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The CMA's article titled *The Spiritual Gifts: Expectation Without Agenda* reflects their stance on spiritual gifts. It is overwhelmingly evident that the Alliance believes the gifts have not ceased and are an active part of the Church at large, or at least they should be. The Christian Missionary Alliance is clear that the gifts of the Spirit should be used to empower and uplift the body and rebukes any argument that the gift of speaking in tongues is the only sign to tell whether or not someone has been filled by the Holy Spirit.

I currently attend and am on staff at a church that does not have a clear statement on where our stance on the gifts of the Spirit. Our church is incredibly diverse as well as our staff. Often, it is stated by those of us on staff who believe the gifts are for today that we are a "Seek not, Forbid not." If people encounter the Spirit in a way that the gifts of the Spirit become manifest that is okay, but we do not seek those experiences.

While this has been an unspoken stance of our church, it is becoming more and more apparent that the younger generation is actually looking for something more. So our young adult and student ministry has been wrestling with how to do this in a way that honors our senior leadership. A large portion of our conversations is incredibly similar to what is written, "A creed of power without the experience of power is worthless."¹ We don't want to have a worthless creed of power without self-proclaimed Christians not actually experiencing the power. So learning about the experience of the

¹ *ibid*

CMA and the conclusion it has come to after years of discussing it is incredibly helpful and hopeful for those of us who are hoping to see the next generation walk in their identity and calling as sons and daughters of God.

I agree with the stance and statement of the Christian Missionary Alliance, I think it is important to create space for those who are new believers to learn and understand the gifts. I'm also grateful for the stance that the "initial evidence doctrine"² is not one that the CMA has. Creating barriers and stating one has not received the Spirit because they do not speak in tongues can result in people having an ill view of God and the Church. Lastly, the view that developing the fruit of the Spirit is just as important as developing the gifts is one I highly believe in and would strongly recommend. As stated in the article, "Regardless of the gifts or manifestations a believer may experience, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, as described in Galatians 5:22–23 is the primary evidence of the Spirit-filled life. These qualities are produced by the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. The fruit of the Spirit shows that the Holy Spirit is in control of the believer's life."³

As I continue to lead and learn how to lead under leadership with differing views, I am excited and encouraged to continue forth and helping to shape the next generation in their view and understanding of who the Holy Spirit is and what He does. Teaching them how to function in the gifts He has given to each one of them. As I type this, I am figuring out ways that I can continue to push our senior leaders in coming to a fuller stance and statement on the gifts of the Spirit.

² The Board of Directors and/or General Council of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, "Alliance Statements and Perspectives."

³ *Ibid*

