

Gifts of the Spirit - Part 1 (Rora 2003)

by Les Wheeldon

Les Wheeldon explores the gifts of the Spirit as expressions of God's revelation and the importance of a personal relationship with Him.

Duration: 58:05

Scripture: 1 Kings 13:26, Matthew 6:33, Acts 2:4, Acts 5:1-11, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 1 Peter 5:8, Revelation 11:3

Topics: "Gifts"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker tells a story about a man named Colin who attends a meeting but feels unhappy and goes to a bar instead. Despite not drinking alcohol, Colin stays at the bar to avoid upsetting his friends. When he returns to the meeting, the teacher prophesies about Colin's life, causing him to tremble. The speaker then discusses the manifestation of the Spirit and the importance of having a relationship with God. The sermon also mentions the story of a man who was commanded by God not to eat and drink. The speaker emphasizes that the gifts of the Spirit are meant to be a conduit for the water of life, rather than an end in themselves.

Transcript

Well, I do rejoice in what we heard this morning and I'm going to speak to you this morning about the will. No, I'm not going to speak to you about the will. It's funny how you can have a new guidance as you listen to someone speak.

I heard a definition of the will which fortunately ties in perfectly with what Ron said. Oswald Chambers said the will is the whole man active. The whole man active.

Not a part of it somewhere, but the whole man active. Well, this morning my subject is the gift of the Spirit. Norman and I have conferred at length on this.

We just met two minutes before the meeting. And conferred at length what we would each speak on on this subject, so fortunately I'm first. And I do play squash and tennis occasionally and one of my favorite excuses after I've served I say to the person, I'm sorry I wasn't ready.

Now, this is a, I'm going to serve, but this is a very big subject and in some ways the subject itself is slightly misleading because the fact of the gift of the Spirit is a great and wonderful truth. But in one way the, many of the things we often say about the gifts of the Spirit are corrective. And the actual truth of the

gifts themselves are rather more like the way in which we express ourselves.

So if you apply the subject of the gifts to Jesus, what gifts of the Spirit did he have, you inevitably will come to the conclusion none and all, because he was just being himself. He was just expressing himself. And if you analyze, if you read any books on the gifts of the Spirit and I've read several and I've read several that were written in the charismatic explosion of the 60's and certain of them written with a great exuberance and great joy at the discovery of the gifts of the Spirit.

One of the things you find is that what they do is they analyze the life of Jesus and tie something he said down to a gift of the Spirit. So when Jesus said to the woman of Samaria you have had five husbands, that's the word of knowledge. And I'm sure it's accurate what they say and the books are accurate.

But many of the things that Jesus did are not as definable as a gift of the Spirit. And so, as I mentioned last night, when the man, the Gadarene saw Jesus from afar off, what gift of the Spirit was it that he used? And it was simply the sudden sight by the Spirit of Jesus. And if I were to give a definition of the gifts of the Spirit, I would say that they are the Spirit moving to reveal God, to bring the knowledge of God, to bring the direct revelation of God.

And the baptism in the Holy Spirit brings it into the realm of the supernatural. Again, to use the word supernatural is dangerous because as Ron said this morning, I believe there is not only Christian superstition, I believe there is Christian witchcraft. I believe that many things that are used are actually imitations of the gifts of the Spirit but are more like fortune telling.

I've heard of many people go to meetings where all they're longing for is someone to tell them their future. Or to give them a word and something that will substitute the responsibility of a direct relationship with God. And I mentioned once, I don't know if anybody remembers anything I say, but anyway, I remember once saying that I had written a list of the nine gifts of the flesh in the fivefold ministries.

You may find this funny, I don't know. But the fivefold ministries of the flesh are bringing glory to self, the ministry of criticism, the ministry of pandering to the flesh, flattering sections of the congregation, the ministry of condemnation, and the ministry of discouragement, bad things to come. I hope I don't have any of those ministries, but anyway.

Then there are the nine gifts of the flesh, the gift of wishful thinking. It's amazing when somebody is sick, everybody wants the person to be healed so strongly, that soon it's transposed into a gift. Not always clear, because you're not certain it's the Lord, but the gift of wishful thinking, the gift of clever speaking, the gift of covering up sin, the gift of ingenious excuses.

You know that something went so terribly wrong, but then you think the Lord gives you a reason why it went so wrong, why you did so badly, it was because he was going to do something else, it was all right. And then the gift of drawing attention to oneself, the gift of humble pride, the gift of saying little in many words. Oh dear, I'd better be careful.

The gift of flattery, and the gift of exaggeration. But we live in a day where there is a counterfeit baptism with the Holy Spirit. There are counterfeit gifts of the Spirit.

I don't want to dwell on that for long, but we live in days where we, quite rightly, we are silent, we excuse many things that are said. And yet I know, very definitely, from things I've read and seen, that people love to write in their reports things that are not true. And I've seen reports of crusades where people say 80,000

saved, so many thousands baptized with the Holy Spirit, so many healed and so on, and they are not true.

Many people reading them may think they're true. I'm not saying they're always not true, but I know places where those campaigns, those claims, where those things are said to have happened, and they did not happen. I remember going once to a huge crusade, and when the evangelist spoke, 80,000 people present, it's the largest crowd I've ever seen, 80,000 people raised their hand for salvation.

A huge number responded to the call for the baptism in the Spirit. In the churches which I was involved in over the next few weeks, there were about five in the largest church who attended after that crusade. It's possible to be captivated and to be drawn along by a pressure that is not actually from a real happening, but is simply an exaggeration.

And although these gifts of the flesh and the fivefold ministries are perhaps amusing, there is a very serious side to it that there are temptations to say things as from God, or to claim things as from God, which are not true. And we mustn't be drawn into it. The supernatural is wonderful, and as I said, that word itself leaves me unsatisfied.

I'm sure Ron will give me a better word than that. No? Shrug of the shoulders? All right. But... I'll give you time to work on it.

But there's something wonderful about the Spirit bringing us into the realm of the supernatural, but it's more into the realm of direct relationship with God. And this is the realm in which we have to work. Now, I want to tell you a story.

I don't know if Colin Wakeling is here. Is Colin Wakeling here? No? It's a story about Colin Wakeling, so I'd better be careful to make sure whether he's here. Colin Wakeling was... He told me how he was converted.

He went to a meeting. I'm not sure where it was. But he went to a meeting.

He was a man. He was not from a Christian background, but he had a friend at work who invited him to a meeting to hear a man speak. And various things happened.

It was very difficult to get to the meeting and the car was breaking down. They had to change the car several times. They got to the meeting and the meeting was in a kind of a community center.

And they... In this community center, there was a hall at one end and at the other end there was a bar serving beer and various things, drinks. And so he went into the meeting. When he got there, he thought, well, I don't really feel happy here.

So he went to the bar at the other end of the community center. And he didn't drink alcohol. He thought, no, I mustn't upset my friends when I go back to them.

He stayed there for some time. When he judged the meeting would be finishing, he went back to the meeting. He sat next to his friend and his friend, of course, was bitterly disappointed.

He got back just as the closing prayer was being said. And he... The people were then dismissed and they were walking out. And the preacher suddenly lifted up his voice and said, I can't remember the exact words, but he said something to the effect, I know you and I've seen you.

And he described certain things directly about Colin's life. And Colin began to tremble. And they had to help him to a seat.

He was trembling. He was under such conviction, they helped him to a seat where he sat down. And under the revelation of God's word and the revelation of Jesus to him, he was completely and utterly made new.

When he got home that night, he'd left at home a worldly man, got home to his wife, a completely new man, completely new. I remember a story that Ron Hearn told. This is a story way back in the 50s when he was in the church in Bradford that Mr North was pastoring.

And Ron went to work, a machine tool, I don't know exactly what it was, various things. He went to work in a factory. Got to work there and there was a man there who was in no way a Christian and he was saying certain things that were wrong.

But in the presence of wrong, that morning, this man, this strong man, suddenly began to tremble and shake. He broke down. He repented and he was converted.

He was filled with the Holy Spirit. And that night he went to the prayer meeting full of desire to pour out his heart to God, a new man. Didn't know how to pray but he had all the desire.

He was praying in the prayer meeting that evening. It's wonderful, isn't it? I don't know what these stories do for you but they quicken and they keep alive in me the desire for the manifestation of the Son of God. You read in 1 Corinthians, it talks about the manifestation of the Spirit.

And we can see various things but we can end up in a form of truth simply using gifts of the Spirit by words that are spoken in thus says the Lord, that's the form of prophecy but not the power of it. The power is in what Ron was saying about this morning, that manifestation of the Spirit to the heart of a man that makes him know God is speaking to him and convicts of sin. And I guess that every person in this, in this tent this morning, if we gave an analysis, a clever analysis of the gifts of the Spirit, I suppose that it would leave us all saying yes, I understand it better now but the thing that I would rather come to every heart is a thirst for God and for a revelation of God to us and through us.

I want to turn you to a passage in the Old Testament which is in 1 Kings chapter 13 and it's about a prophet, it's actually about a disobedient prophet because, you know, when we talk about the gifts of the Spirit, there are different things we can talk about. We can talk about, at the top of my page here, I've written down some notes here and at the top of my page I've written pomegranates, bells and taps. There you go.

I knew that would appeal to Ron. Pomegranates and bells are the on the garments of the high priest when he went into the holy place. The pomegranates, the fruits of the Spirit and the bells, the gifts of the Spirit.

Whether that's a definitive interpretation, I don't know, but it's one interpretation. There they are, sounding one against the other. The pomegranate, the fruit and the bell.

Now, if you take away the pomegranates, the bells, it's clink and clank and it's not very nice. That's what 1 Corinthians 13 talks about because that chapter is very much about the gifts of the Spirit. We could turn to that because the gifts of the Spirit are only like taps.

You may have heard me say this before, but when you're thirsty and you see a tap, you run to the tap and you say, and you turn the tap and dirty, stinking water comes out or pure, fresh water comes out. The tap is only a through thing. It's just to pass through the wonderful water of life.

And if you were in the Sahara Desert and you wouldn't say, Oh, I'm looking for a tap. Has anybody seen a tap? And then someone, they sell them down the road. There's a shop there.

Or a man says, Oh, actually, I've got ten here. Would you like to buy one? I've got a gold one, a silver one. Would you like one? No, I don't want a tap.

I want the water. And to me, that's the great key about the gifts of the Spirit. They are a channel for what is in us.

And as we go on with the Lord, what is in us is a manifestation of Christ. The wonderful fact of the Church is that it is the continuation of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. It is not that we are Jesus Christ, but it is that Jesus Christ is being formed in us and being manifest in our mortal bodies.

And one of the wonderful things about this is that we are still ourselves. We are unique. We are not trying to stop being ourselves.

We could take, I am crucified with Christ to the nth degree to mean that I am to be a nothing. But that isn't what it means. I am to be a new person, fully rounded, in Christ.

And one of the things we need is the expression of Christ-centred personality. Not self-centred personality, but Christ-centred personality. Because one of the things that adorns the Church is people with their lovely nature and their life free, liberated to be themselves in Christ.

Not to be hemmed and to be anxious and to be always apologetic and hiding and some kind of strange legalistic nihilism. Do you understand that? But you know, something trying to deny what I am a person. But the cross liberates me to be in Christ.

One of the things that the Spirit of God produces in the Church is people under whom others come to rest and shelter. There's no doubt that God reveals Christ in a unique way through every person. And one of the great facts of the gift and the gifts is that it's not the gifts I have that are on me like a Christmas tree.

I've got this gift and that gift. But it's the gift I am and am becoming to the people around me. I am the gift of God in that respect to manifest Christ to them through who I am.

And part of the strength of the Church is to be a renewed people in Christ to whom people can relate and find shelter and strength. I guess young Christians lean heavily on the fathers in the faith. And that's not to be denied and it shouldn't surprise us.

People who have become attached to people. It's for a season. It's fine.

It's for spiritual babyhood. They become attached and it's one reason why babes can say, I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos. It must be corrected.

It must be weaned off of as time goes by. But there is a sense in which we need to relate to people who are whole in Christ. And they are gifts given to us for the manifestation of Christ not just in a word but in their life, in their personality that we are to be the continuation of the Incarnation.

We are to manifest the living Christ. Now, as I said, pomegranates, bells and taps. In that sense, what we are in ourselves.

And so if we really are to speak about the gifts of the Spirit, really to understand their operation we have to speak about what is in us. And of course that opens the subject right up to many other things. And before I turn you there into 1 Kings, let me just quote to you from Revelation 12 where it says about the two witnesses who are in the earth.

Whoever they are, leave it for the moment. We can talk about it but I have no doubt that the witnesses are the same today whether they refer to another special age. As you are always, we are tempted to put off.

The witnesses are a special time at the end. But the witnesses are present. The witnesses of God are present in our generation.

God is giving witness to Himself and He never leaves Himself without witness. And He never leaves Himself without two witnesses to confirm what He says. And those two witnesses, they prophesied in sackcloth.

And again, the word this morning, blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted. And for a man to prophesy in sackcloth refers not to the kind of gloomy things he is prophesying but to the broken hearted state from which he prophesied. And it isn't difficult to find terrible things happening in our age, in our world.

You don't have to go far, I suppose, one of the terrible paradoxes of our age is you just go 4,000 miles in that direction and you find murder and mayhem in the Eastern Congo. Things that a man cannot mention even in a men's meeting. But they are happening to men, women and children now across a great swathe of Africa.

Sierra Leone, Liberia, Eastern Congo, Anand, Burundi, Zimbabwe. Right through, things awful happening. Graves being dug, people dying.

When you're there in the midst of that kind of thing where you're aware, you're so conscious of all these things happening, it seems such a different world. But I guess in our generation, in our country, in our nation, there's a whole generation being lost in another way to foolishness. I was thinking of this repentance and thinking of how deep and strong must be the change for some who have plunged themselves into foolishness.

You can see some of the culture of our day is so plunged into such a selfish, pleasure-seeking way. I'm talking about the extremes. I hope I don't know how many are given over to it.

But it's not just young people, it's older people seeking to regain a youth. And plunge into utter folly and for them to come back not even open to preaching. Preaching is not, it's not in fashion, it's not something that is questioned and people don't want to hear somebody preach.

But what is our reaction? I went to hear David Wilkerson speak in London about two months ago and his subject was anguish. That was his subject, I think even just to hear the name of his subject was anguish. And he was saying that the thing that should be regained in the church is anguish.

The anguish of God is there but the hardness and indifference of people who can condemn this activity in the world and can condemn that activity and can speak eloquently against this sin and that sin but do it without any tears. But God's witness in this generation is a prophesying church, prophesying in sackcloth and the heart of all the gifts of the Spirit is prophesying. You can forget all the details for the moment but the church is a prophetic body of people.

We are a body of people who are all prophesying and in the Acts of the Apostles chapter 2 it tells Peter quoted and they all spoke, they were all filled with the Spirit, they spoke in tongues but the tongues they spoke in were understandable to everybody and everybody heard them speak of the wonderful works of God. They were cut to the heart. One of the things Peter said, your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.

This prophesy, your handmaidens prophesy on my spirit, on our poor device, Spirit on all flesh and it refers you back to the word that Moses gave. Oh that all the Lord's people were prophets and could speak a word and could give a manifestation of the wonderful works of God beholding them in the power of the Spirit. To really deal with the subject of the gifts of the Spirit, you have to deal more with subjects like tears and love and anguish.

When I heard David Wilkerson speak, he spoke about the way their church had been broken with a realization how many people were dying around them and how little they were touched. He told some stories about people. He told one story about a drug addict who had filled his syringe with blood and with the blood he had written on his ceiling the words help.

Now if you met him in the street you might have looked at him and an obvious person who is going to hell, someone who is leading others astray or whatever but in his heart there was a cry to God for help. And David Wilkerson said we were broken. That's what he said in anguish.

To reach the generation that is perishing around us. I guess it's something again of a broken biscuit that God could touch at any time just looking at somebody. And I pray that I will be like that broken biscuit able to be touched because I've no doubt that there's many things I've seen in my life and not noticed.

You know, somebody asked me very recently whether I thought how holy I could become in Christ. What did I think was the extent to which, you know, he said we can still sin after we are born again, can't we? And I said to him I think the greatest sins I've ever committed were after I was born again. Things I've done knowing the love of God where I haven't let my heart expand to love people but have reacted in smallness when I should have loved.

I didn't feel I was sinning. I didn't... God didn't jump down on me. When I think back little things nobody would say it was sin but when I sinned in the world nobody would be surprised.

We can all talk about that but when we are... our hearts don't weep when we see a person when we react like the world when politicians fall when we react manifesting the spirit of our age and then go and prophesy beautiful words in the church and believe they'll have power. If God is to renew the gifts of the spirit amongst us I have no doubt it will be a renewal of the processes of repentance. It isn't that we go to school to learn oh you know this is how you speak in tongues and this is how you get a word and you get prompted like this and you know it's not that.

I believe that the manifestation of the spirit is spontaneous unplanned uncontrived unexpected powerful and mighty beyond anything we know. It is the manifestation of what we are in God. And if we have grown indifferent and cold and prayerless we don't know his presence we don't feel his presence we become adept in the ministry of excuses or the gift of excuses.

It's funny until we realise we've done it. Now I've turned you to this chapter in 1 Kings various things in this chapter one of the things just in verse 4 it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God who cried out against the altar in Bethel that he stretched out his hand from the altar saying arrest him. Then his hand which he stretched out toward him withered so that he could not pull it back to himself.

And the altar was split apart. The ashes poured out from the altar according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord. The king answered and said to the man of God please look at the face of God for me that my hand may be restored to me.

So the man of God looked at the face of God for him. And the king's hand was restored to him and became as before. There's a little you cannot isolate the gift of the Spirit from a relationship that is looking up to God.

You can't suddenly turn and do something quite out of character. This man had a life beholding the face of God. And one of the words of the New Testament we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed from glory to glory even by the Lord the Spirit.

There is a word. We all beholding as with open face and that's the word here. This man beheld the face of God.

He looked up and the king knew that the prophet could look up. It's wonderful to notice here the prophet has more power than the kings and it was always true except perhaps for David. But the prophets always were in touch.

They always knew the word of God. The kings sometimes were far away and you can find the same thing in churches. Elders, pastors, leaders can sometimes occupy the place of leadership and power in the church and yet not know the power.

The power does not come from a position. It comes from a relationship. And sometimes we call someone to pray oh he's in that position or he's in that reputation but the reputation that a man must have is that he's able to look at the face of God.

And there's no substitute for quieting our hearts and looking to God. Because the manifestation of the Son of God by the Spirit through our lives, through utterance, through acts of kindness, through, you know I used the gift of the Spirit apparently. I smiled at somebody.

I had to smile at them when they said that. I don't know if you heard them the other day. They said they could give their testimony because I smiled at them.

So after that I used my gift very strongly. I used my gift very strongly. Very cheesily.

But it's not the conscious thing. It's interesting you can smile at somebody unconsciously but when you do it consciously of course then it becomes contrived. But the manifestation of the Spirit is the manifestation really of a relationship with God and of a heart state with God.

Now this chapter goes on, this man in this tremendous victory and you we're not going to read the chapter, it's too long. But the chapter goes on to tell how the man was commanded by God not to eat and drink. It tells you there, it says in the king said to the man, come home with me and refresh yourself, I will give you a reward.

But the man of God said to the king, if you were to give me half your house I would not go in with you, nor would I eat bread, nor drink water in this place. For so it was commanded me by the word of the Lord saying you shall not eat bread nor drink water nor return by the same way you came. And if you know the story another prophet comes to him and tricks him and however he got his word I don't know, but the other prophet contradicted, no no that's not right, he said I've got another word.

This is the true word for you God told me to invite you to come back and have bread come home with me and eat bread. He said I cannot I've been told by the word of the Lord, you shall not eat bread nor drink water there nor return by going there. The prophet said I too am a prophet as you are.

An angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord saying bring him back with you to your house that he may eat bread and drink water. He was lying to him. He was lying.

Was the man conscious of lying? Was there a point in his word to the man when he knew this isn't really from God is it? Did he have a motive? I don't know. But he lied. So the prophet went back and when he got back there he cried out another word saying a lion and the prophet of the Lord went back and a lion killed him.

And there is a lion no lions in England physically but there is a lion and he'll walk even around this campsite and the lion seeking whom he may devour and he devoured the disobedient prophet and it's it tells in verse 26 when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard it he said it is the man of God who was disobedient to the word of the Lord and if I again I was to give another key for the gift of the spirit and the life in the spirit there is one great word it's obedience it's a very dramatic and fear inspiring story many of these stories are they inspire fear and of course we consign them to another age and say well God doesn't act like that anymore of course I don't know how we interpret Ananias and Sapphira who lied to the spirit of God pretending to be on fire for God

now their pretense was particularly damaging in that it was in the midst of a revival so they were they were people who were going to block God's moving most lying pretense maybe I would guess in the midst of a lying generation or a lying context so it doesn't stand out but they stood out blocking the way of God but the great key is to obey and if God is to reach any person through us it will inevitably be in part due to the fact that we are simply walking in obedience because the manifestation of the living Christ is an obedient son I'm here to do your will not my own it's the inspiration for all the sons of God it's the father's will it's the delight of the father's will now I noticed that the man of God the prophet called the man of God would not disobey when pressed to disobey by the

king he could resist the word from the world but he succumbed to the word from his fellow prophet and one of the strange facts about obedience and disobedience is that obedience to God a vital foundation we must obey the spirit quickly if we have disobeyed God years ago and we still know what we must do and we still haven't done it we must still obey God but one of the strange facts about disobedience is this we will not disobey because the world calls it but we will disobey because of pressure from within the saints someone's doing something the tone among things family, husband, wife something happening that we cannot we don't have the stature to resist and the man, the prophet became known as a disobedient

prophet he was a disobedient prophet and the mark of the son of God is that he

is obedient and the key to the gift of the spirit is obedience is to live in the spirit as many as are led by the spirit they are the sons of God Jesus said greater works shall you do because I go to my father Jesus said that what are the words I've spoken to you the spirit shall bring them to your remembrance Jesus said the spirit shall lead you into all truth Jesus said the world will not see me but you will see me and in the whole relationship of all those things that Jesus spoke about in the relationship of the Holy Spirit it comes down to one basic fact, obedience God requires relationship, he longs for it he's thirsty for it it's what he builds on in us, his relationship he doesn't build on some power in us or some doctrine in us, he builds he uses those things but he builds on this

rock of Christ in us and us in relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ through obedience and so if we were to bring all these things down to their the layer in which they are most critically to operate it is simply in the realm in which I am looking up to God in obedience and faith and trust to walk with him now where there is disobedience the power will seep out of the life it will dissipate it will go one of the things that we have to be aware of is that there is something we could only describe as spiritual leakage and we can blame all manner of things but in the end we have to accept that a man's enemies will be those of his own household that obedience to Jesus Christ means that I am going to go with him and walk with him over every other relationship that I have that he

though invisible to me though I see him not though I don't always feel his presence in that way that I can say where he is and what he is doing though he is the one to whom I owe my obedience because I either obey him or obey others and the thing about obedience is that the persons who most undermine our obedience are those we love the most and God will quicken to us by his spirit things that we have allowed things we have let slip things we have allowed to enter in which simply unseat in our lives the lordship of Christ he is there, he doesn't depart but he is not there in that clear relationship of obedience we are not obeying him there we must go back to obey him we must put little things right we must address areas where we got used to sin or disobedience we must address things we

have allowed to simply dwell in our midst, in our lives in our ways worldliness that creeps and we must address these things no matter how little people respect us or how much they criticize us, we must return to the simple facts that God is in relationship with us by the Holy Spirit and we with him through obedience through faith and obedience we inherit the promise there can be no substitute for these spiritual things of anguish love desire for God thirst for God, obedience where do these things go? they are overshadowed, they are clouded by things that we allow and they just things happen, this man disobeyed God's word to him because another said to him, don't be so don't be so fanatical don't be so, I know there is a danger of fanaticism, that's another danger but look at this one,

this simple fact that tips up so many, we disobey God because somebody says that what we would not allow ourselves what we would not do, we see now well, I suppose I can't God wanting to renew the flame of desire and zeal for God I know that there is in many hearts such a thirst for God I don't think people are thirsty for meetings I don't think they are thirsty for preaching or for prophesying or they are thirsty for God and that's what God wants to blow up on, this thirst for God, God wanted to rise up and so take a hold in our hearts that what we want is God himself who pushes aside the other things that we would be in that relationship we heard about it this morning repentance is God and me, it's not me and all the things, the reasons I am what I am look at it all God it's me, why I

am what I am and God is faithful to come and renew to search our hearts and renew in us the precious things of the Holy Spirit I guess in the end it's testimonies I've told you testimony it's testimonies in the end that will quicken desire, things like that and we could tell testimonies, maybe we should hear more testimony, we can tell things that God has done but there is a limit in the end our hearts must be carried on because we see God and we want him and we are willing to pay the price to lay our lives down the price is very little actually, what do we lose? the misery of a half hearted life, it's nothing the misery of a foot in two camps because where hearts yield entirely to God where hearts allow themselves to be led by the Spirit of God on the basis that I will not be led by my

own understanding, I will not be led by my own preferences I will learn new preferences, I will learn new ways as I yield to God through the cross always you come back to that because in the end every relationship with God is built on the fact that God enables me to live a life of self-denial joyfully it's a key to joy not heaviness it's a key to the manifestation of the living Christ in my mortal body it's a key to joy unspeakable and full of glory it's a key to gifts of the Spirit some of which I'm conscious of, others of which I'm not even aware of but a man full of the Holy Spirit like Stephen, I guess he didn't know all that he did he didn't know the wisdom that he spoke, by which he spoke and he was just serving in the church joyfully and gladly I suppose the greatest gift the

church has is a person who is full of joy in the Holy Ghost consistently constantly, day after day month after month year after year full of joy in the Holy Ghost we're not supermen, we have our days when it's difficult but we know the way to gain the joy of the Lord, we know the way to find Him, we know the way in which our hearts can be broken by a touch, we know it and we have this joy that we're walking with God He's done something in us by the baptism in the Spirit which makes me a vessel which is not like a horse that needs a bridle but like a son that needs just a touch just a whisper and it's the treasure of my life to walk with God by the Spirit let us pray now God speaks for response we haven't time for response here but there is time for response don't say there isn't time,

there is time you can even sit in this tent you don't have to go but God wants to renew the things of the Spirit of God in our lives, He wants to renew the things of relationship He wants to bring us back to obedience some doubtless walking in this joyous surrender of quietness of heart, knowing the voice of God and walking with God, praise God and rejoice in it my brother, my sister rejoice, let God renew it, let God refocus you on Christ within Christ in you, the key Christ in us the life, Christ in us, the way me obedient to Him believing Him, trusting Him laying down my life in submission to Him Lord Jesus we turn our hearts to You we love You our hearts are before You this morning that You should move upon us and we pray You will we offer up our lives to You Lord we want You to

occupy the place of power in us, that throne we don't want to sit there and tell You what to do we want You to sit there we want to be at Your feet we want to be at Your feet not just through words of songs but through obedience of life through faith of obedience Lord convict of sin, convict of disobedience, convict so strongly that no man can escape it convict everyone convict so strongly Lord we pray that we may release our lives to the joy of washing cleansing, forgiveness renewal glory to Your name Lord Your faithful Lord we long for the manifestation of God in us, in our churches in every meeting Lord, in every gathering in our homes Lord as we talk in our homes we want to know that Jesus is near He's there He's moving Lord hear our cry we cry to You Lord, we're not sighing, we're

crying

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