

Empowered to Look Like Jesus

Big Idea: The revealing of Jesus in my life to the building up of the church, and to the leading of the lost to Jesus.

1Co 12:1 (ESV) Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.

Paul has worked hard to answer the questions of the Corinthians and now he approaches the subject of spiritual gifts. As with the other topics, his concern is misuse and abuse, misunderstanding and confusion. If Satan could try and disrupt marriage, legal matters, and Christian liberty, he could also try and corrupt the Biblical understanding of spiritual gifts.

Let me start by saying there are differences of opinion among bible scholars on some of these gifts whether they are continuing or whether they have ceased or stopped. I'm going to, as clearly as I can, give you what I believe the Bible says.

Before we can have a study on the gifts of the Spirit that God has given to his church, **we need to be reminded of the overall goal of the gifts.**

Eph 4:11-16 (ESV) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15] Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16] from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

God's goal has been and always will be the rescuing of the lost—leading them from darkness into light—leading them to faith and trust in Jesus and then growing to become completely like Jesus in every way.

I see two categories of the work of the Holy Spirit in this passage. Belief and Belonging.

1. Evidence of genuine belief:

- **1Co 12:2-3 (ESV) You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. [3] Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.**
- **Pagans—"foreign ones" (often refers to Gentiles outside the Jewish community or in NT as "non-Christians")**
- **Mute idols—speechless idols. False gods that cannot lead or instruct a person's life.**
- **No one truly speaking according to the empowering of the Spirit of God would ever say "Jesus is accursed or cursed by God." This sounds very much like what an unbelieving Jew might say or even something the apostle Paul once said before coming to Jesus.**
- **No one can every truly declare Jesus is Lord without the empowering of the Spirit of God to help them to believe.**
- **Evidence of genuine belief is empowered by personal relationship with the Holy Spirit.**

2. Evidence of genuine belonging:

- **1Co 12:4-7 (ESV) Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; [5] and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; [6] and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. [7] To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.**
- **Varieties of gifts—same Spirit**
- **Varieties of service—same Lord**
- **Varieties of activities—same God**

- But it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone (every believer).
- God divides up and gives gifts to believers for the supernatural empowerment of the church for its building up and for its evangelistic mission.
- God equips with various gifts. No one agrees on the exact number of gifts listed in scripture. We should not get hung up on the list but recognize the gift giver.
- Gifts are for service—service to the church and service to the lost.
- Gifts are effected and operated and energized through the power of God.
- Gifts are described as a manifestation of the Spirit. God puts his Spirit within the life of every believer so that his life and character and manifested or revealed in the life of every believer.
- His life revealed in and through my life so that the church is built up and the lost are led to Jesus. (For the common good).
- **1Pe 4:10-11 (ESV) As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: [11] whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.**
- Evidence of genuine belonging is empowered by personal relationship with the Spirit and is made known for the common good.

How does God equip us and reveal his life through us?

As we go through Paul's list, I label myself as a "cautious continuationist." Some believe about 4 or 5 of these gifts ceased after the time of the apostles—that they were sign gifts only for the initial affirmation of the gospel message. Now that scripture is revealed and complete these gifts are no longer ongoing, permanent gifts of the church. I label myself as a "cautious continuationist" because I define "the perfect" in 1 For. 13:10 as our future glorification with Christ. So until that time comes, I believe the gifts continue.

1Co 12:8-11 (ESV) For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, [9] to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, [10] to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. [11] All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

- 1. The utterance of wisdom—the ability to understand God’s will and apply it obediently.**
- 2. The utterance of knowledge—perceiving and understanding the truths of God’s word.**
- 3. Faith—an intensive ability to trust God in difficult and demanding ways.**
- 4. Gifts of healings* —the ability to heal various illnesses.**
- 5. Working of Miracles* —a supernatural intrusion into the natural laws (casting out of demons in Acts)**
- 6. Prophecy* —the Spirit enabled ability to proclaim the truth of God’s word effectively.**
- 7. The ability to distinguish between spirits (discernment)—the ability to discern truth from falsehood in relation to the word of God and the proper application of God’s word to life.**
- 8. Various kinds of tongues* (languages)—the speaking of unlearned languages.**
- 9. Interpretation of tongues* —the understanding of unlearned languages.**

What can we conclude from this morning?

- 1. God wants to reveal his life through every believer to the point of complete maturity in Christ.**
- 2. He does this through the power of his Spirit in every believer.**
- 3. He empowers every believer with gifts to strengthen the church and to enable us to live in such a way as to reveal Jesus to a lost world.**
- 4. Therefore, every believer is a minister.**
- 5. Every believer has a gift or gifts that must be used.**

6. God is honored and glorified when the gifts he has given us are used correctly.

Application:

We have given you a resource to help you explore what your gift or gifts might be. This is not intended to be comprehensive, but is simply meant to aid you as you prayerfully explore how God wants you to be a part of living for Jesus in every way.

Refer to brochure and QR code.