

## 9. The 3 Power Gifts of the Holy Spirit: A Guide to Faith, Healing, and Miracles

### Be Filled with the Holy Spirit Series

We continue our series on the 9 manifestation gifts of the Spirit, also known as spiritual gifts, as described in 1 Corinthians 12. In an earlier session, we looked at three Revelation gifts: the Word of Wisdom, the Word of Knowledge, and the gift of Discerning of Spirits. This session shifts the focus to the 3 Power Gifts: The Gift of Faith, The Gifts of Healings (the original Greek text has gifts and healings in the plural), and the Gift of Working Miracles.

Views on the 9 charismatic or spiritual gifts of the Spirit vary widely. Depending on your denomination or church, some leaders teach that not all these gifts are meant for today, or that some are no longer useful. Certain churches believe that the spiritual gifts ceased because we now have the Bible, and some even think that those operating in these gifts are not doing so through God's power, which can cause concern. We believe that anything from God is meant to benefit us and never to harm. I personally think we should be open to being used by the Spirit of God with any gift He provides. The purpose of the gifts should be to glorify Jesus and affirm God's Word. The Holy Spirit always points to Jesus and aligns with Scripture. If the gifts were meant to cease at some point, wouldn't Jesus have clearly told His disciples? Wouldn't He have specified when miracles and healing gifts would end? We are not yet perfect; one day we will know Him fully, as we are fully known. Surely, we can agree that we are not there yet! So, thank God, He continues to empower and equip His Church. Indeed, we live in a time when we need the Spirit more than ever.

These gifts are divine empowerments granted by the Holy Spirit to assist believers in Christ in their everyday lives. They may be bestowed during evangelistic encounters or to meet needs that emerge in a believer's personal, social, family, or work life. Let's revisit the Scripture passage where Paul discusses the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11:

<sup>4</sup>There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup>There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup>There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. <sup>7</sup>Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup>To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

Can you remember a time in your life when God may have given you a gift for a particular situation? How did you sense this was from God? Share an incident if you can. It does not have to be one of the gifts listed above. Consider what it is like when you feel God is showing you something by His Spirit.

### **Gift of Faith vs. Saving Faith: What is the Difference?**

What distinguishes the gift of faith from the fruit of faith or being faithful? In his letter to the Galatian church, Paul discusses the character traits that develop within a believer as they respond to the Spirit's prompting to change ungodly attitudes or habits. Producing the fruit of the Spirit doesn't require struggle; it naturally develops in a believer's life. When I say "effortlessly," I mean I've never seen an apple or orange tree strain to bear fruit—it's a natural process. The quality of the fruit often depends on the soil where the tree is planted. Here is what Paul said about the fruit of the Spirit:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).

As with all the charismatic gifts of the Spirit, the spiritual gift of faith differs from saving faith or the fruit of faithful living. Saving faith is a response to the gospel (Ephesians 2:8-9). Our focus is on a supernatural gift of faith that takes one beyond one's natural abilities into something God imparts for a particular situation a believer in Christ is facing. The gift of faith may be defined as the special gift by which the Holy Spirit gives Christians an extraordinary level of confidence in God's ability and power through His promises and presence. One doesn't have to work hard to be holy enough or be a certain age; the gift of faith falls on anyone open-hearted enough to step out in faith and believe that the Holy Spirit has prompted them. The gift of faith is a bracelet, a spiritual impartation that comes upon a person, giving them an unshakable confidence in God that is timely for something in their lives. When the Lord imparts this gift to a person, it is often perceived as a gush, outpouring, or a sudden increase of confidence in God. Regular faith petitions God, while a gift of faith is something received from God. It comes as an assurance that God has heard, and it will be done as it has been asked of Him. Jesus talked about this kind of faith:

Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him (Mark 11:23).

Hebrews chapter 11 is an account of gifted people with faith, often called "the hall of faith." The writer is trying to help us see that these individuals were ordinary people just like us, yet they had a relationship with an extraordinary God who works on behalf of those who love Him.

### Examples of the Gift of Faith in the Bible

Noah demonstrated remarkable faith by working for 120 years, awaiting God's flood. Consider the ridicule he must have faced from onlookers as he built a massive boat miles from the sea on dry land.

We also read about Paul the apostle, who, while preaching, was made aware by the Holy Spirit of a man who had been lame from birth and possessed faith to be healed. The Spirit instructed him to call out to the man in the audience and to stand up.

<sup>8</sup>In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked. <sup>9</sup>This man was listening to the words of Paul, who looked intently at him and saw

that he had faith to be healed. <sup>10</sup>In a loud voice Paul called out, “Stand up on your feet!” And the man jumped up and began to walk (Acts 14:8-10).

How did Paul know that the man had faith to be healed? (v. 9). The question is, who had a gift of faith, Paul the apostle, or the crippled man? Faith is contagious. God acts on behalf of those who reach out in expectation, so it could have been both Paul’s faith that God would act in this situation and the man’s expectation. It is my belief that, to a great extent, faith is expectation. What are we expecting God to do? We could also talk about Peter and John’s account of the healing of the man lame from birth at the Beautiful Gate in Acts 3. Peter and John told the man, “**Look at us!**” **So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them (Acts 3:4-5).** To me, it seems as if God gave the two of them a gift of faith that He would act if they gave attention to the lame man.

Another example of someone blessed with faith is Abraham. Consider what it was like for him to tell his wife, Sarah, that they were leaving Ur of the Chaldees to go to a distant land: “**By faith, Abraham obeyed when he was called to go to a place that he would receive as an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he was going**” (Hebrew 11:8). When Sarah asked where they were going, he couldn’t answer. Both Abraham and Sarah also revealed remarkable faith in God by trusting God’s promise that he would have a son with Sarah, even when she was 90 and he was 100, well beyond the normal age for conceiving.

Individuals gifted with faith serve as motivators for others to believe. This virtue resonates with the human spirit, guiding people toward a supernatural God and transforming their perspectives to expect miracles in their lives. Those endowed with this gift carry a calm confidence that overlooks physical barriers, trusting in God’s promises. They have an undeniable inner conviction that God will keep His promises. Although all believers are granted saving faith by God, the gift of faith is a special grace God gives. Let’s move on and look at the second Power Gift:

## 2. The Gifts of Healings

The gifts of healings is the special ability God gives certain members of the Body of Christ to serve as human intermediaries through whom the Lord pleases to cure illness and restore health apart from natural means (Peter Wagner).

### Definition of Gifts of Healings

Gifts of healings, as a special gracelet of the Holy Spirit (charism), are supernatural abilities bestowed on believers to facilitate various forms of healing and restoration in others through the Holy Spirit’s power. In the Greek of the New Testament, both the terms for gift and healing are plural (1 Corinthians 12:9). God chooses to use many ways to heal; sometimes it is through the laying on of hands, sometimes God uses simple obedience, as in telling the ten leprous men to show themselves to a priest (Luke 17:11-19). Then there was also the healing of Hezekiah by applying a fig poultice to his skin (2 Kings 20:7). With each healing, there is an expression of faith and dependence on God.

Why do you think Jesus only healed the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda? Why did He not heal them all? (John 5).

<sup>19</sup>Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. <sup>20</sup>For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed (John 5:19-20).

God uses different ways to heal and sometimes chooses not to heal to fulfill His greater glory and purpose. For example, Paul the apostle was told that his illness was God's will at that time, so that God's power would be displayed through his weakness: “**My Grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect through weakness**” (2 Corinthians 12:9). When Paul's close associate Timothy experienced stomach issues, Paul advised him to improve his diet by drinking a little wine for his stomach's benefit: “**Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses**” (1 Timothy 5:23).

Interestingly, God also performed healings through objects like handkerchiefs and aprons.

so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them (Acts 19:12).

Were the handkerchiefs magical? No. In our view, it was the people's expectations, desperation, and faith in God that brought about healings. The Scriptures state that God used not only Paul's handkerchief but also Peter's shadow when the Holy Spirit was moving strongly among them (Acts 5:15-16).

<sup>15</sup>As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. <sup>16</sup>Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed (Acts 5:15-16).

The handkerchief and shadow alone held nothing extraordinary, nor did any of the apostles claim such power for themselves (Acts 3:12). Instead, God used these objects to strengthen people's faith, which was a gift from the risen and ascended Christ. The purpose was to assist those in need and to testify to Jesus' identity as the Son of God. It demonstrated that forgiveness of sins and eternal life could solely be achieved through faith in Christ (Acts 3:13-26; Acts 4:8-12). How were people healed? It calls to mind the woman with the issue of blood who believed and reached out to touch Jesus (Luke 8:43-48). In her desperation, she reached out in faith to the Lord, and God responded.

The spiritual gift of healing is the supernatural manifestation of the Spirit of God that miraculously brings healing and deliverance from disease and/or infirmity. It is the power of God that destroys the work of sin and/or the devil in the human body, such as the healings that Jesus and the disciples performed ([Matthew 4:24; 15:30; Acts 5:15-16; 28:8-9](#)).

Paul explains to the church that the main purpose of spiritual gifts is to build up other believers and ultimately to glorify God (1 Corinthians 12:7). Although God grants these gifts for His use, in the Corinthian church, they were often seen as symbols of status or signs of superiority. As a result, Paul had to gently rebuke the believers in Corinth. Since the primary aim of the Spirit's gifts is to

honor God, the intentions of the heart are crucial. That's why, in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians—midway through his three-chapter discussion on spiritual gifts—Paul emphasizes that love should be the underlying motive.

There has been much debate about the usage of the spiritual gift of healing among Christians. Some believe the gift of healing and other sign gifts are no longer operative today, while others believe the miraculous gifts are still in use. Of course, the power to heal was never in the gifted person himself/herself. The power to heal is from God and God alone.

<sup>28</sup>And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues <sup>29</sup>Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup>Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup>Now eagerly desire the greater gifts (1 Corinthians 12:28-31).

Paul's question is rhetorical. The answer is no—not everyone performs miracles, nor does everyone possess healing gifts. But we are encouraged to seek God and to petition Him to grant a power gift for the situation we are in. Let's now look at the third of the Power Gifts:

### 3. The Working of Miracles: God's Power Over Nature

The gift of miracles is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to serve as human intermediaries through whom God pleases to perform powerful acts that observers perceive as altering the normal course of nature.

<sup>27</sup>As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David!' <sup>28</sup>When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, 'Do you believe that I am able to do this?' 'Yes, Lord,' they replied. <sup>29</sup>Then he touched their eyes and said, 'According to your faith let it be done to you'; <sup>30</sup>and their sight was restored (Matthew 9:27-30).

God will do His work in your life according to what you believe and what you receive. Jesus frequently told people that it was their faith that brought them the healing, deliverance, and forgiveness that they needed. God did miracles through the early disciples.

The spiritual gifts of miracles and healing are both described in the plural (1 Corinthians 12:10). The Greek phrase *energemata dynameon* literally means “workings of powers.” The double plural suggests that these gifts were varied and not always available at the will of the believer. Instead, they were bracelets granted at different times and under different circumstances. Therefore, these gifts depend on God's divine will and purpose and are not controlled by the person performing the miraculous works.

We know that Jesus performed numerous miracles during His earthly ministry, even more than what is recorded in Scripture (John 20:30-31, Acts 2:22). The Apostles also regularly carried out various miracles, such as casting out demons, healing the sick, raising the dead, and more (Acts 2:43; 3:1-10; 5:1-16; 9:36-43; 13:4-12; 19:11-12). Additionally, other believers who were not apostles, including Stephen (Acts 6:8) and Philip (Acts 8:4-8), also performed miracles.

Miracles, granted by God to the church, serve to reveal His presence and glory among His people, inspiring awe, wonder, and reverent fear of God. These miracles often led more people to believe in Jesus, with God's glory evident, and the church growing in faith and boldness (Acts 4:29-31; 9:35, 42).

Those with the spiritual gift of miracles often have a heightened awareness of God's presence and power through the Holy Spirit. They show uncommon faith and sincerely seek to have God reveal Himself, leading many to believe in Jesus Christ. Instead of chasing attention or followers, they focus on directing others solely to Jesus. They recognize God's sovereignty and His freedom to act whenever and however He wills, remaining sensitive to the Holy Spirit's guidance. This gift is often expressed through prayer and persistent intercession for God to display His glory. They do not seek personal power but always give credit to God for His mighty works. In His wisdom, God often humbles them, keeping them dependent on His grace and focused on His Son rather than on the miracles. See also 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28-29; Acts 1:8; Galatians 3:5.

I believe more miracles will occur, especially as the Lord's coming approaches. It seems we hear more about miracles in other countries, particularly where people lack access to modern medical care and are more desperate for divine intervention. In regions with greater darkness, God's light shines brighter. I want to share a recent miracle from the Fula people, an ethnic group in the Sahara region of Mali, West Africa, found in the book *The Move of the Holy Spirit in the 10/40 Window*.<sup>1</sup>

A man from a church in Colorado, Bob Havenor, took a prayer team to this region. They had heard about a local shaman with occult powers, said by the people to be able to turn him into an animal or a whirlwind. Even as the team prayed about this situation, a Fula man lingered nearby, listening and asking how to repent of his sins. Havenor writes: "Baba Kone, a Malian pastor, shared the Gospel with the Fula man. As Baba began to lead the man in the sinner's prayer, a ferocious wind kicked up, blowing dust and debris everywhere and virtually stopping the prayer. Kevin Walzak and I both realized that this was the [demonic] whirlwind. In Jesus' name, we commanded it to cease. Immediately, all was calm. The prayer continued, and a concerned Fula inquirer was born into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. God's power had ripped another hole in the dark canopy over Bako! Since prayer journeyers have been going to this once-resistant area, 1,100 believers have come to know the Lord!"

### **The Purpose of Power Gifts: Edifying the Church and Glorifying God**

When Paul discusses spiritual gifts, he highlights that they are meant to glorify God, not to promote oneself. Any motive in ministry other than love for God and others can lead to spiritual abuse. Today, similar issues are present in the Church worldwide, just as they were in Corinth during Paul's time. This occurs because human nature remains unchanged; we continue to struggle with the same fleshly tendencies and temptations.

Some individuals, fully aware of the significance of spiritual gifts, may misuse them for financial gain or power, and a common issue in Corinth was gift exaltation, in which one gift was prioritized

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<sup>1</sup> Luis Bush and Beverly Pegues, *The Move of the Holy Spirit in the 10/40 Window*, Copyright 1999, Youth with a Mission Publishing, page 77.)

over others. Some used these gifts as status symbols. Paul corrected this by refocusing believers on the true purpose of the gifts, highlighting that love should motivate all Christian service and ministry. Without Christ's love as the driver, pride and self-indulgence can take hold. It's comforting to remember that the Spirit's gifts and work are God's, not ours. We respond to God in faith, but His power works through us; we are merely vessels—a conduit for His power. Faith links us to Him. When we understand this and give all glory to God, we protect ourselves from misusing spiritual gifts. Every believer is gifted in some way, for all who are in Christ have been given His Spirit. In Corinth, some believers claimed to possess a greater measure of the Spirit than others. However, Paul makes clear that the Spirit is a person, not a force or substance to be possessed or manipulated. If you have received Christ, you have been baptized into Him and are therefore able to drink of the Spirit. The question then becomes one of desire: How thirsty are you?

I once heard it said that we have as much of God as we truly want. By this, I mean that life's distractions often keep us from seeking God deeply and cultivating a consistent devotional life. So, to close, I pose this question to all of us: How much of God do you want?

I want to end with the following scripture for us to consider:

**For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him (2 Chronicles 16:9, NIV).**

Prayer: Help us, Holy Father, to be open and spiritually aware of your promptings to be your hand extended to a needy world. Amen!

Keith Thomas  
Email: [keiththomas@groupbiblestudy.com](mailto:keiththomas@groupbiblestudy.com)