

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

1 Corinthians 12:1-31

The Gifts of The Holy Spirit

by Carl Graham

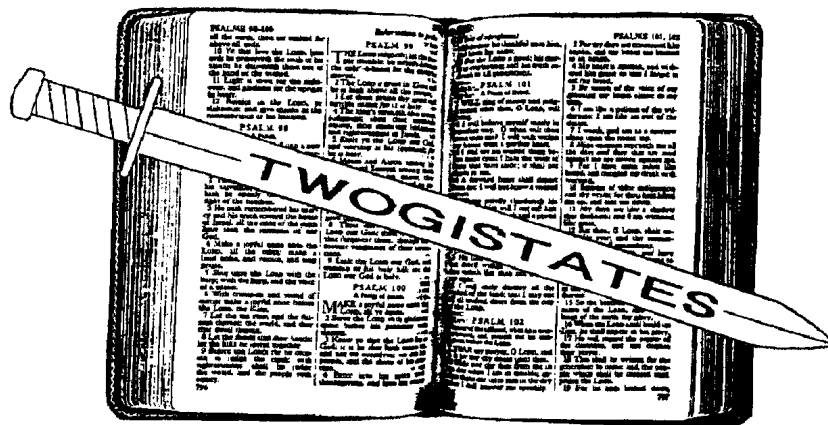
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E-mail: carlgraham@twogistates.com

Web: <http://www.twogistates.com>

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For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any
twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of
soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a
discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
Hebrews 4:12

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The Gifts of the Spirit

Introduction

The gifts of the Spirit are referred to in Romans 12, Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, and Hebrews 2. Some of these are actually offices of the church; so to make the list complete, those positions given in 1 Timothy 3 are also included among the list of gifts. As you read the referenced Scriptures recognize that gifts are broken into categories of administrations, operations, and offices. However, whatever they may be named in the Bible all are interrelated in that all administrations, operations, and offices have to depend on the power of God to be effective. All gifts exist for only one reason and that is so that people so endowed may display their particular gifts in order to testify of a risen Saviour. It must be noted that the display of gifted power must be accomplished in love or it will never do this. The pertinent Scriptures are as follows:

Romans 12:1-31

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 **Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,** whether **prophecy**, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or **ministry**, let us wait on our ministering: or he that **teacheth**, on teaching;

8 Or he that **exhorteth**, on exhortation: he that **giveth**, let him do it with simplicity; he that **ruleth**, with diligence; he that **sheweth mercy**, with cheerfulness.

9 **Let love be without dissimulation.** Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

1 Corinthians 12:1-31

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

4 Now there are **diversities of gifts**, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are **differences of administrations**, but the same Lord.

6 And there are **diversities of operations**, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the **word of wisdom**; to another the **word of knowledge** by the same Spirit;

9 To another **faith** by the same Spirit; to another the **faith** by the same Spirit;

10 To another the **working of miracles**; to another **prophecy**; to another **discerning of spirits**; to another **divers kinds of tongues**; to another the **interpretation of tongues**:

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first **apostles**, secondarily **prophets**, thirdly **teachers**, after that **miracles**, then **gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues**.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Ephesians 4:1-32

1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the **vocation wherewith ye are called**,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 **There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;**

5 **One Lord, one faith, one baptism,**

6 **One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.**

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 **Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.**

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11 And he gave some, **apostles**; and some, **prophets**; and some, **evangelists**; and some, **pastors** and **teachers**;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Hebrews 2:1-18

1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

4 **God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost,** according to his own will?

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

1 Timothy 3:1-16

1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the **office of a bishop**, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the **office of a deacon**, being found blameless.

11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

The chart following gives all the gifts as presented in the referenced Scriptures. Notice that some are presented as gifts such as healing, while others are presented as the action as the result or outcome of a particular gift, while others are presented in the form of an office. However, whether it be direct gifts such as healing, or the action involved such as teaching, or an office such as pastor, all who are called on for any special task for God must have special endowments if Jesus Christ is to be represented properly. It is important to understand that the gifts were given to glorify Jesus and Him alone. This is the sole task of the Holy Spirit.

The Gifts of the Spirit

Romans 12	1 Corinthians 12	Ephesians 4	Hebrews 2	1 Timothy 3
prophecy	word of wisdom	apostles	signs and wonders	bishop
ministry	word of knowledge	prophets	divers miracles	deacon
teaching	faith	evangelists	gifts of the Holy Ghost	
exhortation	gifts of healing	pastors		
giveth	working of miracles	teachers		
ruler	prophecy			
mercy	discerning of spirits			
	divers kinds of tongues			
	interpretation of tongues			
	apostles			
	prophets			
	teachers			
	miracles			
	gifts of healings,			
	helps,			
	governments,			
	diversities of tongues.			

Gifted Offices

Among the gifted offices are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, deacons, and teachers. Many people in these offices are blessed with multiple Spiritual gifts as are necessary for them to carry out the work that God has called them to do.

Apostles (1 Corinthians 12 & Ephesians 4)

An apostle is a special messenger of Jesus Christ; a person to whom Jesus delegated authority for certain tasks. The word apostle is used of those twelve disciples whom Jesus sent out, two by two, during His ministry in Galilee to expand His own ministry of preaching and healing. It was on that occasion, evidently, that they were first called "apostles" (Mark 3:14; 6:30).

These same disciples, with the exception of Judas Iscariot, were recommissioned by Jesus after His resurrection to be His witnesses throughout the world (Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8). After Jesus' ascension, the apostles brought their number to twelve by choosing Matthias (Acts 1:23-26).

The word apostle is sometimes used in the New Testament in a general sense of "messenger." For instance, when delegates of Christian communities were charged with conveying those churches' contributions to a charitable fund, they were described by Paul as "messengers [apostles] of the churches" (2 Cor. 8:23). Jesus also used the word this way when He quoted the proverb, "A servant is not greater than his master, nor he who is sent [literally, "an apostle"] greater than he who sent him" (John 13:16). Jesus Himself is called "the Apostle... of our confession" (Heb. 3:1), a reference to His function as God's special Messenger to the world.

The word apostle has a wider meaning in the letters of the apostle Paul. It includes people who, like himself, were not included in the Twelve, but who saw the risen Christ and were specially commissioned by Him. Paul's claim to be an apostle was questioned by others. He based his apostleship, however on the direct call of the exalted Lord who appeared to him on the Damascus Road and on the Lord's blessing of his ministry in winning converts and establishing churches (1 Cor. 15:10).

Apparently, Paul also counted James, the Lord's brother, as an apostle (Gal. 1:19). This James was not one of the Twelve; in fact, he was not a believer in Jesus before the Crucifixion (John 7:5). It was the resurrected Lord who 'appeared to James' (1 Cor. 15:7) and presumably commissioned him for his ministry. When Paul says Jesus was seen not only by James but also by "all the apostles" (1 Cor. 15:7), he seems to be describing a wider group than "the Twelve" to whom Jesus appeared earlier (1 Cor. 15:5).

In 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11, apostles are listed along with prophets and other saints as part of the foundation of the household of God. In this strictly New Testament sense, apostles are confined to the first generation of Christians.

At an early stage in the church's history it was agreed that apostles to the Jews and Gentiles should be divided into separate camps. Paul and Barnabas were to concentrate on the evangelization of Gentiles; Peter, John, and James (the Lord's brother) were to continue evangelizing Jews (Gal. 2:7-9).

As pioneers in the work of making converts and planting churches, apostles were exposed to special dangers. When persecution erupted, they were the primary targets for attack (1 Cor. 4:9-13). Paul, in particular, welcomed the suffering which he endured as an apostle because it was his way of participating in the suffering of Christ (Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 1:5-7).

The authority committed to the apostles by Christ was unique. It could not be transmitted to others. The apostles could install elders or other leaders and teachers in the churches, and they could authorize them to assume special responsibilities; but apostolic authority could not be transferred. Their authority has not come to us through their successors; it has come through their writings, which are contained in the New Testament.

Prophets (1 Corinthians 12 & Ephesians 4)

A prophet is a person who spoke for God and who communicated God's message courageously to God's Chosen People—the nation of Israel.

The Prophet's Call. A prophet received his call or appointment directly from God. Some prophets, like Jeremiah or John the Baptist, were called before birth (Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:13-16), but their privilege was not a birthright. Their authority came from God alone whose message they bore (Ex. 7:1). Who can match the eloquence and brilliance of Isaiah, the depth of emotion and melancholy of Jeremiah, or the dramatic and dogged spirit of Ezekiel? A prophetic call was a call to liberty and freedom to be oneself (John 8:31-32). It enabled the prophet to be unaffected by human bias and criticism. The call of the prophet required that he not be intimidated or threatened by his audience (Jer. 1:7-8; Ezek. 2:6).

Except for God's call, prophets had no special qualifications. They appeared from all walks of life and classes of society. They included sheep breeders and farmers like Amos (Amos 7:14) and Elisha (1 Kin. 19:19) but also princes like Abraham (Gen. 23:6) and priests like Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:3). Even women and children became prophets (1 Sam. 3:19-20; 2 Kin. 22:14). In rare circumstances, God used the hesitant or unruly to bear his message. Balaam prophesied (Num. 22:6--24:24) the Lord's message but was actually an enemy of God (2 Pet. 2:15-16; Rev. 2:14). Saul certainly was not in fellowship with God when he prophesied (1 Sam. 10:23-24).

Some prophets were called for a lifetime. But sometimes prophets spoke briefly and no more (Num. 11:25-26). In either case, a prophet spoke with the authority of the Holy Spirit (Num. 11:29; 24:4). One trait characterized them all: a faithful proclamation of God's word and not their own (Jer. 23:16; Ezek. 13:2). Jesus' reference to Himself as a prophet in (John 12:49-50) rests upon this standard of faithfully repeating God's word to man.

The test of a prophet's genuineness is found in how his predicted events come to pass (Deut. 18:20-22). Whether a prophet's words were fulfilled within his lifetime or centuries later, they were fulfilled to the letter (1 Kin. 13:3; 2 Kin. 23:15-16). But regardless of the time of fulfillment, the prophet's message applied to his generation as well as to ours.

The main role of the prophet was to bear God's word for the purpose of teaching, reproof, correcting, and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16). Whether warning of impending danger or disclosing God's will to the people, they were similar in function to the modern preacher in the church. Prophets were referred to as messengers of the Lord (Is. 44:26; Hag. 1:13), servants of God (Amos 3:7), shepherds (Zech. 11:4,7; Jer. 17:16), and watchmen (Is. 62:6).

Women were also blessed with prophetic abilities in Bible times. Miriam, the sister of Moses, led the women with her chorus in response to the great song of her brother (Ex. 15:20). Deborah joined with Barak in song and exulted in their great victory (Judg. 5:2-31). Hannah's prayer was remarkable, foretelling how David's dynasty would be founded (1 Sam. 2:1-10).

Luke reported the prophetic activity of the elderly Anna in the Temple (2:36-38), as well as that of Elizabeth and Mary (1:41-45,46-55). (First Corinthians 11:5) assumes the female role in prophesying, seen again in Philip's four virgin daughters (Acts 21:9). Other prophetesses such as Noadiah gained a bad reputation (Neh. 6:14).

Evangelists (Ephesians 4)

An evangelist is a person authorized to proclaim the gospel of Christ. In a more narrow sense, the word refers to one of the gospel writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. Literally, however, the word means, "one who proclaims good tidings" (Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5).

The evangelist is a specially called person to be used of God to spread the gospel to the unsaved (Eph. 4:11). In the early church these persons were not attached to any specific local church. They traveled over a wide geographical area, preaching to those to whom the Holy Spirit led them. The early disciples were also called evangelists (Acts 8:4) because they proclaimed the gospel.

All Christians today may continue the witness of the evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. As the evangelists spoke and wrote of Jesus, so may Christians bring His message to others.

Pastors and Bishops (Ephesians 4 & 1 Timothy 3)

Pastors are the feeder, protector, and guide, or shepherd, of a flock of God's people in New Testament times. In speaking of spiritual gifts, the apostle Paul wrote that Christ "gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11). The term pastor by this time in church history had not yet become an official title. The term implied the nourishing of and caring for God's people.

The Greek word translated pastors in (Ephesians 4:11) is used elsewhere in the New Testament of shepherders, literally or symbolically (Matt. 25:32); of Jesus, the Good Shepherd (John 10); and of "shepherds," or leaders, of the church (Eph. 4:11). Also compare (Jeremiah 23:1-2).

Deacons (1 Timothy 3)

A deacon is a servant or minister; an ordained lay officer in many Christian churches. The general concept of deacon as a servant of the church is well established in both the Bible and church history. But the exact nature of the office is hard to define, because of changing concepts and varying practices among church bodies through the centuries. Another problem is that the Bible passages associated with deacons are interpreted differently by various church groups.

The term deacon is translated from the Greek word *diakonos*. In most cases *diakonos* is translated as "servant" rather than "deacon." In the Greek world, *diakonos* was used to describe the work of a servant—a person who waited on tables or ministered as a religious official. When the office of deacon was established in the New Testament church, it may have paralleled the function of the Jewish synagogue assistant—an official who took care of the administrative needs of the assembly.

The origin of the office of deacon is usually related to the events described in (Acts 6:1-6). The young Christian church in Jerusalem was experiencing growing pains, and it had become increasingly difficult for the apostles to distribute charitable gifts to its needy members without neglecting their ministry of prayer and preaching. The widows of Greek or Gentile background complained to the apostles that they were not getting their just share of food and money. To meet this critical need, seven men were chosen by the congregation and presented to the apostles (Acts 6:1-6). Although these men were not called deacons at that time, the Greek word used to describe their work comes from the same Greek root word.

While these "table servers" were appointed to relieve an emergency and their assignment may sound somewhat menial, these men possessed the very highest moral and spiritual credentials. They are described as "men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" (Acts 6:3). They were formally installed or commissioned in a service of prayer and the laying on of hands by the apostles (Acts 6:6)-- a practice regarded as the scriptural precedent for the ordination of deacons as church officials.

As a result of the selection of these seven men harmony was restored in the congregation and the church continued to grow in number and spirit (Acts 6:5,7). The later evangelistic work of two of these original "deacons," Stephen and Phillip, serves as a role model for the spiritual ministry of deacons today.

The list of qualifications for deacons given in (1 Timothy 3) shows that this servant of the church was to be equipped for a spiritual ministry to serve with the bishop or pastor: "Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But

let these first be proved then let them serve as deacons being found blameless" (1 Tim. 3:8-10).

The deacon was expected to have an exemplary home life (3:11,12), to be a proven leader, and to possess flawless character.

The work of Stephen and Phillip strongly suggests that gifted deacons became a permanent part of the church's outreach to the world very early in its history. The thrilling activities of these servants of the church sound much like the work of a traveling evangelist, missionary, or lay preacher. Stephen is described as a man "full of faith and power" who "did great wonders and signs among the people" (Acts 6:8). So convincing were his words and miracles that "they were not able to resist the wisdom and Spirit by which he spoke" (Acts 6:10). While some responded in faith, Stephen's zeal for Christ stirred up powerful enemies (Acts 6:11-13). Undaunted by false witnesses, Stephen glorified the Lord even as he was put to death for his convictions (Acts 7:59-60). Phillip was also an evangelist who "preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8:9-13). After preaching to eager crowds in Samaria, Phillip witnessed to a solitary Ethiopian in the desert and baptized him (Acts 8:26-38).

Paul wrote that the reward for faithfulness in the office of deacon is that they "obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 3:13). The selfless deacon may also feel close kinship with his Master, who walked the earth as "One who serves" (Luke 22:27). According to Jesus, the true heroes in the kingdom of God are those who assume the role of diakonos-- a servant (Matt. 20:26).

Teachers (1 Corinthians 12 & Ephesians 4)

Teachers are those who teach by the act of instructing students or imparting knowledge and information. As used in the New Testament, the concept of teaching usually means instruction in the faith. Thus, teaching is to be distinguished from preaching, or the proclamation of the gospel to the non-Christian world. Teaching in the Christian faith was validated by Jesus, who was called "teacher" more than anything else.

Since sound instruction in the faith is essential to the spiritual growth of Christians and to the development of the church, the Bible contains numerous passages which deal with teaching (Matt. 4:23; Luke 4:14; Acts 13:1-3; Rom. 12:6-8; Gal. 6:6).

Special attention is directed to the danger of false teachings. Christians are warned to test those who pervert the true gospel (2 Tim. 3:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:1-3).

Sound teaching was a concept deeply engrained in the Jewish mind since Old Testament times. Moses and Aaron were considered teachers of God's commandments (Ex. 18:20). Parents were also directed to teach their children about God and His statutes (Deut. 4:9-10).

Gifts to Spread the Gospel (Romans 12)

Prophecy, Ministry, Teaching, Exhortation, Giving, Ruler, and Mercy (Matthew Henry's Commentary)

We must make a sober use of the gifts that God hath given us. As we must not on the one hand be proud of our talents, so on the other hand we must not bury them. Take heed lest, under pretence of humility and self-denial, we be slothful in laying out ourselves for the good of others. We must not say, "I am nothing, therefore I will sit still, and do nothing;" but, "I am nothing in myself, and therefore I will lay out myself to the utmost in the strength of the grace of Christ." He specifies the ecclesiastical offices appointed in particular churches, in the discharge of which each must study to do his own duty, for the preserving of order and the promotion of edification in the church, each knowing his place, and fulfilling it.

Having then gifts. The following induction of particulars supplies the sense of this general. Having gifts, let us use them. Authority and ability for the ministerial work are the gift of God—Gifts differing. The immediate design is different, though the ultimate tendency of all is the same. According to the grace, *charismata kata ten charin*. The free grace of God is the spring and original of all the gifts that are given to men.

It is grace that appoints the office qualifies and inclines the person, works both to will and to do. There were in the primitive church extraordinary gifts of tongues, of discerning, of healing; but he speaks here of those that are ordinary. Compare (1 Cor. 12:4; 1 Tim. 4:14; 1 Pet. 4:10). Seven particular gifts he specifies (v. 6-8), which seem to be meant of so many distinct offices, used by the prudential constitution of many of the primitive churches, especially the larger. There are two general ones here expressed by prophesying and ministering, the former the work of the bishops, the latter the work of the deacons, which were the only two standing officers, (Phil. 1:1). But the particular work belonging to each of these might be, and it should seem was, divided and allotted by common consent and agreement, that it might be done the more effectually, because that which is every body's work is nobody's work, and he dispatches his business best that is *vir unius negotii*—a man of one business. Thus David sorted the Levites (1 Chr. 23:4-5), and in this wisdom is profitable to direct. The five latter will therefore be reduced to the two former.

Prophecy. Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith. It is not meant of the extraordinary gifts of foretelling things to come, but the ordinary office of preaching the word: so prophesying is taken, (1 Cor. 14:1-3), etc.; 11:4; (1 Thes. 5:20). The work of the Old-Testament prophets was not only to foretel future things, but to warn the people concerning sin and duty, and to be their remembrancers concerning that which they knew before. And thus gospel preachers are prophets, and do indeed, as far as the revelation of the word goes, foretel things to come. Preaching refers to the eternal condition of the children of men, points directly at a future state. Now those that preach the word must do it according to the proportion of faith--*kata ten analogian tes pisteos*.

a. As to the manner of our prophesying, it must be according to the proportion of the grace of faith. He had spoken (v. 3) of the measure of faith dealt to every man. Let him that preaches set all the faith he hath on work, to impress the truths he preaches upon his own heart in the first place. As people cannot hear well, so ministers cannot preach well, without faith. First believe and then speak, (Ps. 116:10; 2 Cor. 4:13). And we must remember the proportion of faith--that, though all men have not faith, yet a great many have besides ourselves; and therefore we must allow others to have a share of knowledge and ability to instruct, as well as we, even those that in less things differ from us. "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself; and do not make it a ruling rule to others, remembering that thou hast but thy proportion."

b. As to the matter of our prophesying, it must be according to the proportion of the doctrine of faith, as it is revealed in the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament. By this rule of faith the Bereans tried Paul's preaching, (Acts 17:11). Compare (Acts 26:22; Gal. 1:9). There are some staple-truths, as I may call them, some *prima axiomata*--first axioms, plainly and uniformly taught in the scripture, which are the touchstone of preaching, by which (though we must not despise prophesying) we must prove all things, and then hold fast that which is good, (1 Thes. 5:20-21). Truths that are more dark must be examined by those that are more clear; and then entertained when they are found to agree and comport with the analogy of faith; for it is certain one truth can never contradict another. See here what ought to be the great care of preachers-- to preach sound doctrine, according to the form of wholesome words, (Titus 2:8; 2 Tim. 1:13).

It is not so necessary that the prophesying be according to the proportion of art, the rules of logic and rhetoric; but it is necessary that it be according to the proportion of faith: for it is the word of faith that we preach. Now there are two particular works which he that prophesieth hath to mind--teaching and exhorting, proper enough to be done by the same person at the same time, and when he does the one let him mind that, when he does the other let him do that too as well as he can. If, by agreement between the ministers of a congregation, this work be divided, either constantly or interchangeably, so that one teaches and the other exhorts (that is, in our modern dialect, one expounds and the other preaches), let each do his work according to the proportion of faith.

Teaching. Teaching is the bare explaining and proving of gospel truths, without practical application, as in the expounding of the scripture. Pastors and teachers may be the same office (Eph. 4:11), but the particular work is somewhat different.

Now he that has a faculty of teaching, and has undertaken that province, let him stick to it. It is a good gift, let him use it, and give his mind to it. He that teacheth, let him be in his teaching; so some supply it, *Ho didaskon, en te didaskalia*. Let him be frequent and constant, and diligent in it; let him abide in that which is his proper work, and be in it as his element. See (1 Tim. 4:15-16), where it is explained by two words, *en toutois isthi*, and *epimene autois*, be in these things and continue in them.

Exhorting. Let him that exhorteth wait on exhortation. Let him give himself to that. This is the work of the pastor, as the former of the teacher; to apply gospel truths and rules more closely to the case and condition of the people, and to press upon them

that which is more practical. Many that are very accurate in teaching may yet be very cold and unskillful in exhorting; and on the contrary. The one requires a clearer head, the other a warmer heart. Now where these gifts are evidently separated (that the one excels in the one and the other in the other) it conduces to edification to divide the work accordingly; and, whatsoever the work is that we undertake, let us mind it. To wait on our work is to bestow the best of our time and thoughts upon it, to lay hold of all opportunities for it, and to study not only to do it, but to do it well.

Ministry. If a man hath *diakonian*—the office of a deacon, or assistant to the pastor and teacher, let him use that office well—a churchwarden (suppose), an elder, or an overseer of the poor; and perhaps there were more put into these offices, and there was more solemnity in them, and a greater stress of care and business lay upon them in the primitive churches, than we are now well aware of. It includes all those offices which concern the *ta exo* of the church, the outward business of the house of God. See (Neh. 11:16). Serving tables, (Acts 6:2). Now let him on whom this care of ministering is devolved attend to it with faithfulness and diligence; particularly,

Giving. He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity. Those church-officers that were the stewards of the church's alms, collected money, and distributed it according as the necessities of the poor were. Let them do it *en aploreti*—liberally and faithfully; not converting what they receive to their own use, nor distributing it with any sinister design, or with respect of person: not froward and peevish with the poor, nor seeking pretences to put them by; but with all sincerity and integrity, having no other intention in it than to glorify God and do good. Some understand it in general of all almsgiving: He that hath wherewithal, let him give, and give plentifully and liberally; so the word is translated, (2 Cor. 8:2; 9:13). God loves a cheerful bountiful giver.

Ruler. He that ruleth with diligence. It should seem, he means those that were assistants to the pastors in exercising church-discipline, as their eyes, and hands, and mouth, in the government of the church, or those ministers that in the congregation did chiefly undertake and apply themselves to this ruling work; for we find those ruling that laboured in the word and doctrine, (1 Tim. 5:17). Now such must do it with diligence. The word denotes both care and industry to discover what is amiss, to reduce those that go astray, to reprove and admonish those that have fallen, to keep the church pure. Those must take a great deal of pains that will approve themselves faithful in the discharge of this trust, and not let slip any opportunity that may facilitate and advance that work.

Mercy. He that showeth mercy with cheerfulness. Some think it is meant in general of all that in any thing show mercy: Let them be willing to do it, and take a pleasure in it; God loves a cheerful giver. But it seems to be meant of some particular church-officers, whose work it was to take care of the sick and strangers; and those were generally widows that were in this matter servants to the church-- deaconesses (1 Tim. 5:9-10), though others, it is likely, might be employed. Now this must be done with cheerfulness. A pleasing countenance in acts of mercy is a great relief and comfort to the miserable; when they see it is not done grudgingly and unwillingly, but with pleasant looks and gentle words, and all possible indications of readiness and alacrity. Those that have to do with such as are sick and sore, and commonly cross and peevish, have

need to put on not only patience, but also cheerfulness, to make the work the more easy and pleasant to them, and the more acceptable to God.

Gifts of the Holy Ghost or Spiritual Gifts

The gifts of the Spirit are specially bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon Christians for the purpose of building up the church. The list of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 includes wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

The apostle Paul indicated that these gifts are equally valid but not equally valuable. Their value is determined by their worth to the church. In dealing with this matter, he used the analogy of the human body. All members of the body have functions, Paul declared, but some are more important than others. The service of each Christian should be in proportion to the gifts which he possesses (1 Corinthians 12--14).

It has been earlier explained that knowledge, tongues, and prophecy do not exist in the modern day church. They were discontinued when the Bible was completed. However, there is no record of the other gifts ever being taken away, so we must conclude that they still exist for the church today in some form.

It must also be noted that the gifts of the Spirit were never continuously bestowed on any one. They were given individually as the situation called for it. God still does exactly the same thing today for the Christian church.

The gifts of the Spirit that we need to discuss are word of wisdom, faith, healing, miracles, discerning of spirits, helps, and governments.

Wisdom (1 Corinthians 12)

Wisdom is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding. The apostle Paul declared that the message of the cross is foolishness to the Greeks and a stumbling block to the Jews. But to those who believe, said Paul, this "foolishness" is "the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:18-25).

Against the wisdom of God Paul contrasted "the wisdom of this world" (1 Cor. 1:20; 3:19), "human wisdom" (1 Cor. 2:4), "the wisdom of men" (1 Cor. 2:5), "the wisdom of this age" (1 Cor. 2:6), and "man's wisdom" (1 Cor. 2:13).

The biblical concept of wisdom, therefore, is quite different from the classical view of wisdom, which sought through philosophy and man's rational thought to determine the mysteries of existence and the universe. The first principle of biblical wisdom is that man should humble himself before God in reverence and worship, obedient to His commands. This idea is found especially in the wisdom literature: the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.

In the Old Testament, the best example of a "wise man" is King Solomon (1 Kin. 10:4,6-8; 2 Chr. 1:7-12). And yet the same book that heaps such lavish, warm and

glowing praise upon Solomon for his reputed wisdom (1 Kin. 4:29-34) also points out how Solomon's heart tuned away from the Lord (1 Kin. 11:1-13).

Faith (1 Corinthians 12)

Faith is a belief in or confident attitude toward God, involving commitment to His will for one's life. According to Hebrews 11, faith was already present in the experience of many people in the Old Testament as a key element of their spiritual lives. In this chapter, the various heroes of the Old Testament Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses are described as living by faith. In addition, the Old Testament itself makes the same point. Abraham "believed in the Lord" (Gen. 15:6); the Israelites "believed" (Ex. 4:31; 14:31); and the prophet Habakkuk taught, "the just shall live by his faith" (Hab. 2:4).

In the New Testament, "faith" covers various levels of personal commitment. Mere intellectual agreement to a truth is illustrated in James 2:19, where even demons are said to believe that there is one God. Obviously, however, they are not saved by this type of belief. Genuine saving faith is a personal attachment to Christ, best thought of as a combination of two ideas, reliance on Christ and commitment to Him. Saving faith involves personally depending on the finished work of Christ's sacrifice as the only basis for forgiveness of sin and entrance into heaven. But saving faith is also a personal commitment of one's life to following Christ in obedience to His commands: "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day" (2 Tim. 1:12).

Faith is part of the Christian life from beginning to end. As the instrument by which the gift of salvation is received (Eph. 2:8-9), faith is thus distinct from the basis of salvation, which is grace, and from the outworking of salvation, which is good works. The apostle Paul declared that salvation is through faith, not through keeping the works of the law (Eph. 2:8,9).

In the New Testament, faith can refer to the teachings of the Bible, the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Or in special cases faith can be said to come from God as a gift when a child of His needs a special measure of faith to see them through tough times. In modern times, faith has been weakened in meaning so that some people use it to mean self-confidence. But in the Bible, true faith is confidence in God or Christ, not in oneself.

Healing (1 Corinthians 12)

Healings take on many forms in the Bible. While all healings comes from God, our human minds seem to separate natural healings from supernatural healings. However, no healings can be separated from God's power for they may be something as simply as taking care of the sick to a specially anointed messenger of God inducing instantaneous healing of a seemingly fatal disease. The following definitions from Vine's Dictionary gives us insight to how healing is presented in the Bible.

A. Verbs.

1. **therapeuo** ^2323^ primarily signifies "to serve as a *therapon*, an attendant"; then, "to care for the sick, to treat, cure, heal" (Eng., "therapeutics"). It is chiefly used in Matthew and Luke, once in John (5:10), and, after the Acts, only (Rev. 13:3) and (12).

2. **iaomai** ^4390^, "to heal," is used (a) of physical treatment 22 times; in (Matt. 5:28), "made whole," or, "healed"; so in (Acts 9:34); (b) figuratively, of spiritual "healing," (Matt. 13:15; John 12:40; Acts 28:27; Heb. 12:13; 1 Pet. 2:24); possibly, (Jas. 5:16) includes both (a) and (b); some mss. have the word, with sense (b), in (Luke 4:18). Apart from this last, Luke, the physician, uses the word fifteen times.

3. **sozo** ^4982^, "to save," is translated by the verb "to heal" in Mark 5:23 and Luke 8:36; the idea is that of saving from disease and its effects.

4. **diasozo** ^1295^, "to save thoroughly" (*dia*, "through," and No. 3), is translated "heal" in (Luke 7:3).

B. Nouns.

1. **therapeia** ^2322^, akin to A, No. 1, primarily denotes "care, attention," (Luke 12:42); then, "medical service, healing" (Eng., "therapy"), (Luke 9:11; Rev. 22:2), of the effects of the leaves of the tree of life, perhaps here with the meaning "health."

2. **iama** ^2386^, akin to A, No. 2, formerly signified "a means of healing"; in the NT, "a healing" (the result of the act), used in the plural, in (1 Cor. 12:9,28,30), it means "healings"; of divinely imparted gifts in the churches.

3. **iasis** ^2392^, akin to A, No. 2, stresses the process as reaching completion, (Luke 13:32), "cures," of the acts of Christ in the days of His flesh; (Acts 4:22,30), "to heal," lit. `unto healing.

Miracles and Divers Miracles (1 Corinthians 12 & Hebrews 2)

Miracles are historic events or natural phenomena which appear to violate natural laws but which reveal God to the eye of faith at the same time. A valuable way of understanding the meaning of miracles is to examine the various terms for miracles used in the Bible. Keep in mind that there is a close relationship between miracles and healing.

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament use the word **sign** (Is. 7:11,14; John 2:11) to denote a miracle that points to a deeper revelation. **Wonder** (Joel 2:30; Mark 13:22) emphasizes the effect of the miracle, causing awe and even terror. **A work** (Matt. 11:2) points to the presence of God in history, acting for mankind. The New Testament uses the word **power** (Mark 6:7) to emphasize God's acting in strength. These terms often overlap in meaning (Acts 2:43). They are more specific than the more general term "miracle."

Miracles in the Old Testament. The readers of the Old Testament recognized that God is the Creator and sustainer of all life (Ex. 34:10; Ps. 33:6-7; Is. 40:26). This assumption permitted the Israelites the possibility of miracles. They thought of the world as God's theater for displaying His glory and love (Ps. 33:5; 65:6-13). Thus, the miracle was not so much a proof for God's existence as a revelation to the faithful of God's covenant love.

When God parted the water for the Israelites, or when He saved Israel in Egypt through the Passover, God revealed His character; and the Israelites were convinced that God was working for their salvation (Exodus 12:13-14). Miracles were expressions of God's saving love as well as His holy justice.

Miracles in the Old Testament are connected especially with the great events in Israel's history-the call of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), the birth of Moses (Ex. 1:1--2:22), the Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12:1--14:31), the giving of the Law (Ex. 19:1-20:26), and entry into the Promised Land (Josh. 3:1--4:7), etc. These miracles are for salvation, but God also acts in history for judgment (Gen. 11:1-9).

The plagues of the Exodus showed God's sovereign power in judgment and salvation (Ex. 7:3-5). In parting the water, God showed His love and protection for Israel as well as His judgment on Egypt for its failure to recognize God (Ex. 15:2,4-10). During the wilderness journey, God demonstrated His love and protection in supplying the daily manna (Ex. 16:1-36). Another critical period in Israel's history was the time of Elijah, the champion of Israel. Elijah controlled the rain and successfully challenged the pagan priests of Baal (1 Kin. 17:1; 18:1-40). God revealed Himself as Lord, as Savior of Israel, and as punisher of the nation's enemies.

Miraculous wonders like these were not as frequent during the days of the writing prophets. But one unusual miracle was the recovery of Hezekiah (2 Kin. 20:1-21; Is. 38:1-21) as well as the miracles in Jonah and Daniel. Prophecy itself can even be interpreted as a miracle. God revealed Himself during this time through the spoken and written Word.

Miracles in the New Testament. As with the Old Testament, the New Testament miracles are essentially expressions of God's salvation and glory.

Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus answered this question Himself. When in prison, John the Baptist sent some of his disciples to Jesus to see if He was the "one to come" (Matt. 11:3). Jesus told them to inform John of what He had done: "The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor" (11:5). With these words, Jesus declared that His miracles were the fulfillment of the promises of the Messiah's kingdom as foretold by Isaiah (24:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1). Jesus' miracles were signs of the presence of the kingdom of God (Matt. 12:39).

This theme of the miracles pointing to the kingdom of God was developed and deepened especially in the Gospel of John. John presented the miracles of Jesus as "signs" on seven occasions: (John 2:1-11; 4:46-54; 5:1-18; 6:1-15; 6:16-21; 9:1-41; 11:1-57). He thought of these miracles as pointing to deep spiritual truth, demanding obedient faith (John 2:11,23-25). Thus, Jesus' feeding miracle (6:1-15) was Jesus' presentation of Himself as the True Manna, the one who gives life and sustenance.

Jesus also understood His miracles as evidences of the presence of the kingdom in His ministry (Matt. 11:2-5; 12:28). Every miracle story was a sign that God's salvation

was present. But not only did the kingdom come; it came in great power, because the dead were raised (Is. 26:19; Luke 7:11-15) and Satan was bound (Mark 3:27).

Jesus' miracles were also performed upon the most unlikely people. Jesus consciously brought the salvation of God to those who were rejected. He healed the lame (Matt. 9:1-8), the dumb (Matt. 9:32-33), and lepers (Luke 17:11-19). Jesus brought the kingdom to all, regardless of their condition.

But Jesus' miracles were not theatrical sensations. He often demanded faith of others (Matt. 9:2). The hemorrhaging woman was healed because of her faith (Matt. 9:18-26). Furthermore, Jesus expected the disciples to do miracles based on their faith and rebuked them for their "little faith" and unbelief (Matt. 17:20).

Jesus' demand of trust in Himself led regularly to opposition by Jewish leaders. John drew this out when he recorded Jesus' healing of a man born blind. Jesus' salvation comes even on the Sabbath, overturning Pharisaic legalism (John 9:16), and resulting in their blindness (John 9:39-41). Similarly, the Pharisees broke into a charge of blasphemy when Jesus healed the paralytic and pronounced him forgiven of sins (Mark 2:1-12). The miracles of Jesus, being God's offer of salvation, demanded a decision. As a result, a division of the Pharisees occurred (Matt. 9:32-34).

Finally, we gain a deeper understanding of Jesus in His miracles. He is Lord over nature (Mark 4:35-41) and death (Luke 8:41-56; John 11:1-44). He is the Suffering Servant who bears the infirmities of others (Matt. 8:16-17). He is the Messiah who was to come (Matt. 11:2-6). He fights the battle against evil (Mark 3:23-30; Luke 11:18-23).

Jesus did not work miracles to prove His deity or His messiahship. In fact, He clearly refused to work miracles as proofs (Matt. 12:38-42; Luke 11:29-32). His death was the proof to Israel. However, Jesus' miracles do give evidence that He was divine, that He was the Son of God, the Messiah.

The Acts of the Apostles is a book of miracles. Again, these miracles are a continuation of the miracles of Jesus, made possible through the Holy Spirit. The miracles of the apostles were done in the name of Jesus and were manifestations of God's salvation (Acts 3:11). This thread of continuity is seen in Peter's miracles, which paralleled those of Jesus (Luke 7:22; 5:18-26; 8:49-56; Acts 3:1-16; 9:32-35; 9:36-42).

God began His church with a powerful display of miracles. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came on the people with great power (Acts 2:1-13), leading to conversions (Acts 2:41). When Philip went to Samaria, the Spirit of God anointed him with power (Acts 8:4-40), and the same happened with Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48). These powerful wonders were designed to convince the apostles and the Palestinian church that other cultures were to be part of the church. To these were added the stunning act of God through Peter when Ananias and Sapphira acted in hypocrisy (Acts 4:32--5:11), the church's power in prayer (Acts 4:23-31), and Paul's transforming vision (Acts 16:6-10).

Miraculous powers were also present in the apostles. Peter healed a lame man (Acts 3:1-6), a paralytic (Acts 9:32-35), and raised the dead (Acts 9:36-42). The apostles performed mighty miracles (Acts 5:12-16), and Peter was miraculously released from prison (Acts 12:1-11). Paul's conversion was a startling incident (Acts 9:1-19). Ability to work miracles was taken as a sign for apostleship by Paul (Romans 15:18-19; 2 Cor. 12:12). Thus, this ability to work miracles is not only an expression of God's salvation but also God's way of authenticating His apostles.

The lists of the gifts of the Spirit in the New Testament show miracles were one of the means by which believers ministered to others (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-10,28-30; Eph. 4:11-12).

Discernment of spirits (1 Corinthians 12)

Discernment of the spirits as used in 1 Corinthians 12:10 is a gift of the Holy Spirit which enables a person to judge whether one who speaks in tongues or performs miracles does so by the power of the Holy Spirit or by a false spirit. However this may be taken a step further as those with this gift will be able to detect all things that is purported to be of God but is really of Satan. The apostle Paul suggested that a person led by the Holy Spirit will be concerned for those things which strengthen the church (1 Cor. 14:12,26).

Helps (1 Corinthians 12)

Helps is a gift given to people to enable them to help others (1 Cor. 12:28), It was a special gift provided to the officers of the early church who performed helpful deeds for the poor and the sick. It is a gift that should be a natural part of the Christian as we strive to be Christlike of our every day endeavors.

Governments (1 Corinthians 12)

Governments is translated from the word "*kubernesis*" ^{^2941^}, from *kubernao*, "to guide" (whence English, "govern"), denotes (a) "steering, pilotage"; (b) metaphorically, "governments or governings," said of those who act as guides in a local church, (1 Cor. 12:28).# Cf. *kubernetes*, "a pilot," (Acts 27:11; Rev. 18:17). Note: For *kuriotes*, "lordship, dominion," rendered "government" in (2 Pet. 2:10).

Signs and Wonders (Hebrews 2)

Signs and wonders are markers that point to, or represents, something larger or more important than itself. The word is used in this way to refer to a wide variety of things in the Bible. But by far the most important use of the word is in reference to the acts of God. Thus, it is often linked with "wonders." In the Old Testament most references point to the miracles produced by God to help deliver the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt (Ex. 7:3; Is. 8:18).

In the New Testament the word signs is linked with both "wonders" and "miracles" (Acts 2:22; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:4). Signs point primarily to the powerful,

saving activity of God as experienced through the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. The word occurs frequently in the Gospel of John, pointing to the deeper, symbolic meaning of the miracles performed by Jesus. Throughout the Bible the true significance of a sign is understood only through faith.

Conclusion

It is concluded that gifts of the gifts of the Spirit, wisdom, faith, healing, miracles, discernment, helps, governments, signs and wonders still exist in the church today. There is not one verse in the Bible that says they have been taken away. All these gifts, and perhaps others are available to the Christians if we could only get in touch with God strongly enough to let the Holy Spirit work through us.

I firmly believe that God can and will give people gifts according to their individual calling. However, God does not give gifts in areas where we should be preparing for service. He could make anyone an expert in any field, but He doesn't do this because He expects us to do something to prove our love for Him and His work. We don't have to seek the gifts of the Spirit; God will give them to us, as we need them. All the gifts are gifts of grace and their use must be controlled by the principle of love—the greatest of all spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 13).

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