

Nine Manifestation Gifts

A New Life of Spirit Led Ministry to Others

Jesus never intended for His church to be powerless or penniless. Just as the tithe is the Lord's provision for material supply, so the baptism in the Spirit is His provision for supernatural supply. Neither is forced on anyone, but when believers come into obedience, watch out—the “windows of heaven” open wide! Through the baptism in the Spirit, Jesus pours out gifts that will manifest as signs and wonders for the sake of ministry to someone He wants to bless.

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:7 ESV

A Context for Understanding

The main passage concerning the nine gifts of supernatural power is Paul's account in 1 Corinthians 12:1-12 where they are set within a wider context. Since he was writing to a church that was experiencing these gifts and was already familiar with how they worked, Paul doesn't take time to describe them. That's a pity for us, because many of us grew up in churches devoid of these supernatural operations.

Experience is the best teacher when it is available; absence of experience gives false ideas plenty of room to grow. Nevertheless, we can surmise what these gifts would have looked like then, by their appearances in other passages of scripture and by the way they are breaking forth in Charismatic and Pentecostal churches where the baptism of the Spirit is flourishing today. Before we examine the individual gifts, let's look at the context Paul gave them.



Context #1

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

According to St. Paul, the very first thing that we need to know concerning spiritual gifts is to avoid being “uninformed.” Learning about something is usually the first step towards doing it, but it is also a necessary step towards allowing others to do a thing. Why does that matter? In western churches many people have pulled away from the supernatural operations of the Holy Spirit due to fear and false teaching. By being uninformed of the truth, they not only aren't seeking to make themselves available for God to work through them, they are actively hindering others from going forward.



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Context #2

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 ESV

The whole of the Trinity is involved in the operation of these gifts: the Holy Spirit who works through the gift we are given, the Lord Jesus whose church is being served by the gift, and God the Father who oversees it all for the sake of everyone involved. Elsewhere Paul will describe other gifts and their place in the Body of Christ. Here his concern is only for certain gifts he now calls “manifestations of the Spirit.” Whatever is “manifest” has been brought to the light. It is something obvious and evident. These are gifts which make it obvious that God is at work through them. They display supernatural power in a way that the other gifts do not.

Context #3

All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:1-12 ESV

Because these gifts are manifestations of the Spirit, it is God alone who “apportions”—who chooses who, when and where. Although these “activities” can be counterfeited by the enemy, the operation of the true gifts is entirely under the Holy Spirit’s control. They can’t be worked up by human effort. This is an important point for discerning how these gifts differ from normal human abilities. For instance, anyone who teaches can convey intellectual knowledge about a subject, but that is not what is meant by the “word of knowledge.” We look to doctors for healing, but their gifts are not “gifts of healings.” Certainly, God may work through doctors and teachers (let’s hope He does!), but His work is hidden, not manifest, except in outcome. These nine gifts manifest during the process of ministering to others.

The Nine Gifts of Power

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. 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 NKJV

1) The Word of Wisdom

Wisdom is available to everyone who asks for it or seeks it. The whole of Proverbs, for instance, is devoted to helping us gain practical wisdom and understanding for daily living. This accumulation of good sense and insight is akin to, but not exactly, what is meant by “the word of wisdom.” Solomon’s most famous judgment gives us an example of this gift in operation. Having previously prayed for wisdom, God gave Solomon the perfect solution to a troubling dilemma:



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which prostitute was the true mother of the child who died and which was lying. Solomon's decision in the case revealed to all Israel that God was with him, giving wisdom.

Then the king answered and said, "Give the living child to the first woman, and by no means put him to death; she is his mother." And all Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice. 1 Kings 3:27-28
ESV

2) The Word of Knowledge

This gift has a very strong prophetic component, giving "knowledge" to both the one who receives it and the one being ministered to that God is at work in a given situation. This elevates the faith level of everyone present for whatever it is that the Lord desires to do. Often, however, it doesn't seem like a word at all. In the context of a healing service it may be a sense of pain felt by the prayer minister in a very specific part of their body. When that "word" is spoken out ("Someone here has ringing in their left ear that God wants to heal"), a person in the congregation with that condition will usually experience increased faith, often receiving healing as a direct result. When the blind man was told Jesus wanted to see him, his faith level was certainly enhanced. Jesus saw his response, noted the faith, and the healing happened.

And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way. Mark 10:49-52 ESV

3) Faith

All who believe in Jesus have already received the gift of faith, so saving faith or faith in Christ's death and resurrection is not what is meant by this gift. This gift conveys a supernaturally sustained ability to trust God in a specific situation or to believe for a specific thing that the Lord wants to accomplish. Persons who receive it don't have to "work" at believing God against what may seem like impossible odds. They only have to make sure they don't lose what they have received. Often this ability to believe for a specific thing is activated by a specific word "quicken" from scripture or received directly from the Spirit. David's confident faith for killing Goliath seems to have been sustained by this kind of gift.

And David said, "The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!" 1 Samuel 17:37 ESV

4) Gifts of Healings

There are so many things about us that can go wrong: physical sickness, systemic disease, organ failure, accidental injury, mental disease, and emotional wounds. It's no wonder that many "gifts" for "healings" are needed. Everyone should pray for healing, all of us can seek to receive a greater capacity for effective prayer, but certain individuals have already been

unquestionably gifted by the Lord for healing. Many of them are consciously aware of an anointing from the Lord which “signals” His presence upon them to heal someone. Sometimes it is a sensation of physical warmth on their hands; at other times it may be an ability to “see” faith upon someone, as with Paul in Lystra.

And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked. Acts 14:8-11 NKJV

5) The Working of Miracles

Of course, sudden healings are miracles in themselves, but what is (likely) intended here are those activities of God which affect the natural order, not the human body—what are usually termed “signs and wonders” in the Hebrew scriptures. Nature, too, can go awry. Jesus rebuked the wind for His disciples’ sake. God stopped the mouths of lions for Daniel’s sake. He also brought forth water from a rock and provided mana in the wilderness for His chosen people. We, too, need miracles of all kinds in our lives: miracles of escape from imminent danger or looming debt; miracles of provision; miracles of deadly forces in nature stopped or turned aside. We have an awesome God-given ability to “speak” even to mountains, commanding nature just as Jesus did.

And he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once. When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?" And Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' it will happen." Matthew 21:19-21 ESV

6) Prophecy

There are many levels to the prophetic. At the entry level is the kind of seeking we all do in prayer to find a word of encouragement or just the right book from an inspired author to match a friend’s need. Jesus says that all of His sheep “hear” His voice. Some do more than others. Those with a prophetic gift hear more frequently and more specifically from the Lord by means of a “language” of prophetic communication that may include dreams, visions, symbols and pictures, even more than words. This does not mean they get it right all of the time, but that they develop a dependable track record for accuracy which makes it worthwhile for others to pay attention to, weigh, and sift their sayings. Agabus’ prophetic gift helped the church prepare for a famine.

Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). So the disciples determined, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. Acts 11:27-29 ESV



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7) Discerning of Spirits

Having been active in the field of demonic deliverance, I can testify that there are at least two levels to the operation of this gift. There are some people (myself at times) who can discern by inward sense which demon needs to be cast out of a person, which spirits are oppressing a church or other organization, and even where angels or demons may be positioned around a room. There are others who have been given sight to see into the invisible realm that surrounds us all. I have worked with many people who evidently had this ability, whose credibility and Christian character gave support to what they reported seeing. In battlefield conditions having someone with this gift is like having a spy behind enemy lines. To Balaam's chagrin, however, his donkey saw the angel blocking their path before he did. Nevertheless, it was a good thing he finally listened to what the donkey discerned.

And the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?" And he said, "No." Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face. Numbers 22:30-31 ESV

8) Different Kinds of Tongues

In addition to "tongues" or languages that can be learned by the usual human means, there are tongues "of men and of angels" which are given by God for His own specific purposes. On the day of Pentecost everyone in the Upper Room was baptized in the Holy Spirit and given an ability to speak human languages that they could not have previously known. This was a sign to the multitudes who heard them "speaking in their own tongue"—a convincing display of God's power which led to Peter's sermon and the conversion of 3000. There are also "tongues of angels" by which the Lord may be worshiped or entreated. These tongues have no human counterpart. The tongues spoken of here may be of either variety, but the setting is public worship, which is why it is stipulated that an interpretation should be given, something that is completely unnecessary if they are simply a part of the person's private prayer language (see [Praying in Tongues](#)). Such a setting requires interpretation for the sake of proclaiming the prophecy it contains.

Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up... So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. 1 Corinthians 14:5, 12 ESV

9) The Interpretation of Tongues

The interpretation of publicly uttered tongues is necessary for the Lord to accomplish what the tongues describe. Without the interpretation coming forth, no one knows what was said. No one can even be confident that the tongues conveyed a message from the Lord or were initiated by Him, rather than from of the speaker's own soul. This gets tricky really fast because the speaker has to have faith that someone is present who will be able to interpret what he/she believes God has prompted them to say (perhaps that will be themselves); likewise the interpreter has to have



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faith to believe that they are hearing from God at least enough of the message to launch out in faith to let it flow in fullness.

Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. 1
Corinthians 14:13 ESV

Learning about these gifts is not the same thing as doing them, but it is a necessary beginning. To go further you will need a fellowship of like-minded believers who are committed to discovering how to make themselves available to God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit at this level. You can be sure that there are others who are pursuing these things of God, as well as the Lord Himself. Passion for Jesus and compassion for others will carry anyone a long way towards the unfolding of every gift the Holy Spirit desires to release through us—if we don't set preconceived limits to what is possible. You can be sure that the Lord doesn't!

More to Explore

[The Etiquette of Intimacy](#) Here we seek to lift the veil on aspects of our relationship with the Holy Spirit that are more intimate and subtle and, therefore, harder to describe. That should not surprise us. The closer we get to any mystery, the more mysterious it becomes.

[Doing Ministry](#) There's nothing like doing the thing, especially when what we are doing is something we can be sure that Jesus is doing right along with us! The real Minister, the true Servant, is there on the inside wanting to get out into that hurting, lost world through us His chosen vessels. The secret to kingdom success is letting Him do ministry through you. Practice His presence as you learn "The Care of Souls," "The Art of Listening," "The Heart of a Servant," and "How to Give Talks and Lead Ministry."

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About the Author: **[Steve Evans](#)**



For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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