

However, whether natural endowment, awakened by the gift of the Spirit, or special enduements of the Spirit, the Scripture makes frequent reference to what are designated the gifts of the Spirit.

9. Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., in *Perspectives on Pentecost* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), p. 44, states:

The gift (singular) of the Spirit is integral to the experience of salvation in Christ (repentance unto life, Acts 11:18). It is an actual foretaste of eschatological life, the anticipatory "firstfruits" of the future resurrection harvest (Rom. 8:23), the "down payment" in kind on the final inheritance (II Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13f.). On the other hand, the gifts (plural) of the Spirit consist of particular operations pertaining to various ministries (I Cor. 12:4-6) and, as such, are provisional and subeschatological. This is one of Paul's points in I Corinthians 13:8ff., a passage touched on here only briefly because we will be returning to it below. Prophecy and tongues, among other gifts, have a provisional and partial character and so are temporary, destined to pass away (vv. 8f.), while those works of the Spirit like faith, hope and love endure (v. 13).

It is necessary, then, in considering the whole work of the one Spirit in the church, to recognize on the one hand those activities and outworkings that are eschatological and experienced by all, and on the other hand those subeschatological functions, none of which is given to all. It is essential to distinguish what is present eschatologically by universal donation from what is given subeschatologically by differential distribution.

10. J. I. Packer, in *Keep in Step with the Spirit* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1984), pp. 82-83, writes:

What is a Spiritual Gift? But our thinking about gifts is shallow. We say, rightly, that they come from the Spirit. Paul calls them "manifestations of the Spirit" (see 1 Corinthians 12:4-11). However, we go on to think of them in terms either of what we call "giftedness" (that is, human ability to do things skillfully and well) or of supernatural novelty as such (power to speak in tongues, to heal, to receive messages straight from God to give to others, or whatever). We have not formed the habit of defining gifts in terms of Christ the head of the body, and his present work from heaven in our midst. In this we are unscriptural. At the start of 1 Corinthians Paul gives thanks ". . . because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus that in every way you were enriched in Him with all speech and all knowledge . . ." (1:4, 7). Paul's wording makes it clear that spiritual gifts are given in Christ; they are enrichments received from Christ. First Corinthians 12 assumes the Christ-oriented perspective that 1:1-7 established. It is vital that we should see this, or we shall be confusing natural with spiritual gifts to the end of our days.

Nowhere does Paul or any other New Testament writer define a spiritual gift for us, but Paul's assertion that the use of gifts edifies ("builds up", 1 Corinthians 14:3-5, 12, 26, see also 17; Ephesians 4:12, 16) shows what his idea of a gift was. For Paul,