

Are The Gifts Of The Holy Spirit for Christians Today?

(all emphasis' in this document are mine)

By Tom Stephens

The first half of the 20th century saw the birth of many of today's great Pentecostal denominations, with the manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the second half of the 20th century, the Charismatic movement led millions more Christians in *other* denominations to embrace the present-day validity of the spiritual gifts.

God's Word alone establishes the doctrines of the Church, and therefore, it is absolutely imperative that we who claim Pentecostalism support our belief with solid Biblical teachings. In this study of the ministry gifts of the Holy Spirit, I continue to support the validity of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit—in this 21st century—even until the end of this Church Age.

“Are these spiritual gifts still active in the Church today?” is a question asked in many of today's churches. Perhaps we can find the answer in these powerful scriptures referring to God's plan for His Church.

The Great Commission—Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:44-49; and John 21:15-17.

¹⁵And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. ¹⁷And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; ¹⁸They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. (Mark 16:15-18)

Note: In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus asked Peter a question concerning his commitment in the ministry. He asked three times, “Simon, son of Jonah, lovest thou Me? Keep in mind that Jesus added to His question the first time, *“More than these?”* Peter's initial answer was, “Yes, Lord; thou knowest that I love Thee”, to which Jesus said, “Feed My lambs”. Then Jesus asked a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, lovest thou Me?” Peter answered, “Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love thee.” “Feed My sheep.” Jesus asked the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, lovest thou Me?” Peter answered, Peter, shaken over the continuing question, added, “Yea, Lord; Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee.”

This is the second time Peter was with Jesus since he denied Christ. Jesus was giving Peter a chance to “face Himself” in true repentance (though Jesus already knew Peter's heart). Therefore, Jesus reinstated Peter into the ministries he had learned to love. A fresh commission was bestowed.

This incident is recited in all four Gospels and leads up to the Great Commission; thus we see how much Jesus loves mankind and desires for His people to spread that love.

Note: *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.* (Matthew 28:19, 20)

More Scriptural Proofs:

¹⁵And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.** ¹⁶**He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.** ¹⁷**And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;** ¹⁸**They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.** (Mark 16:15-18)

¹Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them *power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.* ²And he sent them to *preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.* ³And he said unto

them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. (Luke 9:1-3).—It is impossible for Jesus to lie!

¹⁸And he said unto them, **I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.** ¹⁹**Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.** ²⁰**Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.** (Luke 10: 18-20)

³⁷In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.** ³⁸**He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.** ³⁹*(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)* [John 7:37-39—KJV]

³⁸Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, *and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* ³⁹*For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.* [Acts 2:38-39]

The Great Commission commanded by Jesus in these verses was evidently intended for the entire church age, stretching from Jesus' first coming to His second coming: Consider the following:

Jesus commissioned the Church is to “go into all the world” with the gospel (Mark 16:15-18). We are yet trying to fulfill the command in this, the 21st century.

Jesus commissioned the Church to “Preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16:15). This command is also in force throughout the Church Age, in this 21st century’.

Jesus’ commission affects “whosoever believes” (vs. 16). This statement includes all Christians in every century, until His second coming at the end of the Great Tribulation.

Supernatural signs—Including tongues, driving out demons, and healing the sick were promised to accompany the Great Commission: the gospel preached to every creature...[on earth]...to/by whosoever believes throughout the Church Age, accompanied by the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit.

In summation, the Commission throughout the centuries since Jesus’ resurrection involves preaching the Gospel of Christ, accompanied by God’s confirmation with supernatural manifestations—see Mark 16:20—“*and the Lord worked with them and confirmed His Word by the signs that accompanied it.*”

NOTE: Matthew 28:19-20—“**...go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the world.**”

Consistent with Mark’s account, we see that “to the very end of the age” we are to “teach them to obey everything” Jesus commanded them, including the miraculous works of the Spirit. Therefore, Jesus did establish the ministries of the Spiritual Gifts to be pursued throughout the Church Age, with supernatural signs following. This command is urgently given.

We have been content too long to reach the world with preaching only, violating Paul’s great declaration: “Our words came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit, and with much assurance...” (1 Thessalonians 1:5).

More Great Commissions By His Spirit

- A. 1 Corinthians 1: 7-8:** “So that you come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus.

Note: When Paul listed the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit in 1st Corinthians 12, he assures the Church they will lack no spiritual gifts all the way “to the end”! Though much of the Church is skeptical, the “end” has not come yet and Spiritual Gifts are still very much in operation.

- B. 1 Corinthians 2:4-5:** “And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”

Note: (read verses 1-10) Paul was so full of the Holy Spirit that he could minister the miracles of healing as he was preaching the Word of God. The Apostles were so full of power men cried out, “These are they who have turned our world upside down!”

- C. John 14:11-12:** “Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me or else believe Me for the very works’ sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.”

Note: Everyone who has ever believed in Christ Jesus and walked with Him has the same opportunity to accomplish the works of the Spirit. Greater works that Jesus does? That’s what He said!

- D. Romans 11:29:** “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

Note: These gifts are permanent. If He called you to minister the Word of God in power and authority, then He gave you the talents, and the gifts to minister with signs following. They are never recalled. When we fail because of sin, we have the opportunity to repent and get the sin out of our flesh; and begin anew walking in His Spirit. When we become more serious with the Lord, He will reinstate us. He will recommission us back to a healthy and Biblical ministry.

- E. Hebrews 2:4:** “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?”

Note: God, from the Old Testament all the way to the second coming, proclaimed to us His promise to never leave us, or forsake us. He said He will continue with us to the end. He said He that began a new work in us will see it accomplished till the day of Jesus Christ. He’s there when we are casting out devils; He’s there when we are healing the sick and calling men to repentance.

- F. Hebrews 13:8:** Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

Note: Jesus came to earth in the flesh, as a man, and will remain a man through all eternity—ever showing the nail scars in His hands. That’s supernatural. We cannot understand how our God in all His Glory and power and might, and compassion for a dead world, could find Himself as a man—facing the same temptations and pains—getting weary and needing sleep...just as we are. He did that to manifest His perfect unfailing love for a dying world who first hated Him because He resisted the proud and walked in meekness.

No man will ever understand His Glory while on this earth in the flesh. We will never understand how it is that He called us to do the works only He can do. But He did; and He promised to arm us with all the power He has ever produced, for He did not change while on earth.

- G. Galatians 3:3:** Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Note: Paul led the Galatians to Christ (3:1). They were fulfilling their calling but later on there came Judaizers who attempted to draw the Galatians away from stable doctrine by telling them they should follow Christ, but must also adhere to the Law—circumcision of the flesh; in that belief they attacked Paul and all his teachings.

Before this, Paul prepared the Galatians in showing them by the power of God that there is no other gospel outside the one he preached. Galatians 1:11-23 shows Paul's certification of the true gospel. It was not Gamaliel who was credited for Paul's knowledge. Most all the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ were by supernatural revelation to Paul, and the Holy Spirit confirmed these doctrines through the other Apostles.

Conclusion: For the apostles, it began with the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and His ministries to them. For Peter though, it actually began the night before Christ was crucified. My heart is stirred when after the resurrection Jesus comforted His disciples in their darkest hour, convincing them by the Holy Spirit *they* were not lost; *no battles in the Spirit* were lost; and they were headed for an hour they never would have understood previously.

The day Jesus breathed on frightened disciples, He also blessed and enabled them to understand the scriptures supernaturally. After this revelation began to touch their hearts in mighty ways, revival came to the lands around Israel and in other nations. Mighty works of the Holy Spirit were evident and were confirmed through scripture. The Church of Jesus Christ was born and thousands upon thousands began pouring out their hearts to this brand new way of life in the Spirit, leading to personal healings and victories.

The day of Pentecost: The healing of the lame man by Peter and John; the Samaritan revival (where many were filled with the Holy Spirit after receiving their salvation), when Philip miraculously traveled through space to minister to the Ethiopian. Both Jews and gentiles alike rushed in to find the Savior, as mighty works by the Holy Spirit were manifested in their lives. The Church of Jesus Christ was born and thousands upon thousands committed their lives to this brand new way of life in God's precious Spirit, by their own healings and victories.

The most powerful anointing and spiritual victories became evident everywhere as the Apostles continued to expand their ministries. This was God's perfect will for His Church; not only for the initial Pentecostal *bridge to unity in His Spirit*, but also for today, right now—even unto the second coming of the Lord and Savior, Jesus. *So, why have many of our churches in the USA fallen into apostasy?* Is it because the ministries today are led by pastors and leaders who do not teach nor practice the gifts of the Holy Spirit any longer? Has the revelation of the Holy Spirit been rejected in today's churches?

We have turned our faces from the Spirit and are living in the world, eating and drinking what the world eats and drinks and at the very same time, demanding all our rights, while proclaiming that behavior has nothing to do with "being saved". I have, in this last paragraph, described the apostate church, and if we survive at the Judgment Seat of Christ, we must change our ways and begin a daily walk in the Spirit.

In explaining his intent when writing Romans 7, the Apostle Paul wrote the following:

¹⁶This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. ¹⁸But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. ²⁴And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. ²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. (Galatians 5:16-26)

Blessings from Tom and Linda
www.christsbondservants.org