

66. THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

1. The Savior at the time of His ascension bestowed precious gifts upon His followers.
 - Ephesians 4: 8. Christ gave gifts to men. When?
 - Ephesians 4: 11. The -names of some of the gifts which were bestowed.
 - 1 Corinthians 12: 1. We are not to be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts.
 - 1 Corinthians 12: 8-10. Other gifts named.
 - Acts 2: 1-4. Pentecost marked the bestowal of the gifts.
2. The gifts are powers of the Holy Spirit who operated them, and cannot be obtained except as the Spirit is received, and as He purposes.
 - 1 Corinthians 12: 4. Different gifts, but all controlled by one Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12: 7. Every Christian is given some gift.
 - 1 Corinthians 12: 8-11. God's Spirit operates in the distribution of the gifts.
3. There is a relative importance in the gifts bestowed.
 - 1 Corinthians 12: 28. (a) Apostles; (b) prophets; (c) teachers; "after that miracles," etc.
Note the order given in Ephesians 4: 11.
 - 1 Corinthians 14: 1. We are to desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of speaking for God.
4. The gifts of the Spirit are to remain with the church as long as the church is in the world.
 - Ephesians 4: 12. To remain with the church till it is perfect.
 - Ephesians 4: 13. The purpose of the gifts makes them necessary for all time.
5. We must be careful to use aright the gift which God bestows upon us, or it will be removed and entrusted to another.
 - 1 Corinthians 12: 29-31. We do not all possess the same gifts.
 - Romans 12: 6-8. We are to use the gifts entrusted to us.
 - Matthew 25: 14-30. Faithfulness brings added blessing; unfaithfulness results in blessings removed, and punishment.
 - 2 Timothy 1: 6. Paul's charge to Timothy-

MEMORIZE: Ephesians 4:8, 11.

Questions on the Lesson

1. When did Christ bestow gifts on the believers? Name the leading gifts. Name others.
2. Show that we should understand the Bible teaching on spiritual gifts.
3. How are the gifts operated and distributed?
4. How many receive gifts? Is it wrong to desire the gifts of God's Spirit?
5. For what purpose are the gifts bestowed?
6. Prove that God's plan of bestowing the gifts of the Spirit did not cease with the early church.
7. How are the gifts apportioned?
8. What is the individual's responsibility towards the gifts bestowed upon him?

67. THE PROPHETIC GIFT

1. God communicated His messages to the people in Old Testament times by means of the gift of prophecy.

Hosea 12: 10 God spoke to men by the prophets in ancient times.
Hebrews 1:1. God spoke to men by the prophets in ancient times.
Amos 3: 7. God promises to reveal His secrets by the prophets.

Bible Doctrines

- 2 Peter 1: 21. The prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit.
Hosea 12: 13. God guided and preserved Israel by a prophet.
2 Chronicles 20: 20. The prosperity of Israel, was dependent upon the attitude of the people to God's prophets.
2 Kings 17: 13. God sent messages of warning to the people by the prophets.
2 Kings 17: 15. The messages of the prophets were called testimonies.

Note-Though it is true that all we have in the Bible came through the ministry of the prophets, it is also true that there were many prominent prophets who made no additions to the Bible. Elijah, Elisha, etc., have written no books. Also some of the prophets wrote books, but the books they wrote do not form a part of the Scriptures. 1 Chronicles 29: 29. Israel was sent into captivity for refusing to heed the prophets. 2 Chronicles 36. 14-17.

2. God did not dispense with the gift of prophecy in New Testament times, but after Christ returned to heaven He still used the prophets as His medium of communication.
Luke 2: 25, 26; Christ was announced by three prophets at His Matthew 11: 9. First advent.
Acts 11: 27, 28; There were prophets in the church after Christ's [Acts 21:8-11; 13:1] ascension to heaven.
Revelation 1:1. The last book of the New Testament (along with the other books of the New Testament) was written by a prophet.

3. After the close of the apostolic era, the gift of prophecy practically disappeared from the professed church of Christ, for the same reason, doubtless, that it was removed from Israel in Old Testament times.

- Ezekiel 7: 26. God removed the gift of prophecy when the people departed from His law.
Proverbs 29:18. Obedience to the law and clearness -of vision go together.
2 Chronicles 15: 3. When the people disobeyed, the teaching priest (prophet) ceased.
Daniel 7: 25. After the apostles' day an apostate power (the Papacy) led the people away from God's law. This is evidently the reason why the gift of prophecy was absent from the church.

4. The Bible reveals that the church of the last days will be a commandment-keeping church, and will also possess the gift of prophecy.

- Revelation 12: 17. Two outstanding characteristics of the remnant church-the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus.
Revelation 19: 10. "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy."
Joel 2: 28-32. Joel's prophecy of the gift of prophecy in the last days.

MEMORIZE: Revelation 12: 17.

Questions on the Lesson

1. What was God's method of communicating with men in ancient times?
2. How did God reveal His secrets? Explain the method of His operation.
3. How was Israel advantaged through the prophets?
What was the result of their heeding the messages of the prophets?
Why were they sent into captivity?
4. Did all prophets contribute to the writing of the Scriptures?
5. Give evidence that the Lord did not dispense with prophets after the ascension.
6. Explain the reason for the absence of the prophetic gift after the first century.
7. What would lead one to expect a revival of the prophetic gift in the last days?

68. TESTS OF A TRUE PROPHET

1. There is need to test the claims of one professing to exercise the gift of prophecy, because Satan counterfeits the work of God.

- 1 John 4: 1. We are to try the spirits. Why?
Matthew 7: 15. Christ's warning against false prophets.