

Continuing our discussion on Spirit baptism:

To understand what takes place in the Gospels and Acts, it is essential that we understand the OT ministry of the Spirit.

The OT speaks of the Holy Spirit coming upon people for some temporary enablement.

The concept of filling of the Spirit appears twice and was connected to endowment of natural skill (Ex.31:3, 35:31).

The remaining references to the interaction between the Spirit and God's people have to do with the Holy Spirit coming upon leaders temporarily to enable them for a specific task (Nm.11:17,25, Jdg.3:10, 6:34, 11:29, 14:6,19, 15:14, 1 Sam.11:6, 16:13,14, Isa.42:1). It may be for a moment (Jdg.14:6) or for long periods (1 Sam.16:13,14, Ps.51:11).

While this "coming upon" could result in leadership ability or physical strength, most of the time it resulted in prophecy (Nm.11:25,29, 24:2, 1 Sam.10:6,10, 19:20,23, 2 Sa.23:2, 1 Chrn.12:18, 1 Chrn.28:12, 2 Chrn.15:1, 2 Chrn.20:14, 24:20, Nh.9:20,30, Isa.11:2, 48:16, 59:21, 61:1, Ez.2:2, 3:12,14,24, 8:3, 11:1,5,24, 37:1, 43:5, Joel 2:28,29, Mic.3:8, Zech.7:12)

A few times the pouring out of God's Spirit is synonymous with blessing (32:15,44:3, 63:14, 37:14, 39:29, Hag.2:5)

It seems to me that in OT times, the coming of the Spirit upon someone was in the category of a miracle. It was mostly isolated to the King (or Judge) or the prophets for some specific task.

If you can erase from your mind everything you know about the Holy Spirit in NT times, and just think of it from an OT perspective, you will be able to understand the significance of Jesus' words to His Apostles.

The Spirit came upon Jesus at His baptism, and from then on (and never prior to then) Jesus had a powerful ministry of miraculous signs and wonders. His ministry surpasses any OT leader, as He has the Spirit

**without limit** (Jn.3:34).

John wrote his gospel much later than the others, and so he reminds us that when we read accounts of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' ministry we need to remember to think of it in OT terms.

John 7:37-39

**On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.**

There were some prophecies about some new relationship with the Holy Spirit:

John announced that the Messiah would come and baptize people with the Spirit instead of with water (Mt.3:11).

What would that mean to the OT mindset of John's day? It's hard to say, but without question they would have been struck by the thought that being immersed into the Holy Spirit is an awesome thought indeed (the most spectacular things that ever happened in the OT were instances of the Holy Spirit coming upon someone – what would happen if a person were immersed into Him?

Then in Jn.14 Jesus gives a detailed explanation of the promise.

John 14:16-26 **And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever- 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.**

**25 "All this I have spoken while still with you. 26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.**

Later that night Jesus brought it up again:

**15:26 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify**

about me. 27 And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the **Counselor** will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:

12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the **Spirit** of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the **Spirit** will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

I told you before about the statement in 14:17. The change in prepositions indicates a much closer kind of relationship.

Last Sunday Aaron Miller pointed out to me in what way it is closer. If you look at it from their point of view, chances are they would not have been struck so much by the spatial imagery (just outside your skin as opposed to inside).

More likely they would have been struck with the fact that indwelling implies constancy.

Throughout all time up to their day, if the Holy Spirit came upon you, you were an extraordinarily blessed individual. And now Jesus is saying, "The Holy Spirit has come upon you, and guess what – He is going to take up residence inside you!"

Take the Kings, prophets or judges at their best, and that's the way you are going to be every minute of the day!

There was some discussion last time about Lk.22. It turns out the statement we were talking about is in Jn.20.

John 20:19-23

**On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were**

together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed

lit: **breathed into** (no "them")

It's the word used in the creation account to describe the way God made man into a living being: Gn. 2:7 **the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.**

Ezekiel 37:9 **Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'"**

It's probably a pretty good bet that John intended to call those passages to mind when he used this word. Jesus is pictured as no less than the Creator breathing life into His people.

**and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.**

Scholars have debated whether this is the fulfillment of the promise in ch.14 or if Pentecost was. Some say there was one coming of the Spirit, but Luke reports it as having happened after Jesus ascended, and John sticks it in right after the resurrection.

I can't accept that explanation. It's one thing to report things out of chronological sequence, but it's quite another to report a major event in God's redemptive plan out of sequence with the events of redemptive history.

Some say John 20 must be the fulfillment of Jn.14, because it's the same author and the same book, and John doesn't say anything about Pentecost.

But on the other hand, it's hard to imagine the fulfillment of the detailed,

grandiose promise of ch.14 is described (a passing reference in a half a verse – 3 Greek words, or 7 if you count the breathing).

Also, the whole point of the promise of the Holy Spirit in ch.14 was that after Jesus returned to the Father, the Spirit would be sent in His place. But in John 20 Jesus has not yet returned to the Father.

In fact, Jesus says that in this very same chapter:  
John 20:17

**Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father.**

I would like to offer another suggestion. I believe the period between the resurrection and the ascension was a unique period in redemptive history that served as an illustration of what the Church age would be like.

So the resurrection scenes are preparatory scenes – preparing the Apostles for their mission.

During that time, what the Lord is going to be doing during the Church age invisibly from heaven, He does visibly on earth.

The mission has been inaugurated but not yet begun.

So this brief little remark where Jesus tells them to receive the Holy Spirit in the context of giving them their mission is a miniature picture of what would take place on a grand scale after the ascension.

Did the disciples actually receive the Holy Spirit at that moment? And, if so, in what sense?

The text doesn't say. John just goes right on to another point and makes no further comment. There is no miraculous activity, no speaking in tongues, no indication of any kind that anything happened.

There is little doubt that they would have understood Jesus' comment to be a reassurance that they would be empowered and enabled by the Spirit of God to accomplish their mission. But exactly what transpired at that moment spiritually the Lord has not seen fit to reveal.

So, around the time of Acts 19 – shortly after John’s disciples received the baptism of the Spirit, Paul says all Christians have received it.

And Paul’s point in 1 Cor.12 is that no Christian can disparage himself or another believer regarding giftedness, because every Christian has been baptized by the same Spirit, and as a result has received a gift from the Spirit for the same ultimate purpose.

We don’t have too much of a problem with v.21 but a lot of vv.15-17. Not too many people look down on others because of their giftedness, but we have a huge problem with people disparaging their own giftedness and just opting out of the Body because they aren’t impressed with what they have been given.

But if you are a foot, you don’t have the option of saying, “I’m not a hand, so I’m not important.”

You can’t remove yourself from a God given responsibility just because you don’t like your gift. Your assessment of your gift pro or con does not absolve you from your responsibility to serve the Body with it.

You can’t just decide, “I’m not interested in ministry – I’m not equipped, I think I’ll just opt to come sit in a pew, listen to sermons, and listen to music, and then leave.”

A janitor at Microsoft can’t say, “I’m not contributing anything to the improvement of the operating system or helping people’s computers crash less often, therefore I’m going to do a poor job sweeping the floor.”

But there are some people who fail in the v.21 area. There are some who are such spiritual hotshots that they decide they don’t need the rest of the body. They will drop into church once in a while to grace us with their superior giftedness, but much of the time they are out on their own.

## **27 Now you are the body of Christ,**

Paul has used the imagery of a body as an illustration, but this is the first time in the Bible we have the concept of the Church being the Body of Christ.

It’s a genitive of ownership. The idea is not that we are the body which is

Christ, but we are the body which belongs to Christ (Barrett).

The lack of the article gives this meaning, “You are nothing less than Christ’s *Body!*”

**and each one of you is a part of it.**

Now in v.28 there is another list of gifts. We have pointed out before that each church in the NT that receives a list gets a very different list. Here we find that two lists given to the same church in the same context in the same chapter are different.

I think that is strong evidence that while there are some obvious, common gifts that will always tend to show up (such as teaching), there are countless other gifts. I think if Paul gave another list later in the chapter there would have likely been a few more mentioned.

**28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then...**

In a surprising shift from his emphasis on the equality of the parts of the body, Paul seems to rank some of the gifts. Apostles, prophets and teaches come as 1,2 and 3, then all the rest, with tongues last (tongues appears last in every list it appears in).

From this list it is clear that in the Church, the ministry of the Word is to be preeminent. Some have criticized us at Creekside saying we are focussed more on Scripture than we are on ministering to the poor, or social involvement, or music, or outreach events...

And they are right. We are more focused on the preaching and teaching of the Word than we are on all those things, because God’s Word is supreme above everything else.

**First apostles**

The word “apostle” simply means “messenger.” If Terry tells me to take a music stand over and give it to Michelle, I’m an apostle of Terry.

And there are a few times when the word is used in that way. Epaphroditus was an apostle of the church of Philippi (Php.2:25). An apostle of a church was simply someone that church sent. In that sense we could think of Danelle as an apostle of Creekside.

But most of the time the word is used in the technical sense of an Apostle of Christ.

Apostle is the highest office a human being could ever receive (Mt.19:28 says they will rule over Israel in the Kingdom).

An Apostle was someone who saw Christ and was personally (1 Co.9:1) and was thus an eye-witness to the resurrection, and was commissioned by Him, and who was given the ability to signs, wonders and miracles so everyone would know.

**Matt 10:1-8 He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.**

**8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.**

Miracles were something the Apostles could give at will. If we want a miracle, the most we can do is pray for one. But the Apostles were given the ability to perform them at will.

**Acts 3:6 Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."**

He didn't say, "We will be praying for you." The ability to heal him was something Peter and John had that they could give at will.

**Mt17:20 I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."**

This is not a general promise to all believers. It is a promise of the ability to do miracles given to the Apostles to prove they are Apostles.

**2 Cor.12:12 The things that mark an apostle-signs, wonders and**



**miracles-were done among you with great perseverance.**

If anyone could work miracles, how would they serve to prove Apostleship?

Our answer to the all-important question, “How do we know the Bible is the Word of God?” is

- We know the OT is God’s Word because Jesus referred to it as Scripture, and
- We know the NT is God’s Word because Jesus commissioned the Apostles to write it, and promised that the Holy Spirit would see to it that they would have perfect recall and understanding of Jesus’ actions and words

John 14:26 **But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.**

15:26 **"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. 27 And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.**

16:13 **But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.**

Jesus gave the Apostles absolute authority and His representatives. Throughout the NT we see that to receive an Apostle is to receive Christ (Mt.10:40) , to disobey an Apostle was to disobey God.

1 Thes.4:8 **he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God,**

In fact, to utter a lie to an Apostle was to lie to God (5:2-4).

Who were the Apostles?

We can’t say for sure, but the best evidence is that there were 14 to 17 Apostles. There were the 12 plus Paul, then...

- Barnabas Acts 14:14 **when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes**

- James? Ga.1:19 **I saw none of the other apostles-except James, the Lord's brother.** James is grouped with the Apostles in 1 Co.15:7-9, Ga.2:9, he wrote an Epistle that bears his name, and was the leader of the Church in Jerusalem in the first half of Acts.
- Andronicus and Junias were **men of note among the Apostles** (Ro16:7), but it's not clear if they were among the Apostles, or if the Apostles took note of them.

The last of the Apostles was Paul.

**1 Cor.15:5 and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.**

He appeared last of all to Paul. That was His last appearance.

So the next time someone comes to you and claims to be an Apostle, give two quick little tests:

1. Have them do some sign, wonders and miracles
2. Have them point out where their name appears in the list of people Christ appeared to prior to Paul in 1 Co.15:5-7.

Have any of the gifts ceased? Most scholars, including many charismatic scholars, agree that this one has. There are no more "capital A" Apostles.

Are there lower case a apostles? Sure. There are messengers. A mailman would qualify as one of those.

Are the apostles of the Church? Absolutely. We are sending Danelle on a mission.

But are there official Apostles? No. Paul was the last.

And we know this list is talking about official Apostles, because they are **first**. So at least one spiritual gift was temporary. What about the rest? And what about miracles in general? Next week.

## Miracles

### What are Miracles?

Many people define a miracle as anything God does. But if you understand God's sovereign control over everything, then that would make everything a miracle.

Acts 17:28 **in him we live and move and have our being.'**  
Under that definition, it's a miracle every time a person moves.

Scripture never refers to things like that as miracles, and if those things were miracles, how would miracles ever prove anything?

The idea of divine intervention is meaningless when you realize God controls everything (how do you intervene in something you are doing?).

Others define miracles as anything God does that is especially wonderful. Problem: That definition is arbitrary without Scriptural support. It is also difficult to defend in practice. For example, on what basis would we say it is more wonderful for an axe head to float than for Jesus to take some children on His lap to bless them?

On what basis would we say it is more wonderful for chains to fall off the hands of Peter in prison than for a forgiven woman to anoint Jesus' feet and wash them with her tears and hair?

Others says it's a display of great power. But isn't gravity a greater display of power than the parting of the Red Sea?

So what is a miracle? It's when God does something in a very different way than He normally does it.

Normally God gets me to church through an act of my will, and the operation of my car. The ways the environment responds to the actions within my car are so regular and so predictable, that we refer to them as "laws of physics."

The energy that comes from the explosion of gas inside the cylinders, and

the mechanical transfer of that energy to the wheels, etc. is all the direct work of God, but we don't call it a miracle, because it's the way God ordinarily works.

But if God transports me instantly from my living room to the church building, that doesn't require any more power, it's not necessarily any more wonderful – but we call it a miracle, because it's so different from the way God normally works.

Miracles have been likened to a person running a little model city from remote control, then suddenly reaches in, grabs a street, and moves it to another spot.

What is the purpose of miracles?

It is worth noting three things:

1. God does not need miracles to get things done. He can do whatever He wants by means of providence.

If God just wants people to be healthy, He could providentially prevent their illness, or heal them through natural means.

If Jesus just wanted a safe, placid Sea of Galilee He could have providentially caused the storm to end or to not begin in the first place.

2. Miracles, by themselves, do not change the heart of unbelief that rejects adequate evidence.

Luke 16:31 **"He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"**

3. Miracles are not necessary for those who already believe based on adequate evidence.

If I read that God created the world in 6 days, I don't say to God, "I will believe that if You make the sun stand still for 6 hours today."

If I read that Jonah was swallowed by a fish, or that Jesus is going to return

someday, I don't say, "God, I'll believe that if you miraculously heal my uncle."

God has already authenticated Scripture by miracles.

I don't need to witness a miracle to be impressed with God's power, because I already know it is God's power that I witness every day all around me.

I don't need a miracle to convince me of God's compassion for the sick, because I see that compassion in the countless thousands of natural healings every day.

God can accomplish what He needs to accomplish by means of providence.

The primary purpose of miracles is to authenticate God's Word.

There is no way we can know if someone is speaking for God without a miracle to verify it. God does not need to do miracles, but they are needed for a specific category of people: those who are willing to believe, but who do not yet have adequate evidence.

That fits what we observe in Scripture.

When God commissioned Moses:  
"Go lead My people out of Egypt"  
"What if they want proof You sent me?"  
"You will be able to work miracles."

The vast majority of the time in the OT, there were no miracles. But they were many of them clustered at the time of Moses (writer of the Law) and the prophets (especially Elijah and Elisha).

Then the miracles stop for hundreds of years, until Christ comes along. And with Christ came the greatest display of miracles ever.

The purpose of those miracles was to prove Jesus was from God.

John 3:1-2 **Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus,**

**a member of the Jewish ruling council. 2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."**

**Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know."**

Christ gave that ability to the Apostles, and then commissioned them to write the NT.

**Heb.2:3-4 This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. 4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.**

**Acts 14:3 So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.**

**2 Cor.12:12 The things that mark an apostle-signs, wonders and miracles-were done among you with great perseverance.**

Again, the only way miracles can be useful for authentication of a messenger of God is if they are unusual events.

What you would think if I said, "I am a messenger from God, and I have another book for all of you to add to your Bibles. And as proof that I am indeed from God, I am going to cause a homing pigeon to fly back to its home."?

It is amazing when a pigeon can do that. It's not explainable by science. It's clearly an act of God. But it doesn't prove I'm from God, because it's something that routinely happens.

I just showed you several passages that explicitly indicate that authentication of God's message or messenger is the purpose of miracles. To my knowledge, there are no statements at all indicating any other purpose, anywhere in the Bible.

Those who argue for other purposes, such as Wayne Grudem, will take miracle accounts and observe what takes place in response to them, and turn that into a reason for miracles. For example, Grudem says one purpose of the miracles was to enable people to serve, and we know that because after Peter's mother-in-law was healed, she served food.

But by that logic we would have to say some other purposes of the miracles were to enable people to disobey or be ungrateful, because some people reacted that way after being healed (Mk.7:36, Lk.17:17).

God could have enabled Peter's mother-in-law to serve by healing her naturally.

While there are plenty of *results* of miracles, neither Grudem nor anyone else I read offered any passage of Scripture that indicates any other reason for miracles than authentication.

The only possible exception I can think of is miracles of judgment. Sometimes it seems that God brings supernatural judgments on people just to display His awesome power and to make it clear what is happening is from Him.

### Conclusion

Are miracles normative? That is, should we be expecting miracles every day or every week? No. If so, they wouldn't be miracles.

Do they ever happen? Perhaps. I've never seen one. But that doesn't prove anything. Most of the miracle reports I've heard I don't believe, but some sound pretty credible. My guess is God does do miracles from time to time for whatever reason.

Is it a bad thing that miracles are not more common? Are certain charismatic teachers correct when they say the reason there are not more miracles is because of a lack of faith? If so, Jesus must have lacked faith for 30 years.

Are the miraculous gifts still in operation?

## **second prophets**

It's no surprise that Apostles and Prophets are ranked 1 and 2, since it was through them that the NT was revealed.

## **third teachers, then...**

**workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others,**

Notice, there is never a helps movement or mercy movement. Movements are always centered on the more showy gifts. But whenever there is a tongues movement or miracles movement or prophecy movement, all that does is diminish the importance of the other gifts.

Hand movements and eye movements have intimidated a lot of feet and ears.

**those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. 29Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? 31But eagerly desire the greater gifts.**



There are no “non-essential personal” in the Church.

This is part of the unity of the Spirit from Eph.4. He unites us by making us all dependent upon each other, and giving each of us responsibilities to the rest.

We have people today that bounce from church to church to church and fade in and out, and disappear for months at a time...

The only way that’s possible is that they are not ministering their gift and fulfilling their role. Because if they were embroiled in carrying out their responsibility to the Body, they wouldn’t be able to do that.

Miracles – signs of an Apostle 2 Co.12:12 see also Ro.15:19, Ga.3:3-5, 1 Thes.1:5  
Mt.10::7-8, Lk.10:1-12

**Eph.2:19-20 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.**

Joel and Acts two are talking about the miraculous activity that accompanied the initial coming of the Holy Spirit into the Church. Now the Spirit has come into the Church, and doesn’t keep coming and going (There are no saved people without the Spirit)

Cessationism isn’t modern. Chrysostom lamented the fact that this passage is obscure because the gifts had ceased (Morris 167)

Over and over in the NT we are called to minister to one another in the areas of mercy, teaching, exhortation, etc. But never are we told to minister to each other with the miraculous gifts.

You don't see commands like "Heal one another" or "Speak in tongues to one another" or "Perform miracles for one another" or "Raise one another from the dead."

**And now I will show you the most excellent way.**

### **1 Corinthians 13**

**13:1**If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. **2**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 have not love, I am nothing. **3**If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

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

**8**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. **9**For we know in part and we prophesy in part, **10**but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.

**11**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 childish ways behind me. **12**Now we see but a poor 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.

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

### **1 Corinthians 14**

14:1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. 2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. 3 But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. 4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. 5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but 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.

6 Now, brothers, 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? 7 Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the flute or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? 8 Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? 9 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. 10 Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. 11 If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me. 12 So it is with you. Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church.

13 For this reason anyone who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret what he says. 14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. 15 So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind. 16 If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? 17 You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified.

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

20 Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults. 21 In the Law it is written:

"Through men of strange tongues and through the lips of foreigners I

will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me," says the Lord.

22Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers. 23So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? 24But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, 25and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!"

26What then shall we say, brothers? 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. 27If anyone speaks in a tongue, two-or at the most three-should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. 28If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God.

Keep quiet does not mean "whisper" or "mumble." It means not to make any sound at all.

Some people think they are following this verse by mumbling in tongues so that 4 or 5 people sitting around them can hear. That is clear disobedience to this verse.

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

As in all the congregations of the saints, 34women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. 35If 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.

36Did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached? 37If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's

**command. 38If he ignores this, he himself will be ignored.  
39Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid  
speaking in tongues. 40But everything should be done in a fitting and  
orderly way.**