

The Gift of the Spirit Fewer Want to Exercise

The charismatic world is known for embracing the gifts of the Spirit. Who doesn't like to get a prophetic word? See a miracle, sign or wonder? Receive a healing? Discern a spirit? Flow in words of knowledge and words of wisdom? Pray in tongues and hear the interpretation?

I love to operate in the gifts of the Spirit and watch others step into that stream. It's refreshing—and it's the sign of a healthy congregation. Where the Spirit of the Lord is given liberty—when we get out of the way and let Him have His way—He will often manifest His gifts in our midst. Of course, the greatest gift of all is His presence. Ultimately, that's all we need.

But there is a gift of the Spirit fewer seem to want to exercise in this hour. It's not one of the nine gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12, but it's a gift from the Spirit of God just the same. It's the gift of repentance.

Listen to Jennifer's podcast on this topic: [The Spiritual Gift Every Believer Can Exercise](#).

With hypergrace movement—a wave of teaching that stresses the grace of God while de-emphasizing or negating the need to confess sins and repent—gaining momentum, there's a disturbing trend to approach boldly the throne of grace to find grace while ignoring the need for an ever-flowing river of mercy.

The 1 John 1:8 Reality

The truth is, we have all fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). In fact, we all fall short of the glory of God every day. That's why we need a Savior, and that's why we are charged with working out our own salvation with fear and

trembling (Phil. 2:12).

Father doesn't expect us to achieve 100 percent obedience while we are living in these fleshly tents. We will only reach perfection in our resurrected, glorified bodies. But He does expect us to tap into His grace to lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily besets us (Heb. 12:1); to run to Him instead of away from Him when we sin; to wage war on our flesh and spirits tempting us away from His heart; to seek and receive His forgiveness, grace and mercy when we miss the mark (1 John 1:9); and to press toward the mark of the prize (Phil. 3:14). We can't do that if we are not willing to repent.

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1 John 1:8 tells us, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." John also tells us, "Whoever has been born of God does not practice sin, for His seed remains in him. And he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God" (1 John 3:9). Hebrews 13:5 assures us Jesus will never leave us or forsake us, but hiding unrepentant sin in our lives causes us to miss out on deeper intimacy with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We may hide it from others, but we're not hiding it from Him.

A Lifestyle of Repentance

We like to pray 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

That's a strategic prayer. I believe the church needs to repent. But I also believe if we're not individually walking in a lifestyle of repentance—if we're not exercising this gift of the Spirit of God—it hinders corporate repentance. Again, God doesn't expect us to walk in perfection. He knew every

single sin you'd commit before He saved you. But let's remember Israel lost a war against its enemy because there was sin in the camp (Josh. 7). We must not tolerate sin in our lives, or families—or anywhere. Where we see a brother or sister in sin, we need to pray and, if we're in relationship, kindly approach them unto Galatians 6:1 restoration.

I am praying that a spirit of repentance is poured over the church in this hour as false prophets continue rising, as apostles merchandise the saints, as sexual immorality and financial impropriety runs rampant and all manner of wicked sin is coming to light in the church. But it starts with each one of us. If we aren't willing to repent on a personal level—to exercise this spiritual gift—we cannot decry the conditions in the church or in society. Let's all model the way. {eoa}