

The Preservation and Protection of the Plan of God Through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Pastor Jeremy Richardson, July 19, 2026

Word of Knowledge & Discerning of Spirits

Theme Statements

"I want my people protected in the last days that we're living in, through the help of the Holy Spirit and the power of the gifts of the spirit."

"It will produce an empowered life and a protected life, a protected calling, mission, and mandate."

"You should feel totally empowered to carry out your calling in life, empowered, and protected by the help of the Holy Ghost and the gifts of the spirit."

"The preservation and protection of the plan of God through the gifts of the Holy Spirit."

Introduction

Jesus continually demonstrated the **Word of Knowledge** and **Discerning of Spirits** throughout His earthly ministry.

These revelation gifts were not merely for miracles—they also:

- Protected Him
- Preserved the Father's plan
- Guarded His assignment
- Directed His steps
- Exposed the enemy
- Kept Him perfectly in the will of God

The same Holy Spirit now lives in us.

1. The Gifts of the Spirit Help You Stay on Course With Your Calling

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Matthew 16:13–23

Theme

The gifts preserve and protect God's plan by helping us discern God's voice from the enemy's voice.

Jesus had divine "MUSTS"

There were things:

- He **must do**
- Places He **must go**
- Assignments He **must fulfill**

Examples:

- Jerusalem was where He **must go**
- The Cross was what He **must endure**

These were not optional.

They were God's plan.

The devil opposed every one of them.

Expect opposition

When God's will advances...

The enemy attempts to:

- derail
- detour
- distract
- delay

"We do not wrestle against flesh and blood..." (Ephesians 6:12)

Often the battle is **not the person**.

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It is the spirit influencing the person.

Ask Yourself

What are your “MUSTS”?

- What must you do?
- Where must you go?
- What has God clearly spoken?

Those are the very places Satan will oppose.

Matthew 16:22

Peter sincerely believed he was helping Jesus.

He took Jesus aside.

He rebuked Him.

He tried to convince Him not to obey God.

Have you ever had someone say:

- “Don’t do that.”
- “Don’t go there.”
- “That can’t be God.”

Examples:

- Family
- Friends
- Former ministry relationships

Yet God had already spoken.

Follow God—not merely man

Peter loved Jesus.

Peter was sincere.

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Peter was still wrong.

This reminds us:

- Men can miss it.
- Follow God.
- Follow His Word.
- Follow His plan.

The enemy looks for available voices

He uses:

- doubt
- unbelief
- fear
- selfishness
- self-preservation

to persuade people to talk you out of God's plan.

Personal examples

- Our mothers
- Ministry relationships
- Tristan leaving—loving someone is never enough to keep them from God's assignment. We launch people.

Matthew 16:23

Jesus immediately discerned what was happening.

He saw beyond Peter.

He rebuked Satan.

He did not argue.

He did not entertain it.

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He saw through it by revelation.

Personal Example

When crusades became difficult...

Someone suggested:

“Maybe we should stop doing crusades and just focus on soul winning.”

My response:

- No.
- God called me.
- **I MUST.**
- I must pastor.
- I must do the work of an evangelist.

David

When David stayed home instead of going to battle...

Everything unraveled.

When we neglect what God has called us to do...

Problems multiply.

Pastor Rodney Howard-Browne Example

While preparing for Good News New York...

Someone proposed another fundraising strategy.

Pastor Rodney stood up and declared:

“Either God called me or He didn’t.”

He refused to back away from God’s assignment.

Application

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The devil still attempts to talk believers out of their God-given “MUSTS.”

But the Holy Spirit helps us discern the difference.

He empowers us to resist:

- detours
- distractions
- derailments

Jesus' response

He didn't negotiate.

He didn't compromise.

He discerned.

He rebuked.

Then He continued doing what He must do.

Offense is a trap

Jesus called Peter:

“A stumbling block.”

Words include:

- trap
- snare
- scandal
- occasion to stumble

By the gifts of the Holy Spirit...

You will:

- see every trap
- discern every snare

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- avoid every stumbling block
- continue fulfilling your assignment

Victory

You will be:

- protected
- preserved
- kept

by the Holy Ghost.

1 John 4:4

You will not stumble.

You will finish your assignment.

Jesus dominated every situation through the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. The Gifts Help You Choose the Right Relationships

John 2:23–25

Theme

The gifts preserve God's plan by protecting us from wrong associations.

Jesus knew what was inside people.

He would not entrust Himself to everyone.

These same crowds later abandoned Him (John 6).

Examples

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- Lot's wrong influence
- Nathanael—"an Israelite indeed in whom is no deceit."
- Patrick at Pastor Jonathan's
- What Patrick's uncle said

Jesus prayed all night

Before choosing twelve disciples...

Jesus prayed through the entire night.

Remarkably...

He spent longer praying over who He would associate with than He spent praying in Gethsemane before the Cross.

Why?

Because associations affect destiny.

These men would carry the anointing after He departed.

Mark 10

Peter said,

"We have left all..."

Following Christ often requires leaving unhealthy relationships behind.

Application

The Holy Spirit knows:

- what is in people
- who will strengthen you
- who will weaken you

The gifts help protect your future.

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3. The Gifts Keep You in God's Timing

John 6:14-15

Theme

The gifts preserve God's plan by keeping us in God's timing.

The crowd wanted to make Jesus king.

It sounded honorable.

It was actually out of God's timing.

Jesus departed.

Practical application

The Holy Spirit helps you know:

- when to stay
- when to leave
- when to wait
- when to move

Don't exalt yourself.

Let God exalt you in due season.

If you move ahead of Him...

- it becomes flesh
- spiritual people discern it
- offense can develop
- bitterness can grow

Sometimes...

It simply isn't God's timing.

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Jesus knew

The Amplified says:

“Knowing...”

This was supernatural knowledge.

The Father revealed what they were planning.

Jesus acted before they acted.

That is the Word of Knowledge.

Result

The gifts protected:

- Jesus
- His assignment
- God’s redemptive plan
- all of mankind

The Holy Spirit still preserves God’s plan the same way today.

4. The Gifts Help You Discern Competing Voices

Matthew 12:46–50

Theme

The gifts preserve God’s plan by helping us choose God’s voice over man’s voice.

Jesus loved His family.

Luke 2 shows His submission to them.

Yet in Matthew 12...

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He refused to allow family relationships to interrupt His assignment.

Sometimes those closest to you...

may sincerely oppose God's direction.

Examples:

- Parents
- Family
- Close friends

Personal examples

- Tara's and my mothers did not want us to marry.
- A young woman called to missions whose mother discouraged her by saying:
"If God wanted you to go, He would have told me first."

That decision greatly affected her spiritual journey.

Family influence

Family influence can be wonderful.

But when it contradicts God's voice...

The Holy Spirit helps you discern the difference.

As adults...

We must ultimately obey God.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to recognize when another voice—even a familiar one—is pulling us away from God's purpose.

Closing Theme

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“The preservation and protection of the plan of God through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.”

The enemy will continually attempt to:

- derail
- distract
- detour
- delay

But...

The Greater One lives in us.

The devil is not the greater one.

The Holy Ghost is.

He is mighty to:

- reveal
- guide
- expose
- protect
- preserve
- empower

through the gifts of the Spirit.

Supporting Scriptures

- Matthew 16:13–23
- John 2:23–25
- John 6:14–15
- Matthew 12:46–50
- 1 John 4:4
- Ephesians 6:12
- Nehemiah 6 (“I am doing a great work and cannot come down.”)

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Final Declaration

Because the Greater One lives in me...

- I will not be derailed.
- I will not be distracted.
- I will not be detoured.
- I will not stumble.
- I will finish my assignment.
- I will stay in God's timing.
- I will walk in God's plan.
- I will be protected, preserved, empowered, and helped by the Holy Ghost through the gifts of the Spirit.