

On the Holy Spirit and His Gifts

Introduction: Why do we provide these papers?

At Mosaic Church, we believe that it is crucial for the Word of God to shape the way we view and engage the issues of our day. From time to time, the pastors of Mosaic engage in writing works of “practical theology.” We intend for these documents to be a pastorally sensitive, biblically rich, and theologically engaged treatment of issues that are on the hearts and minds of the people God has entrusted to our care.

As a note: These papers are not intended to be some kind of address to the church in America or all Christians everywhere. The pastors of Mosaic intend for them to be for the people whom God has entrusted to their care. We take seriously Peter’s admonition in 1 Peter 5 to “...shepherd the flock of God that is *among* you...” and ***we believe that serious matters require significant and proximate relationships.***

These papers are typically the result of a long season of study and reflection among our leaders. We spend months studying for them, crafting them, editing them, and getting feedback from elders, staff, and members of Mosaic. We test them with outside voices and subject matter experts as well, to measure their biblical fidelity, theological strength, and practical benefit.

Here is our hope: *In a world in which it can feel as if there are so many people giving their opinions about matters of consequence, we hope that these papers, written by pastors who love you and pray for you, will be words of weight in an age of flimsiness. We hope you will consider them with sobriety and treat them with serious consideration as your views on the issues at hand come into focus. If nothing else, we hope that the paper demonstrates that the Christian exploration of issues of consequence will require more than memes, tweets, anecdotes and posts.*

In the summer of 2021, we published a paper [“On Wisdom and School Options.”](#) The hope for that paper was that it would shape the way we talk about the sensitive subject of school options as a diverse church family united in the gospel. In the fall of 2021, we published a paper [“On Race and the Gospel.”](#) In the spring of 2022, we turned our attention to [“Death and the Life to Come.”](#) Now: We consider the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Why would Mosaic Church take time to address this topic? Well there are five main reasons.

- The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead and worthy of worship, glory, and true belief.
- There is widespread confusion about the work of the Holy Spirit.
- One of our distinctives as a church is that we are “charismatic” in theology and one of our aspirational values is to be “charismatically expressive.”
- Many people have experienced religious malpractice and confusion in “charismatic” churches.

- The Bible addresses these topics as significant for the journey of Christian discipleship.

We think that God is inviting us to move forward as a church family in faith, but as the old theologians have said, “faith seeks understanding.” We want to embrace the Spirit-filled Christian life that is displayed throughout the New Testament and we want to move in this direction on the firm authority and clarity of God’s word. This requires a serious study and meditation upon what God’s word says and how the church has received this testimony concerning who the Holy Spirit is, what the Holy Spirit does, and how the Holy Spirit gifts the body of Christ.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are fundamentally students of God’s word. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: “All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” When we are looking to come to a true understanding of what to believe and how to practice any element of the Christian faith, we must begin with the witness of God’s word.

It is our goal that this paper can provide a strong biblical and theological foundation for our teaching and preaching on the topic of the Holy Spirit and His gifts to the church. But that is not all: We hope that the paper will be a strong foundation for us to grow in our practice of walking in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit as we cultivate, encourage, and practice the gifts the Spirit of God has entrusted to the body of Christ.

The hope of this paper is not unlike that of previous work.

- We aim to provide a biblical perspective on the relevant issues.
- We aim to provide the “guardrails” for how we as a church will discuss this topic and practice it as a church family.
- We aim to provide a document that can be used by members of Mosaic Church to shape the way they discuss this topic with people outside of the church.

To accomplish this, we must begin with the witness of scripture and the theological engagement of the historic church on six relevant questions.

- Who is the Holy Spirit?
- What is the work of the Holy Spirit?
- What are spiritual gifts and how are they to be used in a church?
- What is prophecy and how are we to practice it?
- What are tongues and how are we to practice it?
- What about healing and deliverance?

We will explore each of these questions and then provide appendices working through FAQs, how to talk about the topic with children, and some recommended resources for further exploration of the topic.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” (Genesis 1:1-2)

Before there was anything in all of creation, there was the Triune God. The true God, the God of the Bible, is three in one: We believe God eternally exists as one essence in three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each of whom is fully God and yet there is one God.

God the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead, or to say it another way, the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is co-equal in worth and glory as God the Father and God the Son. To say that the Holy Spirit is the third person in the Godhead is not to say that he is “third best,” rather, it is to acknowledge the different roles they play in the history of redemption and the unique relations that exist between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:18-20; John 14:16; Acts 13:2; Romans 8:14-26; Ephesians 4:30)

Throughout God’s word we are routinely invited to behold the glory of the Triune God, but over the course of scripture the doctrine of the Holy Spirit becomes progressively more clear. The Holy Spirit is active throughout the Old Testament, but when we arrive at the New Testament we get an even clearer picture of who the Spirit is and what the Spirit does/is doing. We hear that the Holy Spirit is involved in the miraculous virgin conception of Christ Jesus in Mary’s womb (Matt. 1:18), the Holy Spirit descends “like a dove” upon Christ at his anointing in baptism (Matt. 3:16), the Holy Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness temptation (Matt. 4:1). When the disciples receive the great commission they are told to “Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matt. 28:19) We hear throughout the Gospel of John that the Holy Spirit is involved in the new birth, or conversion of the heart (John 3), and that the Holy Spirit was going to be sent by Jesus when He was glorified (John 7).

In Acts, the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the second verse of the book and then we receive Jesus’ words promising the sending of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:4-8: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” In Acts 2 we read that as the apostles and disciples were gathered together on Pentecost that “Suddenly a sound like that of a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were staying. They saw tongues like flames of fire that separated and rested on each one of them. Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them.” As people are hearing the gospel and being converted throughout the book of Acts, they are receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. This, as it turns out, includes gentiles (“gentiles” was the primary category label for people of non-Jewish biological descent), as we discover in Acts 10.

Throughout the epistles (the letters) in the New Testament, we discover that the Holy Spirit dwells within us (Romans 5), sets us free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8), is the Spirit by which we live as adopted children of God (Romans 8), that our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6), that God provides the gifts of ministry to His church through the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12), the Holy Spirit is a “downpayment” on our present and future salvation (2 Corinthians 1), that we are to “walk by the Spirit” (Galatians 5), that the Spirit produces good fruit in our lives (Galatians 5), and that our salvation is sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1).

Throughout the witness of scripture, but in the New Testament in particular, it becomes clear that the Holy Spirit is not a force, but a person. The Spirit is a divine person. The Holy Spirit can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30), the Holy Spirit makes choices (1 Cor. 12:11; Acts 16:6-7), the Holy Spirit is eternal (Heb. 9:14), and the Holy Spirit is called God (2 Cor. 3:17; Acts 5:3-4).

This is just a small sampling of what the Bible in general and the New Testament specifically say about who the Holy Spirit is and what the Holy Spirit does in the world and in the lives of God’s people. Before we move into a discussion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, let’s explore the more “general” works of the Holy Spirit.

What is the work of the Holy Spirit?

God The Holy Spirit, third person of the Trinity, is eternal. He has always been and will always be. Throughout the history of the world and across the story of scripture, we see the Holy Spirit work in keeping with the counsel of the Godhead and the unified will of the triune God.

But, what do we see the Holy Spirit do?

In Genesis 1 we hear that the Holy Spirit is active in creation (Gen. 1:1-2). In Exodus 31 we discover that Bezalel has been “filled with the Spirit of God” in order to craft the tabernacle and the elements of Israel’s worship. Throughout the Old Testament, we see the Spirit of God falling upon the Kings of Israel and departing from them. Behind the words of scripture of the law, prophets, historical books, and wisdom literature, as the New Testament will go on to point out, is the Holy Spirit inspiring the authors of scripture.

The Psalmist pleads with the Lord during his prayer of confession in Psalm 51: “Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.”

In Joel 2, we are told that a day will come when the Lord will “pour out [His] Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.” (Joel 2:28-29) It is this prophetic promise that is fulfilled and referenced at Pentecost in Acts 2.

Beyond any of these moments or select scriptures, one of the principal concerns of the people of Israel throughout the Old Testament is the presence of God. And it is clear that the presence of God that is encountered in the tabernacle after Egypt, or the temple upon its constructions, is the presence of God in the person of the Holy Spirit.

By the time we have reached the end of the Old Testament we can say that the Holy Spirit creates, the Holy Spirit inspires, the Holy Spirit orders, the Holy Spirit dwells among God's people, the Holy Spirit cultivates spiritual fruit in the life of God's people, the Holy Spirit moves among God's people, and the Holy Spirit is coming in the future with a greater "fullness."

When we get to the New Testament, we get a clearer picture of the work of the Holy Spirit within the scope of the world.

In the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) we discover that Mary conceived the child "from the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 1:18), We hear that John the Baptist will be a prophet of the coming Savior who will be "filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15), at the baptism of Jesus "the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him" (Matt. 3:16-17), when Jesus enters the synagogue in Nazareth on the sabbath he invokes Isaiah's prophecy by claiming "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news" (Luke 4:18), we see that Jesus Christ casts out demons by the power of the Spirit of God (Matt. 12:22-32) and that one can blaspheme against the Holy Spirit by attributing the work of God to the work of demons, and in the great commission Jesus commands the disciples to baptize new disciples in the "name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28:18-20)

In the gospel of John we get more expansive teaching on the person and work of the Holy Spirit. In John 3, Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born again by the Holy Spirit in order to enter the kingdom of God and that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6) He goes on to say, "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8) In the next chapter, he tells a Samaritan woman that those who truly seek to worship God will worship him in "spirit and truth." (John 4) In John 6:63, Jesus teaches his disciples, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all." In John 7:37-39, Jesus says that the Spirit is going to be poured out like "rivers of living water" after He is glorified. In John 14 Jesus said He will ask the Father and "he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you." He goes on to say that the Holy Spirit will be sent by the Father and the Son in order to remind the disciples all that Jesus had taught them while He was with them on earth. This is repeated at the end of John 15 when Jesus tells the disciples: "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me." In John 16, Jesus continues to teach on the Holy Spirit, letting the disciples know that the Holy Spirit will convict people of sin, He will illuminate God's teaching and God's word, he will guide the disciples into the way of truth, He will magnify and glorify Christ.

The first recorded words of Jesus in Acts instruct the disciples to remain in Jerusalem as they wait for the promise of the Father, as they will be “baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” (Acts 1:4) At the Ascension Jesus tells them they will “receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) When the day of Pentecost arrived, the Holy Spirit fell upon the followers of Jesus and it is said “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:4) The Holy Spirit plays a significant role in the empowering and anointing of praise, mission, and salvation throughout the whole of the book of Acts.

In the rest of the New Testament witness we are routinely reminded that the Holy Spirit creates new life (Rom. 8), the Holy Spirit inspires God’s word in scripture (2 Tim. 3:16), the Holy Spirit gifts God’s people (1 Corinthians 12-14), and the Holy Spirit produces Christ-like virtue and spiritual fruit in the lives of God’s people (Galatians 5).

The work of the Holy Spirit is majestic and vast, but we think we can group much of what the Spirit does in five basic categories.

- The Holy Spirit **ignites**: The Holy Spirit has been, is, and always will be involved in the work of creating, cultivating, and sustaining life, and providing spiritual gifts or blessings to God’s people.
- The Holy Spirit **indwells**: The Holy Spirit has been, is, and always will be involved in bringing the presence of God into, among, and throughout the people of God.
- The Holy Spirit **inspires**: The Holy Spirit inspires God’s infallible, authoritative, and sufficient word.
- The Holy Spirit **illuminates**: The Holy Spirit opens eyes, ears, hearts, and minds to hear and believe the words, works, and wonders of God. He also convicts, encourages, and comforts the believer.
- The Holy Spirit **invigorates**: From time to time, in scripture and in the experience of the Christian, it appears that there are unique outpourings of the Spirit’s fullness in the face of believer’s persecution, trial, specific call, unique need, or prayerful groaning.

We now turn our attention to the spiritual gifts: What are they and how are they to be practiced in the life of a church?

What are spiritual gifts and how are they to be practiced in the church?

In the New Testament there are at least three (with a possible fourth) lists of spiritual gifts.

Romans 12:6-8: “Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”

This passage seems to indicate the following gifts:

- Prophecy
- Service
- Teaching
- Exhortation
- Generosity
- Leadership
- Mercy

1 Corinthians 12:4-11: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”

This passage seems to indicate the following gifts:

- Utterances of wisdom
- Utterances of knowledge
- Faith
- Healing
- Working of miracles
- Prophecy
- Discernment
- Tongues
- Interpretation of tongues

1 Corinthians 12:28: “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.”

Now, it appears that this “list,” rather than being a taxonomy of gifts, is more of Paul picking out ministries randomly in order to make a point. We should be hesitant to draw any conclusions regarding the offices or persons of the apostles, prophets, and teachers, nor does this list appear to be exhaustive in any way.

It doesn't appear that "apostles, prophets, and teachers" are drawing attention to existing offices that exist in the New Testament church. We are confirmed in that suspicion when we examine the pastoral epistles (1 Timothy and Titus) in particular and find them absent from conversations regarding offices in a local church.

Six gifts:

- Miracles
- Healing
- Helping
- Administrating
- Tongues
- Interpretation of Tongues

The last "list" is best seen in a slightly different light than the three above as it is not as clearly structured as the other three.

1 Peter 4:10-11: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

If we include this as a list then we can deduce two more gifts: speaking and serving.

So, a final list that compiles all four of the lists above would list out the following spiritual gifts:

- Prophecy (mentioned in two lists)
- Service (mentioned in two lists)
- Teaching
- Exhortation
- Generosity
- Leadership
- Mercy
- Utterances of wisdom
- Utterances of knowledge
- Faith
- Healing (mentioned in two lists)
- Working of miracles (mentioned in two lists)
- Discernment
- Tongues (mentioned in two lists)
- Interpretation of tongues (mentioned in two lists)
- Helping
- Administrating

- Speaking

If we were to group the gifts together, it may be wise to use Peter's two general categories: Gifts of Speaking and Gifts of serving.

- **Gifts of speaking:** teaching, speaking, exhortation, prophecy, tongues, discernment, utterances of knowledge and wisdom, interpretation of tongues.
- **Gifts of serving:** leadership, administration, healing, faith, serving, helping,

The Bible is overwhelmingly clear that these gifts are all given by God for the building up of the Christian, and more specifically, the church. One gift, out of all the gifts, is particularly tied to personal edification and encouragement: tongues. Paul's teaching on tongues seems to suggest that the practitioner of tongues personally builds themselves up (edifies), this isn't viewed as a negative, but it is clear from Paul's teaching on prophecy and tongues that he doesn't view tongues as of the same spiritual benefit to the corporate church as prophecy or the other gifts. (1 Corinthians 14)

All the other spiritual gifts seem to be primarily aimed at blessing, serving, or communicating to others beyond the individual who practices those gifts. And while it is clear that all of the spiritual gifts come from God and that they are all good and beneficial (when exercised properly) for the church, there is a verse in 1 Corinthians 12 that seems to indicate that there are "higher gifts." In 1 Corinthians 12:31, Paul says, "But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way." So, what are these "higher gifts?" In the course of this chapter, but particularly in the closing section and where it picks up in 1 Corinthians 14, there is a discussion around the gifts of miracles, teaching, healing, tongues, and prophecy. It would be wrong to conclude that Paul is saying that some of the spiritual gifts are "greater" than other gifts in terms of necessity to the church or ability to glorify God, but it does appear that Paul is saying that some of the gifts are capable of producing more visible or felt benefit (if exercised properly) or more visible or felt burden (if exercised improperly). Regardless of where one lands on this matter, it is important that even in light of their being powerful spiritual gifts entrusted to the church, 1 Corinthians 13 is dropped right in the middle of Paul's discussion of the gifts because it shows the way of love, which Paul calls the "more excellent way."

When we think about all of the gifts, we should consider the **grounds** of the gifts, the **guardrails** of their practice, and the **goal** of the spiritual gifts.

The spiritual gifts are grounded in the grace of God. They are given by God for the glory of God. While we can grow in our practice of the gifts, they are not primarily skills to be learned, they are gifts that have been entrusted to God's people. In order to experience powerful and purposeful practice of the spiritual gifts, we should expect that we will be in great need for intimacy with the God who has given them. This places the emphasis on the kind of spiritual dependency best exemplified in prayer. It is no small coincidence that at Pentecost in Acts 2 the Spirit falls upon praying believers and immediately leads them to celebrate the mighty acts of God. This is how

you know the spiritual gifts are being practiced with faithfulness and power: They emerge from a culture of dependent prayer and they lead to magnifying God (not the practitioner of the gift.)

The spiritual gifts are guarded by the word of God and the virtues of Christ to be embodied among Christians and in churches. The word of God is the final authority for the Christian faith and the practice thereof. Only God's word in holy scripture is "breathed out by God." (2 Tim. 3:16) It is crucial that the practice of the spiritual gifts flourishes in a church culture that believes in the supremacy of God's word as it pertains to questions of the Christian faith and how we are to practice our worship and life together as a church. In addition, for the practice of the spiritual gifts to be kept healthy in a local church, the virtues of Christ as taught in the Sermon on the Mount, in 1 Corinthians 13, and applied with the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5, must be present. We should expect to find division, arrogance, and anxiety where the spiritual gifts are attempted in church cultures where the word of God is treated as a secondary consideration and/or the virtues of Christ as taught in scripture are not present in the teaching ministry, the leadership, and the culture of the church.

The goal of the spiritual gifts is the magnification and glorification of Jesus Christ, accompanied by the increasing conformity and transformation of the people of a church more and more into the image of Christ. The Holy Spirit is sent, according to the words of Jesus, to magnify the glory of God in Christ, to bring Christ into our remembrance, to shape and conform us into the image of Christ. Subsequently, this means that the spiritual gifts are for glorifying God, magnifying the Son of God, and blessing the church in a way that will lead to increasing sanctification, holiness, fellowship with God, meaningful participation in His mission, and love for the family of God in Christ.

It is crucial for us to keep the grounds, guardrails, and goals of the spiritual gifts in mind in our pursuit and practice of any spiritual gift, but this is critically important when we consider pursuing and practicing what are called the "sign gifts." It is these gifts that the rest of this paper will seek to explore.

What is prophecy and how are we to practice this gift?

Reader's note: If you have skipped to this section of the paper, we strongly encourage you to go back and start at the beginning. We have decided to focus explicitly on prophecy, tongues, and healing for longer treatments for three reasons: 1.) These gifts, particularly tongues and prophecy, receive the most cautions and instructions on proper use. 2.) They seem to be gifts that have the potential for greater blessing or burden. 3.) They are gifts that are, rightly or wrongly, perceived to be expressions of unique spiritual power.

Prophecy, healing, and tongues are often referred to as the "sign gifts" among the spiritual gifts. This language is used in order to draw attention to the unique benefits and hurdles to practicing these gifts and to draw attention to the way that these spiritual gifts carry with them a unique demonstration of the supernatural power of God. These "sign" gifts are referred to as such as they are unique demonstrations of the power of God and signs of the power and truthfulness of

the gospel. Some believe that these “sign” gifts were signals of the age of the apostles and that they ceased at the conclusion of the age of the apostles. While this position is a faithful attempt to make sense of the witness of scripture and the experience of the church, it is not the position of Mosaic Church. As a church, we believe that the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and miraculous healings have not faded, but are still active for the glory of God and the benefit of His people.

Prophecy could best be described as the reception of a God-granted insight, impression, encouragement, or exhortation. Prophecies are timely in their reception and can happen spontaneously. They should be tested and sifted in prayer and with other trusted brothers and sisters in Christ, pastors, or prophetically gifted members of the church before they are shared with others, but when shared they are shared for the glory of God and the edification of others. When relayed, they should be shared with humble submission to the authority and infallibility of God’s word with love for the audience, which has the glory of God in Christ and the encouragement, edification, or exhortation of another person or group as its goal.

You’ll notice the absence in this definition of the language of “word or words from the Lord.” We have chosen to exclude that language from our definition due to the confusion it may cause in reference to the uniqueness of the Bible as God’s inspired word. We want to keep with us the ever present reminder of the centrality and unique authority of God’s word in matters of faith and practice. That being said, it is often the experience of those gifted with the ministry of prophecy that they receive what in their experience will feel like words and that a fulfillment of the prophetic ministry is to relay God granted insights, encouragements, and exhortations to others using words. As long as the posture of those practicing this gift remains humble, committed to the unique authority of Holy scripture, and is offered with submission to God’s word and the sound doctrine of the church; we do not need to try and micro-manage or police the language we use to communicate the reception or the sharing of prophecy.

As mentioned above, it is probably best to consider prophecy as both a specific gift and as the label for a group of gifts that would include: utterances of wisdom, utterances of knowledge, discernment (or “distinguishing between spirits”), and the interpretation of tongues.

In 1 Corinthians 14, the Apostle Paul instructs the church in Corinth that:

- 1 Corinthians 14:1 - “Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.”
- 1 Corinthians 14:3 - Prophecy builds up people, encourages them, consoles them.
- 1 Corinthians 14:5 - “Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy.”
- 1 Corinthians 14:29-33 - The gift of prophecy is to be practiced in an orderly way and in submission to the authority of the community of others practicing the gift of prophecy and the pastors in a local church.

He goes on to contrast tongues with prophecy, but a few things become clear:

- The gift of prophecy is a blessing, Paul desires everyone in the church in Corinth to prophesy.
- Paul doesn't believe that the gift of prophecy is reserved only for the apostles, because he communicates a desire that non-apostles would practice this gift and proceeds to give instructions on proper practice.
- The gift of prophecy is for the building up of the body of Christ and can be a blessing to outsiders and non-Christians.

It should be stated clearly that words shared or spoken in the practice of the gift of prophecy are not on the same level as, nor do they possess the governing and ruling authority of, God's words in scripture. This means that the gift of prophecy should be exercised in humble submission to God's word, with a humble heart in its practice, and a spirit of humble deference to the leaders in a local church and the other practitioners of the gift of prophecy.

Examples of the gift of prophecy properly practiced could include, but aren't limited to:

- Timely encouragement
- Addressing hidden sin
- Words of comfort for hidden wounds
- Wisdom for current questions (including unspoken questions)

The gift of prophecy we discover in the New Testament should be clearly distinguished from the office of prophet we find in the Old Testament. The Old Testament prophets were expected to speak on behalf of the Lord for the benefit of the people and their prophecies were to either be perfect or they were to be judged as false prophets and condemned to death. The pattern of prophecy in the New Testament makes it clear that the prophetic ministry of the church was not seen as the same as that of the Old Testament. The ministry of prophecy in the New Testament is to be tested as made clear in 1 Corinthians 14. Prophetic encouragements, exhortations, insights, or impressions should be tested under the authority of God's word, in counsel with the elders of a local church, and among the others in a local church who are faithfully practicing this gift.

Prophetic receptions are subject to faithful, holy, and humble testing, sifting, and discernment.

What are tongues and how are we to practice this gift?

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Prophecy, healing, and tongues are often referred to as the “sign gifts” among the spiritual gifts. This language is used in order to draw attention to the unique benefits and hurdles to practicing these gifts and to draw attention to the way that these spiritual gifts carry with them a unique demonstration of the supernatural power of God. These “sign” gifts are referred to as such as they are unique demonstrations of the power of God and signs of the power and truthfulness of the gospel. Some believe that these “sign” gifts were signals of the age of the apostles and that they ceased at the conclusion of the age of the apostles. While this position is a faithful attempt to make sense of the witness of scripture and the experience of the church, it is not the position of Mosaic Church. As a church, we believe that the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and miraculous healings have not faded, but are still active for the glory of God and the benefit of His people.

In truth, of all the spiritual gifts, tongues is the gift whose purpose, pursuit, and practice is accompanied by the most questions. And for good reason: The gift of tongues receives more cautioning than any other spiritual gift. (One might take exception to this given the qualification, accountability, and responsibilities entrusted to teachers and leaders. But, in the formal lists of gifts, *tongues* is far and away the most “cautioned” gift.)

The gift of tongues can be described as supernatural prayer or praise spoken in a language not understood by the speaker. The tongue might be an existing language in the world that is simply unknown to the one speaking it, but it appears that the tongue might also be something best described as “tongues of angels.” (1 Corinthians 13:1) These “tongues of angels” would be a kind of speech that is not recognized as a spoken language on earth and may appear to others as mere mumbling or an unrecognized/unrecognizable articulation of sounds and syllables.

The gift of tongues is not primarily for the encouragement of a public audience, we know this because Paul is clear in 1 Corinthians 12-14 that the gift of tongues, if practiced publicly or corporately, must be accompanied by an interpretation of the tongue(s). It appears that tongues are personally edifying and seem to accompany and give voice to prayer and praise. In Acts 2 and in Corinth, it appears that the speaker of the tongue has God as their primary audience as the gift of tongues is given for the purpose of prayer and praise.

Paul specifically mentions that:

- He wants them to all speak in tongues, but he'd rather they prophesy.
- The tongues are not primarily for an audience of unbelievers, but when they are practiced publicly it functions as a sign of the non-Christian's alienation from intimacy with God.
- If someone speaks in a tongue in public or corporate worship, it should not be without an interpretation.
- If someone speaks in a tongue in a public gathering of God's people, it should be done in an orderly way.
- Specifically: No more than two or three—and not at the same time on top of each other—but in turns.

Examples of the gift of tongues properly practiced:

- Personal prayer
- In an orderly way in prayer or worship with other Christians (where those given to prophecy or interpretation of tongues are also present)

What about healing, the working of miracles, and faith?

Reader's note: If you have skipped to this section of the paper, we strongly encourage you to go back and start at the beginning. We have decided to focus explicitly on prophecy, tongues, and healing for longer treatments for three reasons: 1.) These gifts, particularly tongues and prophecy, receive the most cautions and instructions on proper use. 2.) They seem to be gifts that have the potential for greater blessing or burden. 3.) They are gifts that are, rightly or wrongly, perceived to be expressions of unique spiritual power.

Prophecy, healing, and tongues are often referred to as the “sign gifts” among the spiritual gifts. This language is used in order to draw attention to the unique benefits and hurdles to practicing these gifts and to draw attention to the way that these spiritual gifts carry with them a unique demonstration of the supernatural power of God. These “sign” gifts are referred to as such as they are unique demonstrations of the power of God and signs of the power and truthfulness of the gospel. Some believe that these “sign” gifts were signals of the age of the apostles and that they ceased at the conclusion of the age of the apostles. While this position is a faithful attempt to make sense of the witness of scripture and the experience of the church, it is not the position of Mosaic Church. As a church, we believe that the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and miraculous healings have not faded, but are still active for the glory of God and the benefit of His people.

If there is any of the “sign gifts” that we are most eager to see, receive, and willing to pursue; it is the gift of healing and the working of miracles.

When we think about this collection of gifts there is strong overlap between healing, the working of miracles, the gift of faith, and the ministry of deliverance. Each of these gifts is an expression of the power of God to bring wholeness to broken things.

Additionally, there are probably no other two gifts more represented (outside of teaching and mercy) that are demonstrated as often by Jesus Christ in his ministry than the gifts of healing and spiritual deliverance.

Miraculous healing is the gift by which people pray for and see those who are sick physically made well or see pronounced symptoms of their frail condition alleviated in a demonstrable way.

Deliverance is a kind of healing where an individual experiences freedom from spiritual torment that may or not be impacting their body, but *is* impacting their feelings, thoughts, and behavior towards God, self, or others.

We have chosen to use the language of “spiritual torment” here over possession as it is our firm belief that while Christian persons can be targeted and attacked by demonic forces and/or Satan, they cannot become nor fall under his possession. For this reason: While we might find instances of genuine demonic possession among non-Christian men, women, and children; we will not find it among Christians.

Throughout Jesus’ ministry we see that some physical illnesses and frailties are a result of spiritual torment, but others are specifically acknowledged as having no relationship to sin, generational sin, or evil spiritual activity. Life in a world broken by sin is accompanied by experiencing brokenness in our bodies and much of the sickness and physical frailty we encounter in this life is a result of the impact of sin on the creaturely world.

The ministry of Jesus and the apostles demonstrates that when a Christian experiences sickness or physical frailty, or when they minister to someone who is enduring these things, it should not be immediately assumed that the presenting issue is a result of sin or demonic spiritual activity, but it should not be ruled out that these are considerations in treating those who experience sickness or frailty in pronounced ways.

In the list of spiritual gifts, the gift of healing and the gift of faith both emerge. Knowing that the gift of saving faith is granted to all Christians by the grace of God and the work of the Spirit, and yet seeing this mention of the gift of faith included in a list of gifts that are mentioned as not being apportioned to all, raises the question: What is the gift of faith? And is it related to the gift of healing?

The gift of faith appears to be the gift of a kind of expectant faith that is coupled with asking God to do things that defy our expectations. We get helpful context and connection between prayer, healing, and this kind of faith in James 5:13-16: “Is anyone among you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone cheerful? He should sing praises. Is anyone among you sick? He should call for the elders of the church, and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. *The prayer of faith will save the sick person*, and the Lord will raise him up; if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.” (Emphasis added)

There seems to be a connection between “the prayer of faith,” the gift of healing, the power of prayer, and the work of God in bringing healing to people.

Similarly, we see there is a deep connection with prayer, faith, and the casting out of demons and the work of deliverance in Jesus’ words to the disciples in Matthew 17. A man brings his son who is having terrible seizures to Jesus and says, “Your disciples couldn’t heal him.” It is said that Jesus rebuked the demon and the boy was healed. When the disciples ask “Why couldn’t we drive it out?” Jesus doesn’t respond by telling them they can’t because they aren’t God. Instead he tells them, “Because of your little faith.” (Matthew 17:14-20)

A few things are interesting about this passage:

- The boy is having seizures—a physical frailty
- The disciples couldn't heal him
- To heal him, Jesus rebukes a demon and it says the “demon came out of him, and from that moment the boy was healed.”
- Jesus tells the disciples that they were of little faith and that's why they couldn't heal the boy

This is a great passage for us to point to a few realities about the gift of healing, deliverance, and expectant faith.

God possesses the power to heal, our bodies belong to him. Much of the frailty we experience, physically and spiritually, is not a result of evil spiritual activity, but some of it is. God invites us to pray for healing and deliverance and appears to grant some people in the church with gifts of healing prayer and expectant faith.

It should be noted that while God does heal people miraculously, it is often the case that sickness and frailty is allowed by the Lord in order to sanctify us and make us hungry for heaven. We are invited and empowered to pray expectantly and boldly for God to heal, and yet, there will be times when God chooses to work His power and presence into our lives by withholding that healing until the day the kingdom of heaven comes in fullness, for good, forever.

Conclusion: Where do we go from here?

In truth, most Christians feel discomfort at the elements of the Christian faith that smell *too* supernatural. We have been shaped and formed by the world we inhabit and it is easy to buy into the lie that the world around us is fundamentally the product of natural mechanisms. We can feel like we are running the risk of being a bit too strange if we begin to live in the true reality of this world: It is a world created by God, broken by sin, being made new in God's grace, and charged with the supernatural.

The world of the Bible is our world. It is a world in which there are demons and angels, a world in which people are spiritually tormented by evil forces, a world in which there is a spiritual enemy looking to destroy the people of God. But it is also a world in which the Spirit of God moves freely, entrusting the gifts of God to the people of God so that they might worship God, encourage their family in Christ, and bear witness to the words, works, and wonders of God in the eyes of a watching world.

One of our aspirational values as a church is that we would become “charismatically expressive.” We mean by this that we would become a praying church who humbly receives and practices all of the spiritual gifts we find in God's word. Why? So that we might give glory to God and build up the body of Christ in love.

So, where do we go from here?

- ***We pray:*** Prayerful dependency on the Lord is the fertile soil for faithful charismatic expression and practice.
- ***We submit to the authority of God's word:*** We cannot begin to attempt to practice the spiritual gifts, particularly those "sign gifts," if there is any doubt in our mind that God's word is the final authority for what is good, true, and beautiful for Christian belief and practice.
- ***We practice the way of love:*** If we are more eager to practice powerful spiritual gifts than we are to love each other, we miss the point. We have to practice the virtues of Christ depicted in the Beatitudes, the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5, and the way of love we discover in 1 Corinthians 13. These virtues emerge from the same rich soil in which the gifts thrive: the soil of dependent prayer and meditation on scripture.
- ***We ask God to make our individual gifts known:*** We must humbly ask God to reveal to us the unique ways in which he has entrusted spiritual gifts to each of us. We do this in a posture of prayer, in counsel with trusted people, in light of our preferences (desires, interests, skills, etc.), and with a desire to step forward in simple steps of practice.
- ***We seek to practice the spiritual gifts with humble, holy, and healthy hearts before the Lord and each other:*** If we are to grow in the gifts God has entrusted to us, we have to avoid two temptations: hiding them in hesitant fear AND showcasing them in selfish ambition. We look to take small steps in practicing these gifts, with humble hearts, and a desire to see God magnified.
- ***We give ourselves both order and space in our worship and corporate life:*** The church's worship is to be well ordered (1 Corinthians 14), but within that right ordering, space should exist for extended prayer, praise, and practice of the gifts. We want to be a church that orders their worship with the Christ-centered formation of our members in mind, but also creates space to wisely steward when it appears that there is a unique movement of the Spirit in our midst.

There is much to learn as a church and we don't have to rush headlong or foolishly in pursuit of this aspirational value. God is inviting us to take a wise, sober-minded, and expectant approach to pursuing life as a charismatically expressive church.

We believe that the most practical invitation we can extend towards those who would seek to grow in their practice of the spiritual gifts, with emphasis on the "sign gifts," is to join us for our prayer and worship nights. It is our hope that this space can become a healthy place for us to seek the Lord in prayer, listen to His word, and begin to humbly and faithfully pursue deeper expression of the gifts God has entrusted to His church.

While Mosaic Church believes that all of the spiritual gifts, including the "sign" gifts, continue on into the present life of the church; we do not require affirmation of this belief for membership. Our aspirational value to increasingly become charismatically expressive means that our

leadership and teaching will be shaped by this belief and value and we will continue to pray that God would pour out His presence and power on our church family.

We invite you to join us in praying.

Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions

We know that there are many questions that are stirred up when we consider what the Bible says about the spiritual world we live in, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit and how they are to be practiced in the church.

Beneath are concise attempts to provide a basic response to some of the key questions that begin to emerge. We understand that there will be more questions not addressed here and we invite you to bring those questions to the attention of the pastors at Mosaic.

- What is the difference between natural talents and spiritual gifts?

For some of the gifts, it can feel difficult to separate what a gift of the Holy Spirit is versus a natural talent or character quality. Gifts like teaching, mercy, leadership, service, administration, etc. You might ask, “Do I have the spiritual gift of teaching, or am I just a natural communicator?” “Do I have the spiritual gift of mercy, or am I just a kind and gentle person?” “Do I have the spiritual gift of administration, or am I just organized?”

A better and more holistic view is for us to recognize that all we are and all we have is a gift of God, from God, and for God. There is no reason why significant overlap cannot exist between “natural” and “supernatural” gifts. Every part of us is designed to glorify God, to find delight in Him, and to love others with. It is tempting to view a gift like “mercy” as just a common character trait. Especially when compared to seemingly more “spectacular” or rare gifts. The danger here is we downplay the beautiful ways God has made us and hold back from engaging with the body of Christ.

- What if we pray and God doesn’t heal?

The Christian knows five things for certain:

1. The world and everything in it has been broken by sin. This includes our bodies and means that our bodies and minds don’t always work in healthy ways. (Gen. 3)
2. There is a day coming when there will be no more pain, sickness, or death. (Rev. 21)
3. Throughout the Bible we see miraculous healings.
4. Throughout the Bible we are invited to pray for God to bring healing.
5. Healing is always an undeserved gift from God.
6. As much as God cares about our physical health, he cares about our spiritual growth more. There are undoubtedly times God may lovingly sanctify us and glorify himself through physical weakness. (Jn 9:3; 2 Cor 12:7-10)

If we pray and God doesn’t heal, we are invited to continue to persevere in prayer while trusting in a coming day where all of the sickness, pain, and death of this world will be removed.

- Is a “second baptism” needed to be filled with the Spirit of God?

There are some who suggest, based on readings of Acts 10 and Acts 19, that a second baptism of the Holy Spirit is required for the filling or the fullness of the Spirit in our lives. Some will suggest that the proper symbol that this “second baptism” has occurred is the experience of the gift of tongues.

We deny this position. We do not believe that a “second baptism” or “baptism of the Holy Spirit” is required for the filling or fullness of the Spirit. In addition, we deny that tongues are the only or central expression of the Spirit’s power to demonstrate a believer’s fullness of the indwelling Holy Spirit of God.

The passages in question are unique moments in the proclamation of the gospel and involve audiences who had heard of Christ, but had not heard the full story including Pentecost. Beyond this unique moment, all throughout the epistles of the New Testament, a second baptism is never required, encouraged, recommended, or discussed.

- How should we interpret what Jesus means by “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?”

In Mark 3:22-30 we hear Jesus speak of an “unforgivable sin” that he calls “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.”

This verse has created much confusion around the question of what exactly “blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is.” In short: It appears that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is akin to the persistent willingness to attribute to Satan what truly and properly belongs to God. Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit occurs when a sinner remains in their perpetual rejection of worship of God in order to ascribe to Satan allegiance, power, or worship that does not belong to Him.

We should be careful to assign to Satan power, position, and privileges that are not His. At the same time, we caution anyone from pronouncing something as “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.” This blasphemy seems to be less a momentary event and more a determined course of action held over a lifetime.

- Do we see fewer miraculous gifts and miracles today than they did in scripture?

It certainly seems like, at least in our slice of the world at this time, we see less miracles and miraculous activity than in the world of scripture. Is this true?

While miracles populate the story of scripture and the ministry of Jesus, we should remember that there were many ordinary days full of the non-miraculous and mundane in the ministry of Jesus and in the course of the story of the Bible. But it does appear that there are moments where miraculous activity accelerates in a unique way, both in the story of scripture and in the history of the church. You could take a look at the Welsh revivals, the Great Awakening, the Azusa street revivals, or the Kansas City blessing and notice that there have periodically in the history of the western church been expressions of unique clusters of miraculous activity.

Fundamentally, we don't believe that God does miraculous things because we have seen him do it in recent memory, but because God's word tells us He does.

- Are mental illnesses the result of demonic activity/spiritual torment?

There is a school of thought in charismatic circles that is quick to root all mental illness in demonic activity. We should avoid this.

It is the case that spiritual torment seems to often psychically fracture an individual, the Gerasene demoniac in Mark 5 being the clearest case of this. But that does not mean that all mental illness should be or can be tied to demonic spiritual activity or spiritual torment.

When encountering mental illness in one's life or in the life of another brother or sister in Christ, it should not be immediately assumed that whatever presenting symptom (anxiety, depressions, etc.) is a result of demonic spiritual torment. And yet, neither should it be assumed that spiritual warfare is excluded from the considerations of care.

Those struggling with symptoms or experiences of mental illness should ask to receive prayer, they should seek professional help through counselors, and when in consultation with their network of care and trust, should know that they are free in Christ to explore the potential for medicinal help for their battles.

- Will God only heal the person if they have enough "faith" or "belief?"

It does appear that the "gift of faith" can characterize the expectant prayer for healing we are invited to practice. It appears that this expectant prayer is marked by a unique perseverance in petition and a unique power in the praying.

That being said, we are not healed because we are strong, we are healed because God is gracious. Throughout the Bible, it is clear that God doesn't withhold his blessing for those who have a strong faith, many (including those with what we might call "weak faith" or "unbelief") experience and see healing occur.

- Can I pray in tongues by myself?

The practice of tongues in personal prayer is not prohibited in scripture. The cautions around tongues are for the public use of tongues in a disorderly and/or uninterpreted manner. While faithful Christians can fall on different sides of the question, we believe that the use of tongues for personal prayer falls within the broad parameters of the Bible's instruction on the gift.

- How do I figure out what my spiritual gift is?

There are many tests and quizzes available online to figure out your spiritual gifts and we caution you from taking any of them too seriously. In truth: The Bible does not lay out a testing

criteria for spiritual gifts and we should be cautious to create criteria that the Bible doesn't detail or recommend.

As in many issues of discernment, the best road to figuring out your spiritual gifts will be marked by asking God in prayer and fasting, seeking input from trusted Christian brothers and sisters, examining how God has designed/wired you, and looking to practice spiritual gifts in a way that allows for you to test them and be tested in your practice of them.

- Why the anointing oil when healing is discussed in James 5?

Throughout the scriptures and throughout the ancient world, oil served as an important symbol for blessing, anointing, and abundance. The oil in James 5 is not magical, but it is not uncommon for our elders to anoint someone with oil when laying hands on them to pray for their healing. The fragrance of the oil is a reminder that our prayers ascend to God, who hears all of our prayers even more intimately than we smell the scent of the oil. Some will tell you that it must be a special kind of oil, but don't be fooled by this. It is likely the oil that was used in James 5 would have been an olive tree oil, due to their abundance in the mediterranean world.

In our pastoral practice, we encourage the use of whatever readily accessible oil one might have at their disposal.

- Can people be possessed by demonic forces?

In the Bible we do see cases of demonic possession. Most notably would be the Gerasene demoniac in Mark 5. It appears that demonic possession, where evil spiritual forces seem to take over the mind and body of an individual do occur. That being said: *The Bible does not give us any indication to believe that this can happen to someone who has received the grace of God in Christ.*

But, it is clear that Christians, those who have experienced salvation and are now in Christ Jesus, can experience spiritual torment. Spiritual torment might play out in physical, physiological, emotional, spiritual, or cognitive ways. In Ephesians 6 we are told that we as Christians are engaged in spiritual warfare and that we should receive and stand firm in the armor of God.

We do not believe possession language should be used with reference to people who claim Christ as Lord and Savior and have demonstrated fruit in keeping with faith and repentance. But, we should be mindful that Satan and his forces desire to and will torment Christians with temptation, trial, affliction, deception, and harm.

- Are people still raised from the dead?

While we do see events of resurrection in the Bible, it is important to note that the resurrection of Lazarus, of the little girl, of Eutychus, and others are resurrections to "what was" not

resurrections to “what will be.” By this, we mean to say that those, excluding Jesus Christ, who experienced resurrection prior to the final resurrection of the dead are raised to a corruptible body that will die again.

While we see resurrection in both the ministry of Jesus and the ministry of the apostles, the New Testament church does not receive any instructions on a ministry of resurrection, it is not listed as one of the gifts in any of the lists, and it is not associated with any non-apostolic ministry we find in the New Testament.

For this reason: We can say that while it is possible that God might miraculously raise someone from the dead even in our day, it is not a ministry of the church, it is not a gift entrusted to the church, nor should it be the normative expectation we hold in the face of death. Rather, we should remember that as 1 Corinthians 15 says, “Death is the last enemy to be defeated.”

- What is the cessationist position on the sign gifts?

As we have stated throughout the paper, Mosaic’s position on this matter is one of a few faithful paths for making sense of the Bible’s witness on the sign gifts. It will shape the teaching, leadership, and ministry model of Mosaic, but affirmation of the details of what we believe about the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and healing is not required for membership at Mosaic.

Mosaic’s position is called continuationism. In contrast with our position, is the position known as cessationism. In brief, the continuationist position argues that all of the spiritual gifts (including what we are calling the “sign” gifts) have continued into the present life of the church. The cessationist position argues the opposite: that the “sign gifts” were uniquely constrained to the Apostolic period of the church and ceased at the discontinuation of the Apostolic office.

In truth, most cessationists will argue that while God still does miraculous works; He is God and can do as He pleases, that the gifts of prophecy, tongues, healing and miracles as seen practiced in and through the lives of members of the church has ceased.

We do not believe the cessationist position can be upheld from the clear witness of scripture, but we understand the logic of the position. We welcome members at Mosaic who may hold this position and would invite them to consider the content of this paper in conversation with pastors at Mosaic as they enter into membership.

Appendix B: Talking with Kids about the Holy Spirit and the Spiritual Gifts

Jesus commends “childlike faith” and he exhorts the disciples to not keep the children away from him. Jesus loves children and we should too. Children are invited into the journey of following Jesus and as a part of that journey will inevitably be engaged by and with the work of the Holy Spirit.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when considering how to disciple your children regarding the Holy Spirit, spiritual activity, and the spiritual gifts:

- The Holy Spirit is working in the lives of children.
- Involve children in your household worship: Have them read the scripture, have them pray, invite them to make up songs about God and sing them loudly.
- Don’t be quick to dismiss children if they say things like: “I heard God...” or “I had a dream about God (or angels/Jesus)...” It can be tempting to try and start to rationalize away these moments, but fight that urge. Instead: Ask some questions and try to bring them to stories in the Bible that are close to their stated experience.
- Invite children to pray with you for healing for them and for others: little scrapes and cuts, fever, their friends when they are sick. And when healing happens, even in the smallest of ways, celebrate it with them by inviting them to pray and thank God with you.
- If children struggle with prayer: Consider inviting them to write notes or letters to God. Or invite them to draw a picture of their prayer. Sometimes the concept of prayer can be really difficult, but if you help them work through it on their level with something they know, it can help them learn how to speak and listen to God.
- Talk to children about how you speak to and hear from God: Give them practical examples. For example: “When I was praying for you this morning, God told me He loves you and I wanted to tell you that.” This will create space for them to ask questions about speaking to and hearing from God.
- When you see a practice, habit, or event where a spiritual gift seems to surface in the life of a child in your life: Identify it, tell the child, and point them towards how that gift is something God has given them so they can reflect His image in the world and in our church family.

The most important opportunity you have for regular conversation with children about the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prayer, specifically corporate prayer and worship. Corporate prayer, when our children are treated as meaningful participants, is such a unique opportunity for them to learn how to pray, how to pray with others, how to listen in prayer, and how to pray *for* others.

Appendix C: Resources for Further Study

As you have seen in this paper, the fundamental resource for the Christian exploration of any issue is Scripture, which is God's holy word. So any Christian exploration will begin with a serious consideration of what God's word says. At the same time, we are blessed to have Christians who have done strong work on the topics that matter and have written meaningful books on these crucial topics.

These are some of the resources the elders of Mosaic Church have found to be beneficial in exploring the topic of the spiritual gifts from a biblical, theological, and historical perspective.

If you'd like to dig into this topic more, we encourage you to begin with reading the relevant scripture references throughout the paper, then moving toward the recommended resources in the order they are listed under each heading.

*(It should be noted that we do not endorse any of these resources as representative of the **whole** position or practice at Mosaic, but as helpful resources in exploring this topic further.)*

Biblical

- DA Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14*
- Tom Schreiner, *Spiritual Gifts: What They are and Why they Matter*¹

Theological

- Graham Cole, *He Who Gives Life*
- Sam Storms, *Understanding Spiritual Gifts*

Practical

- Andrew Wilson, *Spirit and Sacrament: An Invitation to Eucharistic Worship*.
- Sam Storms, *Practicing the Power*

¹A note: Schreiner's book argues for the cessation of the "sign gifts," we have included it for three reasons: 1.) Schreiner's arguments are the strongest and most charitable form of the arguments against charismatic continuationism; 2.) He formerly believed in the ongoing ministry of the sign gifts, but shifted his opinion as he dove further into the relevant biblical passages; 3.) We want the members of our church to know that while this is an aspirational value for our church, affirming it is not necessary to be a member in good standing at Mosaic.