**Spiritual Gifts - Preparation For Christian Service - BD25-01**

We are looking at the background of spiritual gifts. We have been studying Satan and the demons. Satan, as the opponent of God, seeks to spoil the plan of God, particularly as that plan is expresses in Project Footstool in Psalm 110:1. During the millennium, all the demons and Satan himself will be removed from active operation upon the earth. They will be under the foot of Jesus Christ as conquered personalities. Satan also seeks to counterfeit what God does, since he wants to be like God. The increased pace of Satanic activity in the world today reflects this desire on Satan’s part to be like God. This is reflected in the rise in the tongues movement, in the rise of miracle healers, and in the rise of occultism—the attempts to have contact with the spirit world.

So, Satan tries to neutralize the effects of the works of Christians through his counterfeit activities. We have reviewed, therefore, the nature of the church age, in order for us to understand the background of genuine Christian service. This requires an understanding of doctrine, especially the doctrine of the spiritual gifts and the role of the Holy Spirit by which the believer’s Christian service will produce divine good. Ignorance concerning the church and the doctrine of spirituality opens the door to Christian counterfeits, which is so prominently expressed today in tongues, healers, and occultism.

**The Church**

So, we’re going to review the background of Christian service in the church age. We saw that the word “church” itself means an assembly of people called out of the mass of unsaved Jews and Gentiles to form a new and separate company of believers. The word “church” is used of the universal body of believers everywhere, as an organism; and, it is also used of the local group of believers as an organization. We also found that the church began on the day of Pentecost, and that it will end at the rapture. The church is not an extension of the nation of Israel. The church is a unique body of believers in history. It has its own beginning, its own program, and its own conclusions. The teachings which were directed toward the Jewish people under the law in the Old Testament do not apply to Christians under grace in the New Testament. The teachings of grace are largely found in the epistles. The Church was a mystery in the Old Testament; that it, it was never revealed—it was a hidden truth. There is no concept in the Old Testament of Jews and Gentiles being formed into a new body of saints.

The church also has some distinctive characteristics. These are features that were never true of Old Testament Saints, but which are permanently true of Christians in this age of grace. They are: union with Jesus Christ; believers indwelt by Jesus Christ for fellowship; believers indwelt by the Holy Spirit for service; every believer his own priest; the canon of Scripture completed—all of the books written that God intended to be written; believers are called to live a supernatural way of life; and, every believer is an ambassador of God. None of this was true in the Old Testament. If you understand the doctrine of the church, you’ll have an understanding of your role in this age of grace.

**Spirituality**

Secondly, we looked at the doctrine of spirituality. We looked at the fact that there is true spirituality and false spirituality. Under true spirituality, there is a difference between the ministry of the Holy Spirit at the point of salvation, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit after salvation. Some of the confusion relative to the Holy Spirit today is because people are trying to bring ministries that take place only at salvation and put them subsequently to salvation. There were certain things that were done for each believer at salvation. They are: regeneration; baptism; indwelling; sealing; and, He gives spiritual gifts at the point of your spiritual birth. All of this is automatic.

However, there is a function of the Spirit of God after salvation, and that’s called the filling of the Spirit. This is repeated many times in the experience of the Christian, and the Bible tells Christians to seek to be filled with the Spirit—and you do that by meeting the condition of the confession of known sin.

So spirituality and carnality are mutually exclusive. They are absolute states. You are either spiritual or you’re carnal. When sin is confessed, you are filled with the Spirit, and you are spiritual. When known sin is willfully unconfessed, you are carnal, and you are not spiritual, and you are not filled with the Spirit. Spirituality is a matter of imitating Jesus Christ by means of the filling of the Holy Spirit.

There are certain objectives that are achieved by spirituality: We enter into partnership with the divine nature; we imitate God; we glorify Christ; and, we fulfill the Law of Moses. Spirituality is not dependent upon keeping the Law of Moses. That’s legalism. Spirituality produces the character of the Incarnate Christ. This is called the fruit of the Spirit. Spirituality is achieved by confession of all known sins. This places the Holy Spirit in control of your life. There is only one condition in the Word of God for being spiritual, and that is telling God what you did—naming the sin to him, citing it and declaring that you were wrong and it was sin. Filling of the Spirit is crucial to the exercise of spiritual gifts. That’s what we’re getting at—we’re giving background for spiritual gifts, which we’re going to be taking up, one by one.

So spirituality is achieved by placing God the Holy Spirit in control, and you do it by confessing known sings. There will be certain results of spirituality: Jesus Christ is magnified in your life; you have the ability then to understand doctrine; you’ll have effective witnessing—your witnessing will be in the right time to the right person in the right place in the right context. There are a lot of people who are bungling and mulling through their sense of responsibility to witness because they are not filled with the Spirit, and they ought to be keeping their mouths shut until they are filled with the Spirit of God, and then the Spirit of God will give them effective witnessing. You can zap people up for the idea of witnessing, which is what Satan does, and keep them ignorant of doctrine so that their witnessing is ineffective, or ill-placed, or they will not have the sustaining base to continue doing it. Somebody is forever going to have to harangue you to get out and tell people about God.

Another result of spirituality is personal guidance and personal assurance. You will have guidance for true worship. You will have guidance for a proper prayer content. You will have capacity to help other believers to be restored to spirituality. There will be production of divine good. We looked at certain terms for spirituality. One of the positive terms is “walk in the Spirit,” and another one is “walk in the light.” There are some negative terms, such as “quench not the Spirit” which means don’t be producing human good. “Grieve not the Spirit” means don’t be tolerating willful known sins.

We found that emotions or ecstatics do not indicate spirituality. Some people think that if they get happy, then they are spiritual. So they go around trying to create an emotional ecstatic happy condition in order to feel that they are advancing what is going on with God. Many times, people who are seeking the tongues experience get on fire for the Lord. They start going to church, reading the Bible, contributing their money, and service and ministry. Then somebody notes how wonderful this is to see how spiritual they have become and how active they are for the Lord once they got the tongues. This put them on the job. However, in reality, the old sin nature within that individual has been conned into thinking that he has achieved some spectacular relationship with God. He is so happy and excited over what he thought he had secured that it has galvanized him into action. Anytime you see somebody who is a spiritual dud in one place where the Word of God is preached, and now he gets active in another place, you may almost inevitably know that he has become excited in his old sin nature over something by which he thinks he has improved his situation or made an advancement, and now he’s getting hot and getting with it. There is a fantastic amount of service to God which is done entirely in the flesh, and this comes as a shock to most Christians.

So be careful about the idea that if you’re happy, then God is blessing you; or, if you’re happy, then you’re in the place of service. This is the public relations image we give toward Christian service. We want to convey that it’s all fun, that it’s glamorous, it’s so delightful, and it’s so exciting to serve the Lord. Well, it may be all of those things. However, the old sin nature, the old flesh, can produce every one of those feelings. The unsaved believer can be just as faithful in going to church, giving his money, and reading the Bible as you can. It doesn’t mean a thing. So get this straight. The knowledge of doctrine is what gives us the knowledge and understanding of the filling of the Spirit.

There is a false spirituality that we looked at. This is the result of equating the means of spirituality with the results. There is a means to being spiritual. Out of that spirituality comes certain results. People get this twisted. They look at the results of spiritual, and they think that this is how to get spiritual, to get on the job with the Lord. They think that if they do certain things then they will be spiritual. They get the process reversed. This is self-destructive to all spiritual progress in your life. Consequently, some people believe they will become spiritual by imitating certain styles of dress, certain styles of speech, or certain mannerisms. All they do is end up looking foolish. It doesn’t make them spiritual.

Some people think they’ll get spiritual by observing a certain set of taboos. Everybody creates his own set of what he thinks is nice and what is not nice to do. However, these are your own set of what you like and what you don’t like. They will not make you spiritual.

Others think they are spiritual by comparing themselves with somebody else. They find somebody who is worse than themselves, so they think they have made spiritual progress. Or, you practice asceticism. You deny something to yourself. You find something that you really like and you just deny it for yourself. You just feel so happy, and you’ve just risen fifteen feet toward the Lord in your spirituality. No, you haven’t.

You may pursue certain highs of emotions and ecstatics in order to be spiritual. Or, you may perform your rituals. You take your holy water and sprinkle it. You cross yourself. You recite certain prayers. You go through your rituals which will not make you spiritual. Or, you practice self-crucifixion of your old sin nature. You make things hard on yourself.

Or, you engage in a program of activities. Churches love to give this idea to Christians: “If you people want to be spiritual, then get with the program. Start being a club leader or a Sunday School teacher. Start doing this or that, and get in on the program. Well, all of those things are very legitimate and proper things for you to do as the Spirit of God leads you to exercise your gift within the program activities of the local church, but that doesn’t make you spiritual—because you’re in the program.

Finally, you are not spiritual by self-improvement of your character. Many of you feel you need to impose some self-improvement on your character, and a lot of us would agree, but this does not make you spiritual—because you have imposed some improvement on yourself.

**Spiritual Gifts**

So we pick the story up this morning, with that as background. We are looking at the background of spiritual gifts. There are some terms that we ought to look at first. Number one is the “gift of the spirit.” The gift of the spirit is used in the Bible in such a way that it means two things. One, it refers to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; that is, God the Holy Spirit Himself taking up His residence on this earth when he came to fulfill His role during the Church Age (Acts 1:5, 8). Also, the gift of the Spirit refers to the coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell the believer at the point of salvation. He comes to you and takes up your body and makes it His temple. That’s why we have no holy building. That’s why it’s perfectly legitimate for us to meet in this cavernous large gym auditorium. This is as holy a place as any magnificent cathedral that you could build anyplace, because God does not live in a building of stone, wood, and mortar. He has your body as His temple. That’s what He comes into at the point of salvation. When the Bible talks about keeping the Lord’s house holy, it’s talking about your physical structure, not about what you should do here in this physical building. This is not the meaning of the Lord’s house in this age. However, we do get the gift of the Spirit of God (Acts 10:45) when He comes to indwell us.

There’s a second term, “the gifts of the Spirit” (plural) (1 Corinthians 12:4, 11). These are spiritual abilities which the Lord sovereignly bestows upon every believer at the point of salvation. Every Christian has at least one spiritual ability, and a great number have more than one spiritual ability, or gift. These gifts are bestowed as the means by which you are to serve the Lord. You can see why it’s important to get some understanding of spiritual gifts. You can’t really serve God and produce divine good until you know your gift. When you know your spiritual gifts, you know how to server the Lord.

Number three is “the fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22-23). The fruit of the Spirit comprises spiritual graces or virtues produced by the Holy Spirit within a spiritual Christian. When you are a spiritual Christian, you possess the fruit of the Spirit. It’s a single fruit with nine segments. It is summed up by the word “love”, the first word (“agape” love)—this condition of the fruit of the Spirit. Very often the word “love” is used in the Bible and equated with this production of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It speaks about love, and it really means to be filled with the Spirit so that you are producing the fruit of the Spirit.

These three terms are key: the gift of the Spirit—the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and into the life of the individual believer at the point of salvation; the gifts of the Spirit—the various spiritual gifts for service; and the fruit of the Spirit—which is the expression of the character of Jesus Christ.

Now we proceed with the introduction of spiritual gifts. Will you turn with me please to 1 Corinthians chapter 12 which takes up in some detail in chapters 12, 13, and 14, this problem of spiritual gifts. The apostle Paul says, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.”

**Ignorance**

In verse 1, he takes up a problem of ignorance among Christians. The phrase “now concerning” is a Greek expression that reoccurs in the book of 1 Corinthians, and it signals the beginning of a discussion by the apostle in answer to a question that was presented to him. You’ll find this in chapter 7 verse 1 where he begins with the same expression as he takes up a question that was put to him, “… now concerning things about which you wrote to me.” We find this again in verse 25, and in chapter 8 verse1—“now concerning.”

Here’s a question that was put to Paul about spiritual gifts. There was a confusion in this church. Paul spends chapters 12, 13, and 14 answering this question that was put to him.

In the phrase, “spiritual gifts,” the word “gifts” is in italics. This means that the word has been inserted in the translation because it was not actually in the Greek. What is in the text is the word “spiritual” which is the Greek word “pneumatikos.” This word means “spiritual things.” So Paul is saying, “Now taking up the question that you directed tome concerning spiritual things. However, in the fourth verse of 1 Corinthians 12, we read, “Now there are diversities of gifts.” The word “gifts” here is the Greek word “charisma.” This word does mean gifts. It comes from the Greek word for grace (“charis”), and it indicates that these gifts are something that we receive by grace.

So the context indicates that we are talking about gifts. The particular spiritual things that he is talking about are spiritual gifts, so it is proper to insert it up there in verse one.

“Now concerning spiritual gifts brethren”—He is talking to those whom Galatians 3:26 refers to as the family of God. He is talking to believers. “I would not have you ignorant,” and the word “would not” is the Greek word “thelo.” “Thelo” expresses a desire but it connotes a desire that has a quality of emotion. He is saying, “I have a deep feeling about this. If there’s anything I do not want to see existing among Christians, it’s the stupidity and the ignorance of doctrine. I do not desire for you to be ignorant,” and particularly here concerning the doctrine of spiritual gifts. This word is in the present tense which connotes the regular attitude of Paul the teacher. It’s active, which indicates that Paul himself was actively involved in removing ignorance among Christian people, and you should do the same. It should be the pattern of your life to get take tapes and get yourself acquainted with the various segments and the logical progression, especially of the basic training series. Then as you come across people that have spiritual problems, you say, “Let me give you something that I think might help you with your particular problem,” and then give that person the segment. If you find someone who is in some misery over sins in his life because nobody ever explained to him about the old sin nature being taken into the Christian life, and he was just as rotten after he was after he was a Christian as he was before, but what to do with that quality in himself, how to deal with it, and what it does between him and God: Give him tapes number four and five and say, “Listen to these. These will explain what’s going on in your life, and it will tell you how to deal with sin and what God has provided for you in this respect.”

Paul says, “I have a deep feeling about people being ignorant in spiritual things, and I’m actively engaged in doing something about it.” You should be too. The word “ignorant” connotes a primary problem in the Christian life—ignorance of God’s thinking in Bible doctrine. It is ignorance here in the Corinthians that led to ruinous abuses relative to spiritual gifts. Here was a church that was carrying on the greatest perversion of tongues equal to everything we see taking place today—the same ignorance about tongues today as they experienced then.

So every church needs someone to apply himself to cranking out the principles of the Word of God or else ignorance will move in on the congregation. Here is how it works:

**The Soul, the Mind, and Emotions**

The soul has the mind. It has two sides to that mind. It has a perceptive side, and this is where you take in doctrine, as you sit in church and listen to a pastor-teacher, and you’re filled with the Spirit, and here’s where you’re learning doctrine. It also has a directive side of the mind, and God has created us psychologically so that this side of our mind gives directions to our actions. This side of our mind tells our emotions what to do. This directive side of the mind has a frame of reference from doctrine. It has divine viewpoint from doctrine. It has a standard and values in its conscience as a result from doctrine. So, a Christian who is filled with the Spirit and who understands doctrine has the directive side of his mind in control of his soul. We’re talking about your soul here. Your mind is telling your emotions what to do, and therefore you are a stable person. You are a stable believer. Your mind is directing.

Now here’s the relationship that God established between the mind and the emotions. The mind is comparable to the right man in the marriage relationship, and the emotions are comparable to the right woman. The particular man is to be the aggressor in relation to his particular women. The particular woman is to be the responder. There is no way that you can exist in the human race if you violate these roles for which God has created you. If you are a man, you are to be an aggressor, relative to the woman. If you are a woman, you are to be a responder, relative to the man. However, suppose that the reverse takes place. Suppose that the mentality is devoid of doctrine. It has no frame of reference by which to make decisions and judgments. It has no divine viewpoint to think God’s thoughts after Him. It has no conscience to guide in its actions. Instead, the emotions take over, and the emotions become the aggressor, and the mind becomes the responder. The mind is then blanked out. The mind is absolutely blanked out of any governing function. Your emotions take over, and it’s your emotions that kick off your actions. However, there is no information in the emotions. The emotions do not contain a mentality. Your emotions don’t contain intelligence. Your emotions do not contain divine viewpoint. They don’t have a conscience. There is nothing in your emotions to direct your being. What you have is a woman trying to tell a man what to do, and that creates misery every time. When a man is telling a woman what to do, that creates happiness every time. Sometimes she thinks it’s not, but many a woman who has gotten rid of a man who is telling her what to do, later woke up to the sad fact that that man was her right man, and he had the good sense to play his role, and he was doing the greatest thing in the world for her by telling her what to do, because she was made stable and controlled and he played his role. Well, if there’s nothing in your emotions, what’s going to guide? I comes from all the slop and all the junk and all the inanities of your old sin nature come cycling up to your emotions. Your emotions on the basis of what it draws from the cesspool of your old sin nature directs your life. Now is that what you want to do? That’s what happens when you let your emotions attack the directive side of your mind and equalize it. Many believers are moving through life in this condition. They love to say, “Well, I just feel this is the right thing to do.” Oh, you do, do you? Thinking with your emotions—that’s what a woman does, because God made her like that. She is inclined to be emotional unless her right man is controlling her direction.

So she invites someone over to dinner. She puts on a beautiful roast. One of the guest decides to say something nice, so he says, “Oh, where did you get this meat?” Now the husband says, “Down at Greenberg’s Meat Market.” However, the wife answers, “Why, what’s wrong with it?” This is because she is feeling-oriented. When you let a woman run your life, it results in misery and trouble for herself and for you. And the same thing happens when you let emotions control your life. The people who are talking in the gibberish of tongues; running around with the demonic activity of the healers’ racket; delving into the world of spiritism and occultism. People are functioning on their emotions, and this is disastrous. You better learn how God made you, the facets of your being, and get your psychology straight within yourself, and then start feeding yourself. When you do that, you have nothing but blessings ahead of you. This is the condition that a faithful pastor-teacher forever and constantly fights—people thinking with their emotions. That’s why he becomes the brunt of such violent swings of emotional antagonism. People who he resists, who are thinking with their emotions, strike back with that emotional vengeance. It is unbelievable how unstable they are in those swings, and they go up and down. A woman cannot assume authority over a man, and get away with it. Nor can your emotions assume authority over your directive mind and get away with it. It results in wild and irrational swings in your actions.

This was the condition of ignorance that existed in the Corinthian church. These people had become so ignorant in their directive mind, they had been so failed by their pastor-teachers and let down in their instruction, that the people had begun thinking with their emotions. They were just pulling up all of the vile stuff from their old sin natures, and operating on that.

So here’s the condition. This church abounded, of all things, with more spiritual gifts than any other New Testament church. 1 Corinthians 1:7 tells us that this church was lacking in no single spiritual gift. Yet Corinth was the most carnal group of believers in all of the New Testament church. So, possessing a spiritual gift does not make you spiritual. Possessing a spiritual gift doesn’t mean that you have risen to some level of spiritual maturity either. It is important to distinguish between your spiritual gift and being spiritual. I think you know the difference. Your spiritual gift is your ability for service. Spirituality is your relationship to God the Holy Spirit that He is controlling through confession of known sins. The proper use of your gift depends upon this filling.

The Corinthians church was infiltrated by false teaching on two things: legalism and emotionalism. Chapters 12 through 14 are refuting this. Legalism is spirituality by works. Emotionalism is seeking an ecstatic condition in order to achieve what would be considered a spiritual level of life.

1 Corinthians 12:1 says, “Now concerning the question of spiritual gifts, Christians, I do not desire (I have a great feeling in my heart—an emotional attachment toward you) that you should not be ignorant (in the directive side of your mind) concerning the matter of spiritual gifts (so that you are operating out of the emptiness of your emotions).”

Verse 2: “You know that you were Gentiles carried away unto these dumb idols even as you were led.” Paul reminds these Corinthian Christians of their unsaved days when they were stupid enough to be worshipping dumb idols. “You know” means information of the mind, and in the mind, which is well known. “You were” connotes a state in the past that they constantly had by choice. “Gentiles” is the old group of humanity to which they belonged before they moved into the new group of Christians. And they were “carried away.” In the Greek, this is imperfect passive which means that in the past they were continually carried away by this ignorance which they absorbed from their surrounding culture and society. It’s passive, which indicates that they were just helplessly carried along. Once they were empty in the directive side of their mentality, they were just helpless. They were carried away and there was nothing they could do about it until somebody came along and said, “Wait a minute. I’m going to teach you some divine fact and viewpoint.” Until somebody came along and filled that mentality with some information, they were finished. They could not do anything. They were just helplessly carried along and carried away, and that’s exactly what happened.

Furthermore, it says, “When you were Gentiles, you were carried away “unto” these dumb idols. This word “unto” is the Greek word “tros.” With the accusative case in the Greek, this means face-to-face. What the apostle Paul is addressing here is the fact that they stood and looked at these stupid objects that they had created, and they said, “Ah, my god.”

Paul is saying that is really dumb. You really have to be dumb to stand before something you made and say, “Ah, my god, please help me do this and this and this.” He reminds them what, when they were unbelievers, their ignorance of doctrine has led them into. They were helpless before it. Whatever way they had gotten into it, they were helpless victims of spiritual ignorance.

So what did Paul do? Well in their unsaved ignorance, he gave them the gospel, and they believed, and it was to their blessing. Now they had entered a new realm, but they remembered some things. They remembered that when they used to go to the heathen temple, they used to talk in tongues—a gibberish just like the tongues movement does today. They used to do this all the time down at the heathen temple in Corinth. They would go in there and they would have this ecstatic happy experience of talking gibberish. What Paul is getting at, as he goes into this chapter, is that this isn’t the way that spiritual gifts work. They were bringing that ignorance that they once had toward those dumb idols, and they tried using tongues, which is what was happening in the church at Corinth—some of them. He is going to straighten this out and explain to them how the gift of tongues really operates, and what its place is.

Spiritual gifts are not to be patterned after those old days when they were associated with those dumb idols. The relationship of the Holy Spirit in verse 3 is this: Wherefore I give you to understand (therefore, for this reason, I give you, I reveal to you, I cause you to understand), that no man speaking by the Spirit of God (nobody, man or woman, habitually under the control of the Holy Spirit, actively speaking out) is going to call Jesus accursed that is under the control of the Holy Spirit. At the point of salvation, whatever you may have called Christ in your unsaved days, however you may have used His name in a curse word, you will not call him accursed, or speak of Him blasphemously, once you are a believer. Instead, what you will do in contrast to what you did when you were worshipping dumb idols, you will call Jesus Lord, also by the Holy Spirit. The word “Lord” has a specific meaning. The Greek word is “kurios.” Kurios means deity. This is why Christians would not serve in the Roman army. To serve in the Roman army, you had to stand up and say, “I believe that Caesar is lord,” which meant to say that Caesar is god and deity. Some ignorant people in our day like to point out that Christians would not serve in the Roman army because they were pacifists, and Christians don’t join armies, and Christians don’t kill enemies on the battle field. Don’t you believe it for a moment. When Christians were required under certain emperors to stand up and say, “The emperor is god,” Christians refused to serve. To call the emperor lord was to call him deity. However, if you are a Christian, you will be moved from your spiritual ignorance into a sphere of enlightenment where this is exactly what you will call Jesus Christ. You will call him Lord.

**The Holy Spirit**

Now the point is, the prominent place that the Holy Spirit plays in enlightenment. Without Him, we are ignorant. Without what He teaches us from this Word, we have no hope. Only He can fill the directive side of your mind. Only He can give you understanding of God’s viewpoint. Only He can lead you in your service. Only He can make clear to you what your spiritual gift is. Only He can lead you into the enlightenment of service that is producing divine good for which God is someday going to reward you, instead of wasting your life in a lot of human good that people will praise you for but which God will reject. You call Jesus Lord as a result of what? The enlightenment of the Spirit of God who removed your ignorance. Just because you call Him Lord is not why you are a Christian.

**Romans 10:9-10**

Turn to Romans 10:9-10 says, “If you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved.” Now a lot of evangelists are notorious for being poor students of doctrine. A lot of evangelists love to take this verse and make a great deal of it, that a Christian, unless he stands up openly and comes forward in a meeting, or raises his hand, or walks an aisle, or makes a public profession, he can’t be saved. I have heard an evangelist make his pitch and say, “Let’s sing a verse of a hymn.” Ten verses later they sing one more verse. Fifteen verses later they’re singing one more verse. Nineteen verses later they’re throwing in one more verse for good measure. Everybody’s stomach is growling with hunger around them, distracting them. They can’t be spiritual. Even the Salvation Army knows that it’s soup before salvation. But these characters are going to crank it out and hit away at getting you to make your public move. Why? Because they sincerely think that this verse says that you can’t be saved. I’ve heard them close the meeting by saying, “We’re going to close the meeting. I’m sorry you didn’t come.” Bang! If you hand your hand in the door, too bad. You should have come when it was open. As if you couldn’t walk out and sit in your car and think this over and say, “You know, I’m a sinner. God has removed the wall. His grace has offered me salvation. He’s right, and I take it.” And sitting there behind the wheel of your car out in the church parking lot, you can be born again. Don’t ever give a person the idea that the door ever slams shut because he didn’t make a public move.

Now here’s what this verse is saying: In the context here in Romans chapter 9, the question came up as to how close salvation is to the Jews. The end of chapter 9 indicates that Jews cannot be saved through the Mosaic Law. But that salvation comes to the Jew as a matter of the heart, as a matter of faith in Jesus Christ. So the question is, in chapter 10, how close is salvation to the Jews. Well, the Mosaic Law outside of them didn’t produce anything. It couldn’t bring salvation. Inside them is their mind which can believe in Christ. With information concerning the gospel, all they have to do is reach out and take it. Their faith toward Christ within them is closer to them than that Mosaic Law that can’t do any good to them whatsoever.

So verse 9 has a cause and effect. This is what you must understand—this cause and effect relationship in this verse, or you will get in trouble. The verse says, “If…” This is a third class condition. That means that not all of you will stand up and publicly profess Christ. Some of you will and some of you won’t. But it has nothing to do with salvation. Therefore it’s an “if” and it’s a third class condition, maybe you will and maybe you won’t. And the first part of the verse is the result. The result, the effect, is “confess,” and in verse 9 it comes first. “If you shall confess…” They reversed the order. This verse puts the effect first. And then, secondly, it puts the cause which is, “if you believe.” So he says, the result is you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, as a result of the cause that you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. And “you shall be saved” is connected with the cause, “believe.” “You shall be saved” is not connected with “confess.” And in order to take care of that problem, because some dummy is going to come along and reverse what is here (in spite of everything the Bible elsewhere teaches), Paul explains it in verse 10. There he puts the cause first and then the effect. “For with the heart man believes unto righteousness (the cause), (and the result is that) with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Maybe you’ll make the confession, and maybe you won’t. But everybody does the believing for salvation. Some people may profess, and some people may not. But it has nothing to do with whether you are saved or not.

**Spiritual Gifts – Summary**

Now let’s summarize the doctrine of the spiritual gifts. This is the background of further detailed study:

1) There are four main areas of Scriptures on spiritual gifts. They are: Ephesians 4:11, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28, Romans 12:6-8, and 1 Peter 4:10-11. In some of these verses, we’re actually given the order of importance of the spiritual gifts. Incidentally, the least important spiritual gift regularly is tongues. The most important spiritual gift is explaining Bible doctrine, the pastor-teacher gift. That does not make the one who possess that particular gift important, nor the one in New Testament times that may have possessed the gift of tongues less important. It simply means that the value to the body, as these gifts are rated, the least valuable is tongues, and the most valuable is teaching.

2) Spiritual gifts are the Father’s testimony to His plan in the Church age (Hebrews 2:4). All gifts operate in relationship to a team effort in the local church ministry. Each Christian’s position on the team is determined by the gift you possess. Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift that you receive at salvation. What you do in the local body is determined by what your gift is, not by what your ambition is.

3) The purpose of spiritual gifts is to build up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:7-16). Gifts are abilities for spiritual service. Gifts are different from the place of service. The place of service is one thing, but how you serve is something else.

4) There are two kinds of spiritual gifts: temporary and permanent. Temporary for the early New Testament church as the canon was being completed; and, permanent throughout the church age.

5) The believer is to recognize and exercise his gift in humility (Romans 12:3). Every gift is important. While some gifts are more important than others, it does not make any believer superior to other believers.

6) The operation of spiritual gifts depends upon the filling of the Spirit for maximum production of divine good (Acts 2:4).

7) Gifts are not rewards, but they are presents of grace. They do not connote spirituality (1 Corinthians 12:4, 11). They are simply what God give you in order to serve him.

We shall continue next time looking at the gifts themselves.

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