

## **Course 113: Concerning Spiritual Gifts**

The Holy Spirit spoke through Paul the Apostle in the epistle to the Romans chapter 12 and 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and Ephesians 4: 1 - 16. He also spoke through the Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 4: 10, 11 to outline what spiritual gifts are, the broad range of gifts and their application in the Church in 1 Corinthians 14 within the context of charity or love as expounded in 1 Corinthians 13. This course will seek to present a systematic exposition of the plan of God for His Church to operate as a supernatural entity of functional body parts which sustain each other and the whole in a matrix of spiritual gifts. Thus, the course will debunk the concept of the church as an organization with a pyramidal structure under a human Chief Executive which is the prevalent practice of the Laodicea church that bestrides the church world in this generation.

### **The questions that will be answered in the course of this teaching are:**

- What is a spiritual gift?
- How many spiritual gifts are specifically mentioned in the Bible?
- What spiritual gifts are implied and in what context in the bible?
- How are spiritual gifts to be utilized?
- What are the ways to discover our spiritual gifts?
- What do spiritual gifts say of the ministry the Lord call us to. In other words, what is the co-relation between spiritual gifts and ministry?
- What are the dangers of operating outside our spiritual gifts?
- Is the presence and exercise of spiritual gifts sufficient basis for success in ministry? If not, what are the essentials needful to fulfil ministry?

### **Lesson One: Spiritual Gifts – A Survey of Scriptural provisions and purposes**

One of the biggest challenges that the Kingdom church must confront frontally is the way some brethren allow their thoughts, ideas and expectations to over ride clear provisions of scripture. One area where this humanistic mindset is evidently used to great harm is the subject of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church today.

Two broad groups have emerged when the present day ministry of the Holy Spirit crops up. One is the group who insist that the Holy Spirit and His gifts are not for today, having gone out of fashion with the establishment of the Church on the day of Pentecost. Some major denominations have built their whole dogma and theology on this fallacy. The second group has a diverse range of saints who believe that the same Holy Spirit who invaded the earth on the day of Pentecost is still relevant to the day to day life of saints. However, this seems to be the only point of agreement. From this common ground, a cacophony of voices spring up, ranging from the sublime to the absurd.

There was this funny postulation from one of the leaders of the so called Apostolic Reformation that defined speaking in tongue as the capacity to speak many different languages or the art of linguistics! Sadly, no one corrected him since he was the Pope of his movement. Such distortions have been fuelled by the inability of most “Pentecostals” and “Charismatic” to see that it is impossible to serve God ACCEPTABLY WHEN THE REALM OF THE SELF IS ACTIVELY ALIVE! When the self life is alive and well, what ensures is soulishness.

Jesus Himself taught, during His epic encounter with the Samaritan woman, that true worship must be premised on two wings – In Spirit and in Truth. It is our responsibility to stop worshipping God with the corrupt facility of the soul (our realm of self being where the mind, will and emotions hold sway). To achieve this glorious state of true spirituality, saints are called

to firstly deny themselves, take up their own cross and follow Jesus to Calvary where we will be crucified with Him( Matthew 16:24 – 26; Galatians 2:20). When our self life has been crucified, we can no longer seek to pursue reputation, fame, wealth or humanistic empires through religious corporations masquerading as churches.

Crucified saints are dead to themselves; dead to personal ambitions and opinions; dead to desire to be seen and known and dead to their personal ideologies. Such people are made alive by the Holy Spirit who possesses them fully and determines all that they do. Because He is the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit leads such saints into a full understanding of the plan of God for the Church of Jesus Christ. It is that glorious plan which Satan successfully befuddled after the early years of the Church which gave room to the Ephesians concept of lack of intimacy and preoccupation with dead religious works.

The end time reformation of the Church will begin with restoration of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. For the Church to operate the way He intended there will be a restoration of the foundational synergistic ministries of the five fold – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. These headship offices and gifts that Christ bequeaths to His Church cannot function according to the whims and caprices of men. That is why restoration of the sanctity and authority of the Holy Scriptures as sure foundation of the Christian life is not negotiable. True Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers will not and cannot teach people from fleshly minds. They will be faithful to the letters and spirit of the Word of God, believing that in them alone, with the illumination of the Holy Spirit, is the very tonic that is sorely needed to bring revival to the Church in our generation.

The unarguable truth is that there can be no genuine revival outside of the Word as its base. Lakeland is a sure proof of this assertion. Whenever the children of God first repair the altar of the centrality of the word, the true and lasting fire of revival will ignite again in the saints a passion for holiness; agape love, unity and a going forth to fulfil the Great Commission.

The congregation that God will use to bring this to pass in any city or region shall not be measured in terms of size, budget, gender, age, education and eloquence. What will mark out the congregation rather is a rediscovery of the true concept of Church. This true concept is what Apostle Cosmas Ilechukwu, International President of the International Ministers Fellowship, aptly called “The Church of His Vision”, the title of his ground breaking book.

For the Church to function as a congregation of the called out of the Lord in each community, the Lord has endowed a number of supernatural abilities known as spiritual gifts and spiritual offices. It is interesting to see that in many so called living churches, spiritual offices have been jettisoned in favour of carnal titles. This, in itself, is largely based on the transmutation of the simple concept of the Church from what Jesus Christ had in mind to what men deem convenient, even the humanistic behemoths called denominations. Because denominations are not part of the plan of God, they have largely done more harm than good. Denominations have been misled by Satan to subtly and even overtly divide the church; instigated strife and competition and decimated the strength of the Kingdom. In order to sustain their humanistic agenda, denominations first have to discard simple scriptural models in favour of complex systems which create an aura of divinity. Offices are created to minister to human ego.

## **Professional Clergy vs. Laity**

The work of the ministry is undertaken by a professional clergy and the vast majority of the people of God – the laity - come to a building with special architecture and decoration where they have a sensing of the “holy” for a few hours each week. Talk of a golden calf indeed! It is absurd that the people of God can continue to live in sin all through the week and when they come to “church”, they act differently.

Even couples who are quarrelling right to the car park can put up an appearance for the period of “service”, only to go back to their vomit in the drive back home. Worse still, when the saints gather, people are organized to do things according to their gender, physical endowments, age, socio-economic status and other humanistic qualities. In one denomination hit a brilliant idea when it awarded pastorates to all brethren in good jobs who were in contact with many. Such brethren did not need to be called or gifted. All they needed were the name of their denomination to attract seekers. Then such brethren who were neither called to be pastors nor gifted for this were “trained to do it any way”. In the older denominations, “ministry” was a career, pursued by a professional clergy which were taught, amongst other things, how to preach sermons!

These are the things that have disfigured the Church of Jesus Christ. A mere cosmetic make over will not do. The axe is laid at the root of the rotten tree! It is the axe of the Lord which is swinging to cut down all the Baal systems so that the true Church of Jesus Christ will be raised as a radiant colossus which is able to engage and defeat the powers of darkness that are massed against it. Ephesians 5: 25 – 27; Ephesians 3:10; Matthew 16:18, 19; Ephesians 6:10-18.

In the gospel, Jesus referred to Satan as the father of lies. Lying against God has been his key strategy in dealing with man. At Eden, Satan switched on his deception to its highest level and successfully got Adam and Eve to doubt God and believe his lies John 8:44. The rest is history: the Kingdom was lost and darkness set in. Satan did not stop there.

Through the marriage of the apostates who departed from true spiritual relationship in the early church and the then state (Rome), man was led by the enemy to invent a religious system which outwardly looked like the way of life Jesus came to inaugurate. The outer shell of the faith was kept in the form of rituals and activities but relationship with God was lost. Today, 1.1 billion people are part of that grand deception.

There have been various attempts by Satan to make the gospel of no effect. When he fights from outside, Satan’s strategies are easily known. Knowing the truism that most human beings have a God consciousness deep within their hearts, Satan’s chief strategy has been to invent a slew of religious ideas that sound very sweet to human ears. Instead of fighting frontally through atheistic models including as it were the theory of evolution and the Big Bang, the battle ground is routinely shifted to target the minds of those who believe in Christ.

Every millennium and in every generation, he invents a fresh set of lies designed to cause citizens of the Kingdom to step away from God and His word in favour of humanistic notions. The vast numbers of cults that litter the Church attest to this reality. Each of the cults has some unique features. However, they all touch base in their departure from a number of vital truths about God, His Word and what He requires from those who belong to Him.

In these last days, the clearest arrow head of the departure from the faith is the Psuedo Kingdom movement. This movement has various facets but some fundamental issues unite them, when the mask is taken off. Among the core is that this religion of the anti Christ which masquerades as Kingdom teaching devalues the divinity of Christ, exalts man beyond what the Word of God says and denounces the truth that Jesus Christ will return bodily to set up and rule in the full dimension of the Kingdom of God here on planet earth. On two things the various facets of the

Pseudo Kingdom movement also agree. One is that the Church is dead and that the name “Christianity” is obnoxious. The second is that the bible is not inerrant and is insufficient to guide us into proper knowledge of God. The result is that many men and women arise with all manner of personal doctrines that at times contradict the Holy Writ and yet they are marketed as truth. Because of the sweetness of their words, you could follow those who teach such errors for 3 years without picking the full dimension of their departure from the faith! Praise God that He has guaranteed His remnant security through the help of the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 2 and 3; Jude 1; 1 John 2: 18-28.

Contrary to their pernicious doctrines and premature celebration, the Church is not dead and cannot die! The Church is the Body of all who are redeemed by the Blood, whether they believe it or know it or not! Anyone who is redeemed by the Blood that Jesus Christ shed at the Cross of Calvary is a citizen of the eternal Kingdom of God and part of the Church. The Church is the Body of Christ. He is the head of the Church and the source of its power and relevance on this side of eternity. The Church was birthed on the day of Pentecost and will fulfil its assignment when He returns to reward the saints who overcome and put down all rebellion. In this present phase of time and life, we are all citizens of the Kingdom of God and collectively the Church of Jesus Christ. Ephesians chapters 2, 4 and 5; Colossians chapters 1, 2, 3

In God’ gracious economy, He has a remnant in every generation who faithfully hold on to the truth and worship God in Spirit John 4:21-24. This remnant is sustained by the visitations of the Holy Spirit which renew the Church and keep the saints in the mood that Jesus describes as the “wise virgins” waiting for the d-day Matthew 25: 1- 13. To warn against complacency and a spirit of “let us fold our hands to wait and see”, Jesus in various scriptures taught that the Church has an assignment to fulfil while waiting. This dual mandate of the Kingdom driven and Kingdom proclaiming Church is the hallmark of the balanced gospel. Luke 19:11-27.

While on earth, the Church and all the saints who make it up have serious work to do. That work requires that there be free vigour injected into its fibre by the visitation of the Holy Spirit from time to time. For the Church to be what it ought to be and do what it ought to do, there is need for five imperatives to come into manifestation.

### **The Five Pillars of Reformation and Restoration**

**1. Restoration of the teaching of the whole Counsel of God in His revealed will** – making the Bible final authority in all things that is preached, taught and practised in the Church. Our catch phrase should be “I am for all that is revealed in the Word”. 2 Timothy 3: 15-17. Please study Course 100: The Bible as Sure Foundation of the Christian Faith.

**2. Restoration of proper Understanding of what the Church** is and its present import in the eternal Kingdom of God. The Church is not the building where we gather once or twice or more during the week. The Church is also not an organization. The Church is simply the Body of Christ, comprising all who put their trust for salvation on Him alone! The Church at ground zero level is the coming together of two or more saints, gathered unto the Lord to experience the love of God and one another; edification, prayer and fellowship, regardless of where that meeting takes place! This could be in a home, office, in a car, a trailer or in a distinct building. For this reason, the people of God are brought to a new consciousness of why they need to effectively represent Him wherever they find themselves and to take the Church from the building to the community. Where we gather now assumes its rightful importance as Kingdom training and equipping centre which the fivefold use as launch pad to prepare the saints for work of ministry.

**3. Restoration of the Holy Spirit by sound biblical teaching and openness to His office** and work in empowering saints to be effective witnesses for Christ in this present world. John 14: 15

-18; John 16:5- 15; Ephesians 4: 7, 8. Please see the lesson on the Holy Spirit in Course 101 as well as the full teaching on Him in Course 103.

#### **4. Restoration of the Fivefold as headship gifts of Christ for His Church.** Ephesians 4:11, 12

There is absolutely no doubt that no saint can ever achieve his or her full potentials until the synergy released from the operation of the headship gifts of Christ – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers – are received and utilized. This truth in Ephesians 4: 11, 12 is so critical to restoring the reality of the Church as a corporate witness to Christ which will command the respect of powers of darkness. Ephesians 3:10. Please study **Course 112: The Ascension Office Gifts** and **Course 115: Leadership in the Household of Faith**.

**5. Restoration of the knowledge and practise of spiritual gifts as the sound basis of ministry.** This is what will bring us back to where the Church was before it was effectively sidetracked (in some cases hijacked by the spirit of religion injected by the devil, even the spirit of the anti Christ). **1 John 2: 18-19. This is the core purpose which this course 113 will seek to achieve.**

With the foundation laid from lesson one, it is now imperative that we begin, by the Spirit, an exposition of what the core scriptures on the subject matter say.

• **What is a spiritual gift?** Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12: 1, 7

In contemporary language, a spiritual gift is a measure of the Holy Spirit endowed on the saint for the purpose of representing God on earth. In other words, the plan of God for His children is to use them as channels to manifest Himself in everyday life.

As the name implies, it is not a natural talent we speak of. Everybody on earth – saint or sinner has one or more talents. God gives talents to all of creation as part of His overall responsibility as creator. However, God reserves spiritual gifts only for His children who respond to His unsurpassing love expressed in the incarnation, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

A spiritual gift can also be defined as the part of Christ He has made each saint to be so that all of us can bring forth what we are to build up each other and collectively make the Church a strong witness of the reality of His Presence and Power. 1 Corinthians 12: 4-7; 11; 12 – 27; Ephesians 4: 13 – 16.

The plan of God is that ALL his children will discover and live out their spiritual gifts which are the basis of their priesthood. 1 Peter 2: 9 – 11. Every saint is called to be a priest of God and the facility to bring this to pass is the spiritual gift God bestows to ALL His children!

#### **Decoding the grand question of the ages.**

In the centuries following the birth of the Church, one question has begged for answers. It is this: at what point does a saint receive his/her spiritual gifts? Conventional wisdom says it is when a believer presses on and is baptised in the Holy Spirit. This view has been the dominant view propounded by the Pentecostal wing of the Christian faith.

The clear spirit and letters of scripture however paint a different picture. Spiritual gifts are released on two levels. The first or basic level gifts are imparted as fundamental gifts that are wired into the saint at the point of conversion. It is at this point that the first measure of the Holy Spirit is given to seal the saint as owned by God. This truth is consistent with the fact that there is a very serious transaction which takes place when a sinner is convicted, receives a revelation of the blood of Jesus as the only price for his/her redemption and makes the value decision to

receive Jesus as Lord and saviour. The bible teaches in John 1:12 that as many as receive Him, Jesus gives them power to be called the Sons of God. Ephesians 4: 7, 8 says when Jesus ascended to heaven, He led captive all the princes of the power of the air and gave spiritual gifts to the saints. Romans 8:9 says those who do not have the Holy Spirit living in them are not of God!

We may need to take an extract from Course 104 of the Global School of Ministry concerning the four dimensional work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the saint: He seals the saint into Christ; Transforms the saint into the fullness of Christ; He unites saints into one body and He empowers the saint to demonstrate the power and authority of the Kingdom.

### **Seal of our redemption.**

When the Holy Spirit convicts a sinner of sin and shows Jesus as the only solution, such a one repents and comes to be saved. At that point of salvation, a measure of the Holy Spirit is given to the believer. It's a SEAL that says: "**God owns this one**" and a clear guarantee that he or she will be taken up by Christ at His return. As the seal, the Holy Spirit takes His office as the Peace, Comforter, Advocate of the redeemed of the Lord as Jesus Himself promised in **John 14: 16,18**.

To understand the Holy Spirit as seal of the redeemed, please study :**Ephesians 1: 13 - 14; Ephesians 4:30; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6: 17; Romans 8: 14 - 16; Galatians 4: 6, 7**

### **The Seal Measure is when the root/basic spiritual gift is imparted to define the new believer's spiritual identity!**

On the day of that the sinner is sealed into or joined to the Body of Christ, His root spiritual gift is also imparted. This gift – which may be evident or dormant – defines his or her spiritual identity. It is also known as basic or general service gifts, a phrase popularized by International President of International Ministers Fellowship, Dr. Cosmas Ilechukwu.. Basic spiritual gifts are what the Lord, in exercise of His sovereignty makes you to be in the Body of Christ. In other words, these are the gifts that the Holy Spirit imparts in you to be for the local congregation or indeed any other unit of the Body. Your duty is not to yearn for what others have. It is to discover what you are wired to be; accept same and yield to the Holy Spirit to use you to manifest them to meet the needs of others and the entirety of the congregation of God's people.

These root gifts are found in **Romans 12: 4 – 8** which deal with the Body ministry of the local congregation:

- \* **Prophecy** - Ability to prophesy to edify, exhort and comfort the saints; capacity to be a vessel through which God brings forth His counsel to His people. This is not the office of a Prophet.
- \* **Ministry/Service** - Ability to serve others joyfully with the right spirit. This gift is the root of successful ministry as a deacon/deaconess, usher, greeter and indeed most activities in the local congregation which require a commitment to service.
- \* **Teaching** – Ability to use the Word of God to teach others and instruct in righteousness.
- \* **Exhortation** – Ability to encourage and stir up the spirits of brethren. This is the gift which is necessary to stir up the saints to be the best they can ever be. Unfortunately, fleshly application of this gift has led to the dominance of motivational speaking which essentially replaces sound biblical principles with psychological tools of success.

\* **Generosity** – Ability to cheerfully share and distribute finances and materials to the needy.

\* **Leadership** – Ability to lead the people of God to fulfil purpose of the mission to which all of them are called..

\* **Compassion** – Ability to empathize with those who are grieving or suffering pain. This gift is necessary for application in such professions as medicine, nursing and provision of care.

### **Ambassadorial credentials.**

Every Ambassador is vested with credentials which to function in the assigned territory. When Jesus was incarnated, divinity invaded humanity and eternity came into time. With His birth, the eternal Kingdom of God that was bulled back to heaven following the fall of Adam was in a sense, invading planet earth again. It is interesting that in order to function in His Messianic Office; Jesus needed to present His letters of credence to earthlings. This was done at the age of thirty when He came for the baptism of John. John had been specifically raised to usher Jesus publicly to Israel. At the appointed hour, the Father spoke from heaven and declared Him to be the beloved Begotten Son. The Holy Spirit then descended on Jesus like a Dove and He was endowed with the fullness of the Power to function (given the Spirit without measure!). It is interesting to see how the spirit of religion can cover plain simple truths in the Word! Read this glorious neglected truth in these scriptures: Luke 3: 21 – 23; Matthew 3: 13 – 17; John 1: 29 – 34; John 3:23 – 36.

It is instructive that Jesus did no miracle and preached no sermon before the age of 30 when He was baptized at Jordan. The only exception was the incident at the temple when he was left behind by Mary and Joseph at the age of 12 recorded in Luke 2: 41 – 52. If the very Son of God; if He who came from heaven to earth and redeem us from our sins and the power of Satan needed the Holy Spirit to function on planet earth, we who are mortals need the Power of the Holy Spirit much more.

The Holy Spirit is the evidence of our belonging to God and His power at work within and through us constitutes the main credentials we present to the world as Ambassadors of the Kingdom of God. Ours is a supernatural Kingdom and we are living proof of this reality.

Contrary to what conventional wisdom teaches, there are various measures of the Holy Spirit. One measure is automatic, by which we are sealed as the property of God unto the day of final redemption at the appearing of Christ. As we discussed in Lesson 4, the Seal measure of the Holy Spirit imparts into us our basic root gifts which define our spiritual personalities. By our basic/root gifts, our spiritual DNA is imparted and we can then grow on to be identified, through their manifestation, as citizens of the Kingdom. There is no struggle involved in this process. The root gifts are who we are in the Spirit.

### **The Other 3 Dimensions of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Saints**

In order to drive home the point that we are equipped to be Kingdom citizens and Ambassadors, it is necessary to restate some of the salient aspects of Course 104 that deal with the other three dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit in the individual saint. Here is what we shared in that strategic course:

**2. Transform.** The Holy Spirit is the divine instrument for transforming our lives so that we are progressively made to be like Christ, while yet on earth. He is the sap that runs through our lives as we are attached to Christ like a branch. So we do not need to struggle carnally to be holy. Nothing done by human effort is pleasing to God **Jeremiah 17: 5, 6**. Our job is to cling to Christ

like a branch while the Holy Spirit works within us as we yield to Him to produce Christ-like character. John 15: 1- 16.

For the transforming ministry of the Holy Spirit to be effective, He takes His place as the Great Teacher Jesus promised who will guide us into all truth. **John 14:17**. When we receive sound, anointed teaching of the word, this is the outcome:

\* We are rapidly built up by the fivefold leadership to mature quickly into able ministers of the New Testament, able to do the work of the ministry without struggle. **Ephesians 4:7, 11, 12**

\* We mature to such a degree that we become strong and stable in Christ and therefore can no longer be victims of every wind of doctrine. **Ephesians 4:13, 14**

\* The anointing we receive from sound teaching safeguards us from the pervasive presence of false prophets and teachers of heresies. **Ephesians 4:23, 24; 1 John 2: 18 – 23, 26, 27**. Now that Satan has played his very last card which is to cause many so called Kingdom citizens to deny the divinity of Christ, we need this anointing in a great measure lest we lose eternal life. No one who denies the deity of Christ has a part in the Lamb's book of life! The preaching of the Cross (that God was incarnated as Man to die for the sins of whole world) is foolishness to those who perish **1 Corinthians 1: 18**.

\* We are able to contribute maximally to building up other brethren so that as they do likewise to us, the whole body is held together by mutual love, edification and enablement **Ephesians 4: 15, 16**.

**Scriptures** on the transforming power of the Holy Spirit are: **John 15: 1 - 7; Philippians 1: 6; Philippians 2: 13; 1 Thessalonians 5: 23, 24; Galatians 5: 16 – 24; Ephesians 4:23; Romans 12:2; Romans 8: 28 - 39; Hebrews 12: 12: 1 -15**

### **The Transformation process produces Fruit of the Spirit:**

It is the transformative ministry of the Holy Spirit that produces the fruit of the Spirit, which is the character of Christ that will enable the believer to be His witness and personal representative. It is wrong for the people of God to chase after signs and wonders, especially for the wrong motives of using them to earn fame, wealth or acceptance and honour. Signs are to follow true saints while they are to chase after the fruit of the Spirit with never ending quest, praying through and allowing the Holy Spirit to use circumstances and issues like trials, tests, pain, rejection and suffering to lead us to experience holiness as these difficulties often drive us to Him in prayers. See **Mark 16:17, 18** and **2 Peter 1: 5-11**. Interestingly, all the attributes listed here are but various qualities which combine to create a Christian character. We do not therefore pick and choose which of them we like or desire. We need the whole bunch of fruit to make a whole new man. Articulated in **Galatians 5: 22, 23**, the fruit of the spirit is the aggregation of all these virtues: **Love**, Joy, **Peace**, Longsuffering, **Kindness**, Goodness, **Faithfulness**, Gentleness, **Self-Control**.

**3. UNITE**. When we get saved, the Holy Spirit automatically grafts us into the Body of Christ and unites us with other believers world-wide. We are united with each other in the Spirit as one people and members of the SAME FAMILY OF GOD, irrespective of gender, age, socio-economic status, race or tribe or countries where we live. The various churches we belong to are to disciple us and teach us these truths so that we will enjoy unity of the Faith. **Ephesians 4: 1-7**. Unfortunately many people allow the churches to divide. That is what is called the spirit of denomination. It is not of God and works against the interests of God and frustrates the prayer that Jesus prayed for His Church in John 17. We are one in the Spirit and what ever God has



given me is for you and vice versa for all of God's children. We are not to commercialize or withhold any gift or grace!

**Scriptures** dealing with the uniting work of the Holy Spirit are as follows: **Ephesians 4: 1 - 7, 11 - 16; Ephesians 2: 19 - 22; 1 Corinthians 12: 7, 11 - 27**, When we realize this uniting work of the Holy Spirit, we have only one acceptable response: LOVE/CHARITY **1 Corinthians 13**

**4. DEMONSTRATE.** The Holy Spirit empowers believers to demonstrate the power of Jesus Christ so that they can fulfil the Great Commission effectively with signs and wonders following. That is why He told His disciples not to run off and preach the gospel until they were endowed with power from above. **Acts 1: 4 - 8.** It is the power we receive that is manifested as Spiritual Gifts with which God confirms the ministry He is calling us into.

True ministry therefore is the ***EXPRESSION OR BRINGING FORTH of what WE ARE IMPRESSED WITH BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.*** When we bring forth what He put in us, we are engaged in ministry! Every believer is thus equipped by God to be a conveyor of the Power of the Risen Christ through the particular gifts of the Holy Spirit we receive. We are not just to be satisfied with merely speaking in tongues and fleshly induced disorderly behaviour done supposedly in the name of the Holy Spirit! Tongues are a sign of what is stored inside! **Romans 12: 3 - 8 and 1 Corinthians 12** analyze the gifts we receive. **1 Peter 4: 10, 11** tell us that we have a duty to exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit we receive as an obligation to the Body!

**Scriptures** which confirm this are: **Mark 16: 15 - 18; Acts 1: 4 - 8; Acts 2: 1 - 39, Joel 2:28 - 32; Romans 12: 3 - 8; the whole of 1 Corinthians 12, especially verses 1 - 11, 28 -30 and Ephesians 4: 7 - 12.**

With the above, we can now see the pity the brethren at Ephesus deserve who had no knowledge of the Holy Spirit and who had not experienced Him until they encountered Paul. Acts 19: 1-5

In continuation of discussions on, we now need to bring forth how the demonstrative dimension of the Holy Spirit works out in the gifts of the Holy Spirit that are outlined in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 especially verses 4 - 6. We will also show how and why these particular gifts are enablers to give our ministries the cutting edge required to succeed.

#### **How the Power Gifts are activated.**

As stated earlier, when the Holy Spirit convicts a hitherto sinner and seals him or her into the Body of Christ, a gift or collection of gifts are automatically imparted to define that person as a functional part of the living organism which is the Church. That is not the end of His work in the area of spiritual gifts. The Lord expects the saint to yearn for the fullness of the Holy Spirit with zeal in earnest prayer. In response, the Lord Jesus releases the Holy Spirit to fill up the saint in what is called the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit simply fills up the vessel that is the being of the willing and ready saint to the degree of effervescent effusion that translates into speaking in unknown and unlearned tongues. This blessed experience can be had in a revival meeting, a regular church service, in a home or indeed anywhere. As God, the Holy Spirit is not bound to fit into neat religious boxes built by us. The model we have is the walk of Jesus with His disciples. In a sense, the disciples were products of two dispensations - the Old and the New. After 33 1/2 years, Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead to finally seal His claim to Messiahship.

In **John 20:22**, Jesus sealed their faith in him with a measure of the Holy Spirit. Yet He charged them to tarry in Jerusalem to receive the promise of the Father! **Acts 1: 1 – 8**. This is consistent with the words Jesus spoke in **John 14: 17** “*He dwells with you and will be in you*”.

The 120 who obeyed Him and spent an extra 10 days after His ascension were rewarded when on the day of Pentecost; they were filled to overflow with the Holy Spirit. **Acts 2: 1 -4**. His presence and power transformed timid men, added new zest to their lives. Moving in that strength and power, the disciples were able to turn the then world upside down in spite of the limitations of their intellect and finances.

In various parts of the Acts of the Apostles, there is concrete evidence that though sealed by the Holy Spirit on conversion, saints were led into further encounters with Him which caused them to walk in the fullness of His Presence and Power. At Samaria, the people that Philip led to Christ (Acts 8:1-13) received the Holy Spirit when Peter came from Jerusalem and laid hands on them (verses 14 – 17). In Acts chapter 9, we also see that though the then Saul was saved at his unforgettable encounter with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus (verses 1-9), he received the infilling of the Holy Spirit only when the obscure disciple Ananias laid hands on him (verses 10 – 17). In Acts 18, we see that Apollos, a man who was to be one of the great Apostles of his time was an eloquent preacher but was ignorant of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It took an obscure but already imparted couple, Priscilla and Aquila to give him a better and fuller understanding of the full counsel of God Acts 18: 24 – 28). In Acts 19, we see in verses 1 -7 that there were believers in Ephesus who received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit only after Paul met them, shared the full counsel of God, prayed for them and laid hands.

By negating the ordinance of God in favour of humanistic ideas which tickle the ears of men and women, the pseudo-Kingdom gospel is doing a great disservice to saints. If we must come to fullness of our destiny in Christ, saints need to press on to experience the baptism in the Holy Spirit. When this happens, there is an impartation of the gifts outlined in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and the energization or activation of the gift or gifts imparted when the transition from sinner to saint was made.

To use the words of Dr. Cosmas Ilechukwu in the Church of His vision, “the Baptism in the Spirit heralds the beginning of the dominance of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. At the baptism in the Spirit, the believer bows in total surrender to the control and dominance of the Holy Spirit. This attitude of surrender is very basic requirement to power ministry. The believer demonstrates this yieldedness by speaking in an unknown tongue, which most of the time is meaningless to him. Yielding to the gift of tongues is the first step designed by God to reclaim the mind, the seat of human intellect, will and emotions, which the devil distorted at Eden when our first parents reasoned themselves out of the will of God for mankind. Speaking in unknown tongues is therefore a triumph over rationalism, which was man’s undoing in the tragedy of Eden. It is submission to the superior wisdom of God. This perhaps gives us a handle to understanding why it seems the most universal experience of all who have received the baptism with the Holy Spirit”

Let no one deceive you with dead denominational dogmas: saints today need the Holy Spirit even much more as we are now in the close of the age. Our grand need is HIM and not more money, better buildings, more exciting programmes or radio/television publicity. All these things, without Him and His power produce religion and spiritual death!

### **Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12**

Two broad groups of gifts appear in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. The first are those outlining the gifts of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of enabling the saint to achieve cutting edge in ministry and calling. These are found in verses 8 – 10. The second group of gifts are in verses 28 which

deal with the office/leadership gifts. These leadership gifts, their purpose and outcomes are further outlined in Ephesians chapter 4 verses 11 – 16.

### **The Enabling spiritual gifts verses 8 – 10**

These gifts are so called because they enable the saint to demonstrate the reality of Christ to those who encounter them whether in day to day live or in ministry. In a clear sense, they dovetail into the principle of Acts 1:8 which is to make the saint a clear witness for Christ. Whether a saint is called to basic ministry in everyday life or in the local congregation or is called to function in the five fold office, the receipt of the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 verses 8 – 10 will provide the extra capacity to fulfil his/her ministry.

#### ***Manifestation of the Spirit, not switching on and off at will of the saint!***

Before we proceed into understanding of each of the specific gifts, it is necessary that we understand an underlying principle concerning spiritual gifts. Verses 4 – 7 and verse 11 make it clear that

- The grand purpose of God is to use the saint as a channel to express divinity for the purpose of blessing humanity! This notion lies at the heart of a proper understanding and application of all the gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12: 8 – 10 and indeed the entire issue of spiritual gifts.
- We cannot and should not attempt to use the gifts at will to show off. We have no right to control the Holy Spirit by determining when to use the spiritual gift and when not to use them. They are appropriately called “manifestations of the Spirit” or, in contemporary language, “the showing up” of the Holy Spirit!
- The core principle here is that God alone knows when and how He wants to show up to demonstrate His Presence and Power through a yielded vessel. The Holy Spirit in effect, wants to have right of way to determine when He wants to demonstrate the reality of the Risen and Glorified Christ and the power of His Kingdom through the saint He has chosen.
- In effect, He knows when to turn us on and when to keep us mum. We have nothing to prove and we are reminded the futility of doing anything in the flesh or by our own desire. Jesus once told the disciples that when they are hauled before civil courts and authorities, they should not bother to premeditate on what to say. At the very hour, the Lord will show up and put words in the mouth of His own. This principle was well understood and observed by the Prophets of old who only spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit 1 Peter 1: 20,21

**1. Word of Wisdom** – This is the supernatural utterance of the mind of God concerning the direction to go on a matter through the saint who has been gifted. God uses the saint He chooses to reveal what is to happen or provide clear solutions to protracted problems. It is a gift of insight into the mind of God who alone is the wellspring of wisdom. Word of wisdom can come forth within the context of a church service, in a business meeting, in government or business and in everyday life, including the home, at school or indeed everywhere. Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers need this gift. Saints in the Market Place also need the gift.

It is critical to note that this gift is called “word of wisdom”. This implies the gift is not as such a property of the saint. The saint does not have a storehouse of this gift to gush it out at will. The saint is thus not to operate as if he or she is a well spring of wisdom to turn it on and off at will. Those who God has blessed as channels of conveying this gift are called to be sober and of few words so that their dispositions can be conducive to the manifestation of this gift.

**2. Word of Knowledge** – Word of Knowledge is the revelation of present realities that are hidden from natural minds. The mind of man is limited in understanding and often beclouded from various degrees of reality. God however chooses some saints, on His own volition as channels for revealing what is hidden. Word of knowledge differs from word of wisdom in these contexts:

\* Word of wisdom deal with things in the future while word of knowledge deal with things in the now or present.

\* Word of wisdom shows solutions to problems and times when certain things will be consummated while word of knowledge reveals facts of a present matter.

If a minister while preaching or ministering says there is a woman to my right who has been diagnosed with a heart condition but the Lord has taken it away now as we speak”, a word of knowledge has taken place. If in a business or government meeting there is a complex problem and everyone is at a loss of what is the best way forward or when best to initiate a project and a saint comes forth with a clear and precise solution either orally or in writing with any burning of midnight candle or tossing about with many ideas, the word of wisdom has been manifested.

It is a sad thing that the devil has tried to convince saints to confine spiritual gifts within the ambit of buildings they call churches. In this final dispensation, saints need to know that each of us is the primal church or habitation of God by His Spirit. Whatever gift the Lord blesses us with is the sure measure of His desire to use us to impact our world. Our gift will make a way for us!

**3. Faith** – This is beyond the normal grace every saint is called to have faith in God. The gift of faith is supernatural ability to know what God can do, what He will do and to stand and declare same with all confidence. This gift is sorely needed in demonstrating the reality of the Kingdom in all spheres of endeavour. Whether in Church leadership, in Government and the Market place, the gift of faith enables the channel through whom God speaks to rally the saints and sinners alike to believe Him as the Alpha and Omega. Elijah exhibited the dual gifts of word of wisdom and faith when he declared with certainty to the woman of Zarephath that God will supply all her needs in 1 Kings 17: 8 – 16.

**4. Gifts of Healing** – This is the gift through which the Holy Spirit imparts grace from the stripes that Jesus suffered at the Roman Praetorium to bring healing to infirmities of the body and soul. It is important to note that this is a compound gift or basket of gifts “gifts of healing”. This implies that it is a gift whose operation is outside the box.

Jesus and the early disciples demonstrated the use of this gift mix at various times in ministry. There are those Jesus healed from a distance such as the servant of the Centurion..... There are those He healed by merely touching them such as the lepers who were cleansed..... There are others who received healing by touching Jesus and drawing the virtue in Him to touch and take away their infirmities such as the woman with the issue of blood..... In yet another instance, Jesus used His spittle and soil as points of contact..... At the Gate Beautiful in Acts 3: 1- 7 Peter and John were used of the Lord to heal by lifting a crippled man up as the word of healing was uttered. In Acts 5: 12 – 16, the shadow of Peter was a point of contact for impartation of healing virtue. In Acts 9: 32-34, God used Peter to heal Aeneas by the word of authority. Paul the Apostle was used mightily of God to bring healing to many. In Acts 19:11, 12, handkerchiefs from Paul’s body were used as points of contact for healing.

To prove that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are to be used at His prompting and not that of the believer’s will or mindset we see that in 2 Timothy 4:20, Paul left his aide Trophimus sick at Miletus! Paul could not of his own will and ability switch on the healing gift to decree healing at will. He acted as prompted by the Holy Spirit. Even Jesus Himself, while on earth did not heal

every one! The man at the Beautiful Gate was there in the days that Christ walked the earth and yet was not healed. God had evidently ordained that Peter would be the vessel through who healing would be manifested and that through that incident; a great door will be opened for the early Church.

Modern day evangelists who make wild claims of ability to heal every one or prophesy to everyone present in the promotional materials advertising their meetings are advertising their immaturity in things of the Spirit! We cannot bulldoze the Holy Spirit to do what we want. We can only prepare our hearts and beings to be acceptable channels through which He will show up at His own time and place of choice!

**5. Working of Miracles** – This is another compound gift. It is the supernatural ability to be used of God to cause the supernatural to manifest in the natural. Miracles can occur in various forms and ways. In the case of Joshua, the gift caused a major shift in weather conditions..... In the case of Jesus, Elisha and Paul, the dead were raised.

### **Purpose of Miracles**

Miracles are also manifested in gifts of healing and can encompass every area of life. In this closing chapter of the age, we need to demonstrate the power of the Kingdom through miracles. Miracles are also referred to as signs and wonders because whenever they occur; they signify the presence of the Kingdom and keep people in wonderment which opens a door for preaching of the true gospel. Luke 11:20 This is the critical essence for their manifestation according to Mark 16: 15 – 18. Those who use miracles for self glory or to make money are in danger of judgement and eternal condemnation! We are warned however not to fall into the trap of doing miracles in order to impress people or out of pressure to prove who we are. Luke 11: 29-32.

**6. Prophecy** – a prophecy takes place whenever God communicates to His people through a chosen vessel. According to 1 Corinthians 14:3, the purpose of Prophecy is to Edify, Exhort and Encourage the saints. This gift is manifested so that the saints will have the peace and comfort which Christ promised them even in the face of adverse conditions created by the world and its human governments or systems. John 16:33. In Acts 15:32, we see that Judas and Silas were used of God to encourage and comfort the saints.

Saints are exhorted to desire to flow in the prophetic. The reason is that wherever true prophecy flourishes, the saints walk in greater light. They are able to hear what the Lord has to say and adjust their life courses and choices accordingly.

Prophecy should however not be swallowed hook, line and sinker. Prophecy should be judged and evaluated as to the implications of following what it says. Will that lead the saints to a more intimate relationship with the Lord or draw them away? Will follow the prophetic release cause the saints to walk in greater realms of depth of understanding and submission to the will of God or not? Is the prophecy consistent with the express word of God or negates the word? “Thus saith the Lord” should never negate “it is written!”

**7. Discerning of Spirits** – This is the supernatural ability rightly identify the nature, source and capacity of the spirits at work in the life of people. It is also the ability to discern the motive behind what some one is saying, even if the words appear nice and sound right.

Paul the Apostle demonstrated this gift to great effect at Ephesus when he identified the spirit of divination at work in the life of the young slave girl who correctly called he and his team as servants of God. Acts 16:16-18. This gift will help local congregations to identify infiltrators who like the Gibeonites in the days of Joshua, will sneak into the fold having all outward forms of conformity.

**8. Speaking in Tongues.** This gift should be properly called communicating messages from God in other tongues. It is different from the general sign of the infilling in the Holy Spirit which is accompanied by utterance in other tongues as in Acts 2: 1- 6.

Here in 1 Corinthians 12:10, it speaks of the ability to receive and communicate to saints in any setting, a message from the Lord. Not every saint is blessed with this gift as 1 Corinthians 12:28 shows. Those who try to pretend that they have it are guilty of lying and passing off under false pretence! Judgement day beckons when God will bring everything to light and judge people for what they did in His name 2 Corinthians 5:10. This is the most abused practice in Pentecostal and Charismatic communities largely because of two factors – Ignorance and Indiscipline.

### **Core Principles for exercising the gift of speaking in tongues within congregations/fellowship – 1 Corinthians 14**

God gave clear direction to the Church in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 especially verses 1-28 concerning how this potentially divisive and abused gift should be exercised to avoid abuse. The principles are as follows:

I). Communicating messages from God should not be turned into fleshly activity full of competition, strife and seeking for attention.

II). Prophecy, which communicates the mind of God with clarity is of far higher value to the congregation of the redeemed than utterance in tongues. Our God is not the author of confusion and will not seek to keep His saints guessing what He is saying.

III). If one has to speak in tongues in a public meeting, it can only be if God, who is to give the message, has already planted another person with the gift of interpreting tongues therein. The only exception is if the messenger also has the gift of interpretation! Without a person gifted to interpret, such a message should not be uttered or received!

IV). If two or more people claim to have received messages to be given in tongues, they will prove their qualification by taking turns to release the message.

V). In 1 Corinthians 12: 23, the Church is warned that ignoring these principles will show the saints in poor light before their unbelieving neighbours and the gospel programme will be reproached. This is true of typical Pentecostal and Charismatic meetings world-wide. In Africa, many churches tune up their loud speakers and unbelievers passing by often wonder whether they are near mad houses!

The reason for these principles is to prevent situations where malefactors functioning with the spirit of divination or other demonic influences place curses on ignorant saints who sheepishly echo amen in excitement thinking that tongues signify the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.! Maturity or otherwise of a congregation is often indexed in their ability to exercise spiritual gifts in a sense of liberty and yet order.

While everybody in fellowship is free to pray and praise in tongues while worshipping God, it is wrong for the persons on the podium to try to project a higher spirituality by praying or speaking in tongues. This bare face abuse of a vital spiritual gift speaks volumes of the contempt with which many people hold God, even in His supposed house!

**9. Interpretation of Tongues.** This is the supernatural ability to interpret messages that are conveyed through the gift of tongues. This is one of the major missing gifts in the House hold of faith today. Yet this is a sorely needed gift that can save the Church so much trouble. This gift is like a decoding mechanism that rightly expounds to the people whatever the Holy Spirit is

bringing forth. This is not the same as translation. Those who translate are skilled to interpret words for accurate meaning. The gift of interpreting tongues simply conveys in understandable language with clarity, the message uttered in tongues. 1 Corinthians 12: 6-13 reveal that God does not want His people in the dark concerning what He says to them. In John 10: 27, Jesus made it clear that His sheep hear His voice.

From what we have seen so far, these 9 gifts are to be used at the prompting and direction of the Holy Spirit. When they are rightly exercised, they prove beyond a shadow of doubt that the present dispensation of the Kingdom of God is on the march and demand appropriate response from those who are outside.

### **The “Other Gifts”**

So far, we have seen 7 spiritual gifts in Romans 12: 6 – 8; and 9 in 1 Corinthians 12: 8- 10. This makes a total of 16. The Other Spiritual gifts in scripture are as follows:

17. 1 Corinthians 12:28: **Helps** – This is the gift to graciously support another person to fulfil a God given vision. This gift is an exceptional one and is sorely needed for the true Kingdom Church to manifest Christ to the world. Those who manifest this gift fit into the Christ mould and prescription of servant leadership in John 13: 1- 17; Matthew 20: 24 – 28.

Those who have the gift of helps are dead to self. They are thus able to embrace any vision to which they are called as if it were their own. They easily buy into visions and are great helpers of work in the hands of Frontline Ministers. Their faithfulness and commitment to God, the vision and visionary is legendary. Any ministry that is blessed with those in the ministry of helps will enjoy unprecedented growth. The reason is that they make great helpers of the work in the manner described in 1 Chronicles 12: 1- 38.

Those who are called to the office of deacons, ushers and various supportive ministries often excel if there is a basic gift of helps in their lives. Luke 8:1-3 gives us a picture of some women who were active in the ministry of helping Jesus by taking care of the various needs that He had. Phoebe the deaconess, Priscilla and Aquila, Ephenetus and Mary were helpers of Paul the apostle. Romans 16:1-9.

**18. Administration.** Between Romans 12:8 and 1 Corinthians 12: 28, there are two gifts mentioned. One is Leadership while the other is Administration. Leadership is the gift to lead any unit of the people of God into a fresh expression of His purpose. Leadership is a gift with macro-management perspective. Those who are gifted for leadership are equipped with strategic understanding of the purpose and vision from God and are able to assemble, without struggle, the mix of various gifts and callings required for success.

Administration on the other hand is the gift of managing human and material resources for optimum outcomes. This is a gift that gives one the graces to micro manage. Administrators are supportive ministers who give effect to the smaller details and finer prints. They make things happen because of the grace for detail.

**19. Celibacy** – Jesus alluded to this gift in Matthew 19: 11, 12. This gift enables one to live for God and be wholly content, free of pressures of sexuality and the need to procreate. There are many who God has given this gift but who do not want to accept. Such people know fully well that they will live better without the yoke of marriage and yet because of cultural mindsets, they force themselves into relationships where God is not honoured. In that case, marriage is endured and not enjoyed!

Paul the Apostle received this gift, was content and fulfilled as he poured out his life as a drink offering to the Lord. He was thus able to expressly encourage other believers to follow his example. 1 Corinthians 7: 1-2, 7 – 9, 25 – 35, 37 – 40.

**20. Hospitality.** In 1 Peter 4:9, saints are urged to engage in the ministry of hospitality as an avenue to promote the Kingdom life. In 1 Timothy 3:2, those who aspire to be Bishops are required to be hospitable because they will deal with different kinds of people.

The gift of hospitality however enables the saint to operate at a higher level where receiving and refreshing brethren and visitors becomes a ministry and calling pursued passionately. Those with this gift are ever willing to share what the Lord has blessed them with. It has no bearing with whether they are wealthy or not because the gift operates with a mindset and attitude that recognizes the activity as a God given mandate. Those who have the gift of hospitality do not discriminate and treat brethren differently according to spiritual, social or economic standing. They open their doors alike and cheerfully share their meals with those who come in. Their cheerful disposition backed by the love of Christ which compels them make such people effective in providing platforms of unity where brethren find the 3 legged fellowship complete (Fellowship of the Heart; the Table and the Knees).

Stephanas was singled out by Paul as having excelled in the gift of hospitality. For this reason, he was commended to the house hold of faith as a man who others should submit to. Romans 16:15, 16. Martha, Mary and Lazarus distinguished themselves in providing rest and refreshment for Jesus regularly.

**21. Missionary** – This gift is implied in scripture. It is the supernatural grace to easily fit into and function in cultures other than the familiar for the principal purpose of advancing frontiers of the gospel. The apostolic call of Paul and Barnabas was predicated on this supernatural equipping. Acts 13:1-4. Jesus Himself laid the foundation for this gift/calling with the final words He uttered before ascending to heaven in Acts 1:8

Among those in various mission fields of the world it is easy to distinguish those who are gifted for cross cultural ministry from those who are simply pursuing a ministry career. Those who are gifted do not complain because they do not proceed into mission work with any expectations. They receive a commission from the Lord and are led by the Holy Spirit to proceed to particular places. They trust God wholly and commit themselves 100 percent to Him for protection and provision.

With the right attitude, they are able to fit into any environment where the Lord sends them and discern the locals that have been ordained to support them. They plunge into the work whole heartedly, adapt to the food and normal life of their host communities, endure hardness, learn the local language/dialect and do not carry on any airs as people from a superior culture. Consequently, they are able to integrate and be effective witnesses for Christ. Acts 1:8. The gospel they present is often accepted because their persons, lifestyle and attitudes make a positive mark on those to whom they are sent.

**22. Intercession** – This is the special ability to stand in the gap between God and someone else or a group of people – saved or not. This gift and calling is implied yet intensely practical in everyday life. It has been proved in many countries that very few people have this special ministry to pray effectually for other people for a sustained/prolonged period of time.

In Luke 2: 36 – 37, Prophet Anna enjoyed only 7 years of marriage before she was widowed. She devoted the rest of her life to intercede for the visitation of God and by the time she was 84, the manifestation of the prayers was the incarnation and birth of Jesus Christ.



Intercession is generally misunderstood. The core definition however is this: Intercession is partnering with God for the manifestation of His will on earth. Intercessors are thus spiritual midwives primarily whose core purpose is to see to the coming of the Kingdom of God and the emergence of His supreme will in all situations Matthew 6:10.

Those gifted as intercessors are necessarily selfless. It takes selflessness to truly stand in the gap for a fellow human being or the programme of God. For 7 years a group of such intercessors based in Owerri, Imo State in the Eastern part of the nation of Nigeria have been wholly consecrated to the Lord to intercede for Apostle George, his family and the team of people working with him world-wide. They are not paid for their labours. In London England, about 42 people have signed up to intercede for this commission. Here on face book, over 2,000 saints have signed up for the group Frontline Intercessors for Reformation, Restoration and Revival. Our prayer is that most of those who have signed up will be gifted for the assignment by the Holy Spirit.

### **Unity/Interdependence**

Spiritual gifts reveal the spiritual nature of the Church as the mystical Body of Christ with Him as the Head. He has deliberately distributed the gifts in such a way that no saint or congregation has all of Him. The idea is to establish our oneness and unity in diversity.

Since no one has all the gifts, we are faced with a situation where we recognize our strengths, accept our limitations and appreciate the gifts/strengths of other brethren. Thus, by a divine formula, the strength or special ability of each vessel makes up the lack of others and vice versa. Through this process, the whole Body makes increase of itself in love. Ephesians 4:16

This scenario makes 1 Corinthians 3: 1 – 9 very clear. We can only do what is given to us. Someone has to plant while another waters so that God alone can give the increase and get all the glory.

### **One Body, Many Parts**

The operation of Spiritual gifts is thus illustrated with the human body which though one yet comprises various functional parts. The Kingdom of God on earth is not to be communicated in mere words. It is to be manifested in functional power. That functional power is the demonstration of the Holy Spirit in and through the saints.

1 Corinthians 12: 12 – 27 make it clear that the present dispensation of the Kingdom of God is structured to be an organic whole with every part functioning to impact others and make the whole come alive. For this reason, the word enjoins us to pay more attention to those parts of the Body which seem disadvantaged.

What this means is that those brethren who seem outwardly to be less gifted should receive more attention and support. Ultimately, no part of the Body should be rated as weaker or less important. In the economy of the Kingdom, the more a part of the Body seems weak and obscure, the more it has the potential of holding the ace for keeping the whole body functioning optimally.

The Body is one. We should be connected spiritually, emotionally and physically. What ails a brother or sister should ail all while what brings joy and honour to one should likewise affect others.

## How are spiritual gifts to be utilized?

Here are some clear spiritual principles that dictate how spiritual gifts are to be utilized:

1. Romans 12: 1 – The first principle is that of death to self and total consecration to God. Those who obey God and lay their selves and ambitions at the altar of sacrifice make themselves reliable vessels God can use to express Himself and bless His saints.
2. Romans 12: 2 – It takes renewal of the mind to understand and appreciate the things of the Spirit. The spirit of religion and religiosity and the spirit of modernity which the pseudo-kingdom movement offers all blind people from receiving the things of the Spirit of God. 1 Corinthians 2: 1- 16 exposit this reality in detail.
3. To know and utilize the spiritual gifts, the saints must know and understand the word of God. Ignorance of the Word will cause saints to walk in darkness.
4. Communion with the Holy Spirit, yieldedness to Him and creating an enabling environment for Him to play His appointed role as God with us in the Now is vital for spiritual gifts to be received and utilized.
5. Spiritual gifts must be used in a way which honours Christ. The gifts declare the Church to be indeed supernatural and His Body. The Body must honour its head! Any activity or attitude which is not Christ honouring will negate the value and import of spiritual gifts.
6. According to 1 Corinthians 13, spiritual gifts must be exercised in love. Love must be enthroned as the prime motive for all that we do.
7. The whole of 1 Corinthians chapter 14 was written to guide the Church to ensure that the gifts are exercised in order. Order enables us to enjoy our liberty in the spirit. Order requires sensitivity to other people and their gifts. Order requires the saints to be under authority because operating as a loose cannon destroys fellowship. Order requires that no gift be used in a way which is self projecting.

- What are the ways to discover our spiritual gifts?

Spiritual Gifts can be discovered in a number of ways. These include:

**1. Self evident manifestation.** Here, the gifts are clearly manifested to the degree that is unquestionable. A saint with the gift of prophecy will manifest utterances which bring edification, encouragement and comfort. One with the word of wisdom will be used of the Lord to bring forth solutions to tough problems. One with the gift of helps will take his/her place graciously beside and with a visionary.

**2. Knowledge.** Spiritual gifts can best be understood and utilized when there is knowledge. 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and Romans chapter 12 were written to provide knowledge. Spiritual gifts often flourish where there is sufficient light cast on the subject matter. The truth sets free when it is known. John 8:32. Gifts can also be dormant where there is ignorance. Apollos and the saints at Ephesus did not know of the Holy Spirit and evidently spiritual gifts until Priscilla and Aquila and later Paul taught them and led them into the blessed experience. Acts 18:24-28; Acts 19:1-7.

**3. Prayer.** Earnest prayer will lead the saint to receive from God revelation and manifestation of spiritual gifts given. Matthew 7: 7-9.

**4. Opportunities.** Spiritual gifts manifest when the saint is faced with an opportunity where natural abilities fail to deliver. Opportunities have a way of drawing out to the fore what was hidden previously. Philip was content to be a deacon in the Church at Jerusalem. When persecution drove him to Samaria, the opportunities presented by a dark, unreached environment drew out the Evangelist in him!

**5. Impartation/Laying on of hands.** Just as the Holy Spirit is imparted by laying on of hands, so can spiritual gifts that are dormant can be activated when senior ministers who are well endowed with grace and capacity lay hands to pray. Paul told Timothy not to neglect the spiritual gifts he received when hands were laid on him. However Romans 12 gifts (Basic or personal gifts are those that come at the New Birth. Also the leadership/Office gifts of Ephesians 4:11 are sovereignly endowed by Jesus Christ) 1 Timothy 4:14

**6. Prophecy/Revelatory gifts.** 1 Timothy 4:14 also suggests that a spiritual gift can be discerned through prophecy. If the prophetic utterance is true, there will be a resonance in the spirit and a stirring up of what was dormant. Other revelatory gifts can “see” gifts.

7. Sovereign Pattern of God. God is at liberty to reveal the gift He has blessed you with according to the way He communicates to you. As our personalities and attitudes vary, so will God speak to us in various ways. The key is that His sheep shall hear His voice! John 10: 27. As an individual, cultivate a close relationship with God so that you can hear Him clearly.

**• What do spiritual gifts say of the ministry the Lord call us to. In other words, what is the co-relation between spiritual gifts and ministry?**

The Lord ordained that spiritual gifts are the prime avenues for demonstrating the power of the Kingdom of God! The Kingdom of God is not to be presented in mere words of man’s wisdom but in the demonstration of the Holy Spirit and power. This is why spiritual gifts are called manifestations of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11. Of all that it takes to engage in ministry therefore, Spiritual Gifts received and manifested are the clearest indicators of divine calling and approval.

**• What are the dangers of operating outside our spiritual gifts?**

Whenever a saint operates outside his/her spiritual gifts, any of these outcomes can be expected:

1. One is engaged in dead works! Dead religious works refer to all activities that are not rooted in or derive validity from what God designed to accomplish through the saint. This is the very basis of orthodoxy. All saints who accept titles but are not called by God are endangering their souls in eternity and inviting trouble on earth.

2. The saint operating outside spiritual gifts is open to slide into the flesh. “Flesh” refers to activities that are not inspired by or empowered by the Holy Spirit. They rather emanate from the realm of the human soul which is the seat of reasoning (the mind); exercise of the will and the emotion. The soul strives against both the Holy Spirit and human spirit! Galatians 5: 16 - 21

3. The saint is open to manipulation by the devil because one has exceeded the limits of the divinely ordained platform of service. Saints can be smitten by the enemy for so doing because they have strayed outside the perimeter of service approved by God.

**• Is the presence and exercise of spiritual gifts sufficient basis for success in ministry? If not, what are the essentials needful to fulfil ministry?**

The answer is clearly no. There are some other factors which combine with spiritual gifts to equip the saint to be all that God ordained to be and accomplish all that he or she was brought into this world for. Collectively, these factors make up what is called the Spiritual DNA of the saint. This is a mix of factors which collectively make the saint unique in the family of God and in the general society. They include Character, Natural Talents, Personality, Education/Training; Skills acquired; attitude to life. A full teaching on these factors will be provided in the course **“Discover and Fulfil your ministry”**

### **That we know no man after the flesh!**

With spiritual gifts therefore our ages, races, ethnic groups, gender and socio-economic status do not matter. Paul says we should come to the point when we know no man after the flesh. With spiritual gifts, we know people according to what God has made them to be in His Kingdom and receive them as such. In so doing, no one will ask if a saint ministering is a man or woman. Spiritual gifts are imparted and received in the realm of the human spirit and flow out from there. John 7:37

Those who would discriminate against women and have them out of ministry because of their gender can see the absurdity of their positions. Scripture must be rightly divided in order to understand the mind of God. The instructions for women to keep quiet in church were for the purpose of dealing with peculiar situations which arose in the first century Church. In those days, women were more or less house hold chattel. Those who gave their lives to Christ were experiencing a degree of freedom and liberty that was unimaginable in years before. Some evidently misused the liberty and would literally interrupt preachers in public worship services to express their differing opinions. They were commanded to keep quiet and submit to the knowledge of their husbands at home. We shall deal with this subject matter more extensively in the Course on **Women in Ministry**.

### Lesson 11: The Forgotten Gifts

Last Friday, we assuredly thought we were at the touchline on the teaching of spiritual gifts. Unfortunately, we were seeing in part and sharing in part as 1 Corinthians 13:12 say. It has pleased the Lord to call our attention to the fact that there are some other gifts of the Holy Spirit that were glaringly absent.

### **No. 23. The Gift of Dreaming Dreams**

Dreams are one of the ways God communicates with His people. In every generation the Lord lays hold of some people and reveals present or future events to them. In the Old Testament, there were a few notable dreamers. Joseph was exceptional in the sense that he had two associated gifts: dreaming dreams and interpreting them. With Dreams, he was set on the course of destiny. With the gift of interpretation, he stepped into it as Prime Minister of Egypt. Genesis 37, 40, 41.

In Joel 2: 28, 29 where the outpouring which was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost was prophesied accurately, dreaming of dreams was indicated as one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Speaking by the Spirit, Apostle Peter confirmed this in his very first public sermon at Jerusalem Acts 2: 14 - 21

Not all dreams are messages from God. There are two other sources of dreams. Some dreams are projections from Satan and his agents designed to either confuse or intimidate the saints. Worse still, some dreams are projections from the enemy which, when naively accepted and confessed by the saints, confer to Satan the legal authority to execute them. It is naïve to accept all dreams as from God and speak of them as such.

Some other dreams emanate from the subconscious realm of the human soul. They are functions of the worst fears of the saint or his/her deepest desires that have taken root in the subconscious realm and come up to the fore when one is asleep. Dreaming of a particular person as spouse may not necessarily be from God but could signify lust that penetrated the subconscious mind. Dreaming of an accident may not necessarily be a warning from God. It could be the worst fears that have taken root in the subconscious mind and come up occasionally to haunt one. In Job 3:25, the great man of God gave us an insight into why he experienced some of the tragedies that befell him: his fears became a magnet to draw tragedy unto himself! Faith and Fear are two magnetic forces of equal strength. What you have strong faith for inevitably gets drawn to you. Mark 11:22-24. On the other hand, what you fear most also gets drawn to you except the grace and election of God intervenes!

Please do not be quick to voice your dreams as if they were gospel truth! Do not boast either that your dreams always come to pass. Do not use your own lips to condemn yourself to premature death or failure. Dreams which constantly convey a message contrary to the purpose of God for you should be rejected and silenced through the Blood of the Lamb and exercise of spiritual discipline on your path. When you experience such, go before God in humility and sincerity, confessing and repenting of any sin or deficiency the Holy Spirit may convict you of. Then rise up in faith; resist the devil and reject every carrot he presents. He will flee from you! James 4:7, 8; 1 Peter 5: 7 – 10.

As 1 John 4: 1-3 exhorts, we need to try the spirit to discern whether it's from God or not. Dreams from Satan will suggest failure, sickness, and evil. When they speak of "good" things, it is to draw the saints down the path of evil or to displease God.

#### **Gift No. 24: Interpretation of Dreams.**

God has no delight in confusing His saints. That is why He put in the Body of Christ, the special ability to interpret dreams. As the name suggests, this is the ability to put into clearly understood language or explain in detail, the mind of God expressed in dreams. Like the gift of interpretation of tongues, this gift is given for the purpose of clarity. When dreams are correctly interpreted, the meaning is immediately clear and there is great edification. If it is a warning, the people who have the privilege of knowing the mind of God are able to repent and turn to God. If it is an impending judgement whose time is matured, the interpretation will enable the righteous to flee the wrath to come.

Joseph had great capacity for interpreting dreams. It was in exercise of this gift that he fulfilled his destiny which was first expressed in the dream of his parents and siblings bowing before him. .

Daniel was also a man who had the unique gift of interpreting dreams. That became a key factor in his elevation to the Presidency of Babylon and Medo-Persia. Daniel 2 and 4.

#### **Gift No 25: Visions/Trance**

A vision is a vivid portrayal of a present or future event. God used visions in the course of history to communicate with His people and the world. Ezekiel saw a number of visions. The most well known till date is that of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37: 1 – 14.

Visions are communicated in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit in effect shows vivid images to the spirit of the visionary. The Lord may make it clear or may allow messages to be blurred until the appointed time of manifestation.

In Acts 10: 1- 48, we see the way God used visions to minister to Cornelius and Peter alike for the purpose of bringing to pass His counsel concerning the gentiles. The word “Trance as used by Peter signifies that the vision came while he was partly awake and partly asleep. His faculties were awake but the active part of his being was his spirit man.(Acts 10: 9 – 20).

The Book of Revelation is essentially a vision God communicated to His Church through John the beloved. Revelations 1: 1 – 20.

Like other revelatory gifts, visions/trance, dreaming of dreams and interpretation depend substantially on the state of heart and mind of the vessel. Unto the pure, all things are pure. But unto the defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure but their mind and consciences are defiled. Titus 1: 15, 16. If the heart and mind of a saint is pure, the Lord will find it a suitable channel for communicating His truths. A defiled heart and mind will also attract satanic messages.

Where God decides to use His saint to convey a negative message, He will do it with such clarity that those whose lives are not right will have the opportunity to make things right with God.

### **Final Word.**

There is a day of judgement coming for those in Christ Jesus. It is the day God will take account for how the saints used the spiritual gifts they were endowed with to occupy until Christ returns. Various parables of Jesus clearly spell out this reality. Luke 19:11 – 27 is very clear. Those who sit on their gifts waiting for the day Christ will return are doing themselves a great disservice. They are clearly unfaithful! Those who in the name of the Kingdom denigrate or devalue the soon return of Christ have made themselves Apostates. They are playing into the hands of the wicked one. The plan of God is to release a measure of the Holy Spirit into and through us to manifest His glory and proclaim His Kingdom in Power. Read Romans 12: 1- 8; 1 Corinthians 12: 1-28; Ephesians 4: 1-16; 1 Peter 4: 9 – 11 to see that every saint has been blessed with a number of spiritual gifts.

Five leadership gifts/offices – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers - were explained extensively in Course 112. In this course 113 we conclude today, 22 gifts of the Holy Spirit have been explained as well as the issues that define them. The questions that arise are: Who are you in the Spirit? What has God gifted you to be?

### Assignment

Please send in a typed self assessment which answers these questions: many spiritual gifts that God has blessed you with?

Indicate how you knew them and to what use you are putting them. Please send them to [arisechurch@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:arisechurch@yahoo.co.uk)

If you need help to determine your spiritual gifts, please feel free to do the spiritual gifts analysis on the website [www.ministersfellowship.org](http://www.ministersfellowship.org) This should be treated as a mere guide and does not in any way replace self evident manifestation or what you will receive from God in prayer. If you missed a lesson or two write to [ariseoffice@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ariseoffice@yahoo.co.uk) and it will be sent.

### Doing our part

The Lord has given us grace to do our part which is to be used by Him to train, equip, activate and release saints world-wide for ministry. We enjoy His matchless grace as we remain in the main calling He has gifted and directed us: Apostolic Teaching Ministry. The idea is to empower

the remnant and challenge them to step up the plate, right where they are to make optimal Kingdom impact. Please do not allow the grace of God to be in vain.

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