

NINE SPIRITUAL GIFTS
1Cor.12:8-10
Ed Dye

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The nine gifts of which I speak:
 - a. Are listed in 1Cor.12:8-10.
 - b. Are identified as “spiritual gifts,” or “gifts of the Spirit,” or “powers of the Spirit,” in V.1.
 - c. Are diverse in nature and purpose, but of the same source, the Holy Spirit, Vv.4-6.
 - d. Are said to be gifts of the Spirit, or powers of the Holy Spirit, to be given by the Spirit, and/or manifestations of the Spirit, Vv.4,7-9.
 - e. Though possessed individually by different baptized believers, were given, not for their personal benefit but, “to profit withal,” V.7, i.e.,
 - (1) Thayer, 597: “to bear or bring together”...2. with a reference to the subject, “to bear together or at the same time; to carry with others”...hence, “to help, be profitable, be expedient.”
 - (2) See 1Cor.14:1-5 for further proof and evidence of “to profit withal.”
 - f. Are obviously miraculous in nature, or miraculous powers given to baptized believers by the Holy Spirit.
2. As to identify and purpose just what are these nine gifts of the Holy Spirit? To whom where given? When and how bestowed? What was their purpose or why were they needed? Are they still available today? If so, why? If not, why not?
3. Of course, each one must be defined in the sense of miraculous gifts or miraculous powers bestowed by the Holy Spirit as follows.

II. DISCUSSION

A. 1ST, THE NINE SPIRITUAL GIFTS LISTED OR ENUMERATED AND DEFINED.

1. The gift of “The word of wisdom,” V.8a.
 - a. Thayer, 591,582: “broad and full intelligence...the ability to discourse eloquently of this wisdom.” That is, of the Word.

- b. Vine, IV,221: “Wisdom”: “is used with reference to...(1) spiritual things,” Lk.21:15; Ac.6:3,10; 1Cor.2:6; 12:8.
 - c. “Word of” denotes (I) the expression of thought ...discourse, speech, of instruction, etc.,” Vine, IV, 229.
 - d. “Word,” from “logos,” I. As represents speech: ...3. discourse...b. i.q. the faculty of speech...the art of speaking to the purpose about things pertaining to wisdom or knowledge,” 1Cor.12:8 (in spiritual matters).
2. The gift of “The word of knowledge,” V.8b.
- a. “The word of” has the same meaning and significance as it does with reference to that of “wisdom” in the previous gift.
 - b. Vine, II, 297, “Knowledge”: “signifies to understand completely.”
 - c. Thayer, 119: “the deeper, more perfect and enlarged knowledge of...such as belongs to the more advanced,” (in spiritual things).
 - d. See 1Cor.13:2,8; 14:6; 1Jno.2:20 – for examples of it.
 - e. In the infant church such special miraculous spiritual guidance was necessary prior to the complete revelation, confirmation, and written form of the N.T. scriptures. Cf. Eph.4:8-16; 1Cor.13:8-10.
3. The gift of “faith,” V.9a.
- a. Faith in this connection (as the context demands), is more than, and/or other than, that which comes by hearing, or by reading the recorded, inspired evidence that you might believe as per Rom.10:17; Jno.20:30,31.
 - b. Nor is it the “common faith” of Tit.1:4; or the “one faith” of Gal.1:23; Eph.4:5.
 - c. It is a supernatural faith such as the power Paul describes in 1Cor.13:1,2.
4. The “gifts of healing,” V.9b.
- a. It is true that the power to heal is a type of miracle, but for whatever reason both Paul, here in 1Cor.12, and Jesus, in Mk.16:17,18, where he said “these signs shall follow them that believe” (meaning baptized believers), put “gifts of healing” in a different category and/or lists it separate from.
 - b. Vv.28,30.
5. The gift of “the working of miracles,” V.10a.

- a. See Vv.28,29.
 - b. Mk.16:17,18; Ac.6:3,5,8; Ac.8:5,6.
6. The gift of “prophesy,” V.10b.
- a. Vv.28,29; Eph.4:11; Rom.12:6.
 - b. The spiritual gift of prophesy included, but was not limited to, that which was predictive in nature, or fore-telling.
 - c. It also involves inspired forth-telling of the will of God, whether with reference to the past, the present, or the future.
 - d. Its purpose was to edify, to comfort, and to encourage the believers, 1Cor.14:1-5,24 “to profit withal”.
 - e. The one with this power of the Holy Spirit was more of a forth-teller than a foreteller.
7. The gift of “discerning of spirits,” V.10c.
- a. This gift enabled the possessor to distinguish between the true and the false prophets.
 - b. Cf. 1Jno.4:1; 2:20,21.
 - c. Prior to God’s will being completely revealed, confirmed and put in written form, as we now have it in the Bible, the infant church needed the help of those with the gift of “discerning of spirits.”
8. The gift of “kinds of tongues,” V.10d.
- a. “Divers” is in italics, meaning it is not in the original text and was supplied in the English translation by the translators.
 - b. “Tongues” refers to languages; languages spoken by men; the tongues or languages of men subject to interpretation and/or translation, 1Cor.14:1,5,9,13,27,28.
(1) See and compare Ac.2:4,6,8,11.
 - c. The gift of “tongues” is the ability by the power of the Holy Spirit to speak in languages without the benefit of having had to study, by natural means, to learn the language in order to know and to speak it.
 - d. Explain the unfortunate use of the supplied word “unknown” with reference to tongue speaking in 1Cor.14
9. The gift of “the interpretation of tongues,” V.10e.
- a. This has reference to inspired interpretation of the language spoken by inspiration.
 - b. One had the gift of speaking “kinds of tongues.”

- c. Another possessed the gift of “interpretation of tongues” where such was needed and required.
- d. The need arose and was required when the tongue speaker spoke in a tongue not understood by those to whom he spoke.
 - (1) In that case an inspired interpreter of tongues was required, even demanded, to interpret the tongue or translate it into the language of the hearers.
 - (2) If no interpreter was available, the tongue speaker must keep “silence in the church,” 1Cor.14:28.

(Note: For emphasis, these nine gifts are called “gifts of the Spirit.” They are miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit; for they were given by the power of the Holy Spirit.)

B. TO WHOM WERE THESE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT GIVEN AND HOW WERE THEY GIVEN, BESTOWED, CONFERRED, OR IMPARTED?

- 1. From a study of 1Cor.12,13,14, it is obvious they were given to, or bestowed upon, baptized believers.
 - a. This, of course, is what Jesus prophesied in Mk.16:17,18 and identified them as “signs” that “shall follow them that believe,” wherein he listed five separate ones involving miraculous powers of the Spirit.
 - b. Also, Peter, on Pentecost, in Ac.2:16-21 quoted Joel’s prophecy (Joel 2:28-30) affirming that the time for its fulfillment had arrived, which included a two-fold prophecy:
 - (1) The 1st of which was these very gifts of the Spirit, Vv.17,18.
 - (a) V.17 says God “will pout out of (from) my Spirit upon all flesh”
 - (b) V.17 doesn’t say God “will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh,” but “will pour out of (from) his Spirit upon all flesh.”
 - (c) That is, God, through the Holy Spirit will give (impart) these gifts unto “your sons and your daughters,” “your young men,” “your old men,” “my servants,” “my handmaidens”

- (2) The 2nd of the two-fold promise of Joel ready to be fulfilled is quoted in V.21: “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”
 - c. Thus, Joel, Jesus, Peter, and Paul all taught these gifts were to be imparted to baptized believers.
- 2. How were these signs and/or gifts of the Holy Spirit given to or bestowed upon baptized believers?
 - a. With the exception of Cornelius and his household, which case was for a special purpose, they were imparted always and only by or through the laying on of an apostle’s hands.
 - b. Proof: Ac.8:5-19; 19:1-6; Rom.1:11; 2Tim.1:6; 1Tim.4:14.

C. THE DURATION OF THESE SIGNS OR SPIRITUAL GIFTS IMPARTED TO BAPTIZED BELIEVERS.

- 1. According to 1Cor.13:8 they were to “fail,” “cease,” “vanish away,” not to have unlimited duration.
 - a. They were never intended to be permanent, as was charity or love.
 - b. Berry’s Lit. Translation:
 - (1) “prophecies, they shall be done away”
 - (2) “tongues, they shall cease”
 - (3) “knowledge, it shall be done away”
 - c. Thayer, 459, for both “fail” and “vanish”: “to cease, pass away, be done away,” Gal.5:11; 1Cor.13:8,10.
 - d. Not referring to a time when there would be no languages spoken or a time when there would be no knowledge on this earth; but to when these “gifts” would no longer exist or be bestowed on believers.
- 2. According to 1Cor.13:9 we learn why they were to cease or be done away; to no longer exist.
 - a. This of necessity was a fact during the days, or the time, of progressive revelation; that is, when God’s will for man in its totality was in the process of being revealed and confirmed.
 - b. God’s final and complete will for man was not revealed to these ordinary baptized believers receiving these spiritual gifts.

- c. They knew in part, and prophesied in part, until the full and complete revelation and confirmation of God plan of human redemption through Jesus Christ by means of the Holy Spirit inspired apostles of Christ. Cf. Jno.16:7,13; Eph.3:1-5.
 - d. The word “part,” from *meros*, in V.9, according to :
 - (1) Vine, III, 159: “denotes (a) a part, portion, of the whole.”
 - (2) Thayer, 400: “one of the constituent parts of a whole.”
 - e. V.9 is simply declaring that God through the Holy Spirit by means of these spiritual gifts used different individuals to accomplish it in this manner.
3. Thus according to 1Cor.13:10 we learn when the spiritual gifts were to cease or be done away or be abolished.
- a. V.10 is the antithesis of V.9 – an opposition or contrast of ideas.
 - b. Therefore, since V.9 refers to revelation of God’s will, but in “part”, then V.10 must be referring to revelation of God’s will, but in its completeness and not to a person, as some claim.
 - c. In fact, the word “perfect” (*teleios*, tel’-I-os) by definition means or “signifies having reached its end (*telos*), finished, complete, perfect.” – Vine, III, 173.
 - d. Thayer, 618: prop. “brought to its end, finished; wanting nothing necessary to completeness; perfect.”
 - e. When God’s revelation is perfect, has reached its end, or finished and confirmed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles of Christ, these spiritual gifts of 1Cor.13:8-10 will “cease,” “pass away,” “vanish,” be abolished.
4. The fact of this relationship between “part” and “perfect” and the function of these spiritual gifts, or gifts of the Spirit, to baptized believers, is vividly illustrated in 1Cor.13:11-13.
- a. V.11 corresponds to the time when the church in its infancy had these gifts of the Holy Spirit, before the revelation and confirmation of God’s will was completed; they were to be put away when it reached maturity or was completed.
 - b. V.12 corresponds to an imperfect reflection from an imperfect mirror, as to “see through a glass, darkly.”

“Now,” refers to the time when the church had the gifts and knew in “part,” because the will of God was still in the process of being revealed; “but then face to face,” to when they no longer depended on “part” – but when they had the whole, the complete revelation of God’s will for man.

- c. V.13 refers not to heaven, but to the present under the guidance of the N.T., the complete, full, confirmed revelation of God’s will for man.
 - (1) For in heaven **hope** does not abide; in heaven hope is realized; one is no longer with patience waiting for it; he has then realized the object of his hope. Tit.1:2; Rom.8:24,25.
 - (2) In heaven **faith** and **love** abide, but not **hope**.
- 5. Moreover, we now have in the Bible, the O.T. and N.T., the written revelation of God’s word, the “perfect” referred to in 1Cor.13:10.
 - a. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to his apostles to guide them into “all truth,” Jno.16:7,13; Ac.1:1-5,8.
 - b. The apostles received what Jesus promised them; they did what Jesus ordained them to do and enabled them to do by that means, Ac.2:1-4; Gal.1:6-12; Eph.3:1-5; 2Tim.3:16,17; Jas.1:25; 1Jno.1:1-4; Jude 3;
 - (1) Cf. 1Pet.4:11; Rev.22:18,19.
 - (2) Emphasize Eph.3:4,5; 2Tim.3:15-17.

D. THE VERY PURPOSE OF MIRACULOUS POWERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IMPARTED TO MEN BEGINNING ON PENTECOST ATTESTS TO THEIR FUNCTION IN GOD’S SCHEME OF HUMAN REDMPTION.

- 1. Such powers imparted to the apostles of Christ were for the purpose of complete revelation and confirmation, Jno.20:30,31; Mk.16:19,20; Ac.2:22; 2Cor.12:12; Heb.2:3,4; Cf. Jno.16:7,13.
 - a. Once fully revealed and confirmed there is nothing else to be revealed; there is no vacuum left to be filled by “latter day” revelation by means of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. And what has been revealed and confirmed needs not to be re-confirmed.

2. The purpose of these “spiritual gifts,” or “gifts of the Holy Spirit,” to baptized believers through the laying on of an apostle’s hands harmonizes with what is taught about them in 1Cor.13:8-10:
 - a. That they were never intended to be permanent.
 - b. 1Cor.12:1,4-7; 14:1-6,12,31; 1Jno.4:1; 1Jno.2:20,21.
 - c. Cf. with scaffolding used for a house being built.

III. CONCLUSION

1. Of the spiritual gifts of which we have spoken in this study, we have:
 - a. Proven that what Jesus in Mk.16:17,18 said about “signs” following baptized believers in the N.T. age did happen.
 - b. Identified as “gifts of the Holy Spirit,” or “powers of the Spirit,” in 1Cor.13:8-10.
 - c. Enumerated them as they are scripturally identified in 1Cor.12.
 - d. Proven they were promised to and bestowed upon baptized believers by means of the laying on of an apostle’s hands.
 - e. Noted that according to 1Cor.13:8-11 they were to be temporary in duration.
 - f. Noted that according to the design of their purpose they were to serve, not the individual possessor, but the local church as a whole, to “profit withal.”
 - g. Established the fact that there is no longer any need for them because we have God’s complete, confirmed, revelation of his will in written form – the Bible – the O.T. and N.T.
2. There are at least four reasons why these “gifts of the Spirit,” have ceased to exist, or to be imparted to baptized believers. **Because:**
 - a. God does not work miracles through human agency in this day by means of the Holy Spirit, or other wise.
 - b. They were “in part” and were to “cease” when “that which is perfect (the whole) is come,” and we have the whole, the “perfect” today.
 - c. They have served their purpose and are no longer needed for any purpose.
 - d. The means by which they were imparted to baptized believers is no longer available; only the apostles could impart then, and no apostles are available today!
3. Therefore, any claim to possess such gifts today is of necessity a false claim!