

VOICE PRESENCE POWER

A Supernatural Handbook

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*Unless otherwise noted, all scriptures are from the New King James Version,
some emphasis is mine.

For Jill

A life well spent

Romans 6:4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Modern Development Of A Supernatural Culture And Gifting In The Church	2
Chapter 2: Correct Expectations	11
Chapter 3: Supernatural Fruit And Gifts Of The Holy Spirit.....	22
Chapter 4: Gifts Of The Spirit.....	30
Chapter 5: Operating In Gifts Of The Spirit	70
Chapter 6: Spiritual Communion & Communication	79
Chapter 7: Keeping Jesus Central	94
Chapter 8: Living As Sons	114
Chapter 9: Relearning To Experiment	119
Final Words.....	124

INTRODUCTION

Jesus tells us in John 17:3 that knowing God is eternal life. Our eternal life begins at the point of right relationship with God through His son, Jesus Christ. The goal of the book is that the reader would ignite a vibrant and tangible relationship with God, and have the visible supernatural out-workings of being rightly related to Him. As a young Christian, I was deeply marked by the healing of a young girl at a hospital. Her healing led me to ask some very simple, yet profound questions. I asked, can supernatural experiences be intentionally engaged, and can I teach other people how to do it? For over twenty years I have desired to blaze a trail in the spiritual realm that others could easily follow, and I have successfully answered those two questions in the affirmative. The text is written to provide the reader with a solid understanding of the supernatural, how to hear the voice of God, and how to step into the power of God. However, the text is primarily an overview, as so much could be written on the subject. A whole book could be written on each spiritual gift, but this book merely lays the groundwork and sets correct spiritual expectations. It is my heartfelt prayer that every reader is stirred to take a deeper step into operating in the supernatural and that their relationship with God blossoms more fully.

CHAPTER 1

MODERN DEVELOPMENT OF A SUPERNATURAL CULTURE AND GIFTING IN THE CHURCH

The West has experienced a supernatural vacuum since the Enlightenment and the rise of humanism. Logic, reason, and the natural realm became all that modern man set his sights on to determine what reality is. While myths and superstitions were discounted, so too was the idea of a transcendent and benevolent Spirit at work in the everyday life and function of this world. While some would grieve the dismissal of thousands of years of religious tradition with the changing tide of modern sentiment, in reality, this position regarding religion caused some to ask challenging questions regarding Christianity: If God is real and the Bible is God's word, then where is the power of God? This cultural pressure on Christianity impacted men and women to hunger for an encounter with the supernatural and to experience the manifest power of the Holy Spirit. Emerging out of the first and second Great Awakenings, came the Faith Cure Movement led by Charles Cullis in the latter part of the 1800s. When the sick were made whole, this movement provided for the sick and the ministerial empirical evidence of the reality of God. The Faith Cure Movement only wet the appetite of those pursuing an encounter with the supernatural.

On the heels of this evangelical healing movement came the outpouring at Azusa Street in 1906. This democratizing event allowed anyone who was desirous to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the experience and evidence of speaking in tongues. The hunger for a personal encounter with the supernatural realm became a cultural reality for the church. This outpouring and the revelation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit revolutionized the Christian experience. God was not just a God that healed, but a God who delivered a tangible, experiential, and relational presence. From 1906 until this modern day, there have been groups of people seeking a deeper touch or a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the US. There has been the healing ministries of the 1920s, the 1948 Latter Rain healing revival, the Jesus People of the 1960s and 70s, the Toronto Blessing in 1994, and a number of others.

As believers, it is important that we see the history of our collective experience and see where we are in the story the Father is telling. It is important that we consider why the modern church obsesses over the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I would propose that being raised in a culture that has dismissed the possibility or reality of the supernatural, we have lost our spiritual moorings. Mankind as a whole in the West is spiritually frustrated. We are spirit, yet our culture denies us the freedom to access the spiritual as the supernatural is seen as silly and unscientific. Spiritual impressions are just overworking neurons, near-death experiences are simply the oxygen-starved state of a dying brain, and the tormenting voices people hear are merely chemical imbalances in the brain. The agony

modern man faces concerning the lack of real spirituality is expressed in the self-destructive abuse of our souls. Anxiety and depression rule the minds and hearts of our people, yet there is a pill for that too! Our culture hammers this narrative, but the draw toward spirituality still exists and Western culture has had to reimagine an acceptable spiritual expression. In the 1800s and 1900s, the medium/spiritualist movement had great influence and even impacts the psychic culture today. Out of the beat generation and into the hippy movement came the New Age and influence of Eastern spirituality. Though God was moving with the Holy Spirit in a small section of the church, the larger church body allowed their supernatural theology to be disemboweled by modernism and cessationism. Instead of the mainline church pushing back with a greater spiritual demonstration of the power of God, the reaction was to conform. In this vacuum of a supernaturally inept church, the New Age movement redefined and re-termed certain spiritual experiences. This, in turn, led Christians to be fearful of the supernatural, spiritual development, and spiritual experimentation. Though this is slowly changing and many mainline churches are rediscovering their spiritual roots, there is a long way to go.

Many in the Church today believe that they want to be used to heal the sick or to prophesy as they want to push the message of Jesus further and to do their part in the Great Commission. However, if we were to be very honest with ourselves, we are spiritually starving and we have been told all our lives that God is not real. We want to see the power of God at work to give ourselves

permission to truly believe and engage in a relationship with God. To be frank, there is absolutely nothing wrong with this. The first step to believing is encountering and experiencing the power of God. In fact, if the reader is truly born again, he or she has already encountered and experienced God. In order to have a salvation experience, the believer has to have a revelational encounter with God that reveals Jesus as Lord. As Jesus said in John 6:44, *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.”* The Christian walk is a walk of experiencing and communing with God. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 2:4-5, *“My message and my preaching were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power so that your faith would not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.”* The Holy Spirit wants faith to rest on his power and not on apologetics or any form of human reason. Now more than ever, believers must encounter the power of God. Beyond that, believers must be prepared to demonstrate the Spirit’s power.

As a young believer, I struggled with skepticism and unbelief. I want to make it clear that no one should condemn themselves for being skeptical. The disciples were skeptical at times as well. Thomas, in particular, would not believe unless he put his hands in the wounds of Jesus, and yet, Jesus met that request. Skepticism is normal and human, however, God uses it because it is open to being proven wrong. Unbelief is not a question in the mind of a person, it is a statement. Unbelief takes what God has said and lives and reacts as if it is a lie. Skepticism raises questions, unbelief gives the

answer, and the answer it lands on is that God is not truthful or reliable enough to accomplish what He said He would.

As many of us do, I struggled with doubt. As a 20 year-old young man, I was given a series of sermons to listen to. The speaker shared that everyone who believed in Jesus could heal the sick and that if we were true believers, the supernatural would be normal and expected in our everyday lives. I had grown up in a church that had a move of the Holy Spirit in the early 80s and we had the occasional itinerant minister who would come and we would have 'make them fall down Sunday' as my friends and I referred to it. However, I never thought that God would be willing or want to use me to pray for the sick, but as I listened to this sermon series, I became so frustrated in my spirit. I thought to myself, "either this is true and it is the biggest secret in the church or Christianity is not true, and if it is not then I want nothing to do with it." I told God, "I need to see a miracle with my own hand, and if you show me, then you can have my whole life without reservation." I had heard that fasting was helpful for a breakthrough in the supernatural, so I thought, "I will fast until I see a miracle." I want to issue a word of caution here: I did not have anyone to coach me in the supernatural at this level. This radical approach to the supernatural was something that came out of my heart in the moment and I cannot advise anyone taking the same approach. What I can say is that God is a gracious giver and He wants everyone to

walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, and it is my recommendation that the reader ask the Holy Spirit how they can partner with Him in releasing the supernatural in their personal lives. The Holy Spirit will give you a strategy and show each and every hungry person how to enter into their supernatural inheritance in Christ. It was on the fourth day of the fast and my brother and I decided we would go to the hospital down the street to see if we could find someone to pray for. When we walked into the lobby, my brother noticed some of his friends from high school. We walked up to them with bibles in hand, and they asked us what we were doing there. We said, “we are praying for the sick do you know anyone who needs healing?” One young girl said, “you can pray for Ayla, she was just in a car accident and has a brain hemorrhage.” To be honest, I had no idea what a brain hemorrhage was, but as my brother and I entered the elevator, suddenly this strange confidence came upon me. At the time, I had no other way to describe it, but I now know that I had entered into a gift of faith. We walked into the room on the third floor of the hospital and all the family members were gathered around the bed. Tubes and monitors protruded out of the young girl and suddenly I found myself pointing at one of the family members. I heard myself say, “don’t be afraid just believe in God.” My logical side was saying, “what are you talking about, shut up!” Yet, the words just seemed to glide out of my mouth. My brother and I laid hands on Ayla.

I did not feel anything, there was no angel singing in the corner. In fact, it was kind of awkward when we were done. We thanked the family and were on our way. About two hours later, the phone rang and Ayla's mother was on the phone. The doctors had done a follow-up CAT scan to see the progression of the bleeding, but to their astonishment, 90% of the blood had vanished. The doctors then performed a second CAT scan as it is impossible for the blood to vanish in such a short amount of time, and yet, the results came back the same. The blood had disappeared. A few days later, the woman that I had pointed to and said, "don't be afraid, just believe God," called me. She asked us who we were and I simply told her we were Christians trying to be helpful and share God's love. She then said something that I will never forget, "I have never felt love like this." It struck me that day that when God invades someone's situation, they can experience the transforming love and kindness of Jesus Christ. Those words have stuck with me and continue to ring in my ears.

I came into a true walk of faith with Christ, not through some hard-charging, hyped-up faith, but through my honest questions and my doubt. Like Thomas, I needed to experience something tangible and real. Many people talk down about the disciple who needed that extra boost of encounter in order to believe, however, not many people note that Thomas got what he needed. He came into great faith and, at the end of the day, this is what God is looking for.

As the Western church has progressed in pursuing an experience

with the Holy Spirit, there have been various expressions in different streams regarding how to encounter the Holy Spirit and what a move of God looks like. Sociologically, the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Azusa Street sprang to life during a transitional time where Victorianism was phasing out and Modernism was arising. The focus on the scientific method and industrialization with the emphasis on objective and replicable outcomes, led to the idea of repeatable ministry methodologies. A few years before, the systematic method of salvation arose out of the holiness era. That is, a theology that constructed the salvation experience as a sinners prayer founded upon scripture and faith in God's word, in turn, God would save the penitent based upon the words and works of Jesus regarding the cross. A method for receiving the Holy Spirit then arose out of the Azusa Street revival where the hungry would tarry or wait for the Holy Spirit to fall upon the believer. Other methods of encountering God have been replicated including the laying on of hands for the Holy Spirit, having tongues as the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, an evangelical obsession with Hebrew cultural appropriation and expression, fads like the prayer of Jabez, prescriptive oils, and the list goes on. In this modern era, the West has treated the pursuit and expression of the supernatural as if it were a search for the perfect method or correct set of actions that would unlock the power of God. The charismatic church has made excuses for why God will not manifest His power in the West. We have made fads and people with unusual testimonies our focus, and at times we have built a culture of 'spiritual manifestations' and physical

emulation in order to encounter God. If there is a formula to create an encounter with God but we fall short, or if there is a method of prayer but there is no answer, and if we have listened to every teaching and yet are without breakthrough, we must ask this simple question, “where is the raw power of God?”

CHAPTER 2

CORRECT EXPECTATIONS

Depending on the reader's exposure to Pentecostal or Charismatic Christianity, there may be a varying degree of understanding of what the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is. For some, the idea may be a group of people huddled around an individual praying in tongues and believing for the individual to receive the gift of tongues. For others, it may be a tarrying and individual travail in order to receive a touch of the Spirit. Perhaps the idea conjures the notion of well-dressed people being prayed for by a minister and the individuals falling down under the power of the Spirit.

First, let us define what the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is in scripture. When John the Baptist comes on the scene to announce the coming Messiah, he introduces him in a unique way. If John the Baptist were a modern-day Protestant and was going to announce the coming of Christ, he might say something like, 'behold, one is coming after me who will die on the cross for your sins, be sure to believe in Him that you may receive your eternal insurance policy.' However, John does not say that.

Matthew 3:11: *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*

Luke 3:16: *John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*

Mark 1:8: *I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.*

John 1:32-33: *And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'*

No doubt, the cross cannot be understated and it is central to a right relationship with God, yet John is declaring that the crowning achievement of the Messiah's mission, He will baptize in the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a sideline issue or something the believer should see as optional. I hope the reader can see that if this is the ministerial introduction to Jesus in every gospel, it is very important and essential that we understand and, more importantly, have it in our lives.

As it is with most spiritual truths that bear great importance, the enemy would like to cause controversy around the topic in order to prevent people from experiencing it. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is no exception. There have been denominational splits over the topic, but if we are honest with scripture and with ourselves, we will be able to discern what the word of God says.

John 20:19-23

Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

From the reading of this chapter, we know that the disciples encountered Jesus and received the Holy Spirit in this manner on the day of the resurrection as in verse 11 of this chapter the passage indicates it was resurrection Sunday and in verse 19 the scripture indicates it was the same day. The encounter the disciples had with Jesus at this moment was the reception of their salvation experience. The disciples received the indwelling experience of forgiveness and

in turn the righteousness of Christ.

After Christ's resurrection, he is seen by a number of people over the next 40 days. He is seen by Peter in Luke 24:34, by the 11 in Luke 24:36-43, 7 disciples see Him in John 21:1-23, at a mountain in Galilee in Matthew 28:16-17, Jesus encounters His half-brother, James, and Jesus ascends to heaven after 40 days in Luke 24:49-53 and in Acts 1:3-11. Just looking at the timeline, the salvation experience from the book of John and what happens in Acts 2 are two very separate events. Beyond this evidence, there is other supporting evidence that people in the book of Acts had a similar experience.

Acts 8:12-17

But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Here we have evidence that the people had received Jesus and been baptized into His name but received the Holy Spirit when Peter and John laid hands on them. Also, Paul in Acts 9 encounters Jesus, and upon being baptized, then has hands laid upon him to receive the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:1-6:

And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Upon having faith in Jesus and demonstrating that faith publicly with Baptism, Paul laid hands on them and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues and prophesied. As believers, if we have not yet received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we should seek to do so.

Now John the Baptist had said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. It is important to understand what it is to be baptized with fire. In some streams, the baptism of fire would mean that someone is anointed to preach. Perhaps in other camps, it would be the ability to win the lost to Christ. In the old testament we have fire where God covenants with Abraham in Genesis 15:17, God speaks to Moses in a burning bush in Exodus 3:2, God comes as a fire on Mount Sinai in Exodus 19:18, the Israelites are led by a pillar of fire through the desert in Exodus 12:21 and Numbers 14:14, and the disciples have tongues of fire upon their heads in Acts 2. Fire is an outward sign of covenant, it is a sign of communion and a sign of God's manifest presence. To be baptized in fire is to have the continual and tangible experience of God and His presence in our lives. To at the same time be baptized in the Holy Spirit is to literally have our spirits, our souls, our mind and emotions, and body infused with the living presence and living person of God. This infusion of God's Spirit provides us access to the most powerful thing in the universe, the voice of God.

As a new believer in Christ at the age of 19, I wanted to have a real relationship with God. I had told Him that I did not want a relationship where He was far away, where His voice and His presence was reserved for a distant future. It was my expectation that if God wanted me in His family, He would talk to me. I had grown up in church and seen many people pray, but if I can be frank, there was very little answered prayer. I took the whole of what I knew on how to pray and

what had been modeled, and I set it aside. I decided I would approach God in the most simple way possible. I would simply talk to God as if He was with me and then wait for His reply. I had the habit of going on walks and on these walks, I would simply talk out loud to God saying things like, 'hi God, how are you? How are you feeling today?' I would wait for a response and I did not hear an audible voice, but as I would simply ask God questions, I began to have thoughts in my mind that were smarter than me. I would ask God questions and then immediately have a profound thought or answer to my question. My dialogue relationship with God began to blossom, and I decided that I would start going on Holy Spirit drives. At an intersection, there are typically only 3 options, left, right or straight. I practice hearing God's voice by simply asking what direction to go during my quiet time with Him. On one particular day, I was meditating on the omniscient nature of God. I was thinking, 'God if you are really with me and Christ lives inside me, why do I not see the same power Jesus saw in His ministry?' I was truly perplexed at how God could be everywhere but especially be in me in a unique way. It did not make sense and I was pondering these things as I was on my Holy Spirit drive. During this time, I was led to a park I had only visited once before. I decided I would sit on the swings and just keep thinking about this. There were two young boys maybe 7 or 8 years old playing on the jungle gym in front of me about 20 yards away. I was

thinking, 'God are you with me, like really with me?' I was looking out over the park and then one of the little boys on the jungle gym looked at me and yelled, "where you are, there I am!" The little boy then put his hand up and gave me a hang loose sign. Needless to say, this had my attention as chills ran through my body. I was so shaken and I did not know what to think, so I went up to the little boy to thank him and let him know he changed my life. Yet, as I approached him and thanked him, he retreated away from me as if he was afraid in a 'stranger danger fashion'. I was even more perplexed! Did God jump inside this kid's mouth for a second as he seemed to have no idea what he just yelled at me? Despite being absolutely confused, I was totally encouraged. God is with me, He will never leave me, and His real presence is available for every situation.

Throughout scripture, God declares to those who love and follow Him that He will be with them. Now many people see that as the symbolic form of God's omniscience in His being with us, but I would posit that, though God is omniscient, He deposits and manifests His real, tangible, and miracle-working presence on those who are baptized in the Holy Spirit. It is my opinion that the power of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is highly underutilized by a lack of expectation. If we examine the context in which the Holy Spirit fell upon those in Acts, it will provide some necessary insight.

Acts 1:4-7

And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

Before Jesus ascends into heaven, he lets the disciples know that they will be baptized in the Holy Spirit in short order. I think it's important to notice their first question after being told that this would happen, saying, 'Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' Why ask such a peculiar question until we consider their context. The followers are Jewish believers who believe the Messiah would restore the kingdom of Israel and they have just been told that they would not just have the Holy Spirit come upon them but that they would be immersed in this Spirit. The reference the believers have outside of the life of Christ is the Old Testament stories. For them, when the Spirit of God moves on a person, seas split and nations walk through, fire is called down from heaven, heaven and earth are suspended in time, city walls fall down, and one man can kill one thousand men with the jawbone of a donkey. I imagine they were thinking, the Messiah is raised to life, we will be baptized in the Holy Spirit and then a handful of us

will destroy the armies of the oppressing Romans in a few days. I hope it is communicated that the disciples had a very high expectation of what could and would happen when the Holy Spirit came upon them. Many of us measure our expectation of God against the next most anointed person we know. If we are in a church that sees the expression of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a one-time event that happens at a retreat where we all speak in tongues and then come home to our normal lives, then we have placed a very low expectation on the Baptism. If we only use tongues in an emergency as if it releases power in the moment (in most cases to find a parking spot), we are misapplying the gift. If some well-known minister has a lot of deaf people healed through their ministry, many of us put their breakthrough as a personal target or ceiling for what we will experience. The expectation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in our lives should be that we do the ministry of Jesus in the way He did it. He is the model and the way He heard His Father, the miracles He performed, and the authority and presence He walked in is to be our expectation. We cannot let someone else's breakthrough or lack of breakthrough be the metric for the faith and expectation we are willing to have. Perhaps the reader has never raised the dead, opened the eyes of the blind, seen a tumor disappear, or even seen a back or common cold healed. If that is the case, then I have good news, the Holy Spirit has seen and performed all these miracles. God is not looking for us to have great faith in ourselves, He is asking us to have faith in Him. When our eyes are on other people or on ourselves, our potential for

breakthrough is very small. When our eyes are on what God can do and what He said He would do, our faith can soar.

Prayer for the baptism of the Holy Spirit:

Father, I thank you for the fruit of the Spirit and I thank you for the cross. I am standing in faith on your promises, I know that you want to baptize me in the Holy Spirit and fire. I want this too so right now I ask that you would encounter me and baptize me in the Holy Spirit. I yield my heart, my mind, my body to the full experience of the presence of God, baptize me in the Holy Spirit that I may be a witness for your son, Jesus Christ. I ask this in the name of Jesus.

Having prayed this prayer, take some time to worship and wait on the Holy Spirit. He will likely move in power and baptize you in the Holy Spirit. Simply remain in a place of receiving. If you do not experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit, continue to ask, but it can also be helpful to find a body of believers who can lay hands on you to pray. Be persistent, God will surely encounter you.

CHAPTER 3

SUPERNATURAL FRUIT AND GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

When we are born again and have the salvation experience, we have the first step of walking by the Spirit. It's common for people to give testimonies from their salvation experience and share transformational things God has done in their character. I have heard many people say that the first thing God changed was the way they talked and the language they used. Where they were used to cursing, they found themselves changed in that area. Others will say they had struggled with anger and immediately were delivered of anger. People find freedom when they can walk in forgiveness and forgive those in their lives that have wronged them. The responding fruit of being made righteous in Christ is righteous behavior. Jeremiah prophesied this very thing.

Jeremiah 31:33

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

The born again experience imprints God's commandments and the ability to cooperate with His heart in our spirits when we receive forgiveness in Christ. The outward expression of salvation is the blossoming fruit of the Holy Spirit. What is powerful about the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) is that they are the natural expression of our relationship with God. Now to the reader who may be new to walking with the Spirit, fruit comes in seasons, and fruit begins very small. God is the best teacher and He convicts us of righteousness. There is no need to go on a sin hunt to find all the problems we have in our lives. God is capable of doing His job. Our role is to simply yield to Him when He puts His hand on something He wants to change in our lives. Yielding to the moving of the Holy Spirit in our lives takes time and, though our fruit may be small, if we continue to say, 'yes,' to Him we will see the fruit of the Spirit grow. With that disclaimer, the born again experience makes the believer holy and righteous, not by good deeds or right behavior, but righteous by faith. Righteous because we are grafted into the vine of life, Jesus Christ, and holy because the Holy Spirit lives within us. The fruit of the Holy Spirit does not come by effort, but it manifests by simply walking with the Holy Spirit and putting the Kingdom of God first place in our lives. The outward manifestation of our salvation is the evidence of the fruits of the Spirit in our lives.

In like manner, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the empowerment that comes upon a believer to bear witness to the testimony of Jesus utilizing the supernatural presence and power of God.

Acts 1:8:

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

The word power is the word *dunamis* (Strong's 1411), which means in this context, miraculous power. We receive miracle-working power when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit. That is a fact, no matter how we have been conditioned to expect how the Holy Spirit will manifest on us, we have received miraculous and wonderworking power. If the reader comes from a more Pentecostal or Pentecostal-influenced Charismatic background, the initial evidence for being baptized in the Holy Spirit is the initial gift of speaking in tongues. Having the focus of the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit be speaking in tongues has created an over-emphasis on seeing tongues manifest in the person receiving prayer, rather than the person having a powerful and profound experience with the presence and person of God. To put it in the language this is often communicated in, speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but I must add, it is not the only evidence that someone has received. In my experience, I have met well-saved believers who have given words

of knowledge, operated in gifts of healing, and walked in other miraculous gifts of the Spirit. Perhaps this challenges some, but I think it is important to note that people like John Alexander Dowie, founder of Zion, IL, a community based on divine healing, did not speak in tongues. Those of us who have been good students of history know he not only walked in a powerful gift of healing but also worked miracles over nature as mentioned in the book, God's Generals. In this same line of thinking, I have met many people who claim to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and who speak in tongues but do not walk in the wonderworking, dunamis power of God. For too long, the Body of Christ has allowed the issue of tongues to be the main issue regarding baptism when the main issue should be whether or not the individual can manifest the miraculous power of God. Please hear that I am not against speaking in tongues as I speak in tongues regularly and have spent a lot of time cultivating God's presence in my life by that gifting. God is a good giver. If we do not speak in tongues and it is something we desire, He will most certainly give that gift to us. It is my opinion that those who operated in the power of God for healing, miracles, or any other gift of the Holy Spirit, are able to speak in tongues but may lack proper instruction on how the gift operates. We will address the how to's of the supernatural, but my goal is to relieve some of the pressure for some and redirect the focus of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit to the encounter with God rather than the manifestation of a certain gifting.

The infilling of the Holy Spirit awakens an individual's spirit to perceive the presence of the Holy Spirit, to commune with Him, and to release the presence of God into the world. Out of our intimate union with Him manifests supernatural gifts. In the same way, the fruit of the Holy Spirit is the external evidence of our salvation, supernatural gifts are the external evidence of being baptized in the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul writes about and gives us key understanding of spiritual gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11:

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 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. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

The gifts mentioned above are all sign gifts, meaning they demonstrate the outward expression of the supernatural. To be clear, the context of the chapters in which Paul is writing this is

regarding the way church services should be handled. This section addressing how services should be handled begins in 1 Corinthians 11:18 and continues into the section on spiritual gifts. I write this so the reader can understand the context and have an understanding of how lively the Corinthian church services must have been. However, I want to express that these giftings are meant to be used in church and outside of church as they are the expression of the Acts 1:8 *dunamis* or wonderworking and miracle-working power. Also, I will demonstrate how each gift operated in the life of Christ (except for tongues and interpretation of which we have no example of until Acts 2) so the reader can see that all the miracles of Jesus can fall into the categorization of one of these gifts.

Paul begins by describing the gifts as being given and manifest in three different ways in 1 Corinthians 12:4. He writes that there are diversities of gifts, differences of ministries, and diversity of activities. Not to overstate the obvious, but diversities of gifts means there are many different gifts. There are differences of ministries, meaning that there are various applications and ways in which the gifts of the spirit can be utilized. For example, the gifts can be used by a pastor or elder and the setting may be in the church or a home visit. For others, the gifts can be utilized in the church where they serve or in the workplace. Perhaps with younger people, the gifts can be in operation in their family or at school. Another example is the gifts can be used to bear witness to the testimony of Jesus in any setting and especially with evangelism. As believers we are all called to have a ministry, and we are all called to have the

supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit to underscore and strengthen the impact of our message about Jesus. Paul writes that there are diversities of activities of the gifts. What he is saying is that our relationship with Jesus is personal and we all experience the Holy Spirit in a subjective way. We also are all in different places of development and cooperation with the Holy Spirit and so, though we all receive the same Spirit, the gifts will manifest in our lives in different ways or different activities. We will dive into this in greater detail in upcoming chapters, but I want the reader to notice that most of the time, gifts of the Spirit come in seed form. The more we give them proper attention, the more they will grow. What we do know is that no matter where we are development-wise, what we have is to be used to bless the Body of Christ. No matter how big or how small, all are called to steward and use the gifts God has given.

Before we get into the breakdown of each gift, I want to say that every believer should expect to operate in the 9 gifts of the Holy Spirit at some point in their walk. Paul is addressing the body in Corinth in this chapter on how to conduct service so he writes in verse 8, ‘for to one.’ This means that during the service a person might have a certain gift manifest through them, and then another will have a different type of gift manifest. He is not saying that we only get one gift. If that were so, then most people would just have speaking in tongues. I do want to preface and say that some gifts will come more naturally to one believer than another. I call the gifts that operate in my life on a more consistent basis, my right-

hand gifts. It's usually about 3-4 gifts for most people, but I cannot put a limit on God and what He is willing to do, so it could be all 9 for certain people! Gifts I have operated in, but are not a part of my everyday operation in the Spirit, I call my left-hand gifts. I am capable of operating in them but I would not say I am adept in my use of them. Let's jump into the gifts.

CHAPTER 4

GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT –

Word of Wisdom

The word of wisdom is a prophetic gift. It has been largely underused or perhaps just misunderstood in how it functions. That being said, it is one of the most powerful gifts for receiving breakthrough. The word of wisdom can best be defined as a faith-filled action taken in the natural that yields a supernatural result. We see Jesus operating in the word of wisdom in his ministry. Below are a few examples:

John 9:6-7

When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

Mark 7:33-34

Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to

him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.”

Matthew 17:25-27

And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?” Peter said to Him, “From strangers.” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.”

Typically, mud made with saliva would just be a gross and offensive thing to put on someone’s eyes. However, this faith-filled action yielded the miraculous healing of this man’s blindness. In Matthew, Jesus puts his fingers in the man’s ears, puts spit on the man’s tongue, and uses a word of command saying, ‘be opened,’ and the man is healed. Once again, deafness and speech impediments are typically not treated by the method Jesus uses, yet the man is made whole. Finally, most of us do not store money in the bodies of wild animals, yet in this case, Peter is instructed to catch a fish and find the money he needs for the tax. There are other examples in the scripture of the word of wisdom. Naaman the leper is healed in 2 Kings 5 using this gift and this gift is again utilized in 2 Kings 2 when Elisha cleanses with water of the city with a bowl of salt. In fact, Elisha operates in the word of wisdom by making an ax head float out of the river by throwing a piece of wood in the

water or splitting the water of the river with the cloak of Elijah (following his father's example). The gift of the word of wisdom is utilized quite frequently in scripture and I am certain the reader will begin seeing it more frequently now that it has been defined.

Those who are familiar with intercessory prayer or even those who have received instruction from the Lord on how to pray have operated in this gift, perhaps without even knowing it. There are times where they may feel the Holy Spirit ask them to wave a flag, worship in abandonment to God, pray in tongues, or some kind of faith-filled activity, knowing that this partnership with what the Holy Spirit is saying will yield an environment of supernatural breakthrough. Below is a testimony from my parents' church.

This healing occurred during worship at homegroup. It was about 9 pm and suddenly in my mind's eye, I saw a giant bladder. It had a zipper that went all the way across the bladder, the organ looked so full, like it would burst. I felt like we were supposed to unzip the bladder I was seeing. I had everyone lift their hands and together we all unzipped the bladder. I was not sure why I was seeing this or why the Holy Spirit was instructing us this way. I thought it was completely bizarre until one of the ladies that was there, told me her niece was in the hospital in Utah with meningitis and couldn't go to the bathroom. The doctors thought they would have to catheterize her. At the exact time when we pulled the zipper, her fever broke and she was able to pee. We found that out the next day. It was so incredible to partner with God like this.

-Kristi

This testimony is a perfect example of the word of wisdom at work, and operating in a community of believers. Let the reader be encouraged that God may be speaking to them about operating in this gifting and to take the risk to see what kind of breakthrough is released!

Word of Knowledge

The word of knowledge is one of the most utilized giftings at work in the Body of Christ today. Streams like Vineyard and Bethel have been incredible pioneers of this gifting and have demonstrated its effectiveness over the years. Words of knowledge are a prophetic gifting that operates along a timeline of events, conditions, or situations that are happening in the present or have happened in the past. In the supernatural culture of today, words of knowledge have been mostly used to partner with the ministry of healing. However, some streams have incredibly developed this gifting in their culture. Particularly in South Africa and Zimbabwe, we are seeing an amazing demonstration of this gifting. Ministers are able to accurately call out names, dates, events, situations, and more with incredible accuracy. Seeing people operate in gifting at a high level should make us very hungry for God to do the same in our lives. Jesus also operated in the gift of words of knowledge in a number of places.

John 4:7-19

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband. Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

John 1:47-50

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

Luke 19:1-6

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

There are many other instances in the Old and New Testament where this gift is seen in operation. Samuel tells Saul where his donkeys are. Annanias receives the city, street name, the owner of the house's name, and what Saul of Tarsus has seen in a vision.

Peter has the trance with the vision of a sheet being let down and then is told that there are two men at the house looking for him and he should go with them. All these are detailed examples of how the word of knowledge can operate.

In my own life, I had operated in this gifting without knowing what it was. It first happened during a college retreat where I was speaking and two women were healed of reproductive issues. However, I had never seen this gifting demonstrated so I did not know how to take it to the next level. The next time I shared a word of knowledge came after I had received some instruction. At this time, I was around twenty-five years old, and I was working for a newspaper in Montana. I was driving in rural Montana and listening to a CD where Randy Clark had taught on words of knowledge. The CD kept recording as Randy was ministering to people and I could hear people in the background receiving ministry. I was not really paying much attention and I thought, 'God would you ever use me in words of knowledge?' Suddenly I felt a shock inside my body and I began to tremble and shake as I drove. I continued to shake for a few minutes and then all of a sudden I felt pain in my lower left jaw. I thought, 'is this a sympathetic pain for healing?' I said to the Holy Spirit, 'if this is a word of knowledge, then have this pain come back on Sunday and I'll share it.' On Sunday during worship, the pain again returned and my heart started racing. In all honesty, my faith felt very small but I knew I had to be obedient to what I had said to

God. I went up to my pastor, Steve Valentine, and told him I had a word of knowledge for healing. I thought he would maybe have me share it after the service, but instead, he got on stage in the middle of worship in a church of about 500 and waved his arms for everyone to stop playing. If I thought I was nervous before, now I was terrified! Steve addressed the congregants, 'James has a word of knowledge for healing and I want him to share it right now.' I tried to be as brave as possible and I took the mic and shared that I felt there was someone here with a problem with their lower left jaw. About 12 people came forward, so I was a little relieved. I prayed as boldly as I could and commanded healing in the name of Jesus. Steve then asked, 'well who got healed?' I was praying, 'Jesus, please let someone raise their hand.' One older woman named Evon raised her hand. Steve gave her the mic and she began to share that she had had an abscess for a long time but did not have the money to go to the dentist. When I prayed, the abscess reduced by half. I was shocked that there had been an instantaneous change. The infection dried up and by the next Sunday, it was completely healed. The infection had been so large that it had caused her to go deaf in her left ear, but her hearing was also restored. She had been terrified of this infection as her father had died from a tooth infection that went to his brain, but she did not have the money to go to the dentist. God was so kind to heal her and invite me into operating in words of knowledge and I am

so grateful to still operate in this gifting to this day.

I would like to note that the gift of word of knowledge today is mostly used in conjunction with healing ministry, however, we don't necessarily see Jesus using this gifting in this way in the New Testament. As one who is hungry to see this gift develop and blossom in our communities, nation, and the world, we must contend and take risks for a demonstration at the level and beyond what was present in Christ's ministry. I believe the next expression of words of knowledge will highlight with precision the details about a situation in someone's life. Whether that be flowing in personal names, addresses, phone numbers, etc, to see more we must be willing to take greater risks.

Gift of Faith

I love the gift of faith. It is a fascinating gift and there is much to explore in how it can impact situations and be developed in our current Charismatic culture. This gift often has overlap or is used in conjunction with prophecy. The main difference is that the gift of faith utilizes declaration when it is in operation. A gift of faith has the ability to release words into the atmosphere that the Holy Spirit and the angelic respond to so that what is declared is accomplished. Jesus operated in this gifting on a number of occasions. He declared over nature and performed miracles and also made declarations over people.

Mark 4:35-41

On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

Mark 11:12-14 & Mark 11:20-21

Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again."

Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away."

Mark 10:46-52

Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you." And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight." Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

What is interesting to note is that the gift of faith also can recognize and call out the faith in others. We see Jesus do this with the woman with the issue of blood in Paul's ministry in Acts 14:9. The perception of faith in another can be spiritually recognized and the miraculous activated by calling it out with a declaration.

I recall a Sunday where a prophetic team and I were ministering in my father's church in Montana. My team was sharing words and calling out individuals. The group had been prophesying over a teenage girl who was sitting in the

back with her arms folded, looking unimpressed. Obviously, the words were not making an impact at all, so I prayed for the Holy Spirit to give me a word of knowledge to assist her in knowing the words of prophecy were true. I could see in the spirit that the young girl had some kind of unnatural growth on her body. I thought that it might be a cyst or something like that. I asked from the pulpit if she had an unnatural growth on her body. She held up her hands and said she had chronic warts all around her fingernails. All of a sudden, I found myself declaring, 'as a sign to you that these prophetic words are true, God is going to heal your warts.' Now as these words seemed to gush from my mouth, my mind was saying, 'stop saying that, what are you talking about? Shut up!' It was a very odd experience as it felt as if the Holy Spirit suddenly took the driver's seat in my mouth. The congregation gasped and I called the girl up for prayer. I believe I prayed for her a total of three times, but she was, in fact, completely healed of periungual warts.

Also, I would like to note that intercessors and those in prayer ministry will also at times feel prompted to make faith declarations. It is very common for intercessors to pray and then feel led to declare that there will be a special healing grace or prophetic grace in a service and then, sure enough, the very thing they declared happens. There is so much power in the gift of faith and, as it is released to be intentionally used, great power can be demonstrated.

Gifts of Healings

As the name of this gift would suggest, there are gifts, more than one, of healings. The Bible does not speak much to the various gifts of healings but through experience and use, those who operate in the gifts of healings can understand what the text is pointing to. In the physical sense, some individuals are gifted with a certain propensity toward seeing conditions healed. For example, my father has seen a significant number of hearts healed. From holes in the heart, irregular heartbeats, or people needing open heart surgery, for whatever reason, my father has a gift of healing hearts. It has been so consistent that if I pray for someone who is not having a breakthrough with me, I will refer them to my father. Other people I have met have an emphasis on healing for deafness, sight conditions, or abnormal growths. Also, certain individuals can have the gifts of healings manifest in a specialty for mental conditions, and for others, it can be healing of emotional conditions and trauma. For whatever reason, in some people, the way the gifts of healings operates is as a specialty. We see Jesus healing all who came to Him seeking wholeness, but us being the Body of Christ, have various manifestations at work in us that point to Jesus. We even see the gifts of healings at work in Phillip when he preaches in Samaria.

Acts 8:4-8

Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.

Phillip had at work in his ministry the gifts of healings and his specialty in this time was the ministry to the paralyzed and lame. I have also noticed that as we grow in this gifting, the Holy Spirit will put an emphasis on a theme of healing in our lives. The current theme I am seeing in my life is the healing of hormonal conditions. As we grow in this gift, it is important to recognize the theme and emphasis God is manifesting in our lives. It is through recognizing and partnering with what He is doing that will create growth in this gifting.

It is almost silly for me to point out where Jesus operated in the gifts of healings as it was such a huge part of his ministry. However, there is one observation I would like to make, healings are the reanimation or restored function of a diseased or malfunctioning part of the body. The body part exists but does not operate in the way God designed it to. Here are some good examples of healings from the ministry of Jesus:

Mark 1:29-31

Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once. So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her. And she served them.

Luke 8:43-48

Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' " But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

Matthew 9:4-7

But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are

forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” And he arose and departed.

By reading the text, the reader can see that healings restored what already existed. Also, it is important to note that healing can be progressive. A lot of people are under the impression that all the healings and miracles Jesus did were instantaneous, however, this is incorrect. There are a few clear passages where miracles are progressive.

Mark 8:22-26

Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.” Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly. Then He sent him away to his house, saying, “Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town.”

Then we have Jesus who prays for the ten lepers in Luke 17:11-14:

Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance

and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!” When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.

Here we have two cases in the ministry of Jesus where healing takes place over time. My thought is, if Jesus had to pray for a blind person twice for that healing to take place, I can have the endurance to pray multiple times. Secondly, if Jesus has progressive healing in His ministry, then when we have progressive healing or even partial breakthrough in praying for people, we should celebrate God in it.

I lived and ministered in Thailand for two years and during this time I was invited to go to the house of an elderly man named, Cha Leo. He had been blinded for 25 years from some kind of work accident and was only able to see light. We prayed for him and after the initial prayer, he said, ‘di khun, di khun,’ which in Thai means a little better. We interviewed him to see how much better but from my observation, he seemed just as blind as when I met him. That being said, my wife and I continued to visit him once or twice a week for prayer. Each time we prayed he said the same thing, ‘di khun, di khun.’ After about five weeks of visiting his house, we were praying, once again. We were praying near the door of his house, and the door was open to cool off the house. As we were praying, Cha Leo looked out the door and said, ‘that’s a car,’ and then he looked up and said, ‘and that’s an airplane!’ Cha Leo could see! We were so happy. My expectation was

that God would restore his sight and that he would not need glasses. In fact, I kept visiting his house to pray for the full restoration of his eyesight. However, to my knowledge, he still needed glasses, though he was able to travel on his own to Bangkok to visit family he had not seen in years. This is a great example of progressive healing. It took time and persistence to see a noticeable manifestation of healing. Many healings today are progressive but that does not make them any less supernatural and incredible!

Working of Miracles

Miracles defy the modern understanding of the laws of physics. This can mean that a missing body part is restored, food multiplies, people are translated, water is walked on, etc. Often the modern church and world does not have a slot for miracles, therefore, they can often go overlooked or unappreciated. However, there have been documented cases of people having oil spontaneously appear to flow from their hands or bibles, people have received gold crowns or fillings in their teeth, and others have had gold dust appear on their hands. These kinds of miracles or signs appear and to a degree require mature leadership to interpret, explain, and help people see Jesus in it. Unfortunately, in many cases, the individuals who have these kinds of manifestations of the miraculous are either put on a pedestal or shunned. Yet, if these manifestations are stewarded and pastored correctly, they can blossom into something beautiful and powerful from which the community can all benefit. As with any manifestation of the Holy Spirit, it is important to ask Him what it

means and how to use it to benefit the body. Being a God who is kind and gracious, He will instruct on the correct next steps. As with most things we find odd or unusual with God, the first response should be one of inquiry, not assumption.

I also like the way Paul describes this gift as the working of miracles. The working is often a faith-filled activity needed to partner with God in what He wants to do. In the same way, Moses was required to lift up his walking stick and stretch it over the water in order to part the sea, or Elijah laid face to face on the boy to raise him from the dead, or Jesus gives thanks, breaks the bread, and begins to pass it out. There can be a corresponding faith-filled activity that ushers in the realm of the miraculous. The working part of the miracle is the first step, the initial step of faith, that yields the supernatural manifestation. Jesus' initial supernatural work recorded in John is the turning of water into wine:

John 2:6-10

Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it. When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he

said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!”

John 11:38-44

Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?” Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.” Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go.”

Matthew 14:25-29

Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.” And

Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

Notice the working part of the miracle: fill the water pots, draw some out, take it to the master of the feast. There was a cooperative effort on those who were present but the prescription for the sign was from Jesus. In the raising of Lazarus, the stone had to be rolled away. We do not see Jesus begin to walk on water but we see Peter's part in the working of the miracle of walking on water, he had to step out of the boat.

Though we see glimpses of miracles, it is an underdeveloped and underutilized gifting in the church. The gift is most often seen today in the US associated with miraculous healings. For example, there is the story from before where the young woman's brain hemorrhage disappeared. However, there is so much more that God is wanting to do. For most communities, the gift of miracles is misunderstood or misused and for things that are not valued when God presents them, He often reserves them for a future generation. It is time we start stewarding and valuing what we have, without turning it into a show, and allow the gift to manifest and grow in the church today.

Prophecy

Prophecy is one of the most powerful gifts of the Holy Spirit and it is often the most misunderstood. In some communities, the gift has been abused and used as a method to control. In other settings, the gift has been used in an apocalyptic or eschatological application, predicting the end of the world or the return of Jesus. The gift of prophecy functions best in community and it needs accountability.

1 Corinthians 14:29-32

Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

Paul is outlining in this chapter how tongues and prophecy should be used, and in this passage, he specifically addresses how prophecy should function. The first ground rule is that prophecy should be judged not by the prophetic speaker, but by others. This is essential as prophecy deals with future events and therefore in the moment is unverifiable. For example, if someone is healed or there is a word of knowledge concerning a person's life or there is a miracle, these, for the most part, are observable or discernable in the moment. Secondly, Paul tells us that we can all prophesy one by one. This is great news, we can all prophesy. In fact, prophecy is the gift mentioned in Joel 2:28-32 that all believers who receive the Holy

Spirit will operate in. Prophecy is exercised that those observing may learn and be encouraged. There is a level of learning how to prophesy, meaning how to interpret, deliver, and apply the prophetic utterance the Holy Spirit is giving. Finally, Paul lets us know that the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet. This means that those with a word from God are still in control of their bodies, their mouths, and their presentation of the word. Often when people play up a word of prophecy by making it more dramatic or ‘epic’, we should notice this, but more importantly focus on the content of the word not the external factors of the presentation. How the person feels or senses or moves does not have any impact on the validity of the word being given. Jesus prophesied and from what we can tell, his delivery did not come with ecstatic speech or movements.

Mark 14:12-16

Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, “Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?” And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, “Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?” ’ Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us.” So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.

Matthew 17:24-27

When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, “Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?” He said, “Yes.” And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?” Peter said to Him, “From strangers.” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.”

Luke 5:5-7

But Simon answered and said to Him, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.” And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

At its core, prophecy is hearing what God is saying and releasing the word. Often we may prophesy and be unaware that we are sharing the word of the Lord with people. One testimony, in particular, remains with me. I was at a meeting and did not have much responsibility that night. There was a person in the back of

the room who I had not seen in a while. I went up and gave my friend a hug and then said to her, ‘baby you’re worth it.’ I cannot tell you why I said that. In fact, after I said it, I felt kind of silly but brushed it off. What I did not know was that my friend had become pregnant and the timing and situation was not ideal. She was really struggling with the idea of having to raise a new child at her age. Though she knew it was wrong, my friend was privately considering terminating the pregnancy, but when I told her, ‘baby you’re worth it,’ she knew the Lord was speaking. I did not find out until sometime later that she decided to keep the baby after I unknowingly prophesied God’s heart.

Finally, some ground rules from scripture will be helpful. 1 Corinthians 14:3 says, *he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.* Prophecy is meant to instruct and improve us, build up and encourage, and inspire with hope. Prophecy is never to be used to beat people up or condemn others, but to strengthen people to believe. There are many books on prophecy worth checking out for a more in-depth understanding but the above should be enough to wet the reader’s appetite.

Discerning of Spirits

This is another gift that has acquired some baggage over the years. I have met people who told me they had a ‘gift of discernment’. From what I have observed, people who claim to have a ‘gift of discernment’ seem to think they can tell who is in and who is out of the Kingdom. The second type of person I have met

regarding discernment is the person who thinks they are a spiritual radar for detecting demonic spirits. Some I have encountered seem to turn up their spiritual detectors when others are around so they can appear spiritual. My goal is not to hurt anyone's feelings, but to empower. Discernment is given by the Holy Spirit so that we can partner with God in our authority to accomplish what He desires. It is not given for the individual to walk around with an eerie look on their face or draw attention to themselves every time they sense something.

For the sake of definition, let's break down the title of the gift. The discerning of spirits functions by sensing...spirits. There are a few types of spirits we will typically encounter, human spirits, angelic spirits, the Holy Spirit, demonic spirits, and principalities. The word discern from the Greek is diakrisis and it has a few applications. Diakrisis means distinguish, discern, or judge. Within those three words is highlighted the function of the gifts operation. Discern means to recognize through perception. Distinguish means to notice the difference or recognize what stands out. Judge means to form an opinion or to make a determination. These three things are at work when the gift is in operation: perception, recognizing origin, and making a determination. We see this at work in the life of Jesus, most notably in the casting out of demons.

Mark 9:17-27

Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not." He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

Matthew 17:14-16

And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.”

When the father had brought the boy to Jesus in the book of Matthew he says the boy is epileptic. In Mark, the father says he has a mute spirit. Jesus determined it was not just a mute spirit but a deaf and dumb spirit. It is my interpretation, that discrepancy in the boy's condition is the observer's perspective of the gift of discernment at work. I would propose that the disciples could not cast out the epileptic spirit as it was being blocked by a deaf and dumb spirit. The disciples were not at the level of operation with their discernment to deliver the boy. This would explain why Jesus encourages them that these come out by prayer and fasting because the disciples are being invited to level up their gifting, discernment, and exercising of authority through a deeper encounter with God.

Jesus' presence also seems to provoke the demonic as they cry out when he is around them. I have noticed that those who have a gift of discerning of spirits can often provoke the demonic, though they may not intentionally or cognitively be aware of it.

Mark 2:6-9

And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, “Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’?”

Here we see Jesus discerning the human spirit. The text reads that Jesus perceived in his spirit; he became aware of the inner thoughts of the human spirit.

John 1:46-51

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

I think it is important to note that beyond this statement in John, the reader never actually sees angels ascending and descending on Jesus. However, what we do see is Jesus operating in the miraculous. In Luke 22:43 we do have an account of an angel appearing to Jesus and strengthening him. I know that Jesus was very aware of the angelic activity operating in his life and ministry.

Luke 10:17-20

Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

Here we see Jesus perceiving the dethroning of the adversary as the 70 cast out demons. We also see in the book of Daniel 10 the Prince of Persia attempts to stop Daniel's answer from coming. These principalities appear to operate over territory and can be discerned. I would like to make it clear that just because we are able to discern the territorial principalities over a region, it does not necessarily mean we are called to pick a fight. It is unwise to challenge a demonic principality if you have not been given the mandate from the Holy Spirit to do so. The most impactful spiritual warfare we can wage is through our devotion to Jesus and

commitment to the great commandment and great commission. Operating in that mandate will confront the ruling spirits in an area through the expansion of the kingdom of God. If we do discern a principality in a region, we can be aware of it so that we are informed on how to pray and how to avoid being impacted by its spiritual influence.

My first wife, Jill Langton, had a gift of discerning of spirits and truly enjoyed helping people be free of demonic influence. On her first trip to the Philippines with Youth With A Mission (YWAM), she and her group were walking into a remote village. Jill was at the back of the group and off to the side of the trail was a young girl who was approximately 8 or 9 years-old. The young girl looked severely handicapped having a noticeable hump on her back and crossed eyes. When Jill looked at the girl, the Holy Spirit spoke saying, 'I want you to go cast the demons out of her.' Jill, having never done anything like this, was nervous but grabbed the translator, who had an english nickname, Babe. Babe and Jill approached the girl and tried to speak to her, but realized the young girl was mute, however, the little girl could hear. Jill and Babe shared the message of Jesus and asked the girl if she wanted to receive Jesus and the girl nodded in agreement. The group of three prayed and then Jill laid hands on the young girl. Having no training she did not know what to do, but all of a sudden foreign words began to come to mind. Jill started to say in the names that were coming to mind and then

commanded them to come out of the girl. The young girl began to shake and tremble, Jill said she could feel unusual movement in the young girl's body. Babe and Jill continued to pray for about fifteen minutes and suddenly a black, yet transparent-like sheet, came out of the young girl and vanished over her head. As the demonic power came out of the girl, she stood up and the hump seemed to absorb into the girl's body. When she stood up straight, her eyes uncrossed, and her tongue was loosed. She was back in her right mind, totally healed. All the children in the village who made fun of her and often threw rocks at the little girl gave their lives to Christ. It later came to light the villagers believed the girl had spirits put in her by the local shaman.

I want to add one last note on the discerning of spirits. We are able to discern spirits through our human spirits as well. Spirits, and I am talking primarily about demonic spirits, seek agreement. Most demonic attacks come in the form of wicked thoughts or emotions and if we are unaware of it, we can be influenced by them. If someone has a spirit of lust, greed, control, etc, there are times that our human spirit can be influenced by the demonic power operating on someone else. This can happen when we start to have unusual (typically repetitive) thoughts or emotions that are just not our own. We can recognize them because they are not the way we typically think or feel. If the reader has been unaware of this reality, it is possible to think that we just had some weird thoughts or felt funny and, in turn, just brush it off. However, if we are prepared and aware

of what is taking place, we can ask the Holy Spirit what to do and how to partner with Him.

Different Kinds of Tongues

Speaking in tongues or glossolalia, is a gift that has a ton of baggage, misunderstanding and assumptions around it. However, it is often the first gift we receive in being baptized with the Holy Spirit, but often remains our least understood or developed. Tongues has a two-fold application, the first being in public usage. The first demonstration of tongues was in Acts 2 when the 120 were baptized in the Holy Spirit and they all had a visible manifestation of fire above their heads. They all spoke in tongues and the unbelievers who were gathered at their door understood the languages that were spoken. Though it is less common in the West, at times, the gift of tongues has manifested in this way. The second application of the gift of tongues can be a personal prayer language. Some in the body of Christ take issue with this perspective and believe tongues only should be used in the public application. I would make the argument that the gifts of healings, words of knowledge, discerning of spirits, gift of faith, and others can operate in a public and private setting, so it also stands to reason that the gift of tongues also can have a private application.

Tongues utilized in a personal or private application assists us to pray when we do not know what or how to pray. As Romans 8:26 reads, *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but Himself intercedes for us*

with groans that words cannot express. Here we see the Holy Spirit at work in us assisting us with prayer in groans that go beyond our cognitive language ability. 1 Corinthians 14:14 reads, *For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.* This scripture indicates that the act of praying in tongues is a spiritual act and that it comes from the realm of the spirit, and it also indicates that the process is not one of our normal cognitive speech. That is to say, the gift of tongues is not produced in the mind but is something that flows from the spirit. One of the greatest benefits of speaking in tongues is that it puts us in touch with our spiritual selves. Since the fall of Adam, man has retreated into the recesses of the human intellect. The spiritual realm became unfamiliar and in many cases undetectable, except to the few that seemed to be in touch with another world. The gift of speaking in tongues democratized the experience of encountering the spiritual realm and allows us to intentionally strengthen and get in touch with the realm of the spirit. Just as 1 Corinthians 14:4 states, *He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself.* Meaning that the process of speaking in tongues strengthens, builds us up, and puts us in touch with the spiritual reality we were meant for.

Having grown up in the Charismatic movement, I have noticed a consistent pattern with those seeking the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of speaking in tongues, and there can be some confusion in the expectation of how the gift will manifest. Some people expect that when they receive the gift of tongues, the Holy Spirit will use their vocal cords and tongue as a human would operate the mouth of

a puppet. This is not the way in which the gift will operate as God is not interested in controlling a person. God is looking for cooperation. In the same way that laying hands on the sick is the human element of operating in the gift of healing, the human element of praying in tongues is the faith to begin to speak the word and impressions that are coming to mind. In that same way that Psalm 81 declares regarding Moses, saying, *Open your mouth and I will fill it*, God wants us to begin to speak out in faith and he will begin to move upon our faith-filled step of obedience. Some individuals get very hung up on the idea that they are faking it or making the words up. The fact is, even if the individual were making it up, it shows more faith in risk than the person who remains stoic and unengaged. There is a distinct pattern in the Kingdom of God where those who take risks and act in faith and, to the best of their ability are doers of the word, it is those individuals that step into greater breakthrough.

In speaking in tongues, one should never discount God's ability to use one's faith-filled obedience. I recall a few testimonies I have heard, one where a group on a short-term ministry trip in India were separated from the rest of their party. The taxi driver did not speak English and the group had no idea of how to locate their team (this was the late 90s so no one had cell phones). Part of the team would pray about which direction to go (left, right, straight) and the other member would speak in tongues to the driver. Through this method, the team was led right to the hotel and reunited with

the group. The second testimony comes from a young man named John who was part of our youth group. During the 2005 cleanup of Katrina, a group from our church went down to help. John was out walking the French Quarter when the Holy Spirit told him to go pray for two men. He was nervous and tried to get out of it, but the Holy Spirit kept telling him to go and pray for them. Having not done a lot of ministry in public, John approached the men and they were willing to let him pray for them. As John prayed, he was so nervous that he did not know what to pray, so he began speaking in tongues. When he was done, he opened his eyes and looked up. One of the men was crying, and John was obviously confused and asked what was wrong. The man who was not crying said, 'it's because of what you said.' John asked what he had said? The man replied, 'you told him that his relationship with his father is broken but if he goes home, his father will accept him.'

Both of these testimonies are remarkable, but in both circumstances, the person speaking the tongues did not notice a difference in the way they spoke. That is, it did not feel like a different language at the time they were speaking, so somewhere between when the words left their mouths and those being spoken to heard it, a miracle took place. There is no need to overthink the gift or try to make it fit into our understanding of language. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13:1, If I speak in the tongues of men and angels, but have not

love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. This would indicate that in some circumstances people may receive human languages or the languages of angels. That is, there are tongues and unknown tongues, and it is those that speak out in faith who will walk in the intention of the gifting.

Interpretation of Tongues

The initial statement that should be made regarding this gifting is that it functions as an interpretation and not as a translation. If you asked three people to describe a dog running down the road with a red ball they would put that image in their own words and you would have three different but similar interpretations. We have instruction from Paul on how speaking in tongues and the interpretation should function in the church but we have very few examples of it being demonstrated. Acts 2 of course provides the best context of the gifts working together. We also know that speaking in tongues and interpretation should be done in order, but at the same time, the lack of biblical examples has produced a limitation of expression. For those who do speak in tongues in their prayer life, they are aware that speaking in tongues is not a cognitive process. It is possible to be praying in tongues and at the same time be thinking about something else entirely. Also, by reason of experience, certain things will come to mind when we are praying in tongues and it is these impressions that we should pay attention to.

1 Corinthians 14:6

But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?

Paul is sharing the differences and benefits of speaking in tongues versus the gift of prophecy in this chapter. He is saying that we cannot just go around speaking in tongues at each other and expect that we will all be encouraged. Essentially, if you are going to speak in tongues, we can only profit if I speak to you by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching. For those who have been active in this gifting, I pray some light bulbs are going off, as Paul is making a link between the act of speaking in tongues and the activation of revelation, knowledge, prophecy, and teaching. Now we actually see this process at work in Acts 2, but I am certain many of us missed the connection. In Acts 2:1-13 the manifestation of tongues along with other manifestations of the Holy Spirit has taken place. With all this incredible supernatural activity taking place, the whole city has gathered outside. Suddenly Peter, from verses 14-38, preaches the most profound sermon on what the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is and provides the church's first sermon, unpacking the scriptures the whole time. Here we see the gift of tongues activating an anointing to teach the scriptures, just like 1 Corinthians 14:6 states. Let's discover what the interpretation of tongues has the power to release.

1. Revelation (apokalypsis), Strongs G602 meaning disclosure, revelation, and manifestation. Some related verses are Ephesians 1:17 where Paul writes that we would receive a spirit of wisdom and revelation. The word is also used in Romans 8:19 where it says that all creation groans in eager expectation for the manifestation of the sons of God. This could apply to revealing things about the person of Jesus, disclosing hidden things in situations or people's lives. It could bring to light hindrances or the correct path in a situation. If something is hidden, praying in tongues releases the ability to reveal it.
2. Knowledge (gnosis), Strongs G1108 which means general knowledge. Knowledge about the deep things of God, knowledge about people or a situation in the past or present. It is the same word for knowledge that is used regarding the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12. Speaking in tongues let's us help cultivate and puts us in touch with the knowledge that only God possesses.
3. Prophecy (propheteia), Strongs G4394 which means exactly what we would expect. Prophecy forthtells what will happen. Please see above in the gifts of the Holy Spirit where prophecy is discussed in greater detail. That being said, prophecy can be a result of speaking in tongues where the prophecy is the interpretation.

4. Teaching (didache), Strong's G1322 it is the word for instruction or doctrine. If we are having trouble understanding the scripture, speaking in tongues can release fresh understanding on passages, verses, or insight on the whole of scripture. This can even apply to someone who is teaching or preparing to teach as speaking in tongues can release a new teaching the Holy Spirit is wanting to communicate. The Holy Spirit has declared Himself as a teacher, so speaking in tongues can put us in the classroom with God Himself.

I hope this gives the reader some encouragement on what to expect from the interpretation of tongues and how it can function in our everyday lives. Understanding how to flow from speaking in tongues to declaring and partnering with the interpretation will dramatically increase the reader's sensitivity and breakthrough in the Spirit.

CHAPTER 5

OPERATING IN GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

There are a few questions I consistently get from my students. One of the most common questions is, ‘how do I know what my spiritual gifts are?’ I know that many reading this book may have the same question. The reader can know what gift God wants to use them in by simply identifying what gift they most desire. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 12:31, “‘But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.’ We are to earnestly desire the best or most helpful gifts as it is translated in other places. Once the reader determines what gift their heart desires, the next step is to ask God to use you in that gifting.

Luke 11:9-10

So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

The process of prayer for anything, including spiritual gifts, is this three-fold strategy Jesus lays out for us. We must ask, seek and knock or we could say pray, look for opportunities, and take action.

If we are wanting to grow in spiritual gifting we must ask God to use us in that gifting, we must look for opportunities to operate in that gifting, and finally we must take a bold step of faith and put our request into action.

Divine healing has always been of interest to me. In fact, it is the first gift of the Holy Spirit that I pursued and desired God to use me in. I had seen God use me in a number of ways with healing, but I had prayed for a number of people with deafness or partial deafness and not seen any progress or healing. Putting the biblical process of asking, seeking, and knocking into practice, I decided to declare April 2008 deaf ear April. I made a personal challenge to pray for every deaf person I came across. I told God that if I saw anyone with a hearing aid or if I knew of anyone who needed prayer for healing, I would pray for them. I prayed for about 9 or 10 people that month and saw no one healed, but I had put into practice the words of Jesus as boldly as I knew how. In June of 2008, I accompanied the Strength Team down to a campaign in Honduras to assist them with their evangelism teams. The outreach I was a part of was passing out solar-powered radios tuned to Christian channels. We would go door to door and pass out the radios and pray for people. We came to one hut and the man inside was very old and very deaf. Our translator, Oscar, was yelling to the man, 'do you want this radio?' We could barely communicate to the man, finally the old man said, 'pray for me, I'm deaf.' I laid my hands on the

man and prayed with the same faith I had with everyone else I had prayed for. During prayer, the man let out a gasp and told us that his ear suddenly popped and that it felt like an animal or bug jumped out of his ear. I asked him if he could hear any better but he said he could not. We went to the next hut and when we came out, the old man's friend was waiting for us. He said, 'come back, he can hear now.' We went back to the old man's house and found him in tears. Where we were yelling at each other five minutes before, we were now having a normal conversation. The man had been deaf for many years but had developed severe dizziness and a headache for the past five months. He was completely healed. He looked at me and said in Spanish, 'I get up every morning, kneel at my bed, and ask God to heal me, and God sent you.' I could barely contain my own tears, God was showing His supreme goodness and kindness. Since that time, I have had incredible success in praying for deafness or any inner ear disorder, and the key is asking, seeking, and knocking.

One misconception regarding spiritual gifts is that they are somehow a superpower. In fact, some detractors and cessationists have used an argument against Charismatics saying, 'if you have the gift of healing, then go to the hospital and heal everyone.' This line of thinking betrays assumptions about how gifts of the Holy Spirit work. The main misconception is the idea that we have the ability to control the Holy Spirit and determine how or when He should work. Let me be clear, spiritual gifts are not something we control

and they are not a superpower. Spiritual gifts are deposited in our lives as a result of an encounter that we have had with God. We can encounter God in the scriptures and receive a spiritual gift as His presence leaps off the page and He imparts something to us. Secondly, we can encounter God in adoration or worship and it is through the manifestation of His Spirit that encounters us that gifts of the Holy Spirit are imparted. Most commonly, you can encounter God in people and receive an impartation from those who bear God's image. I have had times where I have received an impartation through the people of God or even had the Holy Spirit come upon me in a fresh way as I minister to people. The apostle Paul even says in Romans 1:11, 'For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established.' Gifts are given in moments of intimate encounter with the Holy Spirit and they again become activated as we set our minds upon heavenly things. Spiritual gifts are activated by the manifest presence of the Holy Spirit, and our senses become aware of how to partner with Him. It is through this awareness that we can perceive God's heart and release it to those in need.

Circling back to Romans 1:11, Paul writes that he wants to come and impart a spiritual gift as everywhere he had gone in Acts he had prayed that believers would receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Gifts of the Holy Spirit are typically distributed in seed form and then develop in the soil or context in which they operate. Though we all receive the same baptism, one part of the body of Christ can have a very developed gifting of prophecy or healing and can visit

another part of the body and impart their specific breakthrough. This is what Paul is talking about, he has a gift that is unique and has developed in the context from which he has encountered God and ministered, and he wants to impart that to the Roman church. As I mentioned before, gifts of the Holy Spirit are often given in seed form, but the gift will grow the more it is used. The key to rapid growth in gifting is to put it in a context where there is pressure on the gifting. The more risk used in operating in a gift of the Holy Spirit, the more quickly it will develop. For me, I have always been a proponent of evangelism and putting the gifts of the Holy Spirit in that context. We know that witnessing regarding the testimony of Jesus is important to God. Stepping out boldly and trusting that God will use us in the gift will put pressure on the gift and cause it to operate at a higher level. Putting pressure on the gifting will do two things, one it will encourage us to go deeper when it works, and two, when we mess up or we do not see it functioning the way we were expecting, we will cry out to God for more anointing and breakthrough. I am convinced that the church in the West is one of the most anointed and gifted bodies in the entire world, but I am also convinced we have underdeveloped gifting as we put very little pressure on the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The second key to growing in gifting is persistence. Biblical persistence is central to supernatural breakthrough. Having the words of Jesus abide in us and stepping out in faith according to Jesus' method and model is the key to walking at a higher level. Unfortunately many people do not biblically persist and this can lead to a few errors. One error

is that individuals attempt to run the clear promises of scripture through their experiences. We do not want to bend the promises of scripture around our circumstances or filter them through our lack of breakthrough. If we do, we run into danger of making scripture say things it does not intend to say, or we can make God into someone He is not. Seeing God's promises through the lens of disappointment will keep us from truly entering into the fullness of what the Holy Spirit has. Secondly, if we do not continue in persistence for biblical results, there can be the temptation to change the biblical method or approach to ministry. Many deliverance methodologies have changed the way deliverance is biblically demonstrated. Also, a lot of healing methodologies have developed that do not follow the biblical model we see in the life of Christ (diagnosing root causes of sickness off of principles or patterns, an overemphasis on general repentance from generational curses, the use of fragrant healing oils, etc). From a pragmatic position, one could argue that they work and I do think, in some areas, each has a degree of effectiveness, however, if we are looking to display and replicate the ministry of Jesus, we can accept no other standard or method but Christ's alone. If, as Jesus said in John 13, *a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him*, is true then why would we ever seek to modify the method of ministry that Jesus has put forth. No doubt, we all have different callings, but the sharing of the gospel with signs and wonders is relevant no matter what culture or context. As believers, it should be our goal to have the character of Christ, intimacy with

Christ, our identity in Christ, and the method of ministry of Christ.

When I was a young believer, I approached ministry in a way that I now find kind of ridiculous. That being said, we all know we have experienced spiritual growth when we can look back on our old ways of approaching things and see that we have learned a better way. When I was younger, I used to pray and try to be filled up with the Holy Spirit. My intention was to be so juiced up with the power of God that I would be prepared to minister in power. I acted as if God was a spiritual gas station where I could be filled in order to go do. I actually believe a lot of people approach ministry in this way, but one day in my quiet time, the Holy Spirit corrected me. He spoke to me indicating that we were not meant to be filled in order to do things for Him or for Jesus, but that ministry, particularly miraculous ministry, was a demonstration to the world of the intimacy we have with Jesus and an invitation into that intimacy. The hours of trying to be filled with the Holy Spirit so that I could make God look good were not as valuable to the Father as demonstrating the awareness of the relationship between a son and a father put on display for the world to see. Perhaps this is not as meaningful to the reader as it is to me, but this concept of union and union on display made it so much more about Jesus and demonstrating relationship, than about having a lot of miracles take place. The miraculous is the result of oneness with the Father, and an invitation from the Father to those seeking relationship with Him. The sign and the wonder fall short if all they produce is awe in the observer or receiver, but they find their fullest expression in the

context of relationship.

A very simple exercise I teach my students to highlight ministering out of intimacy is to imagine being seated with Jesus in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). Then I encourage them to imagine bringing a person they want to pray for to that place of being seated with Christ. From this place of relationship and friendship with God, we can ask God questions or get His heart for the person and what we should pray for.

On one occasion, I was praying for my friend, Rob. I asked Jesus what he was doing with Rob and I saw Jesus put a notebook in front of my friend. In the book were play strategies like a coach would have. I heard Jesus say that He had given Rob strategies for missions and creative ways to reach people. Then a word, Ethiopia, floated off the page of the book and then another word, Euretics, appeared above the first word. At the time I thought that the word Euretics was a tribe or a people group. I wrote the vision down and then looked up the word Euretics. To my surprise the word was not a tribe but a method or theory of study. Euretics engages abstract thinking and imagination in order to produce more creative work. For example, a group of architecture students studied abstract impressionist art before creating architectural design. In the study, the students who created using the method of Euretics out-performed the other students. Reference Texas Tech University Libraries 'The use and evaluation of Euretics as a pedagogy for motivating creative

designs among architectural students'. The next day I met with Rob and told him about the encounter. He told me that he had been trained in Art Sozo, which is a form of Euretics, and had actually met with the Minister of Education in Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, he was able to work with leading teachers on how to solve issues within the education system through utilizing Art Sozo. I was able to confirm and bless what God had already been doing in his life, I was able to minister out of partnership and not performance, and I learned a new vocab word! This method of learning to pray and to hear is an excellent way to practice hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit and the prophetic. Learning to minister to the Lord and with the Lord is the first key to walking in continued intimacy with the Trinity, and if we are good stewards of our personal intimacy, we will be able to carry the same intimacy into a public setting for ministry.

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CHAPTER 6

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION & COMMUNICATION

We are spiritual beings having a human experience. That is, the most eternal part of the seven billion plus individuals on planet earth is their spirits. We are spirit, but at the fall of man recorded in Genesis, mankind broke fellowship with God through disobedience. Where mankind was once able to seamlessly traverse the natural and spiritual realm in unhindered relationship with our Creator, sin caused mankind to retreat into self-reliance and to survive off the power of the human will. The result was a reliance on human instinct, human logic, and human emotion, therefore, we lost touch with the preeminence of our spiritual selves. The impact of this disconnect has been a deafening to the realm of the spirit. If the reader has ever listened to a testimony of someone's near death experience (NDE) and this individual met Jesus, angels, or relatives in death, no one ever reports that they were unable to hear what Jesus or anyone else communicated. In fact, most will testify that communication was instantaneous, some have used the word, telepathic. To clarify, telepathy indicates mind to mind communication but God communicates Spirit to spirit. God has chosen to manifest Himself as a Spirit and He primarily communicates in a spiritual format. The

primary point is this, our spirits have no trouble hearing from God, but for many the unfamiliarity with their spiritual selves is the main block that keeps people from hearing His voice. Our spirits live in our bodies and the glue that keeps these two together is our souls. Think of it this way, the spirit is the life force and the soul is the operating system of the body. Spiritual communication is also called revelation knowledge. Human knowledge is attained through study, modeling, repetition, or etc, but revelation knowledge just comes to us. In the Old Testament, when a prophet receives a message from God the phrase, ‘The word of the Lord came to me,’ often introduces what God wants to communicate. This is identifying revelation knowledge in that one minute the individual did not have the information, and the next the information came unto them. There are a number of ways that God can speak to us and being aware of the ways will assist us in identifying when God is speaking.

Instinct

When I teach people how to identify the voice of the Holy Spirit and we practice in a workshop setting and they hear correctly, I will ask them how they knew the information they received. Many times people will say, ‘I don’t know, I just knew.’ My father used to say, ‘I just know in my knower.’ In the same way that humans have instinctive knowings or that geese know to fly south in the winter, we can hear God in our instincts. We can know we have heard through our instincts when we were unaware of any intentional cognitive thought, but the knowing simply appeared.

Hearing

We have two types of human hearing, the one we most often think of is audible hearing. Many people are under the assumption that when God spoke to the prophets or even when Jesus spoke to the Father that it was audible. There are times that people do hear God or angels speak audibly. Even at the baptism of Jesus, there was the audible voice of God speaking to Jesus, and others heard it as well. Yet, from years of mentoring people, learning from peers, and my own experience, when God speaks it is not primarily through an audible voice. Typically people hear the voice of God in their minds and it usually manifests in the internal voice a person thinks in. The internal hearing of His voice can come in a word or phrase. I have had times when I hear, ‘that person has a back problem,’ and other times where the voice will say, ‘I want you to pray for her,’ or something to that effect. I often get the question as to why we hear in our internal voice. I cannot answer this with a scripture but my opinion on the matter is that since God speaks Spirit to spirit, our spiritual selves hear what He says and the spiritual hearing is then translated through our souls and manifests in our minds as a phrase or word. I get this question a lot and the follow-up question typically is, ‘how do I know if a thought is me or God?’ The answer to this question is practice. We must begin to take risks on what we hear by sharing it or testing it. It is then that we will know what it feels like to have an internal hearing that is from us or from God. The more we hear correctly, the more confident we become in knowing the difference.

Seeing

Like the assumption with hearing, many people assume visions are external visual experiences or an open vision. Though these happen, they are not typically the norm. The majority of visions happen internally in the mind's eye. In fact, Daniel highlights this process in Daniel 4:10 and Daniel 7:1 where He writes that he had visions of the mind. Often, God will communicate in pictures or mental imagery, and also, words of knowledge or prophecy will operate with a mental image or vision format. Often when I am prophesying into someone's life, I will have a running stream of images that I will describe and/or interpret as it occurs. Sometimes visions can take place in a moment where we can look at someone and see something over their life or be drawn to a healing need they may have. Sometimes the most powerful visions are the most brief and they simply take boldness to take the risk to share.

Dreams

A lot can and should be written about the importance of dreams. Dreams typically use visual and audio modes of communication. Obviously, not all dreams are from God, but He promises believers that He will speak in dreams. Typically, dreams are highly symbolic and often an interpreter helps parse out the meaning of the dream. However, there have been times where I have received words of knowledge, learned things about people's lives, received insight into situations, or even things about the Bible I did not know in dreams. One tip on getting into position to hear from God with dreams is to

simply ask God for dreams and then put a notebook by the bedside. Be committed to writing down your dreams and taking time to pray and meditate on them.

Emotion

God is a God who has emotions. Jesus had emotions. We know from scripture it is possible to grieve the Holy Spirit, and we know that the Father is well pleased in His beloved Son. The Trinity feels and we can also pick up or discern God's feelings. Many intercessors can tap into God's heart for a situation and pray in partnership with His emotion, and in prophecy, there are times when we sense God's feelings over someone and their situation.

Smell/Taste

I have met people who smell and taste certain things when the Holy Spirit is manifesting. However, I have not heard of these senses being used for a manifestation of gifting, though it is possible, more often, it is a form of comfort or confirmation.

Physical Sensation

God has many ways of talking. Where we may be used to our birth language and verbal language may be the first idea that comes to mind when we think of God speaking, God also has body language. Not body language in the way we typically think of it, but God actually can speak to and through our bodies. This could be the intense chills many experience in worship or when an apt scripture is spoken. It can also manifest with words of knowledge for healing.

The form of this physical manifestation can be a sympathetic pain, which means, having a pain in the same area as someone who needs healing, and it can also take the form of a burning or tingling sensation as an indication for healing. I will expand upon this topic in the next section.

Manifestations Of The Holy Spirit & How To Interpret Them

It was the third day of a fast. I was so hungry for God and so desperate to know the Holy Spirit. I had set aside some time to pray and fast to receive the gift of healing. I wanted so badly to be used to heal the sick and to minister the way Jesus did. On this particular day, I woke up with a strange sensation in my body. It felt like a bolt of lightning was bouncing around my body. One minute I would have the sensation of electricity in my leg and then it would travel to my shoulder, then my back, my stomach, etc. I did not know what to do with this physical sensation. I went to a prayer meeting that day, which I think was just a Saturday morning men's gathering. We started to worship and the feeling of electricity intensified. It moved to my chest and seemed to intensify to where it took my breath away. I asked the Holy Spirit, 'what is this?' In my mind, I heard, 'this is the gift of healing, where do you want it to be in your body?' Instantly my mind thought of Oral Roberts who testified of having sensations in his hands attributed to the gift of healing, and then I thought of William Branham and how the gift of healing would manifest in his left hand. I then said, 'Holy Spirit, I would like the gift to be in

my left arm.’ Instantly the sensation moved to my left wrist and palm area, and it remains there to this day.

1 Corinthians 3:16

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

Every true believer in Jesus is the temple of the Holy Spirit. In the same way, Jesus indicated that He was a temple in John 2:19. This should prompt us to ask, what and why are we called temples? We know from the scripture that we are the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, the Garden of Eden was a type of temple, the Tabernacle was a mobile temple, and Solomon built the first temple. What they all share in common is they were the place where the manifest presence of God dwelt. Temples were the place where heaven and earth intersected, where the spiritual and natural were in complete harmony and the point of the relationship between mankind and the divine. For believers to be temples means we are that point of connection, the interface of the spiritual and human, and the point of divine encounter for the world. Manifestations of God’s presence were common in all three of these aforementioned temples. God walked in the Garden of Eden, His

cloud and presence filled the Tabernacle with Moses, and in the initial dedication of Solomon's temple, there were physical manifestations of God's presence.

2 Chronicles 7:1-2

When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house.

Fire and glory so filled the temple that the priests could not enter. This filling of the temple is a beautiful foreshadow of the New Testament reality of tongues of fire and the glory of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. If we are temples and our temples are full of the Holy Spirit, we can expect God to physically manifest His presence in His temples. Physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit are very common but often overlooked and not discussed. We have evidence from scripture that even Jesus experienced physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 8:43-46

But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me? When all denied it, Peter and those with him

said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' "But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me."

In other translations the word perceive (ginosko) is translated as feel, but a good definition of ginoko is to know by experience. Jesus, experientially knew that power left or went out from him. The disciples' hearts burned as Jesus opened the scriptures to them on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24. The prophet Jeremiah experienced the word of the Lord as a burning fire in his heart and bones in Jeremiah 20:9. In Daniel's encounter in chapter 10:8-9 he reports that his strength remained in him, his 'vigor was turned to frailty', and he was put into a deep sleep. Physical manifestations happened then and they happen now. The key to understanding the purpose of a physical manifestation is to dialogue and ask God questions about the experience as each individual who knows Jesus has a personal relationship. The expression of manifestations in a person's life are subjective and should be meaningful intimate points of contact between the believer and God. Manifestations are most commonly God letting us know that He is drawing near. We may have sensations in our bodies, at times we may feel weakness, warmth, tingling, sensations of cold, feeling energized, and the list goes on. This can occur in a corporate gathering or when receiving prayer, but it can also occur in our own prayer time in speaking to God. Typically, if a manifestation happens over and over, we will need to dialogue with God about it as it may be a gifting He is releasing into our lives.

A few years ago I started to notice unusual flashes of light over people's heads when I would be preaching or simply in normal conversation. The light was not large, but more like a small flashlight was turned on over someone's head. The flash would last less than half a second. It started to happen so frequently that I got on the Internet to Google, 'random flashes of light.' Google reported that I may have a torn retina and that I was going blind! I should know better than to trust the Internet on diagnosis. Then the thought dawned on me that this may be a spiritual manifestation. I am not prone to open visions so it honestly never occurred to me that this was the Holy Spirit. I asked the Holy Spirit if this was spiritual and He replied, 'when you see the light above someone's head, pay attention to what you just said or what they were saying. The light indicates that what was said was important. It will also mean I am releasing angelic activity to accomplish My will in their life.' When the manifestation happens, I am able to take note of what God is highlighting or minister to the person I am talking with.

One interesting note on physical manifestations is that they will continually happen until we ask God questions. The manifestation was actually a gift of discernment but I was unable to function in it until I asked the Holy Spirit what it was. I am certain many readers have experienced something similar, and I pray that many gifts are made accessible through asking simple questions. Lastly, physical manifestations can be an expression of the conflict of two kingdoms.

When the Kingdom of God confronts the Kingdom of Darkness and there are demonic strongholds in our lives, there can be a physical manifestation. People with demonic influence in the New Testament wallowed on the ground, foamed at the mouth, lay prone as dead, and these were all physical manifestations of the clashing kingdoms. In the same way, if believers have repetitive manifestations, and especially if there is not any clarity from the Holy Spirit on what the manifestation is, it is worth dialoguing with Him about the meaning. In Charismatic culture, we currently see all manifestations as a sign of the Holy Spirit, but people are often uninformed that certain manifestations are the Holy Spirit indicating He wants to bring us into greater spiritual freedom and liberty.

In conjunction with physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit, we are also able to have experiences with God that lead to manifestations of the Holy Spirit in our minds. God wants to craft the mental landscape of our inner worlds for relational encounters with Him.

I had only been walking with Jesus for three years, but I was asked to be the Saturday night speaker at our college retreat. I was really excited to preach and I was receiving prayer before the service. I had my eyes closed but I had this very clear and persistent thought in my mind. The picture was of a human body but it looked like the anatomy diagram from our high school textbooks. I could see on the diagram that the female ovaries and the liver were highlighted in red. I was not sure how to share this as I had never given a word of

knowledge before and it seemed kind of awkward to ask my college friends about their ovaries. At the end of my sermon, I said, 'I have a kind of weird word to share, but are there any girls here with reproductive issues?' I think four people came up for prayer. I was expecting them to fall down like on television, but I simply prayed and asked God to bring healing. There was not any outward sign that God was moving. That night, one of the young women, Tracy, had a dream and a big black spider crawled out of her mouth. Her mother had been diagnosed with endometriosis and though Tracy was undiagnosed, during her cycle she would have such extreme pain that she would be in pain for days on end. Another young woman, Catherine, also had an undiagnosed issue and every ninety days she would end up in the emergency room with extreme pain in her uterus. She would be given pain medicine but nothing would make an impact on it. Both women were completely healed after we prayed and never had the symptoms again. After this experience, I realized that I could be in church or a large crowd and bring to mind the picture of the human anatomy and then ask the Holy Spirit of anyone that needed healing. As I kept the picture in mind, body parts would light up in red. This is one of the ways I am able to receive and share words of knowledge to this day.

God encountered me in my mind and he was able to shape my mental landscape with His touch. Now to partner with Him in words of knowledge, all that is needed is to go back to that stone of

remembrance and His presence is there to move. God can also imprint our emotions in the same way. We can feel His heart over a situation and it can cause us to pray in association with how He feels, but we can also go back to that emotion as a place of intimate encounter with God. Doing this can be a powerful trigger point for prayer and releasing His presence.

It needs to be said that not all manifestations, visions, or emotions come from God. Not to shock the reader too much, but even Jesus had a demonic vision and needed to use discernment. Luke 4:5, *Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.* Jesus saw all the kingdoms of the world from standing on a mountain. This means that Jesus did not visit all those kingdoms, but was shown them as in a vision. Fortunately for us, Jesus resisted the temptation but it underscores the point, not everything we see or experience originates with God. In a situation like this where the enemy is present, it is easy to discern where something is coming from, but other situations are not as overt. The writer of 1 John gives us a key scripture that serves as a guideline for whether or not a spirit and spiritual communication comes from God.

1 John 4:1-3

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God.

Believers are called to not believe every spirit but to test them according to the following criteria. The reason spirits must be tested is that evil powers are very deceptive and if we believe every spiritual communication is from God, we are at risk of becoming false prophets. False prophets are not just individuals who prophesy from their hearts, they are people who believed and proclaimed an untested mistruth about who God is. The first criteria is that every spirit from God must declare that Jesus is Christ. That is to say, Jesus Christ is God and is the only begotten son of the Father. The second criteria is that Jesus is Christ, meaning He is the Messiah. As Messiah, He is the forgiver of sins, His words are eternal, and He is the King of the Kingdom of God preeminent over all entities both seen and unseen. The final criteria is that Jesus came in the flesh. He came as both man and God and died on the cross in the flesh and raised from the dead, forever clothed in eternal, redeemed flesh. Jesus is eternally God and man and dwells forever as mediator between God and man. To summarize, any spirit that says Jesus is not the son of God, that Jesus is not the Messiah, or that Jesus did not come in the flesh, die on the cross, and raise from the dead, that

spirit and its revelations/visions/impressions are not from God. As a teacher of supernatural experiences and communication, I cannot overstate how important it is that all believers adhere to these guidelines. I have personally witnessed a number of once-solid believers and gifted ministers completely derail their lives by believing visions and experiences that violate the above criteria.

CHAPTER 7

KEEPING JESUS CENTRAL -

Having walked with Christ, personally participated in thousands of healings and miracles of healing, prophesied the secrets and details of people's lives, and helped spark a move of the Holy Spirit, all signs, all revelations, and all outward manifestations pale in comparison to knowing the deep and overwhelming love of Jesus.

2 Corinthians 3:18

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We have unhindered access to the glory and presence of God as believers and it is through beholding this glory that we are transformed. It is in the glory and presence of God that we grow in the knowledge of God, that our minds are renewed to think like Him, and it is in the beholding of His presence that we encounter Him and are transformed.

2 Corinthians 4:6

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

If it is by beholding His glory that we are transformed, the focus is not some nebulous presence that we fix our attention on. The glory of God is in the face of Jesus Christ. Unlimited, unfettered, transformational glory has an access point, the face of Jesus. Paul being first a Jew has in mind the Jewish concepts associated with His word choice. The word face is the Hebrew word *Paniym* (Strong's 6440) and can mean face, presence, or person. Take for example, Psalms 16:11, *You will show me the path of life; in your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.* The word presence is the word *Paniym*. Psalm 16:11 could also say, 'in your face is fullness of joy.' Paul, writing in Greek, is assuming His audience has an understanding of this interplay, but to our modern reading of the Bible, it is not as apparent. Behold the manifest presence of God is to behold the face of Jesus. To intentionally engage the manifest presence of God, is to have access to the unlimited and transformative person of God. In many circles of the charismatic movement, one might hear the phrase, 'come Holy Spirit.' Though God has honored this phrase and graciously moved, the phrase reveals theology. If we are asking the Holy Spirit to come, where is He coming from? Is He in outer space racing down to meet us as we call upon Him? Are we calling Him as if He is not present? Being God, He is present everywhere, all the time. John 14:21 says, *He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.* The Holy Spirit manifests Himself to those He loves. The Father loves

us, He proved it in sending Jesus for us. In Christ, God has written His commandments on our hearts, His grace empowers us to yield to the new creation, which by nature expresses righteousness, and this is our, 'I love you,' to God. His love has empowered us to love Him and as we realize this, He manifests His presence to us. The Holy Spirit is not coming from far off to meet us, but in love He awakens our senses to perceive Him. The more we yield our hearts and lives to Jesus, and the more we behold Him, we are awakened to perceive the manifest presence of God. It is clear that God's manifest presence is based upon a loving relationship with Him and He has simple access points to experience it.

We can behold Jesus in the scriptures. Jesus tells us in John 6:63, *It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.* Jesus' words are living and they are spirit, in fact, the words and testimony of Jesus are so latent with the manifest presence of God, whole movements have been started because one person got a hold of just a single verse. Beholding Jesus in the word of God is to linger upon the scriptures, to meditate on them, and to allow them to renew our minds to think how God thinks. One exercise I teach my students is to take a miracle of Jesus and ask the Holy Spirit to show you through His eyes that experience. Allow Him to reveal details about the event, to show what Jesus was thinking and feeling, and to highlight important lessons the Father is wanting to reveal. Reading and digesting the spirit of the words of Christ reconnects us to our spiritual selves.

The second way to behold the face of Jesus is through adoration. Psalm 22:3 reads, *'But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel.'* God literally sits as king in the praises of His people. The Kingdom is an extension of the personhood of the king, which means the Kingdom of God is manifest in and through the praises of God's people. To enter into true worship and praise is to behold the face of Jesus and to encounter the manifest presence of God.

For me, worship and praise have always been central to my walk with Jesus. As a young believer, I could always sense the presence of the Holy Spirit at church, but when I went out of the service or back home, I did not have the same sense. I wondered if God would visit my prayer room in the same way He showed up at church. Since I already sensed God's presence at church, I decided that I would worship until God showed up. Not much seemed to happen at first, but I just kept worshipping. The Holy Spirit began to manifest His presence in my room and from His manifest presence, I would begin to talk to the Holy Spirit. Soon I found myself spending hours in worship, not really realizing where the time went. Many people think God's love language is acts of service, but God's love language is quality time. He paid such a high price to be in union with us. I have learned the most about who God is through beholding Him in worship and to be impactful, I believe we all must have a robust worship life.

Finally, the most common way to behold the face of Jesus is in His bride. Seeing and appreciating Jesus in other people may be the easiest way to encounter Him. Throughout the body of Christ are different expressions and various manifestations of the person of Jesus. The expression of the tangible presence of God and the outward working of the gifts of the Spirit will vary based upon the metaphorical soil the church has cultivated. Humans find the most petty reasons to be divisive be it race, culture, social class, gender, etc. God will often place a powerful expression of Himself in groups of people that are very different from us. This is intentional and it is the Holy Spirit telling us He wants us to behold Him in a different part of the Body. He also wants His family and His Body to be one. Many Christians are satisfied to swim in the stream they are most familiar with. However, if we are committed to having the full expression of Jesus in our lives, if we see a group who is different than us but operates at a higher level in a gifting or manifestation of God's presence than us, we must pursue it. God provokes us with His presence and the result is greater unity and relationship among His children. To behold Jesus is to honor Him wherever we see Him being expressed. If we are open and honoring to His body and His people, He will place the unique expression of Himself in our lives as well. In fact, God wants us to behold Jesus in every person we meet as every human being is an image of Him. We can behold the face of Jesus in believers and we can prophetically behold Him in those who have not yet met Him.

Opening our Spiritual Eyes

In the realm of the spirit, all territory has been claimed. All space is either under the influence of God or under the influence of the Enemy. As believers, we are in the process of being sanctified. At the present, we perceive the manifestation of Christ's likeness in our spirits, in our internal world, and with divine health and healing, we see Christ manifest in our bodies. Sanctification happens step by step and encounter by encounter with God.

Romans 8:2

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

The new law that all believers live under is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ. This is the law that propels us nearer to the Father, that shows us that His presence is our habitat, and that teaches us to receive all that the Father has for we are Sons of God. We used to be governed by the law of sin and death, a law that condemned, that ruled by fear, and motivated us to try hard to please God in our own strength. Colossians 1:13 reads, *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.* Our old lives, the law of sin and death, and our flesh were once governed by the power of darkness, but in the law of life in Christ, we are in the Kingdom of the Son of His love where we are partakers of His divine nature, new creations, and Sons of God, beloved as Jesus is beloved. However, as we are being sanctified, we still find that our old nature, though dead in Christ, is still present with us. In

the same way that the children of Israel were required to take the promised land step by step at the direction and counsel of Yahweh, so we too must partner with the Holy Spirit to take territory in our spirits, souls, and bodies step by step. The unsanctified parts of ourselves are what can be tempted, can sin, and even be influenced by the Enemy. In the past, there has been a debate as to whether a Christian can have or be influenced by the demonic. The fact that any believer does sin demonstrates that believers can be influenced by the demonic for we know sin does not originate with God. Beyond that, spiritual growth creates conflict with the kingdom of darkness when it still attempts to influence and control our lives. I have helped numerous people be set free from demonic powers and many of them had walked with Jesus for many years. The majority of demonic manifestations are not outrightly physical, meaning that not everyone that has demonic influence in their lives will have physical or verbal manifestations. In fact, 99% of demonic manifestations are expressed internally as negative emotions or negative thought patterns. What many experience as moods or dark thoughts can often be an evil power utilizing a person's emotions and mind to express itself without fully exposing itself in the physical.

My grandfather was a brilliant man. He was a microbiologist and one of the early developers of tetracycline. Sadly, he also struggled with severe depression and was prescribed MAO inhibitors, yet he still struggled with suicidal thoughts. After my grandmother passed away and through a series of ups and downs, he decided he would commit suicide. On the very day he decided to go through with it, my mother and I happened to stop by. I ran up to my grandfather and told him how much I loved him. From that moment on, he decided to not kill himself. In fact, he took the gun and shot the floor to remind himself that he had chosen to live. As early as five years of age, I would have random thoughts of death. I would hear myself say in my head, 'I wish I were dead,' or, 'I wish I were never created.' The thoughts would often intensify during times of hardship or stress. Even when I fully committed my life to Christ at 19, these lingering thoughts remained. I honestly thought it was me or my flesh, and I often thought about the scripture in Philippians 1:23, which is about Paul wanting to depart and be with Christ. I was nearly forty years old when it dawned on me that these thoughts may not be my own. I spent some time talking with the Holy Spirit and inquiring if these thoughts were demonic and that is when I made the connection with my grandfather and the spirit of death that manifested in his life. The entity that had harassed him was harassing me! That week I met with my good friend, Rob, and we prayed. We cast out the evil power from all

access to my life and from expressing itself in my mind. Immediately, I noticed my thought pattern changed, and I was no longer burdened with thoughts of death and wishing to die. This experience led to an incredible spiritual awakening in my own personal life and I have felt closer to Jesus ever since.

Here is another story from a former student of mine:

A short introduction to myself. I grew up in the church for as long as I can remember as my father is a pastor, and I think it's important to mention that I have never been interested in the demonic. I have never participated with the rest of the schoolboys in elementary school of saying "bloody Mary" three times in the school mirror or ever even seen an ouija board in real life – not into even horror films. I don't know what astrology symbol or birthstone I am and I've kept myself pure from knowing what tarot cards actually do. So it was all the more surprising to me of how I could be influenced by the demonic.

As a 40 year-old and a father of young daughters ages two through eight, I was in a season of homeschooling and staying at home with all 3 children. One particular day, I was having a rough time with them. For hours that day, I would lash out and scream and berate my children. I would unleash a verbal assault unfit for even other grown men to taste. Then I'd have this thought that I should stop and then be pulled into another fit of rage. I found myself stuck in this cycle unleashing on my

children again and again.

That same night was my class for SoCalSSM, a school that James teaches at. We often spend an hour in worship, but after a day like that, it was the last thing I wanted to do. That evening, in His presence, my worship was deep, painful, and sorrow-filled sobs. As the music and the songs continued, I finally ran out of tears and picked myself up from the floor and sat down across the room from James. He motioned with his finger for me to come over and to sit by his side. I sat next to him, both of us quiet as the music rang loudly through the speakers. Finally, James said, “I see there’s like a spirit of anger in your life. Your grandfather, on your father’s side, as the Korean War tore the nation and his family apart, the trauma of that war brought in the spirit of anger and it’s been passed on from generation to generation. In fact, the men in your family are unable to show emotion, except for the emotion of anger. I keep hearing the name “Sung.” Who is that?” That was my dad. The man who tormented me for years and years. The horror of some of the things he did to me few would ever understand or believe. That same night, James led me to a prayer of confession and repentance and ultimately a deliverance. And since that wonderful moment in my life, the anger that’s been so common in my life vanished. Gone. I’ve yelled at my kids since that moment and felt bad – sure. But not like before. Not even close.

Then for a week afterward, I kept on having these series of dreams. In those dreams, I was a murderer. And those dreams wouldn't stop. I felt like I had the spirit of murder in my life. It was both unsettling and hard to believe because mostly I couldn't relate to it. I simply could not rationalize this in my head. Even in the worst episode of anger in my history, murder was neither a thought nor a temptation. But because of my experience of God through my dreams, I finally got the nerve to approach James one day and said I needed prayer for another deliverance.

I said, "James, I think I have the spirit of murder." He asked if I had murderous thoughts. I said, "absolutely not!" Then he laughed because he was sure I was fine and wanted to reassure that I wasn't going crazy. But once I told him my dreams, he put his hand on me and we started praying. Then he did a pulling motion with his hand as if he was pulling something out of me and said, "spirit of murder, come OUT!" I would cough on cue over and over again. It was such a powerful experience. As soon as our prayer time was over, James asked me if my father ever said, "I'll kill you," to me. I immediately said, "no," until I realized that he did ... my entire life. There's a common saying in Korean that's translated as "you wanna die!?" My father would say this to me over and over again, threatening to kill me during his bouts of rage when I was a child, teenager, and adult. Though it's a common phrase, he had literally cursed me my entire

life.

I didn't understand how this spirit impacted my life until it left. One day one of my kids made a simple mistake – she had dropped some food and spilled it all over the floor. I looked at her, she looked at me, and I smiled back. Then I helped her clean up the mess all over the floor. I was and am completely delivered. In that moment, there was nothing of my child's mistake that made me want to get angry or 'kill them' for it. The thought was absurd. I'm blown away at how much this spirit had tormented me and my children. I am so thankful I was set free, I am grateful for Jesus and for the power of prayer.

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The greatest trick the devil ever pulled is not to convince us he does not exist, it was to convince us that he is us. If we take ownership of the demonic expressions of evil spirits in our emotions and minds, we just consider it to be a part of our personality, when in fact, the enemy is keeping many of us bound and suppressed from our true selves. There has been much debate and discussion about what demonic spirits are. For a historically Jewish perspective on what demonic entities are, I recommend [The Unseen Realm](#) by Dr. Michael Heiser. Whatever perspective the reader holds, it is less important than the fact that demonic powers exist and are adverse, harmful, and destructive toward humanity. Even those in the New Age movement occasionally bump into them in the spirit and have

coined the term, spiritual parasites, which is a fairly accurate description. Besides gaining a sense of satisfaction from expressing themselves through our souls and bodies, demonic entities' ultimate goal will be to hinder the relationship of the believer towards God and the intended destiny God has for individuals.

Matthew 13:18-23

“Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. 23 But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

Though many of us have heard numerous sermons on this parable, it actually is a powerful outline of the enemy's tactics to keep us limited and bound from all that God has for us. The three levels of hindrance all come against the word or the revelation of the

Kingdom and the person of God. The enemy hinders us at the level of our revelation of God's promise in and over our lives, so we are led to compromise. For the first, it is a lack of understanding, the second the one who cannot endure or persevere, the third is unfruitful due to cares and distractions. These are the three main areas the enemy targets believers in, understanding of the person of God, discouragement due to circumstance, and unfruitfulness by giving attention to lesser loves. The goal of the demonic is to create blindness in our lives toward God so that we are hindered in becoming like and expressing the person of Jesus on planet earth.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Paul is clear here, the Enemy's tactic for keeping people from receiving Jesus as Messiah is spiritual blindness. Unbelief, in all forms, originates in the demonic. The manifestation of sin in our lives is the outworking of incorrect beliefs about who God is, what He has promised in His word, and the identity we have in Christ. Sin or missing the mark is the fruit of misbelief and unbelief in our lives. It is spiritually enforced and seeks to buffer the revelation of who God is by creating pathways of agreement, typically mental/emotional strongholds or actual physical sin patterns. These pathways of agreement are manifestations of where we doubt God's

character, His promises, and His love for us. Unbelief is completely unreasonable, even in the face of radical miraculous breakthrough, unbelief cannot receive or see who God is.

Matthew 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Here the disciples are seeing Jesus raised from the dead. He is talking to them, they see Him, they worship Him, but some doubted. What! The disciples, who have been with Jesus, have seen jaw-dropping miracles, and now see the resurrected Christ before them, doubted. The disciples still had spiritual blindness that the Holy Spirit needed to deliver them from.

For me, the more I am sanctified, delivered from ungodly agreements in my mind, emotions, and body, and therefore, delivered from a spirit of unbelief, the more I can see and perceive in the spirit. Demonic powers come against our ability to sense God and the word of the Kingdom. Scripture identifies two manifestations that directly indicate the operation of unbelief in our

lives.

Matthew 14:25-31

Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

Peter does the incredible, steps out of the boat into the realm of the supernatural. He is literally walking on water, which is absolutely commendable and has inspired many Christians to try and walk on water ever since! As he is walking on the water his attention is taken away from Jesus and His word which had declared, 'come,' walk on the water. Instead, his attention is drawn to the circumstance of the storm, he sees the wind, the waves, and he becomes afraid. As his focus is taken away from Jesus he is drawn out of the supernatural and begins to sink. Jesus saves him but Jesus

does not say to him, ‘why were you afraid,’ he says, ‘why did you doubt?’ The word for doubt here is *distazo* which means to waiver or to look at different opinions. Fear is a manifestation of a spirit of unbelief in our lives, and this is why fear limits the manifestation of the promises of God in our lives. We can have the word of the Lord or the promises of God in our lives, but experience limited breakthrough or experience of those promises. The scripture says, ‘he was afraid; and beginning to sink,’ meaning Peter was still in the realm of the supernatural but he was being drawn back into the natural. How many times have we partially received God’s promise or seen a partial breakthrough in circumstances and situations in our lives? God wants us to fully commit to His word and His promises in our lives and to not allow fear to keep us out of all He has for us.

Mark 6:1-6

Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, “Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.” Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people

and healed them. And He marveled because of their unbelief.

Here we have Jesus speaking the wisdom and revelation of God and moving in miracles and power. However, it causes confusion in those from His hometown as they had seen Him grow up and they were familiar with Him. The paradox perplexed them to offense but the offense revealed something in them. The offense was rooted in their unbelief, and the second fruit of unbelief is offense toward God. God oversees the performance of His word, but the way it is accomplished often flies in the face of our expectations. Like Namman the leper expected Elijah to come out and wave his hand over him, but instead was offended when told to dip in the Jordan, so too, we can have an expectation of how God's will should be accomplished in our lives. When our expectations are not met, we can also be tempted into offense. God often speaks words of destiny over people but then allows a Joseph-like prison, a season of wilderness, or a lion's den to prune and craft us into the people who can walk in such great words.

I know that when I make decisions out of fear or respond to God in offense, I am leveling off my spiritual reality because of my understanding or misunderstanding of God, my circumstances or emotions, or my preoccupation with the cares of this life. I am convinced that realities are the manifestation of agreement with either the promises of God or the lies of the Enemy. The Enemy imposes his reality by generating difficult circumstances, emotional intimidation, and negative thought patterns. Our agreement with his tactics manifests his will, which is a demonic reality. At some point,

the believer must consider why the devil works so hard to convince us that we are worthless, terrible, and will never accomplish anything. If he puts so much effort into convincing us of accusation and condemnation, it should provoke us to wonder why. It is because once we truly believe and live out the reality of Christ in us, He has lost control and His kingdom will be put into subjection to the Kingdom of God in and through our lives. God issues His word but does not impose His will upon us, but with free will, He desires us to choose to agree with Him. John 17:17 states, Sanctify them by your truth, your word is truth. The word truth in Greek can also be translated as reality. God's word is reality, and our agreement with His word and promises manifests a Godly reality. Taking this perspective manifests the person of Jesus in our lives, and the Kingdom of God accelerates and expands. It is worth some honest consideration, prayer, and pursuit, to have the Holy Spirit uncover areas of our lives where we are operating out of fear or offense toward God. If these can be identified, we will know where unbelief is at work in our lives and how it is blinding us toward all that God has for us.

Below is a simple prayer pattern for self-deliverance. It follows a simple, biblical pattern. The person praying need only be sincere and attentive to the Holy Spirit as they pray. The prayer has four parts that include, confession if the issue being prayed about is related to sin or a sin pattern. Secondly, repentance of that sin. Thirdly, renouncing all affiliation with that form of thinking or sinful behavior. Finally, commanding, that is commanding every

evil power or evil spirit behind that sin, line of thinking, emotional pattern or physical manifestation. If the issue does not have a root in sinful behavior, the person praying can simply pray through renouncing all affiliation and then command every evil power associated to leave. In the prayer below, I will provide the words and the person praying need only to put the words in the blank.

Prayer:

Father, I thank you that you love me. That you see me and you want to help me. Father I confess I have struggled with _____, I know it's not how you intend for me to live my life. I repent of _____, and with your help I will be set free. In the name of Jesus I renounce all affiliation with _____, I want nothing to do with it and I do not want it in my life. In the name of Jesus I command every evil spirit and every demonic power that has tried to influence me regarding _____ to leave right now. I sever you from influencing my mind, my emotions, and my body. Get out in the name of Jesus.

The person praying may need to be persistent and may also have some form of manifestation of the evil spirit leaving. If there is resistance or trouble getting free, simply ask the Holy Spirit what the blockage is and He will instruct you.

CHAPTER 8

LIVING AS SONS –

Many Christians fail to come into spiritual victory, not for lack of attending conferences or listening to worship music, the shortfall is always in the simple and rudimentary things. Perhaps the greatest shortfall is the lack of endurance in appropriating a solid identity in Christ. I say endurance because it is a process and it takes faith to believe about ourselves what God believes about us. It takes no faith to agree that I am worthless, but it takes great faith to believe that I am the righteousness of God in spite of my behavior both good or bad. It takes faith to believe that my humanity is seated with Christ in heavenly places and that the resurrection power of Christ is seated in me in earthly places. It takes faith to believe that I am a son of God, and yet the Holy Spirit testifies that we are spirit of His spirit loved and accepted as Jesus is loved and accepted. It is these realities that we must not only theologically agree to but we must let the Holy Spirit so transform our minds that we see and live from Jesus' perspective about the world and about ourselves.

In Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus in John 3:3 he states, *Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* However, by implication, if we are born again we have the ability to see or perceive the kingdom of God. If we are His

children we have the ability to have an awareness of and actively participate in His manifest presence. It is God's desire that our spiritual perceptions be awakened. The Holy Spirit continually reminds us that we are children of God as He knows our understanding and acceptance of that truth is the first step in us actively and relationally knowing the Father and being reintroduced to our spiritual selves. This vital and vibrant relationship with God creates in us a beautiful purity. Galatians 5:16, *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.* The natural outworking of a relationship with God is a purity of spirit that allows us the liberty to perceive God. He has made us righteous and drawn us near by the blood of Jesus, we are cleansed, we are free, we are holy and we perceive the Father, for the pure in heart shall see God (Matthew 5:8). Jesus' vital relationship with the Father is how He was able to perceive God by the Holy Spirit, John 5:19 reads, *Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do, for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.* The outworking of Jesus' relationship with the Father resulted in spiritual sight and the ability for spiritual cooperation. Sons look to see what the father is doing and cooperate to release the Father's will on earth.

Sons are presence driven. Many Christians are satisfied to warm themselves around theologies, knowledge of the scriptures, or outward obedience/behavior modification. None of these good things can replace or are the signs of a real relationship with the

Father.

John 17:20-23

I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

The manifestation of the Holy Spirit in our lives is given to produce union with Jesus and the Father. The world does not believe we are sons of God because we tell them we are, but out of the profound unity we have with God, the Holy Spirit bears witness to the world that Jesus is of the Father and that we are in Christ. As sons, if our focus is our relationship and unity with Jesus and the Father, we will experience the manifestation of the presence of God, referred to in the above passage as glory. The natural progression of living as sons of God united with the trinity is the supernatural outworking of the tangible presence of God in our everyday lives. The goal of pursuing God through Bible reading or a devotional life should not be to simply check off a reading list. The point is that we encounter Him daily, multiple times a day, and it is the imprints of these encounters in our lives which produces the manifestation of the person of Jesus.

Romans 5:17

For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

Sons know how to receive. I love this scripture, it is one of my life verses. Sons are called to rule and reign with Christ. We are a royal priesthood according to 1 Peter and are called to rule and reign with Christ according to the book of Revelation, but this verse says we can reign in life. Sons reign because they know how to receive from God. Many saved Christians have lived their whole lives with an insurance policy for heaven without realizing the gift was much more. I am convinced that our understanding of our authority in Christ is directly tied to our understanding of our gift of righteousness. Psalm 89:14 says, *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne, mercy and truth go before your face.* If righteousness is the foundation of God's throne and His gift of righteousness is present in us through the atoning work of Jesus, then fully appropriating His righteousness establishes His throne in our hearts. In righteousness, Jesus takes dominion in and through us, and the result is a greater manifestation of the authority of Christ in our lives. When we speak, demons, opposition, and disorder are rendered captive because the ruling Christ, the one through whom all things were made and are held together, is speaking. We reign when we receive His righteousness, but we also reign because we receive an abundance of grace. Having received the gift of

righteousness, we now have a place for the grace of God to alight in our lives. We are able to come before the throne of grace for the righteousness of Christ is present within us. The second half of Psalm 89:14 is, *mercy and truth go before your face*. Mercy, kindness, goodness, and reality are present in His manifest presence. Receiving His abundance of grace is everything we receive from God after having been born again. Be it His voice, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, and every answered prayer. God is a giver and He wants us to learn to receive His manifest presence to reign with Him, so that Jesus may be fully represented in our lives. May the reader permit themselves to receive the grace of God, receive God's righteousness, and reign through the one, Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 9

RELEARNING TO EXPERIMENT

I titled this chapter, Relearning to Experiment, as the value for spiritual experimentation in the Western church has been all but snuffed out. Though there is a low value on spiritual exploration and discovery, my goal is to help free the reader up to experimentation. As discussed in the first chapter, the church has done a poor job in rebutting the rise of the New Age movement and the re-terming of spiritual language and experience. Rather than stand toe to toe in spiritual demonstration, the church largely retreated in fear and, for the most part, labeled anything odd or weird as being of the New Age. Today the Western church community is quick to ignore or discard often biblical expressions of supernatural experience.

I believe we are all called to grow in our experience with God through dialogue and experimentation. Most of us have read the scripture in John 16:13 that says the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth. We can know that if our hearts are to love and serve God and that our desire is to know Him, then we are in a place to receive and walk in the guided truth of the Holy Spirit. The first step to being free to experiment in the spirit is to let go of the fear that somehow the devil is stronger than God and that one false move will forever set you onto the path of perdition.

Secondly, many Christian groups get very afraid of supernatural experiences or are very afraid of being deceived. I have had the experience where I have tried so hard not to make a mistake that I end up making the mistake I was trying to avoid. Spiritual myopia is a mistake. Let's consider the power of the demonic for a minute. Demons, principalities, the Prince of Darkness himself were originally Godly creations and had their station or position in heaven. At one point, they were good and they were gifted or anointed spirits to accomplish good and Godly things. Unfortunately, through rebellion, they are no longer in a relationship with God, but yet retain their spiritual giftedness. We know from Romans 11:29, *For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.* For the Enemy, for us, for angels, and all spirits, the giftedness that God places in our lives remains and is operational despite what condition our relationship with God is in. The gifting on the Devil's life is neither good nor bad, it's simply giftedness, how he chooses to express his anointing is evil. To drive the point a little deeper, if we see someone in the New Age operating in the supernatural, we do not need to respond in fear, but in inquiry to God. There is a correct supernatural expression of any spiritual manifestation that exists. We need to look at the scriptures, we need to inquire of the Lord, and find the godly expression of that supernatural experience. The difference between a gifted spirit that is outside of a relationship with God and me, is that they are capped in their ability to grow in their gifting and I am not. The potential for spiritual growth in me is unlimited for the resurrected Christ dwells in me. Fear has caused

many to think the spiritual realm is off limits, when in fact, it is the enemy that wants to keep us out of the spiritual realm because when we enter it, we become a real threat.

As for methods of experimentation, I would like to lay some basic ground rules. First and primary is that Jesus is the mediator between God and man and the Holy Spirit which is called the Spirit of Jesus is the one who we partner with in the spiritual realm. We do not look to any other religious figure, guide, angel, myth, legend, medium, priest, etc. other than Jesus Christ. We typically utilize physical objects like oil, prayer clothes, the sacraments (bread and wine), and water for baptism for spiritual experience, but we do not use relics, amulets, or crystals. As for tools for communication with God, we are good to communicate with God using the scriptures, dialoguing prayer, and visualization. In all experimentation, please refer to the section on testing the spirits in Chapter 6. In experimentation, the goal is to connect with God in the protocol of communication outlined in scripture and experience an unfettered relationship with Him.

Exercise 1 - Time Traveler

Find a section of scripture that interests you. Then ask the Holy Spirit, who searches all things, to show you from His perspective what He saw when the event happened. Take, for example, the miracles of Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to take you to that day and to show you what He noticed or what stood out to Him. The amount of detail you will perceive will make you fall more in love with Jesus

and pull deeper revelation out of the scripture.

Exercise 2 - Communion

Imagine yourself seated with Christ in heavenly places (Eph 2:6). From this place of visualization, look into the eyes of Jesus. Ask Him what He thinks of you* and what is on His mind. If you are wanting to pray for someone, ask Jesus if you can invite that person into your conversation. Then continue asking dialoguing questions about the person and His thoughts about them. Ask probing questions and really try to partner with His heart and minister out of intimacy.

** I like to begin with asking God what He thinks about me as this is a baseline question for hearing that I can measure against scripture. For example, if He says He loves me and I am His child, I know I am connecting with Him.*

Exercise 3 - The Teacher

In this exercise, before you are about to pray for someone, imagine Jesus being with you. Imagine Jesus is between you and the person you are going to minister to. Then speak the spontaneous thought or image that comes to mind. Do not try to over-interpret, just describe what you see. The first time I practiced this, I saw a picture of Jesus in front of a blackboard pointing to the work, Raymond. I asked my friend what Raymond meant to him. He said he had grown up in the town of Raymond, MA. Like Habakkuk 2:1 says, *watch to see what He will say*. Watch what images, phrases, and impressions are imprinted on the landscape of the mind when

Jesus is in the middle.

Exercise 4- The Diagram

If you are in a service or a large crowd of people. Imagine the anatomy image from your high school textbook. The image typically has skin, muscle, bones, internal organs, etc. With this image in mind, ask the Holy Spirit what conditions He is wanting to heal. Let Him highlight and direct you to what He wants to touch. Often He will point out the area needing healing and then speak or write the medical condition. I frequently get medical words that I did not know before.

There are so many different ways to communicate with God. I encourage the reader to experiment and practice. People often ask, *what diet will make me lose the most weight?* The answer is, it's the diet you stick with. Visualization prayer done once will not benefit in the long run very much. Visualization prayer put into practice will help the reader operate in a higher level of the seeing realm. If the reader is consistent, hungry, and teachable, there is no limit to what God can do with a person like that.

FINAL WORDS

I want to thank each reader for taking the time to read, ruminate, and ultimately I pray that a deeper relationship with God has developed. So often we see people who are naturally gifted or have had a profound encounter with God, and the rest of us feel as if they could never walk in the same grace and power as others. The fact is, if we are hungry and thirsty to grow, learn, and risk, there is no limit on how much grace we can walk in. No one is guaranteed a profound spiritual experience, but each of us have been given a measure of faith. If that faith is put into action and we are doers of the word of God, He is faithful to demonstrate the power of His word in and through us. It is my desire that the reader be carried along by the grace of God, receiving His kind affections, and fully manifest the love of Christ.