

(This is the sixth in a series on the Charismata and the Holy Spirit!)

A Word of Wisdom

By The Most Reverend Philip Edward Phlegar Weeks

© Barnabas Ministries, Inc. 2010

When I first began to learn about the gifts (manifestations) of the Holy Spirit from 1 Corinthians 12: 8-10 I asked for WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE, thinking they were two gifts a clergyman ought to have. Eventually I learned that only TONGUES was given to the person for primarily personal use while the other eight manifestations were given to be used for someone else. For example, the recipient of the gifts of healing is the person who is sick and not the person who is doing the ministry. But tongues is for the person doing the ministry so as to edify and strengthen him or her for that ministry. It was said that Kathryn Kulhman prayed for three hours before she entered the healing service years ago held in First Presbyterian Church in downtown Pittsburgh PA. Words of knowledge regarding healings in the large audience were spoken as the Holy Spirit revealed to her. As a pentecostal might phrase it, she was prayed up in the Spirit so to be able to receive what He had to speak through her later.

A Word of Wisdom is something you do not learn in a classroom. You may be a very wise and prudent person that always act wisely but that is not what the Holy Spirit provides. He gives the "word" out of His abundant knowledge and awareness. In my congregation years ago in Charleston WV there were people who were very receptive to a word of knowledge. Sometimes when I had a counseling session I would ask these people to pray for a "word" or "discernment" and provide them only with the first name of the person I was to counsel. They would give me what they received in prayer, and I would pray for the Holy Spirit to guide me in how to use what had been shared; a "word of wisdom". It is not wise to blurt out information that may hurt the individual or close the door to any further personal revealing.

We were told that a paralyzed lady was going to be brought to our Monday night Prayer and Praise service by ambulance so the congregation could pray for her healing. At first this was exciting news because frequently the religion editor of the *Charleston Gazette* attended our service and wrote about our Church. This would be some free publicity. I was shocked when the Holy Spirit said "NO! GO TO HER!" I shared this with some of the prayer warriors. They confirmed this "word" and we went to her house and

prayed for her. In the way she may have expected and how we would have desired, she was not healed. But when she died a few months later she was at peace with herself and we were confident she was with Jesus. Had we yielded to the temptation for publicity it would have worked against us. What we may think best or want to do is not always "wisdom".

For five years I smuggled Bibles into Red China (1982-1986). Twice I was caught with the precious cargo and interrogated by the Custom officials. The times I succeeded in getting the case of Bible through Customs were the times I had prayed for "wisdom" and acted accordingly. Depending on my own wisdom brought about defeat, but depending upon the Holy Spirit's wisdom brought success and delivery of hundreds of Bibles to waiting Chinese Christians. On one occasion I had been given some very classified documents to be smuggled out of China. Had they fallen into government hands it could have cost some Chinese Christians their lives. I dared not act on my own way of handling this project; I had to depend on the Holy Spirit, and I safely delivered the documents to the Church officials in Hong Kong.

On my way to the airport a priest in Georgia phoned me. He had been given a discernment that he shared with his bishop who told him to warn me. He had been given a vision that upon my arrival in Kigali RWANDA I would be kidnapped. As supervising Bishop I had made that trip numerous times without any problem. I thanked him and put the warning on the back burner (not giving it much thought). The night before my flight to Kigali I was in Nairobi and in the night the Lord woke me and said "shave off the beard and wear a sport shirt". At three o'clock I got up, shaved the beard and when I left in the morning I was not wearing my clerical shirt. Upon arrival at the airport in Kigali, Canon Emmanuel Ngirumpatse (later Bishop) and some of his people met me. They did not recognize me. I had to introduce myself to them, told them the reason for my looking different, and we went to the car and proceeded to our destination. If there were those who intended to do me harm, they did not recognize me because the Holy Spirit had given a "word of wisdom" to a CEC priest in Georgia who shared it with me, and in the night the Lord brought it from the back burner of my mind to the front of my mind calling for action.

It is wise to pray for a "word of wisdom" before attempting to take on a task that may be challenging, dangerous, or confusing. The Holy Spirit knows best.