

Introduction to Spiritual Gifts, Part 3 --- 1 Corinthians 12:1-8

June 7, 2020

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. ²You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. ³Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. ⁴For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us. If one has the gift of prophecy, then let him prophesy according to the proportion of his faith; ⁷if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Introduction

Concerning the Second Coming of Christ, Jesus said in Mark 13:22-23, "for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. ²³But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance." In the end times false prophecy, false signs and wonders will lead people astray.

Paul warned the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, "Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, ²that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."

Paul continues in verses 8-10. ". . . the lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; ⁹that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, ¹⁰and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved."

When something is repeated in Scripture, it flags us concerning its importance. These passages, among others, refer to false prophets and false signs and wonders as prevalent in the last days. I believe portions of the charismatic movement today have inadvertently prepared a mindset for a generation of people to be duped by false signs and wonders and false prophetic utterances.

The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God. He is the author. The Word of God is sufficient for all that we need in this life and for growing in Christlikeness. The charismatic emphasis on the miraculous and prophetic utterances, instead of the sole power of the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God, has primed people to be looking for signs and wonders and to set aside Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone). That mindset has left multitudes vulnerable to deception.

In our study of Romans 12, we have embarked upon a study of what the Bible teaches concerning Spiritual Gifts. My prayer is that it will lead you to a clear understanding of spiritual gifts primary emphasis. Instead of looking for signs and wonders and searching for prophetic utterances, the gifts of the Spirit are given to build up the body of Christ, to promote unity, and to equip the Church to do the work of the ministry which is to make disciples. As we engage in this study, I pray that the Holy Spirit will bear witness with your spirit to devote yourself to understanding and using your spiritual gifts for the building up and edification of this local body.

Read with me 1 Corinthians 12:4-8, *“For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us. If one has the gift of prophecy, then let him prophesy according to the proportion of his faith; 7if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”*

Review

In our study so far, we have found in verses 1-3 that the ultimate test for the validity of any spiritual gift is doctrinal. If someone manifests what looks like a spiritual gift, but does not line up with God’s revealed Word concerning Christ, he or she is a fraud—plain and simple.

Verse 1 of 1 Corinthians 12 states, *“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.”*

We saw that the first three verses are introductory. They supply a test concerning the work and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The church in Corinth consisted mostly of rank, hedonistic Gentiles coming out of idolatrous religions. Many of the Corinthian converts from idolatry lacked discernment in distinguishing between what was inspired by the Holy Spirit and what was not. Their idol worship had been full of seers, mediums and so called prophets.

A sure test of the origin of any spiritual gift is: Does it promote the glory of Jesus Christ? What dishonors Him cannot be from the Holy Spirit. Conversely, what exalts the Lord Jesus Christ is from the Spirit.

We saw that *“gifts”* is added to the text. The original reading was *“spirituals”* referring to things pertaining to the Holy Spirit which are spiritual matters. Paul’s main point in this section is to correct the self-seeking misuse of the things of the Spirit. The main corrective comes in chapter 13 concerning love, where the issue is not only having a correct understanding of the gifts, but also having a correct motivation for the gifts. So this goes further than just spiritual gifts; it involves the whole area of spiritual life, gifts and motives.

We saw in verse 2 that the Corinthians had been, *“ . . . led astray . . . deceived.”* Their being led astray is precisely Satan’s main plan of attack. Satan works to deceive especially in the area of religion as noted in 1 Corinthians 10:20 *“I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons.”* We considered that Satan’s work is both outside of the Church in the form of false religions AND inside the Church in the form of false doctrine and false manifestations of the Spirit.

Verses 3 states, *“Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus is accursed’”*

It is important to understand that unbelievers, whether Jews or Gentiles, were allowed into Christian gatherings. We see this in 1 Corinthians 14:24. So one of these unbelievers might have suddenly shouted in the middle of public worship, “Jesus is cursed.” To the inexperienced Corinthians, a mad shout of this kind (reminding them of the shrieks of frenzied worshippers of other ancient religions) might mistakenly appear inspired.

As I said, the first test of any spiritual gift is doctrinal. If a person holds a wrong view of Jesus Christ, then what he says and does is not of God. This reiterates what we considered before that the authority concerning spiritual gifts does not come from personal experience; it comes from the Word of God. No matter

what someone may say they are experiencing, if it does not match up with the revealed Word of God, it is not of the Holy Spirit. We saw that God's purpose for establishing the Church and giving gifts is so that God may be glorified through Christ which is the ultimate goal of spiritual gifts.

In the latter part of verse 3, "*Jesus is Lord*" refers to a true confession of a believer. We saw that an unbeliever can say the words "Jesus is Lord," and a false convert can profess "Jesus is Lord." But a true confession of who Jesus is will only be by the Holy Spirit.

"*Jesus is Lord*" refers to His Lordship—Jesus is Master. A believer will readily confess that Jesus is Master of his life. We saw that in our study of Romans 10:9, ". . . *that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord . . .*" I reminded you that the Lordship of Christ is clearly taught in Romans 6:6 and 22.

Romans 6:6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

Romans 6:22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.

A Christian is one who is led by the Spirit to accept Jesus as Master of his or her life. We have considered that a good definition of a Christian is one who has died to self and lives for Christ. Believers are enslaved to Christ.

So we considered that the first observation we can make concerning the opening verses of 1 Corinthians 12 is that the ultimate goal for spiritual gifts is the glory of Christ. The next observations that we see in verse 4 and the following verses have to do with the unifying quality of spiritual gifts—particularly, Unity in Source and Unity in Purpose.

Introduction to Spiritual Gifts, Part 3

I need to clarify that unity in diversity in the biblical sense is not to be confused with our culture's chant of unity in diversity concerning religions. "COEXIST" is a mantra today concerning religious variety. This mantra claims that all religions lead to God. This is false and is a satanic message. There is only one God, and there is only one way to Him; and that is through Jesus Christ. Jesus is supremely narrow. The way to heaven is supremely narrow. Jesus said in John 14:6, "*I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.*"

Jesus also said in Matthew 7:13-14, *“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”*

COEXIST is the broad way that leads to destruction. “Unity in diversity” has a very different meaning in our American culture than what it does in Scripture. In the Church, however, there is genuine unity in diversity. When it comes to the body of Christ, the Church is one, yet it is made up of many members. This is unity in diversity.

Look at your own body. Not every member of your body performs the same function, so also in the body of Christ. Let's begin this morning by considering the unifying qualities of spiritual gifts.

Unity in Source for Spiritual Gifts

4Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord.

6There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

Verse 4 speaks of variety yet the same Spirit. Verse 5 also speaks of variety yet the same Lord. Finally verse 6 too speaks of variety yet the same God. The Corinthians may have thought that there were multiple sources of the gifts as with the polytheistic Greek gods. So they were in competition with each other in the church. But the source of the gifts in the Church is One, that is the Triune God, and Paul explains this.

Verse 4 *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.* Variety is a word about diversity or assortment of gifts. We are going to learn in our study of spiritual gifts that there are a many ways to categorize the gifts depending on what is emphasized: serving gifts and speaking gifts; temporary gifts and permanent gifts; miraculous and non-miraculous gifts. No matter how you look at the variety of gifts, Paul's point here is there is only one source of spiritual gifts—the Holy Spirit.

Verse 5 *And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. Ministries . . .* Points to the fact that the function of the gifts is for ministry. The word used here is the word for “serve, servant..diakonia,” from which we get our word “deacon.” Spiritual gifts are not given as badges rather as tools for ministry.

Even Christians with the same basic gift may manifest that gift in many different

ways. For example, a person with the gift of teaching may be gifted in teaching young children; another may be gifted to teach teachers, like a seminary professor. Someone with the gift of evangelism may be able to powerfully address large crowds, while another with the same gift is better in one-on-one situations. The emphasis is on variety. So there are a variety of ministries, but the source is the same—the Lord.

Verse 6 And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. The Greek word translated “*effects*” emphasizes the miraculous work of God. There were multiple times in Acts where the miracles produced at the hands of the apostles were mistaken as the ability of men and not God.

In Lystra, in Acts 14, they tried to sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, thinking that they are gods after they healed a man by the power of the Holy Spirit. Somewhat similar in Acts 8, Simon, the magician, thought he could purchase the power of God from Peter.

Here, in 1 Corinthians, Paul is highlighting that it is God who works miracles through those who are so gifted, not men. The Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Father work together through the variety of the gifts to bring about unity. The main point is this: There are a variety of gifts yet one Giver, and thus the unifying quality of spiritual gifts thus proclaiming The Unity of Source.

This truth confronted the arrogance and self-serving attitude of the Corinthians. Paul reiterates the truth by asking, “What do you have that you did not receive? Nothing. If you received it, then why are you boasting as if you are the source?” Paul states that there is a variety of gifts, but the source is the Triune God; there is Unity in Source.

I came across a humorous statement about unity in the Church. “In the Church, there is the bond of family, yet room for variety. The devil tries to disrupt unity. Two chickens tied at the legs and thrown over a clothesline may be united, but they do not have unity.”

We are reminded of the humility needed that Paul mentions in Romans 12:3, “*For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.*” Furthermore, there is also Unity of Purpose.

Unity of Purpose for Spiritual Gifts

But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good

1 Corinthians 12:7

Manifestation of the Spirit The idea of a “Spirit-led church” is a popular concept today. Paul’s description of a church that is manifesting the Spirit is one where people are unselfishly giving of themselves to one another. The common good is the goal. When there is unity in a local body, Jesus said the result is that the world will know that God has sent Christ into the world. The Spirit is manifest in a church when people are exercising their gifts for the common good not just concerned for self.

For the common good . . . points to the fact that the gathering of the Church should be a time of coming together for mutual building each other up. It is a time of enjoyable, worshipful, uplifting edification and togetherness.

As we consider Paul's introduction of Spiritual Gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:1-7, we see that the ultimate goal of spiritual gifts is the glory of Christ. Furthermore, there is unity in source and unity in purpose for spiritual gifts. Studying verse 8 requires us to look at each individual gift in detail. It is important to keep in mind what we have just learned concerning the glory of Christ and the unifying quality of the gifts.

Before we get into the specifics of verse 8, I want to provide a couple of helpful thoughts in order to clear our thinking about the gifts. First, I want to give you a list of spiritual gifts that are mentioned in different portions of Scripture that we will be considering over the next few weeks, Lord willing. Second, the gifts are grouped into categories. So I want to give you some categories that will help us identify and distinguish the gifts.

First, here is a list of gifts mentioned in the New Testament (there may be others that we add as we go along):

- ! Administration
- ! Apostleship
- ! Discernment—distinguishing of spirits
- ! Evangelism
- ! Exhortation
- ! Faith
- ! Giving
- ! Healing
- ! Miracles
- ! Helps

- ! Leadership
- ! Mercy
- ! Prophecy
- ! Serving
- ! Speaking in unknown languages
- ! Interpreting unknown languages
- ! Teaching
- ! Pastor/Teacher
- ! Word of Wisdom / Word of Knowledge

Second, there are Four Categories of gifts. Category One is the revelatory gifts. These are gifts that were the avenue of revelation during the establishment of the Church for the purpose of speaking and writing revelation, i.e. the gift of prophecy. Revelatory gifts were given so that the Church may have the inspired, finished New Testament. The Bible is a final, fixed body of revelation that God wanted for the church for all time.

We no longer need the gifts that operated to give us this information. We have it written down in the Bible. Therefore, we do not have, for example, the gift of an apostle in the Church today. We will have more to say on this later.

Category Two is the confirmatory gifts. These are miraculous gifts given to confirm the messenger and the message. Mark 16:20 clarifies what I mean by confirming. *“And they [the apostles] went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed.”* Mark verifies that signs were a confirmation of the words which the apostles spoke.

Hebrews 2:3-4 also gives verification for the confirmatory gifts. *“. . . how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard (apostles), God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.”*

Category Three are service gifts. These gifts are given for heightened abilities energized by the Holy Spirit to take care of the physical, spiritual, emotional needs of the body.

Category Four are teaching gifts. Such gifts are given to instruct the body so it may grow in understanding who God is, what He has done, is doing and will do, as well as what His will is for His people.

So now we have a list of the gifts along with the categories of these gifts. Having the list and the categories enable us to identify and distinguish spiritual gifts.

Verses 8 states, *“For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;”* The manner in which Paul writes verses 8-10 makes clear that he has in mind separate groups of gifts. He communicates in this way because, although the gifts are distinct from each other, spiritual gifts are united in purpose.

For instance, the gift of “the word of wisdom” and the gift of “the word of knowledge” are grouped together. They are listed separately but are closely related. Next you have the grouping of the gift of faith, gifts of healing and works of power/miracles, prophecy and distinguishing of spirits. Then there is the group of speaking in diverse languages and interpretation of languages.

Interestingly Paul compiles these groups by using two different Greek words for our one English word “another.” For example, he joins the two gifts, the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge by using a simple Greek word for “another.” But when he moves to the next group beginning in verse 9, Paul uses the Greek word ἕτερος which means “another of a different kind.”

He next separates the gifts that involve faith (gifts of healings, works of power, prophecy and distinguishing of spirits) from the previous gifts (the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge). Next, at the end of verse 10, Paul separates the gifts of speaking in a previously unknown language and the interpretation of a previously unknown language from the earlier gifts mentioned; and he once again uses the Greek word ἕτερος meaning “another of a different kind.”

I say all this to make clear that Paul is lumping gifts into groups that will be important for us to keep in mind. If you missed what I just said, I will repeat it often in the next few weeks. The first two gifts mentioned are the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge.

Verse 8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

Paul begins by mentioning these gifts most likely because they are high profile gifts. Because of the spectacular nature of these gifts, those so gifted gained a certain prominence. Sadly in some churches, this prominence was used to

cause division. However, the unity of the source of the gifts militates against a divisive attitude.

The Word of Wisdom (or the Message of Revelation)

This gift pertains to the supernatural revelation of God given through the apostles and prophets. The content of their revelation can be found in all of the New Testament. This “word of wisdom” is different than an ability that pertains to wisdom gained by Bible study and the ability to apply it to people’s lives.

Wayne Grudem says this about the gifts of the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge: “At the beginning, it must be understood that these two gifts are mentioned nowhere else in Scripture, and no other early Christian literature outside the Bible has been found to use these phrases concerning any spiritual gift either. This means that the only information we have about these gifts is contained in this verse. We have the words used to describe these two gifts, and the context in which the phrases occur.”

I would add that extreme dogmatism concerning the exact definition of these gifts must be avoided. Because this is the only occurrence, we must look at how Paul uses these terms. We are especially helped if we can see how he uses these terms within the same letter or within other of Paul's letters.

Word “Logos” is the Greek term translated “word.” It can be translated as, “word, message, prophecy or statement.” So this could be translated as the gift of “the message of wisdom” or “the prophecy of wisdom.” It is not just the spiritual gift of wisdom, but “the word of wisdom.” This is not a gift where someone has more wisdom than someone else or more knowledge. It is the gift of “the message, prophecy or word of wisdom.”

Wisdom Concerning the word “wisdom” we are fortunate, because Paul uses this term “wisdom” in another portion in this letter in 1 Corinthians 2. In that portion this word “wisdom” is used in relationship to the work of the Holy Spirit giving revelation. What we find in 1 Corinthians 2 is that Paul uses “wisdom” as a synonym for “revelation,” so essentially we might refer to this gift as “the message of revelation.”

Please read with me concerning wisdom 1 Corinthians 2:6-7. “*Yet we do speak wisdom (Sophia, same word in 1 Corinthians 12) among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory*”

We can say from this verse that this “wisdom” is God’s wisdom. It is a wisdom not of this age, so it is not human wisdom. This wisdom has been hidden until the time of Paul. It was predestined before the ages, and it is connected to a mystery.

I want to read you a quote by a bible scholar that is vital in understanding Paul's use of this word “wisdom.” He says, “By mentioning wisdom in connection with *mystery* and what is *hidden*, this passage points clearly to divine revelation received by these early Christian leaders, which they in turn communicated to others in the Church.”

This connection between wisdom and revelation is made also in Ephesians 1:17 where Paul prays, “. . . *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.*”

1 Corinthians 2:10 states, “*For to us God revealed them (this wisdom) through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.*” Thus the connection between wisdom and revelation agrees with the context of 1 Corinthians 12 in that the “word of wisdom” or the “message of wisdom” is a gift of the Spirit to certain ones, and it is given through the Spirit as opposed to just one’s ability to study the Bible and gain wisdom.

Verses 12 and 13 of the same chapter in 1 Corinthians continue by saying, “*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.*” This wisdom or revelation is taught by the Spirit using spiritual words and thoughts and not man’s thoughts.

Based on 1 Corinthians 2, we conclude that this wisdom given by the Holy Spirit that Paul is referring to is not just wisdom in general or man’s wisdom: it is God’s Wisdom. God's wisdom has been hidden until the time of the apostles, but then was revealed to Paul and the apostles by the Spirit. Spiritual words and thoughts are needed to communicate the very wisdom of God. Essentially, we can begin to define the gift of “the word of wisdom” as a message of revelation given by the Holy Spirit to Paul and other apostles and to prophets to communicate to the Church.

With that in mind, please turn to Ephesians 3. I want to show you how this

connection between this gift of “the message of revelation” or the “word of wisdom” fleshes out in another of Paul's writings.

Ephesians 3:1-10 ¹For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— ²if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you; ³that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery (all the same terminology attached to “wisdom” in 1 Corinthians), as I wrote before in brief. ⁴By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; ⁶to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, ⁷of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. ⁸To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; ¹⁰so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

Paul was given a gift to make known the wisdom of God so that God’s wisdom may be revealed. The gift of “the word of wisdom” or said in another way, “the message of revelation,” refers to the transference of revelation by God to those with this gift. It includes the understanding and the communicating of God’s wisdom that had not been known until the time of the apostles. It involves new revelation at the time of the early Church, because God was disclosing new information not known until then.

2 Peter 3:15 “. . . and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him (this refers to the revelation given to Paul), wrote to you”

Much of the revelation given to Paul relating to the Gospel is referred to as a “mystery” which means that which had not been disclosed before. Colossians 1:24-29 speaks of the mystery of Christ. Romans 11:25 proclaims the mystery of the setting aside of the Jews for a time. 1 Corinthians 15:51 tells of the mystery of the Resurrection and the Rapture. Ephesians 3:1-10 declares the mystery of the Church. Each of these passages reveal truths that had not been revealed before.

So when Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 2 of the wisdom that God revealed to the

apostles and prophets, we see that it covers a wide range of revelation which had been hidden until then.

Let us go back to 1 Corinthians 12:8. In the broader context of 1 Corinthians, we see that wisdom refers to the whole message of God that has been hidden and was a mystery until the time of the apostles. It is the spiritual gift of “the message of wisdom” or the “the message of revelation.” It was new revelation that the Spirit was giving to New Testament prophets and the apostles.

If you came here this morning believing that the gift of “the word of wisdom” was a Spirit-energized ability to study the Scriptures and to apply it to peoples lives through speaking or writing, I would whole-heartedly encourage you to continue what you are doing. I may differ with you concerning what that gift is called that you are exercising, but we are exhorted in many places to do that very act of studying and applying the truth of the Scriptures in others lives.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

However, if you came this morning believing that the gift of “the word of wisdom” is a divine revelation containing information outside of the Word of God, I would disagree with you. It is clear from both the Scriptures and Church history that revelation in the manner of what the apostles received has ceased with the passing of the apostles.

There are many today saying they have the gift of the word of wisdom or the word of knowledge who claim that God reveals to them distinct information about a person's future, what they should do, or what is going to happen to others. They may even say that they have new revelation from God about theology, i.e. what heaven is like. They are in error.

Conclusion

As I said in the opening of this morning, Jesus said in Matthew 24:24, *“For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.”* There will be those who mislead, and I must tell you, they will not have a poster that says, “I am here to mislead you.” They will appear slick. They will appear as if they know what they are talking about. But don't listen to them. Go and search the Scripture.

I believe that, even before the time that Matthew 24 speaks of, there will be

these false prophets who claim to be speaking a message from God who will deceive by way of signs and wonders. Therefore we must be extremely careful of what we hold to doctrinally.

We are told that there will be those who profess to speak for God but are false prophets. This requires us to strongly apply the test given at the beginning of 1 Corinthians 12. The issue is not the manifestation of some kind of wonder or sign; rather, the issue is that the message of the person of Jesus Christ is accurately communicated and this glorifies Him.