

SPEAKING **IN** ***TONGUES*** ***& PROPHECIES***

In the series

UNDERSTANDING
THE HOLY SPIRIT **AND**
THE
NATURE OF MIRACULOUS SIGNS

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“Now concerning spiritual gifts,
brethren, I would not have you ignorant”
1Cor. 12:1

“Be not carried about with diverse and strange
doctrines, for it is good that that be established with
grace: not with meat, which have not profiteth them
that have occupied therein.”
Heb.13:9

AIM

This lesson is to address Christians on the religious confusion rocking the society as occasioned by the supposed moves by the Holy Spirit and miraculous signs.

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INTRODUCTION

The key subject here is the Holy Spirit and its nature of operations which has been one of the most misunderstood concepts in the Bible. It is important to have Christians understand what the bible teaches concerning the Holy Spirit and the nature of miraculous signs so as to guide and inform them in this dynamic World. There is hardly a religious body today without the presence of a prophetess, prayer warrior, dreamer, tongue specialist and all sort of supposed miraculous performers. This is so because the world of today, like the Greeks, really agitate for signs and wonders. Some of these agitators are vulnerable members of the society who may be taken advantage of due to their ignorance, spiritual attacks and sicknesses. Most religious leaders capitalize on these weaknesses to take advantage of them. This lesson therefore, shall address most of these issues that have found their ways into the religious circle.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

*“But as it is written, eye hath not seen nor ear heard,
Neither have entered into the heart of man,
the things which God hath Prepared for
them that love Him. But God hath revealed
them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit
searcheth all things. Yea, the deep
things of God.”
I Cor. 2:9-10*

Apart from the Holy Spirit, the Church would not exist. He has come to give the body of Christ; revelation of Jesus Christ and without revelation, we would not understand the Gospel. The role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church started on the day of Pentecost and has extended till this day. The Spirit empowered the Apostles into the deep things of God and revealed the truth of the Gospel to man. The Holy Spirit imparted all the gifts of the Spirit on the disciples for the edification of the Church. It led the disciples into all truth and gave them the utterance to write the scripture.

The Spirit also leads, guides and directs ministers of the gospel and other leaders of the Church into deeper knowledge on how to lead and direct the Church according to the will of God. Apart from the miraculous gifts made possible to the Apostle by the Holy Spirit, there are also non-miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit made possible to believers. These include the gift of mercy, administration, service, and lots more. The Holy Spirit guides and directs the church in her activities through the understanding of God's word and helps members to lead a worthy life of righteousness.

MEASURES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

This refers to the diverse capacities, degree and or extent of impartation in which the outpouring of the Holy Spirit manifested on people in the New Testament. There are not less than four measures of the Holy Spirit seen in the New Testament. A careful study of these measures exposes great understanding with sound biblical background.

1. **Unmeasured: John 3:34**

“For He whom God has sent speaketh the words of God; For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him.”

The manifestation of the Holy Spirit in this category was an endowment meant for Christ alone. The Spirit was not measured unto Him. Some people call this the full or extra-ordinary measure. **Christ** had unlimited power and control over nature and the affairs of life, He had all powers given to Him both in heaven and on earth, Matt. 28:18-20. No one else could command such authority between heaven and earth and even unto the uttermost part of the earth, hades.

2. **Baptismal Measure: Acts 1:4,5,8**

“And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the father, which, saith He, ye had heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. BUT ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

This measure of the Holy Spirit was specifically directed to the twelve Apostles who were with Christ and the additional Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul. With this package, all the gifts of the Holy Spirit were imparted upon them with special ability to impart each of the spiritual gifts to others as may be necessary. They had extra-ordinary advantage to perform wonders using any of the spiritual gifts at any point in time. A manifestation of this was seen on the day of Pentecost as was promised.

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all together with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting... And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance...” Acts 2:1-4

3. Indwelling Measure: Acts 2: 38

*“**Then** Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost”*

This measure of the Holy Spirit is available to every believer at baptism, it dwells in you throughout your sojourn on earth as a believer. It is the deposit that seals a believer, signifying that he or she is a child of God amongst many other advantages as seen in the bible, Eph. 4:30; Rom. 8:14-16; Jn. 1: 12-13; Phil. 2:13; Jn. 14:26.

The laying on of the Apostles' Hands: Acts 8: 18-19

“And when Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostle's hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive of the Holy Ghost.”

All the Apostles who were baptized of the Holy Ghost had the impartation capacity to lay hands on people whom God would lead them to do so, and such people will receive one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But those who had this measure did not have the ability to lay hands on someone and impart the gift. Example of those who had this measure include, Philip, Timothy, Barnabas, and lots more, Acts 8:5-24; II Tim. 1:6; I Tim. 4:13-15.

There are special gifts in which believers were endowed with for the purpose of building and edifying the Church. These spiritual gifts are enlisted in bible passages including Rom. 12:6-8, 1 Cor. 12:8-10; 28-30, and Eph. 4:11. For better understanding of these spiritual gifts, we must understand first, the five-fold ministry design for the Church by Jesus.

THE FIVE FOLD MINISTRIES:

“And He gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for then edifying of the body of Christ.

Eph. 4:11-12

These five-fold ministry was given in order to fulfil the three works of the Church, Evangelism, Edification and Benevolence. A careful study and understanding of the five-fold ministries informs the need for endowment of the Holy Spirit for mission work.

1. **Apostleship**

This is the first office or ministry established in the Church as a foundation upon which the gospel would rest on. The office of an Apostle was held by a limited number of men chosen by Jesus, the twelve disciples (Mark 3:13-19) and Paul (Romans 1:1). The requirements for the office of Apostleship included being a faithful eyewitness of Jesus' ministry and His resurrection (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 9:1), and being called by Jesus Himself (Galatians 1:1). The Apostles were given authority by Jesus to do many different things to establish the church, including writing Scripture and performing miracles (John 14:26, 2 Peter 3:15-16, 2 Corinthians 12:12).

There are no more that hold the office of an Apostle today. Jesus enabled the Apostles in the church to meet the various needs of the church and its ministries, missionaries, or of people who do not have the means to provide fully for themselves. The goal was to encourage and provide, giving all credit to God's love and provision.

2. **Prophets**

The second office provided for in the Church is that of the prophets who had the responsibility to declare the will of God to people and cause them to understand. All the scriptures we read were made possible as the will of God through the work of prophecy. Prophets played special roles in the Church through encouragement and edification made possible as the will of God, Acts. 13:1.

3. **Evangelists**

The third office or ministry in the Church is that of the Evangelist or Preacher of the gospel. Evangelists were charged with the task of spreading the gospel to many cities and teaching the people the will of God. Where the Apostles and Prophets could not reach, Evangelists went using the instrumentality of missionary work. No Church existed without the evangelists, Rom. 10:14-17.

4. **Pastors**

Shepherds. Presbyters, Bishops, Overseers or Elders carry many different responsibilities beginning with feeding the flock of God, Acts. 20:28-30.

Their work was closely related to the spiritual gifts of leadership and teaching. The Greek word for Pastor is *poimen* and simply means shepherd or overseer. They kept a close lookout for predators and protected the sheep from attackers. They cared for wounded and sick sheep, nursing them back to health. They rescued them if they became lost or trapped. They spent

enormous amounts of time with them guiding them to the places of nourishment and rest. The result was a trust and relationship that kept the sheep following the shepherd. The sheep were attuned to the shepherd's voice to the point that even if they were temporarily mixed with another herds, at the call of the shepherd they would separate and follow them. They are called and gifted to care for the spiritual well-being of a local body of God's people.

5. **Teachers, Etc.**

The last place of responsibility in the Church is that of teachers. Several teachers existed in the Church. Those that are taught by preachers incidentally grew in the gospel becoming teachers who have the ability to duplicate what has been taught, II Tim. 2:2

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: DEFINITIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

I Cor. 12:4-7; Rom. 12:6-8

***“Now there are diversities of gifts,
but the same Spirit.”***

I Cor. 12:4

1. The Gift of Wisdom

The spiritual gift of wisdom, like the gift of knowledge, is also referred to as the “word of wisdom” or “utterance of wisdom.” The Greek word for wisdom is sophia and it refers to the intimate understanding of God's Word and His commandments which results in holy and upright living. In the context of 1 Cor. 12:8, it means to speak to the life of an individual or to a specific situation with great understanding and a righteous perspective, with the goal of guiding others toward a life of holiness and worship.

2. The Gift of Knowledge

The spiritual gift of knowledge is also known as the “word of knowledge” or “utterance of knowledge.” The Greek word for this gift is Gnosis and it simply means knowledge and understanding. The Scriptural emphasis in 1 Cor. 12:8 is on the ability to speak this knowledge to others in a given situation. In the opening passages of 1 Corinthians, Paul spoke of knowledge and recognized that the highest form of knowledge among men is the Gospel of Jesus Christ (i.e. the testimony about Christ, cf. 1 Corinthians 1:4-7). What we can conclude then is the gift of knowledge is an

understanding of the things in this world and in our lives that is founded in the Gospel and rooted in the Scriptures. This gift is closely related to the gift of wisdom which is alluded to by Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.

3. Gift of faith

The gift of faith is the special gift whereby the Spirit provides Christian with extra ordinary confidence in God's promises, power, and presence so that they can take heroic stance for the future of Gods work in the Church.

This gift is exhibited by one with a strong and unshakeable confidence in God, His Word, and His Promises. Examples of people with the gift of Faith include; Stephen, Paul, and all the martyrs.

4. The Gift of Healing

The Disciples were given authority to heal and cast out demons. The spiritual gift of healing is an intimate one as it reveals the heart and compassion of God. Jesus is the Great Healer and Physician and during His ministry on earth, He healed countless people and cast out demons (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16; 9:35, Mark 1:34). Healings reveal that God is near to His people and He cares about their sufferings. Healings are meant to draw people to God through His Son Jesus Christ. God wants those healed to respond in faith with thanksgiving and love as the leper did in Luke 17:15-19, and as the demon-possessed man did in Mark 5:18-20. By God's grace, physical healing should lead to

spiritual healing (faith in Jesus) and eternal life with Him in heaven.

5. The Gift of Miracles

The spiritual gift of miracles is described in Scripture much like the gift of healing. It is found in 1 Corinthians 12:10 and the Greek phrase *energēmata dynamēon* literally translates “workings of powers.” The double plural most likely means that these gifts were diverse and were not permanently available at the will of the gifted believer, but instead were bestowed at various times and circumstances. Thus, the gifts are subject to the divine will of God and His purposes and are not decided by the one who performs the miraculous works.

Those with the spiritual gift of miracles often have a heightened sensitivity to the presence and power of God through His Holy Spirit. They have a special measure of faith and desire for God to reveal Himself and draw many to faith in His Son Jesus Christ. They take care not to draw attention to themselves or have a following of people, but are constantly pointing others to Jesus. Those with this gift understand that God is Sovereign and He can work when and how He desires, but they make sure they are available and listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. This gift is often accompanied by prayer and strong petition by these individuals for God to reveal His glory to people. They do not claim power themselves, but always give credit

and glory to God for His mighty works. Often God will deliberately humble them to keep them relying on His grace and pointing to His Son, rather than miracles. See also 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28-29; Acts 1:8; Galatians 3:5.

6. The Gift of Prophecy

The spiritual gift of prophecy is an extraordinary and unique gift. Paul says in 1Cor. 14:1 to “Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.” This gift is a blessing to the church and should not be quenched or despised (1 Thessalonians 5:20). The Greek word for the gift of prophecy is *propheteia* which is the ability to receive a divinely inspired message and deliver it to others in the church. These messages can take the form of exhortation, correction, disclosure of secret sins, prediction of future events, comfort, inspiration, or other revelations given to equip and edify the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 14:3-4, 24-25). Again, they do not constitute the authoritative Word of God, but are the human interpretation of the revelation that was received. They are spoken in human words through a human mind which is why they must be tested against the Scriptures (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21).

The Holy Spirit gives the gift of prophecy to some believers to make God's heart known and to edify the church. This gift is for the benefit of both believers and unbelievers and is a sign that God is truly among His church (1 Corinthians 14:22-25). Those with this gift

are sensitive to both the prompting of the Holy Spirit and the needs of the Church. They should be humble and continually study the Scriptures in order to test these revelations before speaking them. When they do speak, they should allow and even expect others to weigh what is said against the Scriptures and interpret the message accordingly. In this way the church may be continually built up together in unity (1 Corinthians 14:4, 26). See also Romans 12:6, 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:1-5, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:10-11.

7. Gift of Discernment

To have the spirit of discernment is to possess the ability to judge well. This means moral perception, insight, and the practical application of knowledge, 1 Jn. 4:1. Believers were exhorted not to believe every spirit but to test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. See also Col. 1:8, 1 Tim. 4:1.

8. The Gift of Tongues

The spiritual gift of tongues is more accurately called the gift of languages. The Greek word for tongues is *glossa*, or *glossolalia*, which literally means “tongue.” When it is used in the New Testament addressing the subject of spiritual gifts it carries the contextual meaning of “languages.” Speaking in tongues is the utterance of prayer or of a message glorifying God, typically spoken to God (1 Corinthians 14:2), in a language that is unknown to the one speaking it. The

Holy Spirit gives some believers the spiritual gift of tongues to glorify God and, with the help of an interpreter, to edify the church. This gift is dealt with extensively in the Scriptures. 1 Cor. 12:10, 30, 14:4, 39, Acts 2:4, Acts 19:6.

9. The Gift of Interpretation

The spiritual gift of interpretation was given by the Holy Spirit to certain individuals to reveal messages spoken in an unknown tongue for the building up of the church. Like the gift of prophecy, tongues that are interpreted have the effect of encouraging and blessing the church to love and serve God more deeply and effectively. See also 1 Corinthians 12:10, 30; 14:1-28.

The spiritual gift of interpretation of tongues is found alongside the gift of speaking in tongues in 1 Corinthians 12:10. The Greek word for interpretation is *hermeneia* and simply means to interpret, explain, or expound some messages that are not able to be understood in a natural way. Thus, this spiritual gift is the supernatural ability to understand and explain messages uttered in an unknown language.

CONCERNING SPEAKING IN TONGUES

*“Study to show thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needed not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth”*

II Tim. 2:15

Speaking in tongues in religious organizations has been very rampant and confusing in today's world. It is important to have a careful study of the subject for proper understanding. This section shall take a careful look at the usage of tongues and their applications in the New Testament Church.

1. **Tongues on Pentecost day: Acts. 2:1-12**

The first miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit to have manifested **on** Pentecost day is the gift of tongues, because communication is very important in life. God needed to communicate with people in a way they could understand.

*“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to
speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them
utterance”*

Acts. 2:4

PLEASE NOTE:

They spoke with different tongues, that is to say, the language of the people who were present, not angelic or heavenly languages as some people may presume,
Acts. 2:6-8

There were seventeen nations or cities whose

languages were spoken including Pathians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotemia, Judaea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, pamphylia, Libya, Cyrene, Rome, Jews, Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians. **Acts 2:9-11.**

What they spoke were understood to be the wonderful works of God, meaning that they were preaching the gospel using the languages of those present, being their mother tongues so that the people can understand the gospel clearly from the languages they were born with, Acts. 2:11.

2. Tongues in the Church at Corinth: I Cor. 14:2-28

In the Church at Corinth, Paul explains tongues in two perspectives; ***with and without interpretations.*** He describes them according to their roles for the understanding of readers.

PLEASE NOTE: according to Paul,

1. He that speaks with an unknown tongue, speaks to God not men, no man understands him, because he speaks mysteries, vs. 2. A tongue speaker edifies himself not the Church, vs 4.
2. It is better to prophesy than to speak in tongues because great is the man that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpretes for the edification of the Church, vs. 5.
3. **The question:** how does speaking in tongues profit the Church without understanding? Vs. 6. Except your tongue is understood, how shall your idea be known, ***you would be speaking into the air, vs. 9. Because***

every language in the world spoken has its significance in communication only when it is understood, vs. 10.

4. If a language or tongue spoken in the Church is not understood, the speaker is a *barbarian as well as the hearer*, it makes no sense or meaning, vs 11. So anyone who speaks in a tongue should interpret for edification, vs 13.
5. If you pray in an unknown tongue in the church, your understanding is not fruitful, otherwise, how can one say amen to your tongues, vs 14-17, therefore, no matter the many tongues you may be endowed with, few words that are understood are far better than thousands of words in an unknown tongue, vs 18-19.
6. Therefore tongues are for signs, not to believers but to unbelievers just as it was on the day of Pentecost, vs 22. ***Now the big question:*** if the whole church gathers and everyone speaks with tongues, and a stranger or an unbeliever comes in, ***will they not say that you are mad? The*** stranger can only be blessed if he understands, thus worships and glorifies God, Vs 23-25.
7. In conclusion therefore, tongues should be interpreted otherwise, **let the speaker keep silence in the Church**, vs 27-28.

HOW ABOUT TONGUES AND PROPHECIES IN THE WORLD OF TODAY?

Having the understanding on how God used spiritual gifts in the Church, especially tongues and prophecies, we have to look at the application of these gifts in the Churches and in our contemporary society. Because there is hardly a religious body today without the presence of a prophetess, prayer warrior, dreamer, tongue specialist and all sort of miraculous performers. This is so because the people of this generation, like the Greeks, really agitate for signs and wonders. Some of these agitators are vulnerable members of the society who may be taken advantage of due to their ignorance, spiritual attacks and sicknesses. Most religious leaders and prayer houses capitalize on these weaknesses to take advantage of their expectant audiences.

The challenge is that tongues and prophecies of today mostly centers on life threatening sentiments, wealth, political glorification, etc, as against salvation and soul saving which was the concentration in bible times. Prophecies and tongues have scattered families, marriages, businesses and relationships, thereby, injecting more suspicion and regrets into the world. So many people have prophesied falsehood, hence, raising concerns as to whether the spirit of God is still in charge of their actions. For the sake of the faith of many that have been shaken and for the hope of eternal salvation which is paramount for everyone, permit me to diagnose into

scriptural provisions regarding this unanswered question of life. Please note the following three fundamental things about God speaking to us this days:

1. **God Still Speaks Today**

God has never stopped speaking to man. Every human generation must understand the source that God uses in speaking to them so that they will not make the mistake of listening to the wrong source and possibly confusing themselves with the wrong information. You really need to be sure if the voice you listen to is of God because many people have taken advantage of His voice. Now hear this,

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in this last days spoken unto us by His son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds.”

Heb. 1:1

God's spokesman today is **JESUS CHRIST** as against His spokespersons in the past who were the prophets. Jesus Christ is the **author and finisher** of our faith and we remember that faith cometh by hearing the word of God, Heb. 12:2; Rom. 10:17.

If you want to hear from God in this generation, you must listen to His publications given to the world through His Minister of Information, Jesus Christ the Son, otherwise, you may make the mistake of taking information from the wrong source who may claim to be sent by God. Fake news is rampant and readily affordable but truth is scarce. The publication of God through Jesus is the word of God, specifically, the New Testament depending on what you want. Please read this from the bible,

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the

doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.” I Jn. 1:9

God's publication contains all the information, news and current affairs that you may think of. All you need is to study carefully so as to extract the needed information at any point in time, whether for sickness, business, relationship, safety and salvation. Read this from II Pet. 1:3 which says, ***“According as His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”***

2. Tongues and Prophecies were temporal

These two sources of divine inspiration were not meant to last forever. They were meant to serve a purpose and to cease thereafter. Just as God started the world miraculously then allowed it to function non miraculously, He also designed the Church to commence miraculously through tongues, prophecies and miraculous performances, then allow it to function non miraculously through the word of God. Read this from the bible,

“Charity never fails:

but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail, whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

I Cor. 13:8-10

As at the time of this publication, God used His prophets and tongue speakers to proclaim his word until the complete collation of the word into one which gives us the perfect thing, **The Scripture**. It is called the ***perfect law of liberty***, Jm. 1:25. This is why the word perfect in I Cor.

13:10 is used in the neuter gender, showing that it refers to a thing, not a person whether masculine or feminine. As soon as all the prophecies and tongues needed were accomplished, God's will here was done.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of god may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” II Tim. 3:16-17.

3. Injunction: Neither Add nor Subtract

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the pleagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

Rev. 22:18-19

This implies that god never wanted any further prophecies or tongues as in were in the past. He is the one speaking to us and so He gives us the source and method of communication. We are to listen and hear him. Even in the Old Testament, being aware that people will capitalize on every human weakness, God instructed that no addition or subtraction be done to His commandments, Deut. 4:2. There is absolutely nothing a prophet would say now that has not been written.

4. There may be non-standardized forms of inspiration

This may include things like dreams, tickles, feelings, emotional twist and more which may affect our daily lives becoming pointers to some expectations. Believers must be careful with these factors because they are not God's standard for revelations in our generation. The fact that a dream works for you today is not a guarantee that it will always work. God's standard is His word which will never fail. This was the case in the past in which God instructed His people thus, ***"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass... Thou shall not harken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart..."*** Deut. 13:1-5

**COMPARING MIRACULOUS SIGNS
AND WONDERS, THEN AND NOW**
By Min. Aniekan Johnny

*For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets,
and shall shew great signs and wonders;
in somuch that, if it were possible, they shall
deceive the very elect.*

Matt. 24:24

(De 13:1; Mt 24:5, 11; Jn 6:37; 10:28-29;

Ro 8:28-30; 2Th 2:9-11; 2Tim 2:19; Rev 13:13)

There has been random agitation for miraculous signs and wonders in our contemporary society, especially when people are being faced with serious life threatening challenges like sickness, spiritual attack, delayed marriages and childlessness. Complications in the affairs of life leading to trials will temptations always be there. Therefore, believers must know how to tackle each and every of them using the word of God. In out text above Christ forewarned that here shall arise fake or false Christ and prophets who shall show great signs and wonders such that if possible the Christians will be made to fall away. Our generation is the time and our world has been facing these over the years. Our prayers is that LORD please show us your mercy such that we will not be part of the elect that shall be lead astray in Christ name amen. We know that there is nothing that exist in its originality without existing in its fake or false form. Miracles are no exception.

This lesson is aimed at reminding you about the word of the Lord to be aware so as not to fall away through vain deceits. There were real miracles performed in the first century and there are fake miracles performed in our generation. To know the truth we must compare the two

and know which is right.

Comparison means a consideration or estimate of similarities between two things. Miracle refers to an extraordinary and astonishing happening that cannot be explained by any natural or scientific laws but is attributed to the presence and action of an ultimate or divine power.

Examples of Miracles in the 1st Century

There were uncountable logs of miracles in the first century such as healing, raising the dead even after four days, walking on water, turning water into wine, stilling the wind in the water, feeding of 5,000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fishes, transfiguration, resurrection after 3 days, entering the house where the disciples were without passing through the door, appearing and disappearing to the disciples, ascension into heaven, etc.

The modern day miracles are faith healings, expulsion or an attempted expulsion of a supposed evil spirit from a person or place. Note that neither Christ nor the Apostles gave a miraculous sign to prove their son-ship of God or their power and authority. They did it as directed by God, Matt. 4:1-11. The comparison between the miracles of the first Century and the present day miracles shall be viewed in the light of four factors as follows:

1. **The Personalities** that performed miracles in the first century originated from God, they were notable as originating from God.
 - a.) Jesus Christ performed miracles as the son of God. While He was on earth his divinity was known to all,

John 5:18; 10:33. He is the Son of God, John 10:35-37), the Messiah, John 4:25-26 and the Saviour of the world, John 14:6. He proved divinity by the miracles he performed. As the son of God, He had overriding Power over nature. He stilled the storm, Matt 8:26-27. He had overriding power over material things, feeding 5,000 men with a few loaves and fishes, Luke 9:10-17. He had overriding Power over all manner of diseases, Matt. 8:16. He had overriding power over the spirit world, Matt 8:16. He had overriding Power over life and death, Jn. 11:14-44. He had overriding power over all forms of Healing, raising the dead even after 4 days, walking on water, turning water into wine, stilling the wind in the water, feeding of 5,000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fishes, transfiguration, resurrection after 3 days, entering the house where the disciples were without passing through the door, appearing and disappearing to the disciples, ascension into heaven.

In John 21: 25, there are also many other things which Jesus did, that were not written and if all were to be written, even the world itself could not contain such books, Am 7:10; Jn. 20:30. In Verse 24, the disciple testifies of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true, Jn 19:35; 3Jo 1:12, 14. These and more that he did were not merely powers, but performed in confirmation of his divinity, Jn. 20:30-31. Christ did these miracles because he is the son of God and had the spirit without measure. In John 3: 33-35, He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true, Ro 3:4; 1Jo 5:10.

Jn. 3:34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of

God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him, Jn. 1:16; 7:16. Jn. 3:35, the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand, Mt 11:27; 28:18; Lu 10:22; Jn. 5:20-22; 13:3; 17:2; Heb. 2:8)

b) The Apostles were the 13 special disciples whose qualifications are stated in Acts 1:14-26. They also performed miracles in the first century when they received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; including Apostle Paul who was chosen thereafter for the gentiles. (Acts 9:1-22) Those on whom the Apostles lay their hands on: These group of Christians also perform miracles, Acts 6:1-8; 8:5-24, for example, Phillip. Members of the House of Cornelius: These were the representatives of the gentile for the direct outpouring of the Holy Spirit from heaven, Acts 10:1-48. The above 4 personalities were those given the spirit by God to perform miracles in the first century.

Others without authority from God include, those possessed by evil spirits, Acts 16:15-17. Those who brought unto the sick hand kerchiefs or aprons from the body of Apostle Paul, Acts 19:11-12. The vagabond Jews and exorcists who imitated Paul but were overcome by the evil spirits, Acts 19:13-17.

Personalities who claim to perform miracle today are neither notable personalities nor from God. Since all the above personalities are dead except Christ who lives in heaven, anybody that perform miracle today will fall into any of the categories below: Satan, Job 1, False prophets, Matt. 24:24, False Apostles, 1Cor. 11:13-16, Deceitful workers (2Cor. 11:13-16; Ac 15:24; Ro 16:18; 2Co 2:17; Ga 1:7; 6:12; Php 1:15; 3:2; Tit 1:10-11; 2Pe 2:1; 1Jo 4:1; Re

2:2), False Christ, (Matt. 24:24; De 13:1; Mt 24:5,11; Joh 6:37; 10:28-29; Ro 8:28-30; 2Th 2:9-11; 2Ti 2:19; Re 13:13), Enchanters, Lev. 19:26; Nu 23:23, those possessed by Familiar Spirits 2Chron. 33:6, Witchcraft, 1Sa 15:23; Gal. 5:20, Sorcerer (Elymas Acts 10:13-10), Soothsayer (Balaam Jos 13:22), those possessed by the spirit of divination (2Ki 17:17), time observers (Deut. 18:10; Le 18:21; 19:26,31; 20:27; De 12:31; Isa 8:19), Magicians (Exod.8:7-19), Astrologers (Dan. 4:7).

The above are not from God but from Satan. Thus the personalities who claim to perform miracles today are not from God. In 2Cor. 11: 13-15; For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ, (Ac 15:24; Ro 16:18; 2Co 2:17; Ga 1:7; 6:12; Php 1:15; 3:2; Tit 1:10-11; 2Pe 2:1; 1Jo 4:1; Re 2:2). And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, (Ga 1:8), Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.(2Co 3:9; Phi. 3:19

2. **Purpose** of the First Century Miracles were divine in nature. To commence a Project/Era. God always use miracle to commence a new era in his plan. These are seen in creation, the beginning of the Mosaic religion and the beginning of the Christian religion. The modern day miracle is neither divine in nature nor to begin a project or an era but human and imitative in nature. The Purpose of the first century miracle was to confirm God's spokesman to unbelievers. Jesus Christ and the

Apostles did their miracles to confirm that they were sent by God among the unbelievers. In John 20: 30-31; And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book, (Joh 21:25), vs 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name, (Lu 1:4; Joh 3:15-16; 5:24; 1Pe 1:8-9). The modern day miracle performers do it to convince unbelievers and to show off their power. The purpose of the First century miracles were to communicate new truth and bear witness to the performers and principles. God used the miracles of the first century to confirm to the world that the message and the messengers were valid and authentic from Him, Heb. 1-4). God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will, (Mk 16:20; Ac 2:22,43; 14:3; 19:11; Ro 15:18-19; 1Co 2:4; 12:4,7,11; Eph. 1:5,9). The purpose of the modern day miracles is not to communicate any truth for all the truth for Christians has been communicated, (Rev. 22:18-19). The purpose of the first century miracles was given as a sign to makes unbelievers to believe the new truth that they have not heard nor seen as being from God, 1Cor. 14:22; John 5:36. The purpose of the modern day miracles is not for unbelievers nor to reveal a new truth but to reveal a new false prophet.

- 3. The type of miracles performed** in the first century was different from the types performed today. In the

first century, variety of miracles were performed by Christ and the Apostles, they were not limited. Healing, raising the dead even after 4 days, walking on water, turning water into wine, stilling the wind in the water, feeding of 5,000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fishes, transfiguration, resurrection after 3 days, entering the house where the disciples were without passing through the door, appearing and disappearing to the disciples, ascension into heaven, etc, (John 2:1;-11;11:1-46; Luke 8:22-25; John 6:1-21;9:1-7; Luke 5:12-16; John 21: 25). The modern day miracles are just make belief of healing only. However, the Covid 19 has put an end to all forms of miraculous healing as nobody has been able to claim the healing of Covid 19 and other diseases. A Totality and boundless miracles were performed. Jesus Christ never left a man half healed or a leper half cleansed neither did Christ and his disciples fail to heal anyone because of lack of faith of the sick. Genuine New Testament miracles were complete, permanent and boundless even without faith, (Luke 4:33-41; Mark 9:20-.27). The modern day miracle performers have their limitations hence they do not perform all miracles. The Rapidity and Unplanned nature of miracles: Christ and his Apostles were able to perform miracles instantly without delays and unplanned. (Acts 3:1-12; Mark 2:12; John 4:46; Mark 5:29; Acts 3:7-8). Modern day miracle performers planned their miracles to perform. Undeniable and Verifiable Miracles. Even the enemies of Christ and the persecutors of the Apostles could not

deny the notable miracles that took place in the first century. (John 11:37-51; Acts 4:13-18)

4. The Nature of Tongues Spoken: The nature of the tongues (Greek: Glossa) spoken in the first century is quite different from the tongues spoken in modern miracles episode. First century Tongues were the natural languages known and spoken by various races and nations. The Pentecost was a miracle of speaking unlearn languages and not the miracle of hearing, where about 15 different languages were spoken where those that hear and understood were born, (Acts 2:4-8). The modern day tongue speaking are not national tongues and languages that could be understood. First century tongues had syntax, synonym and antonym and could be translated or interpreted as actual languages. (1Cor. 14:21,27; Isa. 28:11-12; Ac 2:4; 10:46; 22:9). Modern day tongue speaking has neither syntax nor synonym and antonym and cannot be interpreted nor translated. Please note that the word UNKNOWN found in 1Cor. 14:2 is not found in the original manuscript Septuagint. It was added by the translators of King James, it is not found in any other translations of the Bible. The first century tongue speaking came unexpectedly and unplanned. Both the speakers and the hearers were amazed at what happened. (Acts 2:1-10; 10:42-46).

While modern tongue speaking are sought for, learned and planned for. First century tongue speaking came on the last days through the pouring out of the Holy spirit on All Flesh- the Jews and the Gentiles in accordance with the

promise of God.(Isa 44:3; Eze. 11:19; 36:27; Joe 2:28-29; Zech. 12:10; Joh 7:38; Ac 10:45; 21:9; Acts 2:1-17; Acts 10). The present tongue speaking is not the promise of God but the fulfilment of the coming of the false Christs, and false prophets at the end of time. (Matt. 24: De 13:1; Mt 24:5,11; Joh 6:37; 10:28-29; Ro 8:28-30; 2Th 2:9-11; 2Ti 2:19; Re 13:13). First Century tongue speaking came through the laying on of the hands of the Apostles. (Acts 6:1-8 ;8:14-22;19:1-7). Present day tongue speakers are neither an apostle nor those that the apostles laid their hands upon hence, fake. The first century tongues speaking were given to the speakers as gifts for a specific purpose. (1Cor. 12:1-10; 14:1-3; Mr 16:17; Ac 2:4; 10:46; Ro 12:6; 1Co 12:28-29; 13:1-2; 14:1,29; Ga 3:5; 1Jo 4:1). Modern tongue speaking are not gifts but are taught and learnt and artificial and psychological. No money was collected during the gathering. One of the most obvious differences between today's "healing campaign" and those in the Bible has to do with money. One does not read in the New Testament where the apostles or others took up a collection as a part of their "healing campaign. (Acts 3:6). The present day miracle crusades always collect money at the end of the crusade which shows that they are out to collect the money not to give healing.

Today God do answer the prayers of the saints to heal the sick and provide for the needy, protect his own when men pray and not faint. (Mark 9:27), James 5:13-16. Matt. 18: 18-20, verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto

you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.(Mt 5:24; 1Jo 3:22; 5:14). For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

FOUR WAYS OF HEALING

There are four particular ways or methods of healing applicable to humans from God. The Lord applies any of these four ways at His discretion depending on prevailing circumstances at that point in time.

1. Miraculous Healing

This has to do with healing that supersedes the laws of nature. So many people in the bible were miraculously healed without prayers or medication. Examples include, the lame man at the beautiful gate, woman with the issue of blood, man at the pool of Bethesda.

2. Medical Healing

At so many instances, God uses medical personnel as well as drugs to administer healing to His children. He endows medical doctors, traditional doctors and nurses to administer healing. Truly, these persons will treat but God grant the healing according to His will. He also gives drug manufacturers the knowledge to manufacture and prescribe drugs to humans. People of God must respect this method as God's way of showing His compassion to man in healing. Luke was a medical doctor.

3. Healing by Prayer of Faith

This is another method that God uses to administer healing that is common to them that believe in Him. The prayer of faith is capable of changing circumstances and returning the sick to health, Jm. 5:14-17.

4. Natural Healing

This method or approach surpasses science and faith. It requires nothing like prayer or drugs. Some sicknesses comes and goes without the administration or application of any known items or knowledge. It can only be said that nature has taken care of such cases.

BE CAREFUL!

1. Of False Prophets who come with great signs

Matthew 24:4,5,14,24

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

2. Ministers of Satan who transform to angels of light

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of

righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

3. The Times and sound Doctrine

2 Timothy 4:3-4

For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

4. To watch over yourselves and the Flock

Acts 20:28-30

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.

5. Not to believe every spirit

1 John 4:1-6

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. 4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the

world. 5 They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

6. And watch out for false prophets

Matthew 7:15-16

Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them...

7. Of false teachers among you

2 Peter 2:1-3, 17-22

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 3 In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping. 17 These people are springs without water and mist driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. 18 For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of the flesh, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. 19 They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for “people are slaves to whatever has mastered them.” 20 If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again

entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. 21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. 22 Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud."

8. Of the son of perdition

II Thess. 2:3, 7-12

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. For the mystery of iniquity doth already: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming...

YOU CAN GIVE YOUR LIFE TO JESUS

By going through the following steps

- 1. Hear the Gospel**
- 2. Believe the Gospel**
- 3. Repent of your sins**
- 4. Confess your faith in Jesus**
- 5. Be baptized for the remission of your sins**
- 6. Continue steadfastly in worship and enjoy
the amazing grace in Christ**

***Rom. 10:10,17; Acts. 2:38-42;
Mark 16:15,16; II Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:1-4; Rom. 8:1-3***

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ROMAN 16:16

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