

Introduction to the Manifestational Gifts and The Words of Wisdom and Knowledge

Lesson # 6



*The Dunamis Course
In the Spirit's Power*

Lesson # 6

Introduction to the Manifestational Gifts

Overview

In 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 Paul emphasizes the diversity of the expressions of the Holy Spirit's power and presence, and stressing that they all come from the SAME Holy Spirit.

These are not only gifts, more importantly they are “manifestations” or expressions of the Holy Spirit's presence in the midst of the “eschatological” people of God.

(Get beyond thinking of gifts—that suggests that these are something we possess. Focus on the working of the Holy Spirit as we are called to join Him.)

All of these “manifestations” make the presence of the living God visible and audible.

Acts 2:33

Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

The manifestational gifts of the Holy Spirit show forth the love, power and presence of Jesus Christ.

A team in prayer at the Michigan Dunamis.



Going Deeper

When we accept Christ as Lord, because the Holy Spirit dwells within us, we have in us the potential for His empowering work. But for this work to become active in our experience, we must welcome the Holy Spirit in faith and follow Him in obedience.

This experience is variously referred to in scripture as the baptism in or with the Holy Spirit, receiving the Holy Spirit, sealing with the Spirit, the Holy Spirit fell upon, and being filled with the Holy Spirit. Without this appropriation of this power working of the Holy Spirit as promised us by Jesus (Acts 1:4-8) we will not be able to actively and consciously move into the manifestational gifts of the Holy Spirit which are supernatural.

"It is important, then, to emphasize that the context for the gifts of the Spirit was the experience of the Spirit's outpouring. Without this there would not have been vitality and power sufficient for the gifts to be manifested and multiplied." - J. Rodman Williams

Before moving into the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, the disciples had to be open to and moving in the experience of the empowering work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, before they were called to be witnesses (which is the context where the manifestational gifts would be experienced), they first had to "wait in Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high." Luke 24:49

Going Deeper

J. Rodman Williams, a great Presbyterian theologian of the Holy Spirit says:

"Gifts of the Holy Spirit, accordingly, are not latent natural talents or trained abilities brought to heightened expression. The spiritual gifts are by no means more of what is already present, no matter how elevated. They are not simply an added spiritual injection that causes talents and abilities to function with greater effectiveness or transposes them to a higher level. They are gifts of the Spirit, endowments, not enhancements - apportionments of the Holy Spirit."

J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology*, Vol. 2, p 335.

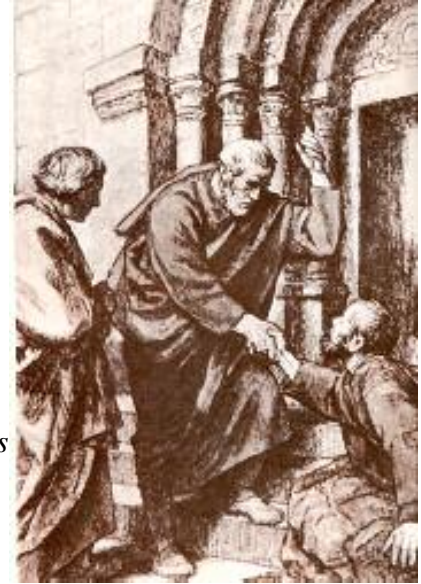
It may be a little confusing, but the "functional" gifts of the Holy Spirit as listed in Romans 12:6-8 seem to be like human talents or abilities that are energized and directed by the Holy Spirit. These gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12, however, are not human talents.

Showing the Presence and Power of God



Acts 2:33

Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.



In Acts 3, 4:7-10, the healing of the lame man is a "showing forth" or a manifesting of the power of the name of Jesus. In explanation of the miracle it is proclaimed that "*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.*" Acts 4:12

These "manifestations" are clearly "supernatural," they do not have to do with our natural talents or abilities—they are expressions of God's abilities in the Church and in the world.

1 Corinthians 12:7

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

"Indeed, the truly remarkable feature about this list is the attribution to "each one" of a whole gamut of supernatural activities—in the same matter-of-fact way that contemporary clergy might list positions on an organizational chart!" Gordon Fee, "*Gods' Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*" (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc, 1994), p. 166.

Divine Human Cooperation

The supernatural will work through the human being. The exercise of the gifts, while divinely inspired and directed, still requires human cooperation in the form of faith and obedience.

Acts 2:4

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The inspiration and words that the disciples spoke came from the Holy Spirit, but they each had to open their mouths and speak. If they had not opened their mouths nothing would have happened.

Supernatural Expressed through the Natural Fabric of Our Being

A word of knowledge will come as a thought amid the thoughts of our own minds. Healing will take place as we stretch out our own hands. The gift of tongues will come as we speak sounds made with our own voices.

There is nothing divine about the medium, for we are the medium. But the inspiration and what is accomplished will be divine.

This implies that to exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit one must be careful to nurture the gift of discernment and be able to distinguish what is merely ourselves and what is actually from the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:32-33

The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace . . .

One may learn how to express the gifts and manifestations in a manner that is appropriate and timely to the context.



2002 PRMI Summer Youth Empowerment at Camp Grier in North Carolina. Rebecca Long at the key board with Robin Luse, and Katie Cole. They are all learning to be led by the Holy Spirit in expressing worship, prayer and prophetic gifts.

Going Deeper

Paul suggests that all of the manifestational gifts, especially prophecy and tongues, may be expressed through each person who is filled with the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:5 (Also, vs 26 and 31.)

Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy.

Based on these verses, and others in Acts some have concluded that everyone who has been filled with the Holy has been given the gift of tongues (or a prayer language.) It is certainly true that many people do receive the gift of tongues when filled with the Holy Spirit. But to conclude that all can speak in tongues, and if they don't it is because they have not appropriated the gift, leads us back to the doctrine of tongues as the initial evidence and suggests a division in the body of Christ.

We must balance what Paul has said about wanting all to speak in tongues with his other word in **1 Corinthians 12:27-30**: *Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?*

Each question assumes the answer is no. What is certain is that each Christian may indeed expect, and I believe should ask for, some manifestation of the Holy Spirit that may be used for the up building of the Body of Christ. (1Corinthians 12:7, and Mark 16:18.)

Going Deeper

According to Hebrews 2:3-4 the message of salvation, in addition to human witnesses, had God's own confirmation through signs, wonders, miracles and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This is an extraordinarily important role for the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But how do they confirm the message?

John Calvin brings an answer that links the gifts to the word of God. "...by the gifts of the Holy Ghost", by which the doctrine of the Gospel has been adorned, these being the appendices. Why has God distributed the gifts of His Spirit, if not partly to be aids to proclaiming the Gospel, and partly by admiration to move the minds of men to obey? Hence Paul says that the gift of tongues was a sign to unbelievers. The phrase, 'according to His will' reminds us that those powers to which he refers cannot be ascribed to anyone except God, and that they have not been made known casually, but in His definite purpose to set the seal on the credibility of the Gospel."

John Calvin, *New Testament Commentaries, Hebrews and I and II Peter* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1963), p. 20.

The manifestational gifts are the God-given, supernatural means given to aid in the proclamation of the gospel. They also confirm the gospel by moving us to obedience.

Continued on the next page

Purpose of the Manifestations of the Spirit:

1. Confirming the Preaching of the Gospel

Hebrews 2:3-4

... this salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

2. For the Common Good! Building up the Church!

1 Corinthians 12:7

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

1 Corinthians 14:26

What then shall we say, brothers (and sisters)? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church. NET Bible*

3. Advancing the Kingdom of God

Peter's Spirit-filled preaching brings many into the Kingdom. Acts 2:41

Signs and wonders were a part of the dynamic community of faith and the result was a daily addition of those being saved. Acts 2:43-47

The healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate and Peter's preaching brought 5,000 lives to salvation. Acts 4:4

The gift of knowledge given to Peter enabled him to expose the deception of Ananias and Sapphira and resulted in many more believers being added to the Lord. Acts 5:14

Manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit both prepared for and marked the Holy Spirit falling upon the whole household of Cornelius, thus extending the Gospel to include the Gentiles. Acts 10, 11

The gifts of prophecy or the word of knowledge provided the direction to set apart Barnabas and Saul for special mission work. Acts 13:1-3

The whole book of Acts is about the Holy Spirit starting in Jerusalem and in ever expanding circles advancing the Gospel.

(In summary: The manifestational gifts of the Holy Spirit are the means by which the signs and wonders take place. They are the means by which the preaching of the gospel accomplishes its purpose of setting people free and bringing them into the Kingdom of God. They are the tools that, when accompanied by the authority of Jesus Christ, advance the Kingdom of God and overpower the Kingdom of Satan. As they are the means of healing and bringing liberty to those in bondage, they are the active, empowered expression of the love of Jesus Christ. This role of the Holy Spirit is affirmed by Paul.

Romans 15:18-19

I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done--by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

If we welcome the Holy Spirit's power expressions, we may experience, in ways appropriate to our own calling, the extension of the gospel.

The PRMI Dunamis on Evangelism at the Wycliffe Center, High Wycombe, England, May 2003.

Teams asking the Holy Spirit to pray through them for the advancement of the Gospel around the world.



Going Deeper

Continued

Both of these functions of the gifts relate to their role of showing forth the power and presence of God.

Another aspect of this role in affirming the gospel of salvation is brought out by Andrew Murray.

“God also bearing witness, by distributions of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will. Not only did God bear witness to the great salvation by signs and wonders and powers, but above all by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The Holy Spirit is God come to dwell on earth, to strive and plead and testify in the hearts of men. There is no fellowship with the Father but through the Son, and no fellowship with the Son and His salvation, but through the Holy Spirit in us... Yes, this is the greatness of the great salvation – in its offer THE THREE-ONE GOD comes to us. The Lord preached, the Father bore witness, the Holy Spirit came as the power of God to work. What a salvation!”

Andrew Murray, *The Holiest of All: An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell Company, 1894), pp. 69-70.

Going Deeper

It must be emphatically stated that: **The gifts and fruit must function together!**

In both of these tasks, building up the body of Christ and extending the gospel, the gifts must be exercised in the context and background of the fruits of the Spirit to be truly effective. Yet, the gifts are not necessarily connected to the fruits of the Holy Spirit. They each result from different operations of the Holy Spirit.

In other words, the gifts are not given as a reward for being perfect, rather, they are given to make us useful. However, if they are not directed by love, and do not lead people into a loving community through which Christ is manifest, then their effect is neutralized.

Growth of the body of Christ assumes the balanced working of both the Spirit upon for power and gifts, and the Holy Spirit within for salvation, sanctification, and fruits.

In 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14 there is a sandwich (or for the Chinese speakers, a Swai Jyau dz!) Chapter 12 and 14 dealing with the gifts are the outside slices of bread. Chapter 13, the love chapter is the meat inside. To be effective, both inside and outside need to be together. Unfortunately Christians, like spoiled children at lunch, have had the habit of taking apart the sandwich and just eating those parts that fit their worldview or tradition.

The Words of Wisdom and Knowledge

1 Corinthians 12:8

For one is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, and to another the message of knowledge according to the same Spirit.

NET Bible

Both are given as a “word” or “utterance” as something that is spoken.

In the dynamic of cooperating with the Holy Spirit they are both a word spoken into a kairos moment. The content in both is something that is supernaturally revealed by the Holy Spirit. (This is not human wisdom gained through experience or knowledge acquired through study or observation.)

Jesus speaks a word of wisdom about who He really is to Martha at the tomb of Lazarus.

John 11:25-26

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

Examples of a word of wisdom in Jesus:

- Whose wife will she be in the resurrection? Matthew 22:23-33
- Should we pay taxes to Caesar? Luke 20:20-26

This supernatural word spoken into the human situation is transforming! It may shape our own understanding of ourselves, the world and God.

Example: Peter’s Confession

Matthew 16:16-17

Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.”

In Paul's context this was the Holy Spirit giving recognition that the message of Christ crucified is God's true wisdom.

The "word of wisdom" that comes through the Spirit proclaims into the human condition true wisdom that Christ is crucified. 1 Corinthians 2:6-16

The ambiguity of the word of wisdom that is spoken into the moment—and wisdom that comes from God—may have many expressions.

Characteristics of Wisdom from God

James 3:17

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

Receiving the Gift of Wisdom

James 1:5

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

"Wisdom is a gift from God, but also connects to our "believing God" which comes from the Spirit within us." Archer Torrey

Going Deeper

1 Corinthians 1:17-25

For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel--not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate."

Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

Going Deeper

Paul continues to be led by what may be both words of knowledge and/or prophecy. Often it is not important to distinguish exactly which gift is at work. They are all forms of the Holy Spirit guiding His people in their witness to Jesus Christ.

Acts 27:21-26

After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

Word of Knowledge 1 Corinthians 12:8

A word of knowledge is a specific fact about a person, place or event that could not have been obtained through natural means.

People who receive words of knowledge “hear” or “just know” things that were previously hidden.

An example in the life of Jesus—the woman at the well.

John 4:18

“The fact is you have had five husbands.”

John 4:39

“He told me everything I ever did.”

Peter perceives supernaturally the deception and hypocrisy of Ananias and Sapphira. This could also be called a case of “discerning of spirits.” Acts 5:3, 4, 9

Paul “sees” that the man crippled from birth had faith to be healed, and then acts in faith to command him to stand up and his healing follows. This is also an instance of the “gift of faith.” Acts 14:8-10

A promising word of encouragement coupled with a word of knowledge. Acts 18:9-10

A word of knowledge is given to Paul in order that he may give warning of impending danger.

Acts 27:10

Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our lives also.

Paul continues to receive guidance in Acts 27:21-26 concerning the fate of the men and the ship.

The word of knowledge will be extremely useful in ministry, especially in knowing how to intercede for people and to pray for inner healing.

Practical Steps in Receiving A Word of Knowledge

The gift of knowledge is a gift that we can neither control nor work up, we must, however, do our part by preparing to receive this gift.

- ***Live a life of faith and have a clean heart.***

While the Holy Spirit may fall upon any of us giving these gifts, if we are to expect long term growth in the gifts and power, then we must nurture a right relationship with Jesus Christ and others. It is especially important that we be in a right relationship with our husband or wife. If there is sin in this most intimate of relationships, it is going to make it hard for us to hear from the Lord.

- ***Learn how to receive this gift.***

Often words of knowledge will come as nudges, images, impressions, or words of scripture that will intrude into the fabric of our own thoughts. We will have to learn how to listen to these. We must also learn how to separate what is of ourselves and what is from the Lord.

It is a matter of cultivating the inner, sanctified voice which may be our conscience or the Holy Spirit speaking through our conscience.

- ***Step out in faith by practicing what is received.***

If a word comes that may be a word of knowledge, in order to really know, one may need to speak it out. If it is of the Lord, it will be true. Receiving the word of knowledge, like all the gifts, is best learned by doing.

- ***Learn to discern what is from God and from oneself.***

The manifestational gifts are expressed through the natural fabric of our being. So a word of knowledge will come as a thought among our own thoughts. It will take practice to sort what is really from God versus what is from ourselves. Review the principles of discernment. Step out in faith and often you will find immediate confirmation that will help you learn to distinguish what is from God or just you.

Notes

Introduction to the Manifestational Gifts and Words of Wisdom and Knowledge

Lesson #6

Round Table Discussion

Summary

We reviewed the manifestational gifts that “show forth” the presence and power of Jesus Christ as the Holy Spirit builds the Kingdom of God through the church.

We then focus on the words of wisdom and knowledge as the means that the Holy Spirit applies the reality of the Cross of Jesus Christ to human beings and reveals what is needed to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in ministry.

Introduction to the Manifestational Gifts and Words of Wisdom and Knowledge

Lesson #6

Questions and Discussion

1. How would you define the difference between these two similar revelatory gifts—wisdom and knowledge?
2. In small groups share when you may have received either the gifts of wisdom or knowledge.
3. What was the inner experience of receiving these gifts? What happened when you spoke out these words?
4. Practically, how do you tell what is actually from God and what is from oneself?
5. What are some of the ways these gifts may be abused or how have you seen them abused? What are the consequences?
6. What is the best way to insure the right expression of these gifts in the Church?

Introduction to the Manifestational Gifts and Words of Wisdom and Knowledge

Lesson #6

Exercise

Repeat the exercise suggested in Lesson #4 about receiving guidance. Except this time, before moving into praying for the person, lay hands on each other. Pray for the Holy Spirit to fall upon each person and give whatever gifts are needed to pray effectively for the person asking for prayer. Ask specifically for the gift of wisdom and the gift of knowledge to be manifested.

Afterwards debrief what happened. Carefully discern what was from the Lord and what may have just been human imagination. Also reflect on the inner experience of receiving a word of knowledge or the gift of wisdom.

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and
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Notes