

Holy Spirit

TLC's placement on today's theological spectrum concerning Holy Spirit ministry and gifts.

Within the body of Christ at large we find a very diverse range of ministry styles and emphasis. The two extremes would be divided between those who hold to a view known as 'cessationism', and those who are labeled 'charismatic'.

- **Cessationists** teach that the gifts of the Spirit ceased with the death of the last original apostle and the canonization of the scriptures. Those who hold to this viewpoint reject Spirit baptism and the practice of Spiritual gifts as valid for today.
- On the other end of the spectrum, those who are known as **charismatic** place great emphasis on seeking and practicing Spiritual gifts and seeking spiritual experiences.

TLC's position is between these two extremes. We believe that *Spirit given gifts did not cease and are still distributed today by the Holy Spirit at His discretion.* (1 Corinthians 12:11) However, it is imperative to emphasize that the purpose and practice of Spirit gifts must be dictated by scripture alone. The use of Spirit gifts outside of scriptural guidelines often lead to divisiveness within the body of Christ which surely must grieve the Holy Spirit since He Himself is the Spirit of unity. Our understanding from scripture is that the use of Spirit gifts will operate within these Biblical parameters.

1. **Will build up the body of Christ.** 1 Corinthians 12:7,25
The exercise of Spirit gifts will not bring division within the body if practiced within scriptural guidelines and under the control of the Spirit Himself.
2. **Will always exalt Christ.** John 16:14
The Holy Spirit never exalts gifts, people with gifts or even Himself. His sole exaltation is Christ Himself.
3. **Will continue the ministry that Jesus began when He walked on the earth.** Luke 4:18-19
Believers that practice Spirit gifts will mirror the ministry that Jesus practiced on earth due to truth that the Spirit that ministered through Jesus is the same exact Spirit that is ministering through His disciples today.
4. **Will always honor the written Word of God.** 2 Timothy 3:16-17, John 10:34-35
Any supposed Spirit gift or Spirit ministry that is in contradiction with the written Word is to be rejected by Christ' body.
5. **Will always bear good fruit.** John 15:1-5, Luke 4:18-19
Believers that operate in Spirit gifts and are directed by the Spirit Himself will

bear the fruits of ministry that Jesus bore. People will be saved, broken hearts and lives will be healed, revelation will come to the spiritually blind, those in bondage will be liberated and people will experience the favor of God on their lives, homes and church.

6. Will always prioritize evangelism. Acts 1:8

Since the book of Acts is the primary book in scripture that reveals the ministry of the Holy Spirit this is the place that we look to define the ministry and effects of His activity. The primary truth that we glean from Acts is that the first and foremost ministry of the Spirit is to empower believers to boldly and effectively declare the gospel of Christ to a lost world.

Acts 1:8 You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be witnesses to me...

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them words.

Acts 2:11 We hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.

Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness.

In summary, we believe that we absolutely need the ministry of the precious Holy Spirit today in order to fulfill Christ' mandate to His church to make disciples that live out His teachings in their daily lives within a culture that is hostile to God's rule in the earth. However, we are committed to the gifts and ministry of the Spirit being operated within the clear parameters of the eternal Word of God.