



Kenneth E. Hagin

Concerning Spiritual Gifts



26 Lessons on
The Holy Spirit and His Gifts

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Lesson 1, The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit — An Experience Subsequent to Salvation

Bible Text: Acts 8:12-19

Central Truth: There is an experience following salvation of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

As a young denominational minister, I had been taught that when a person is saved, he has the Holy Spirit — which is true in a sense. However, my denomination taught that when one is saved, he has all of the Holy Spirit it is possible to have.

The Scripture passage below helped me see that there is an experience subsequent to salvation called receiving the Holy Spirit, or the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

These verses show that although the Samaritans were saved, the apostles didn't seem to think they had all of the Holy Spirit it is possible to have.

Philip's Ministry In Samaria

ACTS 8:12,13

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, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Philip's ministry in Samaria was abundantly blessed of God. Mighty miracles constantly were being performed. Many were saved and healed, according to Acts 8:7,8: "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."

The Samaritans believed Philip's sermons concerning the kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus, and they were baptized in water: "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" (v. 12).

Jesus had said, ". . .Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that BELIEVETH and is BAPTIZED shall be saved..." (Mark 16:15). These Samaritans both believed and were baptized. Were they saved? According to Jesus they were! Yet none of them had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

There is a work of the Holy Spirit involved in the New

Birth, but that work is not called receiving the Holy Spirit (or the baptism of the Holy Spirit). It is called being born again (or receiving eternal life). The experience that follows salvation is called receiving the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or being filled with the Holy Spirit.

We are born again by the Word of God. 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).

Peter And John Sent To Samaria

ACTS 8:14-17

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:

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.

Our text in verse fourteen says, "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria HAD RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD...." This is conclusive proof that these people were genuinely saved. The apostles recognized they were saved, because after they heard of the wonderful things God had done through Philip's ministry, they sent Peter and John to lay hands on the new converts that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

There is no record that any upon whom Peter and John laid hands failed to receive. The Bible simply states, "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:17).

Peter and John were sent to Samaria for a specific purpose. What was this purpose? The answer is found in verse fifteen: "Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost."

The other apostles in Jerusalem sent them to Samaria for this specific purpose. Why did they have to pray for those Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit? Why couldn't Philip have prayed for them just as well?

We must remember we all have our place in God's plan. We must 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 ministry.

Philip was an evangelist. His ministry was leading many to an experience of salvation in Jesus Christ. Peter and John, on the other hand, had a specific ministry of laying hands on people to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Simon The Sorcerer

Acts 8:18,19

18 And When Simon Saw That Through Laying on of the apostles' 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.

Simon the sorcerer offered Peter and John money, saying, .. Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost" (v. 19).

Some have thought Simon tried to buy the Holy Spirit. He didn't. He tried to buy the ability to lay hands on people and have them receive the Holy Spirit.

Peter answered him, "... Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money " (v. 20).

There are four different Greek words translated "gift" in the New Testament. This particular Greek word means "an endowment." Peter said he and John were endowed, or gifted, by the Holy Spirit to lay hands on people to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

How do we know these Samaritans actually spoke in tongues? Some who do not believe in tongues argue that this Scripture says nothing about their speaking in tongues.

There is no evidence, however, that they did not speak with tongues. In fact, students of Church history know the Early Church fathers agree that they did speak with tongues in Samaria. And we read elsewhere in the New Testament that those who were filled with the Holy Spirit spoke with tongues.

Also it is apparent that these Samaritans must have spoken in tongues, because "... Simon SAW that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given..." (v. 18).

Certainly the Holy Spirit cannot be seen with the physical eye, because He is a Spirit. Yet there had to be some kind of physical sign whereby Simon knew they had received the Holy Spirit. There had to have been something that registered on Simon's physical senses so he could tell that they had received the Holy Spirit. Simon didn't receive the Holy Spirit himself, but

he could see that the others had. How?

"Maybe it was because Simon saw the Samaritans were full of joy," one minister said to me. This, however, couldn't explain it, because Simon already had seen their joy. Verse eight reports, "... there was great joy in that city." They already had joy before Peter and John arrived from Jerusalem, and before they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

What kind of sign, then, would cause Simon to know these people had received the Holy Spirit when Peter and John laid hands on them? All evidence indicates that the sign which was manifested was speaking in tongues. That was the sign that convinced Simon they had received the Holy Spirit.

Speaking in tongues is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not speaking in tongues — but they go hand in hand. It's like the tongue in the shoe. The tongue isn't the shoe, and the shoe isn't the tongue, but each is an important part of the other.

When somebody buys an automobile in Texas, he is issued a certificate of title as evidence of ownership. The automobile is not the certificate of title, and the title is not the automobile, but you'll not get very far in that automobile without the certificate (or evidence) of title.

If you have the infilling of the Holy Spirit, you should have the evidence (tongues) to go along with it.

Notice there is not the least suggestion in Acts 8 that Peter and John taught the Samaritans to tarry (or wait) for the Holy Spirit.

To teach people to tarry for the infilling of the Holy Spirit, which already has been given as a free gift, only produces doubt and indecision.

Howard Carter, who was general supervisor of the Assemblies of God in Great Britain for many years, founded the oldest Pentecostal Bible school in the world, and he was a leading teacher in Full Gospel circles around the world. He said that to teach people to wait for the Holy Spirit is nothing but a combination of works and unbelief.

A Free Gift

Notice something else in Acts 8: Peter and John did not pray that God would give the Samaritans the Holy Spirit. They prayed that the Samaritans would receive the Holy Spirit.

Often we pray, "Lord, save souls at this service tonight. Heal the sick." However, we do not find where they ever prayed that way in the Acts of the Apostles (and we should pray according to the Word).

I pray for people, but not that God would save them,

because He already has done something about saving them: He sent His Son to die for us. God already has purchased salvation for each man; however, it is not going to do us any good until we accept it. That is the reason He told us to spread the Good News.

Scripturally, we should pray that people will receive the gift of eternal life that is offered to them.

I don't pray for God to heal people, either. I pray that people will receive the healing God offers.

I don't pray that God would fill people with the Holy Spirit. I pray like Peter and John did, that they might receive the gift God offers.

Also notice that the seventeenth verse of this passage does not say, "Then laid they their hands on them and God filled them with the Holy Ghost." It says, "... and they RECEIVED the Holy Ghost."

I believe we are in good company with Peter and John, so I follow the same procedure they followed: I lay hands on people to receive the Holy Spirit. I do it in faith because it is scriptural. I also do it because I have a ministry along that line. The apostles sent Peter and John to Samaria because they had a ministry along this line. (God anoints us to minister according to His calling on our lives.)

As a denominational pastor half a century ago, when I read the New Testament and the Spirit of God enlightened me on these verses, I was convinced that if I received the same Holy Spirit they had received, I would have the same initial sign of speaking with tongues. I wasn't satisfied with anything less.

Memory Text:

"For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 2, The Promise And Its Fulfilment

**Bible Texts: John 14:16,17; Acts 2:32,33;
John 4:13,14; 7:37-39**

Central Truth: The Lord has promised "rivers of living water" to quench man's spiritual thirst.

In the verses below we see Jesus' promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Then in Acts 2 we see the fulfilment of that promise.

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 the dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

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.

The Promised Comforter

Jesus prayed that the Father would send another Comforter to abide forever. Then on the Day of Pentecost He shed forth the Holy Spirit, who has been here ever since. It is now not a matter of the Father's giving anyone the Holy Spirit. It is a matter of our receiving the Holy Spirit.

Notice Jesus' words, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that HE may abide with you for ever." When we receive the Holy Spirit, we receive "Him," not "it." We have heard people say, "I received the baptism." However, they didn't receive the baptism; they received the Holy Spirit.

Others say, "I am filled with the baptism." They are not filled with the baptism. They are not even filled with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They are filled with the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Godhead.

Receiving the Holy Spirit is more than an experience: A divine Personality comes to live in us — to dwell in us — to make His home in us.

We must not be so concerned with an outward experience that we miss the reality of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. If we have been filled with the Holy Spirit, we should be conscious of His presence every waking moment. We shouldn't have to look back to some experience we had at an altar years ago. The Holy Spirit should become more real and precious to us every day!

The Promise Is For Believers

Notice also that the infilling of the Holy Spirit is not for sinners; it is for believers. Referring to the infilling of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, "Even the Spirit of truth; whom, the world cannot receive."

The world can receive eternal life: "For God so loved the WORLD, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The world can receive Christ as Savior — the world can be born again — but a person must be born again before he can receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

To illustrate this, Jesus said in Matthew 9:17, "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out... they put new wine into new bottles" (In those days wine was stored in skin bottles.)

In the Scriptures, wine is a type of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was therefore saying that the Holy Spirit could not be given in His fullness unless one had been made a new creature. Otherwise, as Jesus pointed out, if you were to put new wine in old bottles, they would burst. If He put the Holy Spirit in people who had not been born again, they would burst. "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.

Also referring to the Holy Spirit,

Jesus said in Luke 11:13, "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. We hear a lot these days about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and that God is the Father of all of us and we are all brothers. That isn't true. Jesus told the Pharisees, the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, "Ye are of your father the devil..." (John 8:44). God is the Father only of those who have been born again. And for those who have been born again, the Father has for them the gift of the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Come And Drink

JOHN 4:13,14

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.

JOHN 7:37-39

37 In the last day, the 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 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 water referred to in both passages above is a type of the Holy Spirit. Notice that two different experiences are spoken of.

First, to the woman at the well of Samaria Jesus said, "But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Here Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit in the act of regeneration or salvation. (The Holy Spirit is represented as a "well of water springing up into everlasting life.")

The other reference is to "rivers of living water," and speaks of the promise of the infilling of the Holy Spirit: "Out of his belly [innermost being] shall flow rivers of living water."

Jesus beckons us to come and drink and get full. "But how can you know when you get full?" someone may ask. For the answer, let us look at 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."

If you are a believer, it is just as simple as Jesus said it is. Come and drink, and keep drinking until you get full! When you get full, you will start speaking with other tongues. This is the initial sign or evidence that you are filled.

Memory Text:

"... If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (John 7:37).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 3, The Holy Spirit — An Ever-Present Source Of Power

Bible Texts: 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16

Central Truth: Every Spirit-filled believer has within him all the power he will ever need to put him over in this life.

The New Testament gives us three relations that God sustains toward man:

- (1) God for us;
- (2) God with us;
- (3) God in us.

To have God for us guarantees 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. If God is for us — and we know He is for us — we become utterly fearless in life. No matter how difficult the situation may be — no matter how dark the clouds may hang upon the horizon of our life — we are calmly assured that we must win. There can be no defeat if the Lord is for us.

We can also have the assurance that God is with us. No matter what the circumstances may be, our Lord is with us. The knowledge of the Word of God along this line should certainly cause our hearts to leap within us for joy and buoy our spirits up in faith and confidence.

In the New Testament we have "a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb. 8:6). Under the covenant in the Old Testament, God was for Israel and was with Israel, but He was not in them.

God is for us and with us today, but we also have something better: God is in us. God is actually making His home in our bodies!

Our Bodies The Temple Of God

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 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?

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.

Too few of us are really conscious of God in our bodies. If men and women were conscious of God in their bodies, they wouldn't talk and act as they do. Some Christians constantly talk about their lack of power; their lack of ability. If they realized that God is in them, they would know that nothing is impossible to them!

The Bible says, . .all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). The reason all things are possible to him that believeth is because God our Father planned that the believer should have God Himself living in him through the power of the Holy Spirit. And with God in a person, nothing is impossible.

Of all the mighty truths connected with our redemption, this is the climax: After God Himself has recreated us and made us new creatures — made us His own — then He, in the Person of the Holy Spirit, makes our bodies His home.

John wrote in his first Epistle, "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).

Both Paul and John were writing to people who not only had received eternal life, but were Spirit-filled believers — those in whom the Holy Spirit had come to dwell — those who had the supernatural sign or witness of His indwelling presence: speaking with other tongues.

John said, "... greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. " I maintain that every born-again, Spirit-filled believer has within him, ready to use, all the power he will ever need to put him over in this life.

When we put the Scriptures quoted above together, it is quite obvious that through the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Godhead — God Himself — indwells the believer. No longer does He dwell in a man-made Holy of Holies. Our bodies have become His temple.

Old Covenant Finished

In the Old Testament, under the Old Covenant, God's presence was kept enclosed in the Holy of Holies. No one dared approach that place except the High Priest, and he only with great precautions. If anyone else dared to intrude, he fell dead. It was necessary for every male throughout Israel to present himself at least once a year at Jerusalem, because that was where God's presence was.

But just before Jesus died on the cross, He said, "It is

finished." He was not referring to the New Covenant; He was talking about the Old Covenant. The New Covenant was not finished until Christ ascended on High and entered into the heavenly Holy of Holies with His own blood to obtain eternal redemption for us, as Hebrews declares. Then and only then was the New Covenant finished.

When Jesus, on Golgotha's rugged hill, said, "It is finished," the Bible tells us that the curtain that partitioned off the Holy of Holies in the Temple was rent in two from top to bottom.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us this curtain was forty feet across, twenty feet high, and four inches thick. God sent His messenger down there to rend that curtain apart from top to bottom, signifying that the Old Covenant was finished.

God's presence, which had been contained in the Holy of Holies, left that man-made structure. He has never again dwelled in a man-made building.

When we call a building "the house of God," we are partly correct and partly incorrect, according to what we mean by it. If we mean the building is a house of God because God lives and dwells there, we are wrong. He does not dwell in a building.

If we mean that it is God's house and is sacred because it is built in the Name of Jesus and is dedicated to the service of the Lord, then we are correct — it is a house of God. However, God doesn't live in a building made with hands; He lives and dwells in us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

John said, "... greater is he that is in you—" Looking again at John 14:16 (which we studied in our last lesson), Jesus said, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." And at the end of the seventeenth verse, "He... shall be in you." That is what John is saying too, as he writes to born-again, Spirit-filled believers: "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." Who is "he that is in the world"? Satan, the god of this world.

But He who is in you is greater. If we were conscious of the Greater One in us, we would have no fear of the devil, because He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world.

If we are conscious of the Greater One who indwells us and we believe what the Word of God says about His presence, no matter what or whom we face, we will have no fear. We have the Source of all power dwelling in us.

As the Holy Spirit dwells within us, according to Christ's promise, we will walk in the power of the Holy Spirit. We do not have to be defeated by the circumstances of life. We can rise above our physical limitations through the power of His Spirit.

Memory Text:

"... greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..(James 1:22).*

Lesson 4, The Evidence Of The Holy Spirit's Indwelling

Bible Texts: Acts 10:44-46; 11:15-18; 19:1-6

Central Truth: Speaking in tongues is the physical evidence of a spiritual experience.

In Acts 10, we see an example of the manifestation of tongues being the convincing proof that believers had received the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 10:44-46

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

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 Ghost.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.

After Peter's dramatic vision of the sheet filled with all manner of unclean beasts being let down from heaven, he was summoned to the house of Cornelius, a Gentile, to proclaim God's salvation through Jesus Christ.

As Peter spoke to Cornelius and his household concerning the remission of sins through the blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit fell on all of them and they spoke with other tongues.

When the Jewish brethren at Jerusalem heard that Peter had carried the Gospel to Gentiles, they were highly critical and said, "... Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them" (Acts 11:3).

Then Peter told them in detail about the vision the Lord had given him, admonishing him, "... What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" (v. 9). Peter then presented evidence proving the Gentiles' salvation was genuine and therefore ought to be recognized by the Jewish brethren.

ACTS 11:15-18

15 And as I [Peter] began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand

God?

18 When they [the Jewish brethren] heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Notice that it was speaking in tongues which finally convinced the group that accompanied Peter to Cornelius' house (as well as the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem) that these Gentiles had received the gift of salvation.

It also is interesting to note that they received salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit almost simultaneously. (When a person is first saved, that is the best time to get him or her filled with the Holy Spirit.) No one had laid hands on these Gentiles. They had all received the Holy Spirit at about the same time. None failed to receive.

Here again we see no suggestion that they tarried or waited to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit Outpoured At Ephesus

ACTS 19:1-6

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, 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.

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.

Here we see another example of Gentiles receiving the infilling of the Holy Spirit. These men were all new converts who had been followers of John the Baptist. They had heard John preach that the Promised One was coming. They had believed John's message, and they had been baptized by him in the Name of the Father. However, because news didn't travel as

fast then as it does now, they had not yet heard that the Promised One had come.

Then Paul came and told them that Jesus, the Promised One, had come, had died on the cross, and had been resurrected; and now they should believe on Him. Paul then baptized them in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

But he didn't stop there. He also wanted them to be filled with the Holy Spirit. When he laid his hands on them, "... the Holy Ghost came upon them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (v. 6).

Without exception, all these new converts received the Holy Spirit when Paul laid hands on them! Again, there was no suggestion of tarrying.

Notice also that they "spake with tongues and prophesied." Sometimes people receive an additional spiritual blessing in addition to tongues when they are filled with the Spirit, but tongues always comes first. (The Scripture didn't say they prophesied and spoke with tongues; it said they spoke with tongues first and then prophesied.) I have seen people speak with tongues and prophesy when they received the Holy Spirit. I have also seen people speak with tongues and interpret when they received the Holy Spirit. We should expect to speak with tongues. If something else is added, well and good.

When I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, I received a gift of the Spirit too, although I didn't realize it at the time. I knew I had received the Holy Spirit because I spoke with tongues, but to be perfectly honest, I felt a little disappointed. Having heard some Christians tell of their experiences when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, I expected to have some kind of overwhelming hilarious experience, but I didn't.

Afterwards, I said to myself, All I did was talk in tongues. I've gotten a bigger blessing than this many times just praying.

But the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not just receiving a blessing; it is much more. I knew my Bible, so I said, I don't care what I feel or what I don't feel I know I have received the Holy Spirit because I have spoken with other tongues. I have the Bible evidence.

I continued to praise God in this manner for about three days. Later I realized that at the same time I had received the Holy Spirit and had spoken with tongues, I had received another gift of the Spirit — the word of knowledge.

The Door Into The Spiritual Gifts

As we have seen, speaking with tongues is the initial, supernatural sign or evidence of the Holy Spirit's indwelling. Speaking with tongues is the door into the spiritual gifts.

I have found in my own life that the more I pray and worship God in tongues, the more manifestations I have of the other gifts of the Spirit. The less I talk in tongues, the fewer manifestations I have.

Speaking with tongues is the door into all the rest of the spiritual gifts. Some people are only interested in the other gifts of the Spirit, but we have to go through the "door" to get there.

The Bible teaches us to be desirous of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 14:1), and to covet earnestly the best gifts (1 Cor. 12:31). But remember that those words were written to people who already spoke in tongues! They weren't written to people who did not speak with tongues.

In the Corinthian church there was an abundance of speaking with tongues. In fact, it seemed that when they went to church, all of them wanted to speak with tongues at once! That isn't edifying, so Paul told them that only two or three should speak in public, and another should interpret. And if an interpreter wasn't present, they should keep silent in the church (1 Cor. 14:27,28).

Paul didn't say they had the wrong thing. They had the right thing, but they were so thrilled and exuberant, they all wanted to talk at once. If everyone is praising God, it is all right for all to praise God in tongues at once. But it certainly would be wrong if everyone started talking in tongues while someone was trying to preach. Also, it would not be right for someone to spend an hour teaching in tongues without any interpretation. The speaker would be edified, but the listener wouldn't get anything out of it.

As Paul said, it is better to speak a few words with our own understanding so we can teach others than to speak ten thousand words in tongues unless there is an interpretation.

Some people, however, have made a mountain out of a molehill. They say that Paul was telling the Corinthians not to speak with tongues at all. This couldn't have been his intention, however, because he had just said, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also ..." (1 Cor. 14:18,19). Certainly it would be better for him to stand before the congregation and speak ten words in his own language so they could understand him than it would be to stand there and speak ten thousand words in tongues that were uninterpreted.

But in order to correct one error Paul did not suggest we make another by abandoning speaking in tongues altogether. Rather, we are told to covet earnestly the best gifts. As we do this and walk into a more powerful and effective Christian life, we will go through the door of the baptism of the Holy Spirit to

receive the glorious spiritual gifts God has promised those who believe in His Word.

Memory Text:

*11 For they heard them speak with tongues,
and magnify God" (Acts 10:46).*

*THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of
the word, and not hearers only ..." (James
1:22),*

Lesson 5, Is It Necessary To Speak In Tongues?

Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 13:8-12; 12:8-10,27-30

Central Truth: Many Have Been Robbed Of The Blessing God Has For them by believing that speaking in tongues isn't for everybody or that it is one of the lesser gifts.

There is more to being filled with the Holy Spirit than speaking in tongues, but tongues are an integral and important part of receiving the Holy Spirit. Paul said, "7 thank my God, I speak with tongues..." (1 Cor. 14:18).

Have Tongues Been Done Away With?

There are those who say, "Tongues have been done away with, because the Bible says that tongues have ceased." Let us look at the passage of Scripture that is used in connection with this argument.

1 Corinthians 13:8-12

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

Those who believe that tongues have been done away with say that the Bible is "that which is perfect" — and because we now have the Bible in its complete form, we no longer need supernatural gifts. Of course, the Bible is perfect, but our understanding of God's Word is imperfect. Therefore, we still "see through a glass, darkly." This Scripture says that when that which is perfect is come, we shall see face to face, and not through a glass darkly. Since it is quite evident that we still see through a glass darkly, it is also obvious that that which is

perfect has not yet come.

Some say that tongues have ceased, but they don't say anything about knowledge having vanished away. Knowledge has not vanished. Prophecies have not failed. And tongues have not ceased.

One of these days, of course, tongues will cease. In heaven there will be no need for tongues. Paul stated, "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). In James Moffatt's translation, he says that the speaker in tongues speaks "divine secrets" in the Spirit. When we get to heaven, there won't be any more mysteries or secrets, so it will not be necessary to speak with tongues. As long as we are this side of heaven, however, tongues will not cease.

Is It Necessary For All To Speak In Tongues?

Then there are those who profess to believe in tongues, but who do not believe that tongues are necessary for all Christians. They use the argument from First Corinthians 12:30: "...do all speak with tongues?" However, one could take part of a verse or even an entire verse of Scripture out of its setting and prove anything. We must read the entire passage to understand what it really means.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:27-30

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

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.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

In verse twenty-eight Paul is talking about the ministry gifts that God has set in the Church. "Apostles" is not a spiritual gift, but an office, or a ministry gift. "Prophets" is not a spiritual gift, but a ministry gift. Likewise, "teachers" is not a spiritual gift, but a ministry gift to minister to the Body of Christ.

In the first part of this chapter, Paul does list spiritual gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:8-10

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....

It is certainly true that the gifts of the Spirit may be manifested through lay men, because Paul said, "...the manifestation of the Spirit is given to EVERYMAN to profit withal" (1 Cor. 12:7).

There are also those in the ministry who are equipped with the gifts of the Spirit. We do not call these people "spiritual gifts." As Paul says here, God has set ministries — five ministry gifts — in the Church.

In writing to the Church at Ephesus, Paul lists these gifts. He said that when Jesus ascended on high, "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11).

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians about these ministry gifts, we notice that neither the ministry of an evangelist nor a pastor is listed (1 Cor. 12:28). Since the pastor is head of the church, his ministry gift is included in the office of governments. The working of miracles and gifts of healings are included in the office of an evangelist.

Philip is a type of a New Testament evangelist. We read of him: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 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" (Acts 8:5-7). Later, Philip was called an evangelist.

If a person is a New Testament evangelist, he is equipped with such supernatural gifts as working of miracles or gifts of healings. It takes these gifts to constitute his office. Many times we call people evangelists when they are really exhorters. (Paul speaks of exhorters in the Book of Romans.) Those who just exhort sinners to get saved — but have no working of gifts of healings or miracles or the supernatural in their lives — are not evangelists; they are exhorters.

As we have pointed out, Paul is speaking about a ministry gift of diversities of tongues in First Corinthians 12:29,30. He

isn't talking about being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking with tongues. He asks, "Are all apostles? [No.] are all prophets? [No.] are all teachers? [No.] are all workers of miracles? [No.] Have all the gifts of healings?" [No.]

Then he asks, "Do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" According to what he is talking about here, the answer is no. He is not talking about people being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking with tongues. He is talking about ministering tongues in a public assembly with interpretation. Everyone doesn't do that!

Are Tongues Really Important?

Many believers have been robbed of the blessings God intended them to have because they believe that speaking in tongues isn't for everyone, or that speaking in tongues is one of the lesser gifts.

Early in my Christian walk, before I became aware that I didn't have any spiritual gifts at all, I can remember saying, "We've got wisdom and knowledge, and those are the greater gifts!"

What I didn't know was that Paul wasn't talking about intellectual wisdom and knowledge. The Scripture says, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge ..." (1 Cor. 12:8).

This is speaking of spiritual gifts: the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge.

But in my ignorance I said, "We have wisdom and knowledge. A few of those Pentecostals might have that little ole gift mentioned down at the bottom of the list — tongues — but that isn't very important. We don't need it." To my utter astonishment, the Spirit of God began to show me from His Word that I needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and that when I got filled, I would speak with tongues!

Memory Text:

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 6, What Purpose Do Tongues Serve?

**Bible Texts: 1 Corinthians 14:2,4,13;
Galatians 5:22,23**

Central Truth: Speaking in tongues is a supernatural means of building ourselves up spiritually through communication with God.

In writing to the Church at Corinth, Paul strongly encourages believers to speak in tongues in their own private prayer lives, and he gives them several reasons for doing so:

1 Corinthians 14:2,4,13

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 _____
4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church _____
13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.

The word “unknown” is italicized in the King James translation. When a word in the Bible is italicized, it means that word isn’t in the original Scriptures; it was added by the translators to clarify the meaning. In one sense there is no such thing as an “unknown” tongue. The translators of the King James Version added the word “unknown” so the readers would know that the tongue is “unknown” to the one doing the speaking: He never learned it — it was imparted supernaturally. It isn’t unknown to everyone, and it certainly isn’t unknown to God.

For example, I have spoken a number of different languages unknown to me and which I never learned, such as Hebrew and Chinese. People present, who knew the language, understood what I said. However, if you were to ask me now to speak those languages, I wouldn’t be able to say one word!

In fact, the impact of your speaking in an unknown tongue (unknown to you, but known to others) can even lead to someone’s salvation, as in a situation I once encountered.

A Jewish man, who didn’t believe in Christ or the New Testament, attended one of my services. At the close of my sermon, I spoke in tongues and interpreted. He came up to me afterwards and said, “I heard you speak in Aramaic tonight and then translate it.” When I told him that I didn’t know that language, he was astounded and asked how this could be. I explained that I was speaking with other tongues and

interpreting the tongues as the Bible states in First Corinthians 14:13: "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret."

When he replied that he didn't accept the New Testament, I said, "Well, you know your Old Testament. In the Old Testament, the prophets of God were anointed with the Holy Spirit. We see a word of wisdom being given to one, and a word of knowledge to another. We see discerning of spirits and the gift of special faith in operation. We also see gifts of healings, working of miracles, and prophecy. This was the same Holy Spirit in manifestation, although no one spoke with the gift of tongues and interpreted in that dispensation. Tongues and interpretation are distinctive to this dispensation."

The Jewish man wanted to see for himself these gifts of the Old Testament listed in the New Testament, so I opened my Bible and read it to him. And he was so impressed with seeing this gift of tongues and interpretation demonstrated, and then seeing it in the Bible that he promised to come back to the services. He wanted to learn more about the New Testament and Jesus the Messiah.

Some believe that all speaking in tongues is prayer and those who speak with tongues are always just praying. They believe the interpretation is really prophecy. But this was the gift of tongues and interpretation in manifestation. If I were only praying, this Jewish man would have known I was just praying because he knew the language. I wasn't praying, though. I was addressing the congregation by the demonstration of the gift of tongues with the interpretation.

Tongues For Edification

So we see that all tongues aren't prayer. But when the believer who is filled with the Holy Spirit speaks in tongues in his own private prayer life, this tongue is given to him to use in worship to God: "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself. ..." The word "edifieth" means to build oneself up. Greek scholars tell us that we have a word in our modern vernacular which is much closer to the original meaning than the word "edify." That word is "charge." We use the word "charge" in connection with charging a battery. A more literal translation would be, "He that speaks in an unknown tongue edifies, charges, or builds himself up like a battery."

This wonderful, supernatural means of spiritual edification is not for just a few of God's children: it is for every one of them. Also notice this "charging" or "building up" of oneself is neither mental nor physical edification. It is spiritual edification. Paul said, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth..." (1 Cor. 14:14). The Amplified Bible adds, "... my spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays, but my mind is unproductive. ..." So speaking in tongues isn't mental

edification; it is spiritual edification.

"For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him..." (1 Cor. 14:2). Here Paul isn't talking about diversities of tongues, or ministering in tongues in a public assembly; he is talking about the individual Spirit-filled believer employing the use of tongues in his prayer life. .. howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries."

When Cornelius and his household began to speak with tongues, the Bible says, .. they heard them speak with tongues, and MAGNIFY GOD" (Acts 10:46). Speaking with tongues is the supernatural way to magnify God!

Fruit Of The Spirit In The Believer

GALATIANS 5:22,23

**22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,**

**23 Meekness, temperance: against such there
is no law.**

Some argue, "But many people who speak with tongues don't have the fruit of the Spirit in their lives as they ought to have." However, the fruit Paul talks about in Galatians 5:22,23 is not the fruit of the baptism of the Holy Spirit at all; it is the fruit that should be in the life of every Christian as a result of being born again and experiencing the rebirth of the human spirit. The born-again human spirit produces the fruit, for Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches ..." (John 15:5). The fruit grows on the branch just as the fruit grows in the life of the born-again, recreated child of God because of the life of Christ within.

The first fruit mentioned in Galatians 5:22 is love. Those who have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit don't necessarily have any more love than other Christians do for the simple reason that Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). John said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14). So love is fruit of the born-again human spirit; not fruit of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Another fruit listed in Galatians 5 is peace. I didn't have any more peace after I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit than I had before. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace ..." Romans 5:1 says.

Baby Christians haven't produced and grown fruit yet. After all, we don't expect a baby tree to produce fruit. It takes time for fruit to grow. Yet that baby Christian can be filled with the Holy Spirit and have power in his life. The Corinthians were

babes. Paul said, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ" (1 Cor. 3:1). Yet he said, "ye come behind in no gift" (1 Cor. 1:7).

Also notice that the fruit of the spirit is for HOLINESS — whereas the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for POWER.

You can be holy without having power, and you can have power without being very holy. Yet a combination of the two is best. I have seen people who are wonderful Christians and have marvellous fruit of the spirit, but there is no power in their lives. Then I know of others who are certainly powerhouses for God, but it is obvious that they need to grow a little more fruit in their lives.

It is wonderful what the Lord is doing in these days. God has given us a supernatural means of communicating with Him. He has given us a supernatural means of edifying ourselves; of building ourselves up spiritually. Are we taking advantage of it?

I am thoroughly convinced that if we would respond to the Holy Spirit, He would show us things to come, because He knows what is coming in the future, and He will equip us for what lies ahead.

Praying and speaking with tongues is one way we can be built up spiritually in order to be ready for whatever may come in the future.

Memory Text:

"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself ..." (1 Cor. 14:4).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).*

Lesson 7, Is It Scriptural To Tarry For The Holy Spirit? (Part 1)

Bible Texts: Acts 2:1-4; 8:5-8,12-17; 10:44-46; 19:1-3,6; 9:11,12,17

Central Truth: The infilling of the New Testament believers with the Holy Spirit should be our pattern today for receiving this blessed experience.

Tarrying has been thought by many to be a prerequisite to receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Certainly I believe in tarrying before the Lord. I believe in waiting and praying long and earnestly before God. Many times in our meetings we have waited five to six hours on the Lord in prayer.

Yet when I see people waiting and praying, crying out and agonizing to receive the Holy Spirit, it breaks my heart, because I know this "tarrying" isn't necessary.

Before the Day of Pentecost, Jesus said to His disciples, "... but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

Some have supposed this was the Bible formula for receiving the Holy Spirit. If it were a formula for receiving, however, we would not have any right to take the word "Jerusalem" out of the text. Jesus told them not only to wait, or "tarry," but He said to wait in Jerusalem. Why didn't He say to tarry in Bethlehem? Why didn't He say to tarry in Jericho? Because it was necessary that they wait in Jerusalem, since the Church had to have its beginning there.

ACTS 2:1-4

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The disciples were waiting for the Day of Pentecost to come; they were not waiting for an experience. They were not

just waiting to be filled with the Holy Spirit. If that had been true, the Bible would have said, "When they were fully ready, the Holy Ghost came." But it doesn't say that. It says, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come" That is what they were waiting for — the day.

After the Day of Pentecost there is no record in the Bible anywhere that anyone ever waited, cried, agonized, sang, struggled, or tarried to be filled with the Holy Spirit!

Someone said, "I believe in receiving the Holy Spirit the old-fashioned way." I do, too. You can't get any more old-fashioned than the Acts of the Apostles. I propose that we look at Acts, see how they did it, and follow their example in getting people filled with the Holy Spirit.

Reading through the twenty-eight chapters of the Book of Acts, one who is not a Bible student might suppose he is reading something that had happened over a period of a few days, a few weeks, or even a few years. However, the events in this book cover a number of years.

Eight years after the Day of Pentecost we see Philip carrying the Gospel to the people of Samaria.

Believers Filled In Samaria

Acts 8:5-8

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.

Joy is not necessarily a characteristic of being filled with the Holy Spirit. These people had great joy before they were filled with the Spirit. We can have joy before, and we can have joy afterwards. It is joyous to be saved. It is joyous to be healed. It is joyous to enjoy the blessings of God.

Acts 8:12-17

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, beholding 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, 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 had a glorious revival in Samaria. Hundreds of people must have been saved and scores healed. And all received the Holy Spirit. Notice, too, that they received without waiting, without praying, without agonizing, and without exception or disappointment.

Believers Filled In Cornelius' Household

Then ten years after the Day of Pentecost, the Bible tells us about Peter going to Cornelius' house to carry the Gospel.

In the tenth chapter of Acts, we see how an angel appeared to Cornelius and told him to send to Joppa and inquire in the house of a certain individual for Simon Peter, "Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:14).

Until this time, neither Cornelius nor his household had been saved. They were Jewish proselytes. They didn't know Jesus had died. A person can't be saved without hearing the Gospel, so Peter preached to them. They believed and were born again while Peter was preaching, and they received the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues before he had finished his message!

Acts 10:44-46

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

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 Ghost.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God _____

Notice that they were saved and filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking with tongues, without tarrying — without

waiting, praising, or singing. We make a mistake by thinking things have to be done a certain way — except the Bible way. God doesn't have any cut-and-dried methods. While Peter was still preaching, these people received the Holy Spirit. I have seen people receive the Holy Spirit while I was speaking too.

Believers Filled In Ephesus

Then twenty years after the Day of Pentecost, Paul journeyed to Ephesus.

There he met some believers and introduced to them the Person of the Holy Spirit, as recorded in Acts 19:

Acts 19:1-3,6

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, 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.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

As we see from the verses above, the believers at Ephesus never had heard about the Holy Spirit. But when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues.

Every one of them — without waiting, without praising, and without tarrying — was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke with other tongues as the Spirit of God gave them utterance.

Paul said to the Ephesians, "Have ye received?" He didn't say, "I have come here to pray that God would pour the Holy Spirit out on you." The Holy Spirit had already been poured out on the Day of Pentecost.

(We saw earlier, in Acts 8, that the apostles in Jerusalem sent Peter and John to Samaria to lay hands on Philip's converts to receive the Holy Spirit. They didn't send them to tarry and wait on God for the Holy Spirit.)

Paul's Infilling With The Spirit

Paul, who laid hands on the Ephesians, previously was known as Saul of Tarsus. The account of his experience of receiving the Holy Spirit is found in the ninth chapter of Acts:

Acts 9:11,12,17

11 A ad the Lord said onto 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 earnest, bath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Saul, later known as Paul, received the Holy Spirit immediately. He didn't have to tarry or wait.

"But it doesn't say he spoke with tongues," someone might object. It is true it doesn't state this specifically right here, but Paul himself later said that he spoke with tongues: "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Cor. 14:18). We know he didn't start talking with tongues before he got the Holy Spirit, so it shouldn't be too difficult to figure out when he started. He started when he received the Holy Spirit, just as the rest of us do, because tongues goes with that experience.

"But I remember those wonderful times I had of seeking God for several years before I was filled," someone once told me.

"Have you stopped seeking God?" I asked. "I remember that time I had last week seeking God. I remember that time today seeking God. I believe in seeking God and tarrying. Spirit-filled believers need to seek God just as much as people who are not filled." "Yes, but I learned many lessons," a man said.

"You could have learned them a whole lot faster with the Holy Spirit than you did without Him," I said. "And isn't it true that the very thing you learned when you did get filled was that you didn't have to do all of that seeking?"

He laughed and said, "You are exactly right. The first thing I said after I received was that if only someone had told me, I could have received years before."

We don't have to wait five years, five weeks, or even five minutes. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a gift which every believer can receive right now!

Memory Text:

"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" (Luke 24:49).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..."* (James 1:22).

Lesson 8, Is It Scriptural To Tarry For The Holy Spirit? (Part 2)

Bible Texts: John 7:37-39; Luke 24:49; Acts 2:4

Central Truth: To receive the Holy Spirit, drink in of the Spirit of God, and utterance will be given to you.

In the last lesson, we read every recorded instance in the New Testament where people received the Holy Spirit over a twenty-year period.

We found that there is absolutely nothing in the Scriptures that even resembles what we would call a "tarrying meeting" in order for people to be filled with the Holy Spirit. In every instance where people sought the Holy Spirit, everyone received right away. Not one person went away disappointed. Therefore, if we taught this to our people today, they would receive in the same way — the Acts of the Apostles' way — the New Testament way.

I have had the baptism of the Holy Spirit since 1937, and I have never told anyone to wait or to tarry in order to receive the Holy Spirit. I have always told people, "Come and receive the Holy Spirit." And people everywhere have come and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in my meetings.

Look To The Word, Not Experiences

The Early Church had no trial-and-error way of seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit and not finding, or of coming and going away empty. We should be scriptural and tell people what the Word of God says. Too often people say what they think. They give their theory, or tell their experience. Paul, however, told Timothy, "Preach the Word." He didn't say, "Timothy, tell what you think about the Word." He didn't say, "Timothy, give your theory about such and such." The preaching of theory just produces doubt and unbelief. The facts of God's Word produce faith! That's why the Bible says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

It is all right to refer to experience, but we must magnify the Word above experience. Everyone will have his own experience in the way he receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for experiences do vary. We will all speak with tongues, but some will have additional experiences. This does not mean, however, that one will have any more of the Holy Spirit than another.

Some have told of experiences in receiving the Holy Spirit of seeing a beam of light which seemed to come down through the ceiling; others have told of seeing a ball of fire. I have never

seen any beam of light or ball of fire, but I am just as much filled with the Holy Spirit as anyone. I have the Bible evidence: I spoke with tongues.

I don't doubt that such experiences happen, but God didn't promise "experiences." If they happen, all right; but don't seek them. You do have a right, however, to seek to be filled with the Spirit and speak with tongues.

Many people also have unusual experiences when they are born again. For example, when Paul was converted, he saw a light and heard a voice. "And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Said, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:3,4). However, when I was born again, I didn't see any light or hear any voice, but I am just as much born again as Paul was.

Paul never told people that they had to be converted in the same manner he was, or see a light or hear a voice as he did. He referred to this experience occasionally, but this is the way he taught people to be saved: "... If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

We thank God for Paul's experience in the way that he received the Holy Spirit, but we should not hold an experience up as the norm. Magnify the Word, and let every man have his own experience.

Too many times people have been given no instructions on the Bible way to receive the Holy Spirit. Or even worse, they receive wrong instructions. When they fail to receive, someone slaps them on the back and says, "Better luck next time." However, we don't receive from God by "luck"; we receive from God by faith.

Many have gone away discouraged. Those who should have received the Holy Spirit have been hindered from receiving. Many honest, sincere, intelligent people have been driven away by unscriptural practices. We must tell people what the Word says. "The entrance of thy words giveth light..." (Ps. 119:130). Proper instruction will save people hours of needless seeking.

'Come And Drink'

In the seventh chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus talks about receiving the Holy Spirit.

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 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.)

In this passage, Jesus is talking about receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. These are rivers flowing out of the believer. But notice in John 4:14, Jesus said to the woman of Samaria .. the water that I shall give him shall be IN him a WELL of water springing up into everlasting life." (v. 14). This is referring to salvation.

So in John 7:38 the reference is to RIVERS, and in John 4:14, the reference is to a WELL. It is obvious that these are two different experiences that Jesus is talking about. One — the well — is the blessing of the New Birth in you. It blesses you. It is the well of water in you springing up into everlasting life. It refers to salvation.

The other experience — the river — is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and that makes you a blessing to others. It is those rivers flowing out of you — it is the endowment of power Jesus promised in Luke 24 — and it is available to every believer.

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.

Also notice, in referring to receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, "Come and drink" — not "Come and shout, come and pray, or come and praise." He said, "Come and drink," not, "Come and then go away empty."

We make a mistake by not taking what Jesus said in the simplicity of the way He said it. Can you drink and talk at the same time? Have you ever tried to drink water and talk? Can you drink and sing or praise at the same time?

The Holy Spirit is there to give utterance, but you can't drink and talk at the same time. So tell the candidate to quit talking in English and start drinking of the Spirit! Tell him that he is to do the speaking in tongues! The Holy Spirit will act on his vocal organs, lips, and tongue, and will put supernatural words on his lips, but the candidate himself must speak those words aloud.

The Holy Spirit gives the utterance, but man does the speaking.

Acts 2:4

4 And THEY were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and [they] began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave THEM utterance.

"They" is the subject of the sentence. They did the talking. The Holy Spirit gave them the utterance.

Just drink in of the Spirit. Drink until full; when you are full, the Holy Spirit will give you the utterance in tongues.

Someone might ask, "Do you mean to insinuate there is no need to tarry anymore?" No, I don't mean to insinuate it; I mean to absolutely state it! There is no need to tarry anymore! Jesus said, "Come and drink."

How long does it take you to drink? Jesus said it is just as easy to drink of the Spirit — that is, to be filled with the Spirit — as it is to drink water, or be filled with water. On the other hand, drinking water and being filled with water is something that you do, not something that the water does. Drinking of the Holy Spirit and being filled with the Holy Spirit is something you do, not something that the Holy Spirit does.

Infilling Of The Holy Spirit: A Gift

We can't do anything to merit the Holy Spirit any more than we can do anything to merit salvation. Babes in Christ can receive the Holy Spirit just as easily as mature Christians. We don't receive the Holy Spirit because we have graduated to some marvellous degree of spirituality beyond everyone else, and thus God puts a seal on us saying we are perfect.

The Holy Spirit is a gift. "... ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). If you are born again, you are ready to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. If you have to do one thing to receive the Holy Spirit, then receiving Him ceases to be a gift and becomes a reward.

Some think I make it too easy for people to receive the Holy Spirit. But I wasn't the one who made it easy. I wasn't the one who said, "Come and drink." It was Jesus. I wasn't the one who put receiving the Holy Spirit on a gift basis: It was God.

Someone said, "Yes, but I don't believe in 'railroading' people through to the Holy Spirit." If "railroading people through" means getting people filled with the Holy Spirit quickly, then does that same person believe in "railroading people through" to salvation? Does he believe in getting people saved as quickly as possible to insure that they don't die in the meantime and go to hell? Or if sick, does he believe in "railroading" people through to healing, or letting them linger awhile?

Salvation is a gift. Healing is a gift. The Holy Spirit is a

gift. You can receive one gift just as quickly as you can receive the other!

Reading in the Acts of the Apostles, we see that the Early Church believed in getting people filled with the Holy Spirit as quickly as they did getting them saved or healed. (We saw this in our last lesson.) I not only believe in railroading people through; I believe in "jet-planing" them through!

Taking The Direct Route

Canaan's land is a type of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and of our rights and privileges in Christ. Some have thought it was a type of heaven. But Canaan couldn't be a type of heaven. There won't be any cities to conquer and battles to fight when we get to heaven. The last enemy — death - shall have been conquered. There won't be any enemies or giants in the land over there.

Israel came out of Egypt, which is a type of the world. The children of Israel were all baptized (going through the Red Sea was a type of water baptism). They all drank of Christ. (The rock out of which the water flowed, was Christ.) They could have gone right into Canaan, but because of unbelief and disobedience, they wandered in the wilderness for forty years. When they finally did go in, they took a detour.

If you want to detour before receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit, you may. You may detour to the altar, detour by tarrying, detour a lot of ways. But you can also come directly into the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The door is open.

Another way to say it is this: If you want to go to a nearby city, you can go directly there. Or if you want to, you can go by way of St. Louis, on over to Memphis, down to Atlanta, back over to New Orleans, etc. You wouldn't have to, but you could. It is the same way with receiving the Holy Spirit. You can detour if you want to, but why not take the direct route and receive the Holy Spirit by faith?

Someone said, "More people have received the Holy Spirit after midnight than at any other time." My answer to that is, if they got the Holy Spirit after midnight it is because they didn't believe God before midnight. God is no different after midnight than He is before midnight.

Then there are those who warn, "Be careful about getting in the flesh."

But you can't receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit any other way than in the flesh. Every person who ever got the Holy Spirit was in the flesh!

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter quoted Joel's prophecy, saying, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh ... " (Joel 2:28). Paul said, "What? know

ye not that your body [flesh] is the temple of the Holy Ghost .. ?" (1 Cor. 6:19).

To receive the Holy Spirit, open your being with a strong desire toward God. In simple faith breathe in, drink in, of the Spirit of God, and utterance will be given to you. If you are simple enough in faith and strong enough in courage, you can speak that utterance out right now. If you can drink water, you can drink of the Spirit right now. I am quoting good authority — the Lord Jesus Christ.

Memory Text:

"... If any man thirst, let him come unto to me, and drink" (John 7:37).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..." (James 1:22).*

Lesson 9, Ten Reasons Why Every Believer Should Speak in Tongues (Part 1)

**Bible Texts: Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 14:4;
John 14:16,17; Romans 8:26; Jude 20**

Central Truth: Speaking in tongues is a flowing stream that should never dry up; it will enrich your life spiritually.

The Apostle Paul wrote and spoke at length on the subject of speaking in tongues. He apparently practiced what he preached, because he said, '7 thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Cor. 14:18).

I, too, thank God I speak in tongues regularly, and I wish every believer might know this blessing and source of power in his daily life.

The purpose of the next two lessons is to set forth major reasons why every Christian should speak in tongues, and to help Christians see the blessings that can be theirs through appropriating the power of the Holy Spirit daily.

Reason 1 — Tongues The Initial Sign

Acts 2:4

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The Word of God teaches that when we are filled with the Holy Spirit we speak with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance. Tongues is an initial evidence or sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the first reason people should speak with other tongues is because this is a supernatural evidence of the Spirit's indwelling.

In Acts 10, we read that the Jewish brethren who went with Peter to Cornelius' house were astonished when they saw that the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles. They thought it was just for the Jews.

How did these Jews know that Cornelius' household had received the gift of the Holy Spirit? "For THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:46).

Speaking in tongues was the supernatural sign which convinced them that the Gentiles had the same gift they had.

Reason 2 — Tongues For Spiritual Edification

1 CORINTHIANS 14:4 4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself_

In writing to the Church at Corinth, Paul encouraged believers to continue their practice of speaking with other tongues in worship and in their prayer lives for spiritual edification, or building up.

"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 says that he speaks "divine secrets." Paul is saying here that God has given the Church a divine, supernatural means of communication with Himself!

In the 14th verse of this chapter Paul stated, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful" Notice he said, "my spirit prayeth."

The Amplified Bible adds, "My spirit (by the Holy Spirit within me) prays."

God is a Spirit. When we pray in tongues, our spirit is in direct contact with God, who is a Spirit. We are talking to Him in a divine, supernatural means.

Howard Carter, who was general superintendent of the Assemblies of God in Great Britain for many years and founded the oldest Pentecostal Bible school in the world, said we must not forget that speaking with other tongues is not only the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit's infilling; it also is a continual experience for the rest of one's life. For what purpose? To assist us in the worship of God. Speaking in tongues is a flowing stream that should never dry up; it will enrich your life spiritually.

Reason 3 — Tongues Remind Us Of The Spirit's Indwelling Presence

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.

Continuing to pray and worship God in tongues helps us to be ever conscious of His indwelling presence. If I can be conscious of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit every day, it is bound to affect the way I live.

A minister's 12-year-old daughter once lost her temper and was talking very rudely and hatefully to her mother. A visiting evangelist overheard the scene. When the girl looked up

and saw him, knowing he had witnessed her tantrum, she was embarrassed and burst into tears.

The evangelist asked her if she was filled with the Holy Spirit. When she replied that she was, he reminded her that the Holy Spirit was in her. They had prayer together and she asked the Lord's forgiveness. While praying, she began to worship God in tongues.

When they were finished praying, the evangelist said to her, "There is one secret that will help you curb your temper. If you will pray and worship God every day in tongues, it will help you to be conscious of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. If you remember He is in you, you won't act that way."

Some years later when the evangelist returned to preach at that church, the girl told him, "I have never forgotten what you said. Every day for the past few years I have prayed and worshipped God in tongues, and I have never lost my temper again." Unfortunately, we all know people who have been filled with the Holy Spirit, yet they still lose their tempers and say and do things they shouldn't. This is only because they haven't been walking in the Spirit as they should.

It is so easy, when we are not conscious of His presence, to become irritated and frustrated. But if we will take the time to fellowship with Him, we can be conscious of His indwelling presence.

Reason 4 — Tongues Will Keep Our Prayers In Line With God's Will

Romans 8:26

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.

Speaking in tongues keeps selfishness out of our prayers. If I pray a prayer out of my own mind and out of my own thinking, it may be unscriptural. It may be selfish.

Too often our prayers are like the old farmer who always prayed, "God bless me, my wife, my son John, his wife — us four and no more."

In the Scripture quoted above, Paul didn't say we don't know how to pray, because we do: We pray to the Father in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the correct way to pray. But just because I know how to pray doesn't mean I know what to pray for as I should. Paul said, "... 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."

P. C. Nelson said that the Greek here literally reads, "The Holy Ghost maketh intercession for us in groanings that cannot be uttered in articulate speech." (Articulate speech means our regular kind of speech.) He went on to point out that the Greek stresses that this not only includes groanings escaping our lips in prayer, but also praying in other tongues.

That agrees with what Paul said in First Corinthians 14:14: "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth...." The Amplified Bible says, "My spirit (by the Holy Spirit within me) prays."

When you pray in tongues, it is your spirit praying by the Holy Spirit within you. It is the Holy Spirit within you giving you the utterance, and you are speaking it out of your spirit. You do the talking; He gives the utterance.

By that method the Holy Spirit is helping you pray according to the will of God, which is the way things should be prayed for. This isn't something that the Holy Spirit does apart from you. He doesn't groan or speak in tongues apart from you. Those groanings come from inside you and escape your lips.

The Holy Spirit is not going to do our praying for us. He is sent to dwell in us as a Helper and an Intercessor. He is not responsible for our prayer life; He is sent to help us to pray. Speaking with other tongues is praying as the Spirit gives utterance. It is Spirit-directed praying. It eliminates the possibility of selfishness in our prayers.

Many times when people have prayed out of their own minds, they have changed things that actually were not the will of God and were not best for them!

If God's people want something a certain way, even if it isn't best for them, or it isn't God's perfect will, He often will permit it. Remember, God did not want Israel to have a king, but they wanted one, so He permitted them to have one. But it was not His highest will.

Reason 5 — Praying In Tongues Stimulates Faith

Jude 20

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.

The fifth reason every believer should speak with tongues is because it stimulates faith and helps us learn how to trust God more fully.

Because the Holy Spirit super-naturally directs the words I speak, faith must be exercised to speak with tongues. I don't know what the next word will be — I trust God for that. And trusting God in this area of life helps me trust Him in another.

There was a fine Christian woman in a country church I once pastored. She dearly loved the Lord, but she had an ulcerated stomach, and doctors feared it would lead to cancer. Her husband made good money, but he had spent everything he had on doctor bills. I sometimes stayed in their home.

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

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

I have seen this happen many times. What is the connection? We know that receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit doesn't heal us. However, speaking with tongues helps us learn how to trust God more fully.

In our next lesson we will study the remaining five reasons why every believer should speak in tongues.

Memory Text:

"I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Cor. 14:18).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).*

Lesson 10, Ten Reasons Why Every Believer Should Speak in Tongues (Part 2)

Bible Texts: 1 Corinthians 14:28; Isaiah 28:11,12; 1 Corinthians 14:15-17; James 3:8

Central Truth: Yielding the tongue to the Holy Spirit to speak with other tongues is a giant step toward fully yielding all of our members to God.

Too few Christians today realize the potential power that is available to them through the Holy Spirit. In this lesson we will look at five more reasons why every believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues.

Reason 6 — Praying In Tongues Keeps Us Free From Worldly Contamination

1 Corinthians 14:28

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

The sixth reason every Christian should speak in tongues is because it is one way of keeping us free from contamination from ungodly, profane, and vulgar talk around us on the job or out in public.

Notice from the Scripture above that we can speak with tongues to ourselves. It's different in a church service. Paul said regarding a church service, "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).

If we do this in church, we can do it on the job. It won't disturb anyone. In a barber shop, for instance, if the men tell risqué jokes, I just sit there and speak to myself and to God in tongues. Riding in a car, bus, or airplane, we can speak to ourselves and to God. On the job we can speak to ourselves and to God. Talking in tongues to yourself and to God is a means of keeping yourself free from contamination.

Reason 7 — Praying In Tongues Enables Us To Pray For The Unknown

The seventh reason every believer should speak in tongues is because it provides a way to pray about things no one thinks to pray about, or is even aware of.

We already know that the Holy Spirit helps us to pray

because "...we know not what we should pray for as we ought..." (Rom. 8:26). In addition, the Holy Spirit, who knows everything, can pray through us for things about which our natural mind knows nothing.

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

"Lord, what is the matter?" I asked. "I know something is wrong somewhere. Holy Spirit in me, You know everything. You are everywhere as well as within me. Whatever this is, You give me utterance."

I prayed in tongues for an hour and then I began to laugh and sing in tongues. (When praying this way, always continue praying until you have a note of praise. Then you will know that whatever it is you are praying about has been prayed through.)

I knew what I had been praying for had come to pass. I had the answer, so I went back to sleep.

I dreamed that I saw my younger brother become extremely ill in Louisiana. He had to be taken to the hospital in an ambulance. I dreamed that the doctor came out of his hospital room, pulled the door closed behind him, and told me he was dead.

I said, "No, doctor, he is not dead. The Lord told me he would live and not die." In the dream the doctor became very angry with me for doubting his professional ability. He took me into the room to see for myself that my brother was indeed dead.

Jerking the sheet from his face to prove that he was dead, the doctor saw that my brother was breathing and his eyes were open. Astonished, the doctor said, "Why, you knew something I didn't know. He is alive, isn't he?" I saw my brother rise up well and then the dream ended. I knew then that this was what I had been praying about.

Three months later when I saw my brother he said to me, "I nearly died while you were gone." I told him I knew all about the attack he had had during the night and how he had been rushed to the hospital.

"How did you know?" he asked. I told him about my burden for prayer, followed by the dream.

He said, "That's exactly how it happened! They told me that for about forty minutes there at the hospital the doctor thought I was gone."

Praying in the Spirit provides a way for things to be prayed for that we wouldn't know anything about in the natural. The Holy Spirit, however, knows everything.

Reason 8 — Praying In Tongues Gives Spiritual Refreshing

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, the refreshing, that the above Scriptures refer to? Speaking in other tongues.

Sometimes the doctor recommends people take a rest-cure, but I know the best one in the world. Often when you take a vacation, you have to come home and rest before going back to work. But isn't it wonderful that we can take this "rest-cure" every day.

"... This is the rest... this is the refreshing." We need this spiritual refreshing in these days of turmoil, perplexity, and anxiety.

Reason 9 — Tongues For Giving Thanks

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 understandeth 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" in verse sixteen, he was referring to those who are unlearned in spiritual things.

If you invited me to dinner and said, "Please give thanks," and if I prayed in tongues, you wouldn't know what I said. You wouldn't be edified. Therefore, Paul said it would be better to pray with the understanding in such cases. If you do pray in tongues, you should interpret it so the unlearned will know what was said.

Notice Paul is saying that praying in tongues provides the most perfect way to pray and to give thanks, because he said, "thou verily givest thanks well...." But in the presence of people who are unlearned, Paul said to pray with your understanding

also so they can be edified; so they will understand what you say.

Reason 10 — Speaking in Tongues Brings the Tongue Under Subjection

James 3:8

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 giant step toward fully yielding all of your members to God, because if you can yield this most unruly member, you can yield any member.

In conclusion, I want to point out that, while these ten reasons have dealt primarily with tongues in the individual believer's private life, it is also true that there is a public side to tongues.

First, when people receive the Holy Spirit publicly, they speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. Second, the Chinch is edified by speaking with other tongues in public assembly with interpretation.

Paul plainly stated that to prophesy is to speak unto men "to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3). But he said, "... greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret. ..." (1 Cor. 14:5). He is saying that tongues with interpretation is equivalent to prophecy. If he interprets, the one who is prophesying is not greater.

To illustrate, it takes two nickels to make a dime. However, two nickels are not the same as a ten-cent piece. Paul is saying that prophecy is like the dime, the ten-cent piece. Naturally, it would be better to have the dime than to have one nickel (speaking with tongues). But, if interpretation goes along with tongues, then the two together are the equivalent of prophecy.

Prophesying is "speaking unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." Prophesying is not preaching. (However, sometimes there is an element of prophecy in preaching.)

If prophesying were preaching, you wouldn't have to make any preparation to preach. But you do have to study. Paul said, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God. . ."(2 Tim. 2:15).

You don't have to study to speak with tongues or to interpret. You don't have to study to prophesy. It comes by inspiration of the Spirit. Of course, when one is preaching under the inspiration of the Spirit and suddenly he says things he never thought of, that is inspiration and that is an element of prophecy.

Speaking with tongues plus interpretation edifies the Church. When used with the Word of God, speaking with tongues with interpretation convinces the unbeliever of the reality of the presence of God, and often causes him to turn to God and be saved.

Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils" (Mark 16:17). That can be private or public.

"They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (v. 18). That can be private or public.

Another sign is, "They shall speak with new tongues" (v. 17).

Of course, we don't want prolonged praying in tongues during a service, because unless there is an interpretation, people won't know what is said and will not be edified.

It is all right to pray in tongues as long as you like in the altar service, because you go there to get edified. If everyone is lifting his hands and praying sometime during the service, it is all right for you to pray in tongues. (I stand on the platform and pray that way in every service.)

But when the congregation ceases praying in tongues, I cease praying in tongues, too. The congregation wouldn't be edified if I went on and on. We need to know how to use what we have to the greatest advantage.

Memory Text:

"And these signs shall follow them that believe... they shall speak with new tongues"
(Mark 16:17).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ... (James 1:22),*

Lesson 11, The Holy Spirit Within

Bible Texts: John 14:16,17; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; 1 John 4:4

Central Truth: Christ's purpose in sending the Holy Spirit was so that He, a divine Personality, might live in us.

In this lesson we will deal further with the subject of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the Spirit-filled believer.

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

The Holy Spirit, Our Helper

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.

The Amplified Bible reads, "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, 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. I will not leave you orphans — comfortless, desolate, bereaved, forlorn, helpless — I will come [back] to you" (John 14:16-18).

Notice Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be a Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener, and Standby. We don't need anything more than that. But often we have been so concerned about receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit through a natural, outward experience or feeling of ecstasy that we have missed the reality of what the Holy Spirit came to do in us.

Often when we need help we run here and there, trying to find someone to pray for us. We forget we have a Helper on the inside. We don't have to pray for a helper; we already have a Helper in us!

1 Corinthians 3:16

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

The Amplified translation of this verse reads, "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?

The Amplified version of this Scripture reads, "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.

Again, The Amplified translation of this verse reads, "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."

1 John 4:4

4 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? (Satan, the god of this world.) But there is a Greater One in you! God Himself in the Person of the Holy Spirit is in the born-again, Spirit-filled believer.

All that God could possibly be and do for you, the Holy Spirit is to you and for you. This Greater One who is referred to is the Holy Spirit, who is in you. He is greater than he who is in the world.

Instead of believing what the Bible says, too many people believe only what they feel. When they received the Holy Spirit, they felt wonderful. Later they said, "I had a marvellous experience, but He must have left me, because I don't feel now as I did then." However, Jesus said, "... that he may abide with you for ever."

The Holy Spirit didn't come as a guest to stay for just a few days. He didn't come on a vacation. He came to dwell in you — to be at home in you! The Holy Spirit's home in this life is in your body.

People talk about the outward manifestation and miss the reality of His indwelling presence. We should be conscious of His presence during every waking moment!

The Holy Spirit, Our Guide

The Holy Spirit also is 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 as Jesus said, "Thy word is truth." He will guide us into the truth of God's Word.

He also will guide us in 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 without placing himself in the hands of the guide. It is needless to pray, "Lord, guide me, give me directions," unless we are willing to allow ourselves to be guided.

When we tour some place that has a guide available, if we don't follow the guide, there will be much that we will not understand, because the guide can explain it. Certainly no one would want to go through Carlsbad Caverns without a guide. It is pitch black inside those caverns. But the guide knows right where to turn on the lights. (Thank God, the Holy Spirit knows right where to turn on the lights too!) We never would get out of the caverns if we failed to follow the guide.

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

During the many years I travelled on the evangelistic field, leaving my wife and small children at home, I depended upon my Guide, the Holy Spirit. He always warned me ahead of time of a need in my family. And although I had no communication with my sister and brothers other than in the Spirit, I always knew when one of the family was sick.

Once while ministering in Oregon, I was very burdened in prayer. The Holy Spirit showed me that my older brother was in difficulty, but he would be all right.

I told my wife, "The doctors will think his condition is very serious and, from the natural, it is serious, but he will be all right."

In just a few hours a long-distance call came from my sister. She was almost in hysterics as she said, "Our brother has had an accident and has broken his back. He is in very serious condition. What are we going to do?"

Thank God, I was able to tell her, "I already have inside information on this. He is not as bad as they think he is. He will be all right. Don't fret about it."

Later the doctors said to him, "We don't understand it. The X-rays show that your back is broken. Why you aren't paralyzed we don't know." I knew, however. My brother was in Kansas, but there was an Intercessor in me in Oregon — the Holy Spirit.

If space permitted, I could tell of experience after experience. But let me say that the Holy Spirit is not in me to help me just because I am a preacher. He is in you to help you too. If you will learn to listen to Him and look to Him, He will guide you. When you have guidance, you can be prepared ahead of time. He will guide you into all truth, and He also will guide you and lead you in life.

The Holy Spirit, Our Teacher

Jesus said, "... he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak" "What shall He speak? What He hears God say. Not only will He speak whatever He hears, but "... he will shew you things to come" (John 16:13).

John 15:26 says, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." Notice again John 16:14, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." In other words, the Holy Spirit will make Jesus real to you.

"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" (John 14:26).

Some people say, "I have a poor memory and just can't remember things. I can't remember Scriptures." I tell them, "Why don't you quit trying to remember and look to Him and expect Him to bring them to your remembrance." It is one thing to do something mentally yourself and it's another thing to trust the Holy Spirit who is in you. He is everything in you the Word says He is. He'll do everything in us the Word says He will do. He will be everything in us the Word says He will be.

Smith Wigglesworth said in Ever Increasing Faith, "I am a

thousand times bigger on the inside than I am on the outside." To illustrate this he told of an experience in England when he was asked to pray for the insane daughter of an elderly couple.

The parents led him to an upstairs room, pushed open the door and stepped back, motioning him to enter. Inside, he saw the frail young woman lying on the floor. She was so violent she was being held down by five men.

As Wigglesworth entered the room, she screamed, eyes blazing, "We are many. You can't cast us out." Quietly he said, "Jesus can." He remembered the Bible said, "greater is he that is in you" and that he was a thousand times bigger on the inside than on the outside. He dared to believe that God was within him. He said to the woman, "Jesus can. And out you come in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Thirty-seven devils came out and the woman's mind was completely restored. She dressed and went downstairs later in the day to eat the evening meal with her family.

Someone asked Wigglesworth, "What is your secret? What great place of spirituality have you attained?"

His answer was, "All I did was to remember that greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world. Dare to act on that Scripture."

John was writing to laymen 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."

You are not left helpless. The Greater One is in you. You have authority over the devil!

Memory Text:

"... greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

.(James 1:22).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.

Lesson 12, Seven Steps To Receiving The Holy Spirit (Part 1)

Bible Texts: Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6; 1 Corinthians 14:2,4,5,14,15,18,27

Central Truth: God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. All the believer must do now is receive God's gift.

These next two lessons have a twofold purpose: to help those who have not yet received the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and to help Spirit-filled believers pray with those seeking to receive this experience.

In these lessons I will share seven steps any layman can take to help anyone get filled with the Holy Spirit without waiting and without tarrying. I have successfully used these seven steps for years in my meetings across the country.

Step 1: The Gift Has Already Been Given

Help the candidate see that God has already given the Holy Spirit to believers, and it is now up to the individual to receive the gift. Above all, help him see that he is not to beg God to fill him with the Holy Spirit! God promised to send His Holy Spirit to believers and this promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came then. He has been here ever since, and people have received the infilling of the Holy Spirit ever since.

For example, nineteen or twenty years after the Day of Pentecost, we read in Acts 19, "... Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye RECEIVED the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (w. 1,2). Notice Paul 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.... And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them ..." (w. 2,6). We see that Paul didn't teach these believers to pray that God would give them the Holy Spirit. And notice that WHEN hands were laid upon these believers they RECEIVED the Holy Spirit: "And WHEN Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and THEY SPAKE WITH TONGUES, and prophesied." (v. 6).

Another example of believers receiving the Holy Spirit without waiting and without tarrying, occurs in the eighth chapter of Acts — eight years after the Day of Pentecost: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and

John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might RECEIVE the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:14f15). Peter and John didn't pray that God would give the Samaritans the Holy Spirit; they prayed that the Samaritans might receive the Holy Spirit.

We see in verse seventeen, "Then laid they their hands on them, and they RECEIVED the Holy Ghost." God hasn't given the Holy Spirit to anyone since the Day of Pentecost. That's the day He was given to the Church. Since then believers have received Him. The Holy Spirit is already here for believers to receive.

Step 2: Salvation Is The Only Prerequisite

Help the person see that anyone who is saved is ready to receive the Holy Spirit. "Now when they [the multitude that had gathered after the 120 had received the Holy Spirit and to whom Peter 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? 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" (Acts 2:37,38). Anyone who is saved is ready to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit now.

Some people think there are certain things they have to do to qualify to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, if a person is saved, he couldn't possibly be any cleaner than he is at that moment. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. We believe that saved people go to heaven when they die. If they are good enough to go to heaven, they are good enough to have a little bit of heaven in them!

Some people think that they have to follow certain standards of dress in order to receive the Holy Spirit. Others have the mistaken idea that they have to court God's favor to get Him to do something for them. But the Bible says all we have to do is 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 God.)

Some people have imagined that one has to be perfect before he can receive the Holy Spirit. However, even the great apostle Paul himself said, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect.... 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, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12,13).

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

Him?

Carnal Christians can be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Bible said the Corinthian Christians were carnal, yet Paul said of them, .. ye 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!

Baby Christians can be filled with the Holy Spirit. Certainly carnal Christians and baby Christians need to be filled more than anyone, because they will then receive power that will help them, if they walk in the light of it, to outgrow these things. So, if a person is saved, he is ready to receive the Holy Spirit.

Step 3: Laying On Of Hands

I always tell people that when I lay hands on them, they are to receive the Holy Spirit. Anyone can lay hands on another in faith, for God honors faith. However, there is a ministry of laying on of hands, and some are used along this line more than others. But anyone could lay their hands on a person as a contact of faith and tell him, "This is the minute — right now — you are to receive the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit is then received by faith.

Step 4: Expect To Speak In Tongues

Tell the candidate what to expect. If we don't, he may not know what is happening when the Holy Spirit moves on him. Tell him that he is to expect the Holy Spirit to move upon his vocal chords and to put supernatural words on his lips which he is to speak out in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Remember, the person himself must do the speaking — he must lift his voice by an act of his will. The Holy Spirit gives the utterance, but the person does the talking.

Acts 2:4

4 And 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 14:2,4,5,14,15,18,27

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 _____

4 HE THAT SPEAKETH in an unknown tongue edifieth himself _____

5 I would that YE ALL SPEAK with tongues _____

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-----

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.

Notice that every one of these Scriptures shows that in receiving the Holy Spirit (as well as after receiving the Holy Spirit), or in praying in tongues, or in ministering tongues in the public assembly, it is always man who does the talking.

When I tell this to people who have been seeking the Holy Spirit 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 prompting. It was all I could do sometimes to keep from talking in tongues, but I was waiting for the Holy Spirit to come and take my tongue over."

Some people think that it is as if one might swallow a small radio, and when God gets ready, He turns it on and it starts talking automatically! However, the Holy Spirit gives you the utterance, and you do the talking.

When the Spirit of God is moving on your tongue and lips, you must lift your voice and put sound to it. You are then cooperating with the Holy Spirit and you will find yourself speaking with tongues!

Memory Text:

"I would that ye all spoke with tongues ..." (1 Cor. 14:5).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 13, Seven Steps To Receiving The Holy Spirit (Part 2)

Bible Text: Luke 11:11-13

Central Truth: If you will act on God's Word, He will honor His Word, and you will receive the Holy Spirit.

We learned in the last lesson that in order to help believers receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit they must realize that:

1. God has already given the Holy Spirit to believers, and it is up to the individual to receive this gift.
2. Salvation is the only prerequisite for the infilling of the Holy Spirit.
3. Laying on of hands can be an important contact of faith.
4. The believer should expect to speak in tongues.

Let us now look at three more important steps to receiving this blessed infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Step 5: The Child Of God Need Not Fear Receiving Something False

Some people fear that they might receive something false or counterfeit when they seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit. I have heard people say, "There is a wrong spirit as well as a right spirit. I want to get the right Spirit." To these people I point out this Scripture:

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 here, "If your child asked you for bread, would you give him a stone? If your child asked for a fish would you give him a serpent? If your child asked you for an egg, would you offer him a scorpion?" No, 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 ?" 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 an unsaved person is seeking the Holy Spirit. But if a person is a child of God, he will not receive an evil spirit.

Notice that the expressions "serpent" and "scorpion" were also used in Luke 10:19. "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 refer to evil spirits. He said you are not going to get a "serpent" or a "scorpion." If you are a child of God and you come to your heavenly Father seeking the Holy Spirit, that is what you are going to receive.

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

Step 6: Receive The Holy Spirit And Speak The Language He Gives

Tell the candidate to open his mouth and breathe in as deeply as possible. At the same time he should tell God in his heart, "I am receiving the Holy Spirit right now by faith."

I like to absolutely insist that candidates speak not one word of then-natural language. Then, when the Holy Spirit begins to move upon them, I tell them to lift their voice and speak out whatever sounds seem easy to make, regardless of how they sound. I tell them to begin to speak the words and language the Spirit gives them, praising God with those supernatural words until a clear, free language comes. When that person can hear himself speak in tongues, he will have assurance and confidence that he has received the Holy Spirit.

In John 7:37-39, Jesus said to come and drink. "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. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (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)"

Receiving the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, is like drinking water; the same principle is involved. No one can drink with his mouth shut!

Also, no one can drink and talk at the same time.

I have seen people come to receive with their mouths open. I haven't seen anyone who would open his mouth wide, who didn't receive instantly. Once I saw five businessmen walking down the aisle with their mouths wide open, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "Come and drink." If you will act on God's Word, He will honor His Word, and you will receive.

Step 7: No Confusing Crowd Should Gather Around The Candidate

I like to have a few workers whom I have specially instructed to help seekers, because people are often slow about yielding to the Spirit, and someone else is able to lead them and help them yield. (Sometimes when going swimming it is hard to get some people to go into the water, but if you go in and swim around, telling them how good it is, they will come on in.) Sometimes your being there talking in tongues will encourage the seekers to follow you on into the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Don't crowd around candidates who are seeking the Holy Spirit with everyone trying to give instructions at the same time. This will only bring confusion. Let just one person teach them how to yield to the Spirit.

If you are among those praying with the seekers, do one of two things: If you pray aloud, pray in tongues. Otherwise, pray quietly. If you pray in English, candidates will hear what you are saying, and this will get their minds on you. Many times people will be hindered from yielding to God because they are listening to what those around them are saying.

I have been in Full Gospel circles for half a century, and I have seen nearly everything you can mention — and a lot of things I hate to mention.

I have seen dear people at the altar seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit, while someone on one side of them yells 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 beating them on the back, yelling, "Let go, brother, let go!" Then someone sitting right in front of them shouts, "Die out, brother, die out!" at the top of his voice.

Not because of it, but in spite of it, multitudes have received. But, at the same time, many honest and sincere people have been driven away. We will see more filled with the Holy Spirit if we follow scriptural practices.

By following the seven steps which we have outlined in these two lessons, you will be able to help people receive the Holy Spirit. And you will feel personally blessed and rewarded for your part in their receiving this wonderful infilling of God's

power.

Memory Text:

"Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain ..." (Zech. 10:1).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..." (James 1:22).*

Lesson 14, The Gifts Of The Spirit

Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 12:1-14

Central Truth: The gifts of the Spirit are given to profit the whole Church.

Paul, inspired by the Spirit to write to the Church at Corinth, said, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (1 Cor. 12:1).

If the Spirit of God, through Paul, said He didn't want the Church at Corinth to be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts, I certainly do not believe He wants the Church today to be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts. Yet a gross ignorance does exist concerning these things.

In some places people know nothing at all about them — not even that such gifts exist. They think these gifts have been done away with. In other places they know something about some of them, but their knowledge is very limited.

1 Corinthians 12:1-14

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

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

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.

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.

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.

12 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.

13 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.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

The Epistle of First Corinthians is not a letter written to an individual; it is a letter written to the whole Church. Some have thought these verses apply to an individual, but Paul was telling the whole Church to covet these gifts. Then, as the whole Body covets them, the Spirit will divide to every man severally as He wills.

Paul infers here that not every man is going to have all these gifts, because he said, "For to one [not to everybody], is given a word of wisdom; to another a word of knowledge...."

Some have taken this out of its setting and have thought the Bible was telling the individual to desire all of these gifts. Actually, Paul was telling the Church as a group to covet them. Then if they do, the Spirit will divide to every man severally as He wills — not as I will, not as you will, but as the Spirit wills.

Gifts Of The Spirit Proclaim Jesus As Lord

The Church at Corinth had some peculiar things about it that do not exist among us today.

Paul said, "Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led." These people previously had worshipped idols. In this idol worship, motivated by the wrong spirit, they said a lot of things in error.

Church history tells us that some of them came into the Christian assembly, and when the Spirit of God began to manifest Himself, they would say things under the influence of the wrong spirit. Some of them even would arise in the service when the gifts of inspiration and utterance were in operation and would say that Jesus was accursed.

Paul said that when the Holy Spirit is in operation, He will proclaim Jesus Lord (v. 3). If it is an utterance gift, then of course the Holy Spirit will say that Jesus is Lord. Or, if it is any of the gifts, they will always uplift the lordship of Jesus, not the lordship of some man. They will not attract attention to man, but rather to Christ.

"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed. " You can be sure that if one is exercising one of the vocal gifts and calls Jesus accursed or speaks against Him in any way, that is not the Holy Spirit speaking!

Then Paul said that no man can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. He is saying that if a man is speaking by the right spirit, he will say that Jesus is Lord.

Lacking understanding, many people try to operate a gift without the Spirit. Perhaps the gift has been manifested in their life on occasion and they think, I have it now, and I can operate it at will. However, when they do, they invariably get into trouble. They are throwing themselves wide open to satanic deception. When we get away from the Word, Satan will accommodate us.

Diversities Of Gifts

Paul went on to say, "Now there are diversities of gifts " The word "diversities" simply means "different." In other words, Paul was saying, "There are different gifts but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And differences of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all."

There are two theories on this particular Scripture, and I can see merit in both of them.

One line of thought says these gifts are administered to different ones in different ways. They say diversities of operations means they operate in different ways and not always the same way in different individuals.

On the other hand, there are those who believe that there are diversities of gifts, so there are different gifts, there are differences of administrations, and there are diversities of operations. They say Paul is talking here about three different things, not just gifts: He is talking about gifts, administrations, and operations.

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal " Notice he is calling these gifts "manifestations" — the manifestation of them is given to profit withal. They are given to profit the whole Church, not an individual.

Then Paul went on to say, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge..." and he goes on to list nine manifestations.

Three Categories Of Gifts

The simplest way to describe these nine gifts is that three of them say something, three of them do something, and three

of them reveal something.

The three gifts that say something are the gifts of utterance. They are: prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

The three gifts that do something are the gifts of power. They are: the gift of faith, the working of miracles, and the gifts of healings. In the original Greek, every time this third power gift is mentioned, both "gifts" and "healings" are in the plural: gifts of healings. (This isn't always translated correctly in The King James Version.) There is no such thing as "the gift of healing."

The three gifts that reveal something are the gifts of revelation. They are: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and discerning of spirits.

These gifts are listed in the order of their importance. Of the three gifts of revelation, the word of wisdom is the best gift.

Of the three gifts of power, the gift of faith is the best gift.

Of the three gifts of utterance, the gift of prophecy is the best gift.

Of course, the best gift in any situation is the gift that is most needed at that time.

Memory Text:

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (1 Cor. 12:1).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 15, The Gift Of The Word Of Knowledge

Bible Texts: Acts 9:10-12; 10:9-20

Central Truth: The word of knowledge is the supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of certain facts in the mind of God.

First, let us note the fact that this gift is called the "word of knowledge," not the "gift of knowledge." "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). There is no such thing as a spiritual "gift of knowledge." The word of knowledge is the supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of certain facts in the mind of God.

God is all knowledge — He knows everything. But He doesn't reveal everything He knows to man. He gives him just a word, or a part of what He knows. A word is a fragmentary part of a sentence, so a word of knowledge is simply a fragmentary part of knowledge. God is all knowing. He has all knowledge. But He doesn't impart all knowledge to us, nor does He impart knowledge to us; He imparts a word of knowledge to us — just that part which He wants us to know.

The Gift Is Supernatural

Also this word of knowledge is a supernatural manifestation, as are all of the gifts of the Spirit. None of them is a natural gift. If one of them is natural, then all are natural. If one of them is supernatural, then all are supernatural.

There are those who say that First Corinthians 12:8 refers to natural knowledge. If that were true, then the gifts of healings would not be supernatural healing, but would simply be healing through the advancements of medical science. We certainly believe in medical science and thank God for all it can do. But this Scripture is talking about supernatural healing.

If the gifts of the Spirit were only natural gifts, then divers kinds of tongues would refer simply to those languages which people had learned naturally. Then even unsaved people could have this gift. But we know that these "divers kinds of tongues" are supernatural, for we are able to speak in languages which we have never learned; they are given by the Holy Spirit. Also, we know that this gift of healing is not natural healing; that is, it is not man's ability through medical science to assist nature. It is supernatural healing — imparted by the Holy Spirit.

I believe that if two out of the nine gifts are supernatural, then all nine are supernatural. Therefore, this gift is not natural knowledge, but it is supernatural knowledge — a supernatural

revelation from the Spirit of God.

Confusing the gift of the word of knowledge with natural knowledge, someone said, "We don't need some of these lesser gifts. We have the gift of knowledge." The knowledge they're bragging about is intellectual knowledge — knowledge gained apart from the Holy Spirit and apart from the Word of God. However, the knowledge Paul is referring to in First Corinthians 12:8 is a supernatural gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Gift Manifested Through Visions

We see an example of the manifestation of the word of knowledge through a vision when John was on the Isle of Patmos. John wrote that he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and Jesus appeared to him in a vision. In this vision Jesus revealed to John 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 their spiritual condition to him. That was a word of knowledge.

Another example of this gift in operation is found in the ninth chapter of Acts.

Acts 9:10-12

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.

Here again the word of knowledge was manifested in a vision, but this time it came to a layman. Ananias wasn't an apostle, as was John. He wasn't a pastor or an evangelist. Ananias wasn't even listed as being a teacher. The Bible calls Ananias 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.

In this vision the Lord told Ananias to go to a certain house and pray for Said. At the same time He appeared to Saul in a like vision, showing Saul that Ananias was coming to pray for him "that he might receive his sight."

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 very moment. He couldn't have known this any other way than by supernatural revelation: a word of knowledge.

Acts 10:9-20

9 ... Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

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 four-footed 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 surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

Here again the word of knowledge was manifested through a vision. Peter had fallen into a trance and saw a vision. While he was thinking about what it meant, the Holy Spirit said to him, "Three men seek thee." Peter did not know the men

were there. He had no way of knowing that they were, except that the Spirit of God told him. That was a word of knowledge — a supernatural revelation.

The Gift Manifested Through An Inward Revelation

Sometimes the word of knowledge comes by an inward revelation. When Jesus dealt with the woman at the well in Samaria, He used the word of knowledge to convince her, a sinner, of her need for a Savior (John 4). This woman asked Jesus who He was, and He answered, "If you knew who I was and you would ask me, I would give you water that you need never thirst."

"Give me this water, so I won't have to come here and draw," she said, thinking about the water in the well.

Jesus said, "The water I give you will be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

The woman wanted that water. Jesus told her to go get her husband. When she answered that she didn't have a husband, He said, "You are right about that. You have had five husbands, and the man you are living with right now isn't your husband." Jesus knew this by an inward revelation — a word of knowledge — and used this gift to point her to salvation.

The word of knowledge can be manifested in a number of different ways. It may come through tongues and interpretation, through the gift of prophecy, or an angel may come to deliver a word of knowledge. God has many ways of doing things. Often these gifts operate together — we just separate them in order to define them.

Sometimes this gift of the word of knowledge is confused with a profound knowledge of the Bible. One minister told me that he had the word of knowledge because he had studied the Bible so much! While it is true that God helps us to understand His Word, and we receive knowledge from studying it, that kind of knowledge is not a supernatural gift. The word of knowledge does work in connection with the Bible; God does reveal things in connection with His Word which we don't know. But if that were all there were to it, we wouldn't have to study. Yet Paul told the young minister Timothy to study. In his letter to this young pastor of a New Testament church, Paul said, "Study to shew thyself approved..." (2 Tim. 2:15). So this particular kind of knowledge of God's Word comes by studying, but the word of knowledge comes by supernatural revelation imparted by God.

Another mistaken idea about the gift of the word of knowledge is that it is that very real knowledge which comes by walking with God. While it is true that one does gain a knowledge of God by walking with Him, that knowledge is

different from supernatural knowledge.

An example of the difference between the word of knowledge and natural knowledge is found in the Old Testament story of how God spoke to the boy Samuel (1 Sam. 3:4-10). Samuel was in the Temple helping the prophet Eli. One night Samuel heard a voice call his name. Thinking it was Eli calling, he got up and went to him. Eli told him he hadn't called him, so Samuel went back to bed. Again he heard a voice calling, "Samuel,

Samuel." Again he ran to Eli and again Eli sent him back to bed. When this happened the third time, Eli realized that God must be talking to the boy, and Eli told Samuel to answer the next time the voice called his name.

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 had known the things of God, but he hadn't heard God's voice that night.

So we see that the word of knowledge does not come by long experience with God. There is a knowledge of God that is obtained through close fellowship with Him and experience of His ways, just as there is when we walk with a friend and become better acquainted. As we walk with God, our knowledge of Him increases. But that is not the same as this supernatural manifestation of the word of knowledge.

This manifestation of the Spirit of God isn't just for yesterday; it is also for today. A Spirit-filled Baptist brother who is president of his local chapter of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, once told me of an experience he'd had. He said, "I passed by a large Roman Catholic church, and something seemed to tell me to stop. So I pulled into the church parking lot, stopped, and sat there praying for a little while.

"Something seemed to tell me that the priest would be praying in his office and that I should go in, lay hands on him, and he would be filled with the Holy Spirit. I hesitated. I didn't want to make a fool of myself. I sat there and prayed awhile longer. Then I decided it wouldn't hurt just to go see if I could find the priest, and see if God was really leading me."

This business executive found his way inside the church and knocked on the door of the priest's study. He heard a voice inviting him to come in, and he opened the door to see a priest sitting at a desk with some books open in front of him. As he entered, the priest got up and greeted him, and they introduced themselves to each other.

When the priest heard that his caller was president of the local Full Gospel chapter, he immediately said, "Praise the Lord! I was just reading about what God is doing in these days in this move of the Spirit. I was reading about the baptism of the Holy

Spirit and speaking in tongues, and the Lord witnessed to my spirit that this is what I need. I am conscious of my spiritual lack. Only ten minutes ago I bowed my head and said, 'Lord, I don't know anyone in this town who has this experience. Send somebody by to pray with me.' And here you are!"

The business executive told me, "That priest got down on his knees, I laid hands on him, and he started speaking in tongues almost instantly, lifting both hands to heaven."

It is amazing what is happening in this day. God is visiting hungry hearts everywhere. He is not going to pay attention to any of the old boundary lines of denomination that we have set up and the labels which we go by. You can put any kind of label on an empty can, but that won't put anything inside the can. It's not the label that counts; it's what's inside.

Here was a supernatural manifestation of the word of knowledge very similar to those occurring in the Acts of the Apostles — happening because the Holy Spirit is still manifesting Himself among those who believe. We need supernatural manifestations today just as much as the early Christians needed them!

Memory Text:

"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).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).*

Lesson 16, The Gift Of The Word Of Knowledge In The Old Testament

Bible Texts: 1 Kings 19:2-4,14,18; 2 Kings 5:25,26; 6:9-12; 1 Samuel 9:3,4,6,19,20; 10:21-23

Central Truth: Through the word of knowledge, the discouraged can be comforted, the saints gladdened, lost property recovered, the enemy defeated, and the Lord Jesus Christ glorified.

Supernatural manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit occurred in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. In fact, all the gifts of the Spirit except tongues and interpretation of tongues, were in operation in Old Testament times. (We will cover the reason for this when we study those gifts.)

The other gifts were first manifested in the New Testament under the ministry of Jesus. Then, after the Day of Pentecost, tongues and interpretation of tongues began to be manifested as well.

Word Of Knowledge Used To Enlighten A Discouraged Servant

1 Kings 19:2-4,14,18

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.

3 And when he [Elijah] saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers_____

14 And he said, 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_____

18 Yet I [God] have left me seven thousand in

Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

The prophet Elijah was very bold up on the mountain top when he prayed fire down from heaven. But when someone told him, "Queen Jezebel said that by this time tomorrow she is going to have your head," Elijah became fearful.

He sat down under a juniper tree and begged God to let him die. He told God, "Everybody is backslidden but me. Everybody has bowed their knee to Baal, and I am the only one left."

But God gave him a word of knowledge which encouraged him. He said, "No, you aren't the only one left.

I have seven thousand who have not bowed unto Baal, reserved to Myself." Elijah Couldn't Have Known That Any Other Way. I Am Sure It encouraged him to know that he wasn't the only godly person left; that God had seven thousand who had not bowed their knees to Baal.

Word Of Knowledge Used To Expose A Hypocrite

2 Kings 5:25,26

25 But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither.

26 And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and olive yards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants?

After Naaman was healed of leprosy, he wanted to give the prophet Elisha changes of raiment, silver, gold, and other gifts to express his gratitude. Elisha, however, refused the gifts. But Elisha's servant, Gehazi, ran after Naaman and lied to him, saying, "After you left, two young prophets came, and although my master wouldn't take anything for himself, he said it was all right to take some changes of raiment and some talents of silver and gold for these prophets." Naaman was so thrilled to be healed that he gave Gehazi twice as much as he asked for. Then Gehazi hid the gifts because he was a thief as well as liar.

When Gehazi returned and Elisha asked him where he had been, he said, "Nowhere, my master."

Elisha said, "My heart [my spirit] went with you when you caught up with that chariot. I saw you." How could Elisha,

sitting in his own house, know what was going on several miles away? God revealed it to him! God gave Elisha a supernatural revelation of what had happened, thus exposing a hypocrite.

Word Of Knowledge Given To Warn A King Of The Enemy's Plan

2 Kings 6:9-12

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, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

Every time Syria set up an ambushment against Israel, the prophet of God revealed their plans to the king of Israel. Finally the king of Syria called his cabinet together and said, "There must be a traitor among us who is giving us away."

The king's servants replied, "No, there is no traitor among us. A prophet of God in Israel tells the king what you speak in your bedchamber."

This information regarding the ambushments of Syria was a supernatural revelation. The prophet Elisha couldn't have known the enemy's plans. He was not in Syria. The enemy's plans were revealed to him supernaturally through a word of knowledge and his country was saved from danger.

Word Of Knowledge Used To Help Recover Lost Property

1 Samuel 9:3,4,6,19,20

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.

4 And he passed through mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of Shalisha, but they found them not: then they passed through the land of Shalim, and there they were not: and he

*passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found them not*__

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; peradventure he can shew us our way that we should go__

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?

While Saul was out looking for his father's donkeys, which had either strayed or were stolen, someone suggested, "Why don't you go ask the prophet, Samuel? He would know." (Of course, Samuel would know only what God would reveal to him, because if he knew everything he would be omnipotent.) When Saul asked him concerning the donkeys' whereabouts, Samuel told him, "They have already been found."

Word Of Knowledge Used To Discover A Man In Hiding

1 Samuel 10:21-23

21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found.

22 Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence__

Although Samuel had already anointed Saul to be king of Israel, when it came time to cast lots determining the next king, Saul hid "among the stuff." When the people couldn't find him, they inquired of the Lord instead of sending everybody looking for him. That was the quickest way. They knew that the Lord knew where Saul was. And the Lord told them exactly where Saul was, and when they looked there, they found him. That was the word of knowledge in operation. The word of

knowledge reveals facts.

The word of knowledge can also be used to reveal sickness and demon possession. Remember that the revelation the word of knowledge brings is never about the future. The word of knowledge brings revelation concerning things past or present. The word of wisdom, on the other hand, brings revelation pointing to the future, including the plan and purpose of God.

By the manifestation of the gift of the word of knowledge, the discouraged can be comforted, the saints gladdened, lost property recovered, the enemy defeated, and the Lord Jesus Christ glorified.

Memory Text:

"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).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 17, The Gift Of The Word Of Wisdom (Part 1)

Bible Texts: Acts 9:10-16; 8:26-29

Central Truth: The word of wisdom is a supernatural revelation by the Spirit of God concerning the divine purpose in the mind and will of God.

In studying the nine gifts of the Spirit, the Scriptures plainly state that all these work .. that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he wills," (1 Cor. 12:11).

As the Body of Christ, we are to desire that the gifts of the Spirit be made manifest among us and then leave it up to the Holy Spirit to use those whom He will.

The Holy Spirit will not use everyone in the same way. He plainly stated that He divides to every man severally as He wills. Therefore, we must stay open to Him and let His will be done, even in the distributing and manifesting of spiritual gifts. We will get into trouble by wanting to do any of this ourselves.

Not everyone will have all the gifts of the Spirit in manifestation, because 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 equally to everyone. As the Body of Christ, let us desire these manifestations and let us allow the Holy Spirit to manifest Himself in our midst as He wills.

Regarding this Scripture, "... to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.. people sometimes call these manifestations the gift of wisdom or the gift of knowledge. That is not correct, however. We must call them what the Bible calls them or we will become confused. If you called a dog a cat, you would confuse people. This Scripture is not talking about wisdom or knowledge in the general sense. It is talking about just what it says — the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge.

God has all wisdom and all knowledge. He knows everything, but He never reveals to anybody everything that He knows. He just gives them a word of what He knows. A word is a fragmentary part of a sentence. And so it is with wisdom. It is not the gift of wisdom, it is the gift of the word of wisdom that God reveals to man — only the word, or part, that He wants him to know.

For example, if you needed legal advice, you would call a lawyer. But the lawyer wouldn't give you all the legal wisdom he

has, because you wouldn't need all of it. He would just give you a part — a word — of the legal wisdom that fits your particular case. He gives you a "word" of wisdom, legal wisdom, and that is really all you need.

The word of knowledge is a supernatural revelation by the Spirit of God concerning certain facts in the mind of God, relating to people, places, or things. The word of wisdom is a supernatural revelation by the Spirit of God concerning the divine purpose in the mind and will of God. The difference between these two gifts — the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom — is that the revelation which the word of knowledge brings is always present knowledge, or it is knowledge of something which happened in the past; the word of wisdom, on the other hand, always speaks of the future.

Word Of Wisdom And Word Of Knowledge Often Operate Together

In teaching about them, we usually divide these two gifts and deal with them separately; however, they frequently operate together.

For example, as we pointed out in Lesson 15, when the Lord spoke to John on the Isle of Patmos, it was in the form of a vision. Jesus appeared to John and told him about the condition of seven churches in Asia Minor at that time. The knowledge about the present condition of these seven churches was a manifestation of the word of knowledge.

Then the Lord went on to give John a word of wisdom. Jesus instructed each church as to what to do in the future according to His plan and purpose for each one.

We see another example of these two gifts operating jointly in the case of a layman, Ananias.

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.

In this passage we see both the gifts of the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom in operation. The Lord told Ananias where to go to find Saul, and that Saul had been praying and had seen a vision. The Lord even told Ananias the very street, the very house, and the very person to go to. These were all present facts. The Holy Spirit also revealed to Ananias that in Saul's vision, Saul had seen a man called Ananias come in and lay his hand on him that Saul might receive his sight. This, too, was a revelation, given by a vision, to Ananias concerning present facts about Saul. Therefore, this was the word of knowledge in operation.

But a further revelation was also given to Ananias. This other revelation was a word of wisdom because it revealed God's plan and purpose, as we read in verse 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"

Giving even further revelation, the Lord said to Ananias, "For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." That didn't mean Saul (later named Paul) was going to be sick for Jesus' sake, but that he would suffer much persecution and physical hardship. And he did. He was stoned and left for dead. Five times he was given thirty-nine lashes by the Jews. He was shipwrecked three times. Everywhere Paul went, people stirred up things against him, and he suffered many things for God. This revelation given to Ananias concerning the great things Paul would suffer, was also a manifestation of this supernatural gift called the word of wisdom.

In the eighth chapter of Acts, we have another example of this gift of the word of wisdom in operation through a layman. At this time, Philip was still a deacon; he was appointed to serve tables. Later God made an evangelist out of him.

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.

God revealed His plan and purpose to Philip through an angel's message. In this message, God directed Philip as to what to do — just as anyone might be led of the Spirit. And in the message, God told him to go to the desert, and Philip had to go by faith. The angel's message was a revelation which revealed something about God's purpose and plan; not the whole of God's plan, but just a part of it — just a word. Therefore, this was the word of wisdom in operation.

Natural Wisdom

The word of wisdom often is confused with simple wisdom used in dealing with the affairs of life. But wisdom in dealing with the affairs of life is not a spiritual gift of the Holy Spirit.

In the beginning of Joshua's ministry, God told him the key to his success would lie in meditating on the Word of God: "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" (Josh. 1:8).

Another translation says, "Thou shall make thyself prosperous and thou shalt be able to deal wisely in the affairs of life."

Yes, there is a wisdom to be gained through the knowledge of God's Word, but that wisdom is not the supernatural manifestation of the gift of the word of wisdom.

Some people think Solomon's wisdom was a manifestation of the supernatural word of wisdom, but it wasn't. Solomon's wisdom was given to him by God. This same kind of wisdom is promised us 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."

The wisdom James is talking about is the wisdom to deal wisely in the affairs of life — wisdom to know how to conduct oneself as a Christian. God has promised that this wisdom — which I call general wisdom to deal in the affairs of life — is available to everyone who will ask for it. God does impart wisdom, but it still is not the supernatural manifestation of the

word of wisdom.

In writing to believers, James said that if any lack wisdom, let him ask of God for it. Yet Paul said in our text, "To one is given the word of wisdom" — to one; not to all, but to one. This infers that not everyone is going to have these manifestations. Paul concludes by saying that manifestations of the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit are given only as the Spirit wills.

When God sees fit to reveal His own mind and purpose and plan to man in a supernatural way, He does so by the supernatural manifestation of the word of wisdom. And that gift of the word of wisdom is to be distinguished from the general wisdom in dealing with the affairs of life that He will give to all who ask.

Memory Text:

"For To One Is Given By The Spirit The Word Of Wisdom ..." (1 Cor. 12:8).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But Be Ye Doers Of The Word, And Not hearers only..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 18, The Gift Of The Word Of Wisdom (Part 2)

Bible Texts: Acts 11:28-30; 21:10,11

Central Truth: God reveals His purpose and plan for the future through the word of wisdom.

Sometimes what we call prophecy is not the simple gift of prophecy at all. If what is spoken forth has an element of revelation to it, it is actually a word of knowledge.

There is no revelation in the simple gift of prophecy. According to First Corinthians 14:3, the gift of prophecy "... speaketh unto men to EDIFICATION; and EXHORTATION and COMFORT." If a person is used only in the simple gift of prophecy — if he does not have manifestations of the other gifts in his ministry — then his prophecies will deal only with edification, exhortation, and comfort.

The Old Testament prophets, on the other hand, had to have the gifts of the Holy Spirit in operation in their lives in order for them to stand in the office of the prophet, because they made predictions concerning the future. And as we have seen, the simple gift of prophecy has no prediction in it. Therefore, the prophets' predictions, even though they came through prophecy, were actually words of wisdom. For example, we ride in an automobile, but we are not an automobile. In the same way, sometimes a word of wisdom is conveyed by prophecy, but it really isn't prophecy. It is a word of wisdom.

Word Of Wisdom May Come In Many Forms

The word of wisdom, like the word of knowledge, may be given by an audible voice, a vision, or a dream. It also may come through the vocal gift of prophecy, or through tongues and interpretation.

In the Old Testament, Joseph received a word of wisdom through a dream which revealed God's plan and purpose for the future.

Moses received the revelation of the law in an audible voice as God gave it to him. This law concerned God's purpose for Israel; therefore, it had to be the word of wisdom which was exercised.

This is also true of the prophets of the Old Covenant who prophesied many things concerning Israel's future, the New Covenant, the coming Messiah, and even events yet to be fulfilled. They conveyed it through prophecy, but it was actually a word of wisdom they received.

Throughout the Old Testament as the prophets would

prophesy, the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge would flow together. In the New Testament we see the same thing in operation.

Acts 11:28-30

28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea:

30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Agabus prophesied that a drought was coming, and the people believed him because he was a man of integrity who had a proven ministry. (We can't believe everything that everyone says. We must have some discernment in order to judge things in line with God's Word.) But when Agabus prophesied about the drought, the people immediately began to prepare to send relief to the victims of the drought.

We again read of the prophet Agabus in the twenty-first chapter of Acts. Paul and his company, including Luke, the writer of the Book of Acts, Were At Philip's House.

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.

Notice that something was revealed. When any REVELATION comes, 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. The revelation concerning Paul was not a word of knowledge, because it dealt with the future. "Knowledge" encompasses past and present facts and events given to us through the Holy Spirit of God. A word of "wisdom" is revelation of the future given to us through the Holy Spirit; God in His divine wisdom knows all about the future.

Then Luke said, "And when we heard these things, both

we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. 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" (vv. 12,13).

After that Luke said, "And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done" (v. 14). This was a revelation of the will of God which was to come to pass in the future; therefore, it was a word of wisdom. And it came to pass.

Word Of Wisdom Can Be Conditional

There are some instances in the Old Testament when the prophet received a word from God which did not come to pass. Some things are conditional. In the case of King Hezekiah, God told Isaiah to give him a word of wisdom concerning the future — the plan and purpose of God under the present conditions. Isaiah told Hezekiah, "... Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live" (2 Kings 20:1).

Isaiah delivered the message and started to leave the palace. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, repented of his wrongdoings, cried and prayed to God, and reminded Him that he had walked with God and had kept His commandments in times past.

The word of the Lord came to Isaiah before he even got out of the courtyard, instructing him to go back and give Hezekiah another word of wisdom. (It was a word of wisdom because it concerned the future.) "Tell him I am going to give him fifteen more years," God said.

God also spoke to the prophet Jonah and gave him a word of wisdom that Ninevah was going to be destroyed. It was a word of wisdom because it concerned the plan and purpose of God for the future.

Jonah didn't care if Ninevah was destroyed or not! He didn't want to go warn the enemies of Israel. God dealt with him, however, until he was obedient to go and preach to the people of Ninevah, warning them of impending judgment if they didn't turn to God. They repented and judgment didn't fall on them in that generation (although it came eventually).

Word Of Wisdom Used To Set Apart Those For Special Ministry

The gift of the word of wisdom is also used to reveal God's plan to those He wants to use in ministering. We saw an example of this in our last lesson. God sent Ananias to pray for Saul, telling him, "... he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel..." (Acts 9:15).

Word Of Wisdom Used To Assure Of God's Protection

The word of wisdom is also given to assure of coming deliverance in a time of calamity. When Paul was aboard a ship en route to Rome to appeal his case to Caesar, a violent storm arose. Paul had had a word of wisdom for his fellow passengers even before they set sail. He had said, "... I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage ..." (Acts 27:10). But because the south wind was blowing softly, they disregarded Paul's warning and set sail.

If they had listened to Paul, they would not have lost their ship and all their merchandise. Failing to heed his warning, however, they had to throw everything overboard. Finally, all hope was gone. But in the midst of such calamity, Paul stepped forth. He had heard from heaven!

Paul said, "There stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul... God hath given thee all them that sail with thee" (Acts 27:23,24). Paul said, "The ship is going down and will be lost. Listen to what I am telling you, for you will have to stay with the ship." They were about to leave it, but they all stayed with it, and not one man was lost.

How desperately we need such supernatural manifestations today! Thank God, we can and do hear from heaven through the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit!

Memory Text:

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom ..." (1 Cor. 12:8).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).*

Lesson 19, The Gift Of Discerning Of Spirits

Bible Texts: Exodus 33:20-23; Acts 16:16-18

Central Truth: The discerning of spirits gives insight into the spirit world.

By way of review, the nine gifts of the Spirit can be divided into three categories: three gifts which reveal something, three gifts which do something, and three gifts which say something.

The three gifts of revelation—gifts that reveal something — are the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the discerning of spirits.

The three power gifts, as they are often called — gifts that do something — are the gift of faith, the working of miracles, and the gifts of healings.

The three inspirational gifts, or vocal gifts — gifts that say something — are the gift of prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues.

Often these gifts work together, as in the case of tongues and interpretation. But we divide them here in order to distinguish them and study them.

Our previous lessons have dealt with two of the three gifts which reveal something: the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge. In this lesson we will cover the third revelation gift: 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 they are: (1) the word of wisdom, (2) the word of knowledge, and (3) discerning of spirits.

Everything within the realm of knowledge — facts, events, purpose, motive, origin, destiny; human, divine, or satanic; natural or supernatural; past, present, or future — comes within the focal range of these three gifts. They include in their comprehensive scope all that God knows. And there is nothing God knows that may not be made known to man as the Spirit wills through the agency of one or more of these three gifts!

The word of wisdom gives us a revelation of the mind and purpose of God. We can understand why this gift would rank first, because it is more important to have a revelation of the mind and purpose of God than anything else. The word of wisdom deals with the future.

The word of knowledge gives us a revelation of things in the present or past.

The discerning of spirits gives us insight into the spirit world. It actually has a more limited range than the other two

revelation gifts, because its revelation is limited to a single class of objects — spirits. Revelations that the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge bring are broader and apply to people, places, and things, whereas the discerning of spirits gives supernatural insight into only the realm of spirits.

Let me say right here that it is not “discerning of devils,” nor is it the “discerning of evil spirits.” To say that the discerning of spirits has to do only with devils is misleading. It is supernatural insight into the realm of spirits both good and bad. The discerning of evil spirits is included, but too many people have thought discerning of evil spirits is all this gift refers to, and so they have been misled.

Discerning The Similitude Of God

God let Moses look into the realm of spirits. He said to Moses, “You can’t look on my face, but I am going to hide you in the cleft of the rock and put my hand over your face; I am going to pass by and let you see my back parts.”

Exodus 33:20-23

20 And he 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 it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft 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.

This is an example of Moses seeing into the spirit realm. He was able to see the similitude (or likeness} of God.

All through the Word of God we encounter people who in visions have been able to see the similitude of God. They didn’t see God; they saw the likeness of God. As He was revealed, they were seeing into the spirit world. For example, Isaiah said, ‘7n the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up ...” (Isa. 6:1). That was a manifestation of discerning of spirits.

Discerning The Risen Christ

Through the discerning of spirits, or seeing into the spirit realm, one may even discern the risen Christ! No one has actually seen Him physically since His Ascension and seating on high. He is seated on the right hand of the Father, where He “ever liveth to make intercession” for us (Heb. 7:25). But

through this supernatural gift of discerning of spirits, people have sometimes been able to see into the spirit realm and see Jesus.

Discerning The Holy Spirit

John, in his vision on the Isle of Patmos, saw the Holy Spirit as seven spirits before the throne of God. That simply meant that John was seeing into the spirit realm and seeing seven aspects of the Spirit of God.

All such visions would be a manifestation of the gift of discerning of spirits. A vision might bring with it a word of wisdom and/or a word of knowledge. But the vision itself would be the gift of discerning of spirits in operation because that person would at that time be seeing into the spirit world. To "discern" means to "see," so a person is discerning or seeing into the realm of spirits. And in the spirit world there are both divine spirits and evil spirits.

Discerning of spirits also means the discerning of cherubim, seraphim, archangels, the host of angels, or the discerning of Satan and his legions. It also refers to the discerning of the human spirit, with its good or evil tendencies.

Discerning Of Spirits

The gift of discerning of spirits also reveals the kind of spirit behind a supernatural manifestation — whether evil or good. An example of this is found in the apostle Paul's ministry.

Acts 16:16-18

16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said TO THE SPIRIT, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

By the discerning of spirits, Paul knew that this young woman who was following his group through the streets of Philippi had a spirit of divination. When the gift of discerning of spirits was in operation, Paul turned to her and spoke directly to the spirit, commanding it to come out of her. Notice that Paul dealt with the spirit involved; not the person. (And after her deliverance, the girl couldn't tell fortunes any more: That spirit

of divination had left her!)

Supernatural manifestations in the realm in which we live originate from one of two sources: God or the devil. Many things which seem miraculous to us actually do not come from God. We must not forget that Satan is a supernatural being also. Too often people are ready to follow anything, whether it is backed up by Scripture or not!

We can correctly identify a genuine manifestation of the Spirit of God if discerning of spirits is in operation. Through this gift, we can know the spirit behind the operation. On the other hand, we can correctly identify the source of the manifestation even without having discerning of spirits in operation in our life. How is this possible? Because if we know the Word of God and are walking in the Spirit, we will have an inward witness that will lead us and distinguish the true from the false.

Romans 8:14 tells us, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." This verse implies that all the sons of God can be led by the Spirit. But the Scriptures certainly don't imply that all the children of God would have the gift of discerning of spirits. First Corinthians 12:8-10 says, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge ... to another the discerning of spirits." This doesn't state or even imply that everybody would have these gifts, but it does imply that every believer can be led by the Spirit. We need to distinguish the difference between the two: Some things are revealed to us by the inward witness, and some things are revealed to us by the discerning of spirits.

'Discerning' Not Mind Reading

Someone has said that the best way to find out what something is, is to find out what it is not. So let us look at some things the gift of discerning of spirits is not.

First, discerning of spirits is not "discernment." People say, "I have the gift of discernment." Actually, there is no such gift mentioned in the Bible. The Bible calls this gift the discerning of spirits. Many times what people call "the gift of discernment" is really the gift of the word of knowledge in operation. People know things by the Spirit of God and mistakenly call the gift "discernment."

Discerning of spirits is not a kind of spiritual "mind reading." Nor is it psychological insight, mental penetration, or the power to discern the faults in others; for this fault-finding, I have noticed, is possessed not only by believers but by unbelievers as well! You don't even have to be converted to get this "gift." However, this "gift" is forbidden in the Scriptures: "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1).

One purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to destroy this critical attitude and to replace it with the sweet attitude of

gentle forbearance. The gift of discerning of spirits is not a gift of fault-finding. If those who think they have this gift would just turn it on themselves for a few minutes, they would never again use it. The gift of discerning of spirits is not discerning of character or faults. It is not the discerning of people. It is the discerning of spirits.

The Christian should walk in love, for love covers a multitude of sins. Paul said, "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32).

The noted English Bible teacher, Howard Carter, wrote in Questions & Answers on Spiritual Gifts, "The word of knowledge gives one a revelation of anything that can be classified as existing or having existed, so the fact of a spirit possessing a body could be revealed by this gift, but the one so informed would have 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."

Memory Text:

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (1 Cor. 12:7).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only .(James 1:22).*

Lesson 20, The Gift Of Faith (Part 1)

**Bible Texts: Ephesians 2:8; Romans 12:3;
Galatians 5:22,23; 1 Corinthians 12:9**

Central Truth: Those who possess the gift of faith believe God in such a way that He honors their word as His own, and He miraculously brings it to pass.

Having covered the three revelation gifts — the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the discerning of spirits — in previous lessons, we will go now to the three power gifts.

The power gifts — those that do something — are: the gift of faith, the working of miracles, and the gifts of healings. In this lesson we will discuss the first of these: the gift of faith, or special faith. (Read First Corinthians 12:4-12.)

Let me emphasize that the gift of faith, like all the other gifts of the Spirit, is supernatural; it is not natural. There are those who say that some of the gifts of the Spirit are natural and some are supernatural. However, if one is supernatural, then all are supernatural. I believe that every one of the gifts is a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit! (See First Corinthians 12:11.)

The gift of faith is the greatest of the three gifts of power. It is a gift of the Spirit to the believer so that he might receive miracles. The working of miracles is a gift of the Spirit given to the believer so that he might work miracles. One gift receives, and the other gift does something. One gift is passive; it receives. The other gift is active; it works. Notice that the Scripture says, "To another the WORKING of miracles ..." (1 Cor. 12:10). When you perform a miracle, that's "working" a miracle. But when you receive a miracle, you don't "work" it, and that's the gift of faith in operation.

And we must remember too, that these power gifts are very closely associated, just as the revelation gifts are closely associated, and the utterance gifts (prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues) are closely associated. In fact, the Bible plainly tells us in First Corinthians 14:5, that tongues with interpretation is equal to prophecy. We differentiate between these gifts and list them separately in order to better define them.

Furthermore, we also find that faith, like prayer, is often confused in some people's minds. We have a tendency to put all kinds of faith in the same sack, mix them up, and shake them all out together. But we must differentiate between them.

Thus, we learn that there are four different kinds of faith:

1. Saving faith, which leads one to salvation.

2. General faith, which every believer has.
3. The fruit of faith — or faithfulness — the fruit of the recreated human spirit, which comes after salvation.
4. The gift of faith — or special faith — a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit, which is imparted after the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit wills.

And as someone once said, sometimes the best way to find out what something is, is to find out what it's not.

Saving Faith

Ephesians 2:8

8 For by grace are ye saved through FAITH; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God —

The faith by which we are saved is a gift of God. It is imparted to us through the Word: "So then faith [saving faith] cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). However, the kind of faith which we will be discussing in this lesson — the gift of faith, or special faith — is different from saving faith.

General Faith

Romans 12:3

3 ... God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

There is a type of faith — I call it general faith — which all believers have. This general faith can be increased as Christians feed on the Word of God and exercise it in the arena of life. We can all have this ever-increasing general faith. The gift of faith, however, is one of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit, given as the Holy Spirit wills.

Furthermore, general faith is the faith by which we ordinarily receive answers to prayer. For example, we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit by faith; and we receive answers to prayer by 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 received answers to prayer by faith — general faith — even before we received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. These answers came because we believed God by faith, but that is not the same as the gift of faith in operation.

In fact, if the gift of faith had to be in operation in order to get an answer to prayer, to receive healing for the body, or to have a financial need met, then we could never get any prayers answered until after we had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, because that's when this kind of faith — the gift of

special faith — is received. But even then, it's only as the Spirit wills.

However, we know that many of us did receive answers to prayer by faith — general faith — before we had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Many of us, for example, were healed based on faith in God's Word before we ever received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We exercised general faith to receive these answers to prayer.

And following this same line of reasoning, if it required the gift of faith — special faith — to receive answers to prayer, then not everyone — even those filled with the Spirit — could be assured of having their prayers answered. Why? Because not every Spirit-filled believer is promised this gift of special faith. The Scripture says, "For to ONE is given . . . the word of knowledge . . . ; To ANOTHER FAITH by the same Spirit..." (1 Cor. 12:8,9).

Regarding this gift of faith, Paul sums up at the end of the chapter, "... are ALL workers of miracles?" (v. 29). No. "Have ALL the gifts of healing?" (v. 30). The answer is no. Then we can add to it, "Do ALL have this GIFT OF FAITH?" The answer is again, no.

So we can see that the gift of faith is not the same as general faith which every believer has; for if we had to rely on the gift of special faith to get our prayers answered, then not everyone could receive answers to prayer.

The Fruit Of Faith

Galatians 5:22,23

*22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

*23 Meekness, temperance: against such there
is no law.*

The fruit of faith is also different from the gift of faith. We read about the fruit of the Spirit (one of which is faith) in Galatians 5:22,23, quoted above. In the original Greek, however, this fruit of faith is not called faith at all, but "faithfulness."

While the fruit of the spirit are for the development of Christian character, the gifts of the Spirit are to produce power in the believer's life.

Fruit is something that grows. Faith — or faithfulness — is a fruit that grows in the life of a Christian to establish him in spiritual character. But the gift of special faith is a gift given by the Spirit of God, as the Spirit wills.

Concerning the gift of faith, Weymouth's translation says, "... to a third man, by means of the same Spirit, special faith "

(1 Cor. 12:9).

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....," and they think that this is the way to get "faith." However, the faith referred to in this Scripture is the gift of faith, or special faith.

The Gift Of Faith

1 Corinthians 12:9

9 To ANOTHER faith by the same Spirit*_*

So we see that the gift of faith is not imparted to all, but only as the Spirit of God wills. Also, it is a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit to receive a miracle. By the gift of faith one does not work a miracle, but passively receives a miracle.

The gift of faith is distinguished from the other kinds of faith in that with this special faith there is a manifestation of the evidence of the supernatural. One can supernaturally, and against all odds, believe God for a miracle.

Of the three power gifts — the gift of faith, the working of miracles, and the gifts of healings — the gift of faith is the greatest.

And we have also seen that the gift of faith, or special faith, is separate and distinct from saving faith which leads one to salvation, general faith which every believer has, and the fruit of faith which develops one in Christian character.

We will see in the next chapter, that by the gift of faith one is given a supernatural ability to receive a miracle from God; whether it be for supernatural protection, supernatural sustenance, the casting out of unclean spirits, the raising of the dead, or the impartation of supernatural manifestations, such as in the laying on of hands for the Holy Spirit, or pronouncements of blessings.

Memory Text:

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom.... To another faith by the same Spirit..." (1 Cor. 12:8,9).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 21, The Gift Of Faith (Part 2)

Bible Texts: Daniel 6:16,17,19-23; 1 Kings 17:2-6; Galatians 3:5

Central Truth: The gift of faith is a supernatural endowment by the Spirit whereby that which is uttered or desired by man, or spoken by God, shall eventually come to pass.

The gift of faith is different from the gift of working of miracles, although both gifts produce miracles. The gift of working of miracles is active, whereas the gift of faith is passive. It doesn't work; it receives. In other words, the difference between the gift of working of miracles and the gift of faith is that one does, and the other receives.

When the gift of faith is in operation, whatever is spoken or desired by the individual being used in this gift will come to pass. Whether it be an utterance by God or man, a miracle, assurance, curse or blessing, creation or destruction, removal or alteration, it will ultimately come when it has been spoken by this gift of faith.

The working of miracles is more of an action, and the gift of faith is more of a process. The gift of working of miracles performs a miracle, whereas the gift of faith receives a miracle. This is because the working of miracles utilizes faith which actively works a miracle, but the gift of faith utilizes faith which passively expects a miracle, a prolonged or ongoing miracle. Also, when the gift of faith is in operation, the believed-for miracle may not manifest immediately. It may manifest over a long period of time.

The Gift Of Faith For Supernatural Blessings

The gift of faith was used by the patriarchs of old for direct supernatural blessings or fulfilment of human utterances. When these patriarchs were about to die, they would lay their hands on their sons and would command blessings upon them. Often these blessings did not come to pass until many years later. We see this in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Joseph. These patriarchs believed their pronouncements would come to pass at the appointed time in the future. This was the gift of faith in operation.

The Gift Of Faith For Personal Protection

Daniel 6:16,17,19-23

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel,

Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

17 And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel....

19 Then The King Arose Very Early In The Morning, And Went In Haste unto the den of lions.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocence was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no matter of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

Daniel received a miracle while he was in the lions' den. In those days, and throughout history, many others were thrown to the lions — and they were killed. Why didn't these lions harm Daniel?

The Bible says that Daniel "believed in his God." There is no doubt that God gave Daniel special faith — a special manifestation — to receive deliverance. Daniel didn't do anything: He just lay down and went to sleep. Notice that Daniel's faith was passive rather than active, yet he received a miracle. This was the gift of faith in operation.

In just the same manner, Jesus exercised the gift of faith in the face of great danger. During a raging storm Jesus slept on a pillow in the back of the ship. This was the gift of faith in operation which simply expects a miracle.

Someone might argue, "Yes, but that was Jesus. He was the Son of God."

However, we know that Jesus never did anything except by the power of the Holy Spirit. He stripped Himself of the power He had as the Son of God.

The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus and anointed Him when He was baptized by John in the Jordan River. Jesus was just as much the Son of God before the Holy Spirit came upon Him as He was afterwards. Yet the Bible tells us He had never worked any miracles prior to His baptism (John 2:11). Afterwards, Jesus ministered as any man anointed by the Holy Spirit would minister.

If Jesus had worked miracles by some power INHERENT within Himself as the Son of God, then He could not have told us we would 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). However, if Jesus did these works as a man anointed by the Holy Spirit, then certainly under the inspiration and anointing of the Holy Spirit, believers can do the same thing!

While the storm swept across the sea, Jesus slept. He wasn't bothered by the storm. While hungry lions roamed about Daniel, he lay down and slept in the face of that danger.

Throughout the Bible, we see such instances where the gift of faith worked for individuals in the face of great danger. They possessed a calmness which was supernatural; and by that supernatural faith they received a miracle.

The Gift Of Faith For Supernatural Sustenance

1 Kings 17:2-6

2 And the word of the Lord came unto him [Elijah], saying,

3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

4 And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5 So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

Here we see an instance where the gift of faith was used for supernatural sustenance in the time of famine. Elijah's faith had to be given to him supernaturally by God, because it was beyond human reasoning to expect ravens to feed a human. Nevertheless, ravens brought food to Elijah morning and evening. And by this supernatural faith, Elijah received a

miracle.

The Gift Of Faith For Raising The Dead

As we mentioned before, the gifts of the Spirit often operate together. In the case of raising the dead, three gifts operate together — the gift of faith, the working of miracles, and the gifts of healings. This is one reason we don't see too many people raised from the dead. Some Christians may have one or more of these gifts in operation in their lives, but not too many have all of them in operation.

First of all, in the raising of the dead it takes supernatural faith — the gift of faith — to call a person's spirit back when it has left the body. It takes a working of miracles to raise the person, and it takes the gifts of healings; otherwise, if the person is not healed, he would immediately die again. Therefore, all three of the power gifts are in manifestation when someone is raised from the dead.

According to Albert Hibbert, as many as fourteen people were raised from the dead during Smith Wiggles-worth's ministry.

The first instance occurred while Wigglesworth was still working as a plumber. (He had already received the baptism in the Holy Spirit then, but he wasn't out in the active ministry as yet.)

One night he was called to the home of a young woman who was dying of tuberculosis. Wigglesworth started praying for her at 1 o'clock. At 3:30 a.m., she died.

"It was a time when I would not have 'No,' and God said 'Yes,'" Wigglesworth recalled. The face of Jesus appeared at the window of the room where Wigglesworth was praying. Color returned to the face of the girl. She rolled over, fell asleep, and later awakened totally well.

Another case concerned a neighbor who had died just before Wiggles-worth arrived at the man's home. Mrs. Wigglesworth was already there. As Wigglesworth began to pray for the dead man, Mrs. Wigglesworth shook her husband, pleading, "Don't, Dad! Don't you see that he is dead?" But Wigglesworth continued to pray.

"I got as far as I could with my own faith," Wigglesworth said, "and then God had 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." The man returned to life!

A third case Wigglesworth told about, was a woman who died immediately after Wigglesworth and another man had prayed for her. "You may think that what I did was absurd," Wigglesworth said, "but I reached over into the bed and pulled

her out. I carried her across the room, stood her against the wall and held her up."

Wigglesworth commanded the corpse, "In the Name of Jesus, I rebuke this death!" The woman's body began to tremble. "In the Name of Jesus, I command you to walk!" he said — and the woman walked. She was restored to life!

This is beyond anyone's ordinary faith. With ordinary faith we could pull a dead person out of bed as Wigglesworth did, stand the body up, and tell the corpse to walk. But with ordinary faith I don't believe that corpse is going to walk. It takes a supernatural manifestation of God's power to receive a miracle such as this.

Many times if we will take a step of faith — ordinary faith — the faith every believer has, when we come to the end of our own faith, this supernatural faith will take over. The reason this hasn't happened with a lot of people is because they haven't used the faith they already have.

The Gift Of Faith For Casting Out Evil Spirits

The gift of faith may be used, on occasion, to cast out unclean spirits from those whose bodies have been defiled by them. Here again, more than one gift must be in operation. The gift of discerning of spirits and/or the word of knowledge will be manifested as well as the gift of faith. If one doesn't discern or "see" the spirit, often the spirit is revealed through the word of knowledge. But the gift of faith still will be exercised to cast out the evil spirit. Of course, we know from Mark 16:17 that general faith also is effective in casting out evil spirits.

The Gift Of Faith For Ministering The Holy Spirit

Galatians 3:5

5 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?

This gift of faith comes into operation in the laying on of hands for people to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Any believer can lay hands on people in general faith, and appropriate God's promises, and believe God. But there is a difference between believing God with general faith and appropriating His promises, and that supernatural manifestation which is passed from one individual to another through the gift of special faith.

Now it is possible, in general faith, to lay hands on a

person for healing or any other blessing; and although nothing may be perceptibly manifested, if it is received, it is still a demonstration of God's power.

However, if when one person lays hands on another and there is ministered through them healing, or the infilling of the Holy Spirit by supernatural manifestation, then that is the gift of special faith in operation.

So God works in both these ways: by our general faith appropriating the promises of God and receiving His power that way; and, on the other hand, by a supernatural manifestation of God ministered from one person to another — which is the gift of faith in operation.

Memory Text:

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; ...To another faith by the same Spirit..." (1 Cor. 12:8,9).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..." (James 1:22).*

Lesson 22, The Gift Of Working Of Miracles

Bible Texts: 2 Kings 2:9-14; 1 Kings 17:12-16; Acts 5:1-5

Central Truth: A miracle is a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature; a temporary suspension of the accustomed order through the Spirit of God.

In our studies on the gifts of the Spirit we come now to the gift of working of miracles. First of all, let us define "working of miracles." As with many words in the English language, when we use the word "miracle," it means one thing generally speaking, but used specifically it means something else.

Sometimes the word "miracle" is used as a figure of speech. We talk about "miracle fabrics," "miracle drugs," and "miracle detergents."

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 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.

Every one of the gifts of the Spirit is miraculous. They are supernatural.

In the general use of the word "miracle," all gifts of the Spirit are miracles. But specifically speaking, they are not. The working of miracles, then, is a specific act, such as Elisha's dividing a river by the sweep of a mantle.

After Elijah ascended to heaven in a chariot in the whirlwind, Elisha received his mantle and smote the Jordan River with it. Dividing the waters by a sweep of his mantle was actually working a miracle — an intervention in the ordinary course of nature.

2 Kings 2:9-14

9 And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

10 And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken

from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

13 He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan;

14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

In the realm of healing, miracles are often received, but they are not the result of working of miracles; they are healing miracles. Everything that God does is miraculous in a sense, but it is not a miracle as in the case of turning water into wine just by speaking a word — that is the working of miracles.

Water turned into wine by the process of nature is a natural miracle. But water turned into wine by speaking a word, as Jesus did in John 2:1-11, is the result of the spiritual gift of the working of miracles.

A miracle, therefore, is a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature, a temporary suspension of the accustomed order, an interruption of the system of nature as we know it, operated by the force of the Spirit of God.

Working Of Miracles In The Old Testament

Working of miracles was more prominent in the Old Testament than in the New Testament. Although people were healed and gifts of healings were in operation in the Old Testament, gifts of healing were more prevalent in the New Testament.

The working of miracles was used for the miraculous deliverance of God's people from Egyptian bondage. We see this gift used when God convinced Pharaoh to let Israel go. A number of miracles were wrought there.

When Aaron threw down his rod and it was turned into a serpent (Exod. 7:10), that was the working of a miracle. When

the dust was turned into insects (Exod. 8:16), and the other plagues followed, this was the gift of working of miracles in operation.

Coming out of Egypt, the Israelites faced the Red Sea with Pharoah and his hosts close behind, ready to make them slaves again. Mountains loomed on one side, the wilderness was on the other, the sea was in front of them, and the enemy was behind them — their situation seemed hopeless. But Moses looked to the Lord, and the Lord told him to stretch forth his rod. Moses obeyed, and the sea divided. That was the working of a miracle — divine intervention in the ordinary course of nature.

Actually, two gifts of the Holy Spirit were in operation in this instance. The working of miracles divided the sea, but it took the gift of faith to keep it divided! That was a continuing miracle. The people walked over dry-shod to the other side. When the enemy attempted to do the same, the waters came together and the Egyptians were drowned.

Another scriptural use of the working of miracles was to provide for those in want.

1 Kings 17:12-16

12 And She Said, As The Lord Thy God Liveth, I Have Not A Cake, But an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

13 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

14 For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

15 And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

16 And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.

It also was a working of miracles in Elisha's ministry when a widow's pot of oil kept flowing until she had filled every vessel she owned. She then borrowed her neighbors' vessels and filled them with oil too. (See Second Kings 4:1-7.)

Working Of Miracles In The New Testament

We see the working of miracles in manifestation when Jesus took a little boy's lunch, fed the five thousand with it — and then gathered up twelve baskets of leftover food after the people had eaten (John 6:5-14).

The working of miracles was also used to confirm the Word that was preached. When Paul was preaching in Cyprus, Elymas the sorcerer withstood him. Paul, through the power of God in the operation of the gift of working of miracles, struck him blind for a season, and that was a sign to others (Acts 13:4-12).

This gift was also used to deliver people from unavoidable danger. The gift of faith will carry a person through the danger without his being harmed at all, but the working of miracles is different: It will actually change the circumstances causing the danger.

For example, when Paul was shipwrecked, the storm did not cease until it blew itself out (Acts 27). Paul didn't stand up and say, "Storm, you stop!" But because God spoke to him, he had supernatural faith to believe for divine protection. That was the gift of faith in operation, and he received safety for every man, although the ship was lost.

However, when Jesus stood on that ship during a storm on the Sea of Galilee and said, "Peace, be still" (Mark 4:39), that worked a miracle. That changed the very circumstance causing the danger.

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 used for "miracles" is "powers." In other words, the working of miracles is called "the working of powers." The Greek word, according to the Greek concordance, means, "explosions of almighty." It means impelling, staggering wonders and astonishment. In other words, the Greek could read, "The working of impelling, staggering wonders or astonishments, or the outworking of explosions of almighty."

In his book, Questions & Answers on Spiritual Gifts, Howard Carter said, "... the working of miracles is a very important manifestation of the Spirit. It is the mighty power of God flowing through a person." We might say that the individual participates in the same power of God that was in manifestation when God created the world, because He surely worked a miracle when He spoke the earth into existence.

When the Lord permits an individual, through the power of the Spirit, to speak the word and the river is divided — the same God who created those waters lets a little bit of that omnipotence, as the Spirit wills, be manifested in that person.

This working of miracles is indeed a mighty gift, glorifying "the God of all power," as Howard Carter said, thus stimulating the faith of His people, and astonishing and confusing the unbelief of the world.

Memory Text:

"For to one is given by the Spirit... the working of miracles..." (1 Cor. 12:8,10).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 23, The Gifts Of Healings

Bible Texts: Acts 10:38; 1 Corinthians 12:28-30

Central Truth: The purpose of the gifts of healings is to deliver the sick and destroy the works of the devil in the human body.

The gifts of healings are given by God for the supernatural healing of disease without natural means from any source. Every one of the nine gifts of the Spirit is supernatural.

We may have some difficulty, because of our limited knowledge, in defining some of the other gifts, but there should be little difficulty in defining the gifts of healings. Nearly everyone understands about healing. Of course, Jesus brought healing into prominence by His own ministry. He also gave authority to His disciples to heal the sick (Matt. 10:8).

We want to emphasize the supernatural character of all the gifts of the Spirit, including the gifts of healings. These gifts have nothing to do with medical science or human learning.

Luke, the Beloved Physician, was with Paul on many of his missionary journeys. Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles as well as the Gospel which bears his name. He was with Paul when he was shipwrecked on the Island of Melita (Acts 28). Yet nothing is said to the effect that Luke ministered to the people with his medical knowledge. In fact, Luke records that the father of the chief man of the island was sick, and Paul laid his hands on the man, and he was healed — by supernatural power. Then the people brought the sick from throughout the island for Paul to minister to them, and they were healed.

Of course, we believe in medical science, and we thank God for what it can do. We are certainly not opposed to doctors. But some people confuse medical science with the gifts of healings. I've heard some say that the gifts of healings were the doctors and medical knowledge which God has given them.

If medical science is God's method of healing, however, then doctors should not charge — their services should be free. This is not the case, however, as anyone knows who has had any experience with them. Also, if medical science were God's method of healing, it would be free from errors. Doctors would make no mistakes.

We thank God for medical science and what good doctors and hospitals can accomplish. We would not speak disparagingly of them or the great advances made in modern medical technology. We also thank God for the many good Christian physicians who have the interests of their patients at heart and minister skilfully to them. But supernatural healing

comes not by diagnosis or by prescribing treatment; it comes by laying on of hands, anointing with oil, or sometimes just by speaking the Word. I believe in natural healing and I thank God for it. But I also believe in supernatural healing.

Jesus' Ministry Of Healing

Acts 10:38

38 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.

Jesus ministered not as the Son of God, but as a prophet anointed by the Holy Spirit. Jesus was just as much the Son of God when He was 25 as when He was 30 years old. Yet at age 25, He had not healed anyone, and not one miracle of healing had been wrought under his ministry. He was just as much the Son of God when He was 29 as when He was 30; yet throughout His twenty-ninth year no one was healed, nor had He wrought one miracle of healing.

When Jesus was 30 — even on the day before He 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 afterwards. Yet until that happened, He had never healed anyone. There was no manifestation of power operating in His life.

It was only after the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove to anoint Him to minister that these things began to happen. In fact, Jesus Himself never claimed to do the works. He said, "... the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (John 14:10).

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). Years later, Peter, preaching to Cornelius and his household, said, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power ..." (Acts 10:38).

Although Jesus was always the Son of God, He never healed anyone until after He was anointed with the Holy Spirit and power.

This should prove conclusively that He wasn't healing by some power which was inherent in Him as the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, but that he was healing the sick just as any believer would minister to the sick today — by the anointing of the Spirit through the manifestation of the gifts of healings.

A Full Measure Of The Spirit In Jesus' Ministry

The Bible tells us that Christ had the Spirit without measure. "... he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (John 3:34). Therefore, we would see manifestations of things in His ministry which we wouldn't see in anyone else's because He had the Spirit without measure; no other individual does. However, it seems to me this text infers that the entire Body of Christ — collectively — has the same measure of the Spirit which Jesus had. Consequently, an individual would not have the same measure of success in ministering even the gifts of healings which Jesus had, because He had the Holy Spirit without measure. And having the Spirit without measure, Jesus would have the manifestation of all these gifts of healings.

1 Corinthians 12:28-30

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.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

30 Have all gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

Notice that in verse twenty-eight, both the words "gifts" and "healings" are plural. This is the way it should be in every one of the verses, for this is the way it is in the Greek.

Notice, too, this is the only one of the gifts of the Spirit which is in the plural. All the others refer to only one gift.

Why are they "gifts of healings" and not the "gift of healing"? I really don't know, but I have my opinion. I don't think any of us could know for a certainty, because the Scripture doesn't tell us specifically, but I think there are gifts of healings because there are different kinds of diseases — and one gift wouldn't heal all kinds.

I have noticed in my ministry, as well as in the ministries of others, that where these gifts are in operation, there is a greater degree of success in some areas of healing than in other areas. And other ministers tell me there are certain kinds of diseases which are seldom healed in their ministries, yet certain other diseases are nearly always healed. "Why?" I don't know. Perhaps in the process of time we will know more about this, for we are here to study and to learn.

In the ministry of Jesus, every manner of sickness and every manner of disease was healed. All the gifts of healings were in manifestation, because Jesus had the Spirit "without measure."

Two Different Manifestations Of Healings

There is a difference in the manifestation of gifts of healings and simply receiving healing by our own faith in God's Word. God has taught me through the years the difference between the two.

When I received healing for my body, no one laid hands on me. I didn't really know there were any church groups that believed in divine healing. 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 I was healed by acting and standing on Mark 11:24, "... when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

So I prayed and began to say, "I believe that I receive healing for my deformed heart. I believe that I receive healing for my paralyzed body. I believe that I receive healing from the top of my head to the soles of my feet." Then God's healing power was manifested in my body.

My healing came directly from God. Gifts of healings are manifested through another person to you. All the healing is done by God, of course, but the difference is in the channel He uses to accomplish your healing.

Somebody has said that anytime one receives healing, it is the gifts of healings in operation. It is a gift, in one sense of the word, because anything we get from God is a gift, generally speaking. But it wouldn't necessarily be healing as a result of these gifts in manifestation.

Look again at First Corinthians 12:28. "And God hath set some in the church" He is not talking here about spiritual gifts; He is talking about men equipped with spiritual gifts: "God hath set some in the church, first apostles" "Apostles" isn't an individual spiritual gift which somebody might receive from God. It is a ministry gift to the Church. "... secondarily prophets...."

That is also a ministry, not to bless an individual, but a ministry given to the Church. "... thirdly teachers" The teaching gift is not something given to you to bless you. It is something which is given to you to enable you to bless others. It, too, is a ministry.

Paul went on to talk about the working of miracles. He was saying that there are some in the ministry who are equipped with working of miracles and "... then gifts of healings"

Then Paul asks the question, "Are all apostles? [Does everyone have the ministry of an apostle? Certainly not.] are all prophets? [Does everybody have the ministry of a prophet? No.] Are all teachers?" No, everybody doesn't have the ministry of a

teacher. We could all teach to the extent of our knowledge, but there are those whom God has put in the Church who are equipped by the Holy Spirit with a teaching gift.

Then Paul asked, "are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" Obviously, the answer is no, for the Spirit divides "to every man severally as he will" (1 Cor. 12:11).

Thank God for His Word, and for the privilege of believing and acting upon His Word. Thank God for the supernatural manifestation of all these gifts according to His will.

Memory Text:

"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).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..."* (James 1:22).

Lesson 24, The Gift Of Prophecy

Bible Texts: 1 Corinthians 14:1-5; Acts 21:8-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21

Central Truth: Prophecy is supernatural utterance in a known tongue.

Prophecy is the most important of the three gifts of inspiration or utterance. The reason it is the most important is because it takes the other two — divers kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues — to equal prophecy.

Paul said, "... greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret..." (1 Cor. 14:5), inferring that to speak with tongues and interpret is equivalent to prophecy. Therefore, prophecy is really the most important of these three gifts of inspiration or utterance.

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 tongues.

The Hebrew word that is translated "to prophesy" means "to flow forth." It carries the thought "to bubble forth like a fountain, to let drop, to lift up, to tumble forth, to spring forth." The Greek word that is translated "to prophesy" means "to speak for another." It means to speak for God, or to be His spokesman.

Gift Of Prophecy For All

1 Corinthians 14:1-5

1 Follow after charity [love], and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

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.

3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

5 I 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.

In this passage of Scripture, Paul tells us to desire spiritual gifts, but especially that we might prophesy. That doesn't mean we are not to desire the other gifts, but that we are to put this gift first. At the end of this chapter, Paul repeated, "Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy." Thus, Paul, writing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, emphasized the importance of prophecy.

The Gift Of Prophecy And The Prophet's Ministry

The simple gift of prophecy should not be confused with the prophetic office. "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. In the office of a prophet, however, we often find revelation coming forth even by prophecy.

It is also interesting to note the difference between prophecy in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, prophecy is essentially foretelling future events, whereas in the New Testament it shifts strongly to forth telling. In the simple gift of prophecy there is no foretelling whatsoever.

Notice that Paul is telling the whole Church at Corinth to covet to prophesy and to desire spiritual gifts — but "rather that you may prophesy." Yet Paul had just gotten through telling them in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians that God has set in the church, ". . . first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers . . ." (v. 28).

Then Paul asked, "Are all apostles?" The answer is no. "Are all prophets?" No, they couldn't be. If prophesying made you a prophet, then Paul would be contradicting himself. However, the fact that you have prophesied doesn't make you a prophet. It means that you have exercised the simple gift of prophecy.

For example, a rich man has money. All of us have at least some money, but that doesn't make us rich. By the same token, a prophet would prophesy, but one who prophesies wouldn't necessarily be a prophet. A prophet, for example, 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.

Paul said in First Corinthians 14:29, "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge." Then in verse thirty he said, "If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by [that is, another prophet], let the first hold his peace." Here he is talking about revelation. The prophet would have these other revelation gifts operating.

Thus, to stand in the office of the prophet, a person must have operating in his ministry the gift of prophecy plus at least two of the revelation gifts: either the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and/or the gift of discerning of spirits.

Therefore, we should not confuse the office of the prophet with the simple gift of prophecy which all believers are told to covet. All can have the gift of prophecy, because God wouldn't have told us to covet something that wasn't available to us. All can prophesy, but we can't all be prophets.

In Acts 21, we see a scriptural illustration of the gift of prophecy.

Acts 21:8-11

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 had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

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.

Note that all four of Philip's daughters had this simple gift of prophecy. These young women must have prophesied in the services held in their house; otherwise, Paul and his company would not have known that they prophesied. They spoke to the whole company to edification, exhortation, and comfort. Evidently they never prophesied to Paul. When the prophet Agabus came, however, he had something on a higher order which brought revelation.

Therefore, we see that the prophet may prophesy — but the message he brings may not be prophesying at all. It may come through the gift of prophecy, as he just speaks what he has from the Lord, saying, "Thus saith the Lord." In Acts 21:10,11 it was one of the revelation gifts — the word of wisdom — in operation through the gift of prophecy.

Some think that to prophesy means to preach. All inspired utterance is prophecy in some form or another, but prophecy isn't preaching.

Sometimes there is an element of prophecy in preaching when one is anointed by the Spirit and is inspired to say things which come from the heart rather than the head; but that is only one phase of the operation of the gift of prophecy.

To preach means to proclaim, announce, cry, or tell. The scriptural purpose of the gift of prophecy is different from the purpose of preaching. Jesus didn't say men would be saved by the foolishness of prophesying, but by the foolishness of preaching. Supernatural gifts are given to arrest people's attention, not to save them. Even on the Day of Pentecost when people were talking in tongues, no one got saved until Peter stood up and preached to them.

Wrong Use Of The Gift

1 Thessalonians 5:19-21

19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Another area of confusion regarding the gift of prophecy is caused by the misuse of this gift. The Church at Thessalonica had so much misuse of the gift of prophecy they almost despised it. Therefore, Paul, writing by the Spirit of God, had to say to them, "Despise not prophesyings." If people would use this gift as the Scripture teaches, it would be a great blessing. But some hear a minister who has 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.

As we saw, the gift of prophecy is given to edify the Church. "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to EDIFICATION, and exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3). "... he that prophesieth EDIFIETH the church" (1 Cor. 14:4). This gift is also given to exhort the Church. The word "exhort" here means in the Greek "a calling nearer to God." Then our text says the gift of prophecy is given to comfort. A lot of what some people call prophecy never comforts anyone; rather, it discomforts them.

Prophecy And The Prayer Life

The gift of prophecy, like tongues, has to do with more than just public utterance. Prophecy can be used in your prayer life.

Many times while you are in prayer, God fills you with the Spirit and you speak with the Spirit and speak in tongues. Speaking with tongues is the beginning of these things, but God wants every Spirit-filled believer to do more than speak with

tongues. He wants us to be able to interpret. And He wants us to prophesy.

Paul didn't infer that just a few believers would speak with tongues. He encouraged the entire Church at Corinth to pray in tongues and worship God. Then he said, "... 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. And He also wants us to prophesy, because He plainly said, .. desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy " (1 Cor. 14:1). Then He said to covet to prophesy.

Through this gift of prophecy we can speak supernaturally not only unto men, but also unto God. Through prophecy we can enjoy fellowship with God in the Spirit which is beyond anything we have known before.

Memory Text:

"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).

Lesson 25, The Gift Of Tongues

Bible Text: Mark 16:15-18

Central Truth: Divers kinds of tongues is supernatural utterance by the Holy Spirit in languages never learned by the speaker, not understood by the mind of the speaker, nor necessarily always understood by the hearer.

Our study now brings us to the gift of tongues, or “divers kinds of tongues.” The Scripture says, “...to another divers kinds of tongues ...” (1 Cor. 12:10). The word “divers” is italicized in the King James Version, which means it was added by the translator. Actually, the verse reads, “...to another, kinds of tongues—” Later in this same chapter, Paul said that God set in the Church “diversities of tongues” (v. 28). Therefore, it would be acceptable to say “divers kinds of tongues,” or different kinds of tongues.

Divers kinds of tongues is supernatural utterance by the Holy Spirit in languages never learned by the speaker, not understood by the mind of the speaker, nor necessarily 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!

The gift of tongues is the most prominent of the three vocal gifts — or as they are sometimes called, gifts of utterance or inspiration — the gift of prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. However, this doesn’t necessarily mean the gift of tongues is the best. But it is the most prominent for several reasons.

Why Are Tongues Emphasized In Some Circles?

A question often asked by some denominational people is, “Why do you Full Gospel people emphasize tongues?” The answer is, “We do not.” There are a number of reasons why it seems that we do.

1. We are often asked about tongues, and are therefore drawn into discussions about the subject.
2. Speaking in tongues is always manifested when people are baptized in the Holy Spirit.
3. Utterance in tongues in a public assembly is the least of the gifts, and is therefore the most widely dispersed and most frequently used gift.
4. The gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues are distinctive to this dispensation. We see all the other gifts of the Spirit — the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge,

discerning of spirits, special faith, working of miracles, gifts of healings, and prophecy — in operation in the Old Testament. In the ministry of Jesus we see all the gifts of the Spirit in operation except tongues and interpretation. The gifts of speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues are distinctive to the dispensation in which we live. Therefore, they are more in use.

5. Paul gave prominence to tongues. The reason he did was because then, as now, speaking with tongues was widely misunderstood.

Tongues — A Supernatural Sign

Jesus said in Mark 16:17, "And these signs shall follow them that believe... they shall speak with new tongues— " One preacher, endeavouring to explain this, 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 passage we see that every one of the signs mentioned here by Jesus is a supernatural sign!

Mark 16:15-18

15 And he said unto them, 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; they 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.

No thinking person would doubt that if four of these signs are supernatural, surely the fifth would be too. Therefore, one reason we speak in tongues is because Jesus said this is a sign which will follow believers. It is the scriptural evidence; that is, it is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

One preacher disagreed with this, saying, "John the Baptist was full of 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."

I replied, "Yes, but we are not living under the Old Covenant."

What happened back then is an example for us now. We desire the Holy Spirit in operation in our lives, according to the

dispensation in which we live. Therefore, we have to start with the Acts of the Apostles. We can't go back to the Old Covenant, because we are not living there.

John the Baptist was a prophet under the Old Covenant. Jesus Himself said concerning John, "... 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).

In this dispensation, we have a better covenant established on better promises (Heb. 8:6), and particularly in the area of the Holy Spirit.

Tongues — A Devotional Gift

We need to put the emphasis on tongues where the emphasis belongs. Tongues is primarily a devotional gift.

When Paul wrote the Church at Corinth, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Cor. 14:18), he was giving them the purpose of tongues and explaining what speaking in tongues would do for them. Tongues is primarily a devotional gift to be used in our prayer life in the praise and worship of God.

Paul was teaching that only a few believers will be used in what we would call the public ministry of tongues, because he said in First Corinthians 12:30, "do all speak with tongues?" Some take that out of context and say, "Speaking in tongues isn't for everyone. You can be filled with the Spirit without speaking with tongues." However, we must remember that Paul is talking about the ministry gift of tongues, because 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).

Then Paul asked, "Are all apostles? [No, all aren't.] are all prophets? [They are not.] are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? [No, they do not.] do all speak with tongues?" The obvious answer is no. But Paul is talking here about public ministry.

We should not be too concerned about our ministering in tongues and interpreting. We should be primarily concerned with maintaining tongues in the place where they principally belong — as a devotional gift to assist us in the worship of God.

Howard Carter said, "We must not forget that the speaking with other tongues is not only an initial evidence of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, it is a continual experience for the rest of his life, to assist in the worship of God. It is a flowing stream that should never dry up, and that will enrich the life spiritually."

It seems to me Paul was saying that he never used tongues publicly, because he said, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all Yet in the church..." (1 Cor. 14:18,19). This seems to indicate that Paul's speaking in tongues wasn't done in the church. Paul continued, "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" (v. 19).

Tongues is not a teaching gift or a preaching gift. This is not its purpose. If I were to speak in tongues in the pulpit for an hour instead of teaching, it wouldn't edify the congregation at all. It would edify me, but not the hearers. Therefore, it is more profitable that I teach in a known language in the church.

However, Paul was not belittling tongues when he said, "... I had rather speak five words with my understanding...." He was merely distinguishing between the private and the public use of the gift of tongues. 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." He was saying, in other words, "You would get more good out of just those five words in a known language than the ten thousand words I would speak in tongues."

Tongues In Public Ministry

God will use some people in public utterance in tongues, but that is a gift and is not intended for everyone. (This is the mistake the Corinthians were making and one that we often make.)

Discussing public ministry in tongues, Paul 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). 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" There may be more prophets present who could speak, but in any one service only two or three of them should speak.

We need to be very careful to walk softly before the Lord. We need to remain open to Him as we walk quietly, honorably, and reverently about spiritual matters. And we need to invite the operation of the Spirit of God among us.

Memory Text:

"And these signs shall follow them that believe... they shall speak with new tongues"

(Mark 16:17).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.." (James 1:22).

Lesson 26, Interpretation Of Tongues

Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 14:13-15,27,28,40

Central Truth: The interpretation of tongues is the supernatural showing forth by the Spirit the meaning of an utterance in other tongues.

Our study of the gifts of the Holy Spirit has now brought us to the end of the list — the gift of interpretation of tongues.

We first covered the three gifts of revelation, or the three gifts which 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, as they are often called, the three power gifts: the gift of faith, the working of miracles, and the gifts of healings. Finally, we studied the three vocal gifts, or the three inspirational gifts — the three gifts which say something: prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

As we have said, 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 revelation by the Spirit of the meaning of an utterance in other tongues. It is not translation of the tongues; it is the interpretation of tongues.

The gift of interpretation of tongues is the least of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit, because it is dependent upon another gift in order to operate. It does not operate unless the gift of tongues has been in operation. The purpose of this gift of interpretation of tongues is to render the gift of tongues intelligible to the hearers so that the Church, as well as the possessor of the gift, may know what has been said and may be edified. 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? Yes, He can and does. We have messages which are not an interpretation of tongues; they are a manifestation of the gift of prophecy. All these gifts operate by faith, but it takes more faith to prophesy than to give an utterance in tongues or interpretation of tongues, because those who operate in these gifts have another person to lean on. In other words, the person with the gift of tongues can lean on the one with the gift of interpretation of tongues, and vice versa. However, the person who has the gift of prophecy has to have enough faith just to start speaking what he has received.

Interpretation, Not Translation

As we have noted, the interpretation of tongues is not

translation. I am sometimes asked why it is that when someone speaks at length in tongues, an interpreter will occasionally give only a short interpretation. Because interpretation is simply showing forth supernaturally by the Spirit of God the meaning of what was said in tongues, the interpretation may not require as many words as the original message. Similarly, someone may give a short utterance in tongues, yet the interpretation may be lengthy. The same principle of clarity is involved: It may take longer to give the interpretation in order to clearly show forth the meaning of the message.

If the person who is interpreting tongues is also used in prophecy, he may finish the interpretation and go on into prophecy. (I do this quite often.) Most people who are keen in the Spirit can readily recognize the difference, because the instant one speaks forth prophecy, his words take on more authority and a greater anointing: There is more inspiration and a greater blessing to prophecy.

Interpretation In Private Prayer Life

1 Corinthians 14:13-15,27,28,40

13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.

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: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also____

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; and let him speak to himself, and to God____

40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

According to verse thirteen, those who speak in other tongues are instructed to pray for the gift of interpretation. The reason Paul instructs us to seek this gift is not necessarily that we may interpret publicly, but rather that we may interpret our private prayers, if God so wills. Knowing what we are praying would greatly edify us spiritually — and if God wished to use us publicly to interpret messages in tongues, that would be an added blessing.

The way I first started interpreting tongues was in my private prayer life. I was praying one day when suddenly I

realized I was speaking in English, and I knew what I had been praying about in tongues — I was giving the interpretation of it. (Of course, God knows what we are praying about in tongues, because we are talking to Him, but sometimes He wants us to know what we are praying about too.)

However, it is not necessary that everything we utter in other tongues in private prayer should be made 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). Furthermore, we aren't talking to ourselves; we are talking to God; what we are praying is clear to Him, and that is sufficient. "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).

So we see that there is a private side to this gift of interpretation of tongues that can be very important to us personally. And there is a public side to the manifestation of this gift as well. But not all of us will be used publicly; it is only as the Lord wills.

Interpretation In Public Ministry

In the twenty-seventh verse of this same chapter, Paul said, "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by TWO or at the most by THREE" Only three people should minister in tongues in public in any one service. (The words "two" and "three" in the Greek are personal pronouns.)

Some have asked, "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 which has been coined to try to explain it. A better term would be "utterance in tongues." However, this verse is talking about people, not messages or utterances.

Paul didn't actually say how much people should or should not speak in tongues. He just said to let two or three speak, and let it be by course, or, in turn. This implies they shouldn't all speak at once. (To me it implies that an individual may speak more than once.)

My advice to any congregation is that if three people have already spoken publicly in tongues, a fourth should not join in, no matter how strongly he may feel impelled of the Spirit to speak. If something else needs to be said, one of those who has already spoken should utter it. That maintains good order.

Notice Paul said, "... let one interpret" There is nothing in the Scriptures which would do away with the thought that one person may speak in tongues and interpret for himself. In fact, one of those giving an utterance in tongues publicly may interpret that utterance, even though there might be more than

one person present who could interpret. Paul is admonishing us that we are not to have competitive interpretations. So there is nothing unscriptural with giving an utterance in tongues and interpreting it oneself, as long as there is only one interpreter.

'Decently And In Order'

Paul devotes the entire fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians to the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Then he goes on to state, "God is not the author of confusion ..." (v. 33). Paul means that in the use — or misuse — of prophecy, tongues, and interpretation there is sometimes confusion.

I have been in services where I have seen the misuse of these gifts and I have gone home confused. (These were not my services, because in my meetings I usually try to point out any errors and explain them to the people so they won't go home confused.)

This doesn't mean that the devil was working in those services. It just means that people can get things mixed up. If we learn to stay in the Spirit, walk according to the Word, and follow Paul's admonition to "Let all things be done decently and in order" (v. 40), we will not have confusion in our services.

Sometimes we just need practical advice concerning these manifestations to help us maintain good order in our services. Then even visitors could understand and be impressed by our good order. More important, we would not grieve the Spirit of God. The Bible says, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God..." (Eph. 4:30). He has been grieved at times in some churches — grieved by wanting to manifest Himself and not being permitted to do so, and grieved by the way some people do things out of order!

When someone is uttering a message in tongues, a person who is used in the gift of interpretation should immediately begin to be in tune with the Spirit (if he is not already), because the Lord may want to use him in the operation of that gift.

Sometimes I have waited for someone else to interpret and they have waited for me. Meanwhile, someone else waited for someone else. Any one of us could have interpreted the message in tongues, but we all lost it because we didn't tune in to the Holy Spirit. (We will not get things from God unless we are tuned in to Him.)

This is the reason why we sometimes don't have an interpretation of an utterance. When I have missed it, I've said to the person who gave the message in tongues, "Please give that again, and I will interpret it." Then, when they started speaking, I got in the Spirit, and God gave me the interpretation.

A final point I want to stress about tongues and interpretation is found in First Corinthians 14:26, "Let all things be done unto EDIFYING." When something is done in the Spirit — and this is one way to judge if it is in the Spirit — it will be edifying, inspiring, and it will be a blessing. (Of course, if we are out of tune with the Spirit, we are not in a position to judge.)

Manifestations of spiritual gifts do need to be judged, however. (After all, we do judge them, whether we do it publicly or not, because we either accept or reject them.) We can't always accept just any man's judgment, however; only the judgment of those who are sensitive to the moving of the Holy Spirit.

In conclusion, let me point out that all of the nine spiritual gifts operate by faith. They do not operate by the gift of faith; they operate by common or general faith. Also remember the Bible says that "... all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23) — and if you believe, all things are possible to you!

Memory Text:

"Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret" (1 Cor. 14:13).

THE LESSON IN ACTION: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..." (James 1:22).

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