

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

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The article on spiritual gifts was a joy to read. It is filled with powerful nuggets to empower believers to carry out the messio dei to the body as commanded by the Holy Spirit. Spiritual gifts are rarely discussed in the pulpit anymore, but they are God-given tools to the body to build the church and advance the kingdom of God.¹ Spiritual gifts are given to every believer; without them, the believer cannot carry out the mission of Christ with the zeal the Holy Spirit gives. Evangelizing the way Jesus did far exceeds our human strength; that's why Jesus told His disciples to "Stay in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:3), because He knew they could not continue the ministry He started in their own power. As we diligently develop and apply the gifts with love, the Holy Spirit aligns Himself with us and works in and through us as we trust Him.

The church tends to focus on the speaking of tongues, but all spiritual gifts are essential to the body of Christ.² Each believer is endowed with spiritual gifts from God, who is the owner and dispenser;³ some have many, and others might have one, but they are all relevant to the spiritual well-being of the church. Jesus told the disciples, "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth," therefore, believers must try to excel in the gifts that build up the church, taking the message of God global (Acts 1:8).

As one takes up the mantle to pursue ministry, one must acknowledge that each believer's journey is unique. God chose each of us and equipped us with different spiritual gifts, but with one purpose to make Him known to the ends of the earth (1 Corinthians 12:6). Therefore, no one should compare or despise their gifts. One God, different kinds of workings, yet the same

¹ "Spiritual Gifts: Expectation Without Agenda" – The CMA Statement on Spiritual Gifts <https://cmalliance.org/who-we-are/what-we-believe/perspectives/> , p. 1

² Ibid, p. 4

³ Ibid, p. 1

working in the body in each believer. "The number of spiritual gifts we have is not important, but rather the understanding"⁴ of the ones we have and how they are to be used. By acknowledging the "Spiritual gifts as a gift from God to fulfill His plan, we must use them to glorify Him. We accept that we are not our own, but a part of the body with many members. Therefore, we must work together in love, sharing His love and message. When spiritual gifts and love are combined, they work"⁵ smoothly like a well-oiled machine and accomplish the goal they are given – a fruitful ministry.

Contrary to popular belief, the gift of tongues is not the only evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit; we walk in the anointing of the Holy Spirit because He lives with us and is in us (John 14:17). As John 15:16, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. The day we received God as our Lord and Savior, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30) and given a part in His perfect plan for His people. As we walk in obedience, remaining connected to the Vine, the Holy Spirit will make His home with us (John 14:23).

I am so glad about this article. I believe the church has gotten off track and no longer speaks about the gifts of the Spirit, which is detrimental to edifying and unifying the body of Christ. As I go forward in ministry, I must be mindful of allowing the Holy Spirit to be my sanctuary and walk by the Spirit, not to gratify the desires of the flesh (Galatians 5:16-17), thereby allowing the enemy to enter in and cause conflict and division.

The Holy Spirit produces the love in our hearts that binds us together in perfect harmony (Colossians 3:14). As I allow the Holy Spirit to be the center of my ministry, as it is written, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit" and (Galatians 5:25), as we do

⁴ Ibid, p. 4

⁵ Ibid, p. 4

this, the manifestation of God will be evident in the harmony of the ministry community of flow over into the community at large.

Bibliography

“Spiritual Gifts: Expectation Without Agenda” – The CMA Statement on Spiritual Gifts
<https://cmalliance.org/who-we-are/what-we-believe/perspectives/> Accessed, February 14,
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Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV), God's Word Mission Society, Orange Park,
Florida, 199

With integrity, I have read this book (circle one) Thoroughly and Entirely 100 %

Quickly but completely ____%

Thoroughly but NOT Entirely ____%

Quickly and NOT Completely ____%

Not at all

Signed: Jennifer Skeete