

# destiny

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*Living Your Purpose in the Power of the Holy Spirit*

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We should not be looking around for some other way.  
God has given us, in His Holy Spirit, every gift and power and help that we need to serve Him!

**A.W. Tozer**

## How to Enjoy your Group and be Enjoyed in Your Group

### **Listen.**

Lean in and hear what others are saying at your group. Ask questions. Be sure not to dominate the sharing time. Be aware of those who are quiet and invite their input.

### **Protect One Another.**

We're a bit like Vegas: what is shared at the table, stays at the table. Make this a safe place for everyone.

### **No Advice or Counseling.**

Resist the urge to give advice—this can often be very hurtful. We're not here to *fix* one another but to support, care and point one another to the grace and truth of Jesus. Also resist the urge to tell someone in pain that "it will get better."

Typically,

in the midst of great pain, a person wants simply to be heard. Affirm that what she is experiencing must be hard and then just listen.

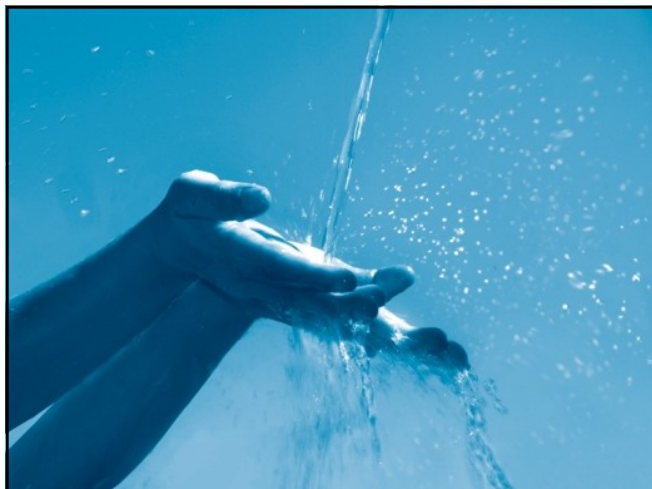
### **Pray. Pray. Pray.**

Pray for your group throughout the week and invite others to pray for you.

### **Prepare.**

Get the most out of this study by using this study guide. You can complete the homework in 45 minutes (or less) each week. Please make every effort to do the homework and come prepared for discussion. This will bless everyone, including you! It might help to divide each lesson in half, spending 30 minutes twice a week, so you don't feel rushed.

# A Weekly Prayer for the Holy Spirit



We want to encourage you to pray weekly for the filling of the Holy Spirit. We believe that every follower of Christ receives the indwelling Holy Spirit when they place their faith and trust in Christ and become a Christian. But Paul also encourages us to continue to be filled with the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18 where the wording there can be literally translated, “keep on being filled with the Spirit.” Paul is basically saying, “keep yielding your life to the control and leadership of the Holy Spirit.”

Dog-ear this page and make this passage of Scripture and the following prayer your weekly (or even daily) prayer.

<sup>15</sup> *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,*  
<sup>16</sup> *making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish,*  
*but understand what the Lord’s will is. <sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery.*  
*Instead, **be filled with the Spirit,***  
<sup>19</sup> *speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.*  
*Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord,*  
<sup>20</sup> *always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

## **Ephesians 5:15-20**

Loving Father, I ask you in Jesus’ name, to fill me afresh with your Holy Spirit.

Fill me, that I may know your presence and that I may know in the depths of my being that I am your child.

Fill me, that I may follow in Jesus’ footsteps and preach good news to all who will hear.

Fill me, that I may be full of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self control.

Fill me, if it be your will, that your Spirit might manifest through me, for the common good:

wisdom, knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues and interpretation.

Thank you Father that you know how to give good gifts to your children and that you are answering this prayer.

Amen.

**A Prayer for the Filling of the Holy Spirit by David Wanstall**



# **My Group and Prayer Requests**



# You Were Made for This

*How the Holy Spirit Empowers our Destiny*

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## **In Your Group: Discovering Your Destiny**

Get to know the women in your group by answering the following questions and then looking at Scripture together.

➤ Share three times in your life when you felt successful. Don't think too hard. Just say the first three things that come to mind.

➤ If you were independently wealthy (so money is not an issue), but you were required to "work" eight hours a day, what would you spend your time doing?

➤ What are three talents you possess?

## **How the Holy Spirit Empowers our Destiny**

Everyone who follows Jesus is a part of his community (the Church) and his mission. As a group, read the following verses and discuss **what they reveal about God's mission** and **how he empowers us to be a part of that mission**.

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;  
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

**Acts 1:8**

*There are different kinds of gifts (of the Spirit), but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.*

**1 Corinthians 12:4-11**

*[Jesus said:] "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

**John 13:34-35**

*For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.*

**2 Timothy 1:6-7**



# Notes: You Were Made for This

Spiritual gifts are nothing less than God himself in us, energizing our souls, imparting revelation to our minds, infusing power in our wills, and working his sovereign and gracious purposes through us.

Spiritual gifts must never be viewed as if a God “out there” has sent some “thing” to us “down here.”

Spiritual gifts are God present in, with, and through human thoughts, human deeds, human words, human love.

**Sam Storms, *The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts***



# Discovering Your S.H.A.P.E

*Created by Christ and Empowered by the Holy Spirit for the Glory of God*



## Opening the Gifts of the Spirit

The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit gifts the church with talents and manifestations to benefit the community and to empower our participation in God’s mission. Unfortunately, we have no complete list of these gifts. But we do know that there *are* gifts (probably more than are recorded), and that God wants us to use these gifts to accomplish his will in the church and around the world. Our focus this week is to discover how God has uniquely designed each of us for his purposes. This will involve the gifts but so much more. Dive in and discover your unique design by looking at your S.H.A.P.E. —[1] Spiritual Gifts; [2] Heart; [3] Abilities; [4] Personality and [5] Experiences — all of these things work together to help you understand your destiny.

### Spiritual Gifts

Look over the list below and then, on the next page, record the top two “gifts” you think you might have. Sometimes it’s helpful to ask those close to you for their input. Remember Scripture never gives us a complete list of gifts, and it does not say that each gift is given for a life-time (it might be, but it also might be given just for a season or a particular situation).

1 Corinthians 12:8-10	1 Corinthians 12:29-30	Romans 12:6-8	Ephesians 4:11
Word of Wisdom			
Word of Knowledge			
Healing	Healing		
Miracles	Miracles		
Prophecy	Prophecy	Prophecy	Prophecy
Discerning of Spirits	Discerning of Spirits		
Tongues	Tongues		
Interpretation of Tongues			
Faith			
	Apostles		Apostles
	Teachers	Teaching	Teaching
	Helps	Serving	
	Administration		
		Encouragement	
		Giving	
		Leadership	
		Mercy	
			Evangelists
			Pastors



### [1] Spiritual Gifts I Might Have:

- 1.
- 2.



### [2] Heart: The Things I Am Most Passionate About

*\*\* Resist the temptation to over-spiritualize this as well as the following questions. All things are spiritual to God, even baking, working out, traveling and creating art.*

I get most excited about:

I am most concerned about:

If I could do anything in the world it would be:



### [3] Abilities: Talents I Have, and Stuff I Do Well

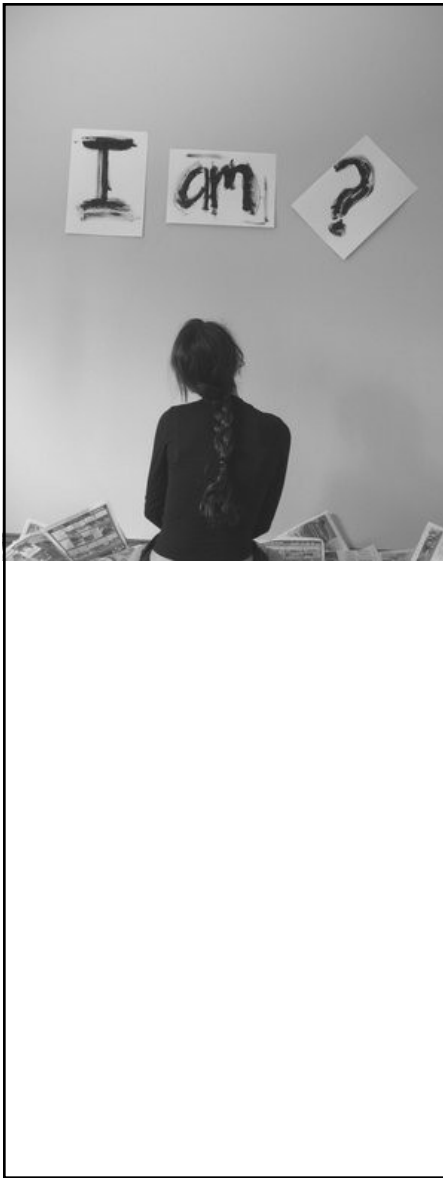
I am good at:

I have succeeded at:

I could teach others to:

In a group, my most valuable contribution is:





#### [4] **Personality:** Who I Am

We are complex people, and we need to be careful not to stereotype ourselves, but it can be helpful to consider how we mostly are. For instance, are you more introverted or extroverted? Active or passive? Analytical or Emotional?

Take a minute to write down 5 words that best describe you:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What do these five words — seen together — tell you about how you should spend your time and how God has uniquely designed you?

\*\*See the Going Deeper section on page 11 to discover more about your unique design.

#### [5] **Experiences:** My Past

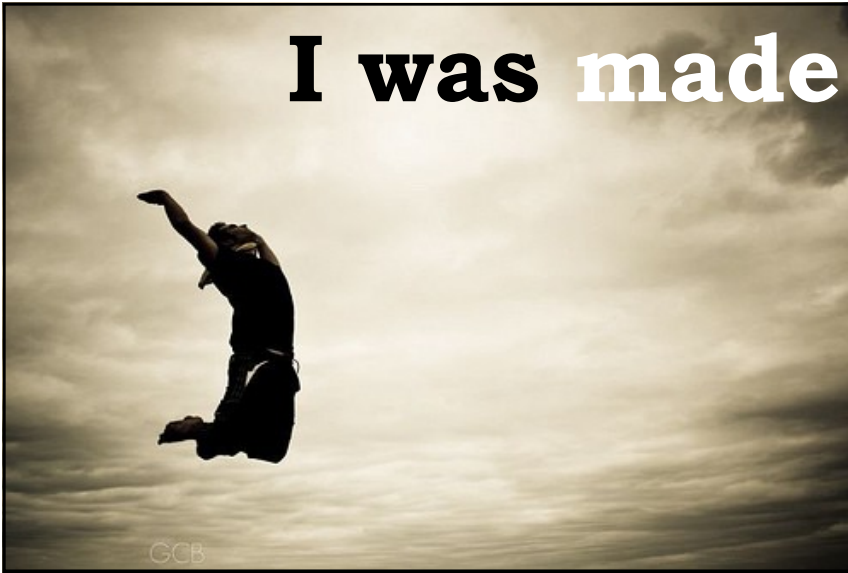
Our experiences shape us deeply. Our God is a God who uses all of our experiences — the good, the bad and the ugly — to bring about something beautiful in our lives so that we can help and serve others. Complete the following statements.

Some significant spiritual experiences for me are:

Some painful experiences include:

Three things I've learned in life that are really significant to me are:

# I was made for this



Ask three friends what they consider your greatest talent. Record their answers here.

*Now may the God of peace . . . equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

**Hebrews 13:20-21**

*Then the Lord said to Moses, "See, I have chosen Bezalel . . . and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts— to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship.*

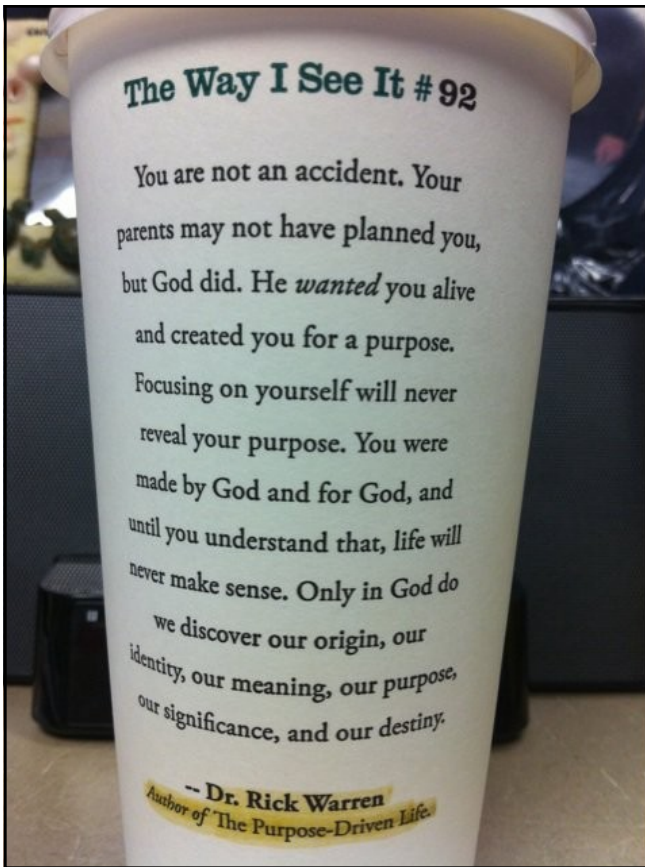
**Exodus 31:1-5**

*In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

**Philippians 1:4-6**

In light of all that you have learned about yourself, what do you think you are made for in this season of your life? Record your answer(s) here.

Based on your gifts, talents and story, how can you best serve God's mission as a part of your local church?



Ambitions for God, if they are to be worthy, can never be modest.

There is something inherently inappropriate about cherishing small ambitions for God . . . Christians should be eager to develop their gifts, widen their opportunities, extend their influence and be given promotion in their work — not to boost their own ego or build their own empire, but rather through everything they do to bring glory to God.

**John Stott**

Be who God meant you to be, and you will set the world on fire.

**Saint Catherine of Siena**

May today there be peace within. May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be. May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith. May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you. May you be content knowing you are a child of God. Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of us.

**St. Theresa's Prayer**

## Summary

**Key Concept:** You are uniquely designed by God for God.

**Key Verse:** Hebrews 13:20-21

*Now may the God of peace . . . equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

## For My Group

List three things you want to remember to share with your group this week.

①

②

③

## Going Deeper

Take one of the following on-line tests to help you better understand your personality and strengths.

**Strength Finders:** [www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/Purchase/](http://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/Purchase/)

**Disc:** [www.123test.com/disc-personality-test/](http://www.123test.com/disc-personality-test/)

**Enneagram:** [www.enneagraminstitute.com](http://www.enneagraminstitute.com)

Summarize what you discover here and how it is significant to how you serve and use your time.



# **Notes: Discovering Your S.H.A.P.E**



# Gifted Together

The Unity and Diversity of God's People

**Spiritual Gifts:** Read through **1 Corinthians 12** and answer the questions to the right.

<sup>1</sup>Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. <sup>2</sup>You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. <sup>3</sup>Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup>There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup>There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup>There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

<sup>7</sup>Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup>To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

<sup>12</sup>Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup>For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. <sup>14</sup>Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

<sup>15</sup>Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup>But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. <sup>19</sup>If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

<sup>21</sup>The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup>and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, <sup>24</sup>while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, <sup>25</sup>so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. <sup>26</sup>If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

<sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. <sup>28</sup>And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. <sup>29</sup>Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup>Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup>Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you the most excellent way.

List significant words that are repeated in this passage.

What are at least 3 key points Paul is making about spiritual gifts?

Why does Paul use the metaphor of a body to describe the church and the distribution of gifts?



## 1 Corinthians 12

Continue making observations of **1 Corinthians 12** by answering these questions.

Why does God give different gifts to different people, and why doesn't he give anyone all the gifts?

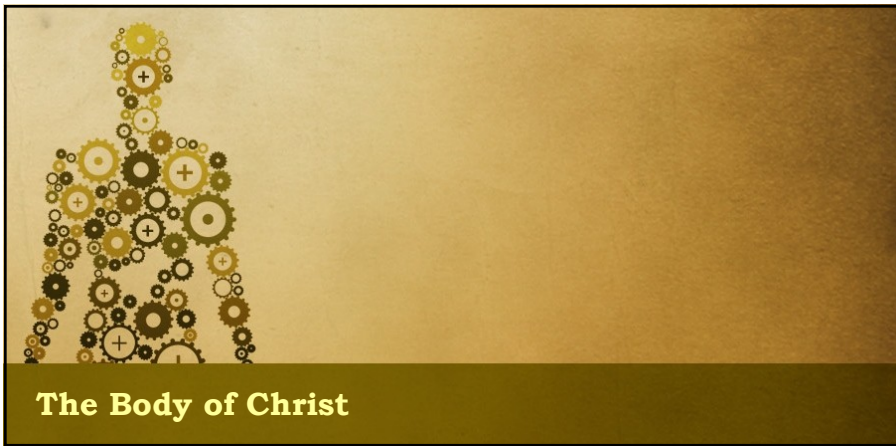
What does this passage reveal about God?

What is one thing you learned about spiritual gifts in this passage that surprised you?

*God also testified to (our salvation) by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.*

**Hebrews 4:2**

What does **Hebrews 4:2** (on the left) reveal about spiritual gifts, and why is this significant?



## The Body of Christ

### **Living in the Power and Gifting of the Holy Spirit**

How is the Body of Christ (the church) both unified and diverse? Why is this important?

**1 Corinthians 12:18** says, *“God has placed the parts of the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.”*

What does this truth mean to you and to your significance in God’s plan?

What is one thing you will do this week to apply **1 Corinthians 12** to your life?



Gifts are abilities God gives us to meet the needs of others in Christ’s name: speaking, encouraging, serving, evangelizing, teaching, leading, administering, counseling, discipling, organizing. Graces, often called spiritual fruit, are beauties of character: love, joy, peace, humility, gentleness, self-control.

Spiritual gifts are what we do; spiritual fruit is what we are. Unless you understand the greater importance of grace and gospel-character for ministry effectiveness, the discernment and use of spiritual gifts may actually become a liability in your ministry. The terrible danger is that we can look to our ministry activity as evidence that God is with us or as a way to earn God’s favor and prove ourselves.

If our hearts remember the gospel, and are rejoicing in our (salvation), then our ministry is done as a sacrifice of thanksgiving – and the result will be that our ministry is done in love, humility, patience, and tenderness. But if our hearts are seeking self-justification and desiring to control God and others by proving our worth through our ministry performance, we will identify too closely with our ministry and make it an extension of ourselves. The telltale signs of impatience, irritability, pride, hurt feelings, jealousy, and boasting will appear. We will be driven, scared, and either too timid or too brash . . . These signs reveal that ministry as a performance is exhausting us and serves as a cover for pride in either one of its two forms, (boasting or self-pity).

**Timothy Keller**

<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p><b>Key Concept:</b> God gives gifts of the Spirit to all who belong to him for his purposes.</p> <p><b>Key Verse:</b> 1 Corinthians 12:11  <i>All these (gifts) are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.</i></p>	<p><b>For My Group</b></p> <p>List three things you want to remember to share with your group this week.</p> <p>①</p> <p>②</p> <p>③</p>
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<p><b>Going Deeper</b></p> <p>At Pentecost (<b>Acts 2</b>) the Holy Spirit brings about a new community, the church. This church is created to be united. Look up the following passages and record what they reveal about the unity of the church.</p>	
<p><b>Acts 2:44-47</b></p>	
<p><b>2 Corinthians 13:14</b></p>	
<p><b>Philippians 2:1-2</b></p>	
<p><b>Ephesians 2:18, 22</b></p>	
<p><b>Romans 5:5;</b></p>	
<p><b>Colossians 3:12-17</b></p>	





# **Notes: Gifted Together**





# Gifted for God

*Designed for the Glory of God*

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## Oh, by the way . . .

Right in the middle of talking about spiritual gifts in **1 Corinthians 12 and 14**, Paul stops and starts talking about love. Read through the passage and answer the following questions.

Why do you think Paul was compelled to stop and insert this passage in the middle of his discussion on spiritual gifts?

### **1 Corinthians 13**

*If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.*

*<sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup> It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup> Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup> It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

*<sup>8</sup> Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. <sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup> but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. <sup>12</sup> For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.*

*<sup>13</sup> And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.*

What does **1 Corinthians 13:1-3** specifically reveal about spiritual gifting?

List at least three reasons love is “the greatest” (v. 13).

## **The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts**

Read the following passages and record what they reveal about the purpose of spiritual gifts (use the space to the left).

*Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. . . All these (gifts) are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. . . . But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.*

**1 Corinthians 12:7, 11, 18**

*So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*

**Ephesians 4:11-16**

*So it is with you. Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church. . . What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.*

**1 Corinthians 14:12, 26**

*For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.*

**Romans 12:3-8**

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

**1 Peter 4:10-11**

## Gifted to Love and Serve



Understanding the purpose of spiritual gifts goes a long way in helping us think clearly about their use. Spiritual gifts are not given for self-promotion or personal agendas, but for the service of others and the mission of God. The benefit to us is the joy and freedom of living our purpose and calling.

When you consider your unique talents, gifts and story, how are you created by God to love and serve others and his mission?

How does your gifting/personality/talent express the character of God?

What keeps you from using your gifts/talents/personality to serve others, the local church and the mission of God?

Take some time now to pray, thanking God for your unique design, and then asking him to show you how to best serve him, his mission and his creation. Record your prayer here.



I am learning more and more that critique is easy and clean, like the Pharisees. It is love that is difficult and messy, like the Cross.

**Tobin Miller**, Pastor in Hong Kong

If you judge people, you have no time to love them.

**Mother Teresa**

People are often unreasonable and self-centered. Forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway.

If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough.

Give your best anyway. For you see, in the end, it is between you and God.

It was never between you and them anyway.

**Mother Teresa**

Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier.

Be the living expression of God's kindness: kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile.

**Mother Teresa**

## Summary

**Key Concept:** Spiritual gifts are an expression of God's love.

**Key Verse:** 1 Corinthians 13:1-2

*If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.*

## For My Group

List three things you want to remember to share with your group this week.

①

②

③

## Going Deeper

Read **1 John 4:7-21** and record what it reveals about love.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-8** describes love. Look back over this passage and consider how God is like the love described here.



## **Notes: Gifted for God**







# Speaking in Tongues

## *The Purpose and Practice of Tongues*

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### **What the Bible Says**

Most commentators believe that the primary issue Paul is addressing in **1 Corinthians 12-14** is the abuse of the gift of tongues in the Corinthian church. Most of the letters in the New Testament were written to churches to deal with internal problems. This is important to remember when studying the Bible. Especially when reading the letters, it is good to ask, “What is the problem being addressed here?” This helps us to make a more accurate interpretation. Before diving into a study of **1 Corinthians 14** (the most extensive passage on tongues in the Bible), answer the following question and then (to the left) record your observations of the following Scripture.

What is your experience with the gift of speaking in tongues?

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*When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken . . . (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!”*

**Acts 2:1-6, 11**

*The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.*

**Acts 10:45-46**

*Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all.*

**Acts 19:4-7**

## Speaking in Tongues and the Bible

Speaking in tongues has been a controversial practice in the church and has created great division. Some think that all should speak in tongues, while others think that no one should. We want to know what the Scripture says, but unfortunately, the Scripture does not say much. The word for this gift only shows up 19 times in the Bible, and 14 of those times are in **1 Corinthians 12-14!** The three times it occurs in Acts are all unique settings. In **Acts 2** it is the day of Pentecost and the inception of the new Church. In this instance it is clear that those speaking in tongues are speaking in a known language. In **Acts 10 and 19** the gift of tongues appears as evidence that the Gentiles also received the Holy Spirit as a result of their salvation (a concept mind-boggling to some Jewish believers).



Wayne Grudem (*Systematic Theology*, p. 1069) notes that the Greek word that we translate “tongue” is best translated in these instances as “language.” He says, “If the English translation were to use the expression ‘speaking in languages,’ it would not seem nearly as strange (as ‘speaking in tongues’), and would give the reader a sense much closer to what first century, Greek-speaking, readers would have heard in reading (the New Testament).”

Nowhere do we have a specific description of this gift or a mandate that all believers should or shouldn’t have it. Keep this in mind as you read **1 Corinthians 14**. Also remember that Paul is correcting an abuse of this gift in the church. As Sam Storms says, “The problem in Corinth was not that they spoke in tongues, but that those who did so thought themselves spiritually superior or more highly favored than those who didn’t. And to make matters worse, they were using the gift in the public gathering of the church without accompanying interpretation.”

**Read 1 Corinthians 14** (on the following page) looking for what it reveals (and doesn’t reveal) about the gift of tongues. Record your findings here.

## 1 Corinthians 14:1-18, 22-40

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy.<sup>2</sup> For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit.<sup>3</sup> But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.<sup>4</sup> Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church.<sup>5</sup> I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

<sup>6</sup> Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction?<sup>7</sup> Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the pipe or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes?<sup>8</sup> Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle?<sup>9</sup> So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air.<sup>10</sup> Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning.<sup>11</sup> If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker is a foreigner to me.<sup>12</sup> So it is with you. Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church.

<sup>13</sup> For this reason the one who speaks in a tongue should pray that they may interpret what they say.<sup>14</sup> For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.<sup>15</sup> So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding.<sup>16</sup> Otherwise when you are praising God in the Spirit, how can someone else, who is now put in the position of an inquirer, say “Amen” to your thanksgiving, since they do not know what you are saying?<sup>17</sup> You are giving thanks well enough, but no one else is edified.

<sup>18</sup> I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.<sup>19</sup> But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. . .

<sup>22</sup> Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers.<sup>23</sup> So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and inquirers or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind?<sup>24</sup> But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all,<sup>25</sup> as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, “God is really among you!”

<sup>26</sup> What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.<sup>27</sup> If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret.<sup>28</sup> If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God.

<sup>29</sup> Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said.<sup>30</sup> And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop.<sup>31</sup> For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged.<sup>32</sup> The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets.<sup>33</sup> For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord’s people.

<sup>34</sup> Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says.<sup>35</sup> If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.

<sup>36</sup> Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached?<sup>37</sup> If anyone thinks they are a prophet or otherwise gifted by the Spirit, let them acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord’s command.

<sup>38</sup> But if anyone ignores this, they will themselves be ignored.

<sup>39</sup> Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.<sup>40</sup> But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

## Summing it all up . . .

Summarize what you learned about tongues in these passages and consider what your response to God will be in light of what you've discovered.



### Summary

**Key Concept:** The gift of tongues is given by God.

**Key Verse:** 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

<sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

### For My Group

List three things you want to remember to share with your group this week.

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### Going Deeper

As mentioned, the Scripture does not say a lot about tongues, so our understanding is somewhat limited. For greater theological understanding, read one (or all) of these authors (note: they hold somewhat different views):

1. *Systematic Theology*, Wayne Grudem—the section on the gifts of the Holy Spirit
2. *Baptism and Fullness: The Work of the Holy Spirit Today*, John Stott
3. *Praying and Praising in the Spirit (1&2)* by Sam Storms [<http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article/tongues-praying-and-praising-in-the-spirit-1-acts-21-811b-1-corinthians-141-19/>]

Record your thoughts here:



## **Notes: Speaking in Tongues**





# Prophecy and Discernment

*The Purpose and Practice of Prophecy and Discernment*

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## Prophecy in the New Testament and Today

The understanding of prophecy seems to change from the Old Testament to the New Testament. In the Old Testament a prophet spoke and wrote with absolute divine authority. They could (and did) say, “Thus says the Lord.” Their words were the very words of God. But in the New Testament the people who spoke for God and wrote what is now Scripture were not called prophets but instead were referred to as ‘apostles.’

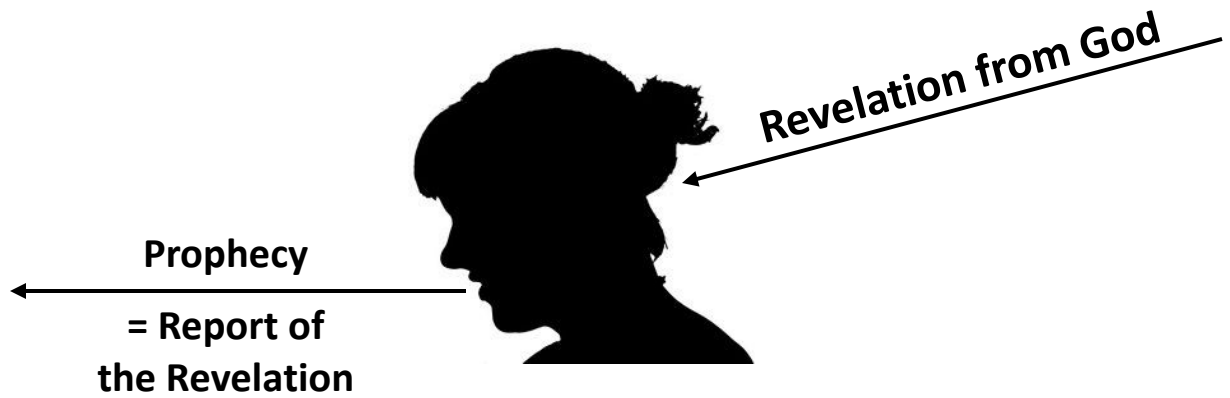
Grudem notes that in the time of the New Testament “the words *prophet* and *prophecy* were used of ordinary Christians who spoke not with absolute divine authority, but simply to report something that God had laid on their hearts or brought to their minds.” Sam Storms gives this simple definition of prophecy today: “the human report of a divine revelation.” It is important to remember that God’s divine revelation is always right but our hearing can be skewed and may not be correct.

What is your experience with the gift of “prophecy”?

Look back over **1 Corinthians 14** (page 27) and record what it says about the gift of prophecy.

Prophecy occurs when a revelation from God is reported in the prophets own (merely human) words.  
It is telling something that God has spontaneously brought to mind.

Wayne Grudem



Look at the following verses and record what they reveal about the spiritual gift of prophecy in the New Testament.

Scripture	Prophecy
<i>Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers. After spending some time there, they were sent off by the believers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. Acts 15:32-33</i>	
<i>Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. 1 Corinthians 14:1-4</i>	
<i>[At Pentecost, Peter said:] . . .this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.' Acts 2:16-18</i>	
<i>[Jesus said:] Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Matthew 7:15-16</i>	
<i>Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4:1</i>	
<i>We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith. Romans 12:6</i>	





## Practicing Prophecy with Discernment

The gift of prophecy is an invitation to hear and respond to the promptings and revelation of God with humility and discernment. Humility means that we are always aware that we might not have heard God correctly — that our own whims and desires and preferences can get in the way of right hearing. Humility means that we never ever say, “God said . . .” but rather we say, “I sense that God might be saying/leading, etc. but please test this and pray about it to be sure . . .”

To practice prophecy in a Christ-exalting manner, we must be discerning. Biblical discernment requires:

1. **Teach-ability**—A discerning person is always learning. They can admit when they are wrong and they can say “I don’t know” with ease. Discerning people ask for help, input and feedback.
2. **Commitment to the Scripture** — A discerning person checks all promptings from God against the teaching of the Bible. God’s promptings and revelations will never contradict his word.
3. **A love for Prayer** — A discerning person is more committed to prayer than proclamation. They recognize that when God reveals something to them it is often wise to commit it to prayer before they ever say anything. They also know that there are things God is revealing to them simply so that they will pray and they might never speak of it.
4. **Kindness** — A discerning person knows how to communicate with kindness and grace. They are not harsh. They do not prophesy for their own gain but to serve the Church.

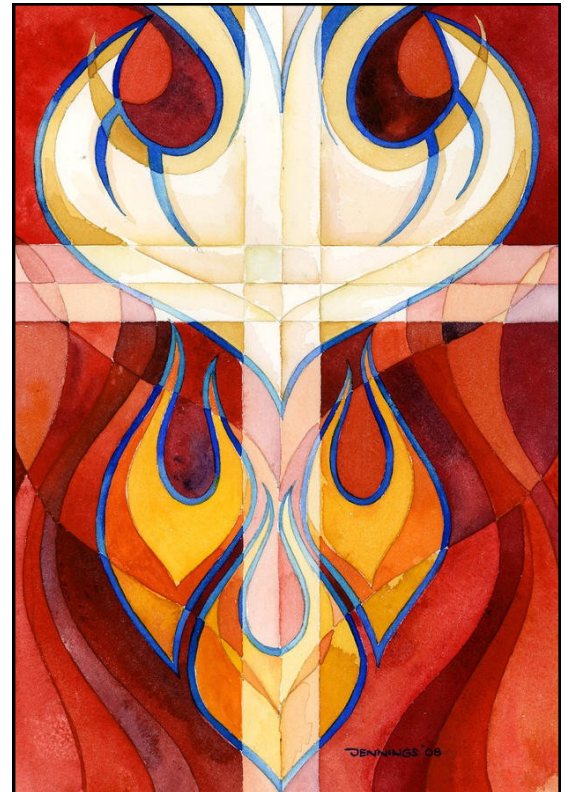
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How might the preceding guidelines serve you if the Holy Spirit prompts you to speak on his behalf?

*Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. . . the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort . . . the one who prophesies edifies the church.*

**1 Corinthians 14:1, 3-4**

What does this passage mean to you today? What might it look like for you to pursue this gift?



## Summary

**Key Concept:** The gift of prophecy is given by God and to be desired by all.

**Key Verse:** 1 Corinthians 14:1-4

*Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church.*

## For My Group

List three things you want to remember to share with your group this week.

①

②

③

## Going Deeper

Read the article, *The Power and Pitfalls of Prophecy*, by Sam Storms.

<http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article/the-power-and-pitfalls-of-prophecy-1-corinthians-141-5/>

Record your thoughts here:



# **Notes: Prophecy and Discernment**





# Healing

## *The Purpose and Practice of Healing*

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### **The Gifts of Healing**

Three times Paul mentions the “gifts of healing” in **1 Corinthians 12**. He uses plural language which Gordon Fee (*God’s Empowering Presence*) says, “suggests not a permanent ‘gift,’ as it were, but that each occurrence is a ‘gift’ in its own right.”

Healing was common in the ministry of Jesus and the early church. Paul seems to indicate that this gift is given within the church and not just to those holding certain positions. It is good and right for the church to ask for and expect healing. But this expectation can also bring hurt to those who are not healed. In this study we want to consider what the Scripture says about healing and the practice of this gift in the church.

Read the following verses (here and on the following page) and record what they reveal about healing.

*Surely he (Jesus) took up our pain and bore our suffering,  
yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.  
But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our  
iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him,  
and by his wounds we are healed.*

**Isaiah 53:4-5**

[Note: this passage is a prophecy about the salvation to come through the future Redeemer, Jesus. It is quoted in 1 Peter 2:24 in reference to the spiritual healing of salvation; it is also quoted in Matthew 8:16-17 in reference to physical healing.]

*Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues,  
proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease  
and sickness among the people. News about him spread all over  
Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases,  
those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having  
seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them.  
Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and  
the region across the Jordan followed him.*

**Matthew 4:23-25**

*When Jesus landed (on the shore) and saw a large crowd,  
he had compassion on them and healed their sick.*

**Matthew 14:14**

*When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.*

**Luke 9:1-2**

*Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. Jesus is 'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.' Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."*

**Acts 4:8-12**

*Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

**James 5:14-16**

*Then the woman (with the issue of bleeding), seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."*

**Luke 8:47-48**

*Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10**



After reading the preceding passages, what do you think was the purpose of healing in Jesus' ministry?

Why are not all people healed when healing is prayed for?

How has this study of healing impacted how you will pray for healing?

Few doubt that Paul had the gift of healing, but his prayers for Epaphroditus weren't answered, at least not at first (Phil. 2:25-30). Clearly, Paul could not heal at will. Aside from Jesus, no one else could either! It seems that healing, whenever it occurred, was subject not to the will of man, but to the will of God.

**Sam Storms**

I believe in divine healing- not in faith healing. . . Divine healing has as its focus the person of Jesus Christ, while faith healing looks inwardly to human potential or outwardly to some human agent. Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2), we make Him the center and source of healing gifts and miracles from God.

**Jack Hayford**

We all long for the second return of Christ when suffering and sickness will be no more and the innocent will no longer suffer tragedy. Presently, we experience the now and not yet of the Kingdom of God, a foretaste of heaven, but not the kingdom's full realization . . . In this life, the people of God will experience freedom from sickness and deliverance from oppression, but deliverance from *all* suffering will not occur until the second coming of Christ. I do not believe we possess the gifts of the Spirit: the Spirit possesses us. When God, the Holy Spirit, chooses to heal through the spiritual gifts, then and only then, will a man or woman be healed (1 Cor. 12:11). The gift of healing is not something we own. Only God, the Holy Spirit, can heal physical sicknesses and he alone chooses through whom he will operate.

**Unknown**



<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p><b>Key Concept:</b> The gift of healing is given by God for his purposes and glory.</p> <p><b>Key Verse:</b> James 5:14-16  <i>Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.</i></p>	<p><b>Going Deeper</b></p> <p>For further understanding of healing in the Bible, go to <a href="http://www.biblegateway.com">www.biblegateway.com</a> come and search the word "heal."</p> <p>Record here what you discover.</p>
<p><b>For My Group</b></p> <p>List three things you want to remember to share with your group this week.</p> <p>①</p> <p>②</p> <p>③</p>	





## **Notes: Healing**





# The Beauty of the Holy Spirit

*Living in Relationship with the Holy Spirit*

## Knowing the Spirit

**Romans 8** is the most comprehensive passages in the Bible concerning the Holy Spirit. Read **Romans 8:1-30** and answer the following questions.

List all that this passage says about the Holy Spirit.

What does it mean for you to “live according to the Spirit”?

After reading this passage, what do you most love about the Holy Spirit?

## Romans 8:1-30

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,<sup>2</sup> because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.<sup>3</sup> For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh,<sup>4</sup> in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

*<sup>5</sup> Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.<sup>6</sup> The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.<sup>7</sup> The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.<sup>8</sup> Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.*

*<sup>9</sup> You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.<sup>10</sup> But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.<sup>11</sup> And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.*

*<sup>12</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it.<sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.<sup>14</sup> For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.<sup>15</sup> The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry Abba, Father.”<sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.<sup>17</sup> Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

*<sup>18</sup> I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.<sup>19</sup> For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.<sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope<sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.*

*<sup>22</sup> We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.<sup>23</sup> Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.<sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?<sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.<sup>26</sup> In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.<sup>27</sup> And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.*

*<sup>28</sup> And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.<sup>29</sup> For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brothers and sisters.<sup>30</sup> And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.*



## **Taking it all in**

We've been on a journey to discover who the Holy Spirit is and what it means to be transformed and empowered by him. Whether you've been with us all 23 weeks or just this session, take a moment to look back over all your notes and prayers and study guides and reflect upon what you have learned.

What is the most important thing you have learned about the Holy Spirit? Why is this so significant to you?

What most surprised you about the Spirit?

What helps you live more dependently on the Holy Spirit?

How have you seen the Spirit transform you during this study?



How do you believe the Spirit is empowering you and gifting you to serve God's Kingdom?

Pause right now and invite the Holy Spirit to fill you anew. Record your prayer here.



## **Notes: The Beauty of the Holy Spirit**