

## 02 – DEFINING THE GIFTS

1 Cor. 12:1 – “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, **I would not have you ignorant.**”

- ✓ Did You Ever Notice: That every time Paul says, “Don’t be ignorant”, those wind up being the things the Church is most ignorant of? (ie – End times, Spiritual Gifts, etc.)

v. 2-3 – “You know the way you lived before you were believers. You let yourselves be influenced and led away to worship these dumb idols. Therefore, **you should realize that ‘speaking under the influence of a spirit’ doesn’t necessarily mean it’s the Holy Spirit.**”

- ✓ Before the Corinthians came to Christ, they worshipped idols. In that worship, many times, they’d yield to wrong spirits and would say all kinds of goofy things (under their influence). It’s like the New Agers today, who “channel” spirits. They *think* they’re lending their voice to “spirit guides” and “ascended masters”, but they’re really lending their voice to demons. (Paul is giving guidelines to the Corinthians, so they don’t yield to wrong spirits again, while they’re trying to prophesy.)

*“Therefore, I want you to know that no one speaking by the [power and influence of the] Spirit of God can say, “Jesus be cursed”, and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” and really mean it, except by the Holy Spirit.”*

- ✓ When the gifts are in manifestation, they’ll always exalt Jesus. If someone is “operating in the gifts”, but their words curse Jesus, or put Him in a bad light, obviously they’re not speaking by the Spirit of God. (Don’t blame the Holy Ghost for the goofy stuff you see.)

v. 4 – “Now there are different **gifts**, but the same Spirit. And there are different **ministries**, but the same Lord. And there are different **functions**, but it is the same God working in all of us.”

- ✓ This verse mentions three sets of gifts. (**Each member of the**

**Godhead has a set of gifts for us.)**

- a.) **The Holy Spirit** gives us the Gifts of the Spirit.

*“There are different gifts, but the same Spirit.”*

- b.) **Jesus** gives us the Ministry Gifts.

*“There are different ministries, but the same Lord (Jesus).”*

- ✓ Jesus is the One who gives the ministry gifts to the Church (Eph. 4:8-11). Think about that. Every apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher is a gift to you from Jesus.

- c.) **God the Father** gives us Personality Gifts.

- ✓ These gifts determine how we’re “wired” and how we function in the Body – (Romans 12:4). Psalm 139 discusses how God gives each of us color, personality and variety – and He does it in the womb.

- ✓ Those are the three sets of gifts, and each set is discussed in this chapter. The Gifts of the Spirit are considered in v. 7-11. The Ministry Gifts are mentioned in v. 28-30. The Motivational (Personality) Gifts are discussed in verses 12-27. In this series, we’ll only be discussing one set of gifts – the Gifts of the Spirit.

### **Breakdown of the Gifts**

- ✓ There are 3 gifts that “**say**” something – (The Vocal Gifts). There are 3 gifts that “**do**” something – (The Power Gifts). And there are 3 gifts that “**reveal**” something – (The Revelation Gifts).

- Vocal – Tongues, Interpretation & Prophecy

- Power – Working of Miracles, Gifts of Healings, & Special Faith

- Revelation – Word of Knowledge, Word of Wisdom, & Discerning of Spirits.

## THE VOCAL GIFTS

- ✓ With some of the gifts, Paul doesn't even give us a definition. But when it comes to the vocal gifts, he gives us two whole chapters of instruction. Why *is* that?
- ✓ We're more *involved* in the vocal gifts than we are in some of the others. **Anything we're involved with; we can mess up.** (Think about it! It would be *totally* possible for me to "make up" a prophecy, out of my own mind. Wouldn't it? And, if I say, "Thus saith the Lord", most people wouldn't even realize that God wasn't in it.)
- ✓ That's not true with "working of miracles". (I can't do a miracle apart from God. If God's not involved, nothing happens.) **Since there's more room for error with the vocal gifts, he spends more time explaining them.**

- 1.) **Kinds of Tongues** – This is the supernatural ability to speak in languages you've never learned; in languages you don't understand.
- ✓ Don't confuse this gift with the *prayer language* you get when you're baptized in the Holy Ghost.

- a.) In the prayer language, you're speaking from your heart to God. (It's going *this* direction.)



- b.) But the Gift of Tongues goes the other way. God is speaking *through* you to the congregation. 1 Cor. 12:30).



- ✓ This **Gift** of Tongues *always* needs to be interpreted, because God is speaking to the people through you. If no one interprets, then the people won't hear what God wants to say. (On the other hand, your prayer language *doesn't* need to be interpreted.)

- 2.) **Interpretation of Tongues** – This is God using someone to supernaturally *reveal the meaning* of what was said in tongues.
  - ✓ Now, here's the interesting part. The interpreter doesn't understand the language either. (So, the guy who *speaks in tongues* doesn't know the language, and neither does the person who *interprets*. The whole thing is supernatural.)
  - ✓ Notice it didn't call it a "translation" of tongues. (It's probably not a "word-for-word" translation.) It's an "interpretation" of what was said. As long as it captures the *meaning* of what God was trying to communicate, that's enough. (That's why you can sometimes have a long "message" in tongues and a short interpretation.)
- 3.) **Prophecy** – Is inspired utterance in a known tongue. (In prophecy you're speaking in a language you know. But you're not speaking from your head, you're **speaking from your heart**. It's not something you planned. You're speaking from the inspiration of the moment.)
  - ✓ When people hear the word "prophecy", immediately they think of "telling the future". That's not what this gift is! **New Testament prophecy is "speaking by the inspiration of the Spirit"**.
  - ✓ Sometimes, it's a message from God. ("Thus saith the Lord.") Other times, as you're preaching (or giving a testimony), this gift manifests, and you start speaking from the inspiration of the moment. (That's what Paul meant when he said, "You may all prophesy one by one". We may not all deliver a "Thus saith the Lord" message, but we can all be Spirit-inspired as we're speaking.)

### A Few Words of Clarification and/or Caution

- a.) Just Prophesying, Doesn't Make You a Prophet
- ✓ I've seen people prophecy one time and start calling themselves a prophet. But there's a difference between operating in the simple gift of prophecy and standing in the office of the prophet.

Acts 21:8 – “... and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, **which did prophesy**. As we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain **prophet**, named Agabus.”

- ✓ Notice, Philip’s daughters weren’t called “prophetesses”. (They didn’t stand in a ministry office. They just spoke inspired words of edification, exhortation and comfort. On the other hand, the *office* of the prophet is a full-time ministry gift.)

b.) Not Everyone who Says, “Thus Saith the Lord” Has Actually Heard from God

- ✓ As I said, it’s possible to prophesy out of your head, when God’s saying nothing.
- ✓ Some people (who believe you can turn prophecy on and off at will) say, “God is always speaking, you just need to tap into it.” That’s not true. God is NOT always speaking.

Jeremiah 23:21 – “**I have not spoken**, yet they prophesied.” (God plainly said, “I wasn’t saying anything. That was totally you.”)

Ezekiel 13:1-2, 6 – “Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, and say to those **who make up prophecies out of their own heads** ... woe to the foolish prophets which **prophesy out of their own mind** ... They say, ‘thus saith the Lord’, and the Lord has not spoken.”

- ✓ Here’s the tragedy – when you say, “Thus saith the Lord” when God isn’t speaking ... people still believe you!

Ezk. 13:6 – “God’s Message came to me: Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who are **making things up out of their own heads** and calling it ‘prophesying’, saying, ‘The Lord says’, when the Lord has not sent them. **And they have made people to hope** ...”

- ✓ People can be discouraged when we miss it. (Judge it.)