

UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Part 8

April 9, 2017

River of Life

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The Three Wisdom Gifts – I Corinthians 12

2. Discerning of Spirits

Definition: Insight into the spiritual realm; the ability to know accurately what spiritual influence is motivating a person or situation.

Scriptural examples: John 1:47-51; Acts 16:16-18; 1 Timothy 4:1-2

Acts 8:18-23 ¹⁸When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money ¹⁹and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." ²⁰Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! ²¹You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. ²²Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. ²³For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin." ²⁴Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me." - NIV

Discerning of spirits

Peter discerned the real motives of Simon's heart

- Literally, Peter discerns a stronghold of iniquity - a perversion in Simon's character
- This gift allows the perception of demonic activity
- This gift often works through each person's unique pattern of thinking or perceiving.
- **SEVEN Scriptural Ways God reveals things:**
 1. Some describe a "gut feeling", i.e. heaviness or foreboding. (Acts 20:22)
 2. Some see visions or pictures (Jesus in John 1:48)
 3. Visions or Trances (Happening live while you are awake like Peter in Acts 10)
 4. Dreams of warning or revelation (God warned Wise Men Matthew 2:12 in a dream)
 5. Angelic Revelation (Matthew 2:19-20)
 6. From the Scriptures: **KNOW THE WORD!**
 7. Other People who have wisdom or discernment for you

Discerning of spirits

SIX Applications in ministry

1. Exposing false doctrine or teaching
2. Aiding believers in prayer and intercession
3. Exposing the devices of Satan or demonic forces
4. Determining the root of a person's problem or sickness
5. Avoiding a dangerous situation
6. Understanding the underlying motivation of a person, group of people, family system or conflict

Let's Apply this to the things God has been doing in our midst

Most prevalent questions

1. What does it mean to be "Slain in the spirit?"
 - I don't see that term in the Bible
 - I prefer "falling before the Lord" or "Falling under His power or anointing"
 - Some say there is no scriptural basis – They don't see it in Scripture
 - Some go so far to say it is demonic – dangerous caveat/ This comes close to Blaspheming the Holy Spirit
2. Isn't it wrong to get emotional?

When God's Manifest Presence Comes – What Happens?

God's Manifest Presence comes in very tangible ways at times. Here are some of the results:

1. People cannot stand because God's Glory overwhelms them
 - **God's Glory fills the Temple** - (2 Chronicles 5:11- 14) "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course: 12 Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:) 13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments

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 - **God's Glory Revealed as Elijah Confronts the Prophets of Baal** (1 Kings 18:36-40) "At the usual time for offering the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet walked up to the altar and prayed, "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, prove today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant. Prove that I have done all this at your command."

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 - **God's Glory Revealed as Elijah Confronts the Prophets of Baal** (1 Kings 18:36-40) “³⁷ O Lord, answer me! Answer me so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God and that you have brought them back to yourself.” Immediately the fire of the Lord flashed down from heaven and burned up the young bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust. It even licked up all the water in the trench! ³⁹ And when all the people saw it, they fell face down on the ground and cried out, “The Lord—he is God! Yes, the Lord is God! Then Elijah commanded, “Seize all the prophets of Baal. Don't let a single one escape!” So the people seized them all, and Elijah took them down to the Kishon Valley and killed them there.”

When God's Manifest Presence Comes – What Happens?

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 - **God's Glory Revealed as The Holy Spirit falls upon King Saul** (1 Samuel 19:18-24)

“So David escaped and went to Ramah to see Samuel, and he told him all that Saul had done to him. Then Samuel took David with him to live at Naioth. When the report reached Saul that David was at Naioth in Ramah, he sent troops to capture him. But when they arrived and saw Samuel leading a group of prophets who were prophesying, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men, and they also began to prophesy. When Saul heard what had happened, he sent other troops, but they, too, prophesied! The same thing happened a third time. Finally, Saul himself went to Ramah and arrived at the great well in Secu. “Where are Samuel and David?” he demanded. “They are at Naioth in Ramah,” someone told him. But on the way to Naioth in Ramah the Spirit of God came even upon Saul, and he, too, began to prophesy all the way to Naioth! He tore off his clothes and lay naked on the ground all day and all night, prophesying in the presence of Samuel. The people who were watching exclaimed, “What? Is even Saul a prophet?” - NLT

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 - People who came to arrest Jesus fell before Him-
 - (John 18:5-6). "They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. - KJV

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 - **The Apostle Paul Has a Revelation of God in His Glory** - Acts 9:3-9 "Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank." - NLT

When God's Manifest Presence Comes – What Happens?

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2. The Place where they prayed was SHAKEN

(Acts 4:29-35). "And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus." After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness. All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great blessing was upon them all. There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them ³⁵ and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need." - NLT

When God's Manifest Presence Comes – What Happens?

3. Extraordinary Miracles

The Apostle Paul Has a Revelation of God in His Glory - Acts 19:5-12 “As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.

Then Paul went to the synagogue and preached boldly for the next three months, arguing persuasively about the Kingdom of God. But some became stubborn, rejecting his message and publicly speaking against the Way. So Paul left the synagogue and took the believers with him. Then he held daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for the next two years, so that people throughout the province of Asia—both Jews and Greeks—heard the word of the Lord. God gave Paul the power to perform unusual miracles. When handkerchiefs or aprons that had merely touched his skin were placed on sick people, they were healed of their diseases, and evil spirits were expelled.”

Sadly: Some read the Bible with lenses that block out truth

I have had people say to me: I have never seen those verses before.

- Remember, many of the religious people of Jesus day were unable to see the LIVING WORD revealed right before their eyes
- 2 Corinthians 3:4-6 “We are confident of all this because of our great trust in God through Christ. It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. This is a covenant not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life.”

A Warning about a form of religion that denies God's power

A form of religion without God's power

- **2 Timothy 3:3-5**

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— ⁵ **having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.**



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