

The Associated Gospel Churches, of which Chinese Gospel Church is a member, takes a cessationist position with respect to spiritual gifts. We believe that certain gifts such as speaking in tongues and the working of miracles are sign gifts that were used to validate the messengers of revelation (E.g., Moses, prophets, apostles) and that with the completion of the Canon of Scripture, the need for these gifts has ceased. Although it is still possible for God to bestow these gifts to accomplish His purposes today, they are rare and not to be the expected experience for believers.

Apostles – Authoritative ambassadors of the church and custodians of the authentic gospel. Apostles were men who had received a divine appointment, shared in Jesus' entire ministry, and were witnesses of His resurrection (Acts 1:20-26). In addition to the Twelve (Mark 3:14-19, Acts 1:24-26) were Paul (Acts 14:14, 1 Cor. 9:1-2), Barnabas (Acts 14:14), and James (Gal. 1:19). As the Canon of Scripture has been closed and the foundation of the church has been established (Eph. 2:20-21), there is no more need for apostles. In instructing the Corinthians to desire the greater gifts (1 Cor. 12:28-31), Paul skips apostleship and points them to the next highest gift, prophecy (1 Cor. 14:1, 39).

Prophets – Those who have received divine inspiration to speak or to give a message from the Lord in a particular situation, rather one who can predict the future. The message is given not as preaching but spontaneously as God brings it to mind (Acts 27:21-26, 1 Cor. 14:30-31). The message can be a revelation from God reported in the prophet's own words, which is not equal in authority to God's words through the apostles or in Scripture.

Teachers – Stewards of God's Word who have been given the ability to explain Scripture, instill doctrine, and apply them to people's lives. At the time of the early church, teaching consisted of repeating and explaining both the words of Scripture (Old Testament) and the authoritative teachings of Jesus and the apostles. The original importance of this gift should be understood in the context of the extreme rarity of physical copies of bibles (Jas. 3:1).

Miracles – Acts of power where the Holy Spirit chooses to "override" the laws of nature to accomplish His purposes. These include divine deliverance from danger (Acts 5:19-20, 12:6-11), intervention in the physical world (1 Kings 17:1-16), judgment on enemies of the gospel (Acts 13:9-12), and victory over demonic opposition (Luke 10:17). As healing is listed as a separate gift, Paul was referring to other displays of God's might in this context.

Healing – God's healing power for a variety of different afflictions, given in extraordinary circumstances. E.g., Paul could heal others (Acts 14:8-10, 28:8) but not himself (2 Cor. 12:7-9) or Timothy (1 Tim. 5:23). This healing of the sick was most often performed either by the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, or with a bare word. It is a foretaste of the physical healing and perfect health that will be given when the kingdom of God comes in full.

Helping – The word for helping is only found in 1 Cor. 12:28. This is seen in those who invest their talents in the lives and ministries of other members of the body to bring relief and enhance the use of their spiritual gifts (E.g., Acts 6:1-4). It is also demonstrated by people who are gifted in seeing the needs and opportunities around them to provide assistance and support and who then take initiative to practically meet those needs through their personal involvement.

Administrating – The word for administrating is only found in 1 Cor. 12:28. Also translated as *governments* (KJV), *forms of leadership* (NRS), and *guidance* (NIV2011), the Greek word (*kubernēseis*) "denotes the activity of the steersman of a ship, the man who pilots his vessel through the dangerous shoals and brings her safe to port." The governance given in administrating pertains to planning, organizing, and directing, to lead people in a task or toward a goal (E.g., Tit. 1:4-5).

Tongues – A prayer or praise spoken primarily to God where the uttered words are not understood by the speaker (1 Cor. 14:2, 28). The ability to speak by inspiration a language unknown to the speaker (Acts 2:1-13). When practiced in public worship, this gift must be paired with the gift of interpretation (1 Cor. 14:27-28). Speaking in tongues is not evidence of filling by the Holy Spirit.

Interpretation of tongues – The ability to reveal the meaning of something that was spoken in tongues. It allows the gift of tongues to be of benefit to others as they are enabled to understand and agree with the speaker's words to God. It is God's gift to make known what was previously hidden for the edification of the body (1 Cor. 14:5b).

Sources

1. Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*
2. Morris, Leon. *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*
3. <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/1-corinthians-12/>