THE HOLY SPIRIT

Session Two

The Gifts Of The Holy Spirit

Wednesday Evening
September 6, 2017
FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1 Cor. 12:1

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

Scripture makes it clear that the impartation of gifts by the Holy Spirit are vital to the Church. As followers of Christ, we need to learn all we can about them. When our knowledge increases, the gifts find a larger place in our lives and ministry.

THREE DIFFERENT GROUPINGS OF THE GIFTS

• Gifts of Ministry These are gifts Christ gives to the church in leadership roles
• Other Ministry Gifts These are gifts that are made available by the Holy Spirit to all believers
• Gifts of the Spirit Nine gifts which the Holy Spirit gives to believers as He wills

As a member of Christ’s body, you have a spiritual ministry to perform. What an urgent truth that is! You may feel inadequate to do it; however, God has given you a gift - at least one, and probably more. Almost every place in the Bible where the gifts are mentioned, it is stated that they are for every member.

No human being - not even famous preachers - has the power to give them. And, by the way, we are not speaking of talents that we have come by naturally. Talents are abilities with which people are born. These talents are NOT the spiritual gifts. An out-and-out heathen may have terrific singing abilities, for example, for be a great orator; that is not a spiritual gift.

A SPIRITUAL GIFT COMES FROM ONLY ONE SOURCE - GOD! James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

On many occasions, believers fail to use their gifts. They just put them on a shelf somewhere, not realizing they will one day, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, be held accountable for their stewardship of those gifts. 1 Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the
manifest grace of God. The Bible uses the word “stewardship” when speaking of our duty. Definition: Stewardship means looking after the things of another. 1 Cor. 4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

PROPER USE OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS

One reason perhaps that people shy away from the gifts is because of the abuse of them by uninformed followers of Jesus. God wants you to have proper scriptural knowledge of the gifts and their usage.

Where do we get that information? Scripture! Faith is produced by Bible knowledge. Not only does knowledge of scripture produce faith, it governs it! By that, I mean scripture gives a sense of direction and sets limits. In a course I taught for the International Correspondence Institute years ago in Brussels, we set for this equation:

| KNOWLEDGE – FAITH – EXPERIENCE |

My friend, the late R. L. Brandt, a superb Bible teacher, wrote: Review Paul’s experience at Ephesus in Acts 19. Acts 19:1-7

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. [7] And all the men were about twelve.

Because those Ephesians did not know about the Holy Spirit, they could not believe in Him. Now we note also that because they did not know, and thus could not have faith, they lacked an experience which God planned for them. When Paul learned that they did not know about the Holy Spirit, he began to teach them. He gave them knowledge. Then they were able to believe what they had not believed before. And when their faith acted on their new knowledge, they entered a whole new experience.

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GIFTS OF MINISTRY
For the Biblical basis for these gifts, read Ephes. 4:7-8

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. [8] Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers:

Some scholars believe that “pastors and teachers” are meant to be a single gift of ministry - that is, teaching pastors. I would subscribe to that.

APOSTLES

I once asked my great, late mentor Leonard Ravenhill to define “apostles.” He replied, “Apostles are those who do apostolic things!” That certainly narrows down the list of many who claim to be apostles.

There are two kinds of apostles.

- There was a very special group bearing this title and there were only twelve of them. The original apostles of Jesus were Peter, James, John, Andrew, Jude, Thomas, Philip, Matthew, Judas, Bartholomew, the other James (son of Alphaeus) and Simon the Zealot. When Judas betrayed Jesus and died by suicide, he was replaced: Acts 1:26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

To qualify for this first position as an apostle, each man had to meet a certain condition. Acts 1:21-22 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, [22] Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

The age-old debate was this: was Paul an Apostle of the twelve? Paul considered himself to be such: 1 Cor. 4:9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. 1 Cor. 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

Interesting thought: Many wonder whose name will appear on the 12th foundation stone in the new Jerusalem. Will it be Matthias or Paul? Rev. 21:14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
The twelve apostles had a special function which no one else had: they were part of the founding of the church. Also several of them wrote New Testament books.

- There is also the gift of ministry known as “an apostle.” The original twelve cannot be repeated. Apostles today are given by Christ to His body to do a special work. It is possible that true apostles today do not consider themselves as such and would never address themselves as “apostle so and so.” Rev. 2:2  I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: (Christ’s words to His church in Ephesus, Turkey)

The word *apostle* means “to send away” or “to send forth.” I personally believe that today’s apostles are powerful missionaries. An apostle is one who is sent forth by the Lord to carry the gospel to new places. His or her work is to lay the foundation for a new part of the body.

PROPHETS

Not everyone is a prophet - and not even some who claim to be one. This gift of God has several main functions:

1) Foretelling - to tell about an event before it takes place

2) Forthtelling - anointed or inspired preaching and teaching

PREDICTING: The Old Testament prophets often foretold events before they came to pass. The New Testament prophet’s function is much the same. There are times when the prophet receives a message from God that says something is about to happen. Acts 21:10-12  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 (cloak and sash), 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. [12] And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

It is somewhat dangerous to be a “professing prophet,” predicting the future. If the prophecy does not come to pass, it is obviously a false prophecy, perhaps out of the “prophet’s” own reasoning, not God’s. Jeremiah 28:9  The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.
But the prophet's primary purpose is set forth in Ephes. 4:12: *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.* This relates to effective and anointed declarations of God's Word to either an individual or a body of believers.

**EVANGELISTS**

Every believer is, to a point, an evangelist. As we obey Christ's Great Commission, Mark 16:15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,* we are certainly "evangelizing." But a true evangelist is something else!

For example: Billy Graham. I have heard that great brother speak many times in many venues. With all due respect, there are preachers I think are better speakers; however, when that man "drew the net," gave the invitation to accept Christ, countless thousands responded night after night. There is only one serious conclusion to be drawn there: that man is a true evangelist.

I can think of any number of men and women through the decades whose ministry drew multitudes to Christ. It should be said, however, that some evangelists may be just as faithful but not see the results of the aforementioned preachers.

In the New Testament, we read of Stephen and Philip. Stephen was martyred possibly after his first evangelistic message; but, as I preached recently, his message made a phenomenal impression on his main tormentor, the young Turk Saul, who later became the Apostle Paul. Philip became an evangelist about 33 AD and was still an evangelist in 60 AD.

It is my own sad conclusion that there are not as many evangelists as there used to be - I am speaking here of real, God-given evangelists.

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The man who made perhaps the most indelible impression on my young teen-age life was an evangelist, Jack Shuler. He died in 1962, still a relatively young man. To this day I claim he was the finest preacher I ever heard.

**PASTORS AND TEACHERS**

As mentioned earlier in this study, some believe these two belong together as one. I believe that as well. This is a vital function in the Body of Christ. Several entire books
in the New Testament are especially for pastors. They are called *pastoral epistles* and are the books of Timothy (I and II) and Titus.

A pastor is really an under-shepherd of the "flock," the congregation. Christ is always THE SHEPHERD.

I have sometimes considered writing a book for pastors. It would be a simple one, with only three chapters. Each chapter would have only one page. Each page would have only one sentence. Here is my proposed book:

Chapter One: Love the people!
Chapter Two: Feed the people!
Chapter Three: Don’t do anything stupid!

Peter was commissioned by our Lord to “feed His lambs” (John 21:15-16). There is no excuse for a pastor who does not feed THE WORD to the people on a regular basis. For the “lambs,” that is, the new believers, there is the “milk of God’s Word.” 1 Peter 2:2

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: Hebrews 5:13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. This is one of the reasons why brand new converts need some spiritual growth before undertaking full time ministry.

For the mature sheep, there must be solid food. 1 Cor. 3:1-2 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. [2] I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

Paul’s instruction to young pastor Timothy was clear: 2 Tim. 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 1 Tim. 4:11 These things command and teach. A pastor cannot teach what he or she does not know.

Besides feeding the flock, the shepherd must PROTECT it. John 10:11-12 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. [12] But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

Acts 20:28-29

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy
Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. [29] For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

There are so many “wolves” around in our day that it is staggering. Some are out to make money. Others to make a name for themselves. Others want to expound some personal false doctrine contrary to scripture. A faithful pastor will protect his or her people from them. That is not always appreciated, especially by young believers who don’t know the Word very well; but that protection is vital for their eternal well-being.

The shepherd (pastor/teacher) also wants the sheep, the saints, to produce more sheep. Remember the words of the Chief Shepherd: John 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

There are any number of reasons I am convinced that faithful pastors are missions-minded. They have a world view. So does God: John 3:16 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.

When next we meet, we will pick up other gifts of the Spirit, such a ministering, exhorting, teaching, etc. Teaching must be one of the sterling gifts of the Spirit. The joy of LEARNING never ceases to grow old. A Spirit-filled pastor, under-shepherd, will constantly and faithfully TEACH and FEED the flock.

There is much more to come on the GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.