

## The Spiritual Gifts With Which The Holy Spirit Adorns Christians.

Text: 1 Cor 12:1-11

1) What are these spiritual gifts?

Suggested Hymns:

2) What use should we make of these spiritual gifts?

191, 129, 304, 208, 124

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is 1 Corinthians 12:1–11, *<sup>1</sup> Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: <sup>2</sup> You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. <sup>3</sup> Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*

*<sup>4</sup> There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup> There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.*

*<sup>7</sup> But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: <sup>8</sup> for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

When a person sincerely believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, he is endowed with powers from on high, he is adorned with spiritual gifts, with wonderful gifts of which the unbelieving children of this world are ignorant.

These spiritual gifts were remarkably abundant among the early Christians in the days of the Apostles. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, *<sup>1</sup> Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: <sup>2</sup> You know that you*

*were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.*  
<sup>3</sup> *Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*”

Here the Apostle calls the Corinthians attention to the fact, that formerly they had been Gentiles, that they had been ignorant of the Lord, the true God, that they had worshiped the dumb idols, and that, as long as they were in this heathen state, the gifts of God’s Holy Spirit were unknown to them.

But now they had been converted from the power of Satan to the living God, and the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon them, enlightening them with His gifts and working mightily in their midst.

From other parts of Paul’s Epistles to the Corinthians we see that this Corinthian congregation was especially blessed with spiritual gifts, and particularly with the gift of speaking with tongues, or proclaiming the great works of God in different languages, as the disciples did on the day of Pentecost.

However, there were also false prophets in Corinth who denied Christ, and claimed to speak by the Spirit of God. St. Paul warns the Corinthians, and tells them that they should not be misled by these people. He says, <sup>3</sup> *Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*

A person is not blessed with a spiritual gift who speaks against Christ, but it is an evil spirit that speaks through him; and if a person truly believes in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of the sinful world, and confesses that Jesus is the Lord, he is never led to do so by his own natural power, but it is all God’s doing. It is the Holy Spirit’s work in him.

To this day the Holy Spirit works among Christians, and enlightens them with His gifts. Let us consider, then, *The Spiritual Gifts With Which The Holy Spirit Adorns Christians*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

### **1. What Are These Spiritual Gifts?**

To this day the Holy Spirit adorns Christians with spiritual gifts. Wherever there is an orthodox congregation, wherever the Word of God is proclaimed in its

truth and purity, there the Word of God will accomplish its purpose for what it has been sent.

People will be truly converted to Christ, brought to the faith, and God's Holy Spirit will occupy the human hearts and endow them with the most wonderful spiritual gifts.

The Apostle says that <sup>4</sup> *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.* <sup>5</sup> *There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.* <sup>6</sup> *And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.*

<sup>7</sup> *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:* <sup>8</sup> *for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,* <sup>9</sup> *to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,* <sup>10</sup> *to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues."*

Here St. Paul lists nine different spiritual gifts. At least four of these have ceased to exist in the Christian Church. They were to be found in the early Christian congregations only as long as the Apostles were living. These four gifts are, first, the gift of healing the sick without the use of medicine, simply by the laying on of hands. Second, the gift of working miracles. Third, the gift of speaking a foreign language without previous study. And fourth, the gift of interpreting the foreign language. Nobody can deny that these most extraordinary spiritual gifts have utterly departed from Christians in our days.

The gift of healing, together with the other three most wonderful gifts, was given to the early Christians for a certain purpose, and that purpose was to draw the attention of the heathen, to make them acquainted with the Christian religion, and to make Christianity known in the world.

Now, when this purpose was accomplished, when the voice of the Gospel was heard in all lands, it pleased God to withdraw these four spiritual gifts from the Christians.

But the other five gifts which the Apostle mentions still remain to this day, although they are not nearly as abundant with Christians as they were in former times. They are the gifts of the word of wisdom; of the word of knowledge; of

prophesying, that is, explaining the Scriptures; of a strong, heroic faith; and of discerning the spirits.

All these and similar spiritual gifts exist to this day, to a certain degree, among Christians, and we must note well that they are not natural gifts, but gifts of God's Holy Spirit.

Do we not find faithful Christians that had once been dull and scarcely able to utter a coherent sentence as long as they were in an unconverted state? But what do we see in them after their conversion? They can speak of divine things as they could never speak of earthly things, and their word is powerful to convince the unbelieving.

Do we not find faithful Christians that once had always been full of doubts and uncertainties and anxieties as long as they did not know Jesus Christ in the true faith? But what do we see in them after their conversion? They may still be slow and undecided in earthly things, but in matters of faith they are as sure and certain, as brave and determined as any one can be.

Do we not find faithful Christians that almost any one could influence and induce to change their opinion, that showed no stability, no settled conviction as long as they were without the knowledge of the truth? But what do we see in them after their conversion? They can say in truth: ***"I know whom I have believed,"***<sup>11</sup> and no false prophet, no scoffer can change their conviction which they have based on the Word of God.

Do we not find faithful Christians that could not utter three words in prayer as long as their hearts were void of faith? But what do we see in them after their conversion? They can pray, pray with fervency, and speak to their God as a child speaks to his dear father.

Some Christians are endowed with a special spiritual gift to comprehend difficult passages of the Holy Scripture, others with the gift to restore the fallen, to comfort the afflicted, to convince the doubters and those who contradict, to make peace between quarrellers, and so forth.

All these beautiful spiritual gifts are with us to this day, and if you are true Christians, my friends, the Holy Spirit has surely endowed you with one or more of them more or less; for St. Paul distinctly says, ***<sup>11</sup> But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.***

## 2. What Use Should We Make Of These Spiritual Gifts?

And now, in the second place, let us see what use we should make of the spiritual gifts with which we have been endowed. The Apostle says, “***7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.***” For the profit of all, this is the use which we should make of those gifts with which the Holy Spirit has adorned us. We should make use of them for the edification of the Church, for the benefit of our fellow-Christians, for the extension of God’s kingdom, and for the conversion of the world.

The whole Christian Church is to be an army marching onward under the leadership of the Captain of our salvation, our dear Lord Jesus Christ, and every individual Christian is to be an active warrior in that army of God.

Every Christian congregation is to be a mission family, and every member should be a missionary in his own way, and use those spiritual gifts with which he has been endowed for missionary purposes to do his or her part and share in building up God’s kingdom and winning souls for Christ.

Let no Christian think that he has done all that is required of him, if for his own person he walks the way that leads to eternal life, if he sincerely believes in the Saviour Jesus Christ who bled and died on the cross for the sins of the whole world, and serves God in simplicity of mind.

No; my dear Christian friends, you have special spiritual gifts, and God has endowed you with these gifts for a purpose; you are to make use of them for the benefit of the Church and for the benefit of the world.

You must not think that to work for the Church, to extend God’s kingdom, to gain souls for Christ, is a task and a duty which devolves on the pastor alone, and that you have no business to meddle in these affairs.

No; you are to have a hand in this great and glorious work, you are to make use of your spiritual gifts, you are to help all you can, you are to ***proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.***<sup>2</sup>

There are so many Christians in our day who scarcely provide for their own souls, that have grown indifferent, that seldom come to church, and must be urged to go to the Lord’s Supper. Is it surprising if such Christians take very little interest in the affairs of the congregation to which they belong? They refuse

to take upon themselves any duties, and will not serve in a congregation in any way.

Do not tell me, my friends, that you have no spiritual gift for the profit of all, no gift for the profit of the Church and the world at large to help others in coming to Christ.

To say that you have no spiritual gift is as much as to say that you are not a Christian; for God's Holy Spirit dwells in every true Christian's heart.

A Christian is the Holy Spirit's temple, and the Holy Spirit endows him with a gift to profit others. Certain gifts are given to each and every one of us. Let us examine ourselves and see what are the gifts that we have been adorned with especially, and not exalt, ourselves above others who have not received the gifts with which we have been blessed.

Let us make use of our spiritual gifts to profit others. Let us show and prove thereby that we are the true followers of Jesus Christ who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

Let us thereby show our thankfulness to the God of our salvation who has been so gracious and merciful to us damnable sinners, who has forgiven us all our transgressions for the sake of our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who died on the cross for our sins.

And, finally, let us be aware of the fact that much is required of him to whom much has been given, and that if we faithfully use the spiritual gifts with which we have been blessed, we shall not do so in vain, and the benefit thereof shall come to us when the Lord will receive us into His glory and say, *'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!'*<sup>3</sup> Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Timothy 1:12

<sup>2</sup> 1 Peter 2:8

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 25:34