

PURPOSE OF STUDY: To teach the purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, to whom they are given, and how we may use them to God's glory.

TEXTS:

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| 1. EPH 4:8, 11-15 | 8. 1CO 14:9-19 |
| 2. 1CO 12:7-10, 28 (RO 12:4-8; EPH 4:11) | 9. 1CO 14:22 |
| 3. 1CO 12:11, 29-31 | 10. AC 5:32 (JN 14:15-17) |
| 4. 1CO 14:1-2 | 11. 1CO 14:4-5, 12 |
| 5. AC 1:8 (4:31) | 12. LK 11:11-13 |
| 6. AC 2:1-4, 11 | 13. MT 7:20 (GA 5:22-24) |
| 7. AC 10:44-6 | 14. RO 12:6-8 (2CO 8:12) |

THE STUDY:

- 1. What did Jesus do when He ascended to heaven, and why? EPH 4:8, 11-15**
He gave gifts to His church through the Holy Spirit for the purpose of equipping the church to finish His work in the earth.
- 2. How many spiritual gifts are there? 1CO 12:7-10, 28 (RO 12:4-8; EPH 4:11)**
There are four spiritual gifts lists in the Bible (all referenced between questions 1 & 2). Among the gifts listed are apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, evangelists, miracles and healings, tongues, interpretation of tongues, exhortation, leadership, wealth, knowledge, faith, discernment, mercy/compassion, and administrative abilities. There is nothing to indicate that these lists encompass every spiritual gift; furthermore, some of these gifts are qualities we all should possess to one degree or another (for example, faith and mercy), but some are given an extra measure of these qualities by the Holy Spirit.
- 3. Do all have the same gifts? Is there any certain gift that every believer has? 1CO 12:11, 29-31**
All of the spiritual gifts are in the context of the corporate work of the church rather than the personal life of the believer. In other words, the gifts were not given to benefit us individually, but to benefit the entire church. The body of Christ – His church – is made up of individual members with individual gifts and talents, God determining what is needed for the furtherance of the gospel work; not all have the same gifts. There are a variety of gifts, the Spirit Himself determining who should receive each one.
- 4. Which gift brought controversy to the church in the apostolic age? 1CO 14:1-2**
The gift of tongues appears to have been abused in the early church to the point that guidelines needed to be given concerning its use. There is still confusion today about this gift.
- 5. For what purpose was the gift of tongues, along with the other spiritual gifts, given? AC 1:8 (4:31)**
Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would make His disciples witnesses to Him; when they received the Spirit, they preached the word (Ac. 4:31). In the multi-lingual culture surrounding the early church, they needed the ability to communicate the gospel to many different cultures and dialects. Apparently, the gift of tongues (languages) was given to effectively reach the then-known world with the gospel.
- 6. On the day of Pentecost, what did the people hear? AC 2:1-4, 11**
*On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples were given the gift of tongues “as the Spirit was giving them utterance,” that is, to communicate what the Spirit communicated to them. Notice that the people responded by saying that each one heard the message **in his own language!** (v. 11).*

7. **Why did God give the gift of tongues to the household of Cornelius? AC 10:44-6**
When the house of Cornelius received the gift of tongues, the Jews all heard them glorifying God (evidently, in a language they could clearly understand). This testified to both Jew and Gentile of God's acceptance of the Gentiles.
8. **What counsel does the apostle Paul give concerning the gift of tongues? 1CO 14:9-19**
The only purpose for the gift of tongues is to make communication more understandable, not less. To speak in a language that no one understands not only defeats the purpose of the gift, but glorifies man instead of God.
9. **Who does the Bible say that the gift of tongues is especially for? 1CO 14:22**
The gift of tongues was not for use primarily in the worship services of the church, but in missionary efforts for unbelievers, that they may be able to hear and understand the gospel.
10. **What must we be willing to do to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit? AC 5:32 (JN 14:15-17)**
The one who wants to receive the Holy Spirit must be willing to render full obedience to Christ.
11. **Who should we seek to honor with our gifts? 1CO 14:4-5, 12**
A believer should desire to edify (build up) the church, not himself.
12. **If we feel we are lacking the gifts we need, what should we do? LK 11:11-13**
We must be willing to ask, and the Holy Spirit is promised.
13. **Are the spiritual gifts the test by which we determine whether or not a person has been filled with the Spirit? MT 7:20 (GA 5:22-24)**
*It is by the **fruit** of the Spirit, and not the **gifts** of the Spirit, that we may identify a person who is filled with the Spirit. "Those who are Christ's" have replaced the passions and desires of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit.*
14. **How are we counseled to use our Spiritual Gifts? RO 12:6-8 (2CO 8:12)**
God expects us to use what has been given, and our work is accepted on that basis. God never requires from us what we don't have, but God expects us to exercise our spiritual gifts for the furtherance of His work and the honor of His holy Name.

APPEAL:

The gifts of the Holy Spirit were given to the church to equip and enable it to spread the gospel message to the world. The church is made up of individuals, each one receiving a gift that must be used if the church is to complete her mission. Today, Jesus is inviting you to put your gifts into action in your local church as well as your personal life to reach souls for His kingdom. Won't you commit yourself today to putting your spiritual gifts into practice for Him?

DIFFICULT TEXTS/OBJECTIONS:

Doesn't the Bible teach that those who receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit speak in unknown tongues? (1 Co. 14:2). The phrase translated "speak in tongues" is the Greek glossolalia, which simply means to speak in a language. This term is used consistently throughout the NT. In other words, it always refers to known languages. The word "unknown" is a word supplied by the translators (it is not in the original text), and it does not therefore appear in all translations. Some assume, as Paul refers to those who "in the Spirit" speak "mysteries," that this refers to speaking in a heavenly language unknown to humanity. The context, however, reveals that there were members of the church in Corinth who were "flaunting" their gifts for show, which he discouraged. His counsel is that unless someone else speaks the language, or understands it, there is no purpose in using it – God alone understands it. There is a growing practice among Christians that is called "speaking in tongues" that does not match any Biblical example of speaking in tongues. The counsel of Paul in 1 Corinthians 14 is said to address this new kind of tongues, but nowhere in the actual practice of the church do we witness it. As the Holy Spirit is given "to those who obey" (Ac. 5:32), we would not expect the special gifts of the Spirit to be manifested among those who are living in willful disobedience. As we read the historical accounts of the book of Acts, the gift of tongues was always a native language of at least part of the audience. It must be understood that Paul often found himself in the midst of centers of commerce, where many different cultures were represented. This gift was essential at that time so that the gospel work would not in any way be hindered.