

The Holy Spirit

Gifts and Benefits



Class Section 1: The Benefits of the Holy Spirit

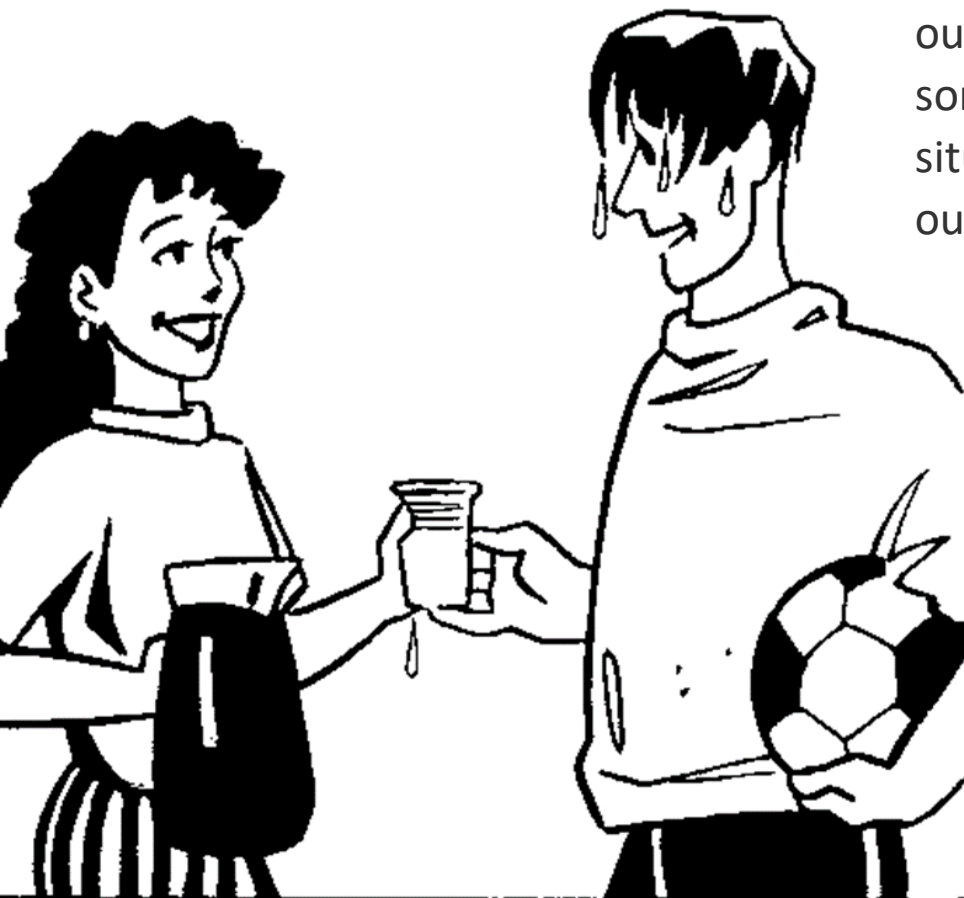
* The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the baptism of love

Galatians 5:22-23—But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

John 7:38-39—"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive.

That baptism of power that Jesus said would flow like rivers of water from within you is a baptism of the power of His love! This all-encompassing love of God even extends to loving people who we

couldn't love merely by our own efforts, in some of the toughest situations, even "loving our enemies" like Jesus told us to do, or when you are around difficult personalities.



*** The Holy Spirit helps, inspires, and strengthens us**

Ephesians 3:16—That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.

John 14:16—And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever.

*** The Holy Spirit guides us and gives us understanding of God's Word**

John 16:13—However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

John 14:26—But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

1 Corinthians 2:12—Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.



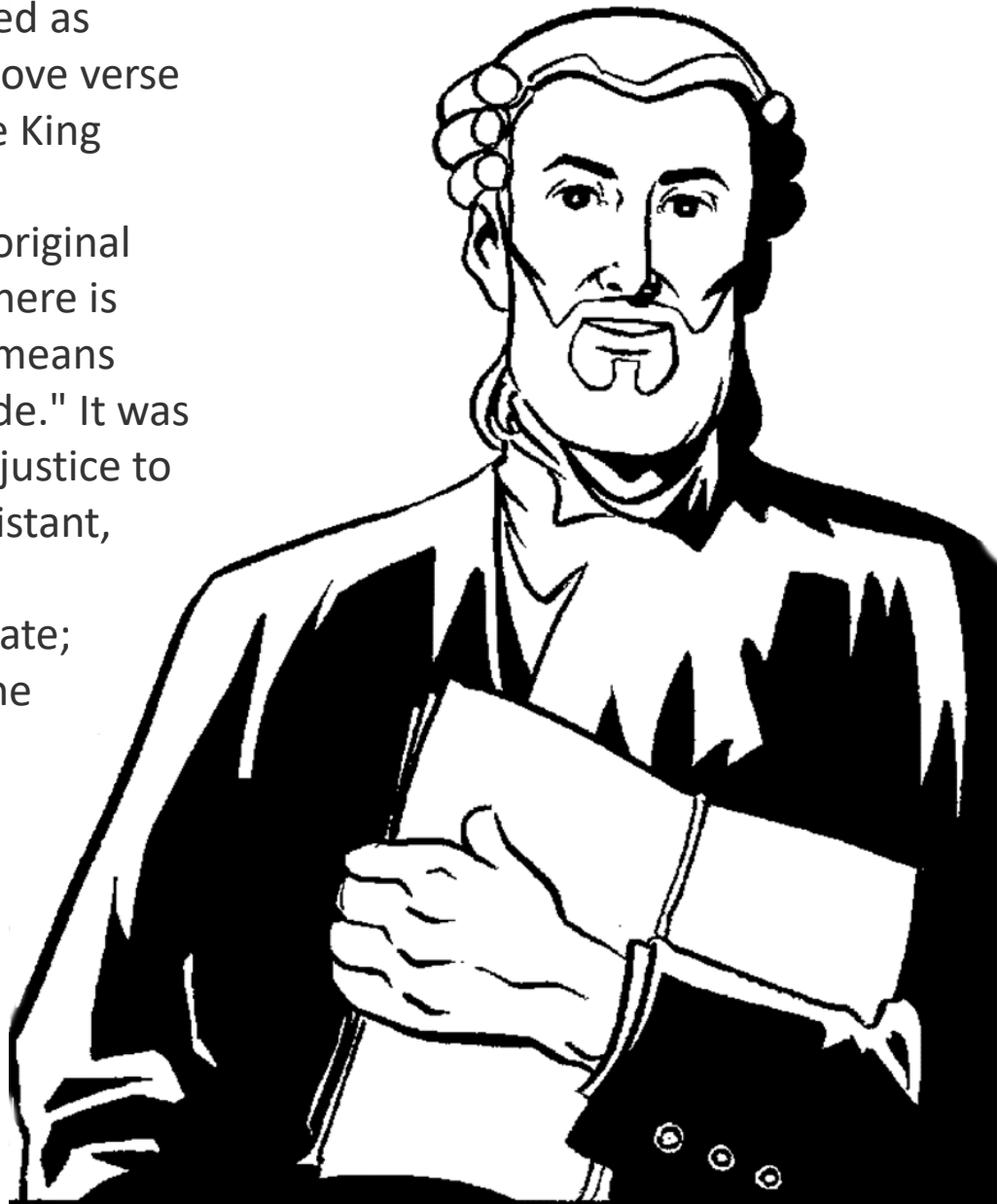
How has the Holy Spirit brought the Word to life for you?

* The Holy Spirit enhances our relationship with the Lord

Romans 8:26—Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

John 14:26—But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

The word translated as "Helper" in the above verse is translated in the King James Version as "Comforter." The original Greek word used here is *parakletos* which means "called to one's side." It was used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant, counsel for the defense, an advocate; then, generally, one who pleads another's cause.



***The Holy Spirit empowers our witness to others**

Acts 1:8—But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me.

Luke 4:18—The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.

The main reason for the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to give you power to witness!

It's often difficult for us to express what we feel; we don't always know how to put it into words. The Holy Spirit can inspire our words and get the point across much better than we can. Our words often seem to fall far short, but the Holy Spirit can cause our words to speak deeply to others' hearts so they understand and feel the profundity of what you may so poorly be trying to express. The Holy Spirit can fill in the meaning, fill in the details that we fail to include. Like Paul said,

1 Corinthians 2:4-5—And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

If you are sincere and trying to do your best, then the Lord will bless your witness! The Holy Spirit will work regardless of how lacking or confusing your words are or how badly you do. You don't have to be afraid of making a mess of things, because whatever you say to try to share the truth of the Word, the Lord is going to bless it.

Class Section 2: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

In the [previous class](#) you read how the Lord sent the Holy Spirit to His first disciples and the effect it had in their lives. Now we're going to look more closely at the gifts of the Spirit and how these can make a difference in your life.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us.

The Spirit gives one person the ability to speak with wisdom. And the same Spirit gives another person the ability to speak with knowledge. The same Spirit gives faith to one person and to another he gives gifts of healing. The Spirit gives to one person the power to do miracles, to another the ability to prophesy, and to another the ability to judge what is from the Spirit and what is not. The Spirit gives one person the ability to speak in different kinds of languages, and to another the ability to interpret those languages. (1 Corinthians 12:4-10)



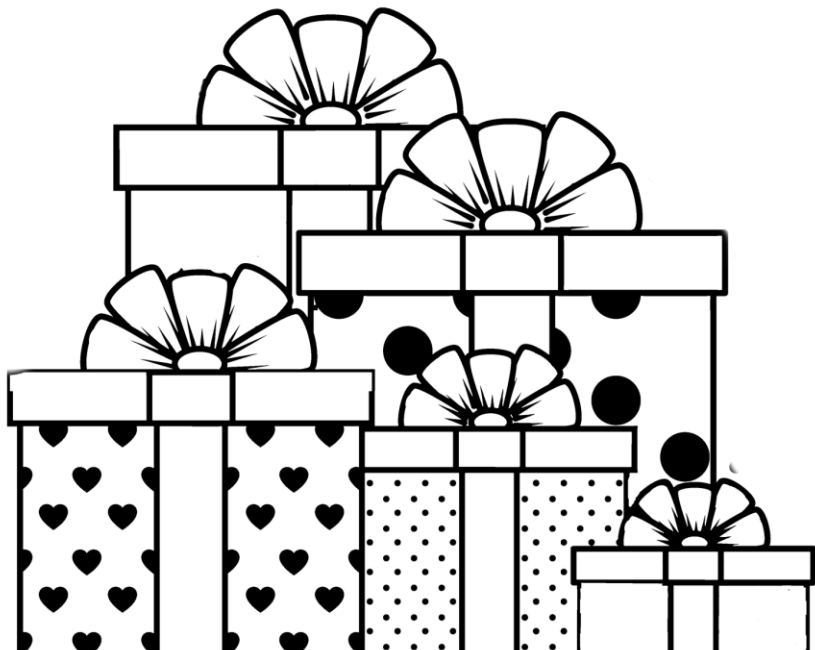
There are nine basic gifts of the Spirit:

- The unseen gifts: discernment, knowledge, wisdom
- The unstoppable gift: faith.
- The guiding gift: prophecy
- The renewing gift: healings
- The showstopper gift: miracles
- The uplifting gift: the ability to speak in different kinds of languages (tongues)
- The revelatory gift: the ability to interpret those languages

The Lord chooses which gifts to give to whom.

1 Corinthians 12:11—It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.

James 1:17—Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.



None of the gifts are essential as proofs of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

1. Discernment

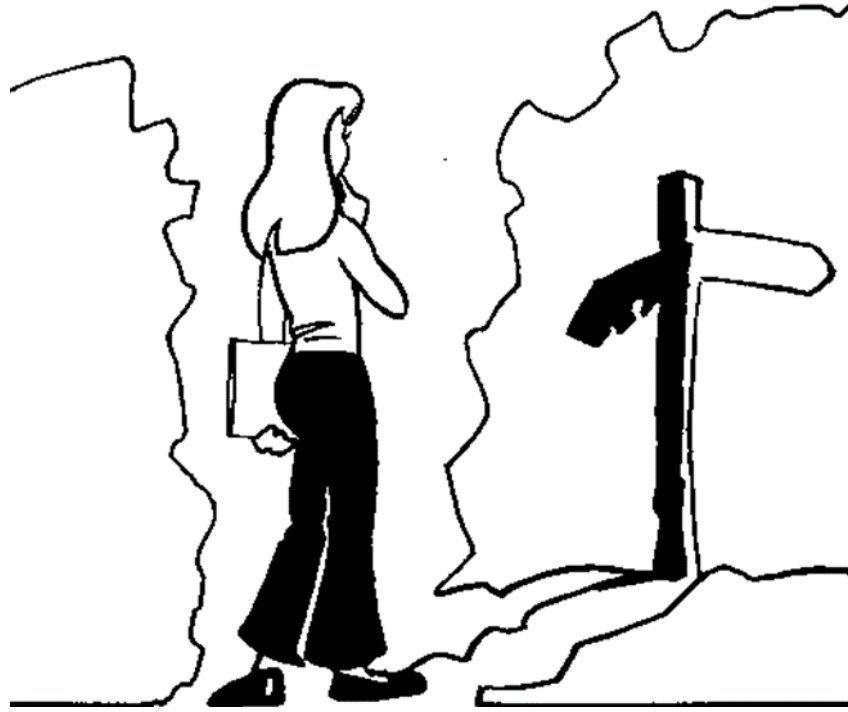
Discernment is defined as "keenness of insight or judgment"—the ability to perceive the spirit and intent behind what others say or do. God's Word exhorts us to discern the difference between good and evil and to "test the spirits."

*1 John 4:1-3,6—
Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. .. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*



2. Knowledge

The spiritual gift of knowledge goes far beyond mental knowledge; it's getting a glimpse of the heart and mind of God. You know things you wouldn't otherwise know.



1 Corinthians 2:9-16—But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.

3. Wisdom

James 1:5—If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Proverbs 4:7—Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.

Proverbs 8:1, 5-7, 11—Does not wisdom cry out, and understanding lift up her voice? O you simple ones, understand prudence, and you fools, be of an understanding heart. Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, and from the opening of my lips will come right things; For my mouth will speak truth; ... For wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.

What is wisdom?—How to use the knowledge of God! It's one thing to know things, that's knowledge, and that's good, that's one of the gifts of the Spirit, but it's another thing to know how to use that knowledge, and that's wisdom, another gift of the Spirit.

You may be very smart as far as facts and figures and history and even Bible knowledge, but if you don't know how to use that knowledge to help someone else or help yourself or use it for a good purpose, what good is it?



4. Faith

Hebrews 11:1,6—Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

The gift of faith is not very obvious. You can't see it; you can't tell what color it is; you can't hear it. But you can certainly tell by the way people act how much faith they've got.

Every born-again child of God is given a measure of faith. Our faith grows every time we read, absorb, and act upon the Word of God. But to have especially great faith for certain things is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Having the gift of faith will lead to the visible gifts of healing and miracles.

For more on faith, read Hebrews 11.

5. Prophecy

The gift of prophecy—that of receiving messages from the Lord—is perhaps the most important of all of the gifts of the Spirit.

One person may prophesy very beautifully and fluently in language that's almost Biblical, while another person prophesies haltingly, slowly, and rather roughly. The Lord is the One who is giving it to both of them; it's all His inspiration. It's just that certain ones are gifted in different ways, with different strengths, weaknesses, abilities, and inabilities.

As this is a big subject, we'll look at it in depth in later classes.

6./7. Healing and miracles

The gifts of healing and miracles are sixth and seventh on the list. To believe that the Lord can heal is important for your own sake and the sake of your fellow believers.

It is sometimes also necessary for the sake of others. God has often used healing and miracles to get a crowd for the sake of the publicity so they can hear the message and believe. But note that God uses the gift of healing in this way because He loves and cares for people and wants them to be healed and to be drawn closer to Him. Such healings are not meant to glorify the individual to whom God has given the gift. It is a gift to be used in sincerity, humility, and love.

Jesus still performs miracles for and through His followers today—miracles of healing and other events. He promises,

John 14:12—Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.



8. Tongues

The gift of tongues is the ability to speak, pray, or praise God in one or more unlearned languages.

Acts 2:4—And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Sometimes these are earthly languages, but more often these tongues are heavenly languages which are unintelligible to the speaker or anyone else except through the gift of interpretation.

1 Corinthians 14:2—For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

9. Interpretation of tongues

1 Corinthians 14:13-15—Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding.

Sometimes tongues are meant to be understood by the Lord alone, but other times they convey messages that the Lord wants you and possibly others to understand and benefit from. The Lord can give you the interpretation of the message in tongues if you ask Him and if it is something that you are meant to understand.

An interpretation is like a prophecy. The only difference between interpreting tongues and direct prophecy is that with prophecy there's no intermediary message in tongues, you just get it straight from the Lord without the secondary step of having to get it in tongues first and then interpret.

* Using God's gifts with the right motives

The main purpose of the Spirit's gifts is to help others and ourselves to be closer to the Lord. Let's look at a few examples: A miracle can increase someone's faith. A prayer in tongues can be used by the Lord to edify our spirit. We can receive instruction via a prophecy. These are gifts from a loving heavenly Father to His children to help communicate understanding of Himself and His Will.

We should not belittle or neglect the "gifts of the Spirit."

2 Timothy 1:6—Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

1 Corinthians 12:31a—But earnestly desire the best gifts.

The gifts of the Spirit are not meant to be played with or proudly displayed or used for personal profit.





Class Section 3: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit: Questions and Answers

*** Are the gifts of the Holy Spirit simply there for the asking, or does the Lord decide who gets which gifts, and when?**

Believe it or not, the answer is both. Sometimes the Lord will give someone a certain gift without them having specifically requested it. Most often, however, He'll give it in response to our request. The apostle Paul explains that *"the same Spirit works all these things [spiritual gifts], distributing to each one individually as He wills."* (2 Corinthians 12:11). But Paul also admonishes us to *"earnestly desire the best gifts."* (2 Corinthians 12:31) Why would he tell us to desire them if they weren't for us?

* How and when can I expect my new gift to first manifest itself?

If you ask for a gift, the Lord will answer, but He will choose which are the most important gifts for you in your life and also the right timing to manifest those gifts. Have patience!

James 1:4—But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

If you don't seem to get any immediate results, don't give up and don't doubt. Just go back to the Word, the source of faith. Read and absorb the Word, and your faith will be increased. (Romans 10:17) The Lord doesn't always answer your prayers immediately or the way you expect Him to, but that doesn't mean you should stop praying. Similarly, He may not always work through your gifts of the Spirit just the way you would like Him to or expect Him to, but that doesn't mean you don't have those gifts or should quit trying to use them. Keep praying, trusting the Lord, and doing your part, and the Lord won't fail! In His time and in His way, He will bring about the results that He knows are best.

* Love!

You can have all the gifts of the Spirit and all the prophecy, tongues, teaching, and everything else, but it isn't worth much unless you have love! Love is the most important thing! Look what Paul says in 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:1—But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.



Dear Jesus, I know that I need more of Your love and power in my life, so please fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Give me the gifts of Your Spirit, and help me to use them to love others more and to be a greater witness of Your love. Help me to develop a close relationship with You, to understand Your Word better, and put it into practice in my life. Amen.