

According To His Will

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In Romans 12: 6 and First Corinthians 12: 11 Saint Paul makes it clear that the source of gifts is the Holy Spirit. He is the first Gift, and His indwelling manifests His powerful ministry through a willing individual. Jesus refers to the gift of the Holy Spirit in His explanation of the goodness of God the Father (Luke 11:13). The popular version of the Nicene Creed refers to the Holy Spirit as “proceeding from the Father and the Son” is incorrect. Jesus said “the Father would send the Holy Spirit in His name” (John 14:26), not that the Spirit comes from both Father and Son. That phrase, called the Filioque Clause, was not part of the original Creed defined in A.D. 325 but added in A.D. 587 at the Council of Toledo (Spain) in an attempt to combat the Arian heresy. The Arian heresy denied the pre-existence of the Son but said God created the Son in the person of Jesus. Such an assertion is a denial of the Trinity as Three in One. The Filioque clause may be inserted to combat a heresy but it is contrary to Scripture. It has been debated over and over. The Roman Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran Churches include the Filioque Clause in their recitation of the Nicene Creed. The Orthodox Church does not use it, and some of our Charismatic Episcopal Churches have deleted the clause.

Sorry! I didn't intend to go on a tantrum about the Filioque but I felt a correction needed to be expressed, whether agreed to or not. Now back to the Will of the Holy Spirit.

Saint Paul emphasizes that any manifestation of the Spirit is according to His will, not the request of the Spirit-filled individual. On one occasion a lady came for prayer to receive the Holy Spirit. Before I began to pray with her, she said she wanted the gift of healing. I explained to her that what manifestation or gift the Holy Spirit she might receive would be according to the will of the Holy Spirit. She wanted the gift of healing, not because she wanted to help people, but because “that is the one that gets the most publicity”. Needless to say, that was an improper request.

There will be times when a believer may function in different ways by the Spirit. He may have a Word of Knowledge because someone is in need for that word of guidance. He may not have that manifestation or gift at a future time but have the gift of discerning of spirits. In other words, the Holy Spirit knows the need and the person He works through doesn't have sole possession of a particular gift. He may because of his faith tend to “specialize” in a particular way. Some people are more prone to speak prophetically than others. One of the Filipino dentists employed years ago by Barnabas Ministries in her first experience of praying for a healing, prayed for a lady who had a lump in her breast. To her surprise the lump dissolved under the dentist's hand as she prayed. She was always called upon to pray with any one in similar condition because she had strong faith based on what happened in her first healing experience. Saint Paul encourages the operation of gifts in accordance with the faith God has given (Romans 12: 3,6).

I may be poorly expressing it, but I am trying to say that no one should think he has some gift that is his personal possession, when it is the Holy Spirit who is using an available

and obedient channel through whom to bestow His blessing. I have a riding lawn mower. I may say “I cut the grass” and in a way I am correct. At the same time I am wrong. The mower cut the grass; I simply operated the mower. The Spirit is the One who is at work; you are the vessel He uses.

The one exception to particular gifts being readily available is the gift of tongues. This manifestation is used in several ways. When I do not know how I ought to pray for an individual, I depend upon the Holy Spirit to pray through me because He knows the mind of God (Romans 8: 26). Once I was asked to visit a man, not a member of my church, in the hospital. I was unsure of his problem and when I went to the man he was in a coma. I stood beside his bed and prayed in tongues. Later when he came out of the coma he told me he was aware of the time I prayed for him but did not “understand Greek”. He may have thought I was praying in Greek. There may be times in ministry that tongues are employed as a voice of exorcism against evil forces in high places (Ephesians 6: 12). As I sit here writing this article I can begin **praying** in tongues (in the Spirit) because there is always the need for personal worship, intercession, communication with God and edification. This particular “gift” is always with me and available whenever I wish to open my mouth and speak, audible or silent.

Beware of spiritual pride. Whatever spiritual experience you have had does not make you better than some one else; it makes you better than you once were yourself. When spiritual pride becomes dominant in one’s ministry, the Holy Spirit will stop because He will not share the glory with you.

The gifts of the Spirit are given to the Body of Christ. By the operation of the gifts, Jesus is glorified. When Jesus is glorified, the Father is glorified. And our attitude should be one of humility and gratitude that God has chosen to use us.

Non nobis, Domine! Psalm 115: 1.