



Vertical Church  
What Do We Believe About Spiritual Gifts?<sup>1</sup>

“Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts.”-1 Corinthians 14:1

**What We Believe:**

By the grace of God, The Father sends the Holy Spirit to empower every believer for Christian witness and service. The Holy Spirit is freely available to all who believe in Jesus Christ, thereby enabling them to exercise their spiritual gifts, which are unique to each, in order to accomplish the ministry and mission of the church: to glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit desires to continually fill each believer with power to glorify Jesus in word and deed and imparts His supernatural gifts for the edification of the Body and the advancement of the gospel in the world.

At Vertical Church, we believe all the gifts of the Holy Spirit that were at work in the first-century church are available today and are to be earnestly desired and practiced. Moreover, we believe the power and presence of the Holy Spirit is indispensably essential to accomplishing the mission of the church in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) to the glory of God.

**Two Ditches:**

There is much confusion today when it comes to the spiritual gifts, especially around those typically called “sign gifts,” such as prophecy, healing and tongues. Theological convictions are diverse, but basically, they fall along a single spectrum. On the one end of the spectrum is *cessationism*, which teaches that these sign gifts have ceased. On the other end is a form of *hyper-charismaticism*, which teaches the necessity of a second baptism or speaking in tongues for salvation, sanctification or Christian maturity. Neither of these extremes is biblical.

At Vertical Church, we seek to avoid two dangers: The first is a non-biblical restriction of the gifts – cessationism. The second is a non-biblical exaltation of the gifts – hyper-charismaticism.

The position that best avoids these dangers is *continuationism* as it teaches that the gifts continue. This is the view held by Vertical Church. According to this position, the gifts of the Spirit are available today and are to be desired by God’s people, but we must be careful to practice them according to the Scriptures, and always to the glory of Jesus Christ alone (John 16:14).

**Restriction of the Gifts**

Scripture nowhere states that the gifts have ceased. In fact, God explicitly says the gifts will continue until the future return of Christ:

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<sup>1</sup> This paper has been largely drawn from an article published by The Village Church:  
<https://www.tvcreources.net/resource-library/articles/what-do-we-believe-about-the-gifts/>



“Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known”.-1 Corinthians 13:8-12

See it in the Text: When will the gifts cease? The gifts will discontinue when “the perfect comes” and we see “face to face” and “will know fully.” When is this referring to? Cessationists teach that this refers to the advent of Scripture. With the canonization of the Bible, the gifts are no longer active. Though a common interpretation in the Christian community, we find it unconvincing for a variety of reasons, but chiefly, with the Scriptures, can we now say that we know fully and see face to face? It seems to be a much more convincing argument that the “coming of the perfect” refers to the return of the Son of God. Therefore, If He has not returned, the gifts have not ceased.

### **Exaltation of the Gifts**

We believe spiritual gifts are given according to the sovereign distribution of the Spirit for the purpose of edifying the body and advancing the gospel. Unfortunately, many churches today exalt the gifts beyond their proper biblical grounds. There are various ways this can occur. Some teach that tongues are a necessary sign of salvation, sanctification or maturity, whereas the Scriptures explicitly deny that tongues are universally possessed by all believers (1 Corinthians 12:27-30). Some center on the Spirit to the neglect of the Son, whereas the Spirit’s primary testimony is to the person and work of Jesus Christ (John 15:26). Any teaching that focuses on the work of the Holy Spirit to the relative disregard of the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, exaltation and future return of the Son is dangerous and unbiblical.

### **Walking in the Gifts**

How therefore are we to live? The Scriptures say to pursue the gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1, 39), exercise them in an orderly manner (1 Corinthians 14:40), and subject them to the Word (1 Corinthians 14:37). As long as gifts are exercised in an orderly and humble manner, subject to the Scriptures, to the glory of Jesus Christ, we encourage all members to pursue and practice spiritual gifts.

One of the best settings for the exercise of spiritual gifts is within the context of a Missional Community. To grow in an understanding and appreciation of the gifts, it is helpful to be walking in community with others who can grow in grace together as spiritual gifts are purposed to edify one another (1 Corinthians 14:12).

We encourage you to study more on this topic, especially the biblical passages we have included, and seek to serve one another in love. As you do so, constantly come back to the gospel. The gifts should continually push us back to the person and work of Jesus Christ.



## For Further Study

### **Passages to Study**

- 1 Corinthians 12-14
- Romans 12
- Ephesians 4

### **Books to Read:**

- The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts by Sam Storms
- Practicing the Power by Sam Storms
- Showing the Spirit by D.A. Carson
- Are Miraculous Gifts for Today? by Wayne Grudem