

Any person who belongs to Christ, who has saving faith in him, has the Spirit of God (Romans 8:9). Indeed, it is the Spirit who opened his or her heart to accept the atoning work of Christ and who now dwells in every believer.

Besides confession, a believer's life bears witness to this inner transformation. The fruit of the Spirit -- love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22) -- gives the clearest evidence that the Spirit dwells in someone. Love towards God, brothers and sisters in Christ, and all others especially marks true believers (1 Corinthians 13; 1 John).

In addition, God has chosen to bestow certain gifts upon believers according to his good pleasure and perfect will. These gifts include wisdom, knowledge, faith, teaching, and other natural gifts which the Holy Spirit spiritually empowers in believers. These gifts also include charismatic expressions such as healing, prophecy, and speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28; Romans 12:3-8). Scripture indicates that these gifts will cease when Christ comes again (1 Corinthians 13:8-10), but in the meantime these manifestations of the Spirit are present and active in the church although the charismatic gifts have occurred less frequently throughout church history.

The charismatic gifts have been misunderstood and abused, so it is important to remember these points:

- Gifts without love are worthless (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).
- Gifts are given for the common good and building up the church (1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:12).
- Gifts are given to empower believers to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 14).
- Not every gift is given to every believer, even speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 12:11, 29-30; Romans 12:3-8).
- In the setting of a worship service, all expressions of the Spirit ought to be orderly and not disruptive (1 Corinthians 14:13-32).
- It is not imperative to speak in tongues in order to be saved.
- Prophecy does not consist only in predicting the future but primarily in proclaiming the word of God. In the OT, prophecy overwhelmingly consists of calling the people of God to repentance and worship of the true God. In the NT, prophecy is also given for this end (e.g., 1 Corinthians 14:24-25).
- We are to test the spirits of those with supposed manifestations of the Spirit (1 John 4:1-6).
- There are no new revelations; that is, true prophecy bears witness to the revelation of God in Christ and his Word and adds nothing new to that revelation. Anything that contradicts the Word of God is not from him.
- Divine healing occurs according to the will of God, not our level of faith or spirituality.

It is equally important not to quench the moving of the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) nor ignore

the gifts he has given us (1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6-7). We ought to pray for the Spirit to constantly be filling us and leading us, and we can expect his gifts to allow us to witness and build up the church.