



This study is preceded by ‘Spiritual Gifts - definition’¹, which it would be best to read first.

The Bible text 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.

The **spiritual gifts/presents out of kindness through the Holy Spirit** in a more literal translation:

- Now **the revelation of the Spirit** is given to each one in order to gather together/carry together/be useful.
 - For indeed to one **a word of wisdom/insight** is given through the Spirit
 - moreover to another **a word of knowledge/understanding** is given by means of the same Spirit;
 - and to another **faith** through the same Spirit
 - and to another **spiritual gifts/presents out of kindness of healings** through the same Spirit
 - and to another **workings/acts of power/abilities**
 - and to another **prophecy**
 - and to another **discernment/distinguishing between spirits**
 - and to another **divers languages/tongues**
 - and to yet another **explanation/interpretation of languages/tongues.**
- And all these are the work of one and the same Spirit,
Who distributes them to each one personally, just as He determines/wishes/plans.
(1 Corinthians 12:7-11)

Explanation of the text:

The revelation of the Spirit is given to each one.

- Now **the revelation of the Spirit** is given to each one in order to gather together/carry together/be useful.

In Romans 12² Paul describes the **spiritual gifts/presents out of kindness** as a friendly gesture, from the spiritual life **of a disciple** of Jesus Christ.

Here in 1 Corinthians 12 he describes the spiritual gifts/charisma/presents out of kindness as a **revelation of the Holy Spirit**.

This refers to presents out of kindness from God, because:

- ... in everyone it is the same God at work. (1 Corinthians 12:6)

Through the Holy Spirit as a channel, God comes to help people in their weakness.

In view of what went before in this chapter, this promise is valid for all the members of the body of Jesus Christ. Note that no condition of baptism in the Holy Spirit is mentioned.

The purpose of the revelation of the Spirit is **to build up, to gather together, to keep together and to carry together** the body of Jesus Christ by means of:

A word of wisdom/insight.

- For indeed to one **a word of wisdom/insight** is given through the Spirit

¹ Study: Spiritual Gifts - definition.

² Study: Romans 12:6-9 - We now have spiritual gifts.



This is a **word van wisdom/insight** given as a **Divine revelation**, literally **through** (Greek: **dia**) the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the channel through which God transfers wisdom/insight.

The Holy Spirit can give this Divine revelation to someone personally, so that he/she is able to function better as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

However, in view of the fact that what is referred to is a **word** of wisdom/insight, God intends particularly that the person who receives this word should speak it out over another member of the church, so that that member will be encouraged or receive insight by it.

In this way God binds members of the body of Christ together to form a whole.

Note:

- The **spiritual gift, the present out of kindness** is a **word** of wisdom/insight.
- It is not stated that anyone receives 'the gift of wisdom'.
- God can entrust **everyone**, who makes Him/herself available for the work of the Holy Spirit, with a **word of wisdom/insight**.

A word of knowledge/understanding.

- ... *moreover to another a word of knowledge/understanding is given by means of the same Spirit;*

The Holy Spirit can give this Divine revelation to someone personally, so that he/she is able to function better as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

However, in view of the fact that what is referred to is a **word** of knowledge/understanding, God intends particularly that the person who receives this word should speak it out over another member of the church, so that that member will be encouraged or receive insight by it.

In this way God binds members of the body of Christ together to form a whole.

Note:

- The **spiritual gift/present out of kindness** is a **word** of knowledge/understanding.
- It is not stated that anyone receives 'the gift of knowledge'.
- God can entrust **everyone**, who makes him/herself available for the work of the Holy Spirit, with a **word of knowledge/understanding**.

Faith.

- ... *and to another faith through the same Spirit.*

Faith is usually seen as assurance, conviction or expectation on the basis of rational thought.

A person usually gains assurance through rational reasoning, as a result of which he goes on to put his trust in something in the present or in the future. This is often confirmed by peace of mind.

However, when God puts faith into someone's heart, through the Holy Spirit, that is then a deep trust, a not to be reasoned assurance in a particular situation.

Think of David, for example, who, as a teenager, dares to fight the giant Goliath.

He trusts strongly in God and refuses the military armour king Saul offers him.



With perfect trust in God he runs towards Goliath and conquers him, in his daily shepherd boy's outfit, with the weapons he is used to - a shepherd's staff and sling.

Spiritual gifts/presents of healings out of kindness.

- ... and to another **spiritual gifts/presents of healings out of kindness** by the same Spirit;

This is usually thought to refer to miraculous physical healing.

Sickness often has a spiritual background, however. For example, several physical complaints can be caused by heavy, protracted stress, from which one first has to be cured if the body is to be and to remain in good health.

A healing by the power of the Holy Spirit, whether spiritually or physically, is not necessarily a one-off occurrence, but often has several facets - this explaining why the plural 'healings' is written here.

Workings/acts of power/abilities.

- ... and to another **workings/acts of power/abilities (dunamis)**,

The Greek word '**dunamis**' is usually translated as '**power**' in relationship to **miracles**.

The word also contains the concept of '**ability**' however, as it is translated in the parable of the talents:

- *To one he (the man) gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his **ability**. Then he went on his journey. (Matthew 25:15)*

Actions/deeds, means that something occurs through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The plural is used here too, probably because more effective action is needed than physical strength, for example, but ability, wisdom or insight as well.

A few examples:

- *See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have **filled him with the Spirit of God**, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and **with all kinds of skills - to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze ... (Exodus 31:2-4)***
- *With great **power (dunamis) the apostles continued to testify** to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all. (Acts 4:33)*
- *Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by **miracles (dunamis)**, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ... (Acts 2:22)*

Prophecy.

- ... and to another **prophecy**;

This is **the proclamation of the words from God** in, or about a particular situation, or person.

Romans 12 speaks of prophecy according to the measure of faith.³

However, prophecy **by the Holy Spirit** is speaking the words from, **by means of Divine revelation** through the Holy Spirit.

³ Study: Romans 12:6-9 - We now have spiritual gifts.



Note that the Old Testament prophets received successive commissions to proclaim a prophecy, whereby God literally put the words in their mouths.

They also had to admonish the people and draw their attention to the consequences of their wrong way of life.

Prophecy is therefore the proclamation of the words from God in general and not only predicting the future.

Discernment/distinguishing between spirits.

- ... and to another **discernment/distinguishing between spirits**

This means that God draws someone's attention to whether something is a result of Satan's work, emanates from the human spirit, or is truly inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Divers languages/tongues.

- ... and to another **divers languages/tongues**,

This is what happened to the disciples and all who were with them on the Day of Pentecost:

- ... All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in **other tongues/languages as the Spirit enabled them.** (Acts 2:4)

The disciples of Jesus Christ who were baptised in the Holy Spirit at that time **spoke in a language they had not learned.** They themselves did not know what they were saying therefore.

In Acts 2 the disciples spoke in languages/tongues following the baptism/immersion in the Holy Spirit.

According to Mark 16:17, speaking in languages/tongues is **not a 'gift'**, but one of the things that follow believers **and is not necessarily coupled with baptism in the Holy Spirit.**

Languages/tongues can be a **known language**, as appears from Acts:

- ... each one heard **their own language** being spoken. (Acts 2:6)

This can also be a **language no one understands**, as Paul writes:

- *If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels ...* (1 Corinthians 13:1)
- *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.* (1 Corinthians 14:2)

Speaking in tongues has a double purpose:

- *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. 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.* (Romans 8:26-27)
- *Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves ...* (1 Corinthians 14:4)

It is wonderful that the Holy Spirit helps us in our human weakness, including in prayer!



It is therefore so important for a **disciple of Jesus to make him/herself** available for the work of the Holy Spirit, so that He is sometimes able to take over the prayer in order for the person to be edified by the Spirit in prayer and/or intercedes for others according to the will of God.

Explanation/interpretation of tongues/languages.

- ... to still another the **explanation/interpretation of tongues/languages.**

Speaking in tongues is not only limited to prayer.

Remember what the listeners said on the Day of Pentecost:

- ... we hear them declaring **the wonders of God** in our own tongues! (Acts 2:11)

When someone speaks in a tongue/language in church, this message can be considered to be prophecy, provided the message is also translated.

If a human language is spoken, someone who speaks or has learned that language would be able to translate it.

If an unknown language is spoken, only the Holy Spirit can give the interpretation of the mystery that is proclaimed in a strange language/tongue, by inspiring someone who does not actually translate it literally, but rather gives an account of what was said.

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit.

- *All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determine/wishes/plans.*

The spiritual gifts/charisma/presents out of kindness are generally coupled with the baptism in the Holy Spirit. There is no conclusive evidence for this in the Bible.

However, it does appear from the Book of Acts that the Holy Spirit, who is at work in every disciple of Jesus Christ, is activated by the power received through the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

The spiritual gifts/presents out of kindness are a consequence of the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of every disciple of Jesus Christ.

Otherwise, the spiritual gifts/presents out of kindness in the Bible would only occur after the Day of Pentecost, whereas that is not the case.⁴

Consider Zachariah at the birth of John the Baptist:

- *His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied ... (Luke 1:67)*

And the high priest, Caiaphas, who said in the Council:

- *You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish. (John 11:49-50)*

John writes about this:

- *He did not say this **on his own**, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation ... (John 11:51)*

⁴ Study: The Holy Spirit in the New Testament (1).

**What Jesus said about the coming of the Holy Spirit:**

- *When he (the Holy Spirit) comes, **he will prove the world** to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment ... (John 16:8)*
- *... when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, **he will guide you** into all the 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.** (John 16:13)*
- ***He (the Holy Spirit) will glorify me** because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. (John 16:14)*

On the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out in the world and since then He is at work **'in all flesh'**, i.e. in everyone.

He will **convince the world** of whom Jesus is.

The Holy Spirit will **show the disciple** (he/she) who is living under the authority and command of Jesus Christ **the way to the full truth.**

The baptism with the Holy Spirit does not appear to be a condition of this.

What Jesus said about the baptism in the Holy Spirit:

- *John baptised with water, but in a few days **you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.** (Acts 1:5)*
- *... **you will receive power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you ... (Acts 1:8)*

Through baptism the Holy Spirit, who is already at work in the life of each disciple of Jesus Christ, will be powerfully strengthened.

In the Book of Acts there are regular reports of people speaking in tongues/languages or prophesying after being baptised with the Holy Spirit.

See also the studies:

- The baptism with the Holy Spirit.⁵
- Spiritual life in the church.⁶
- 1 Corinthians 12:28 - Structure of the local church.⁷
- Ephesians 4:11 - Structure of the universal church.⁸

5 Study: The baptism with the Holy Spirit.

6 Study: Spiritual life in the church.

7 Study: 1 Corinthians 12:28 - Structure of the local church.

8 Study: Ephesians 4:11 - Structure of the universal church.