

The Prophetic Gift Lesson 3 1Q 2009

Spiritual Gifts and Prophecy

SABBATH

Read first two paragraphs “Seventh-day Adventists believe...” thoughts?

What is the most important point of these two paragraphs? Everything is to be tested by the Word of God!

The Mormons believe the Bible was in error and needed to have Joseph Smith correct portions of it and the Book of Mormon supersedes the Bible.

The Jehovah Witnesses believe the Bible has errors and corrected several portions.

Other organizations believe church tradition is more reliable than the Bible.

Notice the SDA position:

You must bring your creed to the Bible and let the light of the Bible define your creed and show where it comes short and where the difficulty is. The Bible is to be your standard, the living oracles of Jehovah are to be your guide. FW 77

When God's Word is studied, comprehended, and obeyed, a bright light will be reflected to the world; new truths, received and acted upon, will bind us in strong bonds to Jesus. The Bible, and the Bible alone, is to be our creed, the sole bond of union; all who bow to this Holy Word will be in harmony. Our own views and ideas must not control our efforts. Man is fallible, but God's Word is infallible. Instead of wrangling with one another, let men exalt the Lord. Let us meet all opposition as did our

Master, saying, "It is written." Let us lift up the banner on which is inscribed, The Bible our rule of faith and discipline.-- The Review and Herald, Dec. 15, 1885. {1SM 416.2}

The testimonies of Sister White should not be carried to the front. God's Word is the unerring standard. The Testimonies are not to take the place of the Word...Let all prove their positions from the Scriptures and substantiate every point they claim as truth from the revealed Word of God.--Letter 12, 1890. {Ev 256.2}

Thoughts? The above statements remain the official position of the church. Do you find that our members generally practice this counsel of building all our position from the Bible?

SUNDAY

Read second paragraph "According to the New Testament..." thoughts?

Spiritual gifts are given to help the church complete its mission, what is the mission of the church? How would you say it?

- To bring people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ?
- To proclaim a message that will free people from the bondage of sin?
- To tell the truth about God which destroys the lies of Satan and wins to trust?
- To love people as God loves people?
- A hospital for sinners?

Upon all who believe, God has placed the burden of raising up churches. The express purpose of the church is to educate men and women to use their intrusted capabilities for the benefit of the world, to employ the means God has lent, for His glory. He has made human

beings His stewards. They are to employ His intrusted talents in building up His work and enlarging His kingdom.
Pacific Union Recorder August 1, 1901

Unselfishness, the principle of God's kingdom, is the principle that Satan hates; its very existence he denies. From the beginning of the great controversy he has endeavored to prove God's principles of action to be selfish, and he deals in the same way with all who serve God. To disprove Satan's claim is the work of Christ and of all who bear His name. {Ed 154.3}

It was to give in His own life an illustration of unselfishness that Jesus came in the form of humanity. And all who accept this principle are to be workers together with Him in demonstrating it in practical life. To choose the right because it is right; to stand for truth at the cost of suffering and sacrifice--"this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 54:17. {Ed 154.4}

How do we show unselfishness in the church? How are we to treat those who have stumbled in sin?

MONDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts?

If you take the position that the edifying gifts are permanent but the sign gifts were not, what would be the internal conflict with that position? That position posits that the Bible is inspired and the Holy Spirit will enlighten to understand the Bible, blessing with knowledge and insight. It posits that the Bible is true and unerring and authoritative, yet it denies its own position because it denies what the Bible teaches will occur in the latter days:

Joel 2:28-32

"And afterward,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

- Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
 your old men will dream dreams,
 your young men will see visions.
- ²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women,
 I will pour out my Spirit in those days.
- ³⁰ I will show wonders in the heavens
 and on the earth,
 blood and fire and billows of smoke.
- ³¹ The sun will be turned to darkness
 and the moon to blood
 before the coming of the great and dreadful day of
 the LORD.
- ³² And everyone who calls
 on the name of the LORD will be saved;
 for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
 there will be deliverance,
 as the LORD has said,
 among the survivors
 whom the LORD calls.

In the latter days, before Christ's return there will be the gift of prophecy, so if one were to believe the Bible and accept its teaching one could not discount the entire spectrum of spiritual gifts.

Another, problem I personally have with restricting the spiritual gifts is that we are basically denying the Holy Spirit to gift people as the Holy Spirit sees fit to do.

Read last two paragraphs – “The church father...” thoughts?

What contributes to increased or decreased spiritual gifts in the church? Is it related to the people in some fashion? How? Does it have to do with the willingness and openness of the hearts and minds of the people to follow truth? Does God arbitrarily open and close the doors of heavenly blessing? Could the belief a person holds about God matter? Do we have any examples of God empowering people to lie about Him? Do we have any examples where God gave spiritual gifts to take a

false message to the world? Would it be necessary for the gifts of the spirit to be manifested that we come back into a true knowledge of God?

What about the idea that the gift of prophecy is to be manifested in the “end-time remnant church”? The lesson quotes Revelation 12:17 as Biblical support for this. Let’s read this passage.

Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring—those who obey God’s commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Does this passage say anything about the gift of prophecy? Often it is linked with Revelation 19:10, which is sometimes interpreted as:

At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” NIV

What does this mean? When we put the two texts together is the most reasonable conclusion is that the remnant people will keep the commandments of God, have the testimony of Jesus, and the testimony of Jesus means that the prophetic gift will be manifested that group? Or is there other reasonable maybe more reasonable interpretations?

I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “Don’t do it! I am a servant together with you and with your fellow-believers, all those who hold to the truth that Jesus revealed. Worship God!” For the truth that Jesus revealed is what inspires the prophets. Rev 19:10 GNT

Does this translation make a difference in how we understand what it means to be the remnant people? Would the remnant

people not only keep to the commandments of God but possess the spirit which inspired the prophets? Would they not hold to the actual testimony of Jesus? And what was the central theme of Jesus testimony?

- If you have seen me you have seen the Father! John 14:9
- Father I have finished the work you have given me to do I have made you known unto men! John 17:4-6

What would be a more reliable identifier of God's end time people in addition to living like Jesus lived, which means living the law of love, which is the same as saying keeping the Commandments

- someone manifesting supernatural abilities and prophetic gifts or
- a group of people holding to the actual testimony of Jesus?
- Was the Jewish Nation specifically chosen by God and called a remnant?
- Were they blessed with the commandments of God?
- Did they have the prophetic gift manifested amongst them?
- And when Jesus came who did Jesus say they were children of? Satan, why? Because they held to Satan's lies about God and rejected Jesus' testimony about God!

Could there be another organization which has the commandments of God, has had the prophetic gift revealed amongst it, yet has been infected with lies about God?

Why do we say we are the remnant today? On what basis do we make this claim? Because EGW had the prophetic gift, if we make the assumption that all people in the world agree she had the genuine gift of prophecy, what does that mean for this

church today? We have the writings of a dead prophet – and what is the Bible? The writings of dead prophets, which all the churches have. So how is the gift being manifested in our church today?

Is it possible, we have missed the point of this prophecy, that the remnant will have not an individual who had the prophetic gift as an historic figure in their church, but the remnant will be a group of people who have the law of God written on their hearts and they give the same testimony that Jesus gave about the Father? And I would posit further, that the remnant have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that filled the prophets. They are so settled into the truth they cannot be moved!

If we as a people hold to lies about God will it matter whether the prophetic gift was once demonstrated amongst us? Did it matter for Israel when Christ came?

The issue for us today, present truth for our time is NOT whether the prophetic gift has been demonstrated amongst this organization, the present truth is are we obedient to God's law of love and holding to the actual testimony Jesus gave – primarily about His Father?

TUESDAY

Counterfeit gifts of the Spirit –

Can you list any gifts or workings of the Holy Spirit that have been counterfeited?

- Snakes, water to blood, frogs – the first three plagues of Egypt
- Speaking in tongues
- Healing
- Prophecy
- Preaching
- Teaching
- Exorcism

Read last four paragraphs starting at “Counterfeit gifts...”

Thoughts?

If gifts of the spirit can be counterfeited what is the most reliable thing to base your faith, trust, belief upon? The truth! The actual message, methods, principles taught and practiced.

We must know God’s character and law, not merely the 10 Commandments but the law of love and liberty such that we can recognize when those who promote the commandments are actually violating God’s law.

In Christ’s day would the religious leaders have been promoters of the 10 Commandments? Was their message from God? We must look deeper than the 10 Commandments to the basis for the 10 Commandments which is the law of love itself! The principle of self-sacrifice, giving, beneficence, esteeming others more highly than ourselves.

What is the danger when there is too much emphasis on the miraculous? It shuts off thinking, it shuts down the pursuit of truth, it blinds the mind and actually leads away from God.

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ Matthew 7:21-23

The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 2 Thes 2:9,10

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts? Does it bother you that some people, apparently not inspired by God, are able to make accurate predictions of future events?

If a student enrolled in college and made a prediction that they would graduate in four years with a BS and then four years later they did, would you consider they had the prophetic gift because their prediction came true? Why not?

If a person predicts the murder of someone in the neighborhood on a specific date and then later, the person who made the prediction carries out the murder on the specified date would you consider that person to have the prophetic gift?

Do evil angels have the ability to predict what they intend to do and then carry out what God does not restrict them from doing? Does that mean they know the future?

Is the fulfillment of a prediction a guarantee that it is a true prophecy from God?

Read last paragraph “Prophets were men...” thoughts? If someone gave a prophecy until it happened how would you know whether it was from God or not? By the truth, by whether it is in harmony with God’s character and law of love and liberty. By testing it against the Scripture read widely.

THURSDAY

The gift of tongues – what does the Bible teach this gift is and what was its purpose?

In Genesis, after the flood mankind unified in rebellion against God, as a means to slow the tide of evil God confused the languages, which resulted in cultural division. At Pentecost

God is neutralizing this barrier and opening the channels of communication to accelerate the spreading of the gospel.

The true gift of tongues is always to open channels of communication for the spreading of the gospel. Satan counters God's gifts with false gifts and has a counterfeit gift of tongues in which various unintelligible noises are made associated with heightened emotions which are supposedly works of the Holy Spirit. These utterances do not open channels of communication or the spreading of the gospel but cause confusion requiring some other person to stand up and "interpret" what was said. Often these utterances are associated with evidence demonstrating them to be from the false spirit.

In Galatians we are told what happens when the true Spirit comes, we develop certain traits of character, the last being "self control." When God's Spirit comes upon people they do no lose control of themselves in emotional hysteria falling on the floor, barking, laughing uncontrollably, or other ourbursts but have ever increasing self-governance.

John the Baptist had more the Holy Spirit than anyone else, according to Jesus, and he never lost control of Himself. And Jesus Himself who was full of the Holy Spirit was never seen flopping around on the ground hollering gibberish. In fact, the Biblical record describes the demoniacs as the ones who fall around out of control.

God is a God of order and everything He does is done in perfect order. God created mankind with reason and works via the truth to ennable, cleanse and restore His image within. Satan works with counterfeit gifts to shut down the avenues of the mind which are sensitive to the truth for he knows he has no truth. The false gift of tongues is one of those avenues which close the mind to truth.

FRIDAY - Question 3 read and discuss