

Assignment Title: Reading Report 3

“Spiritual Gifts” by Alliance Statements and Perspectives

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According to the C&MA Perspective on spiritual gifts, spiritual gifts of many kinds are given to all believers through the Holy Spirit for the sake of encouraging the Church and drawing non-believers to Jesus. The C&MA believes that no spiritual gifts have ceased to be given in this current age and that believers should not neglect to use their gift for the sake of glorifying the Lord.¹

I particularly appreciated the emphasis placed on the purpose of the spiritual gifts within the article. Often, in our evangelical vs. charismatic world, we can see spiritual gifts as something to draw attention to ourselves, to set us apart as more holy or more blessed, or simply just to impress and awe a crowd. That attitude is likely the reason that, until recently, I've been so skeptical of the miraculous spiritual gifts. The CM&A Perspectives article says that spiritual gifts are actually for "building up the body of Christ...and extending the Kingdom of God throughout the world."² This is a purpose that any believer founded in scripture can surly get behind and get excited about!

The church I grew up in was likely cessationist although I don't think I ever heard them actually say that word. I remember in the church membership class when I was a teenager, we took a spiritual gifts test to determine what our gifts were and none of the gifts like prophecy, tongues, or healing were options of results that someone could get. I also remember that after taking the test my conclusion was that I had the spiritual gifts of administration and helps. Now, years later, I have discovered that my gifts are actually prophecy and teaching. It was not taught to me that spiritual gifts were something separate from innate natural talents or things ingrained in me from my parents. I greatly appreciate the article's explicit explanation of this. It says, "If the Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts, then their discovery must by nature be a spiritual

¹ "Spiritual Gifts," Alliance Statements and Perspectives, accessed February 14, 2023, <https://cmalliance.org/who-we-are/our-faith-and-mission/perspectives/>.

² Ibid.

experience.”³ The article goes on to give a few diagnostic questions for beginning to discern where your giftings might lie. I found these questions to be much more helpful than any spiritual gifts test I have taken and think pressing into these questions with the help of a small group or community of believers who know a person well would be the most fruitful avenue for exploring.

I was also exceptionally pleased with the section titled ‘What is the evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit.’ As I shared in a previous paper, I recently spent a season where I was struggling with wondering if I was saved at a young age like I had always thought because I didn’t experience the baptism of the Spirit until much later in life. In my confusion, I had concluded that head knowledge of the gospel and simple belief in Jesus must not have been enough to save me since I wasn’t walking in my spiritual gifts and the deeper life I am now. This section of this article is something that has helped me gain some clarity. The article says that there is no specific required evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit for salvation but lists things like the fruits of the Spirit and fruitful ministry. These are two things that are all too often left out of the conversation when talking about the filling of the Holy Spirit and I was so encouraged to see them focused on here! Succinctly, this section says our posture, when it comes to spiritual gifts, should be “Expectation without agenda.”⁴ It goes on to say that we should expect that God will meet His people in powerful ways but it is dangerous to demand or assume that He always works in a specific way. Praise God for that!

³ Alliance Statements and Perspectives, “Spiritual Gifts.”

⁴ Ibid.

Bibliography

Alliance Statements and Perspectives. "Spiritual Gifts". Accessed February 14, 2023.
<https://cmalliance.org/who-we-are/our-faith-and-mission/perspectives/>

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: __Veronica Torgerson__