



## **A BRIEF SUMMARY OF OUR UNDERSTANDING AND USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

- The Holy Spirit has graciously given spiritual gifts to the church for the church's good. "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7). These spiritual gifts are also referred to as "grace gifts" (charismata) or "manifestations of the Spirit."
- Each believer has been given at least one spiritual gift at the Spirit's discretion. As taught in 1 Peter 4:10-11, some of these are "speaking" gifts (a few examples: teaching, preaching, prophesying, exhortation) and some are "serving" gifts (a few examples: mercy, helps, giving, hospitality). An individual Christian's spiritual gifts are usually identified in the context of serving the church as other people express personal appreciation and note "fruitfulness" as that gift is used. Often, this affirmation from others is accompanied by an inward joy in serving on the part of the gifted person.
- All the spiritual gifts are available and beneficial to the church until the Lord's return (1 Cor. 13:8-12). There is no evidence from the Scripture that any of the gifts necessarily have ceased or will cease before that event. Because of the Holy Spirit's intention in giving spiritual gifts for the benefit of the body of Christ, these gifts should be "earnestly desired" (1 Corinthians 12:31 and 14:1), willingly used for the good of others and appreciated as evidences of God's loving, active involvement in the church.
- Every believer's gifts are needed by the other members of the church, and are to be humbly used under the guidance of the church's leaders for the church's unity, health and growth. No one is to withhold his or her gifts from the others in the church and the church is not to devalue or ignore the gifts of any member (1 Corinthians 12:14-26).
- The gifts are to be used according to the guidelines laid out in God's Word. Of special note is the use of the spiritual gifts of "tongues" and "prophecy." The guidelines for using these gifts in particular are laid out in 1 Corinthians 14, and we commit as a church to use these gifts according to God's Word. For example, with any public use of "tongues," two or three at the most are to share, and only if there is interpretation. With "prophecy," also, only two or three are to be shared in any church gathering, and these prophecies are to be "weighed" by others as to their biblical compatibility and benefit to the church (1 Corinthians 14:26-33).