

Receiving Your Life Giving Flow

Prophetic Weekend

*“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not **slow** in keeping his **promise**, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”*

II Peter 3:8-9

Peter recognizes that the Lord did not show up as many had expected and for some reason the Second Coming had been delayed. He explains that main reason for the delay is that God wants as many people to be saved as possible.

"Slow" (1019) (**braduno**) means to tarry, loiter, delay, be tardy or delayed beyond the expected or proper time.

"Promise"(1860) (**epaggelia**) is a declaration that one will do or refrain from doing something specified. It is also **a legally binding declaration that gives the person to whom it is made a right to expect or to claim the performance or forbearance of a specified act.**

Other Promises God Will Keep- Luke 24

- In **Luke 24:1-11** we read how on the first day of the week after Jesus had been crucified and laid in a tomb some of Jesus' **loved ones** brought spices which were customary in that day and time for burial. Of course Jesus was not there and two men, angels in dazzling clothes were standing there. These two reminded them of Christ's words that He would rise again and they immediately ran to find the eleven and others to tell them what happened.
- **Peter** runs to the tomb to find it empty and then returns home in a quandary.(**verse 12**)
- **Two men** encountered Jesus without knowing it on the road to Emmaus. One of them was Simon. (**verses 13-35**) One of the men make a keen observation:

“They rose up that very hour, returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and those who were with them, saying, ‘The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’”

Luke 24:33-34 (I Corinthians 15:5)

- One of two things happened with these two men, either when things were revealed to them about Jesus, He told them about Peter's encounter with Christ or the word had gotten out and the two had heard of it and were confirming it with their own encounter.
- Peter could write II Peter 3:8-9 because he had personally encountered the promise of God, Jesus raising from the dead!
- **Jesus Appears and Explains, (verses 36-48):** Though we know that at least three of them in the room had experienced Christ's appearance, look at all their reaction when he appeared again and said, “Peace be to you”:

“But they were terrified and filled with fear, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.”

Luke 24:37

- **terrified-** ptoeo {pto-eh'-o} the same sensation as that of falling off a cliff
- **filled with fear-** emphobos {em'-fob-os} thrown into fear, terrified, affrighted
 - It was the same experience as when the group earlier had seen the angels in verse 5 and fell on their faces and in Acts 22 where Paul explains everyone's experience when the light shown around them.
 - What is hilariously is that three of them had already seen Jesus and He pops up out of nowhere again and they respond like everybody else.
 - In our present day terms: They jumped out of their skins!
- **Jesus Makes A Proclamation, (verse 49)**

"I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Luke 24:49

- **The Disciples Received The Promise**

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting."

Acts 2:1-2

"They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

Acts 2:3-4

David Surrounded Himself With Spiritual People

*"David, together with the **commanders of the army**, **set apart** some of the sons of **Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun** for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals."*

I Chronicles 25:1a

- **commanders of the army 8269. sar (sar)** rom sarar; a head person (of any rank or class) captain (that had rule), chief (captain), general, governor, keeper, lord, ((-task-)) master, prince(-ipal), ruler, steward.
- **The Hosts/army 6635. tsaba' (tsaw-baw')** or (feminine) tsadah {tseb-aw-aw'}; from tsaba'; a mass of persons (or figuratively, things), especially reg. organized for war (an army); by implication, a campaign, literally or figuratively (specifically, hardship, worship)
appointed time, (+) army, (+) battle, company, host, service, soldiers, waiting upon, war(-fare).
- **Seperated/set apart 914. badal (baw-dal')** a primitive root; to divide (in variation senses literally or figuratively, separate, distinguish, differ, select, etc.) (make, put) difference, divide (asunder), (make) separate (self, -ation), sever (out), X utterly.
- **Asaph 623. 'Acaph (aw-sawf')** from 'acaph; collector
- **Heman 1968. Heyman (hay-mawn')** probably from 'aman; faithful
- **Jeduthun 3038. Yduwthuwn (yed-oo-thoon') or Yduthuwn {yed-oo-thoon'}; or Ydiythuwn {yed-ee-thoon'}; probably from yadah; laudatory**

- **Prophecy 5012. naba' (naw-baw')** a primitive root; to prophesy, i.e. speak (or sing) by inspiration (in prediction or simple discourse) prophesy(-ing), make self a prophet.
- **Asaph- Prophesied The Word of God**

*“From the sons of **Asaph**: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah and Asarelah. The sons of Asaph were under the (“hands”) **supervision** of Asaph, **who prophesied under the king's supervision.**”*

I Chronicles 25:2

- **Supervision- yad {yawd} 3027-hand**
- **Prophesied- naba' {naw-baw'} 5012- to prophesy under influence of divine spirit**

- **Jeduthun- Prophesied The Worship of God**

*“As for **Jeduthun**, from his sons:*

*Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiiah, Shimei, Hashabiah and Mattithiah, six in all, under the **supervision** of their father Jeduthun, who **prophesied**, using the harp in **thanking** and **praising** the LORD.*

I Chronicles 25:3

- **Thanking-yadah {yaw-daw'} 3034- to throw, shoot, cast thanks to God**
- **Praising- halal {haw-lal'} 1984- to praise, boast, be boastful among men**

- **Heman- Prophesied The Spirit of God**

*“As for **Heman**, from his sons: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shubael and Jerimoth; Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti and Romamti-Ezer; Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir and Mahazioth. All these were sons of Heman the king's **seer (in the words of God)**. They were given him through the promises of God to exalt him. God gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.*

I Chronicles 25:4-5

- **Seer- chozeh {kho-zeh'} 2374- A prophet by vision**
- **In The Words of- dabar {daw-baw'} 1697- speech, word, speaking, thing, speech, saying, utterance**
- **(God)- 'elohiym {el-o-heem'} 430 Rulers, judges, divine ones, , Father, Son and Holy Spirit**

GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT - WHAT ARE THEY?

“Gifts of the Spirit are special abilities provided by the Holy Spirit to Christians for the purpose of building up the body of Christ.” (allaboutgod.com)

The gifts are identified in I Corinthians 12:8-11

“For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

I Corinthians 12:8-11

These nine gifts can be broken down into three categories:

Revelation Gifts - gifts that reveal something

- **Word of Wisdom**
- **Word of Knowledge**
- **Discerning of Spirits**

Power Gifts - gifts that do something

- **Faith**
- **Healings**
- **Miracles**

Inspiration Gifts - gifts that say something

- **Prophecy**
- **Diverse Tongues**
- **Interpretation of Tongues**

Purposes of the Gifts

- **Spiritual maturity**

You cannot strengthen someone who is weak unless you are mature yourself. Spiritual gifts help you mature so you can edify the Church and strengthen others (I Corinthians 14:12).

- **Edification**

Spiritual gifts are used for the edification of the Church and are tools that bring us into spiritual maturity:

"Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."

I Corinthians 14:12

- **Credentials**

A credential is having evidence or testimony concerning your authority. When the gifts are displayed, it publicly confirms that you are a true believer, an ambassador of God:

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover ... And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

Mark 16:17-18,20

We are identified as believers through the gifts of the Spirit:

"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost..."

Hebrews 2:4

- **Spiritual Prosperity**

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."

I Corinthians 12:7

Complete List of Spiritual Gifts

The list of spiritual gifts are found in Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 27-30; Ephesians 4:7-13 and. The purpose of these gifts are to enable the believer to do what he is called to do, when he is called to do it. The Holy Spirit fulfills His purpose in us in "everything we need." It says in II Peter 1:3

"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness."

II Peter 1:3

A. Romans 12:3-8 Mentions The Following Spiritual Gifts:

1. Prophecy
2. Service
3. Teaching
4. Exhortation
5. Giving
6. Leadership
7. Mercy

B. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 27-30 Adds (Without Repeating Those Already Listed from Romans):

8. Wisdom
8. Knowledge
8. Faith
9. Healing
10. Miracles
11. Discerning of Spirits
12. Tongues
13. Interpretation of Tongues
14. Apostle
15. Helps
16. Administration

C. Ephesians 4:11,12 Adds (Again, Without Repeating Any of the Above):

19. Evangelist
20. Pastor-teacher

D. Other Possible Spiritual Gifts (Not Listed Above):

21. Celibacy (1 Cor. 7:7)
22. Hospitality (1 Peter 4:9,10)
23. Voluntary Poverty (1 Cor. 13:3)
24. Martyrdom (1 Cor. 13:3)
25. Craftsmanship (Exodus 35:30-36:2)
26. Music (1 Chron. 16:41,42; 2 Chron. 5:12,13; 34:12)
27. Physical Strength (Judges 14:5,6)

RECEIVING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

It clearly states in God's Word that every believer is given spiritual gifts according to the Holy

Spirit's choice or direction-for the purpose of edifying other believers (1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:12). Here are three points to consider when and how these gifts are given:

- **Point of Salvation:** There are certain gifts that we are endowed with at salvation. It is part of our blessing of faith. It could be part of our foundational spiritual DNA that was defined before the world existed and when we yield to Christ, we actually yield to the giftedness that God had already blessed us with, like one man put it, we received our "spiritual genetics."
 - **The Bible Teaches That Every Christian Is Given at Least One Spiritual Gift**
-- 1 Corinthians 12:7a,11.

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God"
I Peter 4:10
- **Spiritual Gifts Are Sovereignly Given and Determined by the Holy Spirit** -- 1 Corinthians 12:11.
- **Point of Contact:** There are Scriptures that indicate that God can bless us later on in our Christian life with Spiritual gifts in one particular fashion:
 - **Ordination/laying on of hands:** Timothy received a "gift" at the time of his ordination. (1 Timothy 4:14 and 2 Timothy 1:6) This is often interpreted to mean that one of the elders at Timothy's ordination prophesied or transferred a spiritual gift to Timothy that he had not encountered that would be necessary for his development and effectiveness in ministry. (Special Note: Timothy had the responsibility to continue to stir up and develop this gift. This is not the same as to conger up the gifts by some spiritual ritual. But it was to realign himself with what God had already spoken over him in the prophetic.
- **Point of Desire:** God will grant to us those gifts that we need and desire in order to be of greatest benefit to His church (other believers). (1 Corinthians 12:28-31 and 1 Corinthians 14:12-13)

WHAT HINDERS THE GIFTS?

1. Unhealthy and Inaccurate, (Nonbiblical) Teaching:

To best describe this is to let an inaccurate teacher try to explain it:

*"When you and I read the Bible we will know as much as can be known about spiritual gifts because all that can be known about them is found in the Bible. **We cannot fully comprehend all that is involved in these gifts because no one possesses them today. Many think the Bible teaches that these gifts are available today, so they try to help God out by trying to manufacture these gifts. These people are hindering the cause of Christ rather than helping. They are causing unbelief among thinking people. Many think these gifts and the Bible stand or fall together and since they see nothing they can come to grips with they dismiss the Bible as the word of God."***

John Calvin: John Calvin felt, wrote and taught that preaching and teaching had taken over the role of prophecy in the Church. Today many Bible schools and seminaries

teach this same message. His belief was that the preaching and personal ability to interpret the written Word was the replacement of the prophetic gift.

- Here's an example of Calvin's thought process on 1 Thessalonians 5:20:

*"By the term 'prophesying', I do not mean the gift of foretelling the future but ... the **science** of the interpretation of Scripture, so that a prophet is the interpreter of the divine will."*

Nowhere will you find the support of this argument in all of the earliest church writings that Bible interpretation, ("science" or skills) have replaced the gifts such as prophecy or any other gift.

There are other excellent Christian teachers (for example Charles Swindoll, R.C. Sproul, John MacArthur, Bill Gothard) who are skilled and "gifted", (tongue in cheek) who would agree with the Calvin's statement. They would say that "God does not give supernatural gifts to Christians today." They would also say. "Those gifts were only for the time of the Old Testament and Jesus and the apostles."

Why would learned men hold such a view? What Scriptures or reasons do they give against the use of the supernatural gifts today?

CHURCH HISTORY

It's interesting to find that some early church historians such as Didache (ca. 90-100) indicates that there were prophetic ministries which may have been put on a circuit like a traveling show. His means of establishing true prophets was by forcing those who claimed of this gifting to put down roots in a community. So, over time, the church protected itself by developing structure and creating official chains of command. Eventually over time, churches began to rely more on these structures and processes rather than the power or purpose of the Spirit.

Later on in time the Emperor Constantine gave more authority to this type of control by promising a national church or government church. After that, it was impossible to have the freedom the Spirit needed to function. God was withholding gifts from the church. The problem was that the church wasn't open to receiving and using them and their were plenty of teaching to cause people not to pursue them. Now, the church is no longer regulated by the state nor is it limited to Calvin's teaching. We can honestly ask God to use us and He is freely responding to us in a supernatural way.

Prophecy has been recorded all through history. It has never ceased.

- Bishop Melito of Sardis suddenly broke into a prophecy in one of his sermons.
- Birgitta (of Sweden; 1302-1373) was both a beloved predecessor to Scandinavian Lutherans and a very Roman Catholic saint at the same time. She had prophetic visions regarding her native land.
- During the Reformation era, some Anabaptists manifested spiritual gifts, including prophecy.
- There were moments in the ministries of Francis of Assisi and Bernard of Clairvaux, which also manifested a kind of prophecy.
- While Lutheran Pietists such as Spener and Francke did not themselves prophesy, many pietist leaders had visions and gave special words of wisdom or

comfort.

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Basically, people who believe that the supernatural gifts have ceased usually adopt one of two arguments:

1. The First Argument:

"The supernatural gifts were only for the time of the apostles to authenticate (prove the truthfulness of) the apostle's message. The Bible teaches that this was the purpose of supernatural gifts. Read Hebrews 2:3,4. Once the gospel were firmly established in the Roman empire and the apostles died, the supernatural gifts ceased. They were no longer necessary."

Some Problems with this Argument:

1. **All Gifts Have Ceased:** One of the purposes of the miraculous gifts was to clarify and institute the gospel message, but this is only-one of the purposes. Elsewhere in the Scripture, for example, spiritual gifts are:
 - **to serve the Body of Christ** (1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:26),
 - **to equip people to share the gospel** (Matthew 10:19,20; Luke 4:18; 1 Corinthians 2:13),
 - **to show God's compassion and concern for His people** (examples: Matthew 14:13-14; 20:29-34; Mark 1:40-42).

For the success of the Biblical mandate of ministry of the church, wouldn't these spiritual gifts and others still need to exist? Has any of the three mentioned disappeared as a spiritual gift and we carry on the work in our flesh?

2. **Only Possessed By The Apostles:** The "supernatural" gifts were not just the possession of the apostles in the Bible. Other non-apostles also were given supernatural gifts by the Spirit. (Take for example Luke 9:49-50 or **Philip's use of the gifts in Acts 8:6,7,13**).

The Early Church: The early church was marked by prophecy: Acts 21:9; 13:1; 11:27-30; 21:10; 15:32, 19:6; also the presence of prophecy is assumed in 1 Thessalonians 5:20 and Romans 12:6. It is key particularly to the church in Ephesus (Acts 19:6; Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; 4:11).

- **Philip and His Daughters:** In Acts 21:8-9, Philip, one of the deacons chosen in the book of Acts had **four daughters** who were considered "**prophetesses**". They did not have the high recognition of an apostle like Paul or selected among others like their father. Society itself proclaimed them of no worth or at the most, slightly important. They have no claim to fame other than being virgins and gifted with prophecy. And that's what they did.

Obviously their dad encouraged this gift among them. At the height of their father's ministry, they prophesied. And at the death of their father they continued to prophesy.

The Spirit does not care if someone is young or old, male or female, or

has high or low or no particular social or religious status. The Spirit could use anyone to prophesy back then. The Spirit can use anyone to prophesy today.

2. **The Second Argument:**

"The Bible actually tells us that supernatural gifts will cease. Read 1 Corinthians 13:8-10. It is clear that this passage predicts the gifts of prophecy and tongues will not continue. In verse 10, Paul says that once the perfect comes, tongues will cease. What could be more perfect than the Bible? When the last New Testament book was written the need for supernatural revelation ended. At that time prophecy, tongues and the other supernatural gifts ceased."

Problems with this Argument:

1. The Authority of God's Word confused with the Completed Word of God. From verse 10 they are trying to read into the verse that all has ceased when the Bible was canonized. It is just not there! This interpretation ignores the context because just 2 verses later, (verse 12) the "perfect" is (not the completion of the Bible, but) when we see God *"face to face"* and *"we know fully."* This happens upon our death or at the time of Christ's second coming. That is the time that the imperfect will be done away with (V. 10). There won't be any need for spiritual gifts in the presence of the Lord.
2. If tongues and prophecy ended when the Bible was completed (as these men say verse 8 teaches), then so did "knowledge" according to the same verse!

2. **Neglect and Abuse**

In the process of discovering spiritual gifts, 1 Corinthians 12:31 says to **"earnestly desire the best gifts."** You can seek a spiritual gift from God and be zealous after it by seeking to develop that area. God may give you that as a spiritual gift, but He may also feel that you are better fit to serve Christ with a different gift.

"Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you."

I Timothy 4:14

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands."

II Timothy 1:6

If God commanded us to do something (such as witness, love the unlovely, disciple the nations, etc.) then He will enable us to do it. I may not be as "gifted" at evangelism as another, but God commands all Christians to share the Gospel and help others to grow spiritually (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). Therefore, I need to prepare for witnessing (1 Peter 3:15) and actually do it, whether I feel that I have the gift of evangelism or not.

Some people who have less of a natural gift with music become better musicians than those who were naturally gifted, simply because of determination. A determined Christian who strives after learning God's Word and develops his teaching ability by

accepting opportunities to teach can most definitely become a better teacher than a person who has the spiritual gift of teaching, but neglects it.

HOW DO I DISCOVER MY SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

- A. **Pray and Ask God to Show You** - Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "Now about spiritual gifts, I do not want you to be ignorant" (1 Corinthians 12:1). It is God's intention for us to understand and know how He has gifted us.
- B. **Study the Biblical Possibilities** - Begin with the Scripture passages listed above and then use a concordance or cross references to find other passages regarding the spiritual gifts.
- C. **Watch How God Is Using You (Check Results at www.cforc.com/sgifts)** – Our Discipleship Matrix is specifically designed to help you understand and help define your spiritual gifts. There are a number of good spiritual gift inventories available to help you identify how God is using you.
- D. **Counsel With Others** - It has been our experience that many times other people who know you and have served with you can easily identify what your spiritual gifts are. Talk to your pastor, to Christian friends who have served with you, and to your family. "For waging war you need guidance, and for victory many advisers" Proverbs 24:6.
- E. **Try New Ministries** - One of the best ways to discover if you have a gift in a certain area is to actually put yourself in a situation that requires that gift. Stretch yourself.
- F. **Expect Confirmation From the Body** - Spiritual gifts will be recognized by the Body of Christ, because spiritual gifts (properly exercised) edify the Body of Christ. They bring blessing to God's people and extend God's kingdom.

WHAT IS PROPHECY?

"Prophecy is the proclamation of a message revealed by the Holy Spirit, suited to the specific needs of the moment, in the language of those who hear it."

Prophecy is one of the charismata (Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12), and himself waxed prophetic in 1 Cor 15:51-58.

- **A gift to be sought** (1 Cor 14), Evangelism in the early church with its public preaching were often the work of two offices recognized by the Word of God as the office of an apostle and the office of a prophet. (Acts 13:1-3)
- **An office established by God** (1 Cor 12:28).
- **A power to convict** (1 Corinthians 14:24,25).

Prophecy is a sign of God's "nearness and concern", that he Lord is still there with us to build up, tear down, or console (as per 1 Corinthians 14:3; Isaiah 40).

"But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'"

I Corinthians 14:24-25

Prophecy serves as God's way of getting through to people in a particular situation (2

Samuel 12:7; 1 Corinthians 14:24; Acts 8:30-35). It can, within that context, offer a view of what is to come -- especially if repentance is not forthcoming. This is true for societies as a whole -- the prophets and apostles of old pronounced judgment on all and called all to righteousness, even the pagans, for societal evil and injustice.

- The Corinthian Christians were very active with the influence of the Holy Spirit and His gifts. The problem with the church were that individuals had began to abuse and soon confuse (**What is abused will eventually confuse**), what and how those gifts should operate. In 1 & 2 Corinthians Paul addresses the questions of what to do when prophecy and other gifts are abused that eventually confuse.
- The prophet is not firstly an interpreter of God's will, but a **communicator** of it. We humans tend to kill the messenger who brings bad news.