

## Ministry of the Holy Spirit

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit is a study of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life. Our book for this class is "I Believe in the Holy Spirit" by Michael Green. Michael Green does an excellent job of covering the various aspects of the Holy Spirit's work in the Christian life from a reformed standpoint. He summarizes both Old and New Testament teachings on the Holy Spirit and covers the various aspects including the Trinity, Church, Mission, Baptism, and Spiritual Gifts. We have supplemented this text with R. C. Sproul's "The Mystery of the Holy Spirit" Chapter 9 on the Fruit of the Spirit. This is an excellent study on Galatians 5:18 – 23 and provides good coverage of the one topic not explicitly addressed by Michael Green. In the area of Spiritual Gift's Michael Green introduces some Neo-Pentecostal aspects not held by Providence Baptist Church. We do not want to create confusion for those interested in Providence Baptist Church and have documented our beliefs on these vital subjects as follows:

Prayer, pp. 120-121

The Holy Spirit enables prayer. God is the object of prayer.

Scripture, pp. 144-145

The message of God is not enshrined in scripture. Scripture IS the Word of God. The Holy Spirit illuminates our understanding of God's Word.

Gifts, Chapter 10, pp. 209 - 268

In general, the Christian faith is a rationale faith. We are called to understand our faith and the things of God which the Holy Spirit illuminates for our comprehension. Christian faith is not a mindless faith. Ecstatic expressions, not founded in a conscious understanding of God and His will, is not an expression of the Holy Spirit.

Tongues and Interpretations, pp. 121-122, 210 - 223

Tongues are natural languages. We do not see evidence in Scripture that there is a Heavenly or angelic language.

Prophecy, pp. 223 - 231

Prophecy is the forth telling (proclaiming) of the Word of God. This was demonstrated through Old Testament Prophecy, the life of Christ, and the New Testament letters. This encompasses preaching as a form of prophecy (proclaiming the Word of God). Prophecy is not a new word from God. Prophecy explains present and future events based on the Word of God. Francis Schaffer spoke prophecy when he stated in the 1970's the consequences of abortion based on God's promises in Scripture which we are realizing today in the United States.

Healing, pp. 231 - 237

Healing is a gift given to the Church body, not to an individual. This may be manifested through various individuals in the congregation but is not a ministry specific to any single person. There is no ceremony associated with healing. Healing is based solely on God's will as He leads the prayers of the Church body.

Miracles, pp. 237 – 242

Miracles (word of power) are the working of God's power in the words and deeds of those gifted by God for His purposes.

Faith, pp. 242 -243

Faith is the ability to believe in the face of overwhelming circumstances.

Knowledge, pp. 243 - 248

Knowledge is knowing how to implement God's revealed purpose.

Wisdom, pp. 248 - 253

Wisdom is knowing and understanding the revealed purpose of God.

Discernment, pp. 253 - 259

Discernment is the ability to see God's plan in action. It is applied understanding of the will of God.

With this understanding of the Gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, we differ with Michael Green in the interpretation of events he documents in Chapter 9, pp. 204 – 208, Chapter 11, and Chapter 12. As such we are not using these passages in our teaching.

Based on our understanding of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, we do affirm a continuation of the gifts from the time of Pentecost to today. These will continue until Christ returns. At which time the need for these gifts to guide and encourage the Church will be completed as we stand in the presence of God and have our fullness of fellowship with Him completed through the work of Jesus Christ.