



IS THERE AN INTERPRETER IN THE HOUSE? FINDING AND FOLLOWING THE FLOW OF THE SPIRIT IN YOUR SERVICE

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Christianity is supposed to be a vital, powerful, supernatural relationship with a God who speaks and moves tangibly in the lives of people. In our day we face an uphill battle, not with the world, but with our fellow believers who want to make the faith acceptable to an increasingly secular culture. If we are to be effective in our ministry and avoid becoming as dead as the denominational world, we have to follow God. If we don't stand up and contend for the things of the Spirit, who will? We will have to stand strong for the supernatural in our churches or resign ourselves to dead convention

When we hear the term "move of the Spirit" we see all kinds of internal visions. Some see the floor filled with laughing saints, some envision a very solemn hush, some see people dancing or running the aisles, some see the altar full of weeping seekers. Every one of these images and many others could be the real human results of a move of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God moves in fresh, exciting ways. Our task is to discern which way He is going and getting on board. Key to having a continual flow of the Holy Spirit that brings blessing and not confusion is the Gift of the Interpreter. This course will define, explain, and facilitate the flow of that gift.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the move of the Holy Spirit in power as a desirable goal for church leaders.
2. Identify forces which resist the manifestation of the Spirit in our churches.
3. Identify and define the gift of the Interpreter in a broad vision as one who identifies and explains the flow of the Spirit.
4. Help each church leader to assess hi/her own meetings and the freedom of the Spirit therein.
5. Identify steps Pastor/leaders can take to facilitate the Gift to the Interpreter in their services.
6. Encourage Pastors to step up and step out to be the Interpreter in their house.

COURSE CONTENT:

- Lesson 1: Contending for the Supernatural
- Lesson 2: Staying in the Middle of the Road
- Lesson 3: We Have Some Explaining To Do
- Lesson 4: Releasing the Gift of Interpretation

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Read "*Is There and Interpreter in the House*" by Virgil L. Stokes. Write a 500 word essay discussing two points from the reading that seem new or important to you.



IS THERE AN INTERPRETER IN THE HOUSE? FINDING AND FOLLOWING THE FLOW OF THE SPIRIT IN YOUR SERVICE

Lesson 1: Contending for the Supernatural

Text: 1 Corinthians 14:27-28 / 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

- I. Christianity without the supernatural is just another religious philosophy.
 - A. The New Birth is supernatural.
 - B. The Baptism with the Spirit is supernatural.
 1. Acts 2:1-4 / Acts 10:44-48
 2. Acts 8:19 – Does anything ever happen in your service that makes the local sorcerer want to pay money for it?
 - C. Our preaching and teaching are supposed to be, also.
1 Corinthians 2:1-5 / Hebrews 2:1-4
- II. We need the power of God:
 - A. **In signs and manifestations:** 1 Corinthians 12 - Don't be ignorant! The cessation of these gifts led directly to the work of liberal theology to try and explain away or "demythologize" the Bible. The Bible is a supernatural book. Without the miraculous there is no story!
 - B. **In anointed preaching:** Note Luke 4:32 / Mark 9:15
Our preaching ought to be with such "thus saith the Lord" authority " that people are shaken, offended, or amazed. We have had enough scribal meandering, it is time for prophetic proclamation. Matthew 7:28-29
 - C. **In genuine Holy Spirit Revival:** We have had enough of men's programs. Acts 2:41 was accomplished with 120 young believers. It is time to quit getting ready for revival and start having one.
- III. Forces that mitigate against the supernatural:

- A. The church-world heresy hunters: Matthew 12: 22-32
The modern pharisees who still want to reduce the Holy Ghost to a doctrine rather than a vibrant living person who walks and talks in us, through us, and to us.
- B. Our pride: We want to be part of a respectable organization. Be careful not to offend anyone, and you'll always offend the Holy Spirit. It is possible to be doctrinally sound and spiritually dead. Any doctrine you hold which is not manifest is a dead spot in your church. You need to contend for it.
- C. Church growth theories: Shorter, user friendly services; Inoffensive sermons; Pleasing programs
 - 1. This is not a supermarket. People who don't want to be committed need to get saved.
 - 2. We cannot design our services to suit the flesh of the unsaved. We design our services to suit the Lord and glorify Him in the assembly of the saints. We must make a decision as a church whether we want to be easy to access for people or for God. Note Acts 5: Dead people at the altar is definitely not politically correct.
- D. Our own human nature: We like the predictable and the familiar. We are lazy and don't like the real because it often stretches us.
- E. A natural reaction to the false and flaky: 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22
Lack of discernment will kill revival because people will throw out the baby with the bath water.
 - 1. False ministries - Money-hungry, power controlling, miracle faking ministries cause us to turn a skeptical eye toward the real.
 - 2. Excess and confusion - Groaning meetings, spiritual warfare, demon spitting, faith without doctors. These are all ploys used of the devil to blind us to God.
 - 3. Our command **DO NOT DESPISE**: I want the real power of God !!!



IS THERE AN INTERPRETER IN THE HOUSE? FINDING AND FOLLOWING THE FLOW OF THE SPIRIT IN YOUR SERVICE

Lesson 2: Staying in the Middle of the Road

TEXT: *Even so, if unbelievers or people who don't understand these things come into your church meeting and hear everyone speaking in an unknown language, they will think you are crazy. (1 Corinthians 14:23 NLT)*

From the beginning of the 20th Century in Kansas, through Azusa Street, into the Charismatic Renewal, and in our current era, the flow of the Spirit has taken a winding road. We have gone from a little fringe group to being part of the fastest growing religious movement in the world. Unfortunately, in many places the manifestation of the Spirit has come and gone and is now an unwelcome, or at least unfamiliar phenomenon.

- I. Some of the problems we have faced and are facing:
 - A. Many so called “Word” churches became dead churches. Six songs, a sermon, and the obligatory prayer line. Patterns but no substance. 1 Corinthians 4:19-20
 - B. Many charismatic churches became experience seekers with no real doctrinal base. “*We don’t believe in doctrine.*” This is obviously quite dangerous and leads to all kinds of difficulties as subjectivism rules the day. 2 Peter 1:16-21
 - C. Charismatic Christianity is as prone as any other kind to “spectator” mentality. We develop a class of spiritual superstars who we gather to watch. We become Holy Ghost rubber-neckers. 1 Corinthians 14:26
 - D. Many have opted to “sanitize” their services so as not to offend anyone. This also usually goes along with the notion of providing entertaining “ministry” to appeal to the “unchurched.”
- II. This is not a new pattern.
 - A. In every move of God we have fresh excess. A move of God starts and people are blessed. Then the problems begin.

- B. Some try to imitate it and force their church to have exactly what they saw at Campmeeting.
 - 1. Pastor goes to a special meeting and has gifts imparted.
 - 2. He comes home and his people are blessed for a service or two.
 - 3. They teach people what they are expected to do if they are really spiritual - laugh, dance, fall, etc. then they lay hands on them and see if they perform.
 - C. Some establish it as a third work of grace.
 - 1. Demon-chasing, laughing, groaning, weeping and shaking, dancing... The truly spiritual will surely "receive."
 - 2. We call in a plethora of special speakers to try and bring it. "We have a little buzz, we do well for a while then it sort of fizzles."
 - D. Seeing the excess, some decry the whole thing as being of the devil. Instead of going to their brothers and trying to help or at least to understand, they write articles for Christian magazines condemning the nonsense.
 - E. Most of us just smile, try to walk in love, and secretly wonder if any of this is God.
 - F. Some determine that we have to hide the fanaticism so sinners will not be offended, and in the process they offend the Holy Spirit. He won't bother those who don't want to be bothered!
 - G. A few brave souls find the string of the Spirit in the midst of the storm and forge on, being blessed by what's real, loving those who get over-excited, and steering a stable course for those who are adrift.
- III. Steering a steady course:
- A. In our travels and talks with many pastors, we found that many of them were uncomfortable with the move of God. This caused one of two reactions:
 - 1. They avoided it completely. Avoid periods of silence, don't teach on it. Don't encourage it, and if something happens squelch it. Don't allow any manifestation by anyone other

than the platform.

2. They let anything happen for fear of being judged unspiritual. Slowly but surely, the service becomes a sideshow, with individuals repeating behaviors that were a blessing the first time, but have now become a spiritual sideshow designed to draw attention to themselves.

B. In my Bible school experience, we watched others be used in the gifts of the Spirit, but there was never any real instruction in such things, and no opportunity for the vast majority to experience being in charge of a service where the Holy Spirit was free to manifest Himself.

1. Most of us were woefully unprepared to be in charge of a service of any kind, much less one where we experience the reality of, *“It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.”* (1 Corinthians 12:11 NLT)
2. Education in doctrine may come in Bible school, but training for leadership in spiritual things comes in the local fellowship under the loving care of a Pastor.
3. People need somewhere to step out without being terrified or vilified.
4. There is a learning curve to the things of the Spirit, and someone must guide the assembly in the process of growth and development.
5. Who is that one who God has set to help the Church maneuver through the flow of the river of God?

C. **My conclusion:** The problem in most churches is the lack of the gift of interpretation



IS THERE AN INTERPRETER IN THE HOUSE? FINDING AND FOLLOWING THE FLOW OF THE SPIRIT IN YOUR SERVICE

Lesson 3: We Have Some Explaining To Do

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 14:5-6

The Gift of Interpretation has been connected with speaking in tongues in most of our minds. There is a much broader understanding of that gift that will help us in making our services simultaneously visitor friendly and spiritually powerful and diverse.

- I. Our Pentecostal traditional understanding:
 - A. Our Howard Carter tradition: a sort of prophecy-lite.
 1. A message in tongues is followed by an inspired utterance in English which gives the sense of the message. This is a good definition and has brought us all great blessing.
 2. We hearken to 1 Corinthians 14:5 to argue that “*tongues and interpretation (not translation) is equivalent to prophecy.*”
 - B. Note 1 Corinthians 14:27-28. What does it really say, and what does that tell us?
 1. The way this was actually practiced was: “*If someone gives out a tongue and no one interprets, then the tongue was not of God.*” This really put a damper on the novice who was afraid to be labelled unspiritual if no one interpreted. It also made for some very uncomfortable silences.
 2. What it says is that these people were supposed to know if there was an interpreter in the house. There had to be people who were consistently used in this gift who were known to the regulars who read this letter. Otherwise this verse makes no sense.
 3. Having an Interpreter takes the pressure off people. They could speak in tongues knowing that there would be an interpretation.

4. Lester Sumrall said every pastor needs it. I agree! I am an Interpreter. If you are in a service with me and feel you have a tongue, you are safe to give it in the flow of how that congregation handles such things. If no one else interprets, I will. There is an Interpreter present.
 - C. Giving the sense of a message in tongues, thus serving to make it the equivalent of prophecy is a wonderful manifestation of the gift of the Interpreter, but there is much more to it:
 - D. Kenneth E. Hagin said in *Learning to Flow with the Spirit of God*, “*That is what I do in a lot of our services. I interpret the way the service is going. I think there is a great deal more to ‘interpretation’ than what we have seen.*”
- II. There is, indeed, a great deal more to it.
- A. *Diermeneuo* - to translate, interpret, expound, or **explain thoroughly**. The Interpreter is an explainer. The Complete Biblical Library says “*taking the unintelligible and making it understandable.*”
 - B. Dr. Gordon Fee says that the whole argument of 1 Corinthians 14 is the comparison of the unintelligible to the intelligible. It is a treatise on the desirability of intelligibility in our services.
 - C. This is the essence of the gift of interpretation, not just for tongues, but for the flow of the service as a whole.
 1. Note 1 Corinthians 14:23. Our interpretation, or explanation is aimed at two classes of people: the unbeliever and the uninformed. The idea is to explain what is going on in such a way that they will not think we are nuts.
 2. When things go on in service or the service is taking a turn in the Spirit, someone must let people know what is happening.
 - D. Note 1 Corinthians 14:5-6. Tongues +interpretation = prophecy. Now read it with verse 6. The interpretation can be in a variety of forms. It may be anything that gives the sense of what the Spirit is saying or doing.
 1. Explain what we are doing when we all pray or worship in tongues.
 2. Give a teaching or a revelation of:

- a. What the Spirit is doing in our midst may come by revelation.
 - b. The Pastor may bring a teaching which explains what the Spirit is saying. This happens often and we don't even know it. The interpreter could use exhortation (a forgotten gift), prophecy, song, dance, anything which gets the message to others.
 - c. This is not an exhaustive list. Interpretation could come in any way which takes the unintelligible and makes it understandable. This includes discerning the flow of the Spirit in a service and moving the service in that direction. The Explainer is set in the church by God to make sense of what is happening in a service for the benefit of any who might be uninformed or non-believers.
- III. The gift of the Explainer is the key to an ongoing flow of the supernatural in the local church which is not stale and repetitive and is not dependent on the visitation of the great evangelist. It is the lifeblood of the Church and should be our continual heritage.
- A. When people feel comfortable that there is someone who knows what is happening, a driver at the wheel, they find it easier to flow. People will flow where they are comfortable and informed.
 - B. People are at ease when they know someone will deal with insanity and excess in a loving way. This gives a sense of spiritual security.
 - C. Ministries which are having a great ongoing move of the Spirit are those which are flowing in this gift.
 - D. Churches that experience an ongoing flow of the Spirit are those where the pastor functions in this role. The Pastor is like the baton in the hand of the Conductor, the Holy Ghost. 1 Corinthians 14:7-8, 26 tells us that our congregation is an orchestra ready to play a symphony. Every service is a new composition.
 - E. Get real. Locate yourself.
 1. Is your service as predictable as the denomination down the street?
 2. Can people plan their late arrival around "the preliminaries."

3. How often do things happen in your service which you feel might scare your visitors? (Are you seeker-sensitive or Holy Ghost insensitive?)
4. Do you or anyone else in your congregation have a genuine sense of anticipation before services?
5. Have you done your absolute best, but still feel a gnawing sense that there must be something more?
6. If you are having a “move of God,” does it seem the same people are doing the same thing at the same time?
7. Do you get defensive when you hear these questions?
8. Get real! You are not alone. Most pastors just don’t feel equipped to handle the things of the Spirit in any great degree. Your time is coming.



IS THERE AN INTERPRETER IN THE HOUSE? FINDING AND FOLLOWING THE FLOW OF THE SPIRIT IN YOUR SERVICE

Lesson 4: Releasing the Gift of Interpretation

- I. Step up and receive your mantle
 - A. God put you in the pastorate, or put you in charge of a service. He will equip you for the job. I believe this means giving you the gift of interpretation.
 - B. Someone will control every service. If not you, then someone else. Someone will step into the driver's seat. You are the one set by God, but nature (and sheep) abhors a vacuum.
 1. Establish a plan for how the gifts will be ordered in your services and explain it lovingly and regularly, then stick by it.
 2. Accept the mantle and expect to know on the inside what needs to be done in the service.
 3. Get ready by praying much in other tongues.
 - C. Don't abdicate control of the music to your music department. God wants you to take the oversight. The worship is an integral part of the service. Maintain input.
 1. Don't be intimidated by moody musicians.
 2. Don't be in bondage to the song list.
 3. You don't even have to have instruments to have the touch of God.
 4. Pick up the flow of God in the song service. Tell them to revisit a particular song if God is blessing it.
 - a. Identify someone in your music ministry who seems to get the flow regularly, then put them in charge of selecting music for times of ministry.

- b. Instruct them to include a song which God is blessing. These things move in seasons
 - c. Don't be afraid to eliminate songs you hate.
 - D. Learn to correct lovingly when there is disorder. Don't just let it go on. People will love you for it.
 - 1. If something causes fear or confusion, correct and explain immediately.
 - 2. If it is flesh in a new babe, correct them privately the first time.
 - 3. Explain the different ways people respond to the anointing - laugh, shake, cry, shout. People need to know that everything is OK. Our services are often familiar to us, but bizarre and confusing to the uninformed. They want to be able to fit in, but don't know how. Even lifted hands and falling bodies sometimes still need explanation.
 - 4. Praying and singing in tongues in the public arena must be explained if there are unbelievers or ignorant folks present. If we are all praying or worshipping together in tongues, it is not necessary to give the content of what is being said, but it is reassuring to explain what is going on.
 - E. Exercise a little faith.
 - 1. If you are a pastor and seeking the move of God in your church, ask the Lord to grace you with the gift of Interpretation.
 - 2. Tell your congregation you are an Interpreter and they can count on that gift. Ask that they be recognized by you before they exercise a gift. You will let them know if they should move then. Remember 1 Corinthians 14:26. All could do something, but the interpreter should determine who and when. (1 Corinthians 14:39,40)
- II. Have a designated Holy Ghost service.
 - A. Worship and wait on God. You don't need musicians to worship. Get delivered from the tyranny of talent. God inhabits the praises of His people, not the blank stares of an audience.
 - B. Prepare by praying in the Spirit. Don't get a message.

- C. Follow your heart: REMEMBER: If God put you in charge, then He will direct the service through you. Learn to trust your heart. Usually an idea will surface in your inner man: ask for a testimony, ask people to share what God has taught them this week, does anyone feel they have a word from the Lord, take turns reading a favorite scripture, follow the leading to pray for people, who has a song that has been on their mind? Be open to creative possibilities.
 - D. Preach without notes: 2 Corinthians 3:1-3 tells us that there are letters written on our hearts. Open yours and read it to your congregation. You might be surprised at the results.
 - E. Learn to wait, even right there on Sunday morning. Tell them what you are doing and wait. Pray, worship, talk, listen.
 - F. Don't leave the cloud. If God is blessing something, stay on it. When you realize the anointing has lifted, stop and see where you got off.
 - G. Take time to diagnose the atmosphere. God moves according to atmospheres: healing, joy, praise, prayer.
 - H. Pressure of the program must be overcome. Remember: One second with the touch of God will do more good than six years of your best programming.
 - I. If you are willing to scrap the program, the service may actually be shorter. It doesn't take God as long to help people as it does you.
- III. Learn to play your instruments.
- A. You are the baton, not the director or the orchestra.
 - B. When you sense God wanting to do something, but you don't know what, look to your instruments. He may be looking to use someone else.
 - 1. Call out and lay hands on those you are drawn to: a pull, a repeated stare, a sense of compassion. When you lay hands on them be sensitive to the Spirit. This may start an episode of ministry.
 - 2. Observe the people. You may see signs that God is touching them in powerful ways. Listen to your heart. You may want to ask someone – “*What is the Lord doing for you?*” “*What do you have, Brother?*”

3. Learn your instruments: some are exhorters, some prophesy, some have healing gifts, some are merciful, some are pray-ers. Encourage these things. Watch and take note!!!
 - C. Remind the congregation to stay worshipful and be a part in the Spirit, not observers
- IV. Learn from your mistakes. God is merciful.
- A. Don't be afraid to ask questions about your service.
 - B. If you don't feel right about how it went, go back over it and see where you missed it.
 - C. Be willing to examine traditions: a tradition is anything I do because I saw someone else do it, or because it worked that way last time. Prayer lines? Hand-stretching? Wednesday service? Water baptism at a side service?
 - D. Look out for people pressure. The Gospel is supposed to offend religious spirits. Remember Ananias and Sapphira.
 - E. Be careful of imitating your heroes. Imitate their spirit, not their methods. U-B-U
 - F. Don't be afraid, the catch is in the deep. Tell your congregation what you are doing and get them to come along.
 - G. Find someone who flows in this gift and get them to lay their hands on you to impart the gift of interpretation. Then you can always be confident that there is an Interpreter in the House.