

The Manifestations of the Spirit of God

One hears a lot these days about the Holy Spirit. In some quarters one hears more about the Spirit than the Son or the Father. But as I read the Scriptures, I see that the ministry of the Holy Spirit does not involve promoting Himself, although we must read the Scriptures to examine His ministry.

John 16 gives us a clear description of the office work of the Spirit. What He will do. What He will not do. We will come back to that chapter a little later.

But let's define at least one term before we move on. The word "manifestation" gets a lot of press in today's church, so we might as well know what it means from a Scriptural standpoint.

The Greek for that word is a family of words that come from *phaino*. To shine, show. Translated "appear, seem, be seen." *Phaneros*: apparent. Manifest. *Phanero-o*. Render apparent. Make manifest. *Phanerosis* : Exhibition. Expression (only time this family is used in reference to gifts of the Spirit. I Cor 12.)

We get the word "epiphany" from *phaino*. An appearance. A manifestation.

Manifest in English: "readily perceived by the senses and esp by the sense of sight. Easily understood or recognized by the mind. Verb: to make evident or certain by showing or displaying

So, something that suddenly appears, or suddenly makes sense. Often supernatural. I think we all understand the meaning of the word. The question I have is, what manifestations of the Holy Spirit should the Christian expect in His life?

I want to trace the concept and/or the very word, through the New Testament as quickly as possible to give you a flavor of how it is used:

John 4. Jesus meets a woman at a well. Besides exposing her moral problem, he deals with her doctrinal issues. She was under the impression that worship was something that started on the outside and worked its way into favor with God on the inside. If I worship on this mountain I'm OK, but not on that mountain. Jesus, which mountain do you think is the place where people should worship.

Jesus' answer is classic Christian teaching, but we still don't get it. Jesus said that worship is not an external thing to begin with, but is internal, in a man's spirit. You can worship anywhere. But

then he added, you must worship also in truth. Anywhere, but not anything. Anywhere, but not anyone. You must worship Him. Not in this building or that, this denomination or that, but Him.

Worship, true worship, is a manifestation of the Truth of God planted deep in the heart by the Spirit of God. A manifestation of the Spirit.

In Acts 4, Annas and Caiphas, still enemies of Jesus Christ, knew that a miracle had just taken place. It is manifest, obvious, they said. So the healing power of God is a manifestation of the Spirit.

In Romans 1, Paul argues that every man on the earth has within himself a manifestation of the truth about God, based on the visible creation. So the knowledge of God is a manifestation of the Spirit.

In Romans 10, Paul quotes Isaiah as saying, "I became manifest to those who did not ask for me." God's revealing of His salvation to the ungodly is a manifestation of the Spirit.

Romans 16, the gospel of Jesus Christ is now being made known through the Scriptures. The Gospel of Jesus is a manifestation of the Spirit.

May I add here, that there is only one Gospel. I now cringe at the idea of a "full Gospel" vs some other Gospel that has been in the church for 2000 years. There was a time when I understood what some were saying when they used the term "full Gospel." They meant "full awareness." Fuller praise. Fuller life in the worship service. A separate experience from salvation.

But they were wrong, deadly wrong, to label this a "full Gospel." I imagine the apostle Paul would cringe also if the term were used around him. He let us know what the full Gospel was and is: the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, the payment made for sin so that I don't have to suffer in hell forever. The Good News that my debt has been paid. There is no Gospel that is more full than that.

The Good News is not that I can dance in church. Dancing and singing and praising, these are all responses to the Gospel. But it is the Gospel that must bring that response. Not a rock group. Not special lighting. Not an entertaining speaker. Not smoke.

The Good News is not the gifts of the Spirit, whether they exist or don't exist. Those gifts are given to promote the Gospel. They are not the Gospel. Don't add to the Gospel, lest you come under the curse of Paul who warned about preaching another Gospel.

An other. Read my lips. An other. There is one Gospel, as I described above. Any other Gospel is an other Gospel. There has been no second Gospel added to the Gospel in our generation to make it more acceptable.

The Gospel is acceptable on its face. You were going to hell, everyone of you. You deserved it. You broke the rules of the Rule maker. He says you deserve to be punished. He's is eternal. Your punishment deserves eternity.

But Good News. Jesus steps forward and says, LO I COME to do your will. What is that will? To give His life a ransom for many.

That's the Gospel. And that Gospel is a manifestation of the Spirit of God. The greatest manifestation God has ever given to mankind. You can roll around on the floor if you want, and swing from the chandeliers if you want, you can bark like an animal if you want, but if you are not responding to the Gospel of Christ, your antics are from the flesh and from the devil and they bless no one. Get up, dust yourself off, and look into the eyes of Jesus and weep over your sins, and weep with joy for His Good news, manifested to you, by pure grace.

Moving to 1 Corinthians, we see Paul exalting prophecy over tongues in the infant church, since tongues did not edify in the public assembly. Prophecy, says Paul, a gift of the Spirit, makes manifest the secrets of the heart of men. When the Word of God goes forth in the power of the Spirit, it penetrates to the very core of a man's being, and men who are convicted by the Spirit in this way will later testify that God showed up. Nothing weird, nothing out of the way, a simple word, today a Scripture spoken in a timely manner, that totally devastates a person and turns him around. The Word of God is a manifestation of the Spirit.

12:7 gives us the only other time that "manifestation" is specifically referred to gifts of the Spirit. Each of us is given a manifestation, something that can be seen among us, something that physically appears and does good things and is to be used properly.

In another letter to Corinth, chapter 2, Paul speaks of the aroma, the fragrance given off by the true people of God. That aroma of the knowledge of Christ is manifested through us. You, when you walk in the Spirit, are a manifestation of that Spirit of God.

Two chapters later Paul speaks of the dying and life of Jesus Himself that is manifested in us. What we carry about in our bodies of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and show to the world, is a manifestation of the Spirit of God.

Galatians 5 speaks of the fruit of the Spirit. If a manifestation is something you can see of God in the life of the church, surely love, joy, peace, in the life of a believer are the most striking manifestations of the Spirit of God among us. Not great preaching. Not great singing. Not great

meetings. But great living. That's how you know the Spirit of God is in a place. He manifests Himself by a totally changed life!

In Colossians 1, Paul mentions the mystery that was hidden for ages, but now is made manifest. That mystery is Christ in you. The hidden mysteries of God now revealed to us are manifestations of the Spirit of God.

1 Timothy 3:16. God Himself was manifested in the flesh. Jesus Christ is a manifestation of the Spirit of God. So says Peter in 1:20. Foreknown before the foundation of the world, but made manifest, or appeared, in these last times for our sake.

Titus 1:3. The manifestation of the Word at the proper time. The Word is a manifestation of the Spirit of God.

Hebrews 12:14 says that without holiness no one will see the Lord. The Holy Spirit manifests holy living. A person not living a holy life is none of His. Holy living is a manifestation of the Spirit of God.

Look at all these manifestations of God mentioned in your Bible. And you want to tell me that you're seeking after a spectacular gift that will make you look like something? Is not the manifestation of His Word, His truth, worship, holiness, Jesus Himself, enough for you? God manifests Himself in so many ways. Seek all the manifestations of the Spirit.

Let's look now at John 14 and 16.

14:16-26, 16:8-11. When He comes. We all know of His coming at Pentecost. And at Cornelius' house and a few other places in Acts. His coming was dramatic and clear. That first church was to know that the Spirit had indeed come as Jesus said He would. These were historic events, like the resurrection and ascension. Like the crossing of the Red Sea. Like Elijah's miracle on Mt. Carmel. Like the raising of Lazarus. But these are not every day. Every miracle was for a reason and a season. And whatever you need God will provide too, but God may not be as spectacular every day.

The Spirit was to come into the Church, and he came. And he has been in His church ever since. Whether He does something out of the ordinary or not, He is here. And there are certain promises Jesus has made about what His work is to be:

1. 14:16, 18. The Spirit will be with you forever. The man Jesus could not stay, but the Spirit would come. But notice in verse 18, "I will come to you." When the Spirit comes to us, Jesus comes to us. We talk about asking "Jesus" into our hearts. Technically it is the Spirit who comes. But Jesus overrides that technicality and says it is He Who comes! The presence of Jesus in your heart is a manifestation of the Spirit!

2. 14:26. The Spirit will teach you all things. 16:13, says "Guide you into all the truth." How does He do this? He doesn't give them new revelations down through history, and not to you either. He "brings to [the apostles'] remembrance all that [Jesus] said..." Those long discourses. Was someone taking notes? Yes, the Spirit was. And the Spirit gave those notes to the apostles so we could have them in the Bible. Your Bible is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit!
3. 16:8. He will convict the world concerning sin, because the world does not believe in Jesus. How does this happen? The Spirit-filled church. Now when I use that term, "Spirit-filled" I am not speaking of those who exercise a particular gift that the Spirit gives. I am talking about every true believer in Jesus. If any man does not have the Spirit of Christ, says Paul, He is none of His! When Christ enters the life, the Spirit is right there. You cannot be saved without the Holy Spirit. Is there more? Yes, every day. "Be filled with the Spirit" is a command to all believers. Not a one-time event. Constant. Daily. Lord fill me, I need You again, I cannot make it in my natural man.

When a Spirit-filled believer tells an unbeliever about Jesus Christ, the Spirit reaches out to that person and convicts them. When TV and Internet programs broadcast the Gospel all over the world, Jesus Christ is set before the world. And the world by and large rejects this Christ and becomes guilty of the sin above all sins, the rejection of Christ. Some would go so far as to say that it is this sin that is the sin against the Holy Ghost that cannot be forgiven. For it is the Spirit that pleads with men to come to Jesus, through the church and His own working in the human heart. To speak against, or blaspheme, that Spirit, is fatal.

So the preaching of Christ is a manifestation of the Spirit promised by Jesus to convict men of the sin of not believing on Him. Not sins, plural. One sin, the greatest sin of all, saying no to the Creator and the Savior of mankind.

4. 16:8. He will convict the world of righteousness, says Jesus, because He, Jesus will not be here to do it Himself. Jesus says that the Spirit is going to let the world see and know the difference between right and wrong. When that Spirit enters a man of God, his life begins to change. Fruit is produced. Individuals and whole churches become holy. Different. A quiet but real witness to the world of what is good and what is not good. There was a time in our own land when the Spirit's work did indeed influence the culture. Slowly that strength of righteous behavior is lessening. The church herself yielded more and more to the culture and now the culture doesn't seem to know what right behavior is.

So right living is a manifestation of the Spirit's work in our world. Nothing spectacular here. Just a daily obedience to the Lord's will and ways that sets a person or a church apart from the world and thus convicts the world.

5. 16:8 The Spirit will convict the world of judgment also, because, Jesus says, Satan has been judged. In the mind of God, Satan's plans and person have already been condemned. The lake of fire awaits him. He is doomed. Also doomed, then, are all those who follow him. Through the workings of a Spirit-filled church, the message will go out that judgment is coming to the planet. Preachers use to preach this more and people therefore believed it more, whether they came to church or not. They had this uneasy feeling that maybe the church is right. Hell-fire and brimstone preaching has become unpopular in our day. We have to love and be nice to people. No, a Spirit-filled church is not trying to please people, it is trying to warn people. Judgment is coming. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, a message of judgment to the world is being preached.

So it is a manifestation of the Spirit of God when you hear a minister or even a personal evangelist, warning people of the wrath to come.

There is more. 12-15.

6. 16:13. The Spirit will guide into all truth. We must take this as an indirect promise to us and a direct promise to the men sitting with Him at the time. When the Spirit came He gave certain apostles memories of the things Jesus had said and done. We must not believe that the apostles had great memories or even great vocabularies. As the prophets of old they were carried along by the Holy Ghost so as to give to us a perfect account of the life of Jesus. Jesus' biographer was the Holy Ghost. The epistles were written through the Holy Ghost. The history of the church and its future were recorded through this manifestation of the Holy Ghost. The collection of writings that came together we call the New Testament.

Indirectly, He leads us into all truth by keeping us in His Word. Our pastors and teachers direct us to the Word. Our private devotional life directs us to the Word. Slowly and carefully the Spirit working through His own book, leads us into all truth.

Unfortunately there have always been among us those who believed they could find truth on their own. They lock themselves up in their room, turn off the lights, and say, Spirit lead me.

Better far to sit with the Scriptures, while praying, eyes wide open, and saying, Spirit of Jesus, teach me. All truth necessary for life and godliness, whatever your translation, is in that book.

I have searched many versions of the Scriptures. They all have minor flaws, because they are translations from ancient languages. The amount of similarity is what should be our focus and our admiration, not the tiny differences that cause us to hurl condemnations at each other. You can be saved via an NIV translation. Salvation is in there. You can be a fully mature prosperous Christian by reading the NASB or ESV all your life. You will miss nothing of importance. You can even have all those blessings in the KJV, assuming you have a good dictionary and or concordance alongside to explain to you what those strange-sounding 17th century words mean here in the 21st.

My point is that one manifestation of the Spirit of God is that He has, as Jesus promised, led us into all the truth, and told us of things to come. It's all here!

7. 16:13. Notice in verse 13 something that the Spirit will not do. This to me is amazing and quite often overlooked in this text.

I happen to like the KJV here. Jesus is said to have told that the Spirit of God will not speak "of himself." We interpreted that to mean that the Spirit for the most part does not talk about Himself in the Scriptures, but points us to the Father and the Son, the two main Personages of the Bible. That is true. But what saith the Greek? It doesn't matter if I happen to like that interpretation. What did Jesus really say?

There is a similar passage in John 12:49, where Jesus says that He also did not speak "of himself." But the Greek interlinear there and in the verse before us says "from." In John 12, the preposition in Greek is different. It is *ek*. That word denotes origin. Jesus said I do not speak out of or from Myself. I am in perfect unity with the Father.

Here the preposition is *apo*. KJV makes no distinction between the two, but this one means "off" or "away from", much like *ek*. So Jesus is not saying, "He will not speak about Himself." He is saying, "He will not speak "out of" or "from" Himself, that is, by His own personal authority, or on His own initiative, as some translations have it.

Here is a perfect demonstration of the Deity of the Spirit. We speak much of the Deity of Christ, as part of the Godhead or Trinity. But let us not forget the Deity of the Spirit. The Jehovah's "Witnesses" claim that the Spirit is just a "force", impersonal but powerful, sent out by Jehovah. Jesus says He is a person, one who will manifest Himself in many ways when Jesus leaves the earth, will speak many things to the church. But never alone. Never without perfect consultation with Father and Son.

Think of it. If Jesus had meant that the Spirit would never speak about Himself, I would not be teaching this lesson. I would have no material. The Spirit is mentioned often in the Word, to let us know His office and particular duties. He did speak about Himself in

the Scriptures He gave us. But He never acted on His own authority. What you have in that Book is from Father and Son, as well as Spirit.

Prepositions matter. By the way, the New King corrects both of those verses. Even if the 17th century understanding of the word “of” was different than ours, it is important that we not be misled by using a 21st century meaning of the word in the text. Hence, the change.

8. 16:14 He will glorify Jesus. Here is where we can safely talk about the subject matter of the Spirit’s ministry. Here is where it is clear that the Holy Spirit will lift up Jesus, not Himself, when dealing with God’s elect. The Spirit will come, at the direction of father and Son, to one who has been chosen from the foundation of the world, and whisper in His ear, come to Jesus. Jesus is the Lord. Jesus is the Savior. Jesus is to be the center of your attention from now on. Those for whom the Spirit is the main Person, may have been misled. The Spirit does the whispering, but the message is Jesus. Not gifts. Not talents. Not prosperity. Not health. Jesus must be Lord of all, glorified in the believer’s heart above all.

To love Jesus is not to ignore the Spirit. It is to obey Him. If you truly love Jesus, it is because of the work of the Spirit. If Jesus is central in your life, it is because the Spirit made Him that way. Keep your eyes on Jesus. And the very keeping of those eyes is because of the Spirit.

The Spirit will “take of Mine and disclose it to you.” The Spirit, being God, knows all about Jesus. So He will take a picture here of His saving power, put it in a Bible verse for you to look at, and now it’s yours. He will see Jesus as Creator, write it in John 1, and you will read it and have a little more of Jesus appreciation. The Spirit will be breathed into the apostles to remind them of everything Jesus said and did. They will record it and you will read it and the prophecy is fulfilled: He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

The loving and appreciating and knowing of Jesus is a manifestation of the Spirit of God!

Other manifestations in our day and in the past

I have shown you in Scripture after Scripture what was the promised work of the Holy Spirit. The way the Spirit would manifest Himself in the believer and in the church.

Worship. Healing. The Knowledge of God. Revealing salvation to a sinner. The Gospel itself. The Word of God. Your walk with God. The carrying in our body the death and resurrection of Jesus. The changed life. The hidden mysteries now revealed to us. Jesus Christ. Holy living. Spectacular and real gifts, which many say have ceased. Jesus inside of you. Your Bible. Conviction of sin. Warnings of wrath to come. Being led into all the truth. The glorifying of Jesus.

But for some, and a growing number, these manifestations of the Spirit are not enough. Show us more. Make it real. We want to see something, and the bigger and louder the better.

Remember the crowd that followed Jesus after He worked his miracle of feeding thousands of people with what looked like 5 loaves and 2 fish? What a huge sign that was of His glory. But when they were challenged that next day to believe on Jesus they said, Sure, but show us a sign. Like Moses' manna. Thanks for the bread yesterday, but Moses did it every day. Jesus said, the real bread is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. Ohhhh they were so excited. Don't read your own thoughts into that. You know what Jesus meant. You hunger for Him. They could only think bread! Give us this miraculous bread from heaven every day!

When He said He was the bread, they grumbled. Not interested.

Go to a miracle meeting in our own day. The flim flam evangelist has promised that God is going to do signs and wonders tonight. Don't miss it. The music is loud. The offering is long. The white-coated preacher shows up. But he has an announcement to make. Like Balaam, he's been given severe instructions about what he is to preach. Tonight we will not talk about miracles. I am to tell you only about your sin that crucified Jesus. And the way to salvation.

Lock the doors. They're trying to get out of there! Give us our miracles or we're gone like the wind!

I spent too many years travelling amongst people of this type. Mystic-minded people who could see demons like you can see trees. They were everywhere. Spiritual people to whom God was always whispering some secret. And if you didn't agree with their secrets, you were not of God. Dead people. In meetings you would have trouble walking around the building to get in the prayer lines, because you had to step over bodies supposedly knocked down by God's power.

The manifestations I have carefully laid out to you tonight were not enough. They were not satisfied with the Gospel. They wanted the full Gospel. Not satisfied with Jesus, they wanted to be "Spirit-filled." I believe many of them had received another spirit, just as there is in your Bible another Jesus and another Gospel. You can fake anything in the Bible.

There were fake apostles. Fake prophets. Fake teachers. Entertainers. Rock stars parading as worship leaders. All of them claiming they had received the Spirit of God and that the Spirit of God was manifesting Himself in them.

If you came against their message they would accuse you of touching God's anointed. The passage they used referred to Israel, the people of God, the anointed ones chosen of God during the Old Covenant. Enemies of Israel were warned not to touch Israel, or pay the price. These false ones today arrogantly look into cameras and curse you if you dare come against their ministry.

It gets worse than that. We have discovered that there are spirits in the pagan religions that create manifestations that look exactly like the so-called Spirit manifestations you see in so-called churches of our day. Rolling around. Twitching, shaking. Screaming. Animal behavior. From the pulpit you will hear that God has shown up and is manifesting Himself.

We wonder what would happen if the Son of God, the real Son of God, would appear in the flesh for a few moments, and walk through those meetings. Something tells me they would shut up and shut down real quick. Jesus would take His place, seated at the front of the congregation, and begin to teach them. Get in your seats. Calm down. Listen to Me.

They would learn of His plans, His ways, as outlined in Scripture. At the end He would say to them, next time you get together, remember that I promised to be with you to

the end. You have nothing to prove. Listen to the man of God as he teaches my word. Pray. Fellowship. The rest of this that I have seen tonight is totally uncalled for.

I don't believe in dead meetings. Boring meetings. But when the people of God come together with the right motivation, and the man of God comes among you with the right preparation spiritually and in the Word, wonderful things will happen. Like a bowl of oatmeal it will stick with you as you leave this place where a blast of alcohol will only give you a hangover and eventually a fatal disease. Steer clear of the manifesters, the drunk-masters. Be content with the manifestations He promised, not the ones being conjured up by Christian witch-doctors of our day.

And while we speak of witch-doctors it is important to note that there are manifestations all over the spirit world that can be brought into "church" meetings if we are not careful. Those who go deep into the spirit world, just hungry for some outward showing of some sort will run into, as in the Kundalini phenomenon,

"shaking, inability to relax, a major rush of energy, a near-death experience, tongues, spasms, etc.

But more, "good" manifestations of evil spirits.

"Old habits and addictions, relationships, family connections, diet, work and career – everything comes up for review. If it's not in alignment, it will most likely be removed from your life.

"Knowledge has become wisdom through our experience, and we desire to use our wisdom and compassion in the service to others. A sense of purpose and destiny.

"People seek changes in diet, seeking out healers, leave relationships, change jobs — all done in an attempt to respond to what is happening on the inside.

"Miracles and Synchronicities Appear and You Receive Support From Unexpected Places.

"We become our own healers by becoming aware of what we need in the moment, and learning the skills to take care of ourselves.

“Rachel Zelaya (Surinderjot Kaur) has been practicing yoga since she was 12, but her life changed dramatically when she began practicing Kundalini Yoga at age 36. She has since dedicated herself to making the practice more accessible to more people. She became a certified Kundalini Yoga Teacher in 2011 and immediately went to West Africa to teach civil war refugees Kundalini Yoga in Liberia. Upon her return, she devoted herself to the task of opening up a community-based Kundalini Yoga Center in Boulder, with the help of dozens of other teachers and students. Her mission is to make this life-changing practice available to all who are interested. Rachel has a Master’s degree in Classics, and especially enjoys teaching women, people struggling with addiction, couples/relationship work, and working with individuals to help them heal and empower themselves to walk towards their destiny, using the tools of Kundalini Yoga and Meditation.”

Yoga is a gateway practice that leads eventually to possession. It is a denial of the power of Jesus Christ in favor of the power of a mental awareness. It is deadly.

Remember that not all demon manifestation looks demonic. Paul dealt with a spirit inside of a young girl who daily was telling the truth. She knew stuff that turned out to be true. What could be wrong with truth? Is not truth a manifestation of the Spirit of God? That’s how we reason. But our reasoning is faulty. Paul cast that spirit out. He did not need advertising from the devil. He knew that this woman was causing people to believe in her, and not Paul. He knew that if she gained that sort of popularity as a truth teller, one day she would tell a lie and no one would know the difference.

So it is within the church when the enemy manifests himself. A bad person can tell truth for many days but eventually the lie slips in. And people are led off to hell.

Watch out for manifestations. Watch out for putting up with “little sins” and little white lies” and “little imperfections” that manifest in the church. Eventually they kill.

So God has given us of His Spirit. That Spirit manifests Himself in many many ways. May I enumerate them again... Worship. Healing. The Knowledge of God. Revealing salvation to a sinner. The Gospel itself. The Word of God. Your walk with God. The carrying in our body the death and resurrection of Jesus. The changed life. The hidden mysteries now revealed to us. Jesus Christ. Holy living. Spectacular and real gifts, which many say have ceased. Jesus inside of you. Your Bible. Conviction of sin. Warnings of wrath to come. Being led into all the truth. The glorifying of Jesus.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Let us examine our lives to see what He is doing in us.