

Continuous Power on The Church! (Acts 5:1-42)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The manifest power of the Holy Spirit working in and through the Apostles became the norm. The account of Ananias and Sapphira lying to the Holy Spirit brought a sense of soberness and fear of The Lord in the people.
- B. The point is, God knows all about our dealings. You cannot lie to God and expect to go on living life without some kind of consequence. Acts 5:1-11 certainly brought a sense of soberness to the new Church. The Apostle Peter was practicing “the ministry of accountability”!

II. GOD MOVING THROUGH SIGNS AND WONDERS

- A. The Lord was moving powerfully through the apostles. Signs and wonders were the normal occurrence. The faith level was high among the people. People were being ministered to.
“And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people... So they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those where were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.” (Acts 5:12, 15-16).
- B. There were two specific groups that were being touched by God. Those who needed physical healing and those who were being tormented by unclean spirits. There have been seasons throughout history where great healings took place. I think back to the days of the great healing revivals in the late 40’s and 50’s. People like Kathryn Kuhlman, Smith Wigglesworth, and John G. Lake were some of the more well known ones.
- C. The church where Pam and I got saved (Evangelistic Temple) in Houston was founded during a healing revival led by Raymond T. Richey. I remember in the early 1970’s as a teenager attending church services there, where after the preaching they always prayed for the sick. Long lines would form while Bible teachers like Kenneth Hagin Sr. or Derek Prince and others would pray for people individually to be healed, and many were.

III. GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

- A. When it comes to the study of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, it is important that we look carefully at what the Bible teaches or we might miss what it is saying. We should want everything that God has for us today. Fear, lack of understanding can cause us to miss what God wants to do today.
“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant... There are diversities of gifts (charisma – a spiritual endowment), but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries (diakonia – service, ministries), but the same Lord. There are diversities of activities (energema – operations, workings), but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation (expression) of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.” (1 Cor. 12:1, 4-7).

- B. The Bible breaks down the gifts of the Holy Spirit in 3 basic categories. First, are the leadership gifts also known as the 5-fold apostolic gifts (also known as office gifts). Apostles, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher (Rom. 12:4-8, Eph. 4:11-12). These are given for ***“The equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Eph. 4:12)***
- C. The 5-fold apostolic gifts describe leaders who serve in these offices (normally in full-time ministry) as they serve the body of Christ. Apostles are people who have a greater reach in establishing the work of God in larger geographical areas. Prophets are individuals who regularly speak what God is saying to the Church and who give spiritual direction as to what is in the mind of God for a specific season. Evangelists, like Reinhard Bonnke, Franklin Graham, and others, focus their ministry on seeing souls come to Christ. Pastors (shepherds) and teachers serve the local congregations (Isa. 40:11, 1Pet. 5:1-4).

IV. THE NINE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- A. There are nine gifts of the Holy Spirit available to believers. We should earnestly desire the best gifts! (1Cor. 12:31) These gifts are given to help us live fruitful and productive lives. We can divide them into 3 parts: Gifts of Revelation (Word of Wisdom, word of knowledge, discerning of spirits). These gifts reveal something. Second grouping, Gifts of Power: (Faith, healing, miracles), These gifts do something. And lastly, Gifts of utterance: (Prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues). These gifts say something.
- B. The number one way to develop the gifts of the Holy Spirit in your life is to developing your prayer life. People who are used powerfully by God in this area have a strong prayer-life. Through prayer is where we develop our spiritual ears to hear God (Isa. 50:4, 30:21). ***“Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it’”***
- C. Through prayer is where you gain a sense of discernment, to know what you ought to do in certain situations. It means, acuteness of judgment and understanding.
“My son, if you receive My words, and treasure My commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.” (Pro 2:1-5).
- D. As we learn to function in spiritual gifts, it is important that we learn to do it in a way that focuses the attention on Jesus and not on us, and that brings edification to people around us. Mike Bickle in talking on the subject of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, explains that when we function in spiritual gifts, that it is a combination of our spirit mixing with God’s Spirit depending on our personality and level of yielding to God.
- E. Praying with your prayer language is a powerful weapon in spiritual warfare. First, it builds you up on your most holy faith (Jude 20). Secondly, it allows the Holy Spirit to pray through us in a heavenly language that by-passes the understanding, even when we don’t know what to pray for (Rom. 8:26) (We are praying from the spirit instead of our intellect). When we pray in tongues, we are speaking to God, not to men (1Cor. 14:2). We should pray in tongues every day!