



2026 3Q First and Second Corinthians

Lesson 6: Spiritual Gifts

by Tim Jennings

SABBATH

Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11:

- There are different **kinds of gifts**, but they are all from the **same Spirit**. There are different **ways to serve** but the **same Lord** to serve. And there are **different ways that God works** through people but the **same God**. **God works in all of us in everything we do**. Something from the Spirit **can be seen in each person, for the common good**. The Spirit gives one person the ability to speak with **wisdom**, and the same Spirit gives another the ability to speak with **knowledge**. The same Spirit gives **faith** to one person. And, to another, that one Spirit gives gifts of **healing**. The Spirit gives to another person the **power to do miracles**, to another the ability to **prophecy**. And he gives to another the ability to know the **difference between good and evil spirits**. The Spirit gives one person the ability to **speak in different kinds of languages** and to another the ability to **interpret those languages**. One Spirit, the same Spirit, does all these things, and the **Spirit decides** what to give each person. 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 NCV, emphasis mine.

From where do spiritual gifts come? The Holy Spirit.

What are spiritual gifts? Various types of abilities; the ones listed above are:

- Wisdom
- Knowledge
- Faith/trust
- Healing
- Miracles
- Prophecy
- Discernment of spirits/motives
- Speaking of languages
- Translating of languages

Are spiritual gifts the same as talents or different?

My personal view is that all blessings come from God, life comes from God and all abilities come from God. Some come from God through His design of genetic encoding and inheritance, what some might call natural talents.

Natural talents would be things like genetic advantage toward certain types of activities—musical, art, abstract thinking, memory capacity, athletic ability. These natural talents do not mean anything other than biological capacity, it does not mean success, skill, or usefulness. Why?

Because no matter the natural talent, success, skill, usefulness requires application, self-discipline, development—the outworking of the design law of exertion. If Mozart would have been born to a coal miner father and never exposed to any musical instruments and from earliest age taken into the coal mines—his natural talent would not have developed and he would not have written beautiful music. If Michael Jordan never trained, exercised, and practiced thousands and thousands of hours, despite his natural talent, he would not have achieved his proficiency and success.

Likewise, if I would have exercised and practiced basketball thousands of hours when I was young and trained with absolute commitment and discipline, I would never have achieved the results in basketball performance that Michael Jordan did, why? My natural talent, biological capacity, is not capable of that level of performance.

So natural talents, as I see them, are the innate abilities and capacities we inherit through God's design of procreation.

But there is another layer here, which I have not always understood, in which natural talents can and are woven into spiritual gifting—and that is this: with what spirit is a person animated and directing the use of their natural talents?

If we are not converted to Jesus Christ, if we are not reborn with the Holy Spirit and reanimated with the Spirit of truth, love, and trust, then we are motivated by the spirit of fear and selfishness and we will direct our natural talents toward self-advantage, self-promotion, and self-glorification—which will cause the natural talent to manifest in ways that are contrary to the spirit of God and promote the spirit of God's enemy.

For instance, an unconverted person with natural musical talent will use their talent for their own success, fame, fortune, attention, praise for them. They might write and perform songs that promote unhealthy and ungodly themes. They might be a professional musician or they might be someone who merely performs special music at church, but their motivation is to get praise for self. And when they see a new natural talent arising they experience a threat, and will seek to exploit, use, or undermine that person to protect themselves.

But when we are reborn the natural talents are directed, developed, expressed with a new energy, a new motive, a new power, which will not only direct them toward actions down new lines that are intended to glorify God and be a blessing to others, but they will necessarily expand and manifest outcomes that would not have been possible without the animating presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Thus the natural talents become spiritual giftings when the person is filled with and surrendered to the Holy Spirit.

But there are also Spiritual gifts that are endowed, bestowed, gifted by the Holy Spirit upon individuals that are not the purification, expansion, and development of natural talent, but instead are divine endowments such as:

- Direct revelation from the Holy Spirit or one of God's angels—this could be prophecy or some knowledge, examples:
 - Daniel and John given prophetic knowledge.
 - Elisha given knowledge of the counsels of what the enemies of Israel were plotting.
- Wisdom—can be either an intelligent mind that has been reborn and surrendered to the Holy Spirit and following the leading of the Spirit in studying God's Word, nature, life experiences and develops genuine wisdom, or God's gifting of special insight and wisdom of how things work in God's kingdom or how to handle a particular problem.

And all the other gifts work just like this. Questions?

What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

- The advancement of God's kingdom—which means what?
- The saving of people from sin, which means what?
- The restoration of the image of God within people, which means what?
- The healing of hearts and minds, which means what?
- The reconnecting of people with God so that they know Him, love Him, trust Him, and are reborn and recreated, restructured, rebuilt, to function, operate in harmony with Him, His eternal design laws, methods, principles—the law of God is written upon hearts and minds, which means?
- The inner workings operations of our brains change, our motives change from fear and selfishness to love and trust, our understanding of God, self, sin, reality changes from fiction, myth, to ever increasing reality based understanding—truth and our methods change from methods that break God's design laws and injure us and others to methods that harmonize with God and result in thriving, the abundant life, maturing and developing—we become people **whom God can trust!**

Do we agree that the gifts are designed to do this?

And in order to save humans from sin what is God required to do or provide to them?

Would some amount of truth be required? What truth? The truth about God, sin, Satan, our condition, God's solution for it—in other words, reality—God must provide truth sufficient to give humans the ability to realize their situation, who He is, the option for salvation so they can make a choice between life and death.

But when truth is revealed to a mind, is it enough to know the truth cognitively, to acknowledge it as a fact? Or does salvation require a type of knowing of the truth that is deeper than cognitive knowledge?

Salvation is more than cognitive comprehension is the experiential knowledge, we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, we know both the facts truths of His character but we have experienced His love, grace, mercy, patience, presence, healing and restoring and cleansing within.

Okay, if this is reality, and that for sinners to be saved they must be brought to points where they hear and understand truth and have opportunity to choose, wouldn't the various gifts of the Spirit enhance truth and love and the experiences with God providing sinners with opportunities to choose?

So, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are those that enhance truth and love and **provide opportunity for choosing truth and love** which restore trust and transform people so that they mature and we see manifest in them the fruits of the spirit.

With that in mind let's consider one of the gifts of the Spirit in **WEDNESDAY's** lesson: The gift of tongues.

The Greek translated tongues is also translated languages, so this gift reads either the gift of tongues or languages depending on which version one is reading. How do we understanding this gift and its purpose? What does God intend for this gift to accomplish in the church?

Would it not be what we have already stated, provide opportunity for people to know and choose the truth? Then why this gift?

We must recognize God's movements in the landscape of human history. God is always working for salvation, healing, restoration—Satan the opposite.

Therefore, God works to expose truth and oppose lies, while Satan works to promote lies and obstruct truth.

All the way back in Genesis 6 we find the world is in complete rebellion against God, the people are violent all the time, and hearts are hard and won't listen to truth or love. There is only one righteous man and his family left on the entire planet, so God acted in love to put all the people in the world to sleep in the grave in order, not to punish sin, but to keep open the avenue for Messiah.

Remember the context, Adam and Eve have sinned, the entire human race is descended from them and without Jesus all humans die. God promised in Genesis 3:15 that a Savior would come and provide salvation from sin. So, God acts to stop the eternal destruction of humanity by keeping open the avenue for Messiah.

And then, after the Flood, as the human race is again populating the earth, God instructed them to spread out over the earth and subdue it. He told them not to congregate together—primarily as a means of slowing rebellion, to limit the wicked uniting and reinforcing their wickedness.

But they didn't listen and they didn't trust God, so they congregated together and built the tower of Babel in rebellion against God. So what did God do?

He confused their languages, for what purpose? To interfere with the spread of sin and rebellion and to keep open the avenue for the Messiah. This is where the human race divided into different language and ethnic groups; God did this to interrupt the lies and corruption that is reinforced when people practice such things together.

And then what do we see in the New Testament? Jesus has come, He has defeated sin and Satan, died as our Savior, risen and ascended to heaven and the Holy Spirit is poured out and what happens?

If God is working to promote truth and stop lies and the true eternal gospel of Jesus is now understood and being proclaimed to others, but those other humans are speaking a different language—and they speak different languages because God confused the languages to slow sin, what might we expect when God's solution to the sin problem is now understood and being taught?

The Holy Spirit provides the gift of languages so that the gospel is heard by every person in their own language—

- When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Acts 2:6 NIV84.

This means that God was the translator so we can be sure that each person heard, in their own language, the clearest truth possible. This is the reversal of the Tower of Babel. It is God acting to open the avenues of understanding and communication for the truth to go forward unhindered.

But Satan fights against truth, he wants to shut down clear communications, he wants to create beliefs, systems, experiences, methods in which it is easy for confusion to arise, misunderstanding to occur, doubts to form—how could Satan counterfeit this amazing gift of God so that people claim that God's Spirit is working, but in fact, a different spirit is at work, a spirit that does not bring clarity and clear communication?

How about a spirit that causes people to speak in unintelligible noises in which instead of every person hearing clearly what is said in their own language, no one understands, but everyone is required to believe what they could not understand based on the claim of some other person who claims that they understood it?

- One method everyone understands for themselves and can then think through what was said, weigh it against the evidences of Scripture and reality that God has provided and come to their own conclusion.
- The other method no one understands and people are instructed that they are to believe based on faith without evidence, based on a supposed miraculous sign, to accept a message they themselves were unable to understand.

Which of these two methods and experiences maximizes transmission of truth and reduces opportunities for miscommunication and confusion, and which does the opposite?

Now, if the language that the congregation does not understand is a known language—say German in a church where everyone speaks English—and a person who speaks both German and English stands up and translates into English. Why is that different than when someone speaks a supposed unknown language if noises?

1. Because when someone speaks a known language it can be recorded and the translation verified by an independent translator.
2. A person speaking a known language doesn't suggest a "supernatural manifestation" which often shuts down thinking. The impact of the unknown utterances that are believed to come from a supernatural spirit, not only are not understood, they lead minds to accept without thinking what was said because it is viewed as supernatural. The known language doesn't do this, it causes people to reason and think.

Now, in this conflict between Christ and Satan, how much truth is on Christ's side—100%! And how much truth is on Satan's side? Zero!

So, if you have 100% truth, do you want to set up a system in which people are conditioned to believe things based on claims without evidence, without reasoning, without thinking, without testing, or do you want them to reason, think, check the evidence, the facts, the truth and test everything? Thus the Bible teaches:

- "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." Isaiah 1:18 NIV84.
- Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God. 1 John 4:1 NIV84.
- Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. Romans 14:5 NIV84.

This is encoding language, free beings thinking, reasoning, examining, testing, and then choosing what they will believe, which then encodes into their brains and changes them. God, the source of all truth, promotes the methods of reality, of truth...

But if you have no truth, if you are the father of lies, then what method, system do you want them to practice? A system of claims without evidence, a system that relies on experiences, feelings, over facts, that increase misunderstanding, confusion, and opens the mind to deceit!

I hope I don't offend anyone with this next comment, but love rejoices with the truth, and the truth sets free, so I ask if anyone is put off by this, to consider the evidence of what I am describing in this section and prayerfully seek the truth.

But, another interesting point in regard to the question of the gift of tongues when we realize that the Greek word can be translated as tongues or languages, is that those who prefer translating this word as tongues rather than languages, do not ever suggest this “gift of tongues” is the gift of super tasting of foods, that people with this gift can detect whether some food is spoiling or poisoned, and they are to be the official church potluck taster to ensure all foods are healthy.

No, they never suggest the gift of tongues is something like this—they always suggest it is the gift of communication, of languages, but they don’t want to use the word languages and prefer to use the word tongues? Why?

Because the spirit behind the movement is not the Spirit of truth and love, not the Spirit that brings ever increasing clarity in truth and understanding but the spirit that causes confusion, sows discord, creates doubt, uncertainty and the word languages leads the mind to think clearly that this gift is a language, and the false spirit makes noises that comes from the mouth, from the use of the tongue, but it is not a language, thus they prefer the word tongues.

Are there other aspects of the movements of the Holy Spirit, the fruits of the Holy Spirit that become evidences we can see and use as markers to determine when the Spirit of God is at work?

Another fruit of the Holy Spirit is self-control—what should we conclude if we see a spirit manifesting in which people lose self-control and end up on the floor in some ecstatic state flopping around?

Additionally, the Bible tells us one of the avenues through which people are tempted and dragged away from God:

- When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. James 1:13-14 NIV84.

So, putting all of this together, can we establish evidence-based criteria to discern the fruits of the Spirit?

- God’s Spirit is revealer of truth. He makes things clearer to understand, and the fruits of the Spirit enhance comprehension and appeal to the reason.
- God’s Spirit brings order not disorder.
- God’s Spirit brings greater self-control
- False spirits bring confusion, make it harder to understanding, add doubt and uncertainty, rely on believing without evidence or the use of reason.
- False spirits enhance emotional dysregulation and inflame passions and desires
- False spirits lead to loss of self-control.

False spirits wow and direct toward emotional responses without truth and understanding.

So the purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is to heal, to remove barriers to truth and love and restore to God's design—false spirits do the opposite.

SUNDAY

Read 1 Corinthians 12:3

- Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:3 NIV84.

Any questions or confusion about this verse?

- As soon as Jesus got out of the boat, he was met by a man who came out of the burial caves there. This man had an evil spirit in him...he ran, fell on his knees before him, and screamed in a loud voice, “Jesus, Son of the Most High God! What do you want with me? For God's sake, I beg you, don't punish me!” Mark 5:2, 6,7 GNT.

How do we understand Paul's statement that no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit, but the evil spirit acknowledges Jesus as the Son of God?

This is a critical distinction between the false legal approach and the reality approach.

The false legal approach is that it is about what one says or does, and thus if someone legally claims Jesus as Savior and participates in the right ceremonies, then they are legally saved. This mindset leads to the belief that if one hears someone verbally uttering the right words and saying “Jesus is Lord” then that is evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in their life.

But that is not what Paul is saying. Paul is describing design law, reality—no one can say that Jesus is THEIR Lord, the Lord of their life without the Holy Spirit, because Jesus cannot, in reality, be our Lord if we are not reborn by Holy Spirit who brings us the life of Christ.

This evil spirit recognized the truth of who Jesus is, the Son of the Most High God, but that evil spirit did not recognize Jesus as his Lord—no that evil spirit was still loyal to his lord Satan.

Only those who are reborn by the Holy Spirit say, in heart, in mind, in character, in truth that Jesus is Lord.

The lesson, in the second paragraph, draws out attention to faith being a gift of the Spirit—what do we understand this to mean?

The capacity to exercise faith is a gift given to all intelligent beings by God—it is part of our creation and it is a gift just like life. And everyone exercises faith in something—until they lose it and become

disillusioned. (And people lose “faith” by either replacing truth with lies or placing faith in unreliable things—for misplaced faith will always be disappointed).

But faith in the true God is also a gift—why and how? Because faith in God is based on truth, love, Jesus and the Holy Spirit working in us to convict, draw, enlighten, and when we respond and choose to trust—exercise faith, we are reborn and grow through exercising faith.

God has given us all of this and more to win our love and trust, which is faith. So the capacity for exercising faith is a gift, and when people have faith in God it is also a result of all the gifts from God and actions of God that reveal His trustworthiness and the gift of Jesus to give us a new life and the gift of the Holy Spirit to bring us the life of Christ and recreate us in His image.

The last paragraph tells us that the gifts of the Spirit are intended to create unity among the believers—how?

By removing from the hearts and minds of believers the cause of division—which are lies, fear, and selfishness—so unity occurs as we follow and apply truth, as we are reborn with a new spirit of love and trust and stop living to protect and advance self, but live to glorify God, carry out His purposes and trust Him with the outcomes.

MONDAY

The Title Is Unity Through Diversity—what do you think of this title?

This such a great title because it gives us an opportunity to expose how evil works to twist that which is good. Let’s first describe the beauty and truth of what this title is describing.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-13:

- The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 NIV84.

And Paul then goes on to compare different body parts and how they have different functions and how it is foolish for the foot to complain about not being part of the body because it isn’t the hand, or how dysfunctional the body would be if it was composed only of an eye.

So what is the diversity to which Paul is describing as being healthy?

The diversity of abilities and attributes—*when those diverse parts are united under one head Jesus Christ!*

What this means for the church is that we experience unity when the diverse members are united in reality with Jesus as their Lord, when the members have been reborn with a new heart and right spirit and have the mind of Christ—this means that while the members have different talents, gifts, life experiences, knowledge base, skills—they all have the same central values, love for God, love for each other, and love for unfolding truth—and they are all united in motives, methods, principles—the pursuit of God’s glory, the salvation of souls, through the design law methods of God and are submitted to the leading of His Spirit of truth and love.

When that happens each individual member actively and intentionally puts Christ at the center of their life and moves purposely closer to Him and seeks to follow His leading in their life—the reality based result is that they grow closer to each other over time.

Imagine a bicycle wheel: Jesus is the center hub to which all the spokes connect; all of His people are the spokes. We may come from many diverse backgrounds, cultures, languages, tribes, nations, and experiences, but as we move ever closer to Jesus, our physical and cultural differences become less important and our unity in Christlike principles and methods increase exponentially and all draw closer to each other as we draw closer to Christ.

What is the unifying factor as Paul describes it? It is the unifying Spirit of truth, love, and trust with Jesus at the center that creates within the believers a unifying motive, attitude, principles, values, vision, goal.

And what is Paul arguing against? The division that comes from having a spirit of fear, insecurity, which leads to either jealousy or sense of inadequacy.

How does Satan counterfeit this unity we have in our diversity and use the reality that a body functions best with a diverse number of talents, experiences, abilities to cause division, conflict, hostility, undermine health and good function while claiming it makes us stronger?

By replacing Jesus and God’s design law realities, truth, love, liberty, as our center and placing the OUR diversity, our differences, at the center.

When our differences, our diverse languages, cultures, histories, and other attributes become what is valued, then any action which prioritizes one over another is deemed as evil—it will be called racist or some other pejorative.

For instance, if we, in a society or church, were to choose one language over others to use for our system, because we want every single individual in our system to have the same opportunity to learn, we want all to be included, all to hear the truth, all to be able to understand and not have to rely on others to tell them what to think and thereby reduce opportunity for confusion, misunderstanding, and also increase efficiency of the organization. So we take the position that the church meeting will happen in a certain language or society is served best if everyone speaks a common language, such a position is not an attack on any of the languages not selected to be the primary language—it is an

objective reality based action that one common language enhances communication and makes the system run more effectively.

But if one wanted to cause disunity, fragmentation, interfere with cohesion and ability to have unity—one would promote diversity of languages just as God did at the tower of Babel when He confused languages to cause confusion among the rebels and interfere with the spread of evil.

So, Satan will seek to counterfeit God's unity by substituting in the place of Jesus, in the place of truth, love, freedom, design law realities, the elements of diversity itself which inflames fear and selfishness. So it will be taught that diversity is our strength and therefore we do not want everyone speaking the same language, we want to promote many different languages in the same system so we can show how we value each culture and group.

But what is the reality based outcome of such a system? When you cannot speak the language, cannot understand what is being said, have to rely on translations, do you have the same unity, or do you always have a barrier, a disconnect?

Consider when you genuinely love someone and don't speak their language, don't you want to have the language barrier removed? Why, so you can grow closer.

So recently we saw a movement in society that had a slogan "diversity is our strength" but what they promoted as diversity was the exact opposite of God's truth and reality. They promoted diversity as the central unifying principle and intentionally removed God and Jesus and reality-based design laws and substituted artificial made up rules—all of which caused greater division and hostility between diverse people groups.

And then they substituted equality with equity. Equality is what all humans have innately, because we are beings created by God in His image and that equality is enowed to us by our Creator. We are all equal in moral worth and value to God, but we also are all equally sick with a terminal sin-condition, and we all are equally in need of the same solution—Jesus Christ.

Equality is a biblical principle, one that is also foundational to the U.S. Declaration of Independence:

- We hold these truths to be self-evident, that **all men are created equal**, that they are **endowed by their Creator** with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Equality is based upon the reality that human beings are created by God, in the image of God, and are endowed by Him with value, worth, and abilities that are like His—the ability to reason, love, and act. Thus, by God's design and inherent to our existence, all human beings have equality in their value, in their right to life, in their liberty of person (because love and development only happen in an environment of freedom), and in their pursuit of happiness that is independent of any human government.

When we live as God designed, we treat every human being with equality; we value them as our cherished brothers and sisters in the family of God.

However, at the same time, we also recognize in this godly worldview that equality is not the same as equity. We recognize that even though we all have equal value as children of God, we do not all have equal abilities, talents, capacities, or gifting.

When the Holy Spirit pours out gifts upon God's people, He does not gift each individual with the same talents or abilities, which brings us right back to 1 Corinthians 12, abilities and talents are not equitably distributed by God and true unity is only achieved when Christ is at the center and we are reborn with His Spirit living in us.

Equity is not about equal opportunity, but artificially imposed outcomes, a rules-based system that violates how reality works and inspires more fear, selfishness, and rebellion. Because in reality, outcomes are not determined by our natural talents alone, or God's giftings alone, but are always determined by the choice of the individual human made in the image of God—what do they do with the talents with which they are born, how do they respond to truth when presented, do they apply themselves in harmony with God's design laws to mature, develop, advance, do they choose to be reborn and work in God's cause, or to harden in rebellion?

It is Satan's system of imposed penal legal theology that teaches eternal outcomes are determined by the ruling authority and imposed upon people. This is the method, motive, and spirit behind the equity movements.

God's Spirit is the Spirit of truth, love, and freedom, the God of creation and reality and God provides everything for our good, our health, our salvation but the outcome in our lives is not God's choice, it is our choice, what do we choose to do with all that we have been given and experienced? Thoughts?

TUESDAY

Read the third paragraph,

- In 1 Corinthians 13:4–7, Paul focuses on what love is and what it is not; more particularly, what love does and what it does not do. The verbs he chose to characterize love indicate love is not so much something we feel as it is something that we practice. Thus, Paul mentions that love (1) shows patience; (2) shows kindness; (3) rejoices in the truth; (4) bears all things; (5) believes all things; (6) hopes all things; and (7) endures all things. Conversely, love (1) does not envy; (2) does not boast; (3) does not inflate with arrogance; (4) does not behave rudely; (5) does not seek its own [rights]; (6) does not get easily irritated; (7) does not keep record of wrongs; and (8) does not delight in wrongdoing. *Adult SS Guide 3rd Q 2026, First and Second Corinthians*, p. 49.

What are your thoughts about love and how it functions?

Do we believe God is love?

Do all of these elements and attributes apply to God? For instance, is God self-seeking or not self-seeking?

What about keeping records of wrongs—if God is love and love keeps no record of wrongs then does God keep record of wrongs?

Doesn't the Bible teach there are record books in which sins are recorded?

- And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. Revelation 20:12 NIV84.

How do we harmonize the Bible teaching that there are records from which people will be judged according to what they have done and love keeps no record of wrongs?

What law lens is it being taught through. If we have the human law lens then the book from which people will be judged, according to what they have done, is a legal book that records sins, bad things they have done, a book of bad deeds.

And those who hold the false legal view will teach that God will open this legal document in the judgment and He will be required by law and justice to judge us by this list of sins recorded there, the ones not removed by the blood of Christ. They will argue that God is not only loving but also just and they will assert that His justice is that He loved us enough to provide a substitute to be punished instead of us, but if we refuse this legal arrangement then His justice requires Him to punish us.

But, this very teaching undermines love and trust—no matter how one frames it the ideology functions as, “Love me or I will kill you,” which is a violation of liberty and always results in the destruction of love and trust and more fear, selfishness and thus the greater need of those who believe this lie to cling to it so they can feel safe from a god who is in their image and who is untrustworthy.

Other problems with this false legal theory is that sin does not happen or occur in books and cannot be erased or eradicated from the universe by paying legal penalties and erasing historical records.

Sin is a breakdown of love and trust that occurs in the minds and hearts of intelligent beings and can only be erased by truth, love, and trust being restored in the being, which requires their freewill participation. This is why the Bible teaches the plan of salvation is to write God's law upon our hearts and minds. History doesn't change, sinners are in reality changed, from distrusting, fear ridden, rebels, into loyal, loving and trustworthy saints.

So then how do we understand the records?

They are a transcript of each of our individualities, our identities, our characters, who we have chosen to become. Have we chosen to surrender our life of fear, guilt, sin and shame to Jesus and be reborn with a new spirit, and been regenerated and recreated to have the mind of Christ; so like Paul we can say, it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me? Or have we chosen to cling to lies, fear, selfishness, and harden our hearts against God?

And when we are examined for who we have chosen to become—can't you see and hear how this description in Revelation is a description of reality, not legality: As our hearts and minds are exposed to be seen for what they actually are—the books of our lives, our characters are open, and it is seen in the hearts, minds, characters of the wicked that they repeatedly chose fear over love, lies over truth, distrust over trust, exploitation over kindness etc., as they are seen to be hardened in character against all truth and love, can't you hear God and Jesus saying at the rejection of all they have poured out to save them—"What have you done" "What have you done to yourself?"

For "The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books." And what have they done in reality? They have hardened their hearts into lies, fear, selfishness such that no amount of truth or love has any redeeming impact. They experience truth as an attack, they experience love as mocking and manipulation, kindness is experienced as accusation, tenderness as weakness—they are judged, diagnosed, to be exactly what they have chosen to become.

That is the judgment.

If one wants to consider the books as recording historical events rather than the characters of people, then the best understood as medical records—or records of our actual heart and mind condition, who we are in reality. And the only way to erase sin from the records in heaven is to erase it from our heart and minds—because the record is the record of reality—either we have been won back to love and trust or we have not.

Love doesn't keep a record of wrongs—it keeps track of people and people choose who they become.

THURSDAY

What do you understand the gift of prophecy to be?

Read the second paragraph,

- The gift of prophecy is meant to provide edification, exhortation, and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3; compare with Acts 15:32). This suggests that prophecy is not so much about predicting the future as it is about how to live in the present. The Greek verb *prophēteuō* can mean either "to say something in advance" or "to say something on behalf of someone else." For instance, the first sense is seen in Acts 2:29–31 (compare with Amos 3:7), where the idea that David is a prophet is explained as "foreseeing." The second sense is seen in Acts 15:32, where Judas and Silas are identified as prophets. Their "prophecy," however, consisted in encouraging and

strengthening “the brothers with many words” (ESV). *Adult SS Guide 3rd Q 2026, First and Second Corinthians*, p. 51.

The vast majority of the times the gift of prophecy is manifested in history is not prognosticating future events, that is rare, instead the vast majority of the time when the Spirit manifests this gift is it by inspiring people to communicate heavenly truths to other people. In other words, they are coming to the people with messages from God.

In other words, prophets are spokespersons for God, ambassadors, people who are communicating truths that are sent from and empowered by God to be delivered.

Read Revelation 7:1-3:

- After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: “Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.” Revelation 7:1-3 NIV84.

And in Bible symbolism, who are the “servants” of God?

- Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his **servants the prophets**. Amos 3:7 NIV84, emphasis mine.

God’s prophets are repeatedly called His servants. And prophets are not primarily prognosticators and predictors of the future, they are primarily God’s spokespersons, the people who have been inspired by God to take a message to the people at that time. Jonah going to Nineveh was a servant of God etc.

So, the 144,000 from 12 tribes, represents symbolically, the people from the four corners of the earth who have cooperated with God to receive the latter rain to enlighten and empower them with the message that is to go to the world to prepare the world for Christ’s return. These 144,000 did not defile themselves with women.

In Bible symbolism women represent the church, and thus these did not participate or worship false gods and promote a false system of faith in an imperial dictator god who functions like Satan in character.

They follow the Lamb and have the testimony of Jesus—meaning they give the same testimony about God, God’s law, God’s design for life, sin, and salvation that Jesus Himself gave.

And from the witness of this group of spokesperson’s for God a great multitude responds and comes out of Babylon, that fallen system of legal Christianity with a god that makes up laws and uses his power to punish law breakers. They hear the voice of those who follow the Lamb and they realize it is

time in history to stop judging God to be an imperial dictator, to judge Him to be exactly as Jesus revealed Him to be, our Creator and Savior whose laws are design laws and thereby return to trust, encode truth, open the heart and be reborn and thereby give Him glory.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

September Potluck will be the 3rd weekend—September 19.

NO SS Sabbath August 15—the building will be closed for The God of Reality Seminar.

The God of Reality: Separating Truth from Fiction Seminar: August 13-16 2026 Orlando, Florida—More information coming soon. First 500 get five free meals.

Regular registration ends on 6/21/26. Reserve your hotel room at a discounted rate of \$164 (includes resort fee but not taxes). We have a block of rooms available at this price—people should book now.

Our outline of program topics:

1. Who Decides What's True?

How do we know what's actually true in a world full of competing voices? This session examines the foundation of truth—what authority can be trusted and how to discern reality from deception.

2. Did Life Happen by Chance ... or Design?

What does science really reveal about the origin of life? This session examines the evidence behind life's beginnings and what it suggests about our purpose, meaning, and design.

3. What Kind of Power Runs the Universe?

What kind of power sustains the universe at its foundational level? This session explores what reality reveals about worshiping a Creator whose power operates through truth and love rather than force—the quantum power upon which Newtonian power is built.

4. What If Sin Isn't What You've Been Told?

What if sin is something other than breaking rules? This session examines why God allowed sin to exist, how it began, and how being out of harmony with reality in our beliefs and actions reshapes the mind.

5. Genesis: History... and What It Reveals About Reality

What does the book of Genesis reveal about the operating design of our reality? This session explores how God and the human mind intersect in the physical world.

6. What Did God Really Do After Human Sin? (Part 1)

Were God's actions after sin acts of punishment—or something else? This session reexamines key moments after the fall to uncover what they reveal about God, salvation, and the nature of reality.

7. What Did God Really Do After Human Sin? (Part 2)

What does death reveal about God's response to sin? This session explores how death relates to God's mercy and what Christ's life and sacrifice accomplished in reality.

8. Spiritual Warfare: The Battle for Your Mind

How do truth and lies shape the direction of your life? This session examines how our thoughts get encoded within the substructure of brain changing the motivational energy that moves us to action and why truth and love are the powers that, in reality, bring healing.

9. Are We Misreading the Old Testament?

Why does God sometimes appear harsh or angry? This session examines how truth, love, and freedom help us better understand God's actions in the Old Testament.

10. The Bible: History... and How Reality Works

What kind of book is the Bible, really—and how should we relate to it? This session explores how Scripture records real events that reveal truth, conflict, and the principles that govern life.

11. The Beginning and Ending Lies and The Judgment

Satan's two opposing lies through history and what judgment is.

12. The Opus of Jesus: The Opening Movement

The Sermon on the Mount: A Quantum Masterpiece

How Jesus revealed a kingdom built on truth, love, and transformation—not power and force

13. The Opus of Jesus: The Final Movement

Revelation and the 3 Angels—The Quantum Finale

How the final message of the Bible restores the truth about God and brings everything full circle