

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: SPIRITUAL GIFTS

LESSON 4: GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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4.0 - Gifts of the Spirit (1Corinthians 12:7-11)

The final group of gifts, which is the gifts of the Spirit are given by the Holy Spirit.

None of these gifts are possible through human ability or talent; they are supernatural.

It can only be manifested after baptism in the Holy Spirit.

It is important that we not only know about these gifts but want to see them in operation.

The gifts are resident in the Holy Spirit and manifested by the Spirit through the believer.

Every gift should be used for edifying of the church (1Corinthians 14:26)

The gifts are sometimes regrouped into blocks of threes for example.

- (a) Gifts of Revelation
 - Word of wisdom
 - Word of knowledge
 - Discerning of spirits
- (b) Gifts of Power
 - Faith
 - Working of Miracles
 - Gifts of healings
- (c) Gifts of Utterance
 - Prophecy
 - Diverse kinds of tongues
 - Interpretation of tongues

4.1 - Word of Wisdom (1Corinthians 12:8)

Wisdom is good judgement based upon knowledge.

Word (Logos) of wisdom speaks of a small portion of God's unlimited wisdom given to a believer to be spoken at the proper time.

One does not get this gift because one is naturally a wise person.

It does not come through training or experience but only by the Holy Spirit.

An example of an expression of this gift can be found in Acts 15:5-27 during a church council meeting to discuss an important problem. James spoke a word of wisdom in verses 13-21 and this was unanimously agreed as in verses 22-29. His statements helped solve a difficult problem.

This gift can be expressed during preaching as in Peter's sermon (Acts 2:16-36) and in Stephen's sermon (Acts 7; 6:10)

We can also see it expressed during a time of persecution (Acts 5:26-33; Luke 12:12; 21:15)

It can be expressed when people have personal problems (Acts 5:1-11).

In general, word of wisdom is given for the following purposes:-

- (a) It is a supernatural perspective to ascertain the divine means for accomplishing God's will in given situations.
- (b) It is a divinely given power to appropriate spiritual intuition in problem solving.
- (c) It gives a sense of divine direction.
- (d) It is being led by the Holy Spirit to act appropriately in a given set of circumstances.
- (e) It is knowledge rightly applied. Wisdom acts interactively with knowledge and discernment.

4.2 - Word of Knowledge (1Corinthians 12:8)

Knowledge means knowing.

The Holy Spirit has access to God's vast treasure of knowledge, which is described as being Omniscient (unlimited knowledge - All knowing).

Word of knowledge therefore is being able to speak forth or reveal a bit of God's unlimited knowledge.

God enables the believer to say things he in no way knows by using his own abilities.

Throughout the book of Acts, we see manifestations of the word of knowledge. In each of the examples in Acts, the believer spoke something he had no way of knowing except by the Spirit.

- (a) Peter knew Annanias and Sapphira had lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-10)
- (b) Peter knew Simon had bitter envy and sin in his heart (Acts 8:23)
- (c) Ananias knew several things about Saul, for example, where Saul was, where he was praying; he knew that Saul had a vision, was a chosen vessel of the Lord, and would suffer for the Lord (Acts 9:1-18)
- (d) Peter knew that three men had come to see him on behalf of Cornelius (Acts 10:19)
- (e) Paul knew that the sailors in the storm-tossed ship could be saved unless they stayed with the ship (Acts 27:13-14)

Jesus spoke the word of knowledge in John 4:16-19.

The word of knowledge is not mind-reading.

It is not imagination of one's minds, which can deceive.

The word of knowledge often works together with the word of wisdom. For example, Jesus told the Samaritan woman of her past life through the word of knowledge, and gave solution to her problem through word of wisdom.

Another example, especially in the Old Testament is that of Joseph and the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams and also the advice given to Pharaoh (Genesis 41:1-36).

It should be noted that sometimes evil men, such as witch doctors, seem to have power to know things in a strange way. This is NOT a gift of word of knowledge but divination. This is a counterfeit of the devil. Satan knows some things evil men do not know by their own power. However, Satan does not know everything, but God knows all things.

Examples of such manifestation are in Luke 8:28 and Acts 16:16-18.

This type of manifestation may be referred to as the spirit of divination.

In general, the word of knowledge is

- (a) a supernatural revelation of the divine will and plan
- (b) a supernatural insight or understanding of circumstance or a body of facts by revelation
- (c) a deeper and more advanced understanding of the communicated acts of God.
- (d) an objective understanding concerning divine things in human duties.

4.3 - Discerning of spirits (1Corinthians 12:10)

This is a supernatural ability to tell the difference between manifestations that come from the Holy Spirit and those that do not.

It is the power of spiritual insight - supernatural revelation of plans and purposes of the devil and his forces.

It is also a supernatural ability to detect the realm of the spirits and their activities.

There are three spirits in existence; the spirit of man, the evil spirits and the Spirit of God.

Discerning of spirits is also the ability to know which of the three spirits is manifesting.

Satan is a great counterfeiter and tries to copy what the Holy Spirit does through deception.

Men can also speak out of their own spirit, which may appear as though the Holy Spirit is speaking.

The gift of discerning of spirits is given therefore to help protect the Body against deception and danger and also from false teaching.

In Jesus' ministry, He was able to discern both good and evil spirits, for example, John 1:47; Luke 9:55; 13:12.

Other examples in the early church can be found in Acts 5; 8:23; 16:17-18; 19:11-17.

The gift of discerning of spirits sometimes overlaps or work hand-in-hand with the gift of the word of knowledge.

4.4 - Gift of Faith (1Corinthians 12:9)

Generally speaking, faith is the ability to believe.

Gift of faith is beyond ordinary faith.

It is a special faith given by the Holy Spirit to meet a special need.

It is a small part of God's perfect faith given by the Holy Spirit to a believer.

Usually, three things are present when the gift of faith is manifested:-

- (a) An impossible condition or situation exists
- (b) A gift of faith is given
- (c) A solution is seen.

An example is seen in the case of Peter and the lame man in Acts 3:1-11.

It is important that believers must dare to act like Peter when the Holy Spirit drops this gift into their hearts. Often believers are afraid to act, and then faith cannot work.

When the gift of faith drops into one's spirit, there is a strong persuasion that God will do a certain thing. The believer knows within him that God will act.

In general, the gift of faith is the

- supernatural ability to believe God without doubt
- supernatural ability to combat unbelief
- supernatural ability to meet adverse circumstances with trust in God's message and works.
- inner conviction impelled by an urgent and higher calling.

4.5 - Working of Miracles (1Corinthians 12:10)

This is the supernatural ability to do things, which are otherwise impossible.

God is Omnipotent and this is a bit of God's unlimited power in operation.

At times, it is not easy to say which mighty work is a miracle and which is a gift of healing. This makes no difference because they flow out of the same Spirit.

There are Old Testament examples as in Exodus 17:1-6; Joshua 3:15-17; 10:12-13; 1Kings 18:37-38; 2Kings 6:1-7.

In the ministry of Jesus Christ:-

- (a) He turned water into wine (John 2:1-11)
- (b) He calmed the stormy sea (Matthew 8:25-26)
- (c) He and Peter walked on water (Matthew 14:22-31)
- (d) He fed many people with two loaves and five fishes (John 6:5-14)
- (e) He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44)

There were also examples in the early church:-

- (a) Escape from prison (Acts 5:17-20; 12:5-17)
- (b) The dead raised to life (Acts 9:36-44)
- (c) An enemy of God blinded (Acts 13:6-11)
- (d) No hurt from a snake bite (Acts 28:1-6)

Miracles are never to be used for selfish purpose (Luke 9:54-56) but for the building up of the church.

Miracles also help to remove obstacles, which hinder the gospel (Acts 5; 13:6-11; 12:1-5).

The more the gift is used for this purpose, the more miracles will be seen.

This gift operates closely with the gift of faith and healing, to bring authority over sin, Satan, sickness and the binding forces of this age.

4.6 - Gifts of Healings (1Corinthians 12:9)

This is a supernatural ability to heal sicknesses, diseases and infirmities.

Gifts is plural which means that there are more than one gift of healing.

These gifts are likely to be manifested more often through church leaders because their whole lives are given to ministering to people. They also have more contact with people in need.

Church elders can also minister with this gift (James 5:14)

This does not mean that the Holy Spirit will not use any believer with the gift but that this operates mostly with church leaders.

Examples of infirmity could be lameness (Acts 3:2; 8:7; 14:8-10), blindness (Acts 9:17-18), paralysis (Acts 9:33).

Examples of sickness are illness (Acts 5:16), fever (Acts 28:8).

Examples of disease are dysentery (Acts 28:8), etc.

Therefore, there is no disease, sickness or infirmity that cannot be healed by the gifts of healings.

Some people may be gifted to heal sicknesses only, or infirmities or diseases.

The healing could be physical, psychological or emotional.

The gift can be exercised by a touch of the hand, a spoken word or a command. The commonest method of healing recorded in the scriptures is through the spoken word.

However, the gifts of healing are manifested through believers as the Holy Spirit leads.

The purpose of the gifts of healing is to meet the physical needs of the church, and to help bring people to Jesus.

The gift enables the members to be healthy and well physically. The whole body of believers is helped as individual members prosper physically.

4.7 - Prophecy (1Corinthians 12:10)

Prophecy is a divinely inspired and anointed utterance.

It is a supernatural proclamation in a known language.

The manifestation is by the Spirit of God and not by human intellect. It is a natural result of being filled with the Spirit (Acts 19:6; 1Peter 4:11)

Prophecy involves **forthtelling** and **foretelling**.

To **forthtell** means to speak out or speak forth God's message as one is being breathed upon by the Holy Spirit.

It may come upon the preacher in the course of preaching.

To **foretell** means to predict or tell something before it happens. God knows everything both past, present, and future and is able through prophecy to reveal a bit of what will happen in the future.

Evil men sometimes predict the future and they are called fortune-tellers (Acts 16:16). The source of this ability is from Satan. Satan's strategy is to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10) and believers must therefore stay away from such agents of the devil (Deuteronomy 18:9-12).

Any member of the Body of Christ can prophesy. However, not all those who prophesy have the office of a prophet but a prophet will always prophesy.

The purpose of the gift of prophecy is for edification, encouragement and comfort of the church (1Corinthians 14:3).

Prophecy must be exercised as follows:

- (a) Must be according to the faith we have (Romans 12:6)
- (b) Must be limited and judged (1Corinthians 14:29). Do not go on and on prophesying; give time for others to judge.
 - Every prophecy must agree with God's word; otherwise, it is false. Some prophecies may come from a man's spirit or from the evil spirit.
- (c) Everyone may prophesy (1Corinthians 14:5, 24, 31)
- (d) Those who have a prophecy to give do not have to speak forth. They must have the right time to do so and under submission to whoever is the leader (1Corinthians 14:32-33)
- (e) Those with the gift of prophecy must be willing to take instruction and to be corrected (1Corinthians 14:37)

4.8 - Divers Kinds of Tongues (1Corinthians 12:10)

This is a supernatural utterance in languages unknown to the speaker. It could be the language of angels or of men (1Corinthians 13:1).

This is the commonest of all the gifts and is an evidence and sign of the indwelling and working of the Holy Spirit.

The gift can be manifested anytime, anywhere and in any of life's circumstances.

Tongues is the language of the Spirit and enables us to talk with God better than we ever could with our human ability. Recall that God is Spirit.

Tongues is evidence of the baptism of the Holy (Acts 2:4; 8:14-17; 9:17; 10:44-47; 19:1-6).

Therefore, everyone who is baptised in the Holy Spirit will speak in tongues.

Speaking in tongues builds up the believer spiritually (1Corinthians 14:4; Jude 20)

Speaking should always be directed to God and not to men (1Corinthians 14:2-3, 14-17; Acts 2:11; 10:46).

When we pray in tongues, we are able to pray as we cannot pray in the natural (Romans 8:26)

The use of speaking in tongues is as follows:-

- (a) It must not be given too much importance but allowance should be given for the operation of other gifts in public worship (1Corinthians 14:6, 26).
- (b) It should be limited to two or three utterances in public service (1Corinthians 14:27).
- (c) It must be interpreted (1Corinthians 14:27).
- (d) The one speaking in tongues must be silent if there is no-one present to interpret (1Corinthians 14:28). They are also to pray that they may be able to interpret (1Corinthians 14:13).
- (e) Speaking in tongues should not be forbidden (1Corinthians 14:39)
- (f) Speaking in tongues is not to create confusion (1Corinthians 14:40)

4.9 - Interpretation of Tongues (1Corinthians 12:10)

This is the supernatural power to reveal the meaning of tongues.

It does not serve as a translation but rather a declaration of meaning - the interpreter never understands the tongue he is interpreting.

It is a supernatural and miraculous phenomenon.

Translation means 'to say the same thing in another language'.

The purpose of this gift of interpretation is to give the meaning of what is being spoken in tongues, thereby edifying the body, and members can then understand what was spoken in the strange tongue.