

The Gifts of the Spirit

From NBCC Statement of Faith

'The charismatic gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 have never been withdrawn. They are to be encouraged in an orderly manner and for the edification of the Church when believers gather together for worship'

'But the **manifestation** of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually **as He wills**'

(1 Cor.12:7-11)

1) The gifts of utterance

These operate in the vocal sphere and are prophecy, tongues and interpretation of tongues

Their purpose is to say what God wants to say

✓ **Prophecy is an inspired utterance. It is to speak forth a message in one's own language to the Church or individuals, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit**

✓ **It is for edification, exhortation and comfort**

✓ **Two extremes to avoid – glib acceptance, (1 Cor.14:29) and outright rejection, (1 Thes.5:19-21)**

- ✓ **The gift of tongues. By this gift a person can speak fluently in a language they have not learned**
- ✓ **There is a difference between speaking in tongues, which is for self-edification, and the gift of tongues, which is for the edification of the Church**
- ✓ **The gift of tongues is the only gift which is dependent upon another gift (interpretation of tongues) in order for it to be a benefit and blessing to the Church**
- ✓ **These two gifts are the only ones not operational in the OT age. They are distinctive of the New Covenant age (see Mark 16:17)**

2) The gifts of revelation

These operate in the mental sphere and are the word of knowledge, the word of wisdom and the discerning of spirits

Their purpose is to reveal that which otherwise would be unknown□

- ✓ **The word of knowledge is informative**
- ✓ **Its main purpose is to impart knowledge, information, facts, revelation concerning a specific problem or situation, which otherwise would not be known**
- ✓ **God is omniscient. He comprehends all things - past, present or future. Since a word is a fragment of a sentence, a word of knowledge is a fragment of God's knowledge**
- ✓ **Examples: Jn.4:16-19, 28-30; 13:38; Acts 5:1-11**

✓ **The word of knowledge is informative, but the word of wisdom is directive**

✓ **The word 'wisdom' means to have prudence or to know how to act in a situation, or how to deal with a problem**

✓ **Whilst the word of knowledge reveals facts to the recipient, the word of wisdom informs them how to act upon the knowledge they have received**

✓ **Often both work together. E.g. Jn.11:11-15**

- ✓ **Discerning of spirits enables us to know what spirit is operating in a given situation**
- ✓ **There are 3 sources of inspiration: the Holy Spirit, 1 Jn.4:2; the human spirit, Ezek.13:2-3; and an evil spirit, Acts 16:16-18**
- ✓ **The discerning of spirits is not the natural ability one has to find fault with another person, or to psychoanalyse them**
- ✓ **It is the ability given by God to know what spirit is motivating a person or a situation**

3) The gifts of power

These operate in the physical realm and are faith, gifts of healings and the working of miracles

Their purpose is to do what God wants to be done

✓ **The gift of faith enables one to believe God for miraculous intervention or provision in a given situation**

✓ **The *fruit* of faith focuses on character; the *gift* of faith focuses on power**

✓ **Like all the gifts of the Spirit the gift of faith is not bestowed upon all believers, but is manifested by the Holy Spirit through an individual as He wills to meet specific needs**

✓ **Examples: Acts 27; George Muller**

✓ **Gifts of healings.** Note the double plural, 'gifts' for different people and 'healings' for different diseases

✓ **There are three different aspects of healing:**

1) Healing which accompanies evangelism (Mk.16:18)

2) Healing within the local church (James 5:14-15)

3) Those who have a special gift of healing (1 Cor.12:9)

- ✓ **The working of miracles. This is the supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature by the Holy Spirit through a believer**
- ✓ **It often involves the temporary suspension of natural laws**
- ✓ **The gift of faith helps us to *receive* the miraculous; the gift of miracles helps us to *do* the miraculous, (e.g. compare Jesus and Paul in a storm)**

Spiritual gifts do not operate according to human will, but as the Spirit leads

'But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills'

(1 Cor.12:11)

'The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit'

(John 3:8)

We are neither

cessationanists

nor

sensationalists

'Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails'

(John 3:8)