

Gifts of the Holy Spirit



SABBATH—MAY 6

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-9; Ephesians 4:11.

MEMORY VERSE: “Brothers and sisters. I want you to know about the gifts of the Holy Spirit.” “There are different kinds of gifts. But they are all given by the same [Holy] Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4, NIV).

THE NEW TESTAMENT INTRODUCES SPIRITUAL GIFTS AS GIFTS FROM CHRIST AND GIVEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. The Holy Spirit is one. But His gifts are many and different. These gifts of grace (*charismata*) are given in three different groups of verses: Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12 through 14; and Ephesians 4:7-13. Probably even these verses do not include all the gifts of the Spirit. Jesus promised these gifts when He went to heaven (Ephesians 4:8, 11). No person should expect to receive all of the gifts. And all church members should not expect to receive the same gifts. The New Testament compares¹ the church to the human body. There are different parts of the body. Each part of the body does a different kind of work, but all parts of the body work together for the same goal.

This week, we will take a look at some of the Holy Spirit's gifts and how they are used in the church.

Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, May 13.

¹ compares—shows how things are the same.

SUNDAY—MAY 7**THE CHURCH AS A BODY
(1 Corinthians 12:7-9).**

Answer the following questions based on 1 Corinthians 12:7-9.

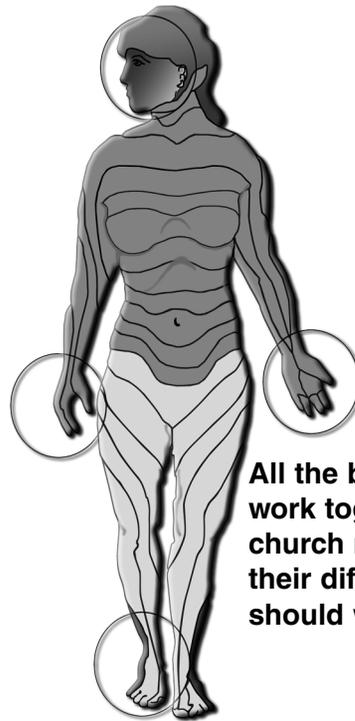
1. Why is the Holy Spirit given to the church?
2. What seems to be Paul's main worry?
3. How does Paul picture the Holy Spirit's work?
4. What point is Paul making when He compares the human body to the Holy Spirit's work in the church?

Through the Holy Spirit, we have been born again. Through the Holy Spirit, we are members of Christ's body. His body is the church. Through baptism in water, we are then joined to a local church. However, the members of Christ's body (the church) are as different as all parts of the human body. It is very important not to try to make each person the same as every other person. We should rejoice in our different gifts.

The body needs all its parts. Each part serves a very special purpose. The church is the same way. That is because the same as a human body, we need all the different members.

Each member serves a special purpose.

But having members with different gifts does not mean disunity. Paul shows that the parts of the body are different, look different, and work differently. But they all are working in unity for a common goal. All the work done for Jesus by different people with different gifts is to be done with one common goal in mind. This goal is serving God for His glory.



All the body's parts work together. All the church members with their different gifts should work together.

What is the greatest cause of disunity among us? Is it because we are all different and have different gifts? Or is it because of something else? Explain your answer.

MONDAY—MAY 8**WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE
(1 Corinthians 12:8, 9).**

Read 1 Corinthians 12:8, 9. How interesting that the “message of wisdom” (NirV) and the “message of knowledge” (NirV) are gifts of the Holy Spirit. We often think that we get knowledge and wisdom from what we learn through study, work, and the lessons of life. But some people can read, study, and go through life and come away with no real “knowledge” or “wisdom” (Proverbs 1:7; Proverbs 9:10). So, we need the Holy Spirit to give us knowledge and wisdom.

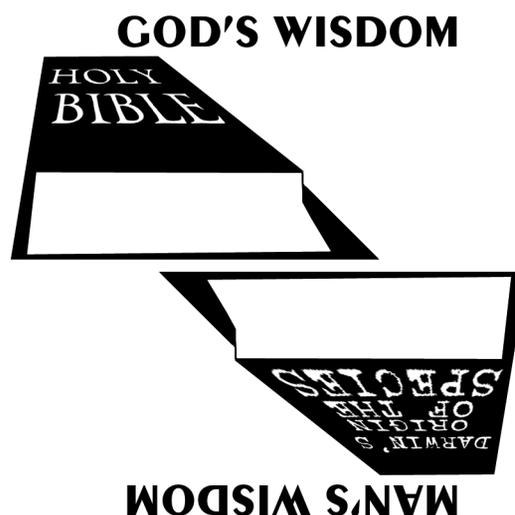
How does 2 Timothy 3:7 help us understand why we need the Holy Spirit to help us understand what the Bible says about wisdom and knowledge?

Throughout history, some of the “greatest” Bible thinkers did not believe the truths of the Bible. They might have been experts in the languages the Bible was written in. They might have been experts in their knowledge of the history of Bible times. But they did not fully understand the spiritual wisdom and knowledge about God found in the Bible.

What is the wisdom spoken of in 1 Corinthians 2:5-7? Why do we need the Holy Spirit to know this wisdom?

Notice the difference Paul shows

between the kinds of knowledge and wisdom. Notice, too, the difference between the wisdom of the world and the “power” of God. That difference is important because God’s wisdom changes lives. His wisdom is not just facts and ideas. His wisdom is a life-changing power that comes only from the Holy Spirit working in us. Worldly knowledge and wisdom can never change us the way the Holy Spirit’s wisdom can.



What kind of knowledge has changed your life? What kind of knowledge has not changed your life? What can you learn from your answers?

TUESDAY—MAY 9**MIRACLES AND HEALINGS
(1 Corinthians 12:10).**

The gifts of the Holy Spirit will remain in the church until Jesus returns. This includes the gift of healing and the gift of working miracles (1 Corinthians

12:8-10). But we should not think Christians should refuse medical help because they believe God can work a miracle to heal them. God does not use miracles too often or uselessly. “What human power can do, God’s power is not called to do.”—Adapted from *The Desire of Ages*, p. 535.

First Corinthians 12:10 talks about “the working of miracles.” How are we to understand what this means?

Someone once said that miracles are miracles only because they do not happen often. For example, if the sun rose only once every thousand years, those who saw it rise would believe they had seen a miracle. But because we see the sun every day, we call it just a common happening. However, the sun rising really is a miracle in itself. Imagine someone who never before saw a cell phone. Imagine how it would seem a miracle to that person to really hear a voice through such a little box!

What are some other “common” things that might seem to be miracles? What can we learn from these things that can help us better understand what miracles are?



Many things we take for granted are truly miracles.

Miracles can make our faith stronger. But faith that depends upon miracles is not real faith (Luke 16:31). Perhaps some of us have seen what could have been “miracles.” But maybe for others, the greatest “miracle” is the change in their life brought about by God’s power working in them. The Holy Spirit can do miracles (Matthew 12:28) whenever He chooses. But “miracles” are not proof that God is working. In the same way, the lack of “miracles” is not proof that God is not working.



What miracles has God done in your life? Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

WEDNESDAY—MAY 10

PROPHECY AND GOVERNMENT (Romans 12:6-8).

What one gift is named in Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; and Ephesians 4:11?

A prophet speaks for God. Even after ancient (old time) Israel became a monarchy,² it was the prophet who received messages and instruction from God. The prophet was to bring these messages to the king. The prophet speaks to the people for God. The message may be any message God desires to give His people at any time. It does not matter that the message is about the past, the present, or the future. God's church today needs special messages from God. The person who gives these messages is the prophet.

What else does the church need from God to carry out His plans for the church? 1 Corinthians 12:28.

What examples in the early Christian church show that God works through chosen leaders in

His organized church? Acts 9:10-17; Acts 13:1-3.

“Paul and Barnabas were separated by the Holy Spirit to do a special work for God. The results that followed show clearly that God works through chosen leaders in His organized church. Many years earlier, God showed His purpose for Paul through Jesus Himself. But Paul was quickly brought in touch with members of the newly organized church at Damascus. . . . And now, God's command was to be more fully carried out. The Holy Spirit again showed that Paul was a chosen leader to give the gospel to the Gentiles.³ The Holy Spirit laid upon the church the work of ordaining him and his fellow worker.” —Adapted from *The Acts of the Apostles*,⁴ pp. 162, 163.

Why has God given the management of His work on earth to His church as a group?

THURSDAY—MAY 11

TONGUES (LANGUAGES) (Matthew 28:19, 20).

“The gift of tongues has a counterfeit (false copy). When God first gave this gift on the Day of Pentecost,⁵ it was perfectly spoken human language.

² monarchy—a nation ruled by a king or queen.

³ Gentiles—people who are not Jews.

⁴ apostles—God's disciples who preached the gospel after Jesus returned to heaven. The word *apostles* means “people who are sent out.” The apostles were sent out into the world to tell others about Jesus.

⁵ Pentecost—fifty days after Jesus went to heaven, there was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the believers in the upper room (Acts 2:1-4).

Making sounds that no one understands is a counterfeit of His gift.” —Adapted from *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 12, p. 619.

From Lesson 5, we learned that “tongues” means foreign languages. This is because that was the way the gift was shown at Pentecost and at other events⁶ (Acts 2; Acts 10:44-46; Acts 11:15; Acts 19:6).

Why was the gift of tongues so important to the early church? Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15; Romans 1:8.

In the early church, there was a need for the gift of tongues (foreign languages). The gospel had to be preached to the world, and most of the early Christians did not know the world’s languages.

Who spoke more often in tongues than anyone else? 1 Corinthians 14:18. What do you think he meant by this statement?

In his gospel work among non-Christians, Paul often had to use a language other than his own language. Paul’s language was Aramaic. Aramaic was the common language of the Jews in the days of Jesus and the apostles. Corinth was a large seaport and business city where people from many parts of the Roman Empire

came. Some in the Corinthian church boastfully used languages that some other members could not understand. Paul advised them not to do so if they did not have an interpreter. This is because no one in the church could profit from it (1 Corinthians 14:4).

What are some of the gifts of tongues you have known about? What can you learn from them that can protect you from other spiritual counterfeits you might face?

FRIDAY—MAY 12

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 33–35; *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 236–238; *Christ’s Object Lessons*, “Hidden Treasures,” pp. 112–114; *The Great Controversy [War]*, pp. 624, 625; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 160–165; *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 243–245.

Paul taught that the gifts were prophecy, teaching, apostleship,⁷ evangelism,⁸ speaking in tongues, and the working of miracles. These gifts were to be used by Christians from all walks of life. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians shows that some misused these gifts. They especially misused speaking in tongues.

“In some places, people claim that speaking in tongues is important. But

⁶ events—things that happen.

⁷ apostleship—the job of being an apostle.

⁸ evangelism—the spreading of the gospel to the world.

the New Testament makes it clear that other gifts are more important to the church. Paul recommends the gift of prophecy as the most wanted gift.” —Adapted from *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 12, p. 610.

“The Jews had been scattered to almost every nation. And they spoke different languages. . . . These many languages were a great block to God’s servants in giving the news of Christ all over the earth. But God could solve the problem of the apostles’ inability to speak different languages in a wonderful way. The gift of tongues would be proof that the apostles were sent by God to share Christ.”—Adapted from *The Story of*

Redemption [Salvation], pp. 242, 243.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. As a class, talk about your answers to Tuesday’s last question. What is your understanding of what a “miracle” is? What do miracles do for your faith? What danger is there in depending too much on miracles?
2. As a class, talk about the work of Ellen White and the gift of prophecy. How does the work of this gift help us understand the purpose of spiritual gifts?
3. Talk about the different spiritual gifts of your class members. What can you do to encourage one another to use these gifts?