**OVERCOMING SPIRITUAL EMBARRASSMENT**

**DOXOLOGY INSIGHT CONFERENCE**

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1. **Challenge from Pentecostal Movement: the Spirit as Comforter**
2. **Our Embarrassment**

* Embarrassment at our spiritual state: ignorance, failure and weakness
* Embarrassment from people who seem to be so much more spiritual than us: super-spiritual highfliers
* Embarrassment from bad conscience: our fault that we are missing out on something
* Silence and paralysis as the result of embarrassment
* The devil as the Great Embarrasser

1. **The Challenge from the Pentecostal Movement**

* Neglect of the Holy Spirit in mainline churches last century
* Liberals: fatherhood of God the Creator and brotherhood of all people as His creatures
* Evangelicals: Focus on Jesus and the Bible as God’s word
* Lutherans: neglect of sanctification
* Practical Unitarianism of first and second articles
* Challenge to mainline churches from the Pentecostal and charismatic movements
* Rediscovery of the supernatural character of the Christian faith
* Emphasis on the Holy Spirit
* Teaching on two baptisms: water baptism and Spirit baptism
* Rebirth by the Spirit and filling with the Spirit as two stages in a Christian’s life
* Speaking in tongues as filling with the Spirit
* Performance of mighty deeds by Spirit-filled people: prophecy, healing and exorcisms
* Identification of worship with praise singing by Spirit-filled people
* God enthroned on the praises of Israel: Ps 22:3
* Goal of worship: ascent to God’s throne in the heavenly realm by the power of the Spirit
* Result: new generic Protestant order of worship based on a three step ascent into the heavenly realm that reflects the three parts of the tabernacle: see Ps 100:4
* Thanksgiving
* Praise
* Adoration
* Purpose of ascent
* Tongues for heavenly praise with the angels: adoration
* Reception of spiritual gifts: prophecy and healing
* Presentation of tithe as an offering to open the flood gates of blessing and self-commitment to God’s plan for my prosperity: Mal 3:10
* Sense of well being
* Distortion and curtailment of the divine service of word and sacrament
* No communal confession and absolution
* No communal intercession for church, world and people in need
* No communal confession of faith in the triune God
* Preaching as practical instruction about godly living rather than the proclamation of the gospel
* Holy Communion as an optional memorial meal
* Divided Trinity
* Common Lutheran embarrassment from the apparent success of this kind of worship and at our apparent failure with the classical order of word and sacrament

1. **What is Christ’s remedy for our embarrassment?**

* See Luke 24:49: ***I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.***
  + Picture: clothing that covers our nakedness and shame
  + Word for power: δύναμις = ability or capacity to do something
  + Heavenly power doing the Father’s work on earth: repentance and pardon
  + Power that is put on daily rather than possessed
  + The power of the Spirit who supplies what we lack (Acts 1:8; Rom 15:13, 19; Eph 3:16; I Thess 1:5, 2 Tim 1:7)
  + Empowerment by the same Spirit that empowered Jesus in his earthly ministry (Luke 4:14, 36; 5:17; 9:1) and raised him from the dead (Eph 1:19-20; cf. Rom 8:11)

1. **The Role of the Holy Spirit in Overcoming our Embarrassing Weakness**

* The Spirit as the Comforter, the Encourager, the Helper: ὁ παράκλητος in John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7
* Person who stands with us and covers for us before God
* Person who like Jesus acts as our advocate in us before the Father
* Person who helps us get what we need from the Father by pointing us to Jesus and reminding us of what he says to us and does for us: personal coach or welfare officer that assists people in accessing their rightful benefits
* Gift of assurance of our status and privileges rather than personal embarrassment at what we lack and our fearfulness from uncertainty about our baptismal status in Rom 8:14-16: ***All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children then heirs – heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ***
* Leading of the Spirit in addressing God as our Father
* Proof of our status and inheritance: same as Jesus
* No reason for embarrassment about ourselves: co-sons and co-heirs with God’s royal Son
* Helper in our spiritual weakness and failure to pray: Rom 8:26: ***the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.***
* Nature of sighing and groaning
* Double weakness: personal deficiencies and inability to pray
* The intercession of the Spirit: turning what lack into prayer and our need into God’s supply
* Power in weakness through prayer for ourselves and others
* See Paul’s prayer for strengthening in Eph 3:14-19: ***I bow my knees before the Father…that...he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in you hearts through faith - that you being rooted and grounded in love, may have the strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.***

1. **Christ’s dilemma**

* Problem: safe access to God’s power
* Picture: electrical circuit breaker to prevent electrocution and fire
* Christ’s call for us to join him in doing his Father’s work on earth
* Need for supernatural power to do God’s work
* Potential for abuse of spiritual power as a form of magic
* Christ’s problem: how to share his power so that it can be used only to do God’s will and it will convert Christ’s enemies into his disciples if they take hold of it for themselves
* Answer: the power of the Spirit as a person (Luke 24:49; John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15; 20:22; Acts 1:4)
* Received only in faith and never possessed
* Gained by prayer to God the Father in the name of Jesus
* Creating faith in unbelievers who pray for the Spirit

1. **The Means of the Spirit: the Work of the Spirit through Holy Things**
2. **Picture: mediated communication with cell phones**

* Communication via radio waves rather than direct sight or sound
* Need for charging with electricity

1. **Present problem**

* Desire for immediate spiritual experience: spiritual telepathy
* Interest in spirituality but contempt for the church
* Contempt for the body despite obsession with it
* Rejection of the physical parts of Christian doctrine
* Creation of physical world by God
* The incarnation of his Son through the virgin Mary
* His physical miracles
* His physical resurrection and ascension
* His physical presence with his body and blood in HC
* The church as his body
* The resurrection of the body
* Orthodox teaching as crude and unspiritual
* Interest in discarnate spiritual experiences

1. **Confusion about the role of the Spirit in the divine service based on four texts**

* Jesus in John 4:23-24: true worship of the Father in spirit and in truth
* Paul in Phil 3:3: new kind of service by the Spirit of God
* Paul in 2 Cor 3:8: ministry of the Spirit in the new covenant
* Peter in 1 Pet 2:5: presentation of spiritual offerings to God through Jesus Christ

1. **Confusion from equating God’s Spirit with our human spirit**

* Common antithesis: body as material thing and the spirit as something immaterial
* Spirit as one of four things
* Human intellect: intellectual knowledge
* Human mind: personal consciousness
* Human heart: sense of emotional intimacy
* Human soul/self: personal intimacy
* Modern teaching of salvation as unmediated intimacy with God
* Consequent denial of Christ’s incarnation
* Gift of the Holy Spirit to Jesus at his baptism
* Work of the Holy Spirit through the physical body of Jesus

1. **What is meant by the Spirit and spiritual in the Bible?**

* False antithesis: human spirit v human body
* The Spirit: the Holy Spirit as a divine person
* Spiritual: something given or created by the Holy Spirit
* Human spirit animated by God’s Spirit
* The creation of the world and life on earth by the Spirit: procreation
* The work of the Spirit with physical people through physical things
* Ignatius in his letter to the Ephesians 8:2: ***Those who are of the flesh cannot do spiritual things, nor can those who are of the Spirit do the things of the flesh, just as faith cannot do the deeds of unbelief, nor unbelief the deeds of faith. So even what you do in the flesh is spiritual, for you do everything in Christ.***
* Two senses of flesh: fallen human nature and physical body
* Spiritual life = whole embodied life of faith in Christ
* Luther in EA 12, 73: ***To serve Christ …is an entirely spiritual thing, not in the way in which the monks speak of something being spiritual which takes place only in the heart. But it is a spiritual service which originates with the Spirit. For whoever speaks the words of the Spirit is said to preach, teach, and speak spiritually.***
* Melanchthon in Apol 24.26: ***“spiritual” refers to the work of the Holy Spirit within us.***

1. **The connection between God’s Spirit and God’s word**

* Spirit in Hebrew and Greek = wind or breath as the power that animates a living person
* Close connection between human words and human breath
* Speaking as a kind of breathing
* God’s giving of His Spirit through His word
* God’s Spirit as the speaker of God’s word through his prophets (2 Sam 23:2; Ezek 2:2; 8:3-5; 11:5; Heb 3:7; Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 20; 3:6, 13, 22): see Nicene Creed
* Since Jesus gives life though his words they do what he says (eg. “Get well!”).
* The words of Jesus are life-giving because they give his Spirit.
* See John 6:63: ***The words that I have spoken are Spirit and life.***
* Hence Peter’s confession in John 6:68: ***Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.***
* Since God’s words are inspired by the Spirit they inspire us with his Spirit.
* See the story of the meeting of Jesus with is disciples on Easter Eve in John 20:21-22: ***Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me even so I am sending you.” And when he had said this he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”***
* Note the Trinitarian enactment
* By speaking to them Jesus breathes the Spirit upon them.
* See John 3:34-35: ***He (Jesus/the apostle/a pastor?) whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he (God/Jesus?) gives the Spirit without measure. The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands.***
* Note double reference in “he gives”: God the Father and Jesus
* The person sent by God is Jesus as well as each apostle and pastor
* Their mission: to speak the words of God
* By speaking God’s words Jesus gives the Spirit.
* By giving the Spirit Jesus gives access to all God’s heavenly blessings to his disciples here on earth
* No partial giving despite varied gifts
* Chain for the full bestowal of the Spirit: Father ► Son ►disciples
* Luther: ***God has so ordered it that the Holy Spirit ordinarily comes through the Word***(LW 23:174). See also LC, The Creed, 38, 58.
* Stress on the mediation of the Spirit through God’s word in the *Augsburg Confession* and the *Formula of Concord*
* Word as the instrument of the Spirit (FC Ep 2.19)
* Word as the medium and instrument of the Spirit (FC SD 11.41)
* The spoken word and administered sacraments as the instruments of the Spirit (AC 5.2; FC SD 2.58), its media (FC SD 2.48)
* Preaching and hearing of the Word as the media of the Spirit (FC Ep 12.22; FC SD 12.30), the ministry and organ of the Spirit (FC SD 2.56), its instruments (FC SD 2.52), its medium or instrument (FC SD 2.54), its ordinary media and instruments (FC SD 2.90; 11.76)
* Rejection of the teaching that the Spirit is given and received immediately (FC Ep 2.13; FC SD 2.46), without media/means (FC Ep 2.4, without any created medium or instrument (FC SD 2.4)
* Since God gives his Holy Spirit through his Word, it is the most holy of all holy things, for it makes everything else holy through the Holy Spirit (See LC, The Ten Commandments, 91-92)
* We receive the Holy Spirit through the “holy things” (Latin *sancta* or *sacra*) that are instituted by God through his Word: means of grace = means of the Spirit
* The Spirit’s freedom to work apart from God’s word but no certainty about what the Spirit is doing, how and for what purpose, apart from God’s word

1. **The connection between faith and the reception of the Spirit**

* Peter in his report about the conversion of Cornelius in Acts 11:17: **God gave the same gift (of the Holy Spirit) them as he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.**
* See Gal 3:14: ***Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law…so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.***
* The blessing of Abraham = his promised inheritance from God = the Holy Spirit
* The Spirit is received through faith in God’s promise and its fulfilment by Christ.
* The Holy Spirit is received in the congregation through hearing and believing the gospel (Gal 3:2, 5): open ears, open hands, open hearts
* The Holy Spirit not only creates justifying faith through God’s word but is also received as a gift from the Father by those who believe in the gospel.
* Stress on this in the Augsburg Confession and the Apology
* AC 10. 29: ***through faith the Holy Spirit is received***
* Apol 4:86: ***Faith alone justifies because we receive the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit through faith alone.*** See also Apol 4:45, 86, 99, 116, 125, 126, 127, 133, 135.
* Melanchthon’s criticism in Apol 4:63: ***Nowhere can our opponents say how the Holy Spirit is given.***

1. **Practical liturgical conclusion**

* What is done with God’s word is done by God’s Spirit and is empowered by God’s Spirit.
* See Luther’s summary in EA 40, 21: ***we teach with the Word, we consecrate (the Lord’s Supper) with the Word, we bind and absolve sins by the Word, we baptize with the Word, we sacrifice (offerings) with the Word, we judge all things by the Word.***
* How can we be sure that we receive the Holy Spirit in the divine service?
* The use of the God’s Spirit-giving, sanctifying word
* Doing what is divinely instituted and so empowered by the Spirit
* Doing everything with God’s word
* The provision of a basis for faith with the use of God’s word
* Strengthening of faith in Christ and gift of a good conscience though Christ’s commands and promises
* Certainty about the reception of the Holy Spirit and all other spiritual gifts by enacting God’s word as law and gospel

1. **Luther’s summary** (*EA* 37, 95): ***The Spirit cannot be with us, except in material and physical things, such as the word, water, and Christ’s body, and in his saints on earth.***
2. **Heavenly Power for Earthly Work: our Corporate Reception of the Holy Spirit in the Divine Service**
3. **High School Students**
   * Question: do we have to go to church
   * My answer: no but stupid not to
   * The Kleinig super-voucher
   * Missing out on the Holy Spirit
4. **The Church as the Temple of the Holy Spirit**

* Where do we go to receive the Holy Spirit?
* See 1 Cor 3:16: ***Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst?***
* No need for a heavenly trip
* Church as God’s holy temple
* Place of residence for the Holy Spirit
* Workshop of the Holy Spirit: protection from other spirits
* Equipment and empowerment for life on earth: working with God in my station and vocation
* Promise of Jesus in John 14:16: ***I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper/Advocate, to be with you (plural) forever***.

**3. The Communal Bestowal of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:1-4**

* Bestowal in answer to communal prayer (Acts 1:14)
* Communal event with equal reception by each person of the 120 members of the congregation
* Sound as of life-giving wind (cf. Gen 2:7)
* Sight as of sanctifying fire (cf. Lev 6:9-13; Isa 4:3-4)
* Equal distribution to each person
* Sanctification of the new temple (see 2 Chron 7:1-4)
* Communal filling with the Holy Spirit
* Result: communal praise by speaking in other languages

**4. Bestowal of the Spirit through baptism**

See Peter’s message in Acts 2:38: ***Repent and be baptized every***

***one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and***

***the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and***

***your children, and all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our***

***God calls to him.***

* Presentation of two gifts to the baptized: parents and children
* Forgiveness/release from sins as the key to the Father’s presence
* The Holy Spirit as the Father’s ***gift*** through Jesus: see Acts 10:45; 11:17; Heb 6:4.
* Connection of baptism with the name of Jesus Christ and the promise of God
* Emphasis on ***reception*** of the Spirit as the purpose of baptism
* Ongoing reception of the Holy Spirit by baptized believers like their ongoing reception of forgiveness

**5. Reception of the Spirit by hearing God’s Word with faith in the gospel**

See Gal 3:2-5: ***Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? After beginning by the Spirit, are you now finishing by the flesh? …Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works mighty deeds among you do so by works of the law, or by the hearing with faith?***

* Contrast: observance of law v believing the gospel
* Preaching of the gospel for the reception of the Spirit
* Reception of the Spirit by hearing with faith
* God’s ongoing giving of the Spirit
* Reception of the Spirit by hearing God’s word as law and gospel in the divine service

**6. Reception of the Spirit in Holy Communion**

See 1 Cor 10:1-4: ***I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and that all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.***

* Note the emphasis on ***all*** (5x) and ***same*** (2x)
* Cloud: glory cloud
* Nourishment of Israelites on their journey
  + Manna from heaven
  + Water from the rock
* Spiritual: Spirit-giving rather than mental or emotional
* Jesus as our travelling watering rock: see Ex 17:1-7 and Num 20:2-13
* Spiritual food: eating Christ’s body
* Spiritual drink: drinking Christ’s blood
* 1 Cor 12:13: ***you have all been given one Spirit to drink****.*
* See drinking the cup with Christ’s blood in 10:21 and 11:26.
* Christ’s blood for transfusion with his life-giving Spirit
* Luther
* ***Here in the sacrament you are to receive from Christ’s lips the forgiveness of sins, which contains and brings God’s grace and Spirit with all his gifts, protection, defence, and power against death, the devil, and all troubles (LC 5, 70).***
* ***The Spirit must not be sought elsewhere than in and by the words which Christ speaks. His words assure us that the flesh is given and the blood is shed for us. Whoever hears this hears God’s Word and the Spirit’s Word*** (EA 23:177)*.*

**7. Prayer for the Gift of the Holy Spirit in Holy Communion**

* + Prayer of Thanksgiving (setting 1 and 2): ***Gathered in the name***

***and remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit...***

* Prayer of Thanksgiving (setting 4): ***Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruits of His cross and receive the blessings of the forgiveness, life, and salvation that comes to us in His body and blood.***
  + Proper Preface (setting 5): ***Grant us Your Spirit, gracious Father, that we may give heed to the testament of Your Son in true faith and, above all, firmly take to heart the words with which Christ gives us His body and blood for our forgiveness...***
  + Second Prayer after Communion (all settings): ***and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You...***

**8. Blessing with the Holy Spirit**

See Eph 1:3: ***Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.***

* Spiritual blessing: blessing of the Spirit with all the Spirit’s blessings
* Our access to all heavenly blessings from God the Father through Jesus for our life here on earth
* Bestowal of the Spirit in the Apostolic Benediction from 2 Cor 13:13
* ***The communion of the Holy Spirit***: common gift of the Spirit that creates community (see also Phil 2:1)
* Empowerment for holy service in the world

**9. Lutheran teaching in Article 5 of the Augsburg Confession:**

***In order to obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted. For through the word and the sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given, and the Holy Spirit produces faith, where and when it pleases God, in those who hear the gospel.***

**10. Question: how can I receive the Holy Spirit?**

* Being baptized
* Hearing the gospel and receiving Holy Communion

1. **Daily Reception of the Holy Spirit through Meditation and Prayer**
2. **What’s the Key to a Sustainable Spiritual Life and a Sustainable Ministry?**
3. **Spiritual Life as Receptive Life**

* Solar flashlight: shining in the light
* Ongoing empowerment
* Daily power like daily bread
* Strength for the day with work in our station and vocation
* 1 Cor 4:7: ***What do you have that you did not receive?***

1. **Modern Problem: Possession of the Holy Spirit**

* A common Lutheran misunderstanding of baptism
* Titus 3:5-6: ***God… saved us by the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior***…
* Gift at baptism ►our permanent possession
* Problem: disconnection of faith and Christian living from the Holy Spirit
* Living by grace = living by faith = living by prayer = living by the Holy Spirit
* Available as an emanating gift rather than possession
* The Pentecostal teaching on filling with the Spirit
* Acts 19:6: ***When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.***
* Gift with laying on of hands after baptism
* Tongues as initial evidence of baptism with the Spirit
* Problem: two baptisms rather than one as taught in Eph 4:5
* Note the use of the present participle in 1 Thess 4:8: ***the one giving his Holy Spirit to you*** (plural)
* Holy Spirit as a person rather than a thing: received but never possessed, like a spouse or love or sunshine

1. **Ongoing Infilling in Ephesians 5:18-19:**

***Be filled with the Spirit,***

***speaking to each other with spiritual (Spirit-inspired) psalms and hymns and songs,***

***singing and making music in your heart to the Lord,***

***always (regularly) giving thanks to God the Father for everything (on behalf of all people) in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

* Addressed to people who had been sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:12)
* Divine passive for God’s activity
* Ongoing infilling in worship: the comparison of the Spirit with water
* See the mention of filling with the Spirit in Acts
* Acts 2:4: congregation at Pentecost
* Acts 4:31: congregation after praying psalm 2
* Acts 9:12: Paul after his baptism
* Acts 13:9: Paul in dealing with the magician Elymas
* Acts 13:52: the congregation in Pisidian Antioch at hearing the word of the Lord
* Three dimensional praise as the result of infilling
* Congregational teaching: outward
* Personal devotion to Jesus: inward
* Thanksgiving to the Father: upward
* Cycle of reception: filling ►singing ►filling
* Spirit: always received yet never possessed
* Ongoing reception of love in marriage
* Ongoing reception of the Holy Spirit by baptized believers

1. **Invitation of Jesus in John 7:37-39**: ***On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let anyone who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, “Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.”’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not yet been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.***

* Glorification at death and resurrection
* Holy Spirit as life-giving water and Jesus as spring of water
* Jesus as the source of the Spirit for those who believe in him
* Giving up of the Spirit at his death in John 19:30
* The flowing of water from his side in John 34
* Reception from Jesus by believers after his death and resurrection
* Reception as drinking: repeated, daily refreshment

1. **Promise of Jesus in Luke 11:13**: ***If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.***

* Teaching on prayer as the exercise of faith in God’s word
* Reception of the Spirit by prayer: see also prayer for others with the laying on of hands by Peter and John in Acts 8: 14-17 and Paul’s prayer in Eph 3:14-19
* My daily prayer: “Come, Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of life!”

1. **Luther on the reception of the Spirit through the use of God’s word in daily prayer and meditation**

* Daily prayer to the Father through his Son for the gift of the Holy Spirit as your teacher *(EA* 34, 28586): ***First, you must know that the Holy Scriptures is a book that makes foolishness of the wisdom of all other books, because none of them teaches eternal life, only this one alone. Therefore you must straightway despair of your own senses and reason, for you will not attain it by these...Rather kneel down in your closet and pray to God in true humility and earnestness, that through his dear Son he may grant you his Holy Spirit to enlighten, guide, and give you understanding.***
* Daily meditation of the Scriptures for the reception of the Holy Spirit (*EA* 34: 286): **you** ***should meditate, not only in your heart but also externally, repeating aloud and rubbing at the written Word (like a herb), reading and rereading them with careful attention and thought as to what the Holy Spirit means by them.. For God will not give you his Spirit apart from the external Word. Be guided accordingly, for it was not for nothing that he commanded that his Word should be externally written, preached, read, sung, and spoken.***
* Misunderstanding of “apart from” as “at the same time as” hearing or reading the word
* See the teaching in 1 Pet 1:23 on the “imperishable word”.
* Attack by Satan to drive the word and the Spirit from the heart that drives us back to God’s word and prayer

1. **Daily Devotions**

* See Luther on the use of the Decalogue, Creed and Lord’s Prayer as a Prayer Book in the “Preface” to the *Large Catechism* 9: ***It is highly profitable and fruitful to read it (the catechism) daily and make it the subject of meditation and conversation. In such reading, conversation, and meditation the Holy Spirit is present and bestows ever new and greater light and devotion, so that it tastes better and better and is digested***.
* Daily reception of the Holy Spirit by the use of God’s Spirit-giving word in meditation and prayer
* Daily “meal”: tasting and digesting God’s word
* See the teaching in *FC SD* 2.16:***In addition, after God has made his beginning through this Holy Spirit in baptism and has ignited and produced true knowledge of God and faith, it is necessary to pray unceasingly that day by day, through this same Spirit and his grace, he strengthen this faith and preserve his heavenly gifts in us by means of daily exercise in the reading and use of God’s Word.***
* Daily sanctification and empowerment for priestly vocation in our station and vocation in our daily devotions

1. **Luther on the Second Petition**: ***God’s kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us his Holy Spirit, so that by his grace we believe his holy Word and live a godly life on earth now and in heaven forever.***
2. **Heavenly Power for Earthly Service: the Communal Nature and** **Purpose of the Charismata**

**1. Modern Emphasis on Spiritual Giftedness**

* Interest in spiritual gifts in the charismatic movement
* Use in worship
* Inventories of gifts and the identification of them
* Use in ministry and mission

1. **Terms used for Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament**

* Charismata = gifts of grace (Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 1:7; 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31;

1 Peter 4:10)

* Spiritual charisma (Rom 1:11)
* Spiritual things (1 Cor 12:1; 14:1)
* Manifestations of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:7)
* Apportionments by the Holy Spirit (Heb 2:4)
* Spirits (1 Cor 14:12; 1 John 4:1)

1. **Lists of Charismata in Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Cor 12:7-11, 27-30**

* Prophecy/prophets (Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:10, 28)
* Diaconal service (Rom 12:7; cf. 1 Peter 4:11)
* Teaching/teachers (Rom 12:7; 1 Cor 12:28)
* Encouragement (Rom 12:8)
* Generous giving (Rom 12:8)
* Diligent leadership (Rom 12:8; 1 Cor 12:28)
* Cheerful acts of mercy (Rom 12:8)
* Word of wisdom: wise guidance (1 Cor 12:8)
* Word of knowledge (1 Cor 12:8)
* Faith (confidence) (1 Cor 12:9)
* Gifts of healing (1 Cor 12:9, 30)
* Working of mighty acts/exorcisms (1 Cor 12:10, 28, 29)
* Discernment of spirits (1 Cor 12:10)
* Kinds of tongues (1 Cor 12:10, 28, 30)
* Interpretation of tongues (1 Cor 12:10, 30)
* Apostleship (1 Cor 12:28)
* Helpful acts (1 Cor 12:28).

1. **The Diversity of Gifts**

* The variety in the listings of the charismata shows that they are descriptive rather than prescriptive in character.
* There are various classifications of the charismata in the NT
* 1 Peter 4:11 distinguishes between **gifts of speech** and **gifts of ministry.**
* In Ephesians 4:11, St Paul regards the different **leaders** in the church, such as apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors and evangelists, as **gifts** given by the risen Lord to his church.
* In Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 20-30, St Paul uses the term ‘charisma’ to describe both **tasks** and the **ability** to perform those tasks.
* In 1 Timothy 4:14 and 2 Timothy 1:6-7 Paul mentions the charisma given to Timothy at his ordination as **power** of the Holy Spirit for his work as a pastor.
* While the New Testament does at time distinguish between **gifts of office,** such as apostleship, and **gifts of abilities,** such as the power to speak effectively, it always presupposes that any gift is given for the performance of a particular task within the congregation.

1. **The Trinitarian Operation of the Charismata: 1 Cor 12:4-7**

* Since all spiritual gifts originate in the Triune God, they need to be understood theologically within a Trinitarian framework rather than just in connection with the Holy Spirit.
* As gifts of grace, they are given by the **Holy Spirit**, as he chooses in the church, and so are received in prayer as manifestations of the Spirit’s presence and work in the congregation.
* As ministries, they depend on the ministry of **Christ** and involve people in work together with him in many different ways.
* With them as empowerments, **God the Father** energizes people to do different aspects of His work.
* They are all given so that each congregation can work together the Triune God in its particular location.

1. **The Testing of the Charismata**

* Since some gifts, such as healing, prophecy, and tongues, may be divine or psychic or demonic in origin, they need to be tested (1 Thess 5:19-22).
* The criteria for assessment
* The full confession of Jesus as Lord, the incarnate Christ (1 Cor 12:1-3; 1 John 4:1-3)
* Faithful enactment of Christ’s words (Matt 7:15-27)
* Listening to the teaching of the apostles and the apostolic community (1 John 4:4-6)
* The charisma of the discernment of the spirits (1 Cor 12:10)

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1. **The Bestowal of Charismata**

* The Holy Spirit gives the charismata to the church today where and when he wills (1 Cor 12:11; Heb 2:4)
* They are not possessed but received as a gracious gift from God in faith (Rom 12:3-6a)
* They vary from person to person with different vocations as well as from place to place with different stations (1 Cor 12:11; Heb 2:4; 1 Cor 12:4-5).
* The charismata which are characterized by their diversity should be distinguished from the *greater gifts* of faith, hope, and love (1 Cor 12:31) which are equally available to all Christians.
* The mark of a true ‘charismatic’ is love for fellow Christians (1 Cor 12:31b-13:13).
* All baptized believers are charismatics who depend totally on God’s grace for their vocation and so need to pray constantly for empowerment by the Holy Spirit and his gifts of grace (1 Cor 1:4-6).

1. **The Corporate Purpose of the Charismata**

* The discussion of spiritual gifts in the New Testament is coupled with assertions about the corporate character of the Christian life.
* Danger of self-promotion by gifted people (Rom 12:3-5)
* Danger of disunity from self-promotion (1 Cor 12:12-27)
* The charismata are given for the common good of the whole congregation (1 Cor 12:7).
* The purpose of the charismata
* The administration of God’s multi-colored grace (1 Peter 4:10)
* The building up (edification) of the congregation as the temple of God (1 Cor 14:12; cf. Eph 4:12, 16)
* Communal encouragement through the faith of each person (Rom 1:11-12)
* The glorification of God the Father through Jesus Christ in the church (1 Peter 4:11).
* Thanksgiving (eu**charis**tia) for the **charis**mata as gifts of God’s grace (**charis**) rather than self-promotion.

1. **Priority for each Christian**

* First my faith, then my vocation, and then my gifting
* Prayer for what I need to fulfil my vocation
* Provision on a need for service basis