

The Gifted: Word of Knowledge

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This morning, we're continuing our message series entitled 'The Gifted'. So far, we've learned about what spiritual gifts are and why we receive them. The last two weeks, we learned specifically how to receive and use the spiritual gift of prophecy and why it is one of the greater spiritual gifts that Paul said that we should eagerly desire.

This week and next, we're going to learn about the word gifts similar to prophecy: word of knowledge and word of wisdom. Word up!

The truth is that our words have incredible power. Think about it for a moment, how did God create the universe and everything in it? He spoke!

Jesus told us:

Matthew 17:20

Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.

How do we execute our faith even as small as a mustard seed? We SAY it! There is such incredible power in our words!

Also, Jesus said this in response to a boy who was having seizures whom Jesus' disciples could not heal.

Jesus came along and rebuked the demon and the boy was instantly healed. How many times do we fail to see healing because we, like the disciples then, stand around praying and begging God to heal someone instead of using the power and authority within us to speak into existence what God has already provided?

We'll get into this more when we learn about the spiritual gift of healing.

Proverbs 18:21a

The tongue has the power of life and death

We have to realize and understand the power that our words truly have. They have the power of life and death. I can speak life into someone's life and their circumstances, or I can speak death into someone's life and their circumstances.

In James 3, we are told that our tongue is like a small rudder on a ship that steers and guides the whole thing and that it is like a small spark that sets a whole forest ablaze. Our words may be small, but their impact has far more power and authority than we often realize. James tells us that our tongue has the ability to corrupt our entire body and to set the course of our whole life. Again, we're going to discuss this more with the spiritual gift of healing, but this is an incredible revelation that our words have a direct impact on our emotional, spiritual, and physical health; able to corrupt our entire body!

We all too often spend time speaking death into each other's lives. We boast in and give power to what Satan is doing to steal, kill, and destroy us. We agree and accept the plans of the enemy way too often.

We say things like:

I can't.

It's just not worth it.

It's too difficult.

That's just the way I am.

I'm not good enough.

I have to worry about...

That's just the way it has to be.

It runs in my family.

I've messed up too much.

God is punishing me for...

It's their fault, not mine.

I'll never get this right.

This doesn't really affect anyone other than myself.

These are all words that steal, kill, and destroy us and others. They are common phrases, so they don't really shock us when we hear them and, unfortunately, we usually agree with these statements or frequently say them ourselves. However, these lies should be no less alarming to us than saying, "I'm going to go and kill myself now.". After all, isn't that exactly what these phrases are saying? They are speaking death to ourselves and leave no room for change or improvement. They steal away the power of life and bring death.

I could stand here and tell you that it's just too difficult to do, list off my reasons why, and I'd probably get an agreement from someone. However, if I stood here and said that I was going to kill myself, I'd probably get rebuked by someone and given a list of all of these reasons why I should not do it.

How different would our lives be if we had a perspective shift and began hearing these words of death for what they really are? How different would our lives be if we began rebuking these death sentences and began to respond with words of life?

I want to encourage you all to begin to be intentional about this throughout your life. Whenever you go to say something ask that simple filtering question, "Is what I'm about to say going to bring death or life?". Or if someone has just said something to you, ask that same simple filtering question of, "Is what they spoke going to bring death or life?". We need to be intentional about speaking words of life ourselves and also turning the death that others speak back into life with encouraging, comforting, and strengthening words (1 Cor. 14:3).

Now that we understand the power that our words possess, let's continue on from prophecy to the other two word spiritual gifts. Prophecy, word of knowledge, and word of wisdom are a spiritual gift trio of words of revelation that have incredible life-giving potential!

1 Corinthians 12:4-8

4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. 7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 8 To

one there is given through the Spirit a word of wisdom, to another a word of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,

We're going to start by defining these two spiritual gifts. They are similar, but certainly have their differences.

A word of knowledge is a spiritual gift where God supernaturally reveals to us information that we did not previously know. Just like prophecy, this spiritual gift usually serves to motivate one of the other spiritual gifts.

For example, I may receive a word of knowledge that someone is struggling financially, which motivates the gift of generosity. Or I may receive a word of knowledge that someone's knee is hurting them, which motivates the gift of healing. Or I may receive a word of knowledge that someone is feeling discouraged, which motivates the gift of prophecy. The list can go on and on.

This is a powerful spiritual gift of revelation that really stirs up someone's faith. Whenever I reveal to someone something that they are dealing with that I had no way of knowing through natural means, this increases their faith to receive whatever else God is desiring to do. The more specific and accurate the word of knowledge is, the more faith the person will have.

For example, I may receive a word of knowledge that someone is struggling financially, which will give them an amount of faith. However, if I ask God to reveal even greater detail to me about that financial struggle, He may reveal to me that this person recently received an unexpected medical bill for over \$1,200 that caused this struggle. As you can imagine, the amount of faith that the person will have will be exponentially greater because of this additional detail. The person may have room for doubt that I just guessed correctly that they were struggling financially, but nearly all doubt would be removed if I am more specific about the information.

This is the type of spiritual gift that people are hungry for, especially outside of the church. Many TV shows like Long Island Medium or Psychic Investigators are tremendously popular because of people who have gifts that provide them with this type of insight; usually counterfeit gifts derived from demonic sources. They give words of knowledge about the deceased; what they were like, what happened to them, and what their relationships with the still living are like, then claim to communicate information from beyond the grave.

Remember from our end times series earlier in the year that scripture is clear that the way in which Satan and his kingdom operate are by mimicking God's kingdom including the spiritual gifts. Many will be deceived during the end times by these types of revelation and healings performed by the power of Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet. It's not that the gifts do not provide accurate results, it's that the source of their power is not from God.

Like all of the spiritual gifts, I receive a word of knowledge by asking for it. Just like prophecy, a word of knowledge can be given to us by countless creative means. I may receive a word of knowledge by just having an impression or thought about it. I may also receive a word of knowledge by means of a physical manifestation. For example, my knee may begin aching for no apparent reason. This may very well be a word of knowledge that someone is suffering from knee pain. We could also see a physical word floating over them or written on them that we know is not physically there. We could also receive a vision or dream

about someone. Words of knowledge may be given as we are praying for someone, when we see them, or they could even be given to us before we ever meet the person that the word of knowledge is about. After we receive a word of knowledge, we should ask God what He would like us to do with the knowledge that we were just given. Sometimes it will be clear and we will know what to do with the word when we receive it, but sometimes it may not be clear. God may want us to physically do something for someone or He may reveal it to us just so that we intercede for them in prayer. As is the case with all of God's revelation, when we are faithful with little, He will be faithful to entrust us with even greater revelation. This week, I encourage you all to be observant and look for opportunities to receive and use the spiritual gift of a word of knowledge to show the people around us that there is one true God who desires that all men might be saved and eagerly desires to reveal Himself and His great love and faithfulness to Him. He has not forgotten about them, but is very aware of who they are and what they are dealing with and He wants to do something great in their lives. Get out there and be the body of Christ to a world in need of Him!