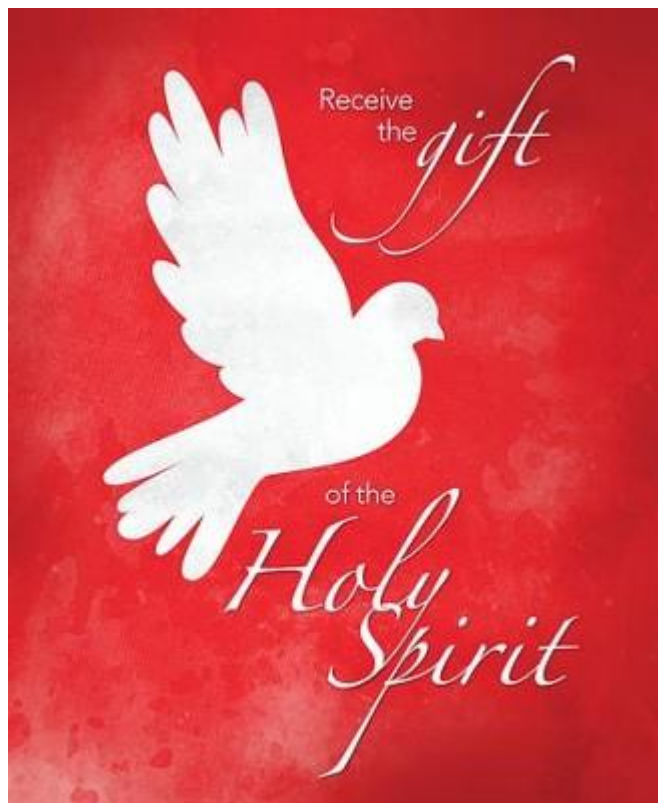


DR. ALVIN'S PUBLICATIONS

THE GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BY PASTOR DAVID LIM

A SUMMARY BY DR. ALVIN ANG



CONTENTS

<i>Part I: Introduction.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Part II: Background Assumptions.....</i>	<i>6</i>
Assumption 1: Believers are Equipped to do God’s Work.....	6
Assumption 2: All Believers are Priests.....	6
Assumption 3: This Community is a Prophetic one	6
<i>Part III: Different Views of the Gifts</i>	<i>7</i>
1. Natural Abilities	7
2. Supernatural.....	7
3. Incarnational	7
<i>Part IV: Gifts from the Holy Spirit</i>	<i>8</i>
Gift 1: The Message of Wisdom	8
Gift 2: The Message of Knowledge	9
Gift 3: Spiritual Faith	9
Gift 4: Gifts of Healings.....	10
Gift 5: Miraculous Powers.....	10
Gift 6: Prophecy	11
Gift 7: Distinguishing between Spirits.....	11
Gift 8: Tongues and Interpretation	12
<i>Part V: Characteristics of Gifts.....</i>	<i>13</i>
Gifts must be Evaluated by the Congregation	13
Gifts must be used together as a Congregation and As A Whole.....	13
Gifts must be Shared Together In Love	14
The Holy Spirit Distributes these Gifts	14
Different Personalities Express Gifts Differently	14
Gifts Must Show Practical Results	14
Key Focus of Giftings	14
<i>Part VI: Guidelines for Using These Gifts.....</i>	<i>15</i>
General Guidelines	15

Specific Guidelines for using the Gift of Prophecy	17
Specific Guidelines for using the Gift of Tongues	18
Key instructions:	18
1. Gifts of tongues MUST be interpreted	18
2. Gifts of tongues encourages worship (IF interpreted)	18
3. Gifts of tongues MUST be exercised in love.	19
4. Gifts of tongues is RULED OUT in corporate worship	19
5. Gifts of tongues is allowed only “one at a time” in ministry to the congregation (1 Cor. 14:31).	19
Part VII: Fruits of the Spirit	20
1. LOVE.....	20
2. JOY	20
3. PEACE.....	20
4. PATIENCE.....	21
5. KINDNESS	21
6. GOODNESS	22
7. FAITHFULNESS	22
8. GENTLENESS	23
9. SELF CONTROL	23
Part VIII: Relationship between Gifts and Fruits.....	24
Gifts and fruits are carefully interspersed.....	24
Gifts and fruits CANNOT be Separated	24
Fruit becomes the method of Exercising the Gifts.....	24
Fruit of the Spirit Produces Spiritual Maturity	25
Fruit has to do with growth and character.....	26
life-style is the key test of genuineness.	26
Part IX: How to Use These Gifts	27
1. Provide opportunities	27
2. Create Awareness	27
3. Develop a Readiness to Share.....	27
4. Create a spirit of acceptance	28
5. Evaluate	28

6. Spend Time in Prayer	28
7. Understand cultural differences	29
8. Strong worship releases gifts.....	29
9. Often I will hear from God first, give opportunity for others to share, then affirm what God has already said to me.....	30
10. The channel for spiritual gifts is ministry	30
11. Focus on the whole process	30
<i>References</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>About the Authors.....</i>	<i>32</i>

PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. This article is a summary of Pastor David Lim's work in Lim (1994).
2. This article talks about the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit.
3. The focus is on Paul's teachings on gifts in the Church and in the believer's daily life-style, how gifts and fruit interrelate, and how to exercise gifts.
4. Paul is intensely practical.
5. In the area of gifts he says nothing that is merely theoretical.
6. He focuses on activating the gifts, developing the fruit, walking in the Spirit, and building the believers in the local church to maturity.
7. Biblical teaching without practice is disappointment, practice without solid teaching is dangerous.
8. On the other hand, scholarship should lead to practice, and practice may enlighten scholarship.
9. Paul saw the Church as an interdependent, interactive organism-with Christ as it's head-walking righteously and powerfully in anticipation of the Lord's return.
10. Thus, to grasp Paul's view of the Church, one must understand the gifts.

PART II: BACKGROUND ASSUMPTIONS

- Lim (1994) made three assumptions before discussing the Gifts and Fruits of the spirit.
- Basically, the assumptions are a description of what happened during the day of Pentecost¹; when the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus's disciples.

ASSUMPTION 1: BELIEVERS ARE EQUIPPED TO DO GOD'S WORK

- Upon receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, believers were equipped with power to do God's work.
- God desired to raise up: priests, tabernacle craftsmen, military leaders, kings, prophets, musicians.
- The purpose of the anointing was to equip people for service.

ASSUMPTION 2: ALL BELIEVERS ARE PRIESTS

- God desired that all Israel would become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exod. 19:5-6).
- The priestly role included worship, prayer, teaching, edifying, reconciling, counseling, loving, building relationships, and bringing hurting people to God.

ASSUMPTION 3: THIS COMMUNITY IS A PROPHETIC ONE

- Paul said, 'You can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged' (1 Cor. 14:s 1).
- The church serves in a prophetic role, bringing God's presence and powerful Word to sinners, to ethical issues, and to nations and individuals.

¹ The Christian holy day of Pentecost, which is celebrated fifty days after Easter Sunday, commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, as described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1–31). (Wikipedia 2020)

PART III: DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE GIFTS

1. NATURAL ABILITIES

- One view sees the gifts as natural abilities.
- For example, a singer has the gift of music or a physician (via science) has the gift of healing.
- But human talent alone can never change the world.

2. SUPERNATURAL

- Another view sees gifts as totally supernatural.
- This view denies human involvement, saying the Spirit bypasses the mind.
- It sees the flesh as evil and capable of only distortion.
- A danger here is that few will have the courage to exercise the gifts.
- Most will feel unworthy, viewing the gifts as mystical or beyond their comprehension.
- They will fear making a mistake.
- However, sharing a gift is no proof of holiness or of spiritual attainment.

3. INCARNATIONAL

1. A third view is biblical: The gifts are incarnational.
2. That is to say, God works through humans.
3. Believers submit their minds, hearts, souls, and strength to God.
4. They consciously, willingly surrender their all to Him.
5. The Spirit supernaturally enables them to minister beyond their abilities, at the same time expressing each gift through their life experience, character, personality, and vocabulary.

PART IV: GIFTS FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT

- There are many gifts.
- No list is meant to be exhaustive.
- All are complementary; none is complete in and of itself.
- **Teaching (and Preaching) Gifts:**
 - The message of wisdom
 - The message of knowledge
- **Ministry Gifts (to the church and world):**
 - Faith
 - Gifts of healings
 - Miraculous powers
 - Prophecy
 - Distinguishing between spirits
- **Worship Gifts:**
 - Different kinds of tongues
 - Interpretation of tongues

GIFT 1: THE MESSAGE OF WISDOM

- Teaching, seeking divine guidance, counseling, and addressing practical needs in church government and administration may offer occasions for the gift of wisdom.
- It must not be limited to church worship or classroom experiences, however.
- It teaches people to grow spiritually as they apply their hearts to wisdom and make choices leading to maturity.

- The gift, however, is a message, proclamation, or declaration of wisdom and does not mean that those ministering the message are necessarily wiser than others.
- Our faith must not rest on human wisdom (1 Cor. 2:5).
- If we lack wisdom, we are exhorted to ask God for it (James 1:5).
- Jesus promised His disciples “words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict” (Luke 21 :15).
- That this promise referred to a supernatural gift is shown by His command “not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves” (Luke 2 1: 14).
- The gift therefore goes beyond both human wisdom and human preparation.

GIFT 2: THE MESSAGE OF KNOWLEDGE

- This gift has to do with teaching the truths of the Word of God.
- It is not the product of study as such.
- Donald Gee described it as “flashes of insight into truth that penetrated beyond the operation of . . . unaided intellect.”
- The gift may include such things as God’s sharing of His secrets, as when He revealed to the Old Testament prophets a time of rain, an enemies’ plans, or secret sins of kings and servants.

GIFT 3: SPIRITUAL FAITH

- Fervent prayer, extraordinary joy, and unusual boldness accompany the gift of faith.
- It is not saving faith, but rather a miraculous faith for a special situation or opportunity, such as Elijah’s confrontation with the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:33-35).
- It can include special ability to inspire faith in others, as Paul did on board the ship in the storm (Acts 27~25).

GIFT 4: GIFTS OF HEALINGS

- In Acts many responded to the gospel and were saved after being miraculously healed.
- In the Greek, both “gifts” and “healings” are plurals.
- Therefore, it seems that no one is given the gift of healing.
- Rather, many gifts are available to meet the needs of specific cases at specific times.
- Sometimes God heals sovereignly and sometimes He heals according to the faith of the sick person.
- The one who prays for the sick person is just the agent; the sick person (whether sick physically or emotionally) is the one who needs and actually receives the gift.
- In every case, God alone must receive the glory.
- We, however, can join our faith with that of the sick person, and together set the climate of love and acceptance so that gifts of healing may flow.
- In the body of Christ are power and strength to meet the needs of the struggling member.
- This is the incarnational aspect of healing.

GIFT 5: MIRACULOUS POWERS

- Here Paul combines two plurals, of *dunamis* (deeds of mighty supernatural power) and *energema* (effectual results).
- This gift may have to do with providing protection, giving provision, casting out demons, altering circumstances, or passing judgment.
- The Gospels record miracles in the context of the manifestation of the messianic Kingdom (or rule), the defeat of Satan, the power of God, and the presence and work of Jesus.
- The Greek word for “miracle” (Gk. *semeion*) in John emphasizes its sign value to encourage people to believe and keep on believing.
- The Book of Acts emphasizes the continuation of that work in the Church, showing that Jesus is Victor.

GIFT 6: PROPHECY

- In 1 Corinthians 14:3 prophecy refers to a variety of Spirit-inspired spontaneous messages in the speaker's known language "for their strengthening [especially of faith], encouragement [especially to move ahead in faithfulness and love], and comfort [that cheers and revives hope and expectation]"
- By this gift the Spirit illumines the progress of God's kingdom, reveals the secrets of peoples' hearts, and puts the sinner under conviction (1 Cor. 14:24-25).
- A good Spiritual example is Acts 15:32, "Judas and Silas, who themselves were Gifts prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers."
- Those regularly used in the gift of prophecy were called prophets.
- However, any believer may exercise this gift.
- But it must be weighed carefully (and publicly) by "the others," that is, by the congregation (1 Cor. 14:29)"
- This evaluation should include what God's purpose is, so that everyone may learn and benefit.

GIFT 7: DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN SPIRITS

- "Distinguishing" and "spirits" are both plurals in the Greek.
- This indicates that there are a variety of ways this gift may be manifested.
- Since it is mentioned directly after prophecy, many scholars see it as a companion gift involved in the "weighing" (1 Cor. 14:29).
- It involves a supernaturally given perception, differentiating between spirits, with an emphasis on protecting us from the attacks of Satan and evil spirits (1 John 4:1).
- It allows us to use all the gifts and the Word of God to work against Satan in order to then make a full, free proclamation of the gospel.
- Like the other Gifts, this one does not raise an individual to a new level of ability.
- Nor does it give anyone the power to go around looking at people and telling of what spirit they are.

- It is a specific gift for a specific occasion.

GIFT 8: TONGUES AND INTERPRETATION

- The gift of tongues needs interpretation to be effective in the congregation.
- Some say that because these two gifts are listed last they are the least in importance.
- Such a conclusion is insupportable.
- All five gift lists in the New Testament have the gifts in a different order.
- In the gift of tongues the Holy Spirit touches our spirit.
- We find liberation to exalt God's goodness and we edify ourselves: We are built up spiritually as we speak.
- Then when the interpretation allows the congregation to understand what is being said, they are encouraged to worship.
- Praise more readily follows the gift of tongues and interpretation than it does the gift of prophecy.
- Prophetic utterances are more instructional.
- The basic difference between the phenomenon of tongues in Acts and in 1 Corinthians is purpose.
- The tongues in Acts were for self-edification, giving evidence that the disciples had indeed received the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, which was to clothe them "with power from on high" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5,8; 2:4).
- They did not need to be interpreted.
- In Corinth the purpose was to bless others in the congregation, making communication necessary.

PART V: CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTS

GIFTS MUST BE EVALUATED BY THE CONGREGATION

- The gifts manifested need to be evaluated.
- That in no way lessens their effectiveness, but rather allows the congregation to test their biblical truth and edification value.

GIFTS MUST BE USED TOGETHER AS A CONGREGATION AND AS A WHOLE

- Each believer is only one member of the body of Christ; each needs other members.
- Together they can do what one individual cannot do.
- No one person shares any gift in its total manifestation.
- Each needs the sharing of others as well.
- We notice also that the Bible does not draw lines between the gifts.
- “Encouraging” is part of the gift of prophecy in 1 Corinthians 14:3, yet in Romans 12:8 it is treated as a separate gift.
- The categories of gifts given above are not mutually exclusive.
- For example:
 - In 1 Corinthians 14: 1-5 the functional value of tongues and interpretation may be compared with prophecy in teaching (14:6-12), worship (14:13-19) evangelism (14:2 & 25), and ministry to the Body (14:26-33).
 - Teaching, ministry of the body of Christ to the Church and the world, and worship are three keys to a healthy local assembly.
 - If we have only two of these categories without the third we have imbalance and open ourselves to difficulties.
 - For example, if we have teaching and ministry without strong worship, we may lose much of the thrust of revival.
 - We may readily burn out in our zeal in serving.

- If we have teaching and worship without practical ministry, our members will become lazy, ingrown, ineffective, critical, and divisive.

GIFTS MUST BE SHARED TOGETHER IN LOVE

- Gifts must be shared in love because of the danger of miscommunication, even by those with the sincerest intentions.

THE HOLY SPIRIT DISTRIBUTES THESE GIFTS

- The Holy Spirit distributes all these gifts according to His creative power and sovereignty.

DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES EXPRESS GIFTS DIFFERENTLY

- Different personalities may express gifts differently in a variety of ministries.
- Even when people manifest the same gifts, they do it differently, with different results.

GIFTS MUST SHOW PRACTICAL RESULTS

- Paul is interested in practical results, that which will set the body of Christ free for discipline, evangelism, unity, and Christlikeness.

KEY FOCUS OF GIFTINGS

- Edification should be the Church's highest goal in its use of the gifts.
- Love builds up. The purpose of gifts is to build up.
- God's people must be supportive, open, forgiving, reaching out.
- Rather than focusing on whether a gift is fully from God, we ask the more vital question, How can I best meet the needs of others and touch sinners for Christ?
- Understanding this principle alone can set the Church free to manifest gifts.

PART VI: GUIDELINES FOR USING THESE GIFTS

GENERAL GUIDELINES

By looking at the parallel passages and adding 1 Peter 4: 10-11 we see the following thirteen guidelines:

1. We should exercise our ministry in proportion to our faith.
2. We should concentrate on our known ministries and develop them.
3. We must maintain the right attitudes: give generously, lead diligently, show mercy cheerfully.
4. We all have different functions in the body of Christ and must understand the relationship to the whole body.
5. Gifts are to edify all, not just the individual.
6. One must have no sense of superiority or inferiority, for every member is equally important.
7. The gifts are given to us, we do not attain them.
 - i. God's will and sovereignty determine distribution.
 - ii. His specific action of placing these gifts in the Church is shown by the following verbs: given (Rom. 12:6), appointed (1 Cor. 12:28), and gave (Eph. 4:11).
 - iii. Paul further affirms in 1 Corinthians 12:28-31 that we should concentrate on the known ministries God has given us.
8. At the same time, these are God-given manifestations, not human talents.
 - i. God continuously grants gifts as He wills.
 - ii. We should be open to them all.
 - iii. If we know what part of the Body we are and what our ministries are, we can then channel the gifts effectively.
9. Though we may exercise a gift to its fullest, apart from love, such exercise is futile.
 - i. Clearly, we have only partial knowledge; we can share only partial knowledge.
 - ii. Gifts are continually given according to one's measure of faith (not once for all).
 - iii. The gifts must be tested; they fall under the commands of our Lord.

- iv. The focus is the maturation of the church, not the greatness of the gift.
 - v. These truths should lead us to a humility, an appreciation for God and others, and an eagerness to obey Him.
10. Enabling ministries have a special function to set others free for their ministries and develop maturity in them.
- i. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers are gifts to the Church.
 - ii. They appear in historical order in the founding and establishing of the church, rather than some ranking of authority (1 Cor. 12:28).
11. We are to minister God's grace in its various forms.
- i. First Peter 1:6 reveals the Christians had suffered grief through its various forms; God has a special grace to minister to each grief.
 - ii. A faithful minister will know how to minister to the need.
 - iii. We are to choose carefully when, where, and how to best minister the grace of God.
12. We must minister confidently in the strength of the Lord.
- i. We must not be timid or do it in our own strength.
 - ii. This is similar to Romans 12 where we are to minister in proportion to our faith, but Peter goes on to say, speak as if you are speaking the "very words of God"! (1 Pet. 4:11).
13. Finally, God must have all the glory.
- i. All the gifts are Gifts graces with which God has blessed His Church.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR USING THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

1. First, prophecy must be clearly communicated so that it strengthens, encourages, and comforts (14:3).
2. Second, the needs of believers, unbelievers, and inquiring seekers must be considered.
 - Believers need to be instructed and edified (14:1-12) to give thanks along with other believers (14: 17), to mature in thinking (14:20), to minister a variety of gifts (14:26-33) to evaluate gifts (14:29), and to be discipled (14:31).
 - Unbelievers need to understand what is happening in a service (14:16), to awaken to the fact that God is speaking (14:22), and to have the secrets of the heart laid bare before God (14:25) so that they may believe.
 - Inquiring seekers need to understand what is happening in a service (14:16), to not be confused (14:23), and to know that God is truly among us (14:25).
3. Third, it is important not to react.
 - Paul says to the Corinthians, “eagerly desire spiritual gifts” (14:1), be zealous for them and channel the zeal to build the Church (14:12), and don’t forbid speaking in tongues (14:39).
 - Fear of extremes often causes churches to shrink from a complete gift ministry.
 - On the other hand, to zealously follow an untested position that has little biblical base is to ask for problems that will hinder the very revival we all seek.
4. Fourth, accountability must be demanded.
 - Throughout this chapter, Paul reveals that the corrections to excess are a healthy exercise of gifts, evaluation, and accountability.
 - We are responsible to others.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR USING THE GIFT OF TONGUES

- Paul contrasts the gifts of tongues and prophecy in four different functions in 1 Corinthians 14:
 - teaching (verses 6-12),
 - worship (verses 13-19),
 - signs for the unbeliever (verses 19-25),
 - and ministry to the local church (verses 26-33).
- He cautions against abuse of gifts and gives positive guidelines for their exercise.

KEY INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Gifts of tongues MUST be interpreted

- a. Spiritual Communication is complex.
- b. There must be clear communication
- c. It is easy to misunderstand intentions, attitudes, and words.
- d. The Corinthians had abused the gift.
- e. Some may have believed they were speaking in angelic languages (1 Cor. 13: 1), services may have been dominated by tongues (14:23) and speakers apparently interrupted each other to give their utterance in tongues, disregarding interpretation (14:27-28).
- f. Paul gives the analogy of flute, harp, or trumpet when played without a clear sound: There is no benefit to anyone else.
- g. In the local assembly, we need to be clear on God's direction and what He says to all of us.
- h. Paul reemphasizes the need for clarity of direction and instruction.
- i. Thus he uses prophecy to represent all gifts exercised in the known tongue.

2. Gifts of tongues encourages worship (IF interpreted)

- a. Tongues when interpreted encourage the congregation to worship (1 Cor. 14:2, 5, 14-15) and is a gift as valid as prophecy.

- b. Paul valued the gift of tongues for worship (1 Cor. 14:2), for self-edification (14:4), for praying (14: 14) for giving thanks (14:17), and as a sign to the unbeliever (14:22).
- c. Paul prayed, sang, praised, and spoke in tongues (14: 13-16).
- d. He speaks of the value of praising and praying in the Spirit and in the understanding.
- e. If the primary purpose of tongues is to praise God, tongues with interpretation will encourage others to worship.

3. Gifts of tongues MUST be exercised in love.

- a. Because of Corinthian selfishness, super-spirituality, and abuse of tongues, many problems arose.
- b. We are imperfect.
- c. There is no biblical basis for calling some gifts superior and some inferior.
- d. Each gift does its unique work if communicated properly.

4. Gifts of tongues is RULED OUT in corporate worship

- a. From 1 Corinthians 14:23-24, Paul was minimizing the use of tongues.
- b. Only two or three people at most should ever speak in tongues in a service for any reason.
- c. Thus, this rules out corporate worship in tongues.
- d. If 14:23 means everyone speaks in tongues “at the same time,” then 14:24 also refers to everyone prophesying “at the same time.”
- e. Obviously 14:24 cannot mean that because everyone prophesying “at the same time” would be seen as confusion, if not lunacy.

5. Gifts of tongues is allowed only “one at a time” in ministry to the congregation (1 Cor. 14:31).

- a. The Corinthian were not to dominate the whole ministry time with tongues by speaking in tongues “one at a time.”
- b. A limit is placed on two or at the most three utterances in tongues and interpretations (14:27).

PART VII: FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

1. LOVE

- Love is the foundation from which gifts can be ministered and the context in which the gifts are to be received and understood.
- It is a steadfast, freely given love.
- In fact, it is the ethical principle, the motivating force, and the proper methodology for all ministry.
- Without love there is little benefit to others and none to the person exercising the gift.

2. JOY

- Joy is the heart of worship:
- It turns drudgery into delight, lifts ministry to a higher plane, and puts sparkle in the ministry of the gifts.
- Paul speaks of rejoicing in truth (1 Cor. 15:6).
- The word is also closely connected to hope.
- Paul speaks of being joyful in hope (Rom. 12:12).
- It is the positive expectation that God is at work in the lives of fellow believers, a celebration of our ultimate victory in Christ.

3. PEACE

- This includes the ideas of harmony, health, wholeness, and well-being.
- In relationships, we are to live at peace with all men (Rom. 12:18); in exercise of gifts, God is not a God of disorder but of peace (1 Cor. 14:33); and in the assembly, we are to strive to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3).
- Peace is foundational to moving ahead in unity, to receiving the ministries of others, and to learning even through failure.

- The exercise of gifts should lead to greater unity and peace.

4. PATIENCE

- Patience with people.
- It includes long-suffering and forbearance that endures the misconduct of others and never seeks revenge.
- The Roman Christians were soon to face persecution.
- During stress and suffering Christians may have less patience with each other, so Paul urged them to be “patient in affliction” (Rom.12: 12).
- In sharing gifts Paul starts with patience with people and ends with patience with circumstances (1 Cor. 13:4, 7).
- It takes time for us as the Church to mature through all our differences, differences stemming from culture, education, even personality.
- Therefore, Paul urges us to be completely humble and gentle; be patient (Eph. 4:2).
- For full ministry in the Spirit, we need to learn together, make mistakes, grow, forgive, and confront in love without having a critical spirit. This takes patience.
- Whenever God’s power is manifested, it is important that we look to Him instead of looking at our inadequacies.
- Then we will not do hasty things or go to extremes that will hurt the Church.

5. KINDNESS

- Patience and kindness are coupled together in line one of Paul’s description of God’s love (1 Cor. 13:4).
- Paul urges us to follow Christ’s example, to be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving (Eph. 4:32).
- Harshness is not the way of the body of Christ.
- Mutual esteem and respect are.

- Kindness is a healing balm that unites us as we learn to appreciate each other.
- Even the gifts are the result of God's kindness to us.
- We do not deserve the gifts, nor do we deserve each other's kindness.
- We receive both with grateful hearts and then share both unconditionally.

6. GOODNESS

- This is generosity that flows out of a holy righteousness given by God.
- Paul says, "Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" (Rom. 12: 13).
- "Share with those in need" (Eph. 4:28).
- The basic reason for all the gifts is to bless others.
- Goodness, or generosity, brings a practical, down-to-earth caring about people where they are.
- The Early Church knew how to care for one another.
- If anything, it erred on the side of generosity.
- Although careless generosity is not good stewardship, our motive is to show generosity.
- A danger is that we show generosity in order to boast.
- In all our giving, we must have love, or it is of no benefit (1 Cor. 13:3).

7. FAITHFULNESS

- The gift of faith heads the category of five powerful gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:10 that have to do with the ministry of the body of Christ to one another.
- Through unity of faith we can attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4: 13).
- If we are committed to one another, God can truly pour forth the Spirit's blessings.

- Faith, hope, and love (1 Cor. 13: 13) are qualities by which we build relationships with each other.

8. GENTLENESS

- This means that humble gentleness is more concerned about others than oneself.
- Jesus said, “Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth” (Matt. 55).
- A meek person has a disciplined spirit.
- Potentially, all spiritual blessings are available to this person.
- While the word itself is not used in Romans, this gentle spirit is described in Romans 12:12-14 as able to persevere in affliction and persecution, faithfully serving in prayer and practical care.
- It is a gentleness that knows God is in control and does not take revenge (Rom. 12:17-21; Eph. 4:26).
- Instead of being rude, self-seeking, and easily angered, we show gentleness, protect others, and persevere (1 Cor. 13:5, 7).
- Our attitude toward each other is to be completely humble, gentle, and free from arrogance (2 Cor. 10: 1; Eph. 4:2).
- Too often spiritual manifestations have been expressed in harsh, manipulative, and authoritarian ways.

9. SELF CONTROL

- This includes control of sensual passions; thus it includes chastity.
- This emphasis is not in the gift passages of Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 through 14.
- Earlier treatment of this subject is thorough, however.

PART VIII: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GIFTS AND FRUITS

GIFTS AND FRUITS ARE CAREFULLY INTERSPERSED

- Gifts of fruit are intricately interwoven in the three gift passages (1 Cor. 13; Rom. 12:9-10; Eph. 4:2).
- In the gift passages and in Galatians the fruit qualities flow horizontally in ministry to one another.

GIFTS AND FRUITS CANNOT BE SEPERATED

- When gifts are emphasized at the expense of fruit, a terrible price is paid.
- Christian character, holy living, and relationships with fellow believers are pushed aside with the rationale that God blesses us with power.
- Thus the work of the Holy Spirit is diluted.
- We must not divorce power from holiness.
- God purifies us to use us.
- Christians whose lives are consistent and unfettered by carnality will be free from condemnation.
- They will have a good reputation.
- They will be powerful.

FRUIT BECOMES THE METHOD OF EXERCISING THE GIFTS

- All the fruit is wrapped up in love, and any gift, even in its fullest manifestation, apart from love is nothing.
- A genuine fullness of the Holy Spirit is bound to produce fruit also because of the quickened and enriched life of communion with Christ.
- Knowing the awesome, love, power and grace of God should make us tender vessels.

- We do not deserve the gifts.
- God empowers us anyway.
- We will become Kingdom people, ready to bring in the harvest.
- We rise to a new realm.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT PRODUCES SPIRITUAL MATURITY

- Although neither age nor experience can guarantee spiritual maturity, the fruit of the Spirit produces it.
- Spiritual maturity means a greater understanding of the Spirit of God and the needs of people.
- Then we can best exercise gifts.
- Maturity develops sensitivity to the Spirit, so one might understand how the gifts operate and when they are needed.
- We will see the balance and not move to extremes.
- We will look to long-term results, not just short-term blessing.
- We will seek a revival that lasts until Jesus comes.
- Spiritual maturity helps us relate to people.
- We understand people better and realize how to best minister to them.
- We must strive for unity.
- As people watch our character and conduct, they will develop trust in us; the Early Church chose its first seven deacons on the basis of how they were “known” (Acts 6:3).
- A good reputation and affirmation by others are crucial to a full release of the Spirit in ministry to one another and for the Church to grow.

FRUIT HAS TO DO WITH GROWTH AND CHARACTER

LIFE-STYLE IS THE KEY TEST OF GENUINENESS.

- Jesus said, “By their fruit you will recognize them” (Matt. 7:16-20; see also Luke 6:43-45).
- The fruit in Galatians 5:22-23 are the “nine graces” which make up the fruit of the Spirit-the life-style of those who are indwelt and energized by the Spirit.

PART IX: HOW TO USE THESE GIFTS

1. PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES

- At board meetings, and retreats, give time for all to listen to the Spirit and share impressions God makes on their hearts.
- See if God is saying similar things to several people and if what is said relates to where the assembly is at that point.
- Pray for the sick, exercise ongoing concern, and if they are not healed immediately, pray again.

2. CREATE AWARENESS

- Share how God speaks to you and guides you.
- Testify to miracles that take place among your people.
- Allow gifts to be manifested naturally; don't force or demand them.
- We are not here for the short term, but the long term.
- The Spirit may minister in a service, a cell-group meeting, or in personal conversation.

3. DEVELOP A READINESS TO SHARE

- Gifts are manifested when people expect to hear from God, whether by Scripture, song, or a gentle whisper.
- Teach about hearing God's voice.
- Give practical application from your life and others.
- When worship leaders give time to share gifts, they themselves should be prepared to share.
- Don't allow long periods of silence to be characterized as "nobody heard from God."
- Rather we should say, "Let us wait in the presence of an awesome God, and if anyone has something to share, do so."
- Then positively conclude by sharing impressions God made on you.
- As leader, be ready to share.

- Model that expectancy.

4. CREATE A SPIRIT OF ACCEPTANCE

- Your people must not feel self-conscious or that others are judging them.
- Start in small groups.
- Use a natural tone of voice.
- Do not worry about mistakes, but teach gently, in love.
- The church is a school, and we are learners.

5. EVALUATE

- Comment after three or four share, whether choruses, Scripture, exhortations, or even testimonies.
- Does it fit the local assembly?
- Teach your people to be sensitive to what God may be saying in the whole service and what God is doing in your fellowship.
- Relate Scripture to what is said.
- Your positive reinforcement is crucial.
- To say nothing is to cause confusion or dampen further exercise of gifts.
- Affirm what can be affirmed, set aside as tentative whatever needs evaluation.
- Try not to criticize, but evaluate in love.
- Evaluation gives people a sense of security, a framework within which they can minister gifts.

6. SPEND TIME IN PRAYER

- Build a church on prayer.
- Gifts are no substitute for waiting on God.
- Practice the presence of God all day.

- God will speak to you and through you.
- Your people will pray only if we as leaders pray.

7. UNDERSTAND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

- In recent years we have seen many differences in worship style and in people's expectations as we talk to them before praying for them.
- In worship, some like hymns, some like choruses, some like music reflecting their culture and heritage.
- Some use complex interviews before prayer, some just pray over a large group of people.
- Be simple.
- Gifts shared in a natural tone of voice encourage others to share.
- We also encourage more dynamic sharing.
- We need not force each assembly into the same worship style or the same way of manifesting gifts as another.

8. STRONG WORSHIP RELEASES GIFTS

- Worship leads to an expectancy of encountering our awesome God.
- That is where the miraculous can readily happen.
- Build to one or two peaks of worship.
- If people know there is a best time to share gifts, they will do so.
- But if you wait after every chorus, this is not as effective and may cause an uncertainty of whether or not to share.
- Worship should follow similar patterns.
- It gives people a sense of security and a freedom to worship in that context.
- To change the pattern every week is not so effective.
- Incorporate psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
- Make room for the whole congregation to feel they can touch God in worship.

9. OFTEN I WILL HEAR FROM GOD FIRST, GIVE OPPORTUNITY FOR OTHERS TO SHARE, THEN AFFIRM WHAT GOD HAS ALREADY SAID TO ME

- This encourages others. I may say, “God has touched my heart with three thoughts, but before I share, I want to give you opportunity to minister to one another.”
- Then, when people who have never exercised the gifts before realize that they are in tune with the Lord, just as the leadership is, it will encourage them to share more.

10. THE CHANNEL FOR SPIRITUAL GIFTS IS MINISTRY

- Mark 16: 17 points to signs that follow those who believe.
- As we are active in reaching a world, ministering where God places us, we become usable vessels.
- Many miracles in Acts happened in the course of everyday life.
- If we care to reach out to people in need, we become bearers of God’s gifts, even at unusual times and in unusual situations.
- The gifts happen when Christians are “on the way” in service for the Lord.

11. FOCUS ON THE WHOLE PROCESS

- Gifts flow through people.
- Always remember: The goal is to build the Church and to win the lost for Christ.
- The gifts are to be seen in the light of the total work God is doing among His people.
- When we do not understand the nature and purpose of gifts, we focus on the wrong issues.
- The question is not primarily what my gifts are, but how to exercise gifts to build the Church.
- Rather than assuming the gifts are totally supernatural and, therefore, infallible, we must recognize that the gifts are ministered through fallible humans and need to be tested.
- We grow as we learn how to exercise them.
- Rather than debating which the greatest or least gift is, we need to share God-given gifts in love.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

David Lim, D.Min., is a Senior Pastor of Grace Assembly of God in Singapore

Dr. Alvin Ang earned his Ph.D., Masters and Bachelor degrees from NTU, Singapore. He is a scientist, entrepreneur, as well as a personal/business advisor. More about him at www.AlvinAng.sg.