

FRIDAY NIGHT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

THE GIFTS AND THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION

- A.** There is a lot of interest in the Holy Spirit today.
1. One publisher told me not long ago that he knew of fifty books in print on the subject of the Holy Spirit; only three on Jesus.
 2. Publishers tend to come out with books that 'sell' rather than what people need.
- B.** Whereas we are looking at the subject of the Holy Spirit, we do believe we are focussing on a needed emphasis.
1. What are the aspects of the Spirit people seem to be interested in? Probably these:
 - a. The baptism of the Spirit.
 - b. The gifts of the Spirit.
 - c. In the last four years literally dozens of books have been written on some aspect of the Toronto Blessing.
 2. Why is it that Christians today, speaking generally, are more interested in the Holy Spirit than in Jesus? Probably because:
 - a. People assume they already know enough about Jesus.
 - b. The Gospel is a mere assumption with many people, hence there is no great need to keep going over it.
 - c. The rise of Pentecostalism, which has been somewhat upstaged by the Charismatic Movement, has drawn attention to the Holy Spirit, especially the gifts of the Spirit.
 3. The gifts of the Holy Spirit have largely been ignored by most churches until the emergence of the aforementioned movements.
 - a. It almost goes without saying that the gifts of the Spirit have not been in prominent operation in most denominations until recent times.
 - (1) Were it not for these movements, there is every reason to assume that these gifts would have continually been ignored.

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- (2) We ought to thank God for those who have called our attention to what has been ignored.
 - (3) We should thank God for John Wimber who has put 'signs and wonders' on the map!
- b.** Some well-meaning Christians have come up with a convenient theological rationale for ignoring the gifts of the Spirit: it is called 'cessationism'.
- (1) This is the idea that the gifts of the Spirit, as well as all signs and wonders, 'ceased' with the early church and the completion of the New Testament.
 - (2) In a word: the gifts of the Spirit are unavailable today – and have been for 1900 years.
 - (3) Cessationism would not refer to the fruits of the Spirit, however, only the gifts.
 - (4) As for the biblical basis for cessationism: there is none.
 - (5) Cessationism was a convenient explanation for the relative absence of the miraculous in church history.
 - (6) Today it serves as a cop-out.
 - (7) To those who embrace cessationism (and make it an article of faith) there is no choice but to claim that anything that is supernatural such as signs, wonders, miracles or gifts of the Spirit, are either of the flesh or demonic.
- C.** But a notable turn of events has taken place: with the current interest in the gifts of the Spirit there is now a neglect of the fruits of the Spirit.
1. The gifts of the Spirit were ignored for centuries.
 2. Now it is the fruits of the Spirit which are (I fear) greatly neglected.
- D.** Why is this study important?
1. It helps redress the imbalance of emphasis that we know is too true today.
 2. It will show the importance of both the fruits and the gifts of the Spirit.
 3. It will show what is the difference between them.

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4. It will show how each is available.
5. It will show which may well be the more important.

I IDENTIFYING THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

A. There are generally speaking, three passages of scripture that demonstrate the gifts of the Spirit.

1. Romans 12:3-8.

a. They are referred to here as 'measure of faith' rather than as gifts of the Spirit. 'For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgement, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.' Romans 12:3.

(1) 'Measure of faith' refers to the limit of our faith.

(2) Each of us has a measure of the Spirit which results in having so much but *only* so much of the Spirit.

(3) Only Jesus had the Spirit without any limit, which means that he had all of the Holy Spirit there is! 'For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.' John 3:34.

(4) Paul's point in Romans 12:3-8: learn to accept the limit of your faith and live within that limit; do not claim a gift you don't really have.

b. The gifts he mentions are:

(1) Prophecy v.6.

(2) Serving v.7.

(3) Teaching v.7.

(4) Encouraging v.8.

(5) Contributing to others' needs v.8.

(6) Leadership v.8.

(7) Showing mercy v.8.

c. Although Paul doesn't call them 'gifts of the Spirit', that is obviously what they are since some of them overlap with the gifts of the Spirit in I Corinthians 12.

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- (1) 'We have different gifts,' says Paul, the same language used in I Corinthians 12. Cf. Rom. 12:6, and I Cor. 12:4.
 - (2) Some want to refer to the gifts in Romans 12 as motivational gifts, the idea being that each person – whether by temperament, nature or the Spirit – finds he is in one of the seven categories of Romans 12:3-8.
2. Ephesians 4:7-13.
 - a. Here the ascended Lord is said to have given 'gifts to men'. v.8.
 - b. These gifts however largely refer to offices or functions in the church.
3. I Corinthians 12.
 - a. They are called 'gifts' or 'manifestations' of the Spirit. v.4; v.7.
 - (1) Gr. *charismata* – grace-gifts.
 - (2) Gr. *phanerosis* - manifestations.
 - (3) I like to call them 'anointings' of the Spirit.
 - b. Paul lists nine of these in verses 8 to 10:
 - (1) Wisdom.
 - (2) Knowledge; the AV 'word of knowledge'.
 - (3) Faith.
 - (4) Healing.
 - (5) Miracles.
 - (6) Prophecy.
 - (7) Discerning of spirits.
 - (8) Tongues.
 - (9) Interpretation of tongues.
 - c. Later on he mentions more (in v.28) not in the previous list:
 - (1) Helps (AV), those able to help others, which is much like 'encouraging' in Romans 12:8.

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- (1) When we give, not to be seen by men.
 - (2) When we pray, not to be seen by men.
 - (3) When we fast, not to be seen by men.
 - c. Forgiving others. Matt. 6:14.
 - d. Not judging others. Matt. 7:1-5.
 2. Romans 13-15 is an unfolding of how the Spirit fulfils the Law.
 3. I Corinthians 13 is an elaboration on the primary fruit of the Spirit.
 4. Galatians 5:22-23 explicitly lists some of the fruits of the Spirit:
 - a. Love.
 - b. Joy.
 - c. Peace.
 - d. Patience.
 - e. Kindness.
 - f. Goodness.
 - g. Faithfulness.
 - h. Gentleness.
 - i. Self-control.
 - j. Note: the nine fruits of the Spirit are only examples – not that there are only nine, not unlike I Corinthians 12:8-10.
 5. Ephesians 4:31-32 shows implicitly by use of the negative and practical. ‘Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.’ Cf. Eph. 5:1-7.
 - a. There are more: ‘Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ Ephes. 5:19-20.
 - b. The husband-wife relationship is to be the outworking of the fruits of the Spirit.

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- (1) Wives are to submit to their husbands. Eph. 5:22-24.
- (2) Husbands are to love their wives. Eph. 5:25-33.
6. Philippians 2 stresses that we should be devoid of selfish ambition and therefore 'consider others better than yourselves' (Phil. 2:1-4) whereupon Paul tells us to do as Jesus did in not holding on to the glory he had before he became flesh. Phil. 2:5-8.
7. Colossians ('the little book of Ephesians') says the same thing again. Col. 3.
8. What Paul calls 'love' James calls 'wisdom'. James 3:13-18.
9. Peter's counsel is the same.
 - a. The husband-wife relationship. I Pet. 3:1-7.
 - b. He explains what he means by loving as brothers: 'Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.' 1 Peter 3:9.
 - c. 'For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' II Peter 1:5-8.
10. The epistles of John elaborate Jesus' teaching on love as found in John's gospel (John 13:34):
 - a. Love one another. I John 3:11.
 - b. 'There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.' 1 John 4:18.

III THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

A. Wherein they are the same.

1. They come from the same Spirit.
 - a. There is not a Holy Spirit who dispenses gifts and another Spirit who gives the fruits.
 - b. It is the same Holy Spirit in both.

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(1) 'There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.' 1 Cor. 12:4-6.

(2) 'For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.' Ephes. 3:14-19.

2. The same Spirit is in all Christians.

a. All Christians have the Holy Spirit.

(1) 'If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.'

(2) 'For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.' 1 Cor. 12:13.

b. Note: the term 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' is used two ways in the New Testament.

(1) According to I Corinthians 12:13, all Christians have been baptised by the Spirit – at conversion.

(2) According to Acts 8:15-17, there is a sense in which some Christians have not been baptised by the Spirit.

c. The best way to understand this is probably to see a twofold operation of the Spirit in believers.

(1) The Holy Spirit comes unconsciously when we are born again, although some feel a conscious power.

(2) There is a subsequent filling for many which seems more powerful than at conversion.

d. Note: any Christian can have either the gifts or the fruits of the Spirit without the subsequent operation of the Spirit, although it is likely that those who have experienced this will manifest both gifts and fruits more powerfully.

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3. Both are important in the body of Christ.
 - a. The gifts enable us to serve others by signs and wonders.
 - b. The fruits enable us to edify others by a gentle and loving heart.
- B. Wherein they are different.
 1. The gifts of the Spirit are sovereignly meted out.
 - a. God sovereignly grants gifts.
 - b. The fruits are inherent in every Christian.
 2. There is no command to have a gift of the Spirit, e.g., 'You must receive the gift of tongues.'
 - a. No-one is required to manifest a gift of the Spirit.
 - b. We are all required to manifest the fruits of the Spirit.
 3. We all have (and we do) one gift but we are required to have all the fruits.
 - a. 'Do all speak with tongues?' Answer: no.
 - b. But we are to have *all* the fruits.
 4. Gifts do *not* prove spirituality; the fruits *do*.
 - a. The Corinthians thought they were spiritual because of their gifts, especially tongues.
 - b. 'No,' thunders Paul; the proof of spirituality is love. I Corinthians 13.
 5. You are not likely to lose a gift, but you can lose the fruits.
 - a. 'For God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.' Romans 11:29.
 - b. 'What has happened to all your joy? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me.' Galatians 4:15.
 6. Gifts are more likely to engender pride than the fruits.
 - a. We can get very proud (if not careful) over having one of the gifts of the Spirit – or any function or office in the church.
 - b. The reason for the fruits: to negate pride.

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7. A gift may not always be working but the fruits may be there day and night. This is part of the meaning of I Corinthians 13:8: 'Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.'

IV THE ADVANTAGES OF EACH

A. The gifts:

1. They perform a direct service to the body of Christ.
 - a. The gift of healing speaks itself.
 - b. The prophecy or word of knowledge can do one of two things:
 - (1) To encourage.
 - (2) To warn.
2. They can serve as an evangelistic tool.
 - a. They provide a platform for the gospel. E.g. Acts 9:35,42.
 - b. It leaves people without further excuse. Acts 4:16.
3. They authenticate the message of the gospel.
 - a. People – if honest – must conclude that there is a God.
 - b. When signs and wonders accompany our preaching it adds credibility to what we preach and teach.
4. It is by the fruit that we come to terms with our own gifts – to avoid jealousy. Cf. I Cor. 12:21-26.

B. The fruits:

1. They edify others.
 - a. Love sets others free.
 - b. Love keeps you from a judgmental spirit.
2. They edify the people who have them.
 - a. There is no greater joy than what comes from the Holy Spirit.
 - b. They show how we fulfil the Law. Rom. 13:10.

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3. They show that the Spirit is ungrieved – which sets him free to work powerfully.
 - a. The Holy Spirit can be grieved. Eph. 4:30.
 - b. When he is not grieved, he moves in us and around us more freely.
4. They may lead to the receiving of the gifts.

V THE AVAILABILITY OF EACH

A. The gifts.

1. Every Christian has the Spirit, therefore the potential for the gifts is endless.
2. We are told to covet the greater gifts; God would not encourage us in this direction if they cannot be had.
3. In all probability, true revival would result in a wider manifestation of the gifts.

B. The fruits.

1. They are available because we have the Spirit.
2. Unlike the gifts, we are commanded to exhibit the fruits of the Spirit; it follows that we can do so.
3. The increase of the fruits is up to us; we make a *choice*, for example, whether or not to forgive.
 - a. Love is the chief fruit of the Spirit.
 - b. If we show love, the others are likely to follow.

CONCLUSION

- A.** Paul called love the most excellent way. I Cor. 12:31.
- B.** This is Paul's way of saying: it is better to show love than to have the gifts of the Spirit.
- C.** By showing love God *may* grant the desire of your heart in giving you the greater gift!