

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-11) 06/29/14
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ATCHISON, KS PASTOR LEE HENDON

ROBERT MORRIS WROTE IN HIS BOOK, THE GOD I NEVER KNEW, "I REMEMBER THINKING, *OKAY, HOLY SPIRIT, I WANT TO RECEIVE YOU. BUT I DON'T WANT TO CHANGE MY HAIR, I DON'T WANT TO BE WEIRD, AND I DEFINITELY DON'T WANT TO SPEAK IN TONGUES.* I DIDN'T USE THESE EXACT WORDS, BUT THE ATTITUDE OF MY HEART SAID, *HOLY SPIRIT, I WANT YOU TO COME IN, BUT ONLY ON MY TERMS AND CONDITIONS. I'M RECEIVING YOU, EVEN THOUGH I HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT IT. I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I HAVE SOME CONCERNS AND STIPULATIONS, BUT IF YOU CAN WORK AROUND MY CONDITIONS AND PROMISE TO BEHAVE YOURSELF, THEN YOU'RE WELCOME IN MY LIFE. KIND OF...I GUESS.* NOT SURPRISINGLY, I DIDN'T SEE MUCH INCREASE IN POWER OR MIRACULOUS ACTIVITY IN MY LIFE FOLLOWING THAT WEAK AND INSULTING INVITATION."

IN MY BOYHOOD CHURCH I WAS TAUGHT ***THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*** WERE ONLY FOR THE EARLY NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH & THEREBY NOT TO BE DESIRED BY CHRISTIANS TODAY - WE WERE TO BE SUSPICIOUS OF THOSE WHO MANIFESTED SUCH GIFTS TO THINK THEY WERE PHONY OR AT BEST EMOTIONAL EXTRAVAGANCES. IT HAS OCCURRED TO ME THAT SOME OF YOU MAY BE WONDERING WHY I AM GOING ON SO MUCH ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT - YOU KNOW PREACH ABOUT MORE PRACTICAL THINGS IN LIFE. WITH ENTHUSIASM I ASSERT TO YOU THAT WE HAVE NO LIFE WITHOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVING IN US. RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GROUND ZERO FOR ACTIVE CHRISTIAN LIVING - JESUS SAID SO - I BELIEVE IT & CONFIRM IT. ***COME BY HERE, HOLY SPIRIT, COME BY HERE.***

HOW WOULD WE KNOW & WHAT WOULD IT TAKE FOR US TO BE SET ON **FIRE** BY THE HOLY SPIRIT? HOW WOULD WE EVEN KNOW THE DIFFERENCE? LAST WEEK WE EXPLORED THAT WE WOULD MANIFEST A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS. TODAY WE EXPLORE THAT WE WOULD MANIFEST THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. NEXT WEEK, WE WILL EXPLORE BEARING THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. LET'S GET TO WORK:

WE WOULD MANIFEST GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. THE SITUATION AT FCC, CORINTH WOULD PERHAPS BE PERPLEXING & CONFUSING TO US - CHURCH MEMBERS WERE MANIFESTING MUL-TIPLE & POWERFUL GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - SO AS TO BE IN COMPETITION WITH ONE ANOTHER AS TO WHOSE HOLY SPIRIT GIFT WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE OTHER. THEY WERE BURSTING AT THE SEAMS WITH HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS & POWER. THIS PASSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED TO BEAT UP EACH OTHER WITH A CLUB AS TO WHY WE MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS. IT DOES BEG FOR ATTENTION & EXPLORATION - ***COME BY HERE, HOLY SPIRIT, COME BY HERE!***

HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS ARE "**GRACE GIFTS.**" THEY ARE GIFTS THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES TO US BECAUSE WE FOUND UNDESERVED FAVOR IN HIS EYES. IN NO WAY CAN WE EARN OR DESERVE "**GRACE GIFTS.**" SO BY DEFINITION THEY COME AS **SURPRISES** TO US. WE MUST NOT EXPECT THEM OR DEMAND THEM. WE CANNOT TEACH THEM OR BE TAUGHT THEM - THEY ARE GIVEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT BECAUSE GOD LOVES US & IS GOOD TO US. HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS ARE

A TREMENDOUS **BLESSING** & NEVER, EVER A **CURSE** - THEY ALWAYS DISPLAY THE GRACIOUS POWER OF GOD ON OUR BEHALF - TO REVEAL JESUS AS LORD. IT IS ALL ABOUT JESUS, NOT ABOUT US.

AS **GRACE GIFTS** - WE MUST SIMPLY RECEIVE - GOD DETERMINES THE GIFT GIVEN - NOT US. GOD DETERMINES THE MEASURE GIVEN - NOT US. WE MUST BE HUMBLE IN OUR RECEIVING WITH OPEN HANDS & HEARTS. BEING HUMBLE & YIELDING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES NOT COME EASY TO OUR AMERICAN SELF-MADE, PRIDEFUL, STUBBORN WAYS. BE VERY SUSPICIOUS OF ANYONE OR CHURCH WHO THINKS THEY CAN COMMAND THE GRACE GIFTS OR TEACH THEM TO YOU. ***THAT IS A LIE!*** WE DO NOT GET TO CHOOSE THE GIFT WE WANT & AT WHICH TIME WE WANT IT. THEY ARE FREELY GIVEN & WE MUST FREELY RECEIVE AT THE HOLY SPIRIT'S DIRECTING - **AS HE WILLS.**

WE ALSO NOTICE HERE THAT THERE ARE A **VARIETY** OF GIFTS GIVEN. ONE SIZE FITS ALL DOES NOT APPLY HERE. THE **VARIETY** OF GRACE GIFTS WERE BREAKING OUT ALL OVER FCC CORINTH - PAUL'S PLEA WAS FOR UNITY IN THE VARIETY. MY PLEA IS FOR THE **OUTPOURING** OF SUCH VARIETY - WE NEED, WE GOTTA HAVE THE POWER OF GRACE GIFTS IN OUR MIDST TODAY TO BREAK US OUT OF BUSINESS AS USUAL PARALYSIS! IN 12:7 PAUL STATED, "TO **EACH** IS GIVEN THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT." PAUL'S POINT IS THAT TO **EACH & EVERY BELIEVER** A HOLY SPIRIT GIFT IS GIVEN. NOT TO SOME, NOT TO MOST, BUT TO **EACH ONE OF US** - EACH ONE OF US ARE THE RECIPIENTS OF HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS. HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS ARE NOT RESERVED FOR SOME KIND OF UNTRASUPER-SPIRITUAL CHRISTIANS BUT TO **NORMALS** LIKE YOU & ME.

THERE APPEARS TO ME TO BE TWO SIDES TO THE HOLY SPIRIT'S GIFTS - THE GIVING & THE RECEIVING - TO EACH & EVERY-ONE OF US. I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS BEGINNING TO MAKE YOU A BIT NERVOUS AT ALL BUT BY GOLLY IT IS MAKING ME NERVOUS & UNEASY. IT COMES ACROSS TO ME - TO US'INS - AS PERHAPS AN ACCUSATION - WHERE WERE WE / IN THE HOLY SPIRIT LINE / WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS WERE GIVEN? WHY ISN'T HOLY SPIRIT GIFT-POWER BREAKING OUT ALL OVER THE PLACE 'ROUND HERE? EITHER MY BOYHOOD CHURCH WAS CORRECT & THE HOLY SPIRIT STOPPED GIVING - PLEASE, HOLY SPIRIT, SAY IT IS NOT SO - OR WE AS THE RECIPIENTS HAVE CONTENTLY STOPPED RECEIVING - SAID NO THANKS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT - JUST NOT INTERESTED HERE! FRANKLY, I DO NOT KNOW WHICH WAY TO TURN.

LET'S PAUSE FOR A WORD OF PRAYER HERE - "HOLY SPIRIT, HELP PASTOR LEE, HELP US OUT HERE - WHAT'S THE DEAL? AMEN" BROTHERS & SISTERS, WE ARE ON HOLY GROUND HERE & I CAN FEEL THE EARTH SHAKING A LITTLE, CAN YOU? I WONDER IF I MIGHT BE PAINTING US INTO A CORNER HERE....SO....I WALKED AWAY FROM THIS SER-MON FOR A DAY + SOME. TO RETURN AT THIS SAME POINT. WHAT HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS DID PAUL MENTION: THE UTTERANCE OF WISDOM; THE UTTERANCE OF KNOWLEDGE; SUPER NATURAL FAITH; WORKING OF MIRACLES & HEALINGS; PROPHETIC FORTH-TELLING; TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN SPIRITS; SPEAKING IN TONGUES; INTERPRETING TONGUES; ETC. PROBABLY NOT A COMPLETE LIST OF HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS - RATHER A REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS. CHURCH LIFE WAS REALLY HOPING AROUND FCC CORINTH - HOLY SPIRIT GIFT POWER ELEC-

TRIFIED THE CHURCH GATHERINGS. PAUL WAS SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSING THE RESULTING COMPETITION & DIVISION CAUSED BY SO MANY HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS. AS FOR ME, I AM LONGING FOR THAT SENSE & PRESENCE OF HOLY SPIRIT GIFT POWER AROUND HERE. WE MUST NOT BE CONTENT TO RUN ON EMPTY!

IT WOULD BE ERRONEOUS FOR US TO EXPECT THE SAME HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS TO BE GIVEN TODAY. PAUL WROTE, "THE HOLY SPIRIT APPORTIONS TO EACH ONE INDIVIDUALLY **AS HE WILLS.**" WE MUST BE PREPARED & YIELDING TO WHATEVER GIFTS THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES - DUPLICATION IS NOT TO BE DESIRED OR REQUIRED. RECEIVING THE GIFTS GIVEN IS REQUIRED AS THE HOLY SPIRITS APPORTIONS. I REALLY THINK MODERN DAY AMERICAN CHURCH GOERS - LIKE US'NS - HAVE SOLD OUR HEARTS & SOUL TO SCIENCE, REASON & INTELLECT AS THE GODS OF TODAY. ME THINKS, PAUL WOULD LAMENT OUR SCARCITY OF HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS. HAVE OUR EXPECTATIONS & ASKING BEEN WEAK IN THE KNEES & HALF-HEARTED LIKE ROBERT MORRIS, "I DIDN'T SEE MUCH INCREASE IN POWER OR MIRACULOUS ACTIVITY IN MY LIFE FOLLOWING THAT WEAK AND INSULTING INVITATION." I LEAVE THE OUTCOME TO YOU - TO ME - TO THE HOLY SPIRIT. ***COME BY HERE, HOLY SPIRIT, COME BY HERE!***