

## Additional Gifts of the Holy Spirit

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### The Gift of Giving

In Romans 12: 6-8 St Paul gives us another list of ways in which the Holy Spirit endows the Body of Christ with gifts. Beginning with this one, I will consider these acts of Grace as well as those in First Corinthians 12: 28-30. One of the Roman gifts is the Gift of Giving. Depending upon the translation you choose, we are told that those with this particular ability (or gift) do it with liberality or simplicity.

Members of the Charismatic Episcopal Church are expected to TITHE. That means we are expected to give ten percent of our income to the Church. This is scriptural. In Malachi 3: 8-11 we are accused as thieves if we fail to pay the tithe. I say "pay" because the gift of giving does not begin until the ten percent is PAID. We are not excused from this obligation because it is in the Old Testament. We acknowledge both Testaments as the authoritative Word of God. Jesus recommended the Tithe but goes beyond it to prescribe what is called proportional giving. Those who have much are expected to give accordingly, but that does not excuse the requirement of the Tithe. The Prophet says we are cursed when we fail to obey the demand to bring into the storehouse (the Church) the tithe. Members are expected to tithe to their church. Churches tithe on their income to their Bishop. Bishops tithe to the Patriarch who uses the tithe for missions and other needs that come to his office. You are not giving until the tithe has been satisfied.

On one occasion when I was teaching in Africa I reminded our brothers how in a time past their people in one tribe captured people from another tribe and sold them into slavery. They knew their history! I continued by telling them that those who were not sold to the slave trader were made slaves in their own country by the Church. The Anglican Church was one of the largest denominations that evangelized Africa. That statement shocked them until I explained that England, France, Holland and other European countries that occupied Africa, by neglect, taught them to depend upon the evangelizing denomination for their financial support. In the Anglican Church the Archbishop received money from England that was distributed to his clergy, especially to those of his tribe. I promised them that the Charismatic Episcopal Church would not make them slaves. God is their provider and through teaching their people to Tithe God would bless them. Some heard what I taught and began to teach their people. I regret not all because many of our African brothers continue to look to the American Church for their resources. Their congregations are not tithing to their bishop, or their bishop to the Patriarch. The flip side of Malachi 3: 11 is that God allows the devourer freedom to destroy if we fail to pay the tithe. Could poverty be attributed to failure to obey God's Word on this subject? The hand that is closed to giving is also closed to receiving.

With the exception of eight years of our married life, we have always tithed. During those years we had severe financial problems. I became convicted because prior to marriage I had tithed and gave beyond my tithe. When I married I felt I had other obligations. June and I began to give with the goal to increase monthly our giving until we reached the ten percent. Within six months we reached that level and for the past forty-six years our contributions to the Lord's work has exceeded the tithe. In other words, we paid our tithe and then we began to give an additional amount at times up to another ten percent. I believe we are blessed and have what we have because we did not rob God. In tithing we opened God's hand to bless us.

St. Paul says there are those who have the gift of giving. Giving does not begin until the tithe has been paid! They have been blessed beyond the tithe and give out of gratitude for what God has given them.

Blessed is the Church that has people who give liberally and with simplicity! At one time I considered wealthy people to be a hindrance because my experience had been that those with wealth tried to control and run the church. They were not people with this gift of the Holy Spirit. They have the gift of Satan to control through their money! I now understand that those with the gift of giving do not control, but they give liberally and they become a blessing to the Lord's work. It is a blessing to a church that has people with this gift. They provide through offerings (that which is given beyond the tithe) ministries that otherwise might not exist. That is commendable. These people are available through the Holy Spirit's motivation to share what God has given them and make possible an outreach that otherwise might not be done. They are not always wealthy people by earthly standards, but ordinary people who love God and His work and give liberally and with simplicity.

God is a Giver! He gave His only Begotten Son to die for us. Blessed is the person who discovers God as Provider, and is open to the Holy Spirit to be a blessing through giving out of their resources.