

# Other Spiritual Gifts

Listed below are nine additional gifts of the Spirit that are not included in the basic inventory due to the difficulty of assessment or their controversial nature. Anyone desiring to know more about any of these gifts is invited to seek spiritual direction and guidance from the pastor. A little information is presented to describe each of the gifts. Many of these gifts appear to be extremely rare today.

**The Gift of Prophecy:** This gift is mentioned in all of the major scriptural passages. Paul believed it to be an especially valuable gift. This gift provides the ability to proclaim and apply God's truth so that believers may be edified, encouraged, and consoled, and so that non-believers may be convinced. Implicit is a "forthtelling" of God's truth so that others may be touched by it. Today, the primary source of prophecy comes from Scripture itself under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is understood that every prophet and prophecy is subject to Christ and to the Scriptures. The focus of prophecy today is upon Christ, who is the Living Word of God, but it is recognized that the Spirit is free to give direct guidance, and any such guidance will be tested by biblical teaching and the wisdom of the believing community. Martin Luther King is often cited as a person who had this gift.

**The Gift of Healing:** This gift is given to certain Christians to restore health to the sick. It is understood that the gift-bearer serves as a human intermediary through whom God pleases to cure illnesses and restore health apart from the use of natural means. Much criticism has been justly levied on the falsehood that there is a direct connection between healing and amount of faith. The truth is that all that is necessary is a "mustard seed of faith" (Matt. 17:20) for the accomplishment of God's purposes. The person with the gift of healing knows that healing may or may not take place according to the loving purpose of God.

**The Gift of Miracles:** This gift is given by God to certain members of the Body of Christ to serve as human intermediaries through whom it pleases God to perform powerful acts that are perceived by observers to have altered the ordinary course of nature. A miracle is understood to be an event of supernatural power, perceived by the senses, accompanying a servant of the Lord, in order to draw attention to the Lord and his message. Miracles remind us of the power and wonder of God and often give us signs of his love for us.

**The Gift of Missionary:** This is the special ability that God gives to some members of the Body of Christ to minister whatever other spiritual gifts they have in a second culture or second community. Certainly Paul is the primary example of someone who exercised the gift of missionary regularly. Persons with this gift have a strong desire to win people of other countries to Christ.

**The Gift of Celibacy:** This gift is given to some members of the Body of Christ to remain single in order to use one's time and other spiritual gifts to serve God more effectively. There are a number of references in New Testament scripture to persons who "have renounced marriage for the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:12) with the recognition that being single frees the person from worldly affairs thus allowing full attention to the Lord's affairs.

**The Gift of Martyrdom:** God gives this gift to some members of the Body of Christ to enable them to undergo suffering for the faith, even to death, while consistently displaying a

joyous and victorious attitude that brings glory to God. This gift is marked by a forgiving spirit and a need to rejoice and to praise God. It is said that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church.

**The Gift of Tongues:** This gift is a special ability for certain members of the Body of Christ to speak to God in a language they have never learned and/or to receive and communicate a message from God to his people through a divinely anointed utterance in a language they never learned. The practice of “tongue speaking” is highly controversial in some circles, but those with this gift enjoy exercising it as a spiritual communication with God for worship, prayer and praise. This gift is not given as a “necessary sign of the baptism of the Spirit,” nor is it evidence of the filling of the Spirit, although some people have that misconception. The speaker in tongues may or may not know what the utterances mean.

**The Gift of Interpretation:** This is a special ability that God gives to some members of the Body of Christ to make known in the vernacular the message of one who speaks in tongues. This knowledge of what has been spoken is regarded as an interpretation and not a translation. The early church did not permit speaking in tongues unless someone with the gift of interpretation was present so that the message could be used for the edification of the church. Tongue interpretation results in comfort, guidance, warning, encouragement, admonition, or edification. Like tongue speaking, interpretation of tongues is also highly controversial in some circles today.

**The Gift of Exorcism:** This is the special gift that God gives certain members of the Body of Christ to cast out demons and evil spirits. Jesus gave his disciples the power to expel demons, and the gift was exercised in the earliest days of the church (Acts 15:16; 16:16-18). It is also practiced today when there is clear evidence of possession by evil spirits. Extreme care must be taken not to confuse possession by evil spirits with mental illness, which will be unaffected by exorcism.

**The Gift of Voluntary Poverty:** This gift provides a special ability for certain members of the Body of Christ to renounce material comfort and luxury and adopt a personal lifestyle equivalent to those living at the poverty level in a given society in order to serve God more effectively. The gift may be given to provide for the poor, to resist material temptation, or to prove the faithfulness of God.