

a study of the *Holy Spirit*

Lesson 6: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

1. At the beginning of every dispensation in civilization, the miraculous has been witnessed.

☞ *The Patriarchal Age*—The creation's miracles originated everything—human life, vegetable and plant life, and minerals. No other miracle was wrought (except as needed) for God respected and honored the natural laws. Even though the first man originated miraculously, God's Laws dictated that the normal processes of reproduction govern the origin of life.

The first crops were miraculous; the first oak was never an acorn; Adam and Eve were never babies. The point is clear; the miraculous was perpetuated by the non-miraculous following God's Laws!

☞ *The Mosaical Age*—The miracles at Sinai provided the beginning (Exodus 20). Again the miraculous was perpetuated by the non-miraculous (except in extraordinary situations) following God's Laws (Deuteronomy 27:8; 28:1, 58).

☞ *The Christian Age*—The miraculous also marked the beginning of this era. The virgin birth of Christ and His miracles illustrate. After He ascended, the beginning of the Church would be marked with the miraculous (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8). Again the miraculous was perpetuated by the non-miraculous. How was this to occur? It would come through the "gifts" of the Holy Spirit!

2. ☞ The "gift" of the Holy Spirit is discussed in terms of "measures."

a. From this term we understand that the Holy Spirit would not be given in the same degree to all. This is evident from the following observations:

1) ☞ John 3:34—"for He gives the Spirit without measure" [ESV]. It is implied there are different "measures"; some are given the Spirit with measure but the Holy Spirit was given "without measure" to Christ.

2) ☞ Acts 10:47; 11:17—The term "like" or "same" implies that some had a gift "unlike" the Apostles.

3) ☞ Acts 2:4—They were "filled" with the Holy Spirit. Some can be filled while others are not filled. The same is seen in Acts 6:5 where Stephen was "full" of faith and the Holy Spirit. There are degrees of faith (2 Thessalonians 1:3; Matthew 6:30). Thus, it











- is wrong to contend that everyone in the New Testament had the same (exact) measure of the Holy Spirit.
- b. 🕊️ The Bible delineates these "measures" of the Holy Spirit.
- 1) 🕊️ The Holy Spirit **without measure** (John 3:34) was given only to Jesus (Colossians 1:19; 2:9).
 - 2) 🕊️ The Holy Spirit in **baptismal measure** was given only two times (Acts 2; 10). This is the greatest measure given to mortals. When the Scripture talks about being "baptized" or "poured" it literally refers to an "overwhelming" measure. (Note: This will be further discussed in the next lesson).
 - 3) 🕊️ The Holy Spirit in **evidential measure** was given to the Apostles and believers in the first century. This qualified them to do abnormal acts that would confirm the validity of the gospel. These acts are often called "spiritual gifts" (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4, 31; 14:1; Mark 16:19, 20).
 - 4) 🕊️ The Holy Spirit in **sanctifying measure** is given to all Christians (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:2; 4:6; Ephesians 1:13; 2:22). There is no denying that the Holy Spirit dwells inside each Christian. Further discussion will be given to this in later lessons, but it is also clear that the Holy Spirit operates via God's Word (Isaiah 59:21). So, only when we increase in the Word will the Spirit increase in us (Galatians 5:22-25). *Note:* The Holy Spirit is different than the Word but He cannot operate without the Word! This is just another proof of how the miraculous has given way to the non-miraculous!
3. How is the Holy Spirit dispensed to Christians in the New Testament dispensation?
- a. 🕊️ He is "given" to believers—His powers, gifts, and graces. Since He is a "Person" you cannot give Him but it is His powers that are given. He has been given as a Comforter, Guide, Advocate, and Strengthener.
 - b. 🕊️ He has been "sent" to the world—He was not previously with man but is now present (Galatians 4:4-6).
 - c. 🕊️ He has been "put upon" men (Numbers 11:17, 25). He was given to some to execute a task of special value.
 - d. 🕊️ He has been "poured forth"—His powers and gifts were given in an abundant manner (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:32, 33).
 - e. 🕊️ He has been "supplied" to man (Galatians 3:5). The measure of Spirit-power is in proportion with the measure of faith (knowledge of the Scripture).

- f. 🕊️ He has "filled" men (Exodus 31:1ff; 35:31; Acts 2:4). He has brought divine knowledge and wisdom to some in a special way.
4. 🕊️ Our concern in this lesson focuses upon the gifts of the Holy Spirit in New Testament times. These gifts can be placed under two categories:
- a. 🕊️ **EXTRAORDINARY GIFTS** were those that formed the miraculous works of the Holy Spirit.
- 1) 🕊️ The Spirit without measure was given to Jesus (John 3:34).
 - 2) 🕊️ The baptismal gift is an "extraordinary" gift of the Spirit (Acts 2; 10).
 - 3) 🕊️ The ability to bestow gifts of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands is an "extraordinary" gift (Acts 8:5-24). Consider the Samaritans' conversion and how they were baptized but had not received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. It took an Apostle to bestow the gifts.
 - a) Sinners can believe without the Holy Spirit "falling" upon them (1 Corinthians 1:21; Psalm 19:7).
 - b) Sinners can be baptized (verse 12) without the Holy Spirit "falling" upon them
 - c) It required Apostles to give the miraculous gifts. Philip could work miracles but he could not pass that power onto anyone—only an Apostle could do that!
 - 4) 🕊️ The reception of "gifts" by another laying on hands is an "extraordinary" gift (Acts 19:6). When the Apostle "laid hands" on and bestowed miraculous gifts to others, those who received the gifts could work the miraculous. However they could not pass on the gifts to others (i.e. Philip). Thus, when all the Apostles died, the avenue for bestowing the miraculous gifts was closed. When all upon whom the Apostles had laid hands and bestowed miraculous gifts died, the miraculous ceased.
 - 5) 🕊️ Nine Spiritual Gifts helped the first Century Church to reach a point of maturity where the miraculous was no longer necessary (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).
 - a. 🕊️ **WISDOM**. This was the power to make wise decisions for the governing of the Church (Acts 15:13, 19, 22-25).
 - b. 🕊️ **KNOWLEDGE**. This was information regarding Christ, prophecy, and the Old Testament Scriptures. There was an immediate need to present accurate facts. They did not have a written record (the Bible) as we have today.

- c. 🕊️ **FAITH.** This is not the ordinary faith (Romans 10:17). It is possible this was a powerful faith that accomplished great things (1 Corinthians 13:2).
 - d. 🕊️ **HEALINGS.** This was the power to cure instantly. There were no "failures" in genuine healings. This power was in the one doing the healing and not in the one to be healed (Acts 3:3-6).
 - e. 🕊️ **MIRACLES.** Special powers to suspend natural laws (Acts 13:9-11; Hebrews 2:4; 2 Corinthians 12:12).
 - f. 🕊️ **PROPHECY.** This refers to a special power to speak for God. It is not necessarily revealing the future but "teaching" and revealing God's will (1 Corinthians 14:3).
 - g. 🕊️ **DISCERNMENT.** This is the power to detect false teachers. Without the written Word the Church needed some way to prevent error from taking over the saints (Acts 5:1-14; 1 John 4:1-6).
 - h. 🕊️ **TONGUES.** This was the ability to speak in a foreign language without having studied it (Acts 2:4, 6-8).
 - i. 🕊️ **INTERPRETATION.** This refers to an ability to translate a foreign language. One was able to translate from one language to another.
- b. 🕊️ The **ORDINARY GIFT** of the Holy Spirit was the power and influence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of all Christians. It was not miraculous. This "ordinary gift" is what remained AFTER the miraculous ceased. It transforms, governs, comforts, and identifies those who follow God's will (Romans 8:9-11). We will discuss this gift in greater detail as the "indwelling" is considered.
5. 🕊️ What were the purposes of these "gifts"?

As we understand the purposes for these gifts, we will be in a better position to understand the Spirit's working in modern times. We need to remember that the first century world looked differently at Christianity than we. It was a new message. It asked them to believe incredible truths that had never been mentioned. Thus the Spirit's gifts had purposes, in large part, to help validate the gospel and edify the saved.

- a. 🕊️ **Spread the gospel Word.** They had no copy of the New Testament. They were to preach to the lost with an inerrant message. They were to meet learned Jews and Philosophers and defend the Truth of God's Word. They were given power to overcome all arguments so the Word would be known (Luke 21:15; Acts 17:22f).

- b.  **Edify the church.** Ephesians 4:11-16 explains this. They had to teach and train each other. But they did not have the Scripture.
 - c.  **Confirm the Truth.** Their message was drastically different from anything ever heard. It had to be proven valid (Hebrews 2:3-4). These miracles gave proof to the virgin birth, resurrection, and ascension.
 - d.  **Record the Truth.** Four authors were not apostles (Mark, Luke, James, Jude). These had to be given the prophetic inspiration.
 - e.  **Establish saints.** The Holy Spirit would exhort/sanctify the believers in holy living (Romans 8:4, 9, 11; Galatians 4:6; 5:16, 25). The Holy Spirit's purpose here is summed up by James 1:4.
6.  All of the miraculous (extraordinary) gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased. But the ordinary (non-miraculous) gifts continue. This conclusion is evident from...
- a.  The governing principle of God that the miraculous begins but the non-miraculous perpetuates.
 - b.  The building metaphor of Ephesians 4:11-16. The "house" has been built (1 Peter 2:5). The finished product is present. We do have "ALL" divine Truth (1 Peter 1:3). When a building is complete all building materials are removed. The miraculous gifts were the "scaffolding" used to construct the Church. Since the Church has reached maturity there is no further need for the miraculous to exist.
 - c.  The maturity metaphor of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. "When Paul said prophecies would be done away, he did not mean that the content of the prophecies would be done away...he simply meant that the act of speaking as the Spirit gives utterance would end, would be abolished" [R. Lanier, Sr., *The Timeless Trinity*, p. 339].
 - d.  The manner in which miraculous gifts were transmitted proves that the miraculous has ceased. Only the Apostles could bestow the miraculous. When the last Apostle died there was NO ONE through whom God could pass the miraculous. When the last person died on whom the last Apostle had laid hands, there was NO ONE on earth who could perform a miracle.
 - e.  The character of the Bible shows that the miraculous gifts are no longer needed. The Bible is able to do everything that the miraculous gifts did. Hence there is no need for dual service.
7. Do we need spiritual gifts today? Some contend that we still need the miraculous gifts today. However, we do not. Why?

- a. ✞ Because God has never re-verified! Peter and the six Jews did not need the Holy Spirit baptism of Cornelius repeated when they met with others in Jerusalem. The world has only the word of these seven that the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius. The act was not repeated every time a Gentile was saved. The sign was given only one time and that was all needed.
- b. ✞ Because God's principle disallows it! The miraculous at the creation, Sinai, and the beginning of Christ's life were not repeated. Why? Because God used the miraculous to begin the epoch and then perpetuated it with the non-miraculous.
- c. ✞ Because the Bible is here! The Bible is complete and offers all we need to know (Deuteronomy 29:29; 1 Peter 1:3). Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide the Apostles into ALL Truth (John 16:13). Thus ALL Truth had to be revealed prior to the death of the last Apostle. The "Truth" was to be confirmed by signs (Mark 16:20). Since ALL Truth was to be given before the last Apostle died, it follows that ALL Truth was confirmed prior to the death of the last Apostle. Thus, there is no reason for the "signs" to exist. Modern day "miracles" are not from God (2 Thessalonians 2:9; Matthew 24:24).