us, but we need to reverence God and the things of the Spirit of God, and allow God to use whom He will to manifest Himself in our midst through the gifts of the Spirit. Then when God moves, we will be open to Him and ready to receive whatever He has for us.