

Why We Must Minister in the Spirit With Integrity

In our performance-driven culture we are pressured to get results. We don't believe the Holy Spirit shows up in a meeting unless someone falls on the floor or claims a healing.

We want action—and if we don't get any, we will make stuff up! Paul the apostle, on the other hand, preached that the Holy Spirit manifests Himself not only through the nine power gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, but also through His fruits listed in Galatians 5:22-23. A true representation of the Spirit isn't just about what He *does*; it is also about who He *is*. We invite problems when we showcase the spectacular and ignore the essential.

Truth is more vital than tongues. The gift of speaking in tongues has been a priceless blessing in my own life. But the apostle Paul, who prayed in tongues more than anyone in Corinth, said he'd rather hear a five-word sermon in a language he could understand than hear someone else babble in tongues for hours (1 Cor. 14:18-19). Paul knew that spiritual gifts can be abused and misused. And he admitted that someone who speaks in tongues but doesn't show the love of God is like a "noisy gong" (1 Cor. 13:1). That is a nice way of saying, "Annoying!"

Love is more crucial than charismatic manifestations. Many of us emphasize the wind and fire that came from heaven at Pentecost. But let's remember that the Spirit manifested Himself in another way in the same chapter. The first Christians were united by a bond of love. The Spirit brought about a holy connection—and this holy love held them together.

Unselfish love, generosity, brotherly and sisterly affection, and sincere kindness is just as much a manifestation of the

Spirit as healing or miracles. In fact, powerful signs and wonders are more likely to happen in an atmosphere that is bathed in Holy Ghost love.

William Seymour, the father of modern Pentecostalism and founder of the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, said it this way: "Pentecostal power, when you sum it all up, is just more of God's love. If it does not bring more love, it is simply a counterfeit."

Could this be the reason we don't see as many supernatural manifestations today? When we are smug, hypocritical, bitter, harsh, judgmental and hateful, we totally short-circuit God's power. I pray we will embrace not just the sound and the fury of God's power but also the genuine love that flows from His heart.

Don't Allow Things to Get Weird

When the Holy Spirit comes in His fullness, people receive miraculous anointing, remarkable boldness, overflowing joy, and irresistible enthusiasm. Yet because we all are bent toward sin and selfishness, many people who experience the Holy Spirit's raw power sometimes also act weird. Their flesh gets in the way, and they misuse the gifts of the Spirit.

I've seen this happen often during prayer ministry at church altars. Because of poor training and a lack of mature leadership, things can get wacky when people come to the front of the auditorium for ministry. If this flakiness isn't immediately corrected, visitors will stop coming, and your church will get a bad reputation. {eoa}

*The preceding is an excerpt from **J. Lee Grady's** book, Set My Heart on Fire (Charisma House, 2016). Copyright © 2016 by J. Lee Grady. All rights reserved.*

J. Lee Grady was editor of Charisma for 11 years before he launched into full-time ministry in 2010. Today he directs The

Mordecai Project, a Christian charitable organization that is taking the healing of Jesus to women and girls who suffer abuse and cultural oppression. Author of several books including 10 Lies the Church Tells Women, he has just released his newest book, Set My Heart on Fire, from Charisma House. You can follow him on Twitter at @leegrady or go to his website, .