# How the HOLY SPIRIT Works

*(Part 1)*
**I Corinthians 12:1-31**
9-24-2023

Introduction: (Verse 1)

*** Do not be ignorant about how the Holy Spirit works!**

*How do I discern whether a message, gift, or movement is a work of the Holy Spirit or not?*
Take a look at the product of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit Preaches...

**I. A SINGULAR Message (v.2-3)**

*When the Holy Spirit speaks...*

A. His message is CONSISTENT (Never contradictory to His nature, His ways or His Word)

B. His message is CHRIST-CENTERED (Never promoting anyone except Jesus Christ)

The Holy Spirit Provides...

**II. A VARIETY of Gifts (v.4-11)**

A. Spiritual Gifts come from a common source (v.4-6)

B. Spiritual Gifts come for a common good (v.7)

C. Spiritual Gifts come through a common Spirit (v.8-11)

1. The Holy Spirit gives the Gifts (v.8-10)

2. The Holy Spirit operates the Gifts (v.11a)

3. The Holy Spirit determines the Gifts (v.11b)

The Holy Spirit Produces...

**III. A UNIFIED Church Body (v.12-31)**

(To be continued)

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Praise God for the blessed Holy Spirit!

## The Names and Titles of the Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit - Lk. 11:13; Ro. 1:4
2. The Holy Ghost - Matthew 28:19
   ["Ghost" and "Spirit" are the same Greek word]
3. The Spirit of God - II Chron. 15:1; Gen. 1:2; I Cor. 3:16
4. My Spirit - Gen. 6:3; Joel 2:28, 29; Mt. 12:18
5. The Spirit of the Lord - Isaiah 11:2; II Chron. 20:14
6. The Spirit of Holiness - Psalm 51:11; Rom. 1:4
7. The Spirit of Wisdom - Isaiah 11:2
8. The Spirit of Counsel - Isaiah 11:2
9. The Spirit of Understanding - Isaiah 11:2
10. The Spirit of Supplication - Zech. 12:10
11. The Spirit of Truth - John 14:17
12. The Spirit of Comfort - John 14:26
13. The Spirit of Life - Romans 8:2
14. The Spirit of Adoption - Romans 8:15
15. The Spirit of Faith - II Cor. 4:13
16. The Spirit of Love - II Tim. 1:7
17. The Spirit of Might - II Tim. 1:7
18. The Spirit of love, might, and a sound mind - II Tim. 1:7
19. The Spirit of Revelation - Ephes. 1:17
20. The Spirit of Power - Eph. 3:20; Rom. 15:13
21. The Spirit of Eternity or the Eternal Spirit - Heb. 9:14
22. The Spirit of Grace - Heb. 10:29
23. The Spirit of Glory - I Pet. 1:17; I Pet. 4:14

# The Works of the Holy Spirit

a. He is responsible for creation (Job 33:4)
b. He is responsible for the inspiration of Scripture (He "bore men along" in the production of God's Word - I Pet. 1:21).
c. He performed undeniable sign miracles
   1) Virgin birth (Lk. 1:35)
   2) Caught away Philip (Acts 8:39)
   3) Signs and miracles through Apostles (Rom. 15:19)
   4) He reveals prophecy (Acts 2:17-18)
d. He convicts men of sin, righteousness, and judgment (Jn. 16:8)
e. He regenerates, imparting a Godly nature to a fallen man when he places his faith in God's Word (Jn. 3:5-6; Titus 3:5)
f. He unites believers to the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13)
g. He comforts as Jesus could comfort (Jn. 14:16)
h. He intercedes (prays) for God's people (Rom. 8:26, 27)
i. He sanctifies the yielded child of God (II Thes. 2:13)
j. He imparts life (Jn. 6:63; Rom. 8:11); He is the direct cause of resurrection (cp. I Pet. 3:18)
k. He seals believers (Eph. 4:30)

**V. 1**

***"Spiritual gifts" -*** lit. "the spirituals" or "spiritual matters" (a major part of which included the "gifts," hence the KJV italicized insertion).

Paul in this chapter intends to straighten out the confused Corinthians about the true working of the Holy Spirit.

The tone of I Corinthians 12 - 14 is corrective in nature (he does not condone all that went on at the church in Corinth, but did correct them in love).

Chapters 12, 13, and 14 are one big unit of thought dealing with one theme: Namely, the gifts given to God's people by the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 12 - The diversity and unity produced by the gifts of the Spirit
Chapter 13 - The supremacy of love over the spiritual gifts
Chapter 14 - The supremacy of the gift of prophecy over tongues

We are commanded to:

--*"test the spirits"* (I Jn. 4:1 - *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world")*

--*"prove* (test) *all things"* (II Th. 5:21)

We (as believers) can be ignorant about many things in life (EX: geometry, the distance from earth to mars), but we cannot be ignorant about spiritual matters (I.e. how the Holy Spirit operates). Reason: God warned of spiritual deception in the Last Days (Mt. 24:24; I Tim. 4:1).

Spiritual ignorance is: --Dangerous (II Cor. 11:14; II Cor. 2:11)
--Inexcusable (we have God's Spirit within and God's Word on our bookshelf)

Recent trends in churches:

1) Visions, dreams, new revelations
2) "Holy Laughter" (Prov. 17:22)
3) "Holy barking" (*"Howl ye"* - Is. 13:6; Jer. 25:34) and "holy crying"
4) "Holy shaking" and being "slain in the Spirit"

Are these actions manifestations of the Holy Spirit or the orchestrations of Satan?

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Take a look at the <u>product</u> of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit Preaches...

**I. A <u>SINGULAR</u> <u>Message</u> (v.2-3)**

**V. 2**

***"Gentiles" -*** polytheistic pagans, idolatrous heathen

***"Carried away" -*** Before salvation the Corinthians were (past tense) influenced by and led astray by voiceless idols which supposedly delivered messages which captivated the minds and controlled the lives of the devotees.

"The verb is often used of leading away a prisoner or condemned person" (EX: Mk. 14:44, 15:16) (Morris, p. 167).

They would lead the blind, ignorant idolaters in one direction at one point and then switch gears and lead them somewhere else the next.

It didn't matter if the messages were contradictory. All that mattered was that the followers yield their mind, body and will to the whims and wishes of the mute idols. Hence, all their lives they were *"blown about by every wind of doctrine by the sleight of man"* (Eph. 4:14).

**V. 3**

Paul is saying: The Holy Spirit will never say, "Jesus is cursed"; and then turn around and say "Jesus is Lord." The Holy Spirit will always speak a consistent message.

***When the Holy Spirit speaks...***

**A. His message is <u>CONSISTENT</u> (Never contradictory to His nature, His ways or His Word)**

**V. 3**

The Holy Spirit today speaks through <u>one</u> means: The Scriptures

(*"The Sword of the Spirit"* - He fights with it [Eph. 6:17] and operates on us with it [Heb. 4:12]).

The Spirit <u>authored</u> the Bible (Jn. 14:26; II Pet. 1:21)

The Spirit <u>illuminates</u> our minds to the Bible (Heb. 10:32; I Cor. 2:10)

The Spirit <u>teaches</u> the Bible (Jn. 16:13; I Jn. 2:20)

His Will <u>NEVER</u> contradicts His Word.

The Spirit will never lead anyone to violate the Bible.

One reason I know for fact that the ecumenical Catholic Charismatic renewal and the "Name It/Claim it" prosperity movement and the "Faith movement" are not from God's Spirit is because in doctrine and practice these movements violate Scripture.

The more you know the "*<u>truth</u>"* the more *"free"* you will be (Jn. 8:32).

**B. His message is <u>CHRIST-CENTERED</u> (Never promoting anyone except**

**Jesus Christ)**

**V. 3**

***"Jesus is the Lord" -*** A bold truth asserting Christ deity (as God), sovereignty (as ruler) and authority (as Master of our lives).

Only the Holy Spirit can illuminate people's minds to the Lordship of Christ, and this is what He does best.

The Holy Spirit's central message surrounds the person and work of Jesus Christ (Jn. 16:13-14 - *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.")*

Any church where the teaching and preaching continuously focuses on the Holy Spirit is NOT a Holy-Spirit-filled church.

The first test we must give every message we hear is the Doctrinal Test.

If the preacher/teacher holds a derogatory view of Jesus Christ, it may be a spirit guiding him, but it is not the Holy Spirit.

Sad to say, multitudes of professing Christians today pay more attention to the charisma of the speaker than to his content; excitement rather than exactness; flash rather than faithfulness to the facts of the test.

The Holy Spirit Provides...

**II. A VARIETY of Gifts (v.4-11)**

**V. 4**

***"Gifts" -*** *charismaton -*

*charis* = grace
*ma* = the result of
*ton* = several (plural)

All of God's gifts are the results of His grace. You don't deserve them, can't earn them, and can't buy them (Acts 8:20).

Many times a "gift" is nothing more than a crucified talent - a talent you had before salvation which now you can use for God's glory.

The Holy Spirit energizes and re-channels such abilities for the spiritual profit of many other believers.

In most cases our gifts have nothing to do with natural ability (as the unsaved have such talent), but gifts that were non-existent or at least dormant and unawakened prior to salvation. At salvation came the gift of eternal life and the gift(s) for this present life.

The Corinthians had a problem with lusting after the spectacular gifts, the popular gifts, the public eye-catching gifts, the flashy gifts.

***"Diversities" =*** varieties; different kinds.

The Holy Spirit is not in the business of "cloning" people when it comes to His gift-giving.

We ought to be alike in the areas of morals and vital Bible doctrines. We ought to be clones of Christ-likeness in our attitudes and actions.

However, we ought to be different when it comes to particular skills, talents, and abilities (EX: how children have unique personality differences, preferential tastes, and personal skills).

***"Diversities" -*** Can you imagine what life would be like if we all did the same thing, had the same skills and talents, were all spiritual clones?

Life would be boring and quite burdensome. Why? Because no one could balance out and make up for mankind's shortcomings.

Christianity would be tasteless, if we were all the same "flavor."

It would be dull, if we were all the same "color."

Diversities in food is what makes eating so enjoyable ... Diversities in color is what makes for contrast and complement ... Diversities in gifts is what makes the Body of Christ so exciting and useful.

No one's needs would be met if we did not have unique differences.

We are not Xerox copies, printed sheets; rather, we are individually hand-crafted uniquely by God.

**A. Spiritual Gifts come from a common source (v.4-6)**

**V. 4**

***"The same Spirit" -*** When you go to a supermarket, you find a variety of products, from a variety of manufacturers. In a church, you find a variety of gifts from a single "manufacturer" - The Holy Spirit.

**V. 5**

***"Administrations" -*** *(diakonion* - akin to "deacon") -- ministries; service
There are many different ways to minister:

--teaching, preaching, counseling, witnessing, singing

--helping, caring, calling, hospitality

--nursery, Sunday school, Jr. Church, AWANA

--building (construction), translating, overseeing, playing instruments, preparing food, cleaning, ETC.

**V. 6**

***"Operations" -*** The outcome of God's working; the effects, results, or products produced by the Father's energy or power.

So the source of every gift, and of every service using that gifts, and of every result of that service is credited to God alone.

The source is not Bible College or Seminary [God employs them]; nor is it your own power, insight, or charisma. As Paul said, *"By the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me"* (I Cor. 15:10).

***"Worketh all in all" -*** God energizes every gift and empowers every act of service so that the outcome can only be attributed to Him.

***"Worketh all in all" -*** God is not only the power behind every gift and

service; but He is also the only source of empowerment for all the workers themselves (no worker for God can take the credit or glory; it goes to God alone!)

Therefore, do we have any right to boast or brag? Any reason for pride or arrogance?

When the Holy Spirit does the work, He will see to it that the glory goes Heavenward not to flesh and blood.

Incidentally, Paul indicates the Trinity by referring to the "Spirit" (*"Holy Spirit"* - v. 4), the "Lord" (*"Jesus Christ"* - v. 5), and "God" ("*the Father"* - v. 6).

**B. Spiritual Gifts come for a common good (v.7)**

***"...given to every man" -*** Every believer should have a manifestation of the Spirit; the Spirit has equipped each and every believer with at least one gift. He wants you to use it for Him.

What gift has He given you? Are you using it?

***"To profit withal" -*** God gave each one of us gifts for the purpose of everyone's profit or spiritual benefit.

No spiritual gift was ever meant for self profit alone. God's gifts are not toys to entertain ourselves with, nor are they cards to play solitaire with. Your gifts were meant for others; specifically, other believers!

"A gift exercised in private (or for private benefit) is a perverted gift" (MacArthur, p. 292).

"They are not for individual enjoyment, but for corporate employment" (Wiersbe, p. 608).

**C. Spiritual Gifts come through a common Spirit (v.8-11)**

**1. The Holy Spirit gives the Gifts (v.8-10)**

**V. 8**

Note the key thought in vv. 8-11:

*"Given by the Spirit. . . by the same Spirit* (v. 8) . . . *by the same Spirit* (two times in v. 9) . . . *"the selfsame Spirit* (v. 11)"

***"The word of wisdom" -*** An ability to communicate practical solutions to life's problems

***"The word of knowledge" -*** an ability to communicate Bible truths, theological facts and doctrines.

***"Faith" -*** All believers have faith or else you wouldn't be saved; however, some are endowed with a special dose of faith whereby they are not afraid to attempt great things for God.

**V. 9**

***"Healing" -*** A miraculous ability to cure people with various sicknesses, including restoration to life (Acts 9:40, 20:12) (as Jesus, Peter, and Paul did).

**V. 10**

***"Miracles" -*** Supernatural powers (like those mentioned in Mark 16:17-20).

***"Prophecy" -*** The ability to foretell and/or forthtell a message from God (EX: Agabus [Acts 11:28 - *"And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar"*]).

***"Discerning of spirits" -*** The supernatural ability to distinguish between evil spirits and God's Spirit in people (EX: Peter to Simon, Acts 8:23; Paul to Elymas the Sorcerer, Acts 13:6ff).

***"Tongues"*** (*glosson*) - a supernatural ability to speak in foreign languages unknown to the speaker, but known somewhere in the world (Acts 2:4-11).

This gift was the most coveted by the Corinthians, as evident by the volume of ink Paul gives it in chapters 12 - 14.

***"Interpretation of tongues" -*** A supernatural ability to orally translate a foreign language you never studied before. This gift was a companion gift to speaking in tongues (I Cor. 14:27).

Paul includes "tongues" last in the list here, as also in verse 30, evidently for two reasons:

1) The Corinthians always put it first
2) Tongues was not the priority gift

The Corinthians tested each others' spirituality (like Pentecostals and Charismatics do today) and judged each other with the test question: "Do you speak in tongues?" If not, they implied that you did not have the witness of the Holy Spirit within you (DeHaan, p. 142). However, even at Corinth it was evident that not all spoke in tongues (12:30).

The first list of mentioned gifts (v. 8-9a) are apparently distinct from the second list of gifts (v. 9b-10). The first list are service gifts whereas the second list are sign gifts.

Paul by no means gifts a complete list of the Spirit's gifts (other gifts are mentioned in I Cor. 12:28-30; Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 4:7-11).

It is my conviction that all mentioned gifts are operative today except the "sign gifts" (SEE: Mark 16:17ff). The sign gifts were temporary as they introduced to the world God's new message and apostolic messengers (II Cor. 12:12). We should not seek after signs of any type (Mt. 12:39; 16:4).

--No sign or sign gift in the Bible was permanent.

A sign's purpose is to display God's new and direct intervention in the world during times when written revelation was either being given or fulfilled.

Examples of temporary signs:

--The signs which Moses performed before Pharaoh's court were temporary.

--The signs Christ performed were temporary.

--The signs the Apostles performed were temporary.

--The signs that will be displayed on earth and in the sky will be temporary (Joel 2:28-31; Rev. 6:12-17).

A sign by its very nature is temporary since it introduces something new to grab the attention of man to the direct intervention and revelation of God.

**2. The Holy Spirit operates the Gifts (v.11a)**

***"Worketh" -*** to energize; to empower. The Holy Spirit not only gifts the gifts, He empowers their use (just as God the Father does - v. 6).

Use your gift, but with His power, never in the energy of the flesh (something smells fishy about people who flaunt a gift they don't have

and to make matters worse use "it" in such a carnal way).

**3. The Holy Spirit <u>determines</u> the Gifts (v.11b)**

***"Dividing to every man severally" -*** The Holy Spirit distributes gifts separately to each individual believer.

***"As He will" -*** As He desires or wants to.

He gives not according to the merit or wishes of men, but according to his own will.

Why do people beg God for gifts they don't have? Answer: They are not content with God's will. Crying, begging, "tarrying" for the gift of tongues is futile.

If God wanted you or me to have the gift of tongues (for example), He would have given it unsolicited as He did in the gook of Acts.

It came spontaneously without the recipient seeking it or even knowing about it.

There is nothing more frustrating to a Christian than to attempt to use a gift he doesn't have.

(Many have bailed out of a ministry because they were never gifted for that ministry to begin with.)

The Holy Spirit dispenses gifts as He sees fit; as <u>He</u> wills, not as the believer wills.

It is with a tongue of spiritual sarcasm that Paul speaks of the Corinthians seeking the best gifts in verse 31 -- Because what they should have sought is <u>love</u> (chapter 13).

Leave the gift-giving to the Holy Spirit. Not many things are as pitiful, in my opinion, as a person telling another person what he wants for Christmas or his birthday. You should leave it up to Him!

CONCLUSION:

<u>(name someone)</u>, you have a gift the Holy Spirit gave you to use in His ministry.

Can you imagine what would take place if every member of every local Body started utilizing his/her gifts for the profit of Christ's church??

(The problem is, that far too many of God's people just idly sit in the Body of Christ like an <u>appendix</u>. Do not do anything, except cause trouble once in a while.)

Man's greatest knowledge is to know the will of God; man's greatest privilege is to do the will of God.

No Christian is fulfilled or completely joyful until he/she fulfills the purpose for which he/she was saved. God has a plan for you! If you surrender your life to Him, He will utilize the gift He has given to you.

The Holy Spirit Produces....

**III. A UNIFIED Church Body (v.12-31)**

(To be continued)