

Gifts of the Spirit
Position Paper
Bethel Church, Fairbanks, AK

Preamble

We rejoice in presence and empowerment of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers today as Jesus promised.

We are aware that some assemblies of believers emphasize experiences related to sign gifts attributed to the Holy Spirit. We would encourage our body to take seriously its commitment to the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith and practice in discerning these matters.

Being aware of many of the questions people have regarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit today, we offer the following affirmations and denials.

Article 1

WE AFFIRM that the believer's baptism of the Holy Spirit coincides with regeneration.

WE DENY that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a second blessing or special work of grace enjoyed by some but not by all Christians.

Titus 3:5-7, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:5, Acts 2:38, Romans 8:9

Article 2

WE AFFIRM that the passages in Acts which describe occasional and public external manifestations of the Holy Spirit subsequent to conversion ought to be understood as descriptive passages of what happened in specific instances during a transitional period in church history.

WE DENY that the occasional public and external manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts subsequent to conversion serve as a normative pattern for believers to emulate or as a litmus test to determine who has been regenerated.

Acts 2:1-4; 8:14-17; 10:44-48; and 19:6-7

Article 3

WE AFFIRM that the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to every believer to bring glory to God by building up the body of Christ in love.

WE DENY that the primary purpose of the gifts is to benefit oneself or as an indication of God's favoritism. We also deny that the expression of a certain gift indicates spiritual maturity or prominence over other believers who do not have that same gift. We also deny that the Holy Spirit gives all gifts to all believers. We further deny that believers can be "activated" or "kickstarted" into certain gifts like tongues or prophecy through the exercise of so-called prophetic exercises.

1 Corinthians 12:7, 11, 20-26, chapter 13, and 14:12; Ephesians 4:15-16

Article 4

WE AFFIRM that God may bring about healing to any and all individuals according to His will and good pleasure.

WE DENY that God is required to heal on the demand of any believer. We also deny that healing is the right of any individual this side of the believer's glorified state.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10, 1 Timothy 5:23

Article 5

WE AFFIRM that the Holy Spirit may give any gift, including the sign gifts (tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, healings, and miracles) today as He wills.

WE DENY that the Holy Spirit is prohibited from giving certain gifts as He wills. We also deny that every manifestation claimed to come from the Holy Spirit actually comes from the Holy Spirit. Satan masquerades as an angel of light, and may attempt to deceive people. Additionally people's emotions may deceive them. Christians must test prophecies, tongues, spirits, and spiritual manifestations to see whether or not they align with God's written Word.

Jeremiah 17:9, 1 Corinthians 12:11, 2 Corinthians 11:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22, 1 John 4:1

Article 6

WE AFFIRM that maintaining unity, order, and consideration of others is of more importance than the exercise of the sign gifts by individuals during church services and activities. Those who claim to possess the gift of tongues and other sign/miraculous gifts are welcome to worship and fellowship with us if they are willing to maintain the unity of our church body.

WE DENY that the unrestricted allowance of the sign gifts during church activities is edifying to the body of Christ. As such we do not allow the unreviewed/unapproved exercise of tongues/interpretation or prophesying during church services and activities. If an individual believes they have a prophetic word or tongue with interpretation to be shared with the congregation, he or she must first bring it to the Elder Board for review and approval.

1 Corinthians 14:33, 40