

UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

“Signs of a True Apostle”

Scripture Reading: 2 CORINTHIANS 12:11-13

-) **SLIDES 1-6.** Bible Jeopardy!
-) **SLIDE 7-8.** Read today’s Scripture text.
-) **SLIDE 9.** Today we continue in our sermon series on Understanding Spiritual Gifts. This is week #8 in this series. I have titled today’s message *“Signs of a True Apostle”* (v12).
-) **SLIDE 10.** Here on the screen is a listing of all the Spiritual gifts recorded in 1 COR 12 and ROMANS 12.
-) **SLIDE 11.** The 12 Spiritual gifts with a check mark are the gifts in which every believer today will have at least one of these.
-) **SLIDE 12.** These other 6 Spiritual gifts listed here with check marks are what we call the SIGN (miraculous or apostolic) gifts.
-) **SLIDE 13.** I am a cessationist. As a cessationist, I believe the Bible clearly teaches that these six sign gifts have ceased once the age of the apostles (29 – 100AD) had ceased. The foundation of the church had been built, and now the signs and wonders recorded in the Bible would take over as the validation of Christ and the saving message of the gospel.
-) Throughout the centuries afterwards there were no apostles, there were no prophetic ministries, no one spoke in tongues, and no one person could perform miracles on a regular basis.
-) **SLIDE 14.** That is until the late 1800s when a man by the name of Charles Parham started a movement called Pentecostalism. This movement focused mostly on reviving the sign gifts of miracles, prophecy, and speaking in tongues and claimed these gifts were all still valid today. Again, that was their claim.

-) There is so much more I would like to say about the history of this movement, but I want to finish this series in 2 more weeks. So, I must leave a lot out of what I'd like to say and just go with what I must say to get these truths across.
-) There are many who have jumped on board this Pentecostal Charismatic movement (continuationists). This movement grew from just a handful in the early 1900s to 58 million in 1970 and then to 656 million in 2021. That is 1 in 12 people.
-) OTOH there were many who felt this was and is false teaching (cessationists). So let's take a quick look at the background of a very important transition in the Pentecostal church that happened around 1998.
-) **SLIDE 15**. The Pentecostals could not deny from Scripture there was a connection between these SIGN gifts (miracles / prophecy / tongues) and the apostles. ACTS 2:43.
-) It appeared that signs and wonders were being done by the apostles only. The Pentecostals knew this. They also knew that the Bible is very clear that there are three qualifications to be called an apostle.
-) **SLIDE 16**. (1) must have been a **WITNESS** of the resurrected Christ (1 CORINTHIANS 9:1).
-) **SLIDE 17**. (2) must have been explicitly **CHOSEN** by the Holy Spirit (ACTS 9:15).
-) **SLIDE 18**. (3) must have the Spiritual **GIFT** to perform signs and wonders (2 CORINTHIANS 12:12).
-) So, what happens when you are a Pentecostal and the cessationists are telling you that miracles, prophecy, and tongues can only be performed by an apostle? Why? Because the apostolic age is over.
-) **SLIDE 19**. Enter C. Peter Wagner. In 1998, he started something called the New Apostolic Reformation.

-) He declared himself an apostle. The office of “*apostle*” had now returned. Now, as an apostle, one can perform miracles, prophecy in the name of the Lord, and speak in tongues. It is now official. The office of apostle has returned. PTL!
-) **SLIDE 20.** Now wait a second. Didn’t we say earlier that there were three qualifications to be an apostle? Yes we did. Read.
-) ONE. These NAR apostles claim that they have had personal encounters with Jesus. Jesse DuPlantis claims he has gone to heaven multiple times, and Jesus even asks Jesse for his opinion on how something should be done. YouTube.
-) TWO. This is easy for the NAR apostles to get around. They say they have been given this apostolic gift. Hey, after all it is a Spiritual gift and the gift of “*apostle*” has now continued.
-) **SLIDE 21.** THREE. Now that they are apostles (one of the 6 SIGN gifts), they can now perform the other 5 SIGN gifts. They can heal people. They can perform miracles such as casting out demons. They can prophesy in the name of the Lord. And they can speak in and interpret tongues.
-) **SLIDE 22.** MATT 7:21-23. Are these NAR apostles possibly walking on very thin ice? I would not want to be in their shoes when they leave the face of this earth and face judgment.
-) **SLIDE 23.** For the remainder of our time here this morning, let’s focus on these two gifts. What is the difference?
-) Prophecy comes in two flavors. The gift of prophecy (forth-telling) is a gift that any of us can have today. It is to speak forth the Word of God as it has already been proclaimed. For instance, if I say (JOHN 3:16) and then end that with “*thus sayeth the Lord,*” then I am speaking forth the truth of God’s Word as is written in His Word.
-) **SLIDE 24.** But what about the SIGN gift of prophecy (fore-telling)? And remember this is one of the gifts that have now been resurrected by the NAR.

-) The NAR apostles and others in the Pentecostal movement claim God actually speaks to them just as He spoke to the prophets of long ago. They claim they receive new and fresh prophetic revelations. They are bold in their prophecies by actually saying, "*thus sayeth the Lord.*" And because God does this through them, they have claimed the name of modern-day prophet for themselves.
-) In the early 1980s a movement started in Kansas City, MO. It was led by a group of men who called themselves the Kansas City Prophets. Some of the main prophets and/or leaders in the movement included Paul Cain, Mike Bickle, Bob Jones, Rick Joyner, John Paul Jackson, and others. Mike Bickle is also the founder of IHOP, the International House of Prayer.
-) They claimed that God was spearheading a new revival from their churches, and that He was restoring the office of prophet. They claim they could hear from God, speak forth God's words, and prophesy of great events soon to transpire on planet earth.
-) Just a footnote here. No modern-day prophet ever even remotely prophesied COVID in 2020.
-) Bob Jones, was quoted as saying that the level of prophetic revelation in the movement's "*prophets*" had an accuracy level of about 65 percent. Some prophets were as low as 10 percent accurate with some of the "*more mature*" prophets having a rating approaching 85 percent to 95 percent.
-) Hmm. Do you see something wrong with this picture? These prophets average 65% accuracy and never claim that any one prophet is always 100% accurate. These statistics lead me (and hopefully you) to conclude a few things.
-) Remember, all these prophets are claiming that they are receiving direct revelation from God Himself. So, what do we know about God?

-) God never lies. God never changes. He is perfect. He is omniscient. He knows all things. He has ordained the end from the beginning. He cannot make a mistake. His counsel is always absolutely perfect.
-) So I must conclude that if they are hearing directly from God, they must be hearing absolute truth—perfect counsel. Right? God cannot and will not lie or ever give false testimony.
-) So if God is giving one of these prophets a direct revelation and it does not come true, if it does not come to pass, then God is giving false counsel. God can then be called a liar.
-) But how can God who never lies, never changes, is perfect, is omniscient, who knows all things, who has ordained the end from the beginning, who cannot make a mistake, and who's counsel is always absolutely perfect give false counsel?
-) Answer. He doesn't. He can't. It is against His nature to do so. So false counsel from God cannot be the reason these prophets are not batting 1000.
-) So why are these modern-day prophets only at 65% and sometimes as low as 10% accurate? Answer. They are not hearing from God. So who or what are they listening to? Well, we know who they are not listening to. Right? And that leaves the door wide open for them to be hearing from any and every other conceivable source including Satan himself.
-) If they were truly hearing from a perfect God, they would have what percentage accuracy in their prophecies? 100%. But they're not. Listen, even if a prophet is 99.999% accurate that is not good enough. If you are truly listening to a 100% perfect God, your prophecies must be 100% accurate.
-) **SLIDE 25**. DEUT 18:18-22. There was a severe penalty for false prophecies. And what was that penalty? Death. Death. What is the penalty for these prophets today if they give a false prophecy? Nothing. Nothing.

-) **SLIDE 26.** Mike Bickle was asked this question: “*Should prophets be disciplined when their prophetic words don’t come to pass?*” Bickle’s response: “*I think if you miss it, you must have the integrity to acknowledge it. You get on your platform and say ‘I blew it.’*”
-) Think? Integrity? This entire prophecy thing is a joke. Any one of us in here can fore tell the future as accurately as these imposters.
-) But do you know what is more amazing than these false prophets? The undiscerning people continue to follow them religiously. Operative word. Undiscerning.
-) **SLIDE 27.** 1 JOHN 4:1.
-) The Spiritual gift of prophecy (fore-telling) has ceased along with miracle workers and tongue speakers. The NAR is a phony organization made up of charlatans who want the power and authority of being called “*apostle*” or “*prophet.*”
-) Next week we’ll talk about healing and miracles. Please come back.

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