

## Doctrinal Statement Clarification

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### ***SPIRITUAL GIFTS:***

My view on Spiritual Gifts is rather simple--I see the whole issue as secondary to the primary issue of who Jesus is and what He has done. I refuse to be dogmatic about secondary issues, but I do have some personal thoughts on this subject. To start with, I do not believe there is scriptural evidence to prove that all the gifts have ceased. I know there are various arguments about verses like 1 Corinthians 13:10 ("but when the perfect comes, the imperfect disappears."), but I don't think it is speaking about Spiritual Gifts leaving after the Bible was written (Many believe that the "Perfect" is the scripture).

I don't believe that most of the modern Charismatic Practices are evidence of the ongoing validity of Spiritual Gifts. Much of what is done today is an emotional experience designed to promote the person's ego, not the work of God. I will not go so far as saying that it is all of the Devil, because I believe that borders on the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (which most commentators say is "attributing the works of God to the Devil")(see Matthew 12:31-32). I know there are many abuses of things, but simply because something is abused doesn't negate it's potential blessing. (ie. a car may be used for ill-purposes, and may even kill, but when used properly, it can be a tremendous blessing).

I understand the gift to Tongues to have two scriptural forms. One is a known language (as was seen on the day of Pentecost, when foreigners from all-over heard the "wonders" of God in their own language--Acts 2:1-13), the other is a Spiritual language--some call it an ecstatic utterance--not discernible by the human mind, without Spiritual interpretation (as seen in Romans 8:26-27, 1 Corinthians 12: 29-31, and 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 14-15, 18-19, 28, 39-40).

I believe the main use of the second type of Tongues to be as a personal prayer language, not for public display unless accompanied with specific interpretation. I have personally experienced the use of private prayer Tongues and find it benefits me when I don't know how to pray intelligently for a situation, or when I can't adequately express (in English) my thanks for all God has done. I am quite aware that this issue has split churches, and divided peoples for many years, however, I am determined not to let this be a divisive issue in my ministry. I am committed to keeping it between myself and my Savior, unless someone specifically questions me on the issue. If questioned, I will always try to explain the issue in such a way as to promote love, unity and peace.

I believe Spiritual Gifts are sovereignly given by God in His time and way, as He sees fit. I have witnessed many (so-called) displays of the Spiritual Gifts, but I believe most were simply a display of emotional frenzy. I cannot be the ultimate judge in these matters, but, as I am commanded in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21, I will not "...put out the Spirit's fire; or treat prophecies with contempt (a feeling of hatred or disgust), but I will TEST everything (with God's Word) and hold on to the good!"