The Ministry Week 5

The Ministry

We believe in the ministries that Christ has set in His Church, namely, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and in the present operation of the manifold Gifts of the Holy Spirit according to the New Testament.

> *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*

The Gift of Tongues Defined.

Holy Spirit inspired utterance where the normal voice organs are used, but the conscious mind plays no part. The languages spoken or sung are entirely unlearned by the speaker.

Some dangers to avoid.

- To declare that unless you speak in tongues you are not a proper Christian.
- To declare that unless you speak in tongues you are not filled with the Holy Spirit.

  Being baptised in the Holy Spirit does not mean that you have to speak in tongues, but it means that you get to.
- To declare that the gift of tongues does not matter.
- To forget what Paul and the Bible says about this gift.

There is no gift in the entire world that receives such an explosive reaction as the gift of tongues. Because the devil is afraid of it, he gets everybody fighting over it. If tongues did not cause him trouble, he would ignore it, but speaking in tongues is dynamic. LESTER SUMRALL

It's not always a language that can be identified.

Nicky Gumbell in the Alpha course, talks about an occasion when an English person was speaking in tongues, and this Russian lady came up to them afterwards and said "You have been praying for me in Russian".

"What have I been praying?"

"You have been praying the same thing over and over again, 'my dear child' ".

There are two dimensions to this gift.

There is the Private Prayer Gift

There is the Public Prophetic Gift.

It's a prayer gift.

It's valuable because

1. **It opens up a new dimension of prayer.**

   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 with groans that words cannot express. ROMANS 8:26

   There are occasions when I want to pray for person, but can't think of much to say about him. I can pray "Lord be with him in his problem and give him your grace" and that's about it.

   If I go on puzzling what else to say, I tend to think about the person rather than to pray for him. But with tongues I can picture him in my mind's eye and lift him up to God for some time, asking the Lord to use what I say, that it is the prayer that the Holy Spirit wants me to make in intercession for him. JOHN GUNSTONE.

2. **It opens up a new dimension of praise.**

For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. ACTS 10:46

When our words of praise run out, the Holy Spirit gives us more words to praise.

3. It builds you spiritually.

He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, he who prophesies edifies the church. 1 COR. 14:4

But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. JUDE 20

a) You are praising God and bringing Him into the situation.

b) *Peace / joy / leaving no room for the enemy*

c) You are praying what is needed for your situation.

d) You are becoming sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

The gift draws us into God's presence, we are sensitive to him, and it's in those places that we are more sensitive to His prompting to any other gift he wants to release in our lives for that moment.

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. 1 CORINTHIANS 14:18

Paul spoke in tongues more than the whole of the Corinthian church put together. I think one of the reasons why Paul was so influential, was so powerful, in his ministry is that he was forever speaking in tongues. This shows us how powerful this gift is.

Public Prophetic Gift of Tongues

> *If anyone speaks in a tongue, two or at the most three should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. 1 Cor. 14:27-28*

The public gift of tongues when used in the public meeting is very similar to prophecy. The only difference is, it's in a different language that's not understood and needs interpretation.

But then Paul says.

If there's no interpretation it doesn't do anything for the church!

> *In the church I would rather you speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. 1 Cor 14:18*

> *I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified. 1 COR 14:5*

What then is the merit of tongues and interpretation when one could prophecy?

> *Tongues then, are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers. Prophecy however is for believers, not for unbelievers. 1 COR 14:22*

So tongues in a public setting demonstrate the supernatural presence of God. The unbeliever in the congregation hears the tongue, hears the interpretation and says "Wow. This is amazing, God is speaking to me."

So in the church setting, and there is the message in tongues, there is the gift of interpretation, whereby someone is able convey the meaning of what has just been said.

Sometimes the interpretation will come to the person who has delivered the tongue, sometimes it will come to someone else. Either way it has to be weighed just as you would weigh a prophecy.

- *Does it strengthen encourage and comfort ?*
- *Is it in line with Scripture?*
- *Does it glorify Jesus?*
- *Does it draw someone to, or push them away from God?*

The Gift of Discernment Defined.

The is a supernatural gift of perception given sovereignly by God to enable individuals in the church to distinguish the motivating spirit behind certain words or deeds.

You can have natural perception.

> *And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. ACTS 27:10*

Paul looked at the weather forecast. This is storm season, if we set sail it's not going to turn out good.

That was natural perception. We all use that to some extent.

"It looks like rain, I'll put the washing in the tumble dryer."

This gift is not simply the ability
to discern things, it is the gift of discerning **OF SPIRITS**

> *We discern the spirits by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, judging whether the spirit is from God, or if someone is speaking by the spirit of man, or by the spirit of Satan. DAVID YONGI CHO*

The Bible shows us that Jesus spiritually discerned.

Simon Peter answered, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Jesus replied, Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. MATTHEW 16:16-17

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God." MATTHEW 16:22-23

Paul's Spiritual Perception

Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her. ACTS 16:16-18

Outwardly she seemed to enhance the work of the Gospel, but Paul was made aware that is was actually the mischief of the devil.

Why is the gift of the discerning of spirits so important?

> *The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. 1 TIM 4:1*

> *Unless we are quickly able to discern and oppose those who enter our midst with seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, great harm will come to the flock of weak believers. DAVID YONGI CHO*

How do you test a spirit?

1. **Observing what a person does.**

   A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them. MATTHEW 7:15-20

   Satan's influence is characteristically destructive, and the person influenced by a demon will have a destructive influence on the church and others around him or her, and also a self destructive influence that

harms the life of the troubled individual himself or herself. WAYNE GRUDEM

2. **Observing whether or not a person exalts Jesus Christ as the Son of God and as Lord and Saviour**

   For instance, by using your heads, you know perfectly well that the Spirit of God would never prompt anyone to say "Jesus be damned!" Nor would anyone be inclined to say "Jesus is Master!" without the insight of the Holy Spirit. 1 COR 12:3

3. **By listening to what a person says Does their confession line up with the truth of God's Word?**

This is how you can recognise the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, 1 JOHN 4 2-3

Every book and every article that I have read or commentaries that looked up online emphasise the discerning of the bad. This gift allows you to see when Satan is at work. It's almost like this gift is working as the gift of suspicion. (Have you met those people who see the work of satan around every door?)

But this Gift is also about discerning and seeing with spiritual eyes when God is at work.

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. 'Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?' the servant asked.

'Don't be afraid,' the prophet answered. 'Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.'

And Elisha prayed, 'Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.' Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all round Elisha. 2 KINGS 6:15-17

Why not allow the Holy Spirit help you discern where God is moving in your life, situation and circumstances right now!