

Gifts of the Spirit - Part 2 (Rora 2003)

by Norman Meeten

The purpose of spiritual gifts is to enable us to glorify God by equipping us to live as He wants and to express the love of God to others.

Duration: 1:06:06

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12

Topics: "Gifts"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of relying on the love of God and the sufficiency of His redemptive work. He encourages believers to let go of worrying about what others think and to allow the Holy Spirit to reign in their hearts. The preacher also highlights the idea that God requires our weakness, not our strength, in order to work through us. He then delves into the topic of the gifts of the Spirit, emphasizing that they are given to enable believers to glorify God and fulfill His purposes. The sermon references 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14, where the main body of scripture related to the gifts of the Spirit is found.

Transcript

God is absolutely holy. He's the only really holy one and he's the one who becomes our holiness by his spirit within. Praise God.

Now this is my second session in the gifts of the spirit. I have no idea what Les is going to do tomorrow. He's here to take notes.

I want to start on a broad platform again this morning and then go back into 1 Corinthians chapter 12, 13 and 14 where we have probably the main body, not the exclusive body, of the scriptural truth related to the gifts of the spirit. And by the way they're not called gifts, they're called spirituals. But if we go into John chapter 16 we see these words, verse 13, how be it when he the spirit of truth is come he will guide you into all truth for he shall not speak of himself but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak and he will show you things to come.

He shall glorify me for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. I believe that the whole purpose for which God gives to you and me his precious gifts is to enable us to glorify him. They're his, he gives them to us in order that we might use them unto that end.

Now many people get very fearful and get all locked up and they're not sure. You feel weak, you feel inadequate. The apostle Paul felt exactly the same.

If you look into 1 Corinthians chapter 2 when he's writing his first letter in which he goes on to talk about the gifts of the spirit he says in verse 1 of chapter 2 and I brethren when I came to you came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom declaring unto you the testimony or the witness of God for I determined not to know anything among you say Jesus Christ and him crucified I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling and my speech was my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom but in demonstration of the spirit and the power and of course then he goes on in the second letter where he talks about his thorn in the flesh which lots of people have crazy ideas about imagine what it was in fact the context tells you exactly what it was if

you want to look at that lots of people think that he had eye trouble other people suggest that he suffered from epilepsy other people think he had marital problems because he was a pharisee and it would be unusual for a man like Paul a pharisee of the pharisees not to have had a wife were not told anywhere in the scripture that he had or that he she had abandoned him some people suggest that that was his problem other people even blasphemy suggest that he had a moral problem which constantly defeated him that is an infamous lie you look into 2 Corinthians chapter 12 where he talks about his thorn in the flesh it says in verse 7 and lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelation that was given to me a thorn in the flesh a messenger of satan debuff of me

lest I should be exalted above measure for this thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me and he said unto me my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness most gladly therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me therefore I take pleasure in infirmities in reproaches in necessities in persecutions in distresses for Christ's sake for when I am weak then I am strong there's his thorn in the flesh beloved defined in a fivefold manner and you know that five is the number for grace when the devil can't get at us along one line he will try another and to try try another isn't that their experience he often tries along the line of our former weakness but if he doesn't get us along that line then

he'll try another now Paul never used his weakness as a platform to excuse sin he saw weakness as a magnificent platform upon which God could demonstrate his power some of you heard me quote a woman called Lilius Trotter she was a remarkable woman who worked in North Africa for many years John Ruskin the great Victorian art critic and social reformer when he met her with her mother in Florence said that she would probably come the greatest female artist of her day she turned her back on all of it and went and worked spent the whole of her life in North Africa working amongst the Muslims she did do some painting only to serve the Lord's purposes there's a little books sorry they're out of print the plates have been destroyed I tried to get hold of them it cannot be reduced except by

photocopying you can get quite a good reproduction of that today are parables of the cross parables of the crown all based on that lovely text except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it will bide alone but if it die it will bring forth much fruit Lilius Trotter said this we are so slow to learn that it is only our weakness that he requires we think it's our strength we think it's our natural ability our brain and all the other things when only it's only our weakness that he requires and that's why he talks about you and me as an earthen vessel that is invested with the treasure in order that all the glory and all the power should be related unto him glory to his name and I believe that that's very applicable when we face this whole subject concerning the gifts of the spirit as

I say many people think that they're inadequate they're insufficient there they haven't got the capacity they haven't got the vocabulary that's the very point to which we all have to come that statement of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians chapter 2 follows on from the great exposition where Paul talks about the cross or the word of the cross the logos of the cross being the power of God unto salvation to all those who believe blessed be his name he is all that we need and he will give to us everything that we need to enable us to live the life that he intends us to live and to give us the ability to do the things that he wants you or me to do and that's why there's such diversity why there are such different differences when he talks about these things amen now let us turn into the 12th

chapter 12 12 12 13 and 14 there all linked most wonderfully and arranged most beautifully I am so glad that chapter 13 is sandwiched between the other two chapters first of all I want to point out quite simply why Paul regarded the gifts of the spirit or spirituals as they are more accurately called to be so important he uses some very strong words chapter 12 verse 1 he says now concerning spirituals brethren I would not have you ignorant he uses that phrase on more than one occasion I would not have you ignorant now he sent the holy spirit to educate us in spiritual truth it's not whether we're academic it's not whether we've been to a bible school and learned all the the contents of the bible and been led astray as Ron seemed to suggest that many of us have been over the years I went

to bible college for four years and spent the next four years trying to unlearn things that I'd learned and then the spirit came amen and things which were an absolute enigma to me before suddenly became sublimely simple and real he would not have us ignorant one of the terrible tragedies in the realm of catholicism was that for years and years they were not allowed to read the bible the bible could only be interpreted by the church and the vehicle of the interpretation was the priest that ended up in a person called the pope praise god things have changed in catholicism and people are allowed to read their bibles today but there's still a degree of breaks onto what people can believe or not believe I would not have you ignorant and I suppose for many many years even within the

evangelical protestant part of christendom there was an abominable ignorance concerning the baptism of the spirit and the gifts of the spirit and that's why when god graciously moved at the beginning of the last century and what was known as the Pentecostal revival started in Azusa street I think in California where the preacher used to preach with his head in an orange box so that he didn't deflect away from the glory of god we used to read a book what happened to the Azusa street one of the things that really got us on a spiritual high we loved it amen and then what happened down in south Wales 1904 and so on I once had the joy of going and preaching at the top of the valley and the pastor there was well into his 80s and he had been involved in the Welsh revival and he just loved

talking about it but it sounded like ancient history that was the tragedy I believe that he was living in the reality of it but on the whole people who called themselves Pentecostals seem to have little knowledge or understanding concerning these things I remember just after I was baptized in the spirit I was invited to preach in a Pentecostal church in Liverpool I'd never been in one before and being Pentecostals I thought that they'd know it all I knew about that much they'd asked me to talk about the gifts of spirit I knew about that much I'd hardly begun to move you would have thought that I'd come from planet Mars I said where did you get all that from where did you learn all that we're Pentecostals we don't know anything about that I was amazed many people beloved live in abject

ignorance of the things of the spirit that God intends he people to enjoy enjoy I often call the gifts of the spirit the tools of love or the tools of the holy spirit that equip us and enable us to do what God wants us to

do and to live as he wants us to live tools of the spirit I would not have you ignorant go to the end of the same chapter that's chapter 12 verse 31 but covet earnestly the best gifts and and yet show I unto you a more excellent way of course lots of people shut up then and say we don't need the gifts we found the more excellent life we are going to live in the good of chapter 13 well you will have no power to live in the good of chapter 13 apart from the spirit of God as we were reminded this morning in Romans chapter 5 it's not until the love of God has been shed

abroad in our heart that we have any ability to love and as I say the gifts of the spirit I believe are the tools that God in equips us with to enable us to express the love of God to men and women to bring glory to his son the Lord Jesus covet very powerful word the ten commandments were told not to cover but here's one thing that you can covet covet earnestly these are not weak words they're very strong words covet earnestly the best gifts go into chapter 14 now and verse 1 follow after charity and desire spiritual gifts but rather that you may prophesy I suppose desire is one of the strongest forces in the human personality the desire associated with coveting is it if desire goes wrong goes into the realm of being covetous it's this desire this longing that thing deep down inside of it

it says I must have it desire spiritual gifts then further down in chapter 14 in verse 12 it says even so ye for as much as you are zealous of spiritual gifts seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church I would not have you ignorant covet earnestly desire be zealous for amen that indicates to me that Paul didn't regard this as an appendage or something that you could just brush over he spends three whole chapters in this epistle alone now let me say the reason why he spent so much time is was he was correcting misuse and abuse you know lots of people say well the gifts of the spirit aren't important because they don't appear they're not talked about specifically in any other letter of the apostle Paul well if you use that argument and say that is irrelevant you can use exactly

the same argument regarding the breaking of bread because you don't read about the breaking of bread in the other epistles either the only reason why Paul wrote this to the Corinthian church was he was correcting misuse and abuse and wanted to put them right lovingly amen you know like sometimes we read the first epistle of the or read the first chapter he says you come behind in no gift there's some wonderful things about them and it was because of his tremendous love for them he couldn't let them just slide that's true love beloved that isn't afraid of facing people up with their lack or their need as I say many people are gripped by fear I heard a story it's a true story many years ago a young man who was the victim of a dysfunctional family abandoned put in one orphanage after another

and then was taken to one home and after another and he was absolute pain in the neck everyone despaired on him everyone gave up on him and it just compounded his awful feeling of utter rejection and he rebelled and he rebelled and he was utterly impossible to live with and then a young farmer and his wife in obedience to the lord said that they would have him well he led them a dance until one day he took this young man behind a haystack pulled down his pants and gave him a thrashing of his life and then the devil said you've blown it you've done what everyone else has done you've despaired and given up on him the devil's an awful liar later on in that day that young man came to the young farmer and he said you're the first person who's had the courage to love me properly that's not

weakness beloved that's strength that's the love of god operative in the heart of a man and a woman and fear so often incapacitates people from moving into this realm where we're prepared to put our lives at the disposal of god if necessary be made to look a fool god doesn't write you off beloved if you make a mistake you don't make any mistakes you'll never make anything we've become so cautious you can

apply this to many other areas of spirit which you can become so cautious so diplomatic but you're terrified of doing anything we had a wonderful visual aid last night that man only told you a fraction of his past i've heard it all perhaps not all but heard far more than you heard last night that man is so convinced of the love of god and the sufficiency of his redemptive work that he's

free of all blemishes all hold-ups doesn't need anyone to add to it no one to take away from he knows that what god did for him christ by that miracle of the new birth has made him another man and he stood here visibly fearless i don't know how you felt boldness hallelujah may god make us bold beloved may he give us the courage to let go and stop worrying about what other people think what other people say and give ourselves over to the lord and allow his spirit to reign and rule in his heart and moving us in every or any and every way that he wants to amen i believe that our meetings would be much more exciting if we did that i've already pointed out to you the day before yesterday that we've got that wonder wonderful cameo picture of a church meeting in chapter 14 amen there were no out

it doesn't say there were any elders there or any pastors or anyone to keep an eye on them i'm sure that they were there they were doing their job properly but they were overseeing they weren't dominating they weren't controlling they weren't manipulating no so people met together when the church had come together amen all manner of things happened glory be to god and those who came in from the outside came to the conclusion that god was in the mother midst amen that jesus was glorified people recognized his presence because of what was happening so that's the first thing this is not just a superficial thing it's not an appendage it's not unimportant it's an essential part of christian experience if we want to be used by of god we've got to move out of the realm of the natural into the

realm where god can have his way now i want to look at another lovely truth that comes within these chapters and that is the context in which the gifts of spirit normally operate not always but normally first of all in chapter 12 and verse 3 wherefore i give you to understand that no man speaking by the spirit of god calleth jesus a cursed or or anathema and that no man can say that jesus christ jesus is lord but by the holy spirit so first of all the context in which these things function is where jesus christ is lord that's one of the most wonderful things that happens to a man or the woman when the spirit of god comes to indwell his his person he takes over the throne of his life and he's lord there are parts of prison today below it that say that if you add the lordship of jesus

christ to the doctrine of salvation you've moved away from the simplicity of it that's a lie whosoever shall call upon the name of the lord shall be saved it doesn't say whosoever should call upon the name of the g of jesus i know that that sounds if we're splitting hairs but it says who shall who shall ever call upon the name of the lord shall be saved when the spirit of god comes to a man or a woman woman he comes beloved because we've we've relinquished the hold over our life over our natural life we have we have ceased to be in control of our own destiny the spirit of god has come and enthroned himself within our hearts that's wonderful he's not just a spirit that floats round in the ethereal blue he's a spirit spirit who's chosen to come and locate himself in every man and woman who

opens up their being to him of course he's up there he's everywhere amen but it's knowing the personal reality i knew all about that but before i knew the doctrine when god baptized me in the holy ghost i didn't know whether i was coming or going my theological alpaca was just turned over and it went rolling in every direction didn't fit into anything that i'd learned that's why i said i had to spend years unlearning the things that i'd learned but i knew that the spirit of god had come although i couldn't understand it i couldn't put a name to it although i'd probably written essays about it i couldn't put a name to it but i knew that he'd come

and all that had formerly been utterly impossible was now possible it's no longer a struggle he had no usurper any longer in my life wonderful

and in that context where the spirit of god is reigning as lord of our lives amen the gifts of the spirit are safe absolutely safe if he's in control if he tells me what to do and i do it then it's safe i remember that when i was baptized in the spirit a friend of mine who had been a long long standing friend we'd worked together we'd done youth work together we were like brothers literally when i was baptized in the spirit he violently disagreed and he was about to say it's of the devil and i physically put my hand over his mouth and i said joe don't say it i said whatever you think at this moment in time please don't say it but our lives parted like that i can't say where that man stands in relationship to the lord today but our lives parted i still love him there are other people in

this tent who know him but our ways parted the spirit of god had come and i when the spirit of god comes over you ought to be prepared to let go and relinquish every other thing that's why jesus talked about hating our father and our mother our wife our children and our own lives sounds horrendous doesn't he doesn't literally mean that we hate our parents our wives our children in fact it's only when the love of god is shed abroad in our heart and we yield ourselves unconditionally to the spirit of god we have the ability to love these people those whom we are married to those who have parented us on the earth those who have come forth from our loins the ones who are nearest and dear to us the only way in which we can love them properly is when the love of god is shed abroad in our hearts

all the rest at the best but of a desentimental human and it runs out very quickly and that's one of the explanations to the breakdown of so many marital relationships and so why so many children run off into the world away from their families but jesus by the holy ghost has to be lord of our whole life and then we're safe in this realm the second context in which we see these things operate operating so wonderfully you'll find in verse 12 and 13 for as the body is one and hath many members and all the members of that body being many are one body so also is christ for by one spirit are we all baptized into one body whether we be jews or gentiles whether we be bond or free and have all been made to drink into one spirit amen the context beloved is the church that's where these things can

function properly now that doesn't mean to say that you cannot exercise gifts of the spirit outside of the gathered company of god's people i remember once someone said to mr north where did he get all the revelation they wanted to know what books he'd read what sort of people he'd listened to and he said i never forgot what he said he said i get most of it laying flat on my face speaking in tongues that was on his own but there are dangers there was a time in liverpool when a group of ladies all very desirous of getting married gathered together and they spoke in tongues and prophesied to one another and interpreted and they'd all concluded he was going to marry the problem was seven people were all all believed that they were told of the lord to marry the same man he didn't marry any of

them praise god but they all confided in my wife that god had spoken to them that they'd had a word of prophecy they they'd been seeking the lord together and one after the other they came and said it's this one i'm going to tell you who it is some of you may know amen he escaped he married someone entirely different and probably those ladies are glad today that they didn't marry him not because he's a bad boy but because he's in a tight spot amen and if they had married him out of the will of god below it would be in havoc the normal context in which the gifts of the spirit will function will be in the gathered assembly of god's people and it talks about prophecy it says it says um let's look at it in chapter 14 where we were the other day and the whole church become together and then it

says down in verse 28 if there no verse 29 let the prophets speak two or three and let other judge if any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by let the first hold his peace for you may all prophesy but one by one that all may learn and all may be comforted the spirits of the prophet are subject to the prophets now i haven't found the piece that i want about testing the word come on help me out ron no i can't see it sorry but it speaks about testing the word weighing it considering it not everything that is spoken in the church is necessarily the work of the spirit of god you can say the right words can't you thus saith the lord are can none to me pay attention to what i'm going to say and so on it all sounds very good but you can't reduce god to jargon um someone speaks of prophecy

and it says let others test it consider it weigh it when i was in a a local church as a regular attending tender which i am not now sometimes if someone spoke a word i would stop the meeting now you don't do this in every meeting i'd stop the meeting and say one do we believe that god has spoken two what has he said i find that many people but it goes in one ear and out of the other end of the meeting they have no idea if we really believe that god is speaking to his people through a gift of the spirit then we should be all ears what has he said and then finally to whom does it apply and what are we going to do about it we're not just to be hearers of god's word we're to be doers of the same and if we believe that the gifts of the spirit are relevant for today and if we believe that

someone who is moving under the inspiration of the spirit of god speaks a word and that word is proven to be the word of the lord then we must listen to it we must observe what it's saying and realize the implication of it either for an individual sometimes god will speak to an individual sometimes you speak to a company of people sometimes you will speak and it won't be just addressed to one person it may be may be addressed to others but we have to know we have to discern we have to decide before god whether that is god speaking of course the ultimate proof that god spoke is that what he speaks will happen that's the greatest proof of a true prophet that what he prophesized happens of course some prophets in the old testament never lived to see the day of the fulfillment but that didn't

invalidate what they had said they spoke way beyond anything that they understood up here there are things which isaiah spoke when he said the spirit of the lord is upon me because he had anointed me that was true in relationships himself it was applied to him at that time little did he realize the full implication of that that there will come a day when the man would stand on the earth and would say the spirit of the lord is upon me and when he sat down he said this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ear that was the confirmation that isaiah was a true prophet bless god but the context of the church where the company of god's people meet together where the family of god we acknowledge the sovereignty and lordship of jesus christ over our lives and were given unto him when he when we

function in the gifts particularly the oral gifts of the spirit we can discern there are people in every congregation at different levels in a meeting like this you could have a prophecy that that sounds all right do you know some prophecies are an accumulation of information that people have gathered and then it comes out as a prophetic word with great authority putting someone right in the congregation or in the church that happens not because the person is malicious but because they think that that's how it's done other people move from the purely soulish point of view but those who are living in the spirit who are right with god who have that faculty to discern what is of god and what is not of god they will know so you don't get carried away so that's the second context in which it

functions most gloriously of course the other context beloved is the context of love and that's why chapter 13 comes so beautifully placed between chapter 12 and chapter 14 where paul is talking about the gifts of

the spirit in chapter 14 he talks more about the gift of tongues which i'm going to go on to in a moment but you've got this wonderful chapter it's not chapter 13 versus chapter 12 or chapter 14 it's both because if the underlying motive of someone functioning in the spirit isn't their love for god and their love for their brothers and sisters but it can be lethal i was once in a situation where as a person who had whom we assumed at that time had a tremendous gift but i always had a problem with it it always seemed so hard the person who was being ministered to and it was

in that sort of context where this person had claimed to have great gift of discernment in fact it turned out that it was clairvoyance rather than a spirit a gift of discerning of spirits but every time it operated was just as it was like a scorpion had a sting in the tail and everything in me reacted sorry that reacted too reacted again i was young in the lord and in the things of the spirit and i thought it was me i was the wrong now i am by nature an introvert melancholic inward looking self-condemnatory so i thought it was me it was my problem and i dug around inside until i almost came to the end of myself in fact i ended up being ill in bed for over three months now i don't bear any resentment about that i have no resentment towards the person who was instrumental because i saw that

god was using it for my good see the devil has to work for your good certainly not a prophet he's not moving in the spirit but he's still going to work for you and those three months brought me to a place of conviction of assurance of settlements in my life that has never wavered since but it was devastating it's only later on that this whole thing was exposed as being something other than the spirit of god that can be a very painful experience but again if you don't let your heart become bitter and resentful if you seek to put your life at that in the hands of god but even the devil can't harm you he might batter you he might tempt you might trouble you in your mind but he cannot get into that sanctuary of your being called spirit where the holy spirit of god has come to live that's made

very clear in the sixth chapter of the second epistle of the princeton's where he talked about light and darkness christ and belial sin and righteousness he said they don't go together they can't live in the same place a person who is truly born of the spirit of god and full of the holy ghost yielded to him beloved cannot be possessed of the of the spirit of the devil cannot he can be troubled he can be tormented he can be tempted jesus was tempted in all things such as we are but he did not sin temptation is not sin and paul says that says to us that no temptation has touched us but as such as it's common to man and he has made a way of escape glory be to god temptation doesn't mean inevitable sin beloved it's a way in which we are persuaded to look unto him again and again where the love

of god beloved has been shed abroad in our heart by the holy ghost undergirding the outworking of it in our lives again it's lovely sometimes it's firm as i've already pointed out love can be very firm the lord chastens those whom he loves and sometimes he will speak a word to us not to condemn us there is no condemnation to them that are in christ jesus if a word of god comes and it's really the word of the spirit beloved is a disciplinary word it will not condemn you it will provoke you to higher heights and broader depths and deeper depth broader widths and deeper depths it will but if it's the enemy it will heap condemnation on you and crush you so there are the three contexts in which the gifts of the spirit normally operate under the authority and lordship of jesus christ enthroned

in our hearts by the spirit in the context of the gathered company of god's people who had been baptized by the spirit into the body of christ and in the context of the love of god shed abroad in our heart actively expressing itself through our lives and in this particular context through the gifts of the spirit now the third thing that we discover and it's a repetitive phrase particularly in the 14th chapter that everything is to be

done unto edifying you'll see it in verse five i would that you all speak in tongues but rather that you prophesied for greater is he that prophesied than he that speaketh in with a tongue except he interpret that the church may receive edifying edifying you will see it again in verse 12 even so for as much as you are zealous of spiritual gifts seek that you

may excel to the edifying of the church you'll find it again in verse 26 how is it then brethren when you come together every one of you hath a psalm hath a doctrine hath a tongue hath an interpretation let all things be done unto edifying now this is a great purpose that the god has given the gifts of his spirit to his church beloved that they should serve to edify us in the things of god not just to educate us not just to instruct us but to educate us to build us up to enlarge and increase our understanding of him giving us greater and greater ability to live lives that are consistent day in and day out they're not play things they're not just there for our amusement that's why i say if god speaks whether it be a through a tongue or interpretation or prophecy a word of wisdom a word of

knowledge in the church if that is really the spirit of god functioning through his members men and women born again and full of the holy ghost then we have to pay attention or we end up a little bit abusing misusing what god has entrusted to us there's great warnings in relation to that to the breaking of bread isn't it the abuse and misuse one referred to it the other morning very serious thing you know so often we uh we just tack the breaking of bread onto the end of a meeting as if it was an appendage something that we do habitually has little significance failing to recognize that in the breaking of bread beloved we have the very essence the very heart of the gospel illustrated for us to remind us of course the early church broke bread every day before it had degenerated into a

ecclesiastical system where you had to have special cups and special bread and special wine and all the rest of it it was something which was a part of their life wasn't an ecclesiastical ordinance it was god constantly reminding us the very heart of the gospel and to abuse and misuse that there are great warnings in the 10th and 11th chapters of this same epistle and what applies to the breaking of bread brother is a significant warning in our relationship to the gifts of god's spirit they're not play things they're not things that we mishandle or regard lightly but recognize that there are god's gracious gifts to us to edify us and build us up in christ now i want to look at the gift of the speaking in tongues because that's the one which always preoccupies people more than any other um

also it's the one that paul spends more time in writing about to the crimson church than any other and therefore i believe that it's important can i say to begin with i do not personally believe that the speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism of the spirit i believe the most wonderful thing that happened on the day of pentecost wasn't that men spoke in tongues it wasn't that they got power for service that wasn't that they were introduced into the realm of the spirit they had functioned in many gifts before the day of pentecost under the authority of the spirit of god that lived in christ after the day of pentecost the spirit of god living in them began to function through them but that wasn't when the gifts of the spirit began for them god had been working of course

when he was on on earth all that he did of eternal significance he did through his son but he delegated his authority and allowed them to share in his ministry you see that in the in the gospel record the most wonderful thing that happened on the day of pentecost was that god and man became one for the first time after jesus becoming god and man that's the heart of the gospel that's the essence of real christianity that's why the baptism of spirit the day of pentecost is the most wonderful thing that ever happened the reason why jesus died wasn't just to deal with our sin certainly wasn't just to forgive our sins god had been

forgiving sins down through the ages men sin god forgave them men sin god forgave them it's like a treadmill and of course many christians live in that sort of

condition he did more than forgive our sins ron said earlier on he did more than justify us he came to bring us into the wonder and the reality of new birth someone came to me after the ron session and said that i seem to equate the baptism of the spirit with new birth i said exactly i said analytically we often separate them like ron is having to separate these four sessions but essentially he's talking about a whole and if you latch on to one to the extrusion of the other you won't get the real thing you've got to embrace the whole that's because of the limitations of our ability to grasp it all at one time in in teaching it has to be progressively unfolded now you can know all about the doctrine of new birth and everything that leads up to it and is a part of it but unless the spirit

of god come you cannot live in it jesus says in john chapter 14 verse 19 because i live you shall live also we have no power to live beloved until the spirit of god comes he illustrated that in john chapter 6 didn't he when he said eat my flesh and drink my blood if you won't you have no life in you the words that i speak and do they are spirit and they are life until we become partakers of the divine nature brother we don't know the reality experimentally of what it means to be born from above and that's what something that god by his spirit does and no one else can do for us and that's what happened on the day of pentecost i am utterly convinced and up until that time no one lived in that glorious life now speaking in tongues the first thing we have a question in verse 30 of chapter 12

where it says have all the gifts of healing do all speak in tongues do all interpret and further up it says are all apostles are all prophets are all teachers are all workers of miracles the obvious answer beloved is no isn't it now paul was writing to the church at corinth and he didn't didn't believe that anyone was a member of the church of jesus christ unless they had been baptized by the spirit into the body of christ it's another way of talking about new birth isn't it join the family of god through birth were baptized by the spirit into the body of christ and he was taught writing to people who have been baptized by the spirit says in the same chapter baptized by the spirit into the body of christ and he says do you all speak in tongues answer was no do you all prophesy the answer

was no are you all apostles the answer is no that's why i can't believe in the doctrine of additional evidence i believe there are there are three clear statements in the acts of the apostles when they people were baptized in the holy ghost that was on the day of pentecost in the house of and the church of the group of deficits before they were the church the 12 men who were gathering there on those three occasions it says quite clearly that they spoke in tongues and in the cornelius context it says they also prophesied never heard anyone saying that prophecy is essential to prove that you're baptized in the spirit but tongues yes but there are many other references in the acts of the apostles that make no reference to speaking in tongues but for the church of birth of the church at

corinth no reference at all if there was if there was speaking with tongues on every occasion that men and women were baptized by the spirit if tongues was there every time you could build a concrete absolute doctrine on it but you can't i do understand that lots of muslims speak in tongues that's not of the spirit of god it of course doesn't prove anything so that's the first question that we have to ask but down in chapter 14 verse 31 where it's talking about prophecy and often tongues followed by interpretation is virtually almost the same as prophecy it says um oh i found my verse 2 verse 29 which i was um looking for just now let the prophets speak two or three and let the others judge the word judge there is way consider and sometimes we need to do that we need to do that in our own

heart if we hear a word of prophecy is that for me what is god saying to me or is he talking to us as a group we have to weigh it we have to consider it see its relevance i was once in a meeting when someone got up and gave what they what is generally called a directive prophecy and the prophet said that a certain lady and he pointed to her in the meeting it's in one of our very early meetings i tell you things happen in this meeting would make your hair stand on their end today i was laughing because he was there as well had this directive prophecy that this woman was going to go to south africa and she was going to do this and do that and do the other and i i remember this in north it was one of the earliest times that he was with us he leapt to his feet and came in and he said sister

whatever you do don't seek to implement that word if that is of god he will bring it about but whatever you do don't take your money out of your savings and buy a ticket and go to south africa because if you do you'll be in trouble that was a big lesson you know lots of people think they hear a word yes it may have relevance it may have personal implications in their own lives but you don't have to manipulate it if it is of god god will bring it to pass all that you have to do in that sort of context is yield yourself to the lord and then in verse 31 it says for you may all prophesy one by one that all may learn and that all may be comforted praise god and if that applies to prophecy realize the context but it applies to the whole range of the gifts of the spirit not everyone speaks in

tongues not everyone prophesies but you all may there's no reason why we shouldn't if our hearts are open and we're prepared to talk a language where we don't know what we're talking about you see that's the problem with the gift of tongues you don't know what you're talking about and i think sometimes god gave that gift to deal with our pride we love to know what we're talking about we love to be in control but when you speak in clue what you're saying that makes you look an ass and you have to be a fool for christ's sake amen and you can't learn it beloved by someone whispering in your ear and saying say this after me i met a young man who came to me a meeting many many years ago in fleetwood i've been asked to go and minister in a meeting there was a young man in the congregation the

moment i finished preaching he came running to me and i usually say to people well tell me a little bit about yourself where you are where are you up to in the lord he said oh he told me he was saved i said that's very good he said i'm born again wonderful he said i'm baptized in the spirit i said how do you know that he said i speak in tongues i said fine and then he began to pour out his heart like a cesspool like one of those people whom jesus found in the in the synagogue he had an unclean spirit it was diabolical i knew it before he started opening his mouth if you're if you live and move in the spirit but you become aware of things that doesn't mean to say that you're critical or that you're analytical and you start pointing your finger at people and make making judgmental

statements but if you're in the spirit abiding in christ and the spirit of god is working you will know but don't tell me how to know how you know you just don't know you just know like if you're truly born again you know you don't hope you don't think you know i remember on another occasion there was a dear young man in livable he over a period of time ministered and i could say amen it was good it was lovely and i'm always for encouraging young brothers that to really begin to get moving and for a period of time it was just wonderful and then one night he began to preach he was saying very similar things using the same terminology and so on and something in me shouted no after a couple weeks jenny said to me you react when so and so ministers don't you i said yes she said why i said i

don't know all i know is that i cannot expose my spirit to what is coming i can't understand up here it all sounds very right and very nice 11 months later i was in no position to go to him and say you know you're

out of line the lord didn't give me permission the lord showed me so that i could pray and wait 11 months later that young man came to me and opened up his heart 11 months to that day in which he came and talked to me beloved he had gone out of the will of the lord still had the ability to perform on the outside but what was coming forth was not of the spirit of god and that's why that inward anointing that inward unction that john talks about in the second chapter of his first letter is so vital you cease to be gullible you're not a sitting duck for anything that's going

but i mean you have a clarity you may not always understand it you may not know what to do about it all you can do is bring it to the lord and leave it there and if he wants you involved in resolving the situation fine if he doesn't beloved the issue will be resolved and you'll be clear you'll feel a clear way through i've seen that and experienced that on many occasions and if someone to ask me how i know i don't don't know how i know but i know often say to people i know who i know i'd never seen tom until yesterday the moment i saw him i knew that we were one as if i'd known him all my life i'd listen to him and so on but that's no guarantee it's when you meet a person face to face you know that's what's lacking in the church so often and why we end up with such a terrible mixture and

all sorts of things come forth beloved and people think they're wonderful they think it's it's truly the spirit of god when there's always the possibility it's not that's why i said in the context of the church beloved where god's people are gathered together you're much safer there isn't the same danger of being led astray now paul says some very significant things as i say he said do all speak in tongues the obvious answer is no but all may then if you look in verse 5 of chapter 14 he said i would that you all spoke in tongues that was the desire of his heart i would that you all spoke in tongues and then he says another thing verse 18 i thank god i speak in tongues more than you all now lots of people say tongues is the baby language of the church who said that the bible doesn't and if

it was the baby language of the church then the apostle paul was a great big baby when he wrote the first epistle of corinthians and probably it was the second not the first i could write a letter like this as a baby i think i was pretty good i'd fall into the category of the genius he said i speak in tongues more than you all he wasn't apologizing forgive philip he wasn't denigrating it his desire was that everyone should he didn't see any reason why they shouldn't i speak in tongues more than you all and then a very very salutary warning at the end of the chapter wherefore brethren covet to prophesy and forbid not to speak in tongues amen forbid not and beloved there are people who say that they believe that the bible is the whole council of god that all that the word of all scriptures

written by inspiration of god and is profitable and they say it's not of the lord that's a blatant contradiction of what god's word says i don't have to be clever to read that forbid not to speak in tongues and that's why i put my hand over my friend's mouth and said joe don't say it and if we said that sort of thing beloved in our foolishness we need to say sorry to the lord we need to repent of it many of us have said silly things foolish things but if you're a child of god beloved and claim to be born again in the spirit of god and seeking to live according to the revelation that we have in the book then we have to be very careful that we don't attribute unto the devil the things that belong to the spirit of god as i read matthew chapter 11 i think it is it talks about the sin against

the holy ghost it's the only symbol of it that is not cannot be forgiven that's how serious it is an attribute a work of this that is ascribed to the spirit of god beloved to abuse and misuse and say that not of god brings us very near to grieving the spirit of god sin against the father it will be forgiven you sin against the son and it will forgive you but if you sin against the holy ghost jesus said it cannot be forgiven that's one of the

explanations beloved about unforgivable sin you can't be forgiven if you've sinned against the holy ghost and you can't be forgiven if you die unrepentant i don't know anywhere else in the new testament talks about unforgivable sin now if we'd done it before we came to the lord if we did it in our ignorance and our foolishness there's a lovely

scripture it says time of man's ignorance god winked at that's a lovely phrase isn't it time of man's ignorance god winked at doesn't mean he lightly regarded but he does not hold us responsible for what we do not know that's why paul starts i would not have you ignorant but once we know but i don't appreciate these things we must not fall into the trap of dishonouring the work of the spirit of god now why was the gift of tongues given and why is it so important again we have three lovely truths john at one print in chapter 14 is such a magnificent explanation to the whole thing you'll find the first reason in verse 2 sorry our time has gone i'll quickly go through these verse 2 it says for he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men but unto god for no man understandeth

him albeit the spirit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries often you will sit next to a person in a meeting probably and they are praying away in tongues they're speaking to god doesn't need interpretation it's nothing to do with anyone else they may not even know it themselves someone described it like liquid glory yeah that's something wonderful bypasses your mind it's unto god secondly beloved it's for the edification of the individual it says in verse 4 he that speaketh in an unknown tongue edified himself now he will be edified beloved just in functioning in the gift as i say it that will be a benediction to his own spirit sometimes god will give him the interpretations for him as i said that's how mr north tells told me that he got a lot of his revelation lying before the lord

speaking in tongues god would give him the interpretation and then thirdly it's for the edification of the church verse 5 i want that you all speak in tongues but rather that you prophesy for greater is he that prophesied than he that speaketh in tongues except he interpret that the church may receive edifying so there's three reasons for the glory of god it's for the edification of the individual and it's for the edification of the church and then there are three disciplines i must stop here three disciplines as to how you handle interpretation and they're quite simple you'll find the first one in verse 27 it says even any man speak in an unknown tongue let it be by two or at the most by three and that by course and let one interpret now i don't believe that that restricts the number of

tongues that take place in the meeting it says if any one one person is not to dominate let one interpret normally a person would speak in tongues and then someone else will interpret if that doesn't happen we have the next discipline you'll find it in verse 13 therefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret that really puts you on the on the spot doesn't it you give a tongue and you think you've fulfilled your responsibility and then there's dead silence then you have to pray and you might be privileged of exercising two gifts rather than one lots of people say why speak in tongues when you could have spoken a prophetic word in one go and as i say i believe that god wants to deal with our pride hmm and then the third discipline you will find in verse 28

but if there be no interpreter let him keep silence in the church and let him speak to himself and to god in other words if in that meeting he speaks in tongues no one else interprets he asks the lord for the interpretation god doesn't give it and you cannot manipulate it and make it up if god doesn't give it but you dare not pretend that you've got the interpretation if there's no one else in the meeting to interpret and you haven't got the interpretation then paul says you're to be silent that doesn't mean to say that you're never to use the gift again he's talking about that meeting that gathering of god's people where the gifts of the

spirit are working so quite simply would to god that you all speak in tongues i speak in tongues more than you all forbid not to speak in tongues but

the edific it is for the glory of god it's for the edification of the individual and it's for the edification of the church three disciplines one person speaks in tongues another interprets no one else interpret you pray that god will give you an interpretation god doesn't give you the interpretation then you don't function in that gift in that meeting again says be silent very simple isn't it three lots of three all in one sentence all in one chapter praise god i hope lez is going to fill in with all the others i don't know what he's going to say praise god let's pray shall we sorry it's we've gone over time father we do thank you for your love we again thank you for your generosity and for the fact that you have baptized us into your body over which you serve as head we acknowledge lord

that we are members where your hands were your feet were your ears were your eyes your where your mouth and we thank you lord that in your wisdom that you invest and give gifts differing differences of operation but all the same spirit we we love you for that lord we trust you with it and we say to you today we want to move more freely and more actively in that which you have given to your church that we don't believe lord was taken away at the end of what was called the apostolic age but still applies today in which we live the day of pentecost stir us up lord cause us to covet earnestly desire be zealous for those things which will equip us to be your servants in jesus name amen amen our next meeting will be at seven o'clock this evening lord bless you

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