

1 Corinthians 12 (Part 2): 8-11 • The Gifts He Gives

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Calvary Chapel Ontario

And we are continuing our study in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 this morning. And we're going to be picking it up in verse 7, and going through verse 11. Not a whole lot here today. We did an introduction last week and now we're going to be looking at some of the specifics of the gifts of the Spirit.

It says in verse 7, *“To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”* We read that verse last week, but I'm tagging it on there again because it's an important reminder.

“⁸ For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.” Stop there.

Heavenly Father, open our hearts, open our minds, open our spirits to what You're saying here, to what You're laying out for us in the Word, and teach us today for You are the teacher. Instruct us now, in Jesus name, amen.

You might remember last week, we gave a definition for spiritual gifts that I thought would be good to repeat. We're going to put that up on the screen again.

Spiritual gifts are abilities given to believers that exceed our human, natural abilities. They are “supernatural” giftings, given by God, enabling us to function in a spiritual capacity.

Spiritual gifts are (essentially) abilities given to believers that exceed the human, natural abilities. They are, (therefore,) “supernatural” (in other words, beyond the natural) giftings, given by God, enabling us to function in a spiritual capacity.

Probably not the perfect definition, but that's the best I could come up with.

Now again, I repeated verse 7, which speaks of the fact that the gifts of the Spirit, the manifestation of gifts in the body of Christ, through the body of Christ, is given for the common good. I repeated that statement because everything Paul says from this point on, is to emphasize and reinforce that statement.

And he goes on in verse 8 to speak of the gifts of the Spirit. And he begins by saying, “*For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, ...*” And I want you to take special note of the wording here. He says “*...to one is given through the Spirit the utterance (or the word, if you will) of wisdom.*” This is a spiritual gift.

Now what Paul is not saying is that, if somebody has a lot of wisdom like Solomon did, that's a spiritual gift. That's not what we're talking about. Solomon was given great wisdom, this is a word of wisdom. This is an utterance of wisdom.

This is a specific impartation of the Holy Spirit through the life of the believer to give a word to someone or to a group of people that encompasses wisdom. And it's something that they did not naturally know, or understand, or wisdom that was given to them and before, and the Lord gave it.

Let me give you an example and it's not a great example, but it's the best one I can come up with for right now. Over the years, because when I was in high school, I used to hang out with guys and we used to, we were into cars. Mostly fast cars, and loud, loud and fast. That's all they had to be and we liked them.

Anyway, we'd work on them and I'm not a mechanic. I, to this day, I'm not mechanically inclined. Thank God for mechanics, but I have learned just from hanging around people that know cars work on cars. And we did a lot of that when I was in high school. I mean, pulling engines out of cars, putting them back in, and getting them to run.

And I just watched and handed people wrenches, but I learned a lot. I actually learned a lot just from being there around these guys about the internal workings of a combustion engine. I just..., to the point where today, I can even, most of the time, I can even semi-diagnose a problem just because I learned from these guys that taught.

Well, here's the problem though, I don't know what to do about it. You know what I mean? I can tell you, oh, I think maybe this is what's the problem with your car, but I'm not really sure what needs to be done to fix it. That, what needs

to be done, that's wisdom. Knowing what's wrong with the car, that's knowledge. Okay.

Knowledge is knowing what the problem is. Wisdom is knowing what to do about it. You with me?

When Paul says, to one is given the utterance or the word of wisdom, this is a word that comes from the Lord at a very important time in either someone's life or a group. And the Lord gives a specific directive, a specific word that says, do this. Okay.

Now we have an example of this in 2 Kings, even back in the Old Testament.

2 Kings 5:9-10 (ESV)

So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house. And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean."

So Naaman (who you remember had leprosy) came (came to Elisha) with (all) his horses and chariots and (in fact, it says he) stood at the door of Elisha's (home) house. And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, (and this was a word of wisdom) "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean."

In other words, what God gave through Elisha was the message to do. Go do. Alright? You'll notice that there wasn't a word of knowledge there, just a word of wisdom.

Knowledge is what we come to next, the next spiritual gift that Paul cites here. if you look in your Bible, he says, "*and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,*"

Spiritual Gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12

- The word of wisdom
- The word of knowledge

The word of wisdom. The word of knowledge.

And again, this is not knowledge that has been learned. Like I gained a little bit of knowledge about how engines work just a little enough, probably to be

dangerous, but I learned it over time. You can study topics. You can learn about things and you can gain knowledge about them, but that's natural.

We're talking about now, a supernatural, impartation of the Spirit when He drops knowledge into the heart of an individual that they had no way of knowing by themselves or through any natural means. That's what a word of knowledge is. And it could not be known apart from God revealing it. A good example is from the Book of Acts. It's from chapter 8. Peter is speaking here and says,

Acts 8:22-23 (NIV1984)

“Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin.”

Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. (speaking to the man who wanted to pay, he wanted to give money for the gift of the Spirit. He said) *For* (look at this) *I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin.*

When Peter says to him, “*I see,*” he's saying, the Lord has shown me. The Lord has given me understanding, and knowledge, that I see, that this is all because you are full of bitterness, and you are actually in bondage to your sin. This is a word of knowledge. This is an informational thing that is imparted to a believer at a particular moment.

And, I've seen this happen in the body of Christ on numerous occasions. I've had it happen to me. In fact, there was one particular time in my life when the Lord, through a perfect stranger, gave me a word of knowledge and followed it up with a word of wisdom.

And the word of knowledge was to make me aware of a problem going on in my family that I was not aware of. And the Lord made me aware through a word of knowledge. And then the Lord gave me, from that very same individual, a word of wisdom saying, here's what you need to do. And what the Lord said was, pray.

And this is, and through this individual I, received this word, you need to pray. You need to be praying for your family because there's a specific attack that is going on at this time. And what was really fascinating about that event in our lives. It was really a watershed event for us in many ways because this individual, by the way, whom I had never met before was praying over Sue and

I. Just praying for us to, for God's grace and blessing and stuff. And he began to just, he began to speak about our personal situation. And that was a little weird all by itself. And then he began, he started repeating things that Sue had said to me in the privacy of our bedroom, and to whom we had expressed to no one else very specific words of understanding.

And again, we just met this guy. He was, lovely believer, lovely man of God. He's just praying for us. We were in a situation where we were living in Montana at the time and Sue desperately wanted to move, and she was on me like every day, let's get out of here. Let's just move. Well, we didn't tell that to anybody because we don't hurt anybody's feelings. This is the conversation that was going on in our bedroom, and so he's just, he's this brand new guy. We'd never met him. He's praying over us and, he's praying and praying. He's just lifting up all these things and then he stops and he turns to Sue and he says, little sister, stop bugging your husband to move, and just stay here because God is going to bring you through whatever you're going through right here, right now. And if you keep constantly wanting to run, that's the way life will be for you. You'll always be on the run.

And when Sue heard that, she just instantly burst into tears because you have this sense of you've been exposed. But you but there's also an incredible sense of God knows and that's a comforting thing when God reads your mail, it's cool. When big brother does it, you feel violated. When God does it, You feel like oh, what's going on? You know what we talk about in the privacy of our bedroom. And this word of knowledge was a powerful reminder to us that God knows our deepest thoughts and feelings and, is in control of our lives.

Verse 9 goes on to give the next gift. He says, *“to another faith by the same Spirit, ...”* And by the way, this is not saving faith. Saving faith is what we refer to as that faith that we place in God for the forgiveness of sins. We say, I believe Jesus died for me on the cross. I believe that is the means by which I am saved. I believe, that He is my Savior. Glorious, wonderful. You put saving faith in Jesus, and you're born again. This is not that.

This is faith. This is a supernatural boost of faith that God gives either to someone who's praying for someone else or to a recipient of something that the Lord desires to do in their life. And when that faith comes upon the individual, they just know that they know, that they know, this is going to happen. It's for them. It's a done deal. It's just an absolute sense of, it's done.

And let me show you an example of where a recipient received the gift of faith. Acts chapter 14.

Acts 14:8-10 (ESV)

Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking.

Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him (and look at this) and seeing that he had faith to be made well, said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking.

It's an interesting sort of a picture of this gift of faith, and what's really interesting too is that Paul recognized it. How do you recognize somebody who has faith to be healed? I mean, what do you look for? That too is a spiritual understanding, isn't it? Paul's sitting here just talking about the Lord, talking about the goodness of God, talking about salvation that is ours in Jesus.

And he's panning through the group, and here's this man who has never walked in his entire life. And Paul looks at him and he knows that this man has the faith to be healed. He sees it in him. And so he just says to him, you, stand up, walk. And the guy does, and everybody I'm sure totally freaked out. This is that spiritual gift of faith. And again, it could either come to the recipient or to the individual who is reaching out and doing the praying.

Pastor Chuck, I've told some of you guys this before, but pastor Chuck Smith used to tell a story about an earlier time at Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, when his kids were still small and this man was being brought down front in a wheelchair for prayer by his kids. And they wheeled him down and pastor Chuck just knew that God wanted to do a work of healing in this man's life.

He grabbed him by the hand and he said, in the name of Jesus be healed. And the guy got out of the wheelchair and he's like walking around. And everybody's just freaking out. And his kids came up to Chuck and they said, we brought him up for you to pray for his cold, had absolutely no intention of asking you to pray for anything related to his physical condition or the fact that he was in a wheelchair. None. But God just imparted that faith in Chuck at this point. And just, he knew, he knew what God wanted to do.

And what's interesting about that is that the very next week some people came down for prayer. Who had similar sorts of physical conditions and stuff like that, and you know what, that week nobody got up from a wheelchair. And one of Chuck's kids, who were still young at that time, came up and asked him, Dad, why didn't you do the same thing that you did to that old guy last week.

Chuck said that wasn't the Lord's direction, that God gives that specific gift, but He determines. We don't determine when those gifts are given you guys. I wish we did. Don't you? I mean, I wish it was in my, well. You don't wish it was in my control, but I wish that I could do that. But it says that God imparts these gifts according to His will, according to His wisdom.

And why the Lord would impart a work of healing on one individual and not another, that's God's business, not mine. We are either the recipients or the vessels through which those things may come. God doesn't necessarily share that inside information with you and I.

Speaking of healing, the next gift that he refers to here. He says, “...to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,” And you'll notice that it is not gift of healing, it's gifts, it's plural. And this refers to power from the Holy Spirit to touch an individual, pray for an individual, and that they might be healed. By the way, I don't believe, I don't care what the televangelists say, I don't believe this is a perpetual gift.

I don't think people are given this gift of like healing cancer, or healing this, or that, and they just go around and whoever they touch is healed. I don't believe that. I don't see it. I think that there are times when God just imparts to an individual a gift to be able to pray for someone that they might be healed.

And then after that, it's not like you're the healing vending machine that people can just walk up and, here's my hand, just touch it. I mean, there are times God does extraordinary things. I'm with you, like in Ephesus. Good grief, they used to take Paul's sweatband, which guys at that time would wear around their neck, just to catch perspiration. And they would, they ripped off his sweatband, and they would take it and lay it on sick people and they would be healed. Luke tells us that was extraordinary. These guys who send you things in the mail. Again, what God was doing in places like Ephesus, it was extraordinary, but gifts of healing.

Verse 10 goes on to speak of another gift of the Spirit, which is “*the working of miracles.*” The Greek literally means here, acts of power, or as one commentator put it, the demonstration of mighty powers. The word, miracles

here is an interesting word, which where we would ultimately get our word, dynamite. It literally means power; the working of mighty power.

And this would include things like the casting out of demons, which we saw Jesus do many, many, times in the gospels. This would include raising of the dead. Even exercising power over the elements.

You'll remember, you might say, you read those things in the Gospels and you say, yeah, but that was Jesus. He's God, you're not. I get that. But don't forget that Jesus said, because I go to the Father and the Spirit is going to come. (John 16:7) He talked about the miracles that they had seen Him do, and He said, greater miracles will you do because I go to the Father. (John 14:12) Now that's a pretty amazing statement to grapple with. This is a gift to the church to work these kinds of miracles.

He goes on, in the same verse, he talks about, *“to another prophecy.”* We like to refer to this as speaking forth a message from God. It could include a personal message to a single individual. It could be a message intended for a larger audience. And on occasion, a word of prophecy can include the foretelling of a future event. Let me give you an example. Acts chapter 11.

Acts 11:27-28 (ESV)

Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius).”

Now in these days (we're told, Luke tells us) prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. (and he says) And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (and then Luke tells us that in fact) (this took place in the days of Claudius) (Caesar).

We see the working of the gift of prophecy in the New Testament and there's no reason to believe that this can't function today except, of course, for all the incredible bad press that it's gotten and some of it very deserved.

The body of Christ has largely and horrifically abused these gifts of the Spirit to the point where there are a lot of people who just want nothing to do with it. It's like, don't talk to me about the gifts of the Spirit. I don't want to hear about it. But prophecy doesn't have to be weird.

It's just simply a message that God has deposited in the heart of one individual, given either to another or to a group. And by the way, prophecy does not suggest that revelation is ongoing. Hear me, Christians, very important point. Many people reject the idea of the present day activity of prophecy because they say, I don't believe that the Bible is still being interpreted or revealed. I don't believe there's new information. I'm totally on the same base with you on that one. The canon is closed, you guys.

We judge prophecy according to the Word of God. It better line up with the Word or we're going to reject that out of hand. Just because somebody stands up and says, I have a word from the Lord, doesn't mean that it's a true word for the, from the Lord. Because there's a lot of people running around halfcocked, saying a lot of things that are simply the result of their flesh.

It is up to you and I to test everything as the Word tells us, test it. Well, what are you going to test it by? We're going to test it by the Scriptures. I have personally witnessed prophecy given in the modern church that was just flat out amazing. Not often, not often. But a number of years ago, back when I was living up in Seattle, I was attending a meeting. It wasn't in Seattle, it was actually in Portland. But we were attending a meeting that was probably three, four, five hundred people.

And there was a man that was up sharing the Word, and he this was in the late 80s, by the way. And if you remember the political landscape of what was happening during that time, you'll remember that nations were spinning off at that time from what was then the Soviet Union. But a lot of this hadn't really taken place yet at this particular time, and this guy was ministering the Word and then he just stopped. And he began to give this message of prophecy and it wasn't weird, or scary, or creepy, or anything, but he did speak in the first person from the Lord.

And I don't know if you're familiar, but the area of the Soviet Union is known in scripture by the animal of the bear. Okay. And this man just spoke these words. And I remember they were so specific and so exacting that I wrote them down. I had a pencil and paper and I just jotted him down.

And here's what he said. He said, the Lord would say, I am about to snatch 3 ribs out of the mouth of the bear, and he then named these 3 Baltic countries by name, specifically named them. Da, da, da, da, da. He mentioned them and that was the gist of the word. And I remember I thought, that's specific. I'm going to test this guy because that's what we're supposed to do. I wrote it down and when I got home, I remember putting it in my file cabinet. I thought, okay.

Months later, and I don't remember how many months later, I picked up the Seattle post intelligence or the newspaper there in Seattle and I opened it up and there was a political cartoon and it was a picture of the leader of Russia at that time. Now it's hard to explain. You know how political cartoons are descriptive? He was cutting, slicing like a loaf of french bread, or what appeared to be, and on each slice of bread was the name of one of these nations, at the time, the Soviet Union, that was departing. And it was about the fact that these, there were 3 new nations that were now seceding from the Soviet Union.

And I looked at the names of those and I ran into the other room, opened up my file cabinet, pulled out that piece of paper. It was the exact same 3 Baltic nations that this man had predicted months earlier, through the Lord, that we're going to secede from the union. But at the time they were given, there was no sign that was going to happen. This was just an example of something God decided to communicate to the body of Christ. It's the gift of prophecy.

As we go on here, he says, *"to another the ability to distinguish between spirits,"* Or if you have a New King James Version (NKJV) on your lap, it says *"the discerning of spirits,"* and that's why a lot of people refer to this as, the gift of discernment.

What is the gift of discernment? Well, it's not the ability to just discern life. There is a human, natural ability that some people have to correctly discern situations. And they just have the smarts about them to do that. This is a spiritual gift to discern. See what is going on in the spirit or in the spirit realm that you and I would otherwise not be able to see.

You have to understand something about the spirit realm which is as real as the physical realm. You and I can't see it. We can't hear it, right? We can't touch it. We can't taste it. We can't smell it. It will not appeal to our 5 senses. How are we going to know sometimes what's really going on without this spiritual gift?

Because, see, here's the point. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians that Satan loves to masquerade, right? As an angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11:14) That's one of his favorite things to do; is to appear as an angel of God. And do you think people can't get sucked into that stuff? It happens all the time, so we need a spiritual method by which we can discern or understand what is behind something, a phenomenon, a word, or an event, or a situation.

And God gives this spiritual GPS to some individuals. To be able to rifle down through what's happening and to be able to say, that's not God. That's not the

Lord who's behind that thing, or that's not the Lord who did this. That's something other, and that's something we need to steer clear of.

Some people have that gift and we need that gift in the body of Christ if we're going to be smart, because again, we as human beings, we're all pretty landlocked in this world of the natural. I don't know about you, but I am. I don't sit and hear spiritual things. I can't see the spirit realm around me.

I know that angels are real. I've never seen one, never heard one. In fact, that goes the same for demons. I've never seen or heard a demon. Can't smell them, touch them, taste them. I don't have that ability, but through the spiritual gift of discernment, someone will have the ability to be able to know what is going on here. What exactly is the flavor of what's happening in our midst, and that sort of thing. And that's why that gift is a very, a vital one.

Next, Paul goes on to speak of, *“to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.”* And we're going to take these together because at least in the gathering of the saints, they're a package deal. And without a doubt, they are the most controversial.

Let me begin here by helping you to understand that the word, tongues is nothing more than the Greek word for languages. When Paul talks about the gift of tongues, he says it's the gift of languages. And specifically, the gift of tongues is the ability to know and to speak in a language. Well, not even know, but to speak in a language that one has never learned. Okay?

It is not, again, a natural gift. It is a supernatural gift. My sister speaks fluently in 5 languages, and she's just linguistically gifted in a natural sense. She learns and picks up languages easily. That's not the gift we're talking about here.

We're talking about a supernatural ability to speak in a language that one has never learned before. All right. And that's a very simple definition of this gift. And by the way, let me make this point very clearly.

The gift of doing this is always spoken to God. This gift is not for people to speak to people. It is always directed Godward.

And as we're going to see when we get into the 14th chapter, it is always praise. There's a huge amount of misunderstanding in the body of Christ about the gift of tongues, huge misunderstanding. We're going to straighten that out as we go through the rest of these chapters. And I encourage you to stick with us on this.

But this gift is always spoken to God and so you say, well if it's spoken to God, why in the world would God go to the trouble of then creating another gift for the church of interpretation? Listen the gift of interpretation is so that the body of Christ, when it is used in the collective gathering of the body of Christ, that the other people can benefit from hearing what was being said.

Because if someone speaks in a language for which I am oblivious, right? I'm not going to get anything out of it. I mean, I've had people pray for me in languages they knew that I didn't. And they're not speaking in tongues, they're speaking in their native language. And then, I've had people pray for me that, hey, can I pray for you, Paul? Sure.

And they start praying for me. It's like in Spanish or something, which is great. And I appreciate the fact that they're praying, but I'm not getting anything out of it, in my intellect, because I can't understand Spanish. You got me? You know, the interpretation.

If somebody were to interpret that now, somebody praying for me in Spanish, now I'd be edified by their prayer, so forth. Whereas I wouldn't otherwise. The gift of interpretation is so that we might benefit from simply what's being said to God.

Now, I think that these last 2 gifts are without a doubt, the toughest for people, because a lot of Christians have spoken to me over the years, and they've just said, Why? Why these dopey gifts? I mean, this gift of speaking in languages you've never learned. I mean, what's up with that? And then interpretation of this thing. It's like, it seems ridiculous. It just seems like, why in the world would God do that? And most Christians really don't see what possible good they could serve.

And, as I said before, there's all the bad press that, about these gifts of the Spirit over the years because of the misuse of them. I'm willing to bet that a good number of you, sometime in your Christian life, if you've been around for a while, has probably walked into a church and just been really freaked out because they were just ping-pong off the walls.

And there were things going on, and you probably, you got there, and you had your eyes wide open the whole time, and you're just looking for the door. How do I get out of this zoo here? And there's a lot, believe me, there's a lot of that going on. And so people are naturally just put off by these things.

They hear about the gifts of the Spirit and they're like you know what? I don't even want to hear about the gifts of the Spirit. They just creep me out. I've just I've seen and heard of so much weirdness related to the gifts of the Spirit.

In fact, I hesitate to share this with you, but I'm going to anyway I read an article just this past week about a psychiatrist who is not a believer by the way, who had been called in to examine people for what appeared to be some pretty serious, emotional, psychological issues.

But when he examined these people, and by the way, this happened over a period of like 20 years. He began to see in those individuals phenomena, things that he couldn't explain from a psychological, psychiatric standpoint. He saw them able to do things people shouldn't be able to do. And frankly, this man, even though he's not a believer in Jesus Christ, has come to believe that demonic possession is very real.

One of the things he saw, and this is going to creep you out a little bit. One of the things he saw in these individuals who were possessed demonically, is the ability to speak in languages for which they'd never learned. Did you just feel the creeps going through you there for a second? You know what? That's enough right there for a lot of people just to say, okay, pack it up. We're going. I don't ever want to hear about this again. Because you've proven right there that this can be demonic, right?

Here's what we forget. We forget Satan is the counterfeiter. This is what he does. He counterfeits genuine works of God. Let me show you this passage from 2 Thessalonians 2. Look what Paul wrote. He said,

2 Thessalonians 2:9 (NIV)

The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders...

The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of (what?) counterfeit miracles, (and) signs and wonders...

Are they going to be signs and wonders? Yeah. But they're going to be counterfeit. In other words, they're counterfeiting the original which is from God. If you've ever had a counterfeit Dollar bill in your hand, it looks a lot like the real McCoy, but it's not. It's not worth anything because it's counterfeit, but it looks really close and Satan is able to do that. And in fact, He loves to do it, and this sort of thing happens. Let me show you Acts chapter 16. You

remember when Paul and Silas went to Philippi? Luke writes, because he was obviously there with them, he says,

Acts 16:16-17 (ESV)

As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation."

As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain (in other words, a lot of money) by fortune-telling. (and) She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation."

Have you ever read that passage in Acts? What's going on here? We're talking about a young girl who has a demon. She's literally invested with a demonic presence. And Luke records for us that she followed behind Paul and his companions, crying out constantly, these men are servants of the Most High God, and they're here to proclaim the way to be saved.

Was she wrong? No, she wasn't wrong. She was telling the truth, right? But she was doing it through a counterfeit means. You know what this is? This is a counterfeit word of knowledge. How did that little girl know what Paul was there to do?

She didn't, but that demonic spirit inside of her manifested in such a way that she manifested this counterfeit word of knowledge. And then look what it goes on to say. It says earlier in the passage that this woman, this girl, through the spirit of divination, actually earned a lot of money for her owners by doing what? Fortune telling.

Fortune telling is a counterfeit of prophecy. God gives prophecy. God, it's a genuine gift of God. And yet, Satan comes along to counterfeit that gift because he wants to usurp God and everything about him. And so there's all this deception going on. By the way, that's where a great gift of discernment comes in.

Paul knew enough to know that this was demonic. And the passage goes on. He finally got tired of it. He turned around and he cast the demon out of the girl. Set her free. That didn't go over very big, they wound it up in jail.

Here's the point. Satan loves to counterfeit the genuine work of God. Here's the question that we need to ask ourselves. Are we going to allow, listen to me people, this is important.

Are we going to allow our fear of the counterfeit work of Satan to scare us away from what God wants to genuinely do in His church through the gifts of the Spirit? That's the question we have to answer. And you know what? Over the years, there are some people who will answer that question by saying, yeah, we're going to let that happen because I don't think we need it. And I can live the rest of my life without it. Yeah, this is too creepy, too weird, what the enemy does. We're not going there.

But you know what? Where does it stop? Where does it stop? Where does it end? You do know that some people worship Satan, don't you? Are we going to ban worship in our services? Should we cancel our worship concert for tonight? Well, some people worship Satan. How do we know that's not what's really going on here? Are you kidding me?

No, of course we're not going to get rid of worship in the body of Christ, just because some poor deluded souls are actually worshiping Satan as if he were a god. Of course we're not going to do that.

We are not going to be frightened away. But neither are we going to be weird. Neither are we going to be out of order. We're going to follow the scriptures. We're going to walk in accordance with God's Word. I have so much more to say. I actually planned a lot more to say, but I have to stop there because we're out of time.

Can I just really encourage you, I know that I haven't begun to answer a lot of your questions, but these chapters in 1 Corinthians: 12, 13, and 14, are so packed with information. I'm so glad the Corinthian church was weird, because Paul wrote this corrective letter, and we get more insight into these things than anywhere else in the Scripture.

Their loss is our gain, I guess. But the point is, As we go through these chapters, we're going to clarify these things. I trust we're going to answer a lot of

questions. And I just want to both encourage you and assure you. Calvary Chapel is not going to become a place of weirdness.

And it's not going to become a place that you're uncomfortable being in. And we are going to continue to focus on the teaching of God's Word. That is going to be our focus on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Now, that doesn't mean that you and I can't open our hearts to God's Holy Spirit and how He wants to equip His people to serve a spiritual kingdom that is just as real as the physical all around you. And these are gifts from God.

And you and I need to be aware of what they are, what the Bible says about them. And I think that we would do good to be open and say, you know what, Lord, I trust you. There've been a lot of weird things that I've seen, I've walked into some churches and I felt like running, but Lord, that wasn't You.

That wasn't You because the Bible says our God is not a God of disorder, but a God of peace. And if you walked into a chaotic presence where things were just creeping you out, God doesn't creep people out.

God is an incredible gentleman, and He loves people. And He is so patient, so loving, so gracious.

When people get a hold of things, we're like a bull in a china shop. But God is not that way. He's so tender hearted, and He is not going to creep you out.

I want you just to I want you to focus on the word and not maybe some of the negative things that you've experienced in the past, amen?