

The Benefits of the Holy Spirit

■ The Baptism of the Holy Spirit Is the Baptism of Love

1 Corinthians 13:1–2—Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. (2) And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

■ 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.

2 Corinthians 3:6b—The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

■ The Holy Spirit Enhances Our Relationship with the Lord

Acts 9:31b—Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, [the believers] were multiplied.

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.

■ 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.

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, (5) that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

What If You're Not an Eloquent Witness?

If the person you are sharing your faith with is receptive and ready to receive the Lord, the Holy Spirit will work in his or her heart. It's the Spirit of the Lord that does the winning!

Remember: It doesn't have anything to do with how fluent you are or how eloquent and expressive you are! It's the *Spirit* that is going to do the work in others' hearts! It only has to do with your obedience, your faithfulness, your sincerity, and your broken heart for others to do all you can to try to win them to the Lord. You just *do what you can* and the *Holy Spirit will do the rest!*

You don't have to compare yourself to those who may be better speakers, or know more Scriptures than you, or can more easily answer questions. Just do what the Word says. Tell them John 3:16, and if you can't answer all their questions, just say, "I'm sorry, I don't know that answer, but I

do know that Jesus can save you and make you happy and give you a wonderful new life!”—And the Holy Spirit will work! It’s the Holy Spirit that wins souls!

It Doesn’t Matter *How* You Speak, All That Matters Is That You *Do* Speak!

The Nine Gifts of the Spirit—1 Corinthians 12:7–11

1. Discernment: 1 John 4:1–6
2. Knowledge: 1 Corinthians 2:9–16
3. Wisdom: James 1:5; Proverbs 4:7; 8:1,5–7,11
4. Faith: Hebrews 11:1,6 (See also all of Hebrews 11.)
5. Prophecy: 1 Corinthians 14:3,5; Acts 2:17 (See also Jeremiah 1:3–9.)
6. & 7. Healing and Miracles: John 14:12
8. Tongues: Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 14:2,14; Romans 8:26b; 1 Corinthians 14:19,22a
 - a. Tongues of praise: 1 Corinthians 4:5b; Hebrews 13:15
 - b. Messages in tongues: Acts 19:6; 1 Corinthians 14:5
9. Interpretation: 1 Corinthians 14:13–16

Use God’s gifts with the right motives: 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Corinthians 12:31a

The most important thing—love! 1 Corinthians 12:31; 13:1

See God’s Gifts in the *Get Activated!* series for more details on the gifts of the Spirit.

Faith in action: Wonderful Gifts!

Faith is the foot of the soul by which it can march along the road of the commandments. Love can make the feet move more swiftly, but faith is the foot that carries the soul. With faith I can do all things; without faith I shall neither have the inclination nor the power to do anything in the service of God. If you would find the men who serve God the best, you must look for the men of the most faith. Little faith will save a man, but little faith cannot do great things for God.

—Charles Spurgeon

Healing and Miracles

A healing miracle!

From Francisco and Margarita in Mexico

Maria had already been in a coma for over 20 days when her sister contacted us and asked us to pray for Maria. A heart attack at eight months pregnant had caused Maria to lose the baby she was carrying. Now doctors had all but given up hope for Maria to recover. Even if she came out of the coma, one of her kidneys would need to be removed. Her sister was desperate.

When we went to the hospital to pray for Maria, most of her family was there. Everyone held hands in a circle and prayed for Maria to come out of the coma and completely recover.

The next day, Maria woke up from the coma, and about a week later her doctors said she wouldn’t have to have the kidney removed after all. They said that Maria’s turnaround couldn’t be explained medically, and that it must have been a miracle.

Now Maria is almost back to full health—yet another case of “with men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible” (Mark 10:27).

Miracle of protection!

From Ben, USA

There have been so many airplane crashes and near crashes in recent months that if you heard about the cargo plane that ran off the end of a Miami airport runway and exploded, chances are you didn't think much more about it. Neither did I, until my daughter phoned to say the crash was immediately in front of the computer store owned and operated by good friends of ours, and that our friends were in the store at the time!

We phoned them immediately, and visited them several days later. Earthmovers were still scooping up fuel-tainted soil when we arrived. Before telling us their amazing story, our friends read us the following excerpts from Psalm 91:

"He who dwells in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver [me] from ... the destruction that lays waste at noonday."

The plane crashed just after noon, they explained, and slid for hundreds of feet before stopping just a few feet from their building. The plane pushed several cars up against the building, and a piece of one of the plane's engines flew through the glass door of their shop, making an escape route. The three of them and their only customer at the time were able to squeeze through to safely. Seconds later, a large blast filled in the space along the building through which they had just made their escape.

When the fire was extinguished and they were allowed to return to the scene, they expected to find their shop gutted. They were in for a surprise.

The neighboring store was a burnt-out shell, but the only damage to our friends' place was a melted storefront sign and the broken glass door that had allowed them to get out. Just inside the door was an outgoing shipment of computer monitors, undamaged and still stacked neatly. A few feet away, next to the couch where my six-year-old had rested when we had visited our friends the evening before the crash, was a box of pants labels, which had been part of the plane's cargo.

Before we left, we helped one of our friends as he painted in large letters on his boarded-up shop door "Thank God we survived! Psalm 91." That same friend was later interviewed on several nationwide talk shows, and each time he took the opportunity to thank the Lord publicly for His protection. What a miracle!

"Tongues of Men and Angels!"

Most people who receive the gift of tongues receive a "tongue of angels" that is not a recognizable language (1 Corinthians 13:1). However in some exceptional cases, people receive the gift of a recognizable language which they had never learned, just like in Acts chapter 2.

Estonian the easy way

Pentecost's miracle still happens today. Since the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, Christians have experienced that people can suddenly speak languages that they never learned, and which can be understood by others.

Kertu Gasman and Lia Piir, two Christian women from the Baltic nation of Estonia recently told of a missionary journey to neighboring Latvia. Both women traveled as part of a team from their hometown Tallinn to Latvia in 1989, two years before Estonia's independence, to pray and evangelize. The Estonian and Latvian languages are very different despite their geographical proximity, so Kertu and Lia had to speak Russian in order to be understood. In a prayer meeting, a Latvian girl suddenly spoke loudly in Estonian: "Lift your eyes, because your hope and Savior is coming soon." Kertu later went to the girl and told her how surprised she was that she could speak Estonian. The girl replied "Estonian? I can't speak a single word!" The Christians present, who were still suffering under a Communist regime, understood this as an encouragement from God.

"When they sang, it was Spanish!"

From Jonathan, Colombia

Years ago I was living in New York with a Christian rock band. I am from Colombia and I know Spanish and English, but none of the members of the band with whom I was living spoke a word of

Spanish. They were all American and only spoke English. I had met the Lord only six months before and I was a new Christian.

The band had made several tapes of their practice sessions as at the time they were preparing to record some songs professionally and would also do functions at youth gatherings.

One day I was doing some jobs around the house, and I was listening to one of the tapes that they had recorded. A particular song had come on in which the group started singing in tongues. At first I couldn't understand what they were saying, but as the song progressed, these Americans who couldn't speak a word of Spanish started singing in beautiful poetic Spanish! I was shocked and thrilled! And they went on and on—out of their mouths came forth a beautiful message of how love will reign forever.

As a young Christian, this was a wonderful sign to me of one of the Lord's supernatural gifts of His Spirit!

Mountain Streams: Diamonds of Dust

By David Berg

God put on a “light show” the other day, and we were there to see it! He said a lot of things, too, and we tried to listen. I'm sure He must have shown it before, but we were all too busy to watch.

The Lord let three tiny rays of light beam their way into our room—not through the shutter, obstructing the light, but through tiny peepholes, letting it in! The smaller the hole, the more perfect the image, the more accurate the projection it reflects! The smaller you are, the clearer others can see Him! The less there is of you, the more the light shines through!

The rays were many different colors—all showing a different color of His Light, but the same light. Like the Bible says, there are different gifts, but they are all from the Holy Spirit. Different gifts, but the same Spirit, each one reflecting in his own way the Light of God—each one letting his light shine, showing his particular kind of works to cause men to glorify the beauty of God! (1 Corinthians 12:4).

We can be like little rays of light in this city that's so dark! Even a few rays of light can make some kind of impression! Don't ever think because there's so much darkness, that it's no use to have just a little light, because even one candle can be seen a mile away when it's dark!

Even a grain of dust, as small as it is, can sparkle like a diamond, if it will get in the sunshine, if the room is dark enough. The greater the darkness, the brighter the light! A little diamond of dust or a little ray of sunshine shows up best when the room is very dark, because where sin abounds, grace abounds much more! (Romans 5:20).

What you see when you see the flame of a candle is not the fire itself, but the tiny little glowing particles, made white hot by the flame. You're not actually seeing the light at all, because the light itself is invisible! It can only be seen in the reflections of all those little diamonds of dust! You don't dare look right at the sun, as it can blind you, but you only see its reflection in the things that it shines on.

Just so, people can only see God as His children reflect Him, like little diamonds of dust! They can't look at God, because He's too bright; He blinds them! They have to look at us to see God in our reflection of Him. God's light can only be seen if you reflect it! People can only see God in you as you reflect Him. So “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

If the dust weren't there, you couldn't see the light, and if the light weren't there, you couldn't see the dust! It takes both!

You may never see the little diamond of dust again, for some of them just flow into the light, sparkle for a moment, and then vanish back into the darkness. They only have their moment of truth!—But if only once in its life it scintillates with the light of the Lord, it's worth it! Even if only once in its life, it is life and joy to someone, it's worth it! But if it could stay in the Lord's light, it could sparkle its life out to the end, like one candlestick gives light to the whole house until it is

finished! The longer that little grain of dust stays right in the light, the longer it shines—and the longer it stays a diamond!

For they can sparkle so short a while, and then they're gone, like a man's life—like the grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is gone! For what is your life? It's but a vapor—a vapor that reflects His rays of light for a little while and then it's gone! (James 4:14). You have no guarantee of tomorrow. You better sparkle now while you have the light, or you'll fade into oblivion and no one will know you even ever existed, because no man ever saw the light reflected in you, shining through you! Because you always dwelt in darkness. You never came to the Light that your deeds might be made manifest, that they were of God! (John 3:20–21).

The path of the rays of light we see is very straight and very narrow! It only shines in one direction, and its source is only in one direction! So there is only one way to the source, and you've got to follow that way or you won't make it! Jesus is the Light of the world! (John 8:12). He's the only way. Only in Him is there light—the straight and narrow beam that points to the love of God, to the Son of God's love—and unless you get in that beam of love, you'll never shine! Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

Think how much God can show you from even a little beam of light, if you're just simple and childlike enough to appreciate it, to look and to listen! "Unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of Heaven!" (Matthew 18:3).

To learn from the Lord, you have to stop and look and listen, or you'll get run over by all the cares of this life, instead of running over with His truth, His love, and His joy! You'll be overcome by the world, instead of overcoming the world through Him!

Stop—look—listen—to the light, and let your dust become diamonds, that show the beauty of God!

If you're too busy, you'll never learn anything!—Or, if you're in a hurry, full of your own doings, your own things!

Watch the diamonds of dust! They don't try to sparkle and shine. They just let the light shine through them! They don't try to work to shine or move. They're not trying to get anywhere; they're not in a hurry! They just float so quietly on God's air, and only get stirred up when He blows up a storm. But even then, they settle back into their place when it's over!

Stop—look—listen—and become a diamond of dust!