

Notes for the Ekklēsia Meeting

Info: (651) 283-0568 Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc www.dtminc.org Today's Date: September 9, 2012

Led By The Spirit

by Dan Trygg

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of servings, and the same Lord. And there are varieties of in-workings, but the same God, the One in-working all things in all persons. But to each one is given the disclosure of the Spirit for the common good (‘carrying together’). For, on the one hand, to one is given a word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to a different person a faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healings by the one Spirit, and to another in-workings of powerful acts, and to another a prophetic-utterance, and to another distinguishings of spirits, to a different person kinds of tongues, and to another an interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit in-works all these things, distributing to each one individually according as He intends.” I Cor. 12:4-11

One of the people we baptized last month has been suffering from a recurrence of leukemia. This person, who I will call Will, had been in remission for a number of years, but recently it had come back. **When we found out about that, after the baptism, several of us were feeling led to pray for him.** After a week and a half, the family asked if we would be willing to come for that purpose.

Will actually lives about an hour away, so six of us piled into a van and made our way down to their home. On the way, I talked about the passage listed above. I talked about how **it was important to open our minds and hearts to God, and allow Him to lead us.** We all want to see God heal this brother, but **God may have other things on His agenda.** We do not know all that is going on. There may be other issues that underlie the physical health problem, or God may wish to direct us to something entirely unexpected. **The Bible says, “...there is a time to heal...”** (Ecc. 3:3), **...but it may not be tonight, or there may be other things to deal with first.** Spiritual health is more important than one’s physical health. Often, physical infirmity brings us to see life differently, and we become more spiritually open.

I talked briefly about what to expect, since not everyone that came had experienced a prayer-ministry session with us before. I believe **the passage above describes spiritual giftings that the Holy Spirit may distribute among us as a group.** The “manifestations” described here are given as the Spirit chooses to distribute them. We must be open to being led by the Spirit in whatever manner He may choose to operate. The gifts described here seem to be “episodic”. That is, they are not necessarily ongoing, regular workings of the Spirit. (Although He can do that, too! – Rom. 12:3-8) Rather, the passage seems to indicate that **the Spirit distributes these gifts to meet the need of the moment.** He may choose to do something in or through us today that has not been typical in our experience. Therefore, **we need to prepare ourselves to be very open, sensitive and tuned in to Him.**

These giftings are described as “disclosures” or “manifestations” of the Holy Spirit. The Greek word refers to “making public, evidencing, revealing, making known, bringing to light or to visible expression, or bringing to plain recognition, expression and activation” the activity of the Holy Spirit. In other words, **the Spirit invisibly operates within us, and as we respond to what He is doing, His inner activity becomes outwardly known** and recognized. **The passage refers to three aspects of these signposts of the Spirit’s working, ...they are “gifts, services, and in-workings”.**

All of them are “gifts” in that they are not something produced by the person who experiences them. They are not the possession of that person. They are not “earned” or “obtained” by virtue of something the person does or has done. We must always remember that **they are grace-expressions from God. They are “gifts”, not something that we can demand, or that we somehow “own”.** God is the Source, and He shares these with us because of His love and generosity, not because of something we have done.

They are also “services”. **They are meant to build up, heal and strengthen others** (I Cor. 14:12,26; I Pet. 4:10). They are not for *our* entertainment. They are to get some practical, real work done, something that helps someone. The word for “service” was commonly used for a house servant or table waiter. This gives some helpful context to this aspect of the manifestation of the Spirit. He is the Master. We are here to serve Him in obedience, as we help one another in love.

Finally, these giftings are described as “inworkings”. The Spirit is the *initiator*. **This begins with Him.** **We will first sense His activity as something happening inside of us.** Whether it is a thought, a word picture, a rising up of confidence or compassion, or something else, it will start as something *He* produces inside of *us*. **It often does not become visible or manifest until we are willing to respond to that inner stirring, revelation or empowering by expressing it outwardly in some manner.** The operation of the Spirit can be blocked, if we do *not* partner with Him by giving expression to that leading. We may receive something that He intends for us to share, but

if we hold back, that particular “inworking” remains hidden and unexpressed. **There are times, of course, where the Spirit comes in a very powerful way, and we cannot help but respond to what He is doing.** Sometimes people will start to shake, or break out in a sweat, or even start to weep, or laugh. These are manifestations of the Spirit, as well, but they are not directed toward serving others. What Paul is describing in I Corinthians 12 are not *just* manifestations of the Spirit, but gifts that result in serving others in ways that helpful and practical, but are more than human in origin. They are produced by God in us.

When we got to the house, I briefly explained some of these things, then **Stan led us in a time of worship. After about a half an hour, I asked Will to sit in a chair in the middle of the room, so we could easily gather around him.** His wife mentioned that it seemed really hot in there. It really wasn't overly warm, so I mentioned that she was experiencing the working of the Holy Spirit. **I anointed Will in accordance with James 5:14,** “Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed any sins, they will be forgiven him.” **This is not just the prayer offered in faith, as some translations have rendered it. Rather, this is the prayer that rises from faith,** ...faith's prayer (cf. Acts 3:16), ...a faith that is inworked by the Holy Spirit. In Acts 3:12-16, Peter is attempting to explain how it was that a lame beggar had been healed in Jesus' name, “Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? ...it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him (literally, ‘the faith the [one] through Him’) has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.” In other words, **the faith to heal came through Jesus!** The prayer that arises from an inworked faith, and the healing itself, are *both* the manifestation of the Spirit's inworking. **Therefore, we are to wait on God for direction, and the leading and inner activity of His Spirit.**

As we laid hands on Will, we all felt the Holy Spirit very strongly. Very soon, he mentioned that he was burning up, and that peoples' hands were very hot. It was not so hot that it was painful, but it was very noticeable. Todd saw a picture of a flame, like from a campfire, which he thought was a confirmation that the Holy Spirit was powerfully present. **We kept praying for more power from the Holy Spirit, and for direction and insight.** From time to time, different people seemed to have the Spirit come upon them more powerfully, and we tried to direct them to place their hands upon this man.

Stan saw an image of a grayish-white cross. He asked if that meant anything to Will. He couldn't think of any connection. At first, we thought maybe it represented someone who had recently died. **Then, Todd got a picture of a ball and chain.** After a few minutes, **someone suggested maybe these images represented religion.** Stan asked if Will had a rosary. He did. It turned out that he had only recently purchased it, when the leukemia had come out of remission. He had been raised as a Roman Catholic. He had purchased it as a kind of charm, or as a religious symbol. He took comfort in it, and had placed it on a lamp next to his bed. Stan gently said that he, too, had been raised in the Roman church. When he came to Christ, and started studying the scriptures, he became aware of how much of what Jesus had done had *not* been clearly talked about. Instead, there were traditions and rituals that had crept in over centuries that had replaced the clear message of the gospel. Basic theological teachings were there, but they had been obscured by religious trappings, practices and prescriptions. Many of Stan's own family members were trusting more in those church teachings than in the grace of Christ. **Religion got in the way of the message of grace and of the call to actively follow Jesus.** Reading the Bible or becoming a serious-minded disciple of Christ was looked at as extreme, and even mocked by his church-going family.

As Stan explained all of this, he could feel movement in his throat and upper chest. He asked Will if he was feeling something in his upper esophagus. Will said that he was. **Stan said that it was his belief that Will had been under the influence of a religious spirit.** As Stan had been talking, I had been sensing this as well, and was wanting Stan to come front and center to be able to deal with this demon. I motioned for him to come over. **As he started addressing the demon, Will could feel the reaction of something inside of his chest.** We began to pray and call on God for power to drive the demon out. Several of us had the same image come to mind at about the same time. We were asking for the Spirit to fill Will from the bottom up, to drive out this religious spirit. Stan prayed this very thing out loud. As he did so, Will began to cough. We encouraged him to not hold back, but to cough it out, if he felt the urge. **Stan had Will renounce his tie to dead religion, and to that rosary, and call upon Jesus to help him.** As he did so, **Todd had an image of that chain break.** After a few seconds the picture recurred again, an affirmation that the bondage was broken. We continued in earnest prayer, as **Stan could feel the demon coming up Will's throat. He was able to finally eject it by wrenching into a bowl** that someone got from the kitchen.

Afterwards, Stan embraced Will, and told him that he loved him in Christ. **We prayed for the filling of the Spirit. Will reported that he felt noticeably “lighter”. He was joyful, and amazed.** He kept saying, “I have never experienced *anything* like this before!”