

# Living In The Spirit

Living life in the Spirit is exciting and anything can happen. God never disappoints.

## Introduction

Smith Wigglesworth, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century Pentecostal evangelist, is quoted as saying, "The reason the world is not seeing Jesus is that Christian people are not filled with Jesus. They are satisfied with attending meetings weekly, reading the Bible occasionally, and praying sometimes. It is an awful thing for me to see people who profess to be Christians lifeless, powerless, and in a place where their lives are so parallel to unbelievers' lives that it is difficult to tell which place they are in, whether in the flesh or in the Spirit."

I think that is quote is just as powerful today as it was 100 years ago. Christians should stop looking and acting like the world. We should be distinctive. That doesn't mean we need to be weird, but it does mean we should stand out from the world.

There are many gifts of the Holy Spirit. We have taught on them many times and how they show evidence of a Spirit-filled life. This week we want to explore this some more. We are talking about Living in the Spirit.

## More Than Followers

Saying yes to Jesus' call and starting to follow him is just the beginning, but there is more to the Christian life than just following along.

Look at what Jesus says to Peter and his brother Andrew as he calls them to be his disciples as recorded in Matthew 4:19

### Matthew 4:19

(19) Then He said to them, "**Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.**"

Following Jesus is our starting point. We follow him, and then he teaches us. He equips us. We have to start following him to receive what he has for us. He has more for us than salvation. He has a mission for us, each and every one of us.

We've talked about the great commission many times; to go into all the world and preach the gospel. To do that we must be prepared and equipped.

When we start to follow Jesus, our preparation begins. Part of that preparation is found in studying Jesus' teachings and how he interacted with people. The other part is taking what we learn from Jesus, and applying it with the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives us.

When we completely and unashamedly give our lives to Jesus, and allow him to baptize us with the Holy Spirit, we receive special abilities, supernatural abilities to carry out the mission we have here on earth.

## Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Let's look at the gifts the Holy Spirit gives. Let's read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11



## 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

(4) There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. (5) There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. (6) There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. (7) Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (8) To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, (9) to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, (10) 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. (11) All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

When the Holy Spirit is working through you, you are able to use the gifts he has given you. These gifts can change over time as the Lord needs. Each of these gifts is supernatural. That is good. Because of that no one can boast that it is in their own ability but only by the power of God through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit gives these gifts to each believer as he sees fit for the believer to carry out the mission and purpose that God created them for. No one receives all of the gifts. In fact, many only receive one of these gifts.

Each of these gifts is given not for the glory of the individual, but for the glory of God. Each of these gifts is given for God to boast, not the individual. We are merely the tool. Imagine the shovel boasting how it turned over all of the ground in a garden to plant vegetables. The shovel didn't do it, the gardener did it, using the shovel as a tool. We too are a tool for God to use in order to share the lifesaving gospel of Jesus Christ with others. He gives us these gifts through the Holy Spirit so we can carry out the great commission.

### Word of Knowledge

The word of knowledge and the word of wisdom are great gifts. These gifts give someone knowledge of something that they did not know or a perspective of an event or situation they could not see naturally. In sharing these with others, God is glorified and people can be introduced to God.

Often it is these gifts that are used by church leaders in counseling people and by evangelists and missionaries to gain acceptance so they can share the gospel of Jesus Christ with someone.

### Great Faith

The gift of great faith is another. We all have faith. You must have faith to believe in Jesus and follow him. It is by grace through faith that we are saved. But some people have been given the gift of great faith.

This great faith can stand as a testimony of the greatness and goodness of God in the face of insurmountable uncertainty.



## Healing

There is the gift of healing. What a practical gift! Unfortunately, too many have used this gift to bring glory to themselves instead of God. This gift is often given to those with great compassion already and is used to bring hope and faith to people who have no hope of being well or whole.

If you have this gift, use it to bring hope to people and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with them. It is by your faith and obedience to Jesus that the Holy Spirit has given you this gift.

## Miraculous Powers

Miraculous powers are similar to healing. This is not for us to show off, or take care of our own wants and desires. It is to serve all of creation in the name of Jesus Christ. If you have this gift, again, use it to give God glory and share Jesus Christ with people.

## Prophecy

There is the gift of prophecy which gives you foresight into people's lives. It doesn't negate people's free choice, but we must remember God is not bound by time and can give someone prophetic words to share to bring people closer to him.

## Discerning Spirits

The gift of discerning spirits is a wonderful gift. This gift helps you see through people who may not be completely honest, or see if some circumstances are from God or not. This is an important gift, especially for leadership teams.

The devil uses many schemes and this gift helps us see through his schemes and move forward in Christ.

## Tongues and Interpretations

Then there is the gift of tongues and the gift to interpret tongues. The gift of tongues is twofold. First it is a personal gift for the believer to pray in, thus allowing the Holy Spirit to pray through us for what we do not see or know.

There are times we do not know what to pray, but we know we need to pray. Praying in tongues at that time is great!

There is also the message in tongues, like what we read in Acts 2. This is when the Holy Spirit anoints someone to speak a message, typically encouragement or evangelistic, to a group of people, and another person interprets the message.

This is a great gift and it is practiced around the world.

## Conclusion

It is easy to receive your gift from the Holy Spirit. It only requires complete submission to the Holy Spirit and willingness to give complete control of your life over to God, no matter what.

Do not worry if you do not receive your gift right away. Whether the gift God has for you is one of healing or speaking in tongues, you will receive it at the perfect time when you are ready and willing to use it as God desires you to.



Living life in the Spirit is exciting and anything can happen. God never disappoints. When you completely give him your life, you will be amazed at what he uses you for.

