



# *Fellowship* CHURCH

## *A Vision for Unity*

*“May they be brought to complete  
unity to let the world know that you  
sent me and have loved them even  
as you have loved me.”*

*-Jesus Christ's prayer  
John 17:23 NIV*



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Called to Be God’s People: A Summary .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>A Biblical Worldview: Spiritual Realities .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Holy Spirit .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Spiritual Gifts .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Affirmations and Definitions .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Appendix A: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix B: Role of the Holy Spirit and the Spiritual Gifts (Study Guide) .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Appendix C: I Corinthians (Study Guide) .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Appendix D: The Kingdom of God .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendix E: Guidelines for Life in the Body of Christ at Fellowship Church (Understanding and using Spiritual gifts).....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Appendix F: The Gift of Prophecy (Supplemental Content).....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Appendix G: The Gift of Tongues (Supplemental Content).....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>33</b>



# CALLED TO BE GOD'S PEOPLE

## A Summary

Peter writes to believers in the first century church,

“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”  
- 1 Peter 2:9-10

The history of God's relationship with humanity reveals the Story of a Father choosing, pursuing and loving His children. He chose us for Himself, in order to demonstrate the greatness of His love and to display His eternal glory.

As His people, we are called to live in love and unity. This was the prayer of Jesus as He approached His death<sup>1</sup> and the command of Paul as he taught the Church to live in Christ by the Spirit<sup>2</sup>. As a local church, FEFC has therefore chosen to be wholeheartedly engaged in the fulfillment of Christ's vision, “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another<sup>3</sup>.” We live to know Him and make Him known. We live to exalt Him with our whole selves, thus living as vessels by which His invisible attributes are displayed in the flesh. We long to be His character, love, and wisdom in relationship to one another and our world. We know this must be done together, in the true fellowship of love and unity.

The commitment to live in love and unity calls requires us to continually choose lives of relational surrender and submission to Christ. By His grace and through His Spirit, we endeavor to “empty” ourselves, following His example of loving sacrifice so that others may be lead to the Father<sup>4</sup>. As we are “emptied by love”, we are filled with His Spirit, resulting in greater fruit and deeper faith<sup>5</sup>.

We, therefore, anticipate that the journey ahead will always include participating in more of His character, becoming more of His love, and learning more of His wisdom. We are certain that we have not even begun to explore the depths of the spiritual life that lie ahead as He transforms us by His sovereign hand. We therefore live in the hope that the mysterious ways of the Spirit and the perfecting strength of biblical Truth will enable us to experience God as more Personal, more Present, more Purposeful, and more Powerful than we have yet dreamed.

We are confident that He is indeed “able to do above and beyond all we could imagine or think, according to the power at work within us<sup>6</sup>.” This document represents both our unyielding commitment and our confident hope for our journey. The path forward for our community life is outlined in the subsequent pages. More specifically, the document describes how we intend to live as a community that finds its unity through the gift of the Holy Spirit and its vitality through the gifts given by the Holy Spirit. We recognize and celebrate that the Spirit's “power at work within us” has as the ultimate goal the exaltation of Christ and praise to our God and Father. To this end we pray, labor, and love as the people of God chosen by His grace and for His glory.

On the Journey,

The Elders and Pastoral Staff of Fellowship Evangelical Free Church, Fall 2006



## INTRODUCTION

As the leadership community of Fellowship Church, we have whole-heartedly committed ourselves to leading people “beyond religion and into relationship” on their spiritual journeys with Christ and His people. Three profound New Testament images shape our understanding of how we are to live as we pursue this Spirit-directed vision.

First, we are to be *disciple-makers*. We believe that the fully mature disciple finds his/her deepest personal fulfillment as he/she joins the Holy Spirit in guiding others into life with the Father through relationship with the Son<sup>7</sup>. In our Lord Jesus’ command to the disciples in Matthew 28:18-20, He casts His vision for disciples living as disciple-makers. Moreover, He assures His disciples of the support necessary for meeting this incredible challenge by declaring His Sovereignty and by promising His Presence.

Second, we are to be disciples who are being *Spirit-formed*. Being fully engaged as a *disciple-maker* begins with a surrender to His grace, a submission to His Lordship, a practice of His Presence, and an active, intentional investment of grace and truth in the lives of others. To enable this engagement, the Spirit of God indwells us, transforming us into His likeness in our character and empowering us for His purposes in our daily lives<sup>8</sup>. His divine act of spiritual formation renews our relationships through spiritual fruit and equips us for our service with spiritual gifts<sup>9</sup>. *Disciple-makers* are thus continually being *Spirit-formed* so that their lives become increasingly effective “incarnations” of His grace and truth.

Third, we are to live as *members of the Body of Christ*<sup>10</sup>. The Spirit of God calls us into unity, in purpose and through relationship, so that the fulfillment of the disciple-making vision will reflect the life of the Trinitarian God we serve. No man or woman is, therefore, called to be a “disciple-making island.” Our spiritual gifts and spiritual fruit are blessings of His grace provided by Him for the Body<sup>11</sup>. His divine design therefore mandates that our expression of His Spirit be focused not on ourselves, but on the ministry of His grace and truth in the lives of others. Spiritual formation is thus experienced, expressed, and exponentially multiplied through our life in the Body<sup>12</sup>.

To summarize, Fellowship Church’s life on the journey is shaped by these biblical truths:

- All disciples of Christ are called to be *disciple-makers*
- All *disciple-makers* are commanded to live *Spirit-formed* lives, bearing fruit and sharing gifts
- All *Spirit-formed disciple-makers* are created to live in deep relationship with others in the local church, seeking to minister His grace and truth as *members of the Body of Christ*



## **A Call to Community**

The purposes of this paper and its appendices are:

1. To envision how we walk in community with our whole hearts devoted fully to Christ and our whole hearts truly open to one another as the Body of Christ
2. To present a biblical foundation that will provide boundaries and promote freedom so that we may live together in grace and truth as a diverse community of disciple-makers
3. To call us to live continually as a disciple-making community that
  - (a) fully submits to the authority of God's Truth, the Bible and
  - (b) fully engages the life of the Holy Spirit so that He may empower, equip, and form us as the true expression of His disciple-making Body
4. In the course of fulfilling these purposes we also seek to provide a climate of spiritual relational health. We choose to do so in the midst of tensions of being a church that holds uncompromisingly to the Spirit's value of unity while embracing the Spirit's creativity and diversity in building Christ's body. We openly acknowledge that this has not been an easy journey for us. Yet, we believe this is precisely the journey we have been called to walk—together.

This paper is not an exhaustive study of all things related to the above purposes. Rather, we simply address what we believe to be key areas where we must develop a shared understanding of Scriptural definitions, freedoms and boundaries in order for us to live in unity. We consider this document, and all areas of our understanding of how to live in community, as a “work in progress”, subject to the Truth of Scripture and to His Spirit's leading in accordance with Scripture.

## **A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW: SPIRITUAL REALITIES**

A biblical worldview includes the reality of the spirit world, the spiritual nature of God, the spiritual and material composite of man, the existence of non-material spirit beings, and two spiritual domains who are at war. The world exists in the context of a spiritual battle between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of darkness<sup>13</sup>. There is a demonic realm led by Satan whose members fight like insurgents fighting guerilla warfare<sup>14</sup>. Yet this battle, while having physical and external manifestations, is first and foremost a spiritual battle in the unseen reality of the creation. It is a war whose ultimate victory is secured and known to belong to Christ, though in this present age the insurgents continue to perform their works of evil against mankind and the world under the Sovereignty of His authority<sup>15</sup>. Moreover, through our biblical worldview, we understand that God is Spirit, that the Holy Spirit is one of three persons of the Trinitarian God, and that we live in relationship with God, the Father, through the work of Christ by His Spirit.



## A Holistic Perspective

Most worldviews are spatial. That is, they indicate where God is and where you are. God is “up there” and we are “down here” is a common view. The secular western worldview puts God and the supernatural realm on the same plane and man and material things on a lower plane, separated by a chasm that becomes “the excluded middle” insofar as it puts a vacuum between the natural and the supernatural. But the biblical reality is that God is on a plane shared by no one or nothing in all of creation. Instead of an excluded middle, there is the realm of angels – both angels of light and angels of darkness. Finally there is the visible material realm of mankind and matter.

From these understandings we are able to make certain observations and conclusions in conjunction with scripture.

- The visible, material, natural world is not all there is to creation. There is also an invisible, immaterial, spiritual, supernatural part of creation<sup>16</sup>.
- God is transcendent over all of creation, seen and unseen<sup>17</sup>. He is not on the same level as Satan and the angels (good or evil) in the spiritual battle.
- We are influenced constantly by spiritual forces. The spiritual reality of the universe – the unseen world - bears influence over the visible world<sup>18</sup>.
- Prime evidence of this is how Jesus worked through the Spirit of God...that is, in the power of the Spirit of God...so as to even be able to change physical matter (water into wine, healings, etc)<sup>19</sup>.
- The physical world impacts our experience of the unseen. For instance, a person who has been victimized in the tangible world is affected in his/her relationship to the unseen. Neither the reality of the body nor the reality of the spirit can, therefore, be denied, ignored, or minimized<sup>20</sup>.
- We live in the mystery of the spiritual inhabiting the natural. We cannot expect to gain control by trying to “manage” the unseen spiritual world to guarantee the outcomes that we desire. However, while there are no formulas for inducing the presence and action of God, (such would be a religious notion) God’s ways are self-consistent and there are principles taught in scripture to guide our relationship with Him and the Kingdom. (e.g. James 4:7 – “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”)
- Certain spiritual disciplines such as prayer, worship and bible study cultivate an attentiveness to and awareness of God’s invisible presence<sup>21</sup>.
- The kingdom of darkness seeks to kill, steal and destroy. But our ultimate victory in Christ is certain – as darkness always gives way to light<sup>22</sup>.
- To press into spiritual life we must not hide our hearts. The reality of the spiritual battle does not diminish the reality of personal sin. We must not hide our hearts and get caught up wholly in the external, visible battle. Our journey of the Christ-life is a journey of living the Way, Truth and Life from the inside out<sup>23</sup>.



## THE HOLY SPIRIT

The FEFC Doctrinal Statement states:

### God the Spirit

We believe that God the Holy Spirit is that person of the Trinity who restrains evil in the world and convicts men of sin, righteousness and judgment. He also regenerates those who receive Christ as Savior, baptizes them into the Church, indwells them permanently, intercedes for them in prayer, seals them unto the day of redemption, bestows one or more spiritual gifts on each believer and empowers those yielded to Him (Matt. 28:19, Jn. 3:3-7, 16:8-11).

### **A Biblical Understanding of “spirit”**

The word spirit (“ruach” in the OT and “pneuma” in the NT) has a common meaning and connotation all throughout scripture. This meaning follows from the following definitions:

*pneuma* (pnyoo'-mah), NT:4151 - a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively, a spirit, i.e. (human) the rational soul, (by implication) vital principle, mental disposition, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, demon, or (divine) God, Christ's spirit, the Holy Spirit:

KJV - ghost, life, spirit (-ual, -ually), mind

*ruwach* (roo'-akh), OT:7307 - from OT:7306; wind; by resemblance breath, i.e. a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; figuratively, life, anger, unsubstantiality; by extension, a region of the sky; by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being (including its expression and functions):

KJV - air, anger, blast, breath, cool, courage, mind, quarter, side, spirit ([ -ual]), tempest, vain, ([whirl-]) wind (-y).

Pneuma and ruach point to a principle that some have called the “vital principle,” – referring to life and the invisible underlying thing that gives a creature life. It sometimes points to the significance of spiritual substance over mere form with respect to words and actions. Hence what may be found behind the life (vitality) of a person is also that behind the life (vitality) of words and meaning. The quintessential example of this is the fact that the “Word became flesh<sup>24</sup>.” It is in this very principle of vitality, that comes through the Spirit, that the believer and the church find its redemptive and sustaining life.

All of these definitions and uses carry the essence of the idea behind ruach and pneuma - that of the invisible, immaterial and powerful existence, movement and presence of the wind. These definitions prepare the way for us to better understand the person and work of the Holy Spirit.



## **The Person of the Holy Spirit**

The Bible often speaks of God's "Spirit," the third person of the Trinity. This is the use of the word in its first biblical occurrence:

"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" Gen 1:2.

The Holy Spirit moves about and functions like wind or breath in its invisible, immaterial and powerful qualities. He is like a wind that originates from the very heart and mouth of God and is seemingly whimsical in the direction, velocity and currents of its movements. Whimsical to man that is, but not within the mind of God who is very intentional in the comings and goings of his own Spirit. Wherever the Spirit of God goes, nothing ever stays the same. Spirit is where the 'rubber meets the road' in the Kingdom sense.

(See Appendix A, page 14, for a comprehensive set of Scriptural references regarding "The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit")

## **The Role of the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit in the NT may also be considered as to His divine operational attributes;

- His distinct Personality in the Godhead<sup>25</sup>;
- His operation in connection with the Lord Jesus in His birth, His life, His baptism, His death<sup>26</sup>;
- His operations in the world; in the church<sup>27</sup>;
- His having been sent at Pentecost by the Father and by Christ<sup>28</sup>;
- His operations in the individual believer; in local churches<sup>29</sup>;
- His operations in the production of Holy Scripture<sup>30</sup>;
- His work in the world<sup>31</sup>.

The Holy Spirit is the Personal Presence of God in the believer's life who brings believers into personal communion with the Triune God. Through this personal presence and relationship, God is establishing a people for Himself - called the church - that will worship Him and glorify Him. Wayne Grudem notes, "The work of the Holy Spirit is to manifest the active presence of God in the world, and especially the church<sup>32</sup>." Thus, the FEFC doctrinal statement reads:

### The Work of the Holy Spirit:

The work of the Holy Spirit is to manifest the active presence of God in the world and especially in the church. We believe every Christian receives the Holy Spirit at conversion (1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13). Subsequent to conversion, it is essential for every believer to thirst for fresh encounters with the person of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39). The Holy Spirit performs many necessary ministries in the believer's life such as: Counselor (John 14:16), Teacher (John 14:26), Revealer of Jesus Christ as Lord (1 Cor. 12:3), Empowerer (Acts 1:8), Guide (Rom. 8:14), Intercessor (Rom. 8:26-27), Giver of Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor. 12:11; 1



Cor. 14), and the One who brings conviction (John 16:8; Acts 7:51), and produces spiritual fruit (Gal. 5:22-25) and spiritual passion (Luke 3:16).

## SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Holy Spirit builds the Church, Christ's Body, by imparting of spiritual gifts in the lives of every believer. These gifts are given by God as He sovereignly chooses, based solely on His grace and intended fully for His glory<sup>33</sup>. Through prayer, community within the Body, and service through ministry within the Body, every believer is to seek to discover and express the gift God has designed for him/her. Every believer is exhorted in Scripture to administer God's grace through the spiritual gifts God provides<sup>34</sup>. Every believer is, therefore, called by God to steward his/her gift responsibly and thankfully.

Each gift is specifically designed to build up the Body of Christ on its collective journey toward maturity in Christ<sup>35</sup>. The gifts effectually accomplish God's will by sustaining the Church, empowering the communication and impact of the Gospel message through the Church, building up the Church in strength and character, pointing to the future perfect fulfillment of His salvation work, manifesting His sovereign power for His glory, and leading the Church always toward Christ. Grudem summarizes, "A spiritual gift is any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church<sup>36</sup>."

(For a more complete outline of the purpose and the diverse expressions of the Holy Spirit through spiritual gifts, please refer to the Appendix B, "Study Guide: Role of the Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts", pages 15-19. Also, due to the relative volume of teaching on spiritual gifts located in the book of I Corinthians, we have included Appendix C, "Study Guide to I Corinthians", pages 20-21.)

## AFFIRMATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Several critical statements are now presented to describe our understanding of life in the Spirit, the exercise of spiritual gifts, and the nature of the Kingdom of God.

### **WE AFFIRM THAT:**

- 1. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS BOTH "PRESENT" AND "FUTURE."** The reality of the Kingdom of God is critical to our understanding of the gospel message, the role of spiritual gifts and the principles by which we live "in, but not of the world<sup>37</sup>." Through the lens of our spiritual/material worldview we can understand God's reign to be over both the spiritual and material creation<sup>38</sup>. As King, God has sovereign will to do whatever he wants. By His sovereign, divine design, the Spirit of God indwells the regenerated souls of men and women, initiating them into life in His Kingdom. These reborn spiritual persons become co-regents of this Kingdom - called into both submission and sonship<sup>39</sup>.

We are taught by Christ to "seek first" this Kingdom and its associated righteousness<sup>40</sup>. We are also taught to pray for "thy Kingdom come, thy will be



done on earth as it is in heaven” as a means through which we synchronize our hearts to the already in-motion desires of God<sup>41</sup>. In both of these key teachings regarding the Kingdom, we are urged to desire the fulfillment of Christ’s Kingdom and to pursue Christ’s present (partial fulfillment) and future (complete, absolute) realization of His Kingdom. Accordingly, we understand that which has been pronounced by Christ to be “at hand” is only the tip of the iceberg as to the glories of the Kingdom yet to be revealed. This is our hope and our joy as pilgrims en route to the heart of this Kingdom – the very City of God – where the marriage feast awaits, as does all the fullness of the experience and knowledge of God<sup>42</sup>.

(See Appendix D, “Kingdom of God”, pages 22-24, for a more extensive outline on our understanding of the topic “Kingdom Authority”.)

#### **WE AFFIRM THAT:**

**2. SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE INTENDED AS EXPRESSIONS OF CHRIST’S LOVE.** We are called to “pursue love and desire spiritual gifts<sup>43</sup>.” Our primary spiritual mandate is love<sup>44</sup>. The experience and expression of gifts is always to be given as an act of love, as the Spirit gives each gift “for the common good” of His Church<sup>45</sup>. As expressions of Christ’s love, the gifts become means whereby the Spirit demonstrates His pursuit of hearts, His power to transform, and the revelation of His purposes in building the local church.

#### **WE AFFIRM THAT:**

**3. EVERY BELIEVER HAS BEEN GIFTED FOR THE COMMON GOOD.** We affirm that we should communicate to every believer that they have a spiritual gift to be discovered and explored<sup>46</sup>. We encourage every believer to seek our Lord’s gifts through prayer, the exploration of His Word, and life in the Body of Christ. Furthermore, we want to encourage each believer to gain a biblical understanding of the purpose of gifts for the Body, the role of their particular gift(s) in the Body, and the principles that guide their expression of that gift for the common good<sup>47</sup>. We do affirm that at all times we are to direct everyone, whether they are seeking to discover a gift or desiring to receive a gift, to approach spiritual gifts as an opportunity to glorify God and to serve the Body as a disciple-making community.

#### **WE AFFIRM THAT:**

**4. SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE BOTH DIVERSE AND SOVEREIGNLY DISTRIBUTED.** We affirm that there are many diverse experiences of, expressions of, and enjoyments of our spiritual journeys with Christ through His Spirit. We encourage our people to walk in freedom into the mysteries of their individual spiritual journeys while also holding one another accountable for doing so in the Body according to biblical guidelines. We also choose to refrain from attempting to force God or His people into unbiblical boxes that have been created by our becoming religious about what spirituality is “supposed to look like.” God can and will work as He pleases, not being limited in His work by what we identify as our spiritual gift.



These affirmations should lead us to teach, nurture, and model what it truly means to live the Christ-life<sup>48</sup>.

Moreover, we believe that all of us are accountable, to the Lord and one another, for stewarding our freedom in a way that is beneficial to the maturity of the Body. Through the authority structures provided by God in the Elder Board, the Lead Pastor, and the Pastoral Staff, the body is to be held accountable to live in accordance with this document and the Guidelines for BodyLife (Appendix E, pages 25-28) approved by the Elder Board. We want to emphasize that the fruit of the Spirit, the integrity of relationships, and the walk of love in the world are the “headlines” of our spirituality. We want to call our people to Christ’s character, love, and wisdom so that the experiences of God in the Body through the gifts have their proper place in our church. Because we believe that “speaking the truth in love<sup>49</sup>”, including biblical confrontation and relational reconciliation, are true signs of the Spirit at work in the Body, we will “pursue love and desire gifts<sup>50</sup>.”

Scripture provides us with a panoramic view of different kinds of gifts, different kinds of service, and different kinds of workings of the Holy Spirit through the Body. Within Scripture there are several diverse contexts where spiritual gifts are listed and/or described<sup>51</sup>. Though there are diverse ways that we individually categorize or integrate the various lists, we do not officially endorse one specific way of organizing the gifts beyond what is presented in Scripture. However, we believe that all are distributed by the Holy Spirit as God sovereignly chooses. We do not believe that we are to tell a believer what gift they “should have.” We rather seek to embrace all of His spiritual gifts and to yield to His leading in the expression of those gifts for the purpose of building up the Body of Christ.

(See Appendix E, “Guidelines for Life in the Body of Christ at Fellowship Church: Understanding and Using Spiritual Gifts”, pages 25-28 for guidelines on how live in community given our diversity of gifts, personalities, spiritual experiences, and church backgrounds.)

## **WE AFFIRM THAT:**

**5. PERSONAL, ONGOING RENEWAL THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT IS ESSENTIAL.** We believe that the disciple is indwelt by the Holy Spirit at conversion<sup>52</sup>. We further affirm that there are subsequent encounters with God, through the Holy Spirit, that will renew and refresh, filling the believer with new passion and power for love and good deeds<sup>53</sup>. Thus our doctrinal statement states,

“Subsequent to conversion, it is essential for every believer to thirst for fresh encounters with the person of the Holy Spirit” (John 7:37-39.)

Important notes:

- a. By “fresh encounters” we primarily refer to the times of personal renewal that are a part of our ongoing development of a personal relationship with God. We also include those experiences where our relationship with God is profoundly altered in a moment of



- sudden spiritual clarity, emotional restoration, or “mountain top” spiritual experiences.
- b. Everyone is baptized through the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ at the time of their spiritual conversion.
- c. While we do not necessitate that an encounter or an experience with God through the Holy Spirit after conversion should be described as what is commonly referred to as the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit”, we do affirm the ongoing, personal, transforming operation of the Holy Spirit.
- d. We do not affirm that the gift of tongues is necessary as a confirming evidence of an encounter with or experience with the Holy Spirit.
- e. We encourage and challenge each individual disciple to long for an ever-increasing measure of faith, experience and filling of all the fullness of God in their lives through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

#### **WE AFFIRM THAT:**

**6. ALL SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE PRESENT REALITY.** We believe that the Scriptures affirm, in the Church, an ongoing expression of all biblical spiritual gifts (as opposed to holding a “cessationist” theological point of view). There are multiple lists of spiritual gifts presented in the New Testament. No gift is described in the New Testament as “ceasing”—until such of its kind ceases as per 1 Cor 13:8-12. Today, as in the New Testament, the expression of all the gifts, including those often referred to as “sign gifts” [healing, tongues, prophecy], are given by God’s sovereign choice.

#### **WE AFFIRM THAT:**

**7. PROPHECY IS A DESIRABLE GIFT.** The gift of prophecy is universally presented within the lists of spiritual gifts. The gift of prophecy is considered to be a very desirable, “higher” gift because of its significant value to the Body<sup>54</sup>. The following are critical statements that we affirm regarding New Testament prophecy:

- a. Prophecy is speaking what the believer senses God has placed in his/her mind for the purpose of edifying the Church, individually and corporately, through edification (including admonishing), encouragement and consolation<sup>55</sup>.
- b. Prophecy is to be encouraged, desired and not despised<sup>56</sup>.
- c. The gift of prophecy as experienced in the church today does not carry the divine authority or responsibility of Old Testament prophecy as spoken by God’s Prophets prior to the coming of Christ and the indwelling of believers by the Spirit.
- d. Prophecy never to be regarded as new Scripture. Scripture judges prophecy and the Body is to “weigh” the validity of prophecy<sup>57</sup>.
- e. Prophecy is not infallible, nor is it “complete.”
- f. Prophecy, as an expression of the spiritual gift of prophecy, is not necessary for us to walk righteously with God<sup>58</sup>. (See Appendix F, “The



Gift of Prophecy”, pages 29-30, for supplemental content on the nature and practice of the gift of prophecy in our church.)

## **WE AFFIRM THAT:**

**8. TONGUES IS A GIFT FOR DIVERSE PURPOSES.** The gift of tongues may be manifested as a very personal, private prayer experience<sup>59</sup>. In this case, the gift is given by and empowered by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of deepening one’s heart for service to the Lord. The gift of tongues may also be manifested publicly when an interpretation is given for the purposes of glorifying God and deepening the hearts of God’s people for service to the Lord<sup>60</sup>. The FEFC doctrinal statement reads:

### **The Gift of Tongues**

We believe the gift of tongues is a spiritual gift that may be used for cross-cultural evangelism (Acts 2:1-11), private prayer (1 Cor. 14:3, 14-19, 28), or for ministry to the body when an interpreter is present (1 Cor. 14:5). We do not believe everyone must speak in tongues (1 Cor. 12:30).

The following are foundational statements we affirm regarding the gift of tongues:

- a. All authentic, “sacred conversation” with God through prayer is “praying in the Spirit”. The reference to “praying in the spirit” in Jude 20 is not, therefore, a specific reference only to prayers expressed through the gift of tongues.
- b. Everyone should not be expected to pray in tongues<sup>61</sup>.
- c. Experiencing the gift of tongues is not an indication of being more spiritually mature or of being more spiritually intimate with God<sup>62</sup>.
- d. Everyone should be encouraged to desire all of God’s gifts, trusting that He gives each gift as He wills<sup>63</sup> for His pleasure and glory, and for the edification of the Body<sup>64</sup>.
- e. As a choice based on the command to “pursue love<sup>65</sup>” and to lead with order<sup>66</sup>, we recommend that the gift of tongues (as spoken in an assembly with the expectation of an interpretation) not be manifested publicly in the celebration services of the body of FEFC. (By the term “manifested publicly,” we mean to refer to expressing the gift of tongues in a manner that it is shared with the rest of the body during the celebration service. A person would, of course, be free to express this gift privately and personally as a component of individual worship of God.) The gift of tongues is, therefore, shared within the FEFC body in a small group or another environment of relationships where the group’s level of trust and experience together provides a relational context for a meaningful sharing of this gift. The leadership team of a particular group is entrusted with the responsibility of applying godly wisdom and spiritual discernment in regards to whether or not the expression of the gift of tongues is fitting for a particular group within the Body<sup>67</sup>.



- f. Specifics related to the questions below may not be understood in precisely the same way by every member of our leadership community. However, there is room for diversity within our unity<sup>68</sup>.

(See Appendix G, “Gift of Tongues”, pages 31-32, for supplemental content on our understanding of the nature and practice of the gift of tongues in our church.)

## **Summary**

Jesus prayed, “May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me<sup>69</sup>.” Paul wrote, “speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work<sup>70</sup>.” We long for our Lord’s prayer to be answered in our Spirit-formed, disciple-making community made up of members of Christ’s Body. We, therefore, seek to know Him deeply, to serve Him sacrificially, and to love with His love faithfully so that in all things Christ Jesus may be glorified in the Church and in the world forever and ever, Amen<sup>71</sup>.



## APPENDIX A

### **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

The personal nature of the Holy Spirit is revealed through the many and varied titles in the New Testament. Some of these are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spirit, Matt 22:43</li><li>• Holy Spirit, Matt 1:18</li><li>• the Spirit of promise, the Holy, Eph 1:13</li><li>• the Spirit of glory and of God, 1 Peter 4:14</li><li>• the Spirit of His Son, Gal 4:6</li><li>• the Spirit of Jesus, Acts 16:7</li><li>• Spirit of Christ, Rom 8:9</li><li>• the Spirit of Jesus Christ, Phil 1:19</li><li>• the Spirit, Matt 4:1</li><li>• the Spirit, the Holy, Matt 12:32</li><li>• Spirit of (the) living God, 2 Cor 3:3</li><li>• the Spirit of God, the Holy, Eph 4:30</li><li>• the Spirit of your Father, Matt 10:20</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eternal Spirit, Heb 9:14</li><li>• the Holy Spirit, Matt 28:19</li><li>• Spirit of God, Rom 8:9</li><li>• the Spirit of our God, 1 Cor 6:11</li><li>• the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead (i.e., God), Rom 8:11</li><li>• Spirit of (the) Lord, Acts 8:39</li><li>• the Spirit of (the) Lord, Acts 5:9</li><li>• Spirit of adoption, Rom 8:15</li><li>• (the) Lord, (the) Spirit, 2 Cor 3:18</li><li>• the Spirit of truth, John 14:17</li><li>• the Spirit of life, Rom 8:2</li><li>• the Spirit of grace, Heb 10:29</li><li>• the Spirit of God, 1 Cor 2:11</li></ul>
--	--



## APPENDIX B

### **Study Guide: Role of the Holy Spirit and the Spiritual Gifts**

#### Role of the Holy Spirit

*The work of the Holy Spirit is to manifest the active presence of God in the world, and especially in the church.* --Grudem, Systematic Theology

1. Prophesied coming- (Isa 32:14-18; Isa 44:3; Ezek 36:26-27, 37:14, 39:29)
2. The Guarantee/First Fruits- (Rom 8:23; 2 Cor 1:22, 5:5)
3. Gives life:
  - a. Physical- (Ps 104:30; Job 34:14-15)
  - b. Spiritual- (John 3:6-7, 6:63; 2 Cor 3:6 (metaphorical reference))
4. Gives power for service:
  - a. Leaders listed as having the 'Spirit of the Lord' on them: Joshua, Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, Saul, David, etc.
  - b. Bezalel (Ex 31:3, 35:31, 34) given artistic talent to construct Tabernacle.
  - c. Christ- (Isa 11:2-3, 61:1 (quoted by Jesus about Himself in Luke 4:18))
    - i. Baptism of- Matt 3:16; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22
    - ii. Role in Temptation of- Luke 4:1
    - iii. Beginning of ministry- Luke 4:14
  - d. Equips for ministry- (1 Cor 12:11 (summary of spiritual gifts issue))
  - e.
5. Distinction between roles in OT and NT- (Ezek 36:26, 27, 37:14; John 7:39)
6. Promise of in NT- (Acts 1:8; John 14:16-17; John 16:7)
7. Empowers prayer- (Rom 8:26; Eph 2:18)
8. Empowers spiritual warfare- (Matt 12:28)
9. Purifies/calls to holiness- (John 16:8-11; Acts 7:51)
  - a. Sanctifies believers- (1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:5; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2)
  - b. Produces specific fruit- (Gal 5:22-23)
10. Produces the Bible- (2 Pet 1:21)
11. Brings glory to Jesus- (John 16:14)
  - a. Bears witness to Him- (John 15:26; Acts 5:32; 1 Cor 12:3)
12. Makes Himself known with manifestations- (Num 11:25-26; John 1:32, Acts 2:2-3, Heb 2:3-4)
13. Gives direction to people:
  - a. Jesus- Matt 4:1
  - b. Philip- Acts 8:29
  - c. Peter- Acts 10:19-20, 11:12
14. Gives us assurance- (Rom 8:16; 1 John 4:13)
  
15. Teaches and illumines- (John 14:26, 16:13)
  - i. What to say- (Luke 12:12; Matt 10:20)
  - ii. Specific information



1. Simeon (would not die)- Luke 2:26
2. Agabus (there would be a famine)- Acts 11:28
3. Paul (would be taken captive)- Acts 21:11
- iii. The things of God- (1 Cor 2:12; Eph 1:17-19)
16. Can be grieved and quenched- (Eph 4:30; 1 Thes 5:19)

### Filling of the believer

Baptism of the Holy Spirit- (Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; Acts 11:16; 1 Cor 12:13- these are all the references with the phrase)

Baptism of the Holy Spirit- occurs at conversion for all believers- (1 Cor 12:13)

### The Spiritual Gifts

*A spiritual gift is any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church.* --Grudem, Systematic Theology

Purpose of:

1. Sustain until Christ returns- (1 Cor 1:7)
2. Empower the preaching of the Gospel- (Acts 1:8)
3. Build up the church- (1 Cor 14:12; Eph 4:12)
4. Are precursors to the work to be done when the believer is perfected- (1 Cor 13:8-12)
5. Glorify God- (1 Pet 4:11)
6. How to use- (1 Pet 4:10)

Number of:

There is no comprehensive list. Six passages mention gifts in types of lists. Some gifts are repeated, some not. There are places that mention gifts are whatever the Lord gives (1 Pet 4:11).

Lists are:

1. 1 Cor 12:28
  - a. Apostle
  - b. Prophet
  - c. Teacher
  - d. Miracles
  - e. Kinds of Healings
  - f. Helps
  - g. Administration
  - h. Tongues
2. 1 Cor 12:8-10
  - a. Word of Wisdom
  - b. Word of Knowledge
  - c. Faith



- d. Gift of healing
  - e. Miracles
  - f. Prophecy
  - g. Discerning spirits
  - h. Tongues
  - i. Interp of tongues
- 3. Eph 4:11
  - a. Apostle
  - b. Prophet
  - c. Evangelist
  - d. Pastor/Teacher
- 4. Romans 12:6-8
  - a. Prophecy
  - b. Serving
  - c. Teaching
  - d. Encouraging
  - e. Contributing
  - f. Leadership
  - g. Mercy
- 5. 1 Cor 7:7
  - a. Celibacy
  - b. Marriage (not listed, but seemingly implied)
- 6. 1 Pet 4:10-11
  - a. Speaking (covers teaching, exhorting, etc)
  - b. Serving (mercy, admin, etc)

Things not listed that could be considered gifts:

1. Artistry and Craftsmanship- (Ex 28:3-4)
2. Marriage- (1 Cor 7:7-8)

FEFC produced a document that listed other 'gifts.' The arguments for and against them should probably be discussed. The ones not listed here are: Missionary (evangelist might cover this), intercession, and music. They are not listed because there are not direct verses calling them spiritual gifts or gifts from God.

#### Other Issues Regarding Spiritual Gifts

1. Should be used in proportion to faith- (Rom 12:6)
2. Should not be neglected- (1 Tim 4:14)
3. Are given as Holy Spirit wills- (1 Cor 12:11)
4. Believers will have individual, even multiple gifts, but not all gifts- (1 Cor 12:11; 1 Cor 12:29)
5. Are for this age- (1 Cor 1:7; 1 Cor 13:8-13)
6. Each believer has one- (1 Pet 4:10; 1 Cor 12:7)
7. Contrasted to commands (where all believers are commanded to behave a certain way AND there is a gifting of this type. Not having this gift does not excuse obedience in these areas)-
  - a. All should exhort- (Heb 10:25)
  - b. All should give generously- (2 Cor 9:7)



- c. All should walk by faith- (2 Cor 5:7)
- d. All should evangelize- (Acts 1:8)
- e. Be discerning- (1 Thes 5:21)
- 8. We should eagerly seek the greater ones- (1 Cor 12:31, 14:1)
  - a. 'Greater gifts' are those that more effectively edify the church- (1 Cor 14:5, 12)
  - b. Seek by prayer- (1 Cor 14:13)
  - c. Sought in right motives- (Acts 18:19-22)

### Specific Gifts

#### Apostles

- 1. Named 'apostles'- (Luke 6:13)
- 2. When speaking of Jesus' 12
  - a. Were appointed only to Israel- (Matt 10:5-8)
  - b. Were appointed to Israel and the world- (Matt 28:16-20)
- 3. Are the foundations of the church- (Eph 2:20)
- 4. Authenticated by miracles- (Acts 5:12; 2 Cor 12:12)
- 5. Called by God- (Rom 1:1)
- 6. Listed as: The Twelve, Paul, Barnabas, James

#### Prophecy

- 1. Apostles different than prophets- (Luke 6:13; Acts 11:1)
- 2. Must be tried and weighed- (1 Thess 5:19-21; 1 Cor 14:29)
- 3. Is a sign for believers- (1 Cor 14:22)
- 4. Is for upbuilding, encouragement and consolation- (1 Cor 14:3)
- 5. Paul desires all to prophesy- (1 Cor 14:1, 5, 39); also acknowledges that not all can or do- (1 Cor 12:29)

#### Evangelist

- 1. Called by Christ- (Eph 4:11)
- 2. Phillip- (Acts 21:8)
- 3. Timothy called to the work of- (2 Tim 4:5)

#### Pastor

- 1. Called to build up the church- (Eph 4:11)

#### Teaching

- 1. Used in reference to explaining the Scripture- (Acts 15:35, 18:11, Heb 5:12)
- 2. Must be in accordance with the word of Jesus- (1 Tim 6:3)

#### Miracles

- 1. There are no specific texts speaking to the stewardship or role of this gift.
- 2. Some texts do speak of types of miracles done in the presence of the apostles (most are healing miracles)
  - a. Deliverance from prison- (Acts 5:19-20, 12:6-11)
  - b. Judgment on enemies of Gospel- (Acts 13:9-11)
  - c. Discipline within the Church- (Acts 5:1-11)



- d. Deliverance from injury- (Acts 28:3-6)

#### Healing

1. There are no specific texts dealing with the stewardship of this gift.
2. Methods of seeking
  - a. Laying on of hands- (Luke 4:40)
  - b. Anointing with oil- (Mark 6:13, James 5:14-15)
  - c. Elder prayer- (James 5:14-15) **Note**- James speaks that those in the church should seek the elders to pray for them
3. Praying for health exemplified- (3 John 2)
4. Was not a 'given'- (1 Tim 5:23, 2 Cor 12:7-10; 2 Tim 4:20)

#### Tongues and Interpretation

1. First reference of tongues- (Acts 2:3-7)
2. 1 Cor 14- chapter on stewarding the gifts of tongues and interpretation.
3. Not all will speak in tongues- (1 Cor 12:30)

#### Words of Wisdom and Knowledge

1. These gifts are mentioned nowhere but 1 Cor 12:8
2. Implied in the apostolic ministry:
  - a. Paul describes his ministry- (1 Cor 2:6-8)
  - b. Peter describes Paul- (2 Pet 3:15)
3. Given by God- (Gal 1:12)

#### Discerning Spirits

1. This gift is mentioned nowhere but 1 Cor 12:10
2. All believers to do so- (1 John 4:1; 1 Thes 5:21)

#### Helps

1. Grk word is used in- (Luke 1:54; Acts 20:35; 1 Tim 6:2)

#### Leadership

1. Used to describe the work of an elder- (1 Thes 5:12; 1 Tim 5:17)
2. Should use with zeal- (Rom 12:8)



## APPENDIX C

### **I Corinthians Study Guide**

#### Synopsis of General Issues Concerning the Epistle of 1 Corinthians

##### Background

- Corinth was the major city between two major ports on the tip of the Grecian peninsula. Its economic prosperity was a given. It was easier to ship merchandise through Corinth than to go overland.
- Was formed by Julius Caesar in 44 B.C. Used 'freedmen' as the founders. This was a class just above slave. It was a way to rid Rome of undesirables (it was a mix of ex-military men from all throughout the Roman Empire). Note that Corinth was formed with these undesirables.
- Since Corinth was founded, it lacked a landed aristocracy. The rich were the aristocracy.
- Filled with all kinds of ethnicities- Romans, Greeks, Jews, etc
- City was known for its licentiousness. To 'Corinthianize' became a Greek phrase for 'to go to the devil.'
- There was a large, floating population. Sailors and merchants were steadily in and out of the city.
- This floating population ensured the rapid spread of whatever messages were taught in Corinth. We can see Paul's interest in the place.
- Ancient authors describe at least 26 (not including the synagogue) different places of worship in Corinth.
- One modern commentator calls Corinth the "New York, L.A., and Las Vegas of its time."

##### Paul and Corinth

- Acts 18 records Paul's founding visit to Corinth
- Paul mentions a letter he sent them previously (1 Cor 5:9). Thus, 1 Cor is the second letter he has sent them, 2 Cor the third. He has been dealing with them for some time.
- We know Paul's visit was somewhere during or after 49 AD. Corinth is where he meets Aquila and Priscilla, Jews who had been banished from Rome in 49 AD by Emperor Claudius.
- Even more narrowing, we know that Gallio, the proconsul to whom the Jews turned Paul over, was there in 51 to 53. These are the most likely dates of the founding of the church in Corinth.
- Using the Acts timeline, we believe that Paul wrote this letter in Ephesus (16:8), somewhere between 53-55 AD.



### Occasion and Purpose

- Immediate occasion of the letter was a letter from the Corinthians that Paul had received. It demanded a reply.
- Before Paul addresses the issues that were written to him about, he discusses items of concern he has with the church. Division, sexual immorality, etc.
- His address to their concerns begins in Chapter 7
- Paul had also heard from Chloe (1:11) about things going on in the church.

### Theology and Contributions

- 1 Cor is not an essentially theological work.
- Eschatology- Paul points out three distinct truths he understands about the end- 1) we still live in bodies subject to decay (15:49-53); 2) there is a future Parousia of the Lord (11:26, 15:23); 3) a subsequent resurrection (15:20-28)
- This understanding leads Paul to call Christians to extreme ethical conduct. Don't worry about the trivialities of this age; it is passing, so to speak.
- This radical obedience to Christ is called the 'commandment of God (7:19)' and the 'law of Christ (9:21)'.
- Two great images regarding the church- it is the temple of God, it is the Body of Christ.



## APPENDIX D

### **The Kingdom of God**

#### The Kingdom of God

1. Arrives and expresses its reality through the Person of Christ      Matt. 18:36
2. Becomes a reality by the Power of Christ in salvation      John 3:5-8
3. Is a present internal reality because of the Presence of Christ in believer's hearts      Luke 17:20-21
4. Will reach its full expression when Christ subjects all to His Power and Presence      Revelation 21-22

#### The Authority of Jesus Christ

1. To forgive sins      Matt. 9:6
2. Over all things      Matt. 28:18-20
3. Supremacy as Creator and Reconciler      Col. 1:15-20

#### The Authority of the Believer

1. In reference to a brother in sin      Matt. 18:15-20
2. In reference to prayer requests      Matt. 16:23-24
3. In reference to deliverance and healing      Matt. 10:1
4. In reference to sin in one's life      Col. 3:1-11
5. In reference to elders' prayer for the sick      James 5:14-16
6. In reference to Satan and the demonic      Eph. 6:10-18; James 4:7

#### What we affirm together:

1. God reigns supreme over all things, in heaven and earth.
2. Jesus Christ, as the Word of God (John 1:1), initiated the arrival of the spiritual Kingdom of God among humanity on earth.
3. Jesus spoke, acted, and lived in Absolute Authority during his life on earth. As the resurrected Lord, His reigns continues, having conquered sin and death on our behalf.
4. On specific occasions, Jesus commanded his disciples to exercise His authority through the disciples' prayers for healing, their casting out of demons, and their proclamation of the Gospel. He retained His authority over all but delegated that authority to empower the disciples to act in these instances as agents who accomplished His Kingdom purposes.



5. As believers, we are in personal relationship with Christ, His Presence being mediated in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we have the Presence of Christ's authority in our lives.
6. Christ chooses to exercise His authority as He sovereignly wills through us. The exercise of His sovereign will takes a variety of forms such as: prayers that lead to healing of the sick, prayers that lead to spiritual deliverance for the demonically oppressed or possessed, prayers and proclamation that lead to the salvation of a non-believer, and servant leadership through spiritual gifts that lead to the maturity of individuals and/or local churches.
7. We are always subject to His sovereign will, yet we are commanded to live boldly in the Kingdom of God. By example, we cannot guarantee healing to someone because of our prayers. We are, however, to pray for the sick and to live in the expectancy of a God who responds to our prayers and chooses at times to exercise His authority through those prayers. As another example, we cannot cause a person to come to salvation in Christ. We are, however, to proclaim Christ, offering our gifts/personalities/relationships as servants of His Spirit in us. We thus act in obedience and He is faithful according to His will to accomplish His purposes. We therefore live in the mystery rather than mastery of His Kingdom authority.
8. We believe that the local church is called to exercise His authority through the redemptive acts of church discipline and restoration.
9. We believe that the elders of the church are responsible before Christ to be prayerfully engaged in the congregation, providing avenues for the exercise of Christ's authority through their prayers as a means not only for healing but also for building up the Church.
10. We believe that the believer, indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit, is called to a life that increasingly resists the devil, defends against spiritual attack, and chooses obedience over sin. We do not affirm that anyone in this life becomes perfected. In fact, we believe that the more we grow in freedom from particular sins and sin patterns, the more aware we become of the gap between our natural sinfulness and the spiritual holiness He reckons to us through Christ. However, we do not believe that we are called to live lives that remain perpetually defeated by the power of sin in our lives. While each person's journey is unique to that person's walk with Christ, we affirm rather that progressive sanctification is the will and work of God. We thus commit ourselves to being a church body that fosters growth in freedom from sin.
11. All expressions of His authority in our lives are subject to His will. We must, therefore, walk boldly yet humbly in the areas in which we sense He is guiding us to pray, speak, or lead as an exercise of His authority. Because we know that in all these things it is His divine will to build up the Body, we seek to express His authority in ways that call all the attention to Him and do not create wounds in the Body.



*How does this affect our practical lives together as a community?*

We recognize that there is much “untapped potential” in the present realization of Christ’s Kingdom because believers at times avoid an “open-hearted pressing into” the heart of God for their lives and our world. We, therefore, challenge and encourage our people to seek God’s will, praying diligently for His Kingdom effects in their circumstances and relationships. We seek to be a community that longs for Him and joins Him in His present work in the world. We pray and serve with full confidence in His response to us relationally and His faithfulness to accomplish His Kingdom purposes through us, though we may not always understand how He is working.

Because we do not possess full knowledge of His will and have not been given an “on demand” access to appropriate His power for our wills, we will not guarantee anyone that God will answer our prayers in exactly the ways we want Him to do so. The only authority we have is to do His will by His authority. Therefore, we remain fully subject to Him believing Him to be trustworthy and full of grace towards toward His people.

We also recognize the necessity of solid biblical teaching regarding the Kingdom so that our people will be living in healthy perspectives and spiritual obedience in the midst of the seen and unseen worlds. We embrace the need to discuss openly any places where our differences in our understanding of the Kingdom may, now or in the future, be expressed in ways that create confusion for our people. We will seek to embrace diversity to the extent the diversity is supported by Scripture while teaching in a manner that promotes unity in the church and among the leadership community.



## APPENDIX E

### **Guidelines for Life in the Body of Christ at Fellowship Church: Understanding and Using Spiritual Gifts**

Fellowship Church is a community of believers in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As members of this community we are also members of Christ's Body, called to remain in connection and subjection to Him as we carry out His work. The purpose of our community is to know Christ, be conformed into His image by the power of the Holy Spirit and help others know Him through all we do and say (both corporately and individually). We believe that His (agape) love at work in our lives is the supreme demonstration that this purpose is being accomplished.

- We believe our Body exists to display Christ's image, character, power, and glory to the world (Rom. 8:29; John 17:20-23). **Therefore we strive to keep this our primary goal in all that we do as a Body.**
- We believe our Body accomplishes this purpose through both the diversity and unity of its members (Eph. 4:3 – 7, I Cor. 12:12 – 13). **Therefore we strive to demonstrate and celebrate both unity and diversity in all that we do as a Body.**
- We believe every member of our Body is given one or more spiritual gifts by God (ministry abilities or giftings) for displaying His image to others (I Peter 4:10, I Cor. 12:7), building up the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:11 – 13) and bringing Him glory (I Peter 4:11). **Therefore we strive to encourage every member of our Body to intentionally use their gifts for these purposes.**
- We believe the way each member of our Body functions affects the health of our Body and all the other members of our Body (I Cor. 12:25 – 26). **Therefore we strive to encourage and hold each other accountable for functioning as healthy members of Christ's Body. This includes the way we use our spiritual gifts. We believe the purpose of spiritual gifts is always to exalt Christ, rather than exalting the gift itself or the person using the gift.**
- We believe the Holy Spirit sovereignly decides who gets what gifts (I Cor. 12:11, 18) and what impact or results come from the use of these gifts (I Cor. 12:6). We also believe the church is commanded to honor and care for every member of the Body of Christ regardless of which spiritual gift(s) each possesses. No spiritual gift makes someone in the Body more valuable (I Cor. 12:21 – 25) or more spiritual than another. **Therefore we do not elevate or regard as "more spiritual" those members of our Body who have gifts that result in wider public attention or impact (i.e. leading, teaching, giving). [Scripture does teach that elders who "direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching." I Timothy 5:17. We obey Scripture's counsel in terms of the call to respect and to follow the leadership of the Body. What we seek to avoid is creating hierarchical categories of believers based upon the particular gift a person has been chosen to steward by God's grace.]**
- We believe that no single spiritual gift is given to everyone in the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12:29 – 31). **Therefore we do not teach that any spiritual gift (i.e. the**



**gift of tongues) or any category of spiritual gifts (i.e. sign gifts) is more indicative than the other gifts of the Holy Spirit's presence or work in a believer's life.**

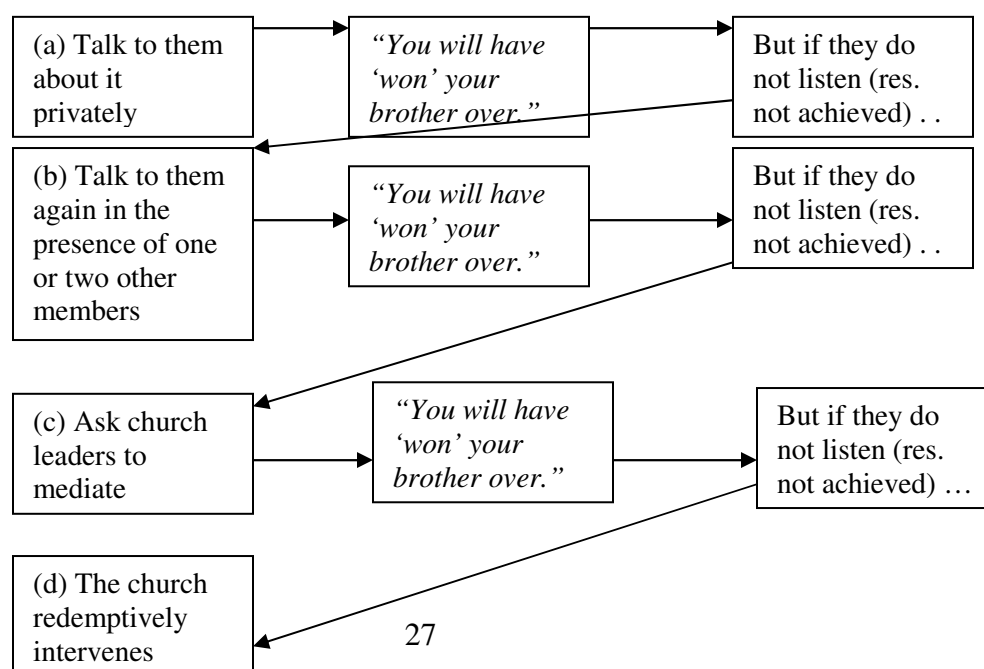
- We believe Christians are commanded not to ignore or neglect their spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12:1; I Tim. 4:14), but to eagerly desire them (I Cor. 14:1). We also believe all Christians are responsible for finding avenues of service for employing their spiritual gift(s) (I Peter 4:10; I Cor. 12:4 – 5). **Therefore we teach about the importance of spiritual gifts in our gatherings and encourage each other to eagerly pray for, watch for, and recognize the gifts God gives us for His service, as well as for the opportunities He gives us to employ them. We seek to create safe and conducive ministry settings for our members to develop and use their gifts. We encourage all members of the body to eagerly desire gifts and to prayerfully seek the Lord's favor in the distribution of His gifts for the sake of the Body. However, because spiritual gifts are not learned abilities we do not teach people to acquire or earn them through their own efforts.**
- We believe Christians are responsible for helping each other identify, develop and wisely employ their gifts according to the biblical guidelines (I Tim. 4:14; Eph. 4:11 – 12). **We do this primarily through helping each other mature in our love for God, in our responsiveness to His Spirit, and in our participation in Christ's work in our world. It is in the midst of our pursuit of these relationships in community where we are able to most effectively help each other identify, hone, and employ our spiritual gifts. Though we see potential value in the insights gained from extra-biblical inventories or checklists, we believe the insights we gain and exchange about ourselves, our hearts, and our gifts in the context of community are the most useful in accurately identifying, effectively developing, and wisely employing our gifts.**
- We believe having and using spiritual gifts do not necessarily indicate that a Christian is spiritually mature (I Cor. 1:7; 3:1 -4;14:20). The fruit of the Spirit in the believer, particularly love, is the true measure of spiritual maturity (Gal. 5:22-24). **Therefore we do not use our spiritual gifts without attending to the condition of our own hearts first, asking ourselves, "Is my heart right toward God, as well as toward those I'm seeking to serve?" The use of any spiritual gifts can be hurtful and/or abusive when the fruits of the Spirit are not evident. This is why we remind ourselves to exercise our gifts only when we are in the kind of community with other believers that encourages us and holds us accountable for how we use them.**
- Because it is possible to misuse spiritual gifts, we believe Christians are commanded to use them only under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit ( I Cor. 12:2 – 3; I Peter 4:11), in the spirit of love (I Cor. 12:21 – 13:3, 14:1; I Peter 4:8), and in accordance with the boundaries, guidelines, and authority structures God has established in the church (I Cor. 14:26 – 40, Hebrews 13:17). **Therefore we encourage our members to use their gifts carefully and reflectively, asking God for the wisdom to determine what is the most loving use of their gifts in each and every situation.**
- We believe no one should be looked down upon for or be forbidden from exercising their spiritual gifts in the way the Bible prescribes (I Cor. 14:39; I Thess. 5:20). **Therefore we seek to set people free to use their gifts in all the**



ways that God intends. Our desire is to never restrict or limit the use of gifts in our gatherings and ministries except in the ways the Spirit of God, the Scriptures, and the biblical principles of love (I Cor. 14:1, 26), propriety (I Cor. 15:40) and expedience (I Cor. 6:12; Rom. 15:16 – 19) call us to. We carefully guide our use of spiritual gifts in our gatherings and ministries (whether small or large, at home or on the mission field) toward what will best edify those who are present (I Cor. 14:1 – 25), and what will most accurately reflect to them the character and mind of Christ (I Cor. 14:26 – 40). We believe Spirit-directed churches can differ in the way they understand and apply the biblical guidelines for using spiritual gifts in different ministry settings (i.e. corporate worship, small groups, missions settings) because the Holy Spirit gives freedom, responsibility, and wisdom to the leaders of each local body of His people to decide how their members' gifts can be most effectively employed in each of these settings.

### Resolving Grievances or Disputes over Spiritual Gifts

- When an offense or disagreement of any kind occurs in the Body of Christ, the Bible mandates us to display love and grace to all involved (Romans 12:20-21) and resolve these matters within the church (I Cor. 6:1 – 8).
- The goal of our response should be to promote the growth in grace and truth of both the offender and the offended (Eph. 4:15). When we handle disputes and offenses in the Body of Christ in the way God prescribes it creates a catalyst for the spiritual growth of everyone involved.
- When one member of the Body becomes concerned about another member of the Body's use or view of spiritual gifts, resolution of the issue should follow the pattern in Mt. 18:15-17. Although this passage specifically addresses only how to deal with interpersonal sin in the Body, the same basic steps provide an effective pattern for bringing resolution to all kinds of offenses, conflicts and disagreements in the Body of Christ.





- When disputes or offenses are brought to our church leaders before steps “a” and “b” above are accomplished, the leaders will serve as peacemakers and coach or shepherd the complainant toward completing these steps with the right heart and manner before proceeding with step “c” (James 3:18).
- When someone in the use of their spiritual gifts discovers or suspects they have harmed or offended another person (or been accused of harming or offending another), it is their responsibility to immediately seek an opportunity to talk with the person, ask their forgiveness if an offense has been committed, and seek reconciliation with them (Matt. 5:23 – 24, Romans 12:18).



## APPENDIX F

### **The Gift of Prophecy** (Supplemental Content)

#### The Role of Prophecy

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Serves to edify, not tear down  | I Cor. 14:3; II Cor. 13:10 |
| 2. May be used by God to prompt repentance and, thereby, restore relationships | I Cor. 14:24,25            |
| 3. Serves the “Law of Love”  | I Cor. 13:2-8              |

#### What Prophecy Cannot Do

1. Contradict Scripture
2. Be elevated to the status of authoritative Revelation of Truth (“God said” rather than “I sense God saying”)
3. Be represented as the confirmed revealed will of God given to one person to direct/instruct another person in what they should do
4. Be accepted as God’s leading for a group of people apart from confirmation from the leadership in authority over that group

Questions to be addressed in our lives together as a community?

1. If someone senses that they have a “word” for the church, how should that person share that Word?

The person should present their sense of what God is saying in writing to the Elder Board for their review. The Elder Board will prayerfully consider whether they sense God’s is speaking to the church through this person’s discernment.

2. Should this occur on a Sunday morning?

The purpose of Sunday morning is teaching, celebration, and assimilation of the church body gathered. A person sensing that God is speaking to the church should follow the instructions given in response to question number 1 above.

3. Is it appropriate to share within the small group what someone is sensing God saying to them regarding an individual in the group or the group as a whole?

The FEFC document on Guidelines for BodyLife instructs leaders in the attitudes and practices required to build healthy community within small groups. These guidelines should be applied appropriately to provide healthy boundaries and flexible freedom. Small group leaders should serve as the shepherds in such cases.



4. Does anyone have the right to authoritatively speak into a person's life based on the belief that he/she has a prophetic word from God?

No. However, each of us has the responsibility to speak with humility what is on our heart for a brother or sister provided that the biblical Guidelines for BodyLife are being followed.



## APPENDIX G

### **The Gift of Tongues** (Supplemental Content)

#### **BIBLICAL TEACHING:**

1. Spoken through the Spirit [in a known tongue] for evangelistic purposes among people of different cultures/languages Acts 2:1-13
2. Spoken to God 1 Cor. 14:2
3. Not understood by speaker 1 Cor. 14:2; 11; 13-19
4. Praying from one's spirit, not one's mind 1 Cor. 14:2  
[Note: Romans 8:26-27 not specific reference to tongues]
5. Praying as a chosen engagement of God 1 Cor. 14:2  
[Not an uncontrollable expression]
6. Personally, privately edifying to the believer 1 Cor. 14:4
7. Edifying to the church if interpreted 1 Cor. 14:5
8. Not edifying or appropriate in the church with unbelievers present unless there is an interpreter 1 Cor. 14:20-28
9. Not all speak in tongues 1 Cor. 12:11,30  
[Note: Mark 16:17-18 not a reference to all believers speaking in tongues]
10. Tongues is a desirable gift 1 Cor. 14:5

#### **CRITICAL QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS WITHIN OUR BODY:**

- a. Are "tongues" to be understood as "heavenly languages?"

NOTE: In Corinthians, the text is not specific enough to require an interpretation one way or another. Perspectives on this question may vary and remain within biblical boundaries.

- b. Should a "prayer language" be considered a separate gift from the "speaking in tongues" that requires an interpreter or are these simply different manifestations of the same gift?

NOTE: As a team, we lean towards a single gift with different manifestations. However, we do not sense the alternative interpretation is a "deal breaker" for our unity.

- c. How does a person know whether or not there is an interpreter present?

NOTE: This is not an easy question to answer as Scripture does not provide a blueprint for this orderly following this principle. We, therefore, see the significance of experiencing the gift of tongues in the context of trusted relationships where the persons in the group/gathering are able to discern together the authenticity of the tongue and the interpretation. We know that some churches apply the text of 1 Cor. 12-14 to the celebration



services. We do not judge those who do as unbiblical, but we rather propose, based on the context and mission of FEFC, to leave this body-life experience to highly relationally connected groups. (This choice is based upon our sense of what is most fitting for the bodylife of FEFC (I Cor. 14:40)).

- d. How widely distributed is the gift of tongues?

NOTE: Scripture does not indicate the extent to which believers in the church experience the gift of tongues. Some may have high expectations for the number of believers who will possess the gift of tongues while others may consider the gift to be more rarely manifested within the church. Scripture only indicates all should desire whatever gift God may will to provide and that not everyone has a particular gift. Again, we are left in the mystery of living relationally with Christ and with the Body through the Spirit.

- e. How does the expression of tongues work within a small group—particularly one that is diverse in terms of its members' experiences with the gift of tongues?

NOTE: The FEFC document on Guidelines for Spiritual Gifts instructs leaders in the attitudes and practices required to build healthy community within small groups. These guidelines should be applied appropriately.



## REFERENCES

1. John 17:20-23
2. Ephesians 4:1-6
3. John 13:35
4. Philippians 2:6-8
5. Galatians 5:22-25
6. Ephesians 3:20-21
7. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
8. 2 Corinthians 3:18; Acts 1:8
9. Ephesians 4:11-16
10. 1 Corinthians 12:27
11. 1 Corinthians 12:7
12. Ephesians 4:11-16
13. Ephesians 2:1-3
14. 1 Peter 5:8-9
15. 1 John 3:8; 4:4
16. Ephesians 6:12
17. Isaiah 40:10-26; 44:6-8
18. Ephesians 6:10-18
19. John 2:1-11; 5:1-9; 11:1-44
20. 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24
21. 1 Peter 4:7
22. John 10:10-18
23. John 14-15
24. John 1:14
25. Genesis 1:2; Matthew 3:13-17
26. Luke 1:35-37
27. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13
28. Acts 2:1-13
29. Ephesians 4:11-16; 5:18-20
30. 2 Peter 1:20-21
31. John 16:5-10
32. Grudem, Wayne (1994). *Systematic Theology*. Zondervan Publishing House, 634.
33. 1 Corinthians 12:4-11
34. 1 Peter 4:10-11
35. Ephesians 4:13, 15-16
36. Grudem, Wayne (1994). *Systematic Theology*. Zondervan Publishing House, 1016.
37. John 17:13-19
38. 2 Corinthians 5:16-17
39. Romans 8:9-17
40. Matthew 6:33-34
41. Matthew 6:9-10
42. Revelation 22:1-6
43. 1 Corinthians 14:1



44. Ephesians 5:1-2
45. 1 Corinthians 12:7
46. 1 Corinthians 12:1-6
47. 1 Corinthians 12:14-26
48. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 13
49. Ephesians 4:15-16
50. 1 Corinthians 14:1
51. See Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 4:10-11
52. Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 12:13
53. Ephesians 5:18
54. 1 Corinthians 14:1-5
55. 1 Corinthians 14:1-5
56. 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21
57. 2 Timothy 3:14-17
58. 1 Peter 1:3-9
59. 1 Corinthians 14:3, 14-19, 28
60. 1 Corinthians 14:5
61. 1 Corinthians 12:11, 30
62. 1 Corinthians 14:20a
63. Romans 12:11
64. 1 Corinthians 14:1
65. 1 Corinthians 14:1
66. 1 Corinthians 14:40
67. See Acts 15
68. Philippians 2:1-4
69. John 17:23
70. Ephesians 4:15-16
71. Colossians 3:17