

## *The Pastors Connection*

Jan. 2011

### Testing Revival Without Putting it Out

*“Do not put out the Spirit’s fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything.”  
I Th. 5:19*

Our summer of 2010 Spiritual Gifts S.S. elective discerned that it would be useful to develop a policy on gift use. The Pastoral Team has developed a draft. What follows yet needs further testing; by the Pastoral Team, through adult SS classes, and by the congregation.

#### **Biblical principles shaping our proposed use of spiritual gifts policy:**

1. We believe God deposits His Holy Spirit into every person who invites Jesus to be their Lord and Savior and yields to water baptism (Acts 2:38, Luke 11:13).
2. We believe God’s Holy Spirit is available to flow through us on an ongoing basis (Rom. 15:13).
3. We believe the Holy Spirit gives one or more spiritual gifts to every believer for the purpose of building up the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:7-11).
4. We believe spiritual gifts are sometimes given for ongoing use; sometimes for a specific time and task; as the Holy Spirit discerns (Heb. 2:4).
5. We believe all spiritual gifts listed in scripture (Rom. 12, I Cor. 12, Eph. 4, etc) remain available in our day, moving the Body of Christ towards its full maturity and final redemption (Eph. 4:11-13).
6. We believe no spiritual gift is given to every believer; nor serves as evidence of what is sometimes called a “second work of grace” (I Cor. 12).
7. We believe the biblical measure of spiritual maturity is an increased fruit of the Spirit as outlined in Gal. 5:22-23.
8. We believe both biblical and revivalist records reveal that when God brings revival the people impacted respond in unorthodox ways (Acts 2:13).
9. We believe the potential for kingdom growth is maximized when the biblical call to “not put out the Spirit’s fire” and to “test everything” are both honored (I Th. 5:19).
10. We believe leaders are responsible to oversee the use of spiritual gifts in the Body. Oversight includes weighing the counsel of members when that counsel grows out of

prayerful discernment. In so doing, the full wisdom of God is discerned from a strong base of mutual submission to Christ (I Cor. 14:26-32, Acts 20:28).

Application of the above principles means we propose welcoming the use of all spiritual gifts in our life together as a church family. Expression of gifts will be shepherded by the Pastoral Team according to biblical principles as outlined above. We will discern response according to whether impacted lives are better producing Gal. 5 fruit. Reactions will be considered a teachable moment (Acts 2:14-16). Our goal as your Pastoral Team will be to discern what is rooted in faith and what in fear. Our commitment is to serve God's purposes with leadership founded upon faith.

The counsel of your insights, concerns, and affirmations concerning the above is welcome!

Joyfully living His story with you, Pastor Bob