



Tapping Into Christian Power Daily

By David Bergsland

Radiqx
PRESS

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This is a work of biblical opinion sharing the experiences of over thirty-five years of serving Jesus of Nazareth, teaching the scriptures, and walking in the spirit. All opinions should be examined and prayerfully considered before they are blindly acted upon.

This is not meant to be nice, polite,
feel-good teaching to tickle your ears.

This is meant to slap you upside the head,
get your attention, and let you know
how much power is available for you
to use in your daily walk with Jesus.

Walking in the Spirit is radical Christianity—
allowing the presence of God to infuse your life.

This book is written by a man who has known
the Lord in this radical manner since 1974.
To me the Christian walk is life & death
You either do it or you fry.

My goal is to help make sure you make it into
the presence of God and that Jesus knows
you when you drop your earth suit and head
for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

What could be worse than having Jesus speak
the words He warned of in Matthew 7?

“I don’t know you.”

Giving the Holy Spirit control of your life

Possession has a really bad ring to it, doesn’t it? However, that is simply due to the fact that we always preface possession with demon. Demon possession is a bad thing—obviously. More than that it is exceedingly dangerous to all of those people around the one who is possessed.

However, the Holy Spirit is God himself and a gentleman at the very least. This is a spirit you should covet. This is a spirit you want to possess you, to fill you to overflowing. We call this being filled with the Holy Spirit. It is not only a good thing, but it is a blessing to all people we associate with or just cross paths with in our daily living.

Walking in the Spirit starts here—with you (and me) having given Him authority to do anything He wants with your (my) life. Walking in the Spirit means following His lead, making His gifts available to those around us by letting Him work through us, and assuming that only He knows what is good for a believer living in the Kingdom of God

Maintaining spiritual security in the midst of a war

The manner of living this way mimics what we have to do to maintain security on the Web. Of course, our enemy is not a hacker, but he can do anything a hacker can do and much more with no guilt or compunction.

The real problem is realizing that we are in a war—that we volunteered to fight in this war, that the weapons of our warfare are spiritual, not physical, and that the enemy is totally ruthless, brutal, nasty, and hateful. Let’s take a little reminder from Ephesians 6:

Ephesians 6:11 & 12 ESV

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

What this means in day to day living is that we must take this walking in the Spirit thing seriously. It is life and death. In the kingdom of God we have a wonderful world with a truly good King. He called us and we serve him—liege warriors in the service of our King. We are to be vigilant, observant, available, and alert. Most important, none of this can be done without the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. So, we need to take these things seriously and get with the program. Surely we can be as vigilant in prayer, worship, and service as we are with our email.

Here are the standard procedures

✚ We do not listen to anyone we don't know

Spiritually, this is incredibly important. Demons lie and pass themselves off as beings of light. Wolves commonly try to masquerade as sheep. They present themselves as a person whom we like and want to befriend. They are often fun, intelligent, exciting, edgy—much like in an unregulated chat room.

Examine the content, not the public persona. Be a careful fruit inspector. Few relationships are begun with the social equivalent of letters from Nigeria promising a share in millions of dollars, but most of his attacks are as stupid—as long as we remain aware.

Standard common sense applies. Your warfare will rarely be swords clashing on shields with blood flowing and soaking into the ground beneath your feet. These brutal assaults are not needed. All the enemy needs is your name on his opt-in list.

Spiritually trustworthy people are very rare. Be extremely careful who you trust: be they pastor, bishop, evangelist, friend, lover, spouse, child, sibling, whomever. I know that I Corinthians 13 seems to say that we are to be trusting and gullible (bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things 1KOR). It is true that the love that flows through us tends to be like this [mEEK]. But, I'll paraphrase from the Message: Love puts up with anything, always trusting God, always looking for the best, never looking back, and never giving up.

Nowhere does it say that we are to be stupid and brain dead. Do not put yourself under the authority of any man or woman unless you are absolutely convinced that this is place the Lord wants you. Even then be alert! Yes, we need to be kind, loving, involved, and trusting. No, we do not make commitments based on what we hear from people. Our lead must be the God: Father, Son, & Holy Spirit communicated through all the ways we will discuss throughout this book.

✚ We only accept information from sources we trust

This goes much further than you might think. Scripture is clear that the world is under the authority of the evil one. This is the spiritual power behind almost all movies, TV shows, music, books, Websites, and so on. In this age of rampant apostasy, the ruler of the world system has much to much influence on the church as well.

Even the Bible must be read with care. KJV has many archaic words that need careful translating to the modern usage. Gender neutral translations are around, but more common are those written by paternal bigots. Always check out Biblical revelations with several versions. I recommend that you use these concurrently: New King James, New American Standard, English Standard, New International, New Living Translation, and New Jerusalem. There are others also.

There is a real tendency for us to base doctrine on a verse that only supports your position in your favorite version. God truly did inspire the Scriptures. They are Gob-breathed. They are essential to our walk as believers. You need to be immersed in scripture and have it become a normal part of your thought processes. But the translators are just humans and your reactions are led by your flesh if you are not careful. Discuss, pray, meditate, and listen carefully.

✚ We never give our password to those who ask

We do not sell our soul to the devil, give allegiance to the enemy, get committed to heathen organizations, and so on. We all work in the world within heathen groups under demonic authority, but we do not have to give them our allegiance, worship, or unqualified support.

Be careful of casting your pearls before swine. Jesus' phraseology is very strong here. He just lays it out, "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces." MATTHEW 7:6 NKJV Our spiritual truths are for fellow believers. Our allegiance is carefully given, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

God does not demand our allegiance. He patiently waits until we turn to Him and ask for a relationship. If we ask, He does respond—wonderfully well. In fact the next verse after the pearls before swine warning couldn't be more clear: "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." If someone is asking you, demanding a decision, that person is not from the Lord.

✚ We have strong junk filters

We need to learn to recognize junk in the same way we filter junk mail & email. If Jesus is not openly proclaimed as Lord of Lords, both man & God—beware! No Jesus, no good!

If they are pushing guilt, you need to read Romans 8:1 and apply the junk filter. God does not manipulate or twist you into to doing something with emotion. Guilt is cleansed with the forgiveness Jesus purchased for you. If you have messed up: repent and give Jesus permission to fix things. If you are called to help with them, the Spirit will make it clear to you, personally.

Doing good works is epidemic up here in the frozen Northland. In fact, this type of work is often substituted for real relationships with people and/or with the Lord. It is seen as a substitute for listening to God—self-justifiable activity. Unless the Lord is telling you to get involved, apply the filter here also.

✚ We only register on trusted Sites

Be careful of which churches & ministries you get involved with. Many of them are apostate. They do have believers within them, but unofficial policy is commonly anti-scriptural and far outside the normal Christian life. Even so-called Biblical churches can have strange beliefs,

We need the Holy Spirit

This security itself is impossible without the Holy Spirit. Our paranoia has no real power to protect. Our fears make us more susceptible. We need to give Him as much authority over us as He will provide. As I mentioned, He is a gentleman and you will need to constantly reaffirm your desire to be under His control. You will need to actively seek a stronger, closer relationship.

However, if you do that—presenting yourself as a living sacrifice—He will protect you. He will care for you in the tiny ways as well as the large overall protection. You can indeed rest in His arms. He can be trusted—always.

The Baptism of the Spirit

Do we receive the Holy Spirit when we are born from above? I believe we do. So why is the baptism of the Holy Spirit a separate event for many? It is probably because of a lack of teaching and leadership especially in the mainline churches or an inability to fully commit or an increasing desire to go further with the Lord. There are hundreds of reasons.

Receiving the empowerment of the Lord

Salvation and regeneration are wonderful, but often we don't get the whole package. Whatever the reason, a believer eventually [sooner or later] comes to realize that he or she really needs some power to live this life of a Christian in a heathen world. We cannot figure it out—in fact this was the original sin, the fruit we ate from the tree of the knowledge of good & evil. We are in over our head spiritually. We really do need help.

Is this baptism necessary for salvation? I doubt it. However, I wouldn't relax into that. Look at the quote below out of John 1. Jesus is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. Luke says the same in Acts 1—adding that we shall receive power. It seems to be part of the normal equipment of a born again believer. So, if you haven't experienced it yet, you should be asking the Lord why not. It is silly [at best] to not have the power available active in your life

How is this baptism different?

John the Baptist separated it out before Jesus began his ministry. He was preaching a baptism of repentance and cleansing. In John 1:29-34, John clearly says what many of us have experienced as reality.

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." ESV

Luke writes more about John's understanding in Luke 3:16. What Jesus brought was clearly different than John's baptism.

John answered and said to them all, “As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. NASB

Water can wash off dirt, but it takes fire to burn off the dross and purify. Jesus explained the concept further in Acts 1:5&8 before He ascended. Not only is this baptism different from the baptism of water for forgiveness, it has a different purpose.

...for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you... ESV

Paul explains a little in Acts 18 & 19

The end of chapter 18 talks about the powerful teachings of Apollos in which it is said, ...being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of Jesus, though he only knew the baptism of John.

In 19:4-6 Paul explains it like this, calling John’s baptism of water for repentance. Then he lays hands on the disciples (using the phrase baptizing in the name of Jesus) and they receive the Holy Spirit—speaking in tongues and prophesying.

It’s a separate event

In Acts 8:14-17 we see Peter and John going to Samaria. They go to minister to people who have received Jesus and have been baptized in the name of Jesus, but the Holy Spirit had not fallen on any of them. Verse 17 says it this way in the RSV:

Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

What is clear is simple: the baptism of the Holy Spirit is one of the things that Jesus does for us and to us. What is not so clear is that you really need to ask for it and that it usually takes the laying on of hands from a committed believer. The necessary asking is discussed by Jesus in Luke 11:9-13.

...ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for...an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

This asking also implies a promise. If you ask God for the Holy Spirit, he will surely give it to you—without fail. If you have not asked Him yet, please do so now. If you ask, you have received and you can expect the things we talk about in the rest of this little booklet to apply to your life—beginning now.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit

Charismata: ministering in the new millennium

I was really surprised the other week watching an international conference when I saw that the leadership of Oral Roberts University did not talk about the gifts when asked what a charismatic is. In fact, no one in the audience knew what a charismatic is. The answers were about praise and excitement. This has always been the problem with the gifts of the Holy spirit. Church leadership does not like to talk about them—probably because they cannot control them.

The name comes from the Greek word for gift, charisma, that is used extensively in I Corinthians 12. Vine’s definition of charisma is God’s endowments upon believers by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Charismatic is experiential!

Over the years, those of us used in the gifts and those of us who have led services where the gifts are expected and commonplace have come up with a lot of practical knowledge about how these gifts work. This little section is focused on the operation of the gift list in I Corinthians 12. Before we quickly go through the list of gifts we need to talk a little bit about what they are and how they work in general.

Much of this stuff is extra-biblical

I know that is heresy for many in the church today. But when we think about things like these, much of what the church does is extra-biblical. We have to be careful when that is true. But altar calls, Sunday school, seminaries, abbots, nuns, clergy, laity, and much more are all extra-biblical. What does that mean on a practical level? This is not doctrine—it is advice from a man who has been focused on how to practically, day by day, walk in the spirit for over 35 years.

These are God’s gifts to build up his people

The operative scripture is I Corinthians 12:7

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” ESV

These aren’t for personal glory or power. They are to help you minister as you have a need. They are designed for use in a meeting, bible study, worship service, outreach, and one on one. Most of what we know scripturally about the gifts comes through Paul. In I Corinthians 14, Paul gives his opinion that prophecy is the best gift – though we are to earnestly desire all of the gifts. Verse 14:12 lays it out:

So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the edification of the church.” NASB

Don't miss the point: Jesus

These are tools to share Jesus and communicate His instructions to us. It is a real mistake to focus on the gifts instead of the Giver.

That being said, it is foolish to avoid the gifts or to not use what we have all been given. Many of the difficulties of Christian living are eradicated by the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in your life and into the lives of people surrounding you.

An example of a spirit-led meeting

On the Radiqx website used to be an excerpt from one of my novels, *The Righteous Perish*, which shows how the gifts work in a meeting. The scene is this: the end is close, America is being racked by severe economic and political crises brought about by natural disasters and lack of leadership. This little church in Santa Fe is going to be used by the Lord to bring in the final harvest before the End. Just before the meeting, while getting set up to begin, they have discovered a bloody aborted fetus in a jar in their refrigerator. The woman who discovered the jar pulled it out of the fridge, freaked out, dropped the jar, which smashed, and there's blood everywhere. The link no longer works so you'll need to buy the book: [The Righteous Perish](#)

The gifts as listed in I Corinthians 12

Now that we have given appropriate warnings and instruction it is time to actually talk about the gifts and how they manifest themselves in your life. There are nine listed:

1. Utterance of Knowledge

This is knowledge imparted by the Holy Spirit that the speaker has no way of knowing in the flesh. For example, my wife regularly “knows” of specific sin in the lives of people she counsels. The Lord uses that supernaturally received knowledge to jolt the person being counseled to get his or her attention.

2. Utterance of Wisdom

This is a word from the Lord about what He wants done with that knowledge or what he wants the believer to do. Quite commonly, within relationships, in mentoring, and so on – prophecy takes the form of a word of wisdom. It is usually a solution to a situation from God that solves a problem, blesses a sheep, or builds character.

3. Faith

This is a faith given from the Lord that wells up inside and overflows in action. Smith Wigglesworth talked about this occurring on some of the occasions when he raised someone from the dead.

4. Healing

These are not medical miracles, but healings beyond what doctors can understand. I heard of one testimony of the disappearance of a pacemaker in one of Dennis Bennett's meetings (after all these years, I can't remember where [I think it was from Dennis himself at a meeting in West Virginia in the 1970s]). They were praying for healing in a person with a very bad heart. When that person went to the doctor, the doctor was almost overcome when he discovered the pacemaker was gone. Then there are all the good reports heard over the years of tumors falling from bodies and much more.

5. Miracles

Something supernatural—impossible naturally—like walking on water or Philip's teleportation in Acts 8:39 & 40. Maybe this is where the disappearing pacemaker should be listed, but the healing for the heart still stands.

6. Prophecy

God speaking through a human (though he used a donkey in the Old Testament) to His people. It rarely seems to be future telling—probably because the future is foretold as much as we are going to see in advance in the scriptures we already have. This is commonly practical, specific encouragement but it can also be a rebuke of bad behavior.

7. Distinguishing of spirits

The ability to discern the spiritual origin of a word, process, or work is a day to day necessity. This is an under used gift because most people do not think it is really necessary. Believe me, it is.

8. Tongues

Giving the Holy Spirit control of your tongue—allowing Him to speak through you directly to the situation at hand. The common belief is this is perfect prayer. Because this one upsets so many people we'll discuss this separately as soon as we are done here.

9. Interpretation of tongues

Please notice that this is interpretation, not translation. In our experience this is a version of prophecy—but then so are knowledge & wisdom. Yes, you can interpret your own tongues, but it is a dangerous path. It is very easy to delude yourself.

These are always available

As you go about your daily living, these gifts are always available. You should practice the exercise of these gifts. You should be constantly testing your knowledge and developing your skills in these areas. This can get pretty strange sometimes, but you really need to give it a try.

For example, when I am picking out produce at the store I usually ask the Lord for a word of knowledge showing me which head

of romaine or which jicama to choose so it will last until we can finish it without spoiling. If I do not ask, I commonly lose half the veggies I buy. If I ask, the veggies usually remain fresh until they are used up. More importantly, I have learned to sense when the Spirit gently says [gives an impression or indicates] “Pick that one.”

Is it infallible? Of course not! This is a walk of faith. Here’s another one you might like to try. When I am adding ingredients to a sauce, I commonly slowly pour in the spice asking the Spirit to tell me when to stop. If I do this, the sauce is usually perfectly seasoned. If I don’t I commonly mismeasure or I am not aware of the sourness of a given orange or whatever, and the sauce is bad.

You can learn to sense when a thing is right, when the Spirit approves, when Jesus is leading you, when you are following the true God. It is a wonderful, exciting life. But it takes practice.

Again, the important thing is that I have learned to hear the Spirit in a much more helpful way. If it is true (and I am sure it is) that Bibles and external helps like that will be taken away from all believers as the time for the Antichrist is revealed, this level of following the Spirit will become essential—life and death.

During the Communist persecution of believers in the 20th century, it was commonly told that church meetings happened as believers headed out into the woods, not knowing where they were going, until they all met at a common location for worship and teaching. The Holy Spirit would simply guide them all individually to the place He had set for the meeting that day.

They did not schedule meetings. It was too easy for a non-believer to find out and get them all killed. They let the Spirit set up the meetings and no one could get to the meeting without the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This stuff is really important!

I suspect that some of you think I am crazy or at least foolish. You are probably correct. But, please believe me when I say that this is essential for survival in a world that is increasingly anti-Christian. More and more of us survive spiritually by the operation of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Romans 6 suggests that this is normal and that without the presence of the life of Jesus within us we would all drop dead. Pray about what I am saying and apply it to your life as the Spirit directs you to do so.

The practical use of tongues

Boy, tongues get'em riled!

Why would I spend extra time on what is arguably the least important of the gifts? I do it as a favor to you so that you will not cut yourself out of a real blessing.

✚ It's the only gift that helps you personally

We see that in the I Corinthians 14 passage seen below. Speaking in tongues builds you up. It is impossible to speak in tongues without focusing on Jesus. The act itself often brings peace and comfort.

I Corinthians 14:2-4 ESV

For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.

This is often taught as a reason to forbid tongues, but Paul goes on in the next verses to talk about how much he speaks in tongues—more than them all; and that tongues are not to be forbidden. I find that the more I remember to pray in tongues throughout the day, the better my spiritual walk is and the closer I am to the Lord.

✚ Tongues enable you to hear better

Again, this is just practical experience speaking. However, the spiritual reasoning is given in the same passage in Corinthians. Verse 14:14 says in NASB:

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

A practical result of this is that it protects you during meditation. Those of you who are familiar with occult practices know that meditation involves blanking the mind. This is a very dangerous practice. Though the Holy Spirit will not enter your mind without an invitation, the enemy has no such compunctions. Demons will gleefully rush into a blank, unprotected mind.

Praying in tongues allows you to safely have your mind open and receptive to the Holy Spirit as you ask the Lord to speak to you. It really does protect you from enemy voices under these circumstance. Plus it seems to open a more direct pathway to God.

✚ You can pray powerfully when you do not know what to say in your normal language

Often we do not know what would be the best course of action or the best result. We may be absolutely overwhelmed with emotion, confusion, disease, or whatever. Praying in tongues enables us to release the Holy Spirit into a situation with miraculous results in many cases.

✚ Tongues seem to be a key part of surrender

One of the most important passages in the New Testament is the first few verses of Romans 12—present yourself as a living sacrifice. For many of us, tongues is the first act of total surrender we experience.

It's silly to reject such a generous gift from the Lord.

Freedom in the Lord

All of these gifts manifest in many ways, under many circumstances, for many purposes. Do not be legalistic about the gifts in general. Remember that one of the major attributes of the enemy is that he is very legalistic. God is not! There is complete freedom in the Lord and walking in the Spirit enables you to tap into that freedom.

As I talk about the need for practice, this is the major area you need to work on. Stay loose! You never know how the Lord is going to work next. You do know that He will work, because He promised He would and He does not lie. However, God is exceptionally creative. This is an essence of his nature—this creativity.

The church has tried to put all this in a box. But, it cannot be done. If we can codify walking in the Spirit, it no longer takes faith—it becomes a skill to learn. That will never happen. It will always take trust, listening, and moving without sure knowledge. It is all based on the sure fact that He is trustworthy.

Types of tongues

There are four common ways that tongues manifest themselves. Don't limit yourself, but be aware that tongues is a gift with many uses and many blessings. The first is relatively rare, but it worked powerfully at the beginning of the church at Pentecost.

✚ Speaking in tongues and everyone hears in their own language

This is what we are pretty sure happened on the day of Pentecost when the church was born, when the Holy Spirit was given. The phraseology strongly suggests this: Acts 2:4-8

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because

each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?" ^{111v}

This is also seen in meetings where a message in tongues will be heard in a known foreign language by a specific participant. (Normally, tongues do not seem to be any existing human language.)

In one of Dennis Bennett's meetings in Seattle a message in tongues was heard as tongues by everyone, but a woman in the back stood up exclaiming that she had heard the message in flawless, unaccented Mandarin Chinese. She had been raised speaking the language though she hadn't done so for many years. The Holy Spirit spoke directly to her in this way and she was redeemed, delivered, and healed on the spot.

✚ A private prayer language

This is extra-biblical for the most part, but the daily experience of those of us who have been given tongues. There are a couple of scriptures that seem to apply here. We've already mentioned 1 Corinthians 14:2-4.

Another scripture that seems to apply is Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ^{15v}

This is much more tenuous, but in practical experience, most of us slip into tongues when we run out of words. We believe that by giving the Spirit control over our tongues we can pray perfect prayers—unclouded by our flesh.

In practice, praying like this is often very powerful with answers to prayer that are amazing.

✚ A helpful part of Exorcism to give you focus, reveal tactics, and force the demons to reveal themselves

Again, this is extra-biblical but very practical. It works. You begin a deliverance by praying in tongues until you are given the liberty to move into English (or whatever your normal language is). I've had demons cry out in pain revealing themselves to be dealt with. I've had it result in words of knowledge and wisdom to guide our prayer into effective paths. It's simply a very effective way to begin a cleansing prayer session. It's much more effective than shouting.

✚ Preaching in tongues and the audience hearing in their own language

I've heard several evangelists testify to this. The scenario is usually a crusade or a preaching event in a foreign country and the translator does not show up. One in particular happened in Tokyo. There was a huge crowd. The translator did not show. The time to begin came, and

the man was convinced that he should just go out and start speaking in tongues. The entire audience heard in Japanese and hundreds received amazing conversion and deliverance experiences.

The operative scripture here seems to be Matthew 10:19&20
 ...do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you
 are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you
 in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit
 of your Father speaking through you. ESV

There is no reason to be upset about tongues. It is a normal part of walking in the Spirit. God seems to think it is an important part of surrender. It definitely helps the Lord work more strongly in your life by His Holy Spirit. You really should seek the gifts and do not forbid or discourage tongues.

Hearing from the Lord

One of the themes running through this discussion of the gifts is the need to hear from the Lord. The problem of hearing clearly from the Lord is always with us. I want to share some practical tips that might help you do this better in your own life. They are not infallible but they have worked for me for over three decades now.

Extra-biblical warning! This message is from personal experience

Discerning your thoughts

I do not want to get into arguments here. But it has been clear to me for a long time that my thoughts have three sources: the Lord, myself, & the enemy. So when I am looking to get guidance from the Lord I need to be careful. As I make my daily, moment-by-moment decisions I need to be careful.

More than that, I need to seriously practice hearing the Lord. I've mentioned this in passing several times already. You will never hear clearly from Him unless you practice hearing His voice and learning to recognize when it is Him and when it is not.

Your own thoughts are as dangerous as the enemy's

This is the first thing you need to understand. If it is not from God, it really does not matter. Remember that the original sin was wanting to know good from evil. We do not know enough to make that determination. God was not being mean when He told us not to eat from that tree. Our database is nowhere nearly comprehensive enough to handle decisions like that.

We regularly make decisions that seem good but prove to be bad in the long run. Let's give a few examples:

⊕ The Industrial Revolution is good

We had no idea about the problems of pollution when we started down the road of technology.

⊕ Cars are good

But we had no idea what they would ultimately do to the nuclear family. We never foresaw suburbs, exurbs, or commuting.

⊕ Drugs are good

But who foresaw a society who turns to drugs instead of God: medically, socially, and emotionally.

⊕ The Internet is good

But who saw it would spring free the spirit of lawlessness?

Your life, my life, and the life of anyone you know is littered with decisions made without adequate knowledge. We all need to be able to tap into the source of all knowledge—the One who knows everything. This is not some trite truism but at the core of our faith. We do not need an astrologer or clairvoyant who are dependent upon reading the creation for answers. We have direct access to the Creator himself—the one who made it all.

Most of this seeking takes place within ourself. This is not limited to just our mind, because our rebirth brought our spirit to life also. But our consciousness has to deal with thoughts. What few want to deal with is the fact that spiritual powers can speak to us via thoughts that seem to come from within. It's nothing to be afraid of, but you do need to be aware of this reality.

Examine your thoughts

When you ask yourself a serious question, listen to the answers you get. Let's take a simple question like, "Should I marry this woman?" Or "Should I accept this job offer?"

How would you know? You certainly cannot trust something as fleeting as emotion. Only God knows the answer to that. So you need to hear from him. You need to carefully examine your thoughts about matters like these.

The goal is to eliminate all thoughts that are not from God. He has the only answers you can trust. You don't know enough and the enemy is trying to hurt you.

✚ Thoughts from God

They will manifest his character. We have several ways to discern that. You can see the two descriptions of his character below in I Cor 13 and Galatians 5. I'm using the New King James this morning

I Corinthians 12:3

Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

I Corinthians 13:4-7

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Galatians 5:22 & 23

...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...

I John 4: 1-3

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God.

How does this work out in real life as you listen to your thoughts?

- ✚ God is a gentleman
- ✚ God is Kind, patient, generous
- ✚ He is never in a hurry, never pushy

Thoughts from the enemy

They manifest his character. He is a clever, cunning liar. He's a liar, cheat, thief come to kill & destroy. He hates the people of God, but he knows those who are faking it and look like a child of God and he can use them freely because they have no defenses against him. He can easily use any one to attack you who doesn't know Jesus because of the lack of defenses or awareness on their part. His primary tool is the flesh.

Galatians 5:19-21

...works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like...

Often thoughts from God will pop into to your mind fully formed. Of course, the enemy's do that also. But the enemy usually has a nasty, pushy edge. The enemy often tries to insist that you make a decision immediately.

Testing the spirits

If you have a thought come into your mind like that. Simply ask the spirit giving you that thought, "Do you confess that Jesus came in the flesh and that he is Lord of Lords?" Often your next thought will be a brusque, "No!" Of course, if you ask out loud and any one hears you, they'll think you're insane. But then we are fools for Christ, right?

Remember the sound & feel of the voice

As you practice these things, remember voices that you identify. As you practice you will learn the subtle differences and come to know the voice of God. You may not always recognize the enemy. It's hard to tell between the enemy and your self. But you will know that it is not God, and you will increasingly learn to know the voice of God.

It's different for every one, but God's voice often brings a feeling of peace, joy, comfort, and so on. Also, his voice is constantly changing and your methods of hearing must constantly change. That is because it is a walk of faith and He does not want you dependent on a method but in Him.

Listen carefully...

The callings of God

The spiritual job description of a believer

This area is not nearly as cleanly delineated as the gifts listed in I Corinthians 12. This is because callings have many more nuances than the simple straightforward gifts of an individual—even if that individual is God. He has placed several lists of callings into that part of scripture we call the new covenant. The three major ones are seen below.

The scriptures listing the callings of God on the believer's life

- ✚ Ephesians 4:11 & 12 NASB
He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ
- ✚ I Corinthians 12:25 NASB
God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.
- ✚ Romans 12:6–8 NLT
So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

God does not call an organization, but a person

We need to start by stating something very important. God sees us all as individuals. He relates to us personally, as individuals. He never calls organizations. He calls the apostle to that organization—the person he sends (male or female) to head up that group of people. God always has a person in charge. Ultimately that person is himself via the Holy Spirit, but He knows that leadership by committee does not work and that it is impossible for corporations to be held responsible.

Most teachers separate the three listings—especially the list on Ephesians. The Ephesian list has five titles that are normally called the offices and are used for God-chosen officials of the church.

Building a work with the five callings of Ephesians 4

✚ Apostle

The one sent: This can be for a work as large as Paul's call to the Gentiles or as small as a Bible study. The apostle is responsible for the spiritual leadership of the work.

✚ Prophet

The one who speaks the words from God: Prophets need to be under leadership, commonly of an apostle as a work is begun. A wise apostle relies on a prophet to keep the direction of the work focused on the vision given by the Lord.

✚ Evangelist

The one who calls heathen to repentance: Again, this type of job usually works better if it is a ministry under the leadership of an apostle. The apostle can keep the focus on the people targeted by the specific work the Lord is developing.

✚ Pastor

The shepherd of the flock: Often a counselor, one who cares for the sheep, tends to the sick and confused, keeps them safe, not necessarily the leader. In fact, the pastor would ideally be charged with caring for the people gathered for a work by the apostle and evangelist. Most apostles are not good pastors.

✚ Teacher

The one who explains: Here also, in an ideal situation, a teacher would explain doctrine and train the sheep gathered in the apostle's work.

Obviously, this is not commonly understood by the church as it stands in America today

There is no concept of a senior pastor. It is possible for pastors to work well taking care of additional ministries under an apostle, as in Wimber's Vineyard, for example. In my opinion, now that John is dead, that ministry should have folded its tents. The apostle is gone, and the sheep should have joined ministries under another apostle.

I see no semantic or biblical justification for separating the Ephesian list from the others. It is true that the Romans list appears to be much more general. The Corinthians list appears to be covering the other two from a different angle. However, they all seem to be talking about the same thing. The Romans list just avoids titles.

Chronological nature of callings

Here the Ephesian and Roman lists seem to be part of the same thing. Apostles come first, followed by Prophets, then the rest of the workers as the work is developed by the Lord.

Apostles: one who is sent; the responsible one

A work of God starts with an apostle. There is no evidence that these lists are talking about the Twelve, Thirteen, 25, or whatever list you pull from the New Testament (& there is one person listed among the apostles who is female [Junia, Romans 16: 7; Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. MKIV]). This is the name of the person called to start a work. God calls, gives a vision, and sends an apostle to start a new work. This apostle is responsible for the work, and God deals with the apostle about the work.

Other than tradition and often biased translation, there is no hint that this job is restricted to men, or that it is restricted to the Twelve, or any other limitation placed on God by mankind. Jerry Falwell was the apostle for Liberty University. Jan and Paul Crouch were the apostles for TBN. Aimee Semple McPherson was the apostle sent to start Angelus Temple. Are these extreme examples? Not really. Whether or not I like those ministries has nothing to do with the facts that they felt called by God to start a work. Katherine Kuhlman, on the other hand, does not appear to have been an apostle. Oral Roberts was an apostle to ORU, but his healing ministry was not apostolic in general.

Are church planters apostles?

Sometimes yes, but often not. Many are sent out by human institutions and that clouds the issue beyond our knowing. Only God knows the truth in these instances.

Prophets: speakers for the Lord; not the leaders; they speak for the Lord to the leaders

God speaks through His prophets. Normally apostles are not prophets. It is too dangerous for an apostle to be His or Her own prophet. A prophet needs to be discerned and the founder of a work is commonly the one who discerns whether the prophet is actually speaking the word of the Lord for the apostle's work. The wise apostle listens to the prophets the Lord gives.

The rest of the callings come under the leadership of an apostle—or they should in an ideal world

The list in Romans seems to be talking more about given talents. All of us have areas of action where we are gifted, more comfortable, more

driven, and more functional. The Roman's list has been over analyzed by many. The main thing to remember is that you are probably a blend of two or more areas of talent.

As far as I can tell, I'm a prophet/teacher, for example. The main gift the Lord uses me in out of the list in I Corinthians 12 is prophecy for the leader I'm serving. I've served as the prophet under a couple of apostles. The Lord seems to continuously put me in a position of teaching. But here is an important point.

I feel totally inadequate in these positions!

Most commonly, the Lord calls you to a position of weakness so that you will rely on Him instead of your own strength. So, I can recognize how He has used me and how he has called me, but I am not comfortable there. I know I will mess up badly unless He anoints me, by His Spirit. As far as I can tell, this should be the norm.

If you are relying on physical, emotional, and/or intellectual gifts, you will soon run off in the flesh. You need to be in a position of relying on Him and His Spirit. Only then can you be used powerfully by God. Remember, it is possible to have a huge ministry or megachurch in the flesh and in the world and be of little or no use in the Kingdom of God. That is a horrible tragedy when it happens.

The fruit of the spirit

The focus of our walk with the Lord is fruit. This is the reason we were called. This is the reason God set up the straight and narrow path of faith, requiring us to walk in the spirit.

Hopefully, our life and work will bring more people into the Kingdom. Obviously, the Great Commission is very dear to the heart of the Lord. But getting people saved and delivered is a by-product of fruit development.

It becomes more obvious every year I live & grow that salvation and personal growth only work when they are the result of a move of the Holy Spirit. The way to get the Spirit to move through you in power and freedom is to grow and mature into a believer who bears much good fruit.

Our life's goal & reward

- ✚ Fruit is not the people you save
- ✚ Fruit is not the good deeds you do
- ✚ Fruit is not going to church or bringing people
- ✚ Fruit is not the size of your audience
- ✚ Fruit is not the scope of your influence

Fruit is the character of Jesus lived through you by the Holy Spirit

Our goal in life is to produce fruit—good fruit. There are several things to notice about this. There is only one list of fruit in scripture and that is seen below. First of all, the list of fruit in Galatians 5 shows the character of Jesus—and by extension the character we are expected to have as believers.

Galatians 5:16-24 ESV

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But **the fruit of the Spirit is love,**

joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; *against such things there is no law. And Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires*

Jesus made it clear how important he thinks this process is to our life as His disciple. In John 15: 1-16 he uses the analogy of a vine and its branches. We are those branches. I'll excerpt it to give focus & make it more clear.

...Every branch in me that does not bear fruit (God) takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit... You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ESV

Branches do not automatically bear good fruit or lots of fruit. A branch must be pruned to bear more fruit. Pruning is painful to the branch as things are cut off. Everything extraneous, diseased, or distorted must go.

However, it goes much further than that. Pruning by an amateur or a psychologist, or some other worldly counselor merely causes pain with no true redirection toward fruit bearing. In addition, the quality of your fruit depends on the source of your life. If you are still foolish enough to believe that you have any real control, that you can really make good choices, that you understand what the Hell is going on, your fruit will be bad. There may be a lot of it. But it will be rotten, stinky, bad tasting fruit.

Only in Jesus, by His Holy Spirit

In the midst of the verses referenced above in John 15, the message is clear: fruit comes from the life flowing through us—the life of Jesus, our messiah. There is no good fruit without walking in the Spirit. As usual, Jesus did not pull any punches but talked openly and directly. In verses 4 & 5 we read:

Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. 11:17

Jesus tells us to be fruit inspectors

In Matthew 7, Jesus tells us that we can tell what kind of person we are dealing with by examining their fruit. We can identify false prophets in this way. We can see fleshly pastors through this looking glass. We can identify true men & women of God by this criteria.

Matthew 7:15-20

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them. 11:14

Walking by the Spirit results in fruit

The more access you give to the Holy spirit, the more He can do in and through your life. The more you grow to be like Jesus, the more fulfilled you will be and the more people you will influence positively. The quicker you obey the leadings of the Spirit, the more painless the pruning will be.

Works are plural. Fruit is singular.

If you read the passage in Galatians, I want you to notice that the works of the flesh are many, divisive, and fragmenting. They drive us apart from each other, set up walls between us, and isolate individuals.

The searches for power, pleasure, and bad relationships have terrible results. They keep us on our own, focused on ourselves, complaining about others, and all of that which is stated in the list of the works of the flesh.

On the other hand, the fruit of the spirit is whole. You cannot get joy or love or kindness or peace or any other part of the fruit without all of it. It is a package. It is the character of Jesus. It is the personality of a man or woman of God after they become mature. There are glimpses of it in new believers. But it does not develop as luscious, good fruit until it ripens and becomes mature.

It is the focus of our life. At least it is for God. You need to make it your conscious focus also. Nothing else matters, and it is the result of your drive to know Jesus, to become one with Him, to allow Him to live in you and work through you. The success of your life will be measured in the quantity and quality of your fruit.

Walking in the Spirit

I usually use walking in instead of walking by the Spirit. Though both are accurate and true, I need to remind myself, that in him I can do all things. He is not a tool or power source to enable me to do good. He is good and I am as good as I allow Him to flow out through me. The key is found in the last verse you see in the quote from Galatians 5.

26: Tapping into Christian Power

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires

The only part we have in all of this is cooperating with the Lord as He prunes us. When the evil rises up in us with bad attitudes, horrible thoughts, nasty words, unkind self-centered actions, and the like—all we can do is react in horror and repent.

As usual, the key is repentance

When we repent, we give the Lord the authority He needs to cleanse us. Remember, he will never force you to do anything. It requires your cooperation and approval of the process. You need to ask him to fix you. You need to allow Him to prune you. You need to put away the flesh and put on the new creation.

Repent!

The Kingdom of God is at hand...

From the author:

Actually, I hope the author of this is the Holy Spirit and that I have faithfully been obedient to His lead. If you have questions or comments, please feel free to write me at david@bergsland.org –and feel free to check out what the Lord is having me do. The best place to discover that is on the company Website/blog: <http://radiqx.com> – I hope to hear from you. May the Lord bless you forever.



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