

The Gifts Are His

by G.W. North

The gift of the Spirit is not for personal gain, but for the manifestation of the Holy Ghost, and it belongs to Him, not the gifted member.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Gifts"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes that spiritual gifts are not possessions of individuals but manifestations of the Holy Spirit's work through them. He explains that while gifts may be visible, they are merely tools for the Spirit to express Himself, and the true spiritual condition of the person using the gift is crucial for its effectiveness. North warns against the temptation to claim ownership of these gifts, as doing so would hinder the Spirit's work and reflect a return to self-centeredness. The sermon highlights the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit to enhance the function of the gifts and to ensure that they serve the body of Christ rather than the individual. Ultimately, the person becomes the gift to the body when they fully identify with the Spirit's purpose in their life.

Transcript

Having first understood this, it must also be realised that a gift is bestowed for the purpose of the manifestation of the Spirit. The gift itself is not that manifestation, it is only a particular form or means through which the Spirit manifests Himself. True it is that the gift at that time becomes obvious -- that is unavoidable -- but it is only an inanimate, abstract form, a means through which some spirit person or another is able to manifest himself. That is why in this section God is not just discussing spiritual means, but spiritual persons.

The gift does not spiritualise the person, but the person the gift, that is to say that as he co-operates with the Spirit for its function it is enhanced. The Holy Spirit does not normally work through a member/person of the body of Christ beyond the spiritual condition of that person. The Lord wishes to speak and work increasingly, and more powerfully and all the time; this will be quite possible to every member as the person keeps permanently filled with and alert to the Holy Spirit. Spiritual condition, spiritual power and spiritual achievement are interdependent. In order to manifest the Spirit, the gift of the Spirit, of whatsoever kind it may be, must be worked exclusively by the Spirit through the member. It may then be said to be used of the Spirit, so that although the gift is in operation, He is being manifest. The gift is being used, but not being displayed; then and then only is the gift spiritual in use.

The Holy Ghost must not be robbed of His gifts. They are, and always will be, His personal property. Persons who receive them must fully grasp this, for it is a basic principle, and the understanding upon which they are distributed. All must know that:

- 1) gifts do not belong to the gifted member;
- 2) no person must expropriate his gift;
- 3) he must not take over its working from the Spirit of God.

Should this latter take place, it is an evidence that Old Adam is again active, as in the beginning, robbing God of His rightful possessions.

Outwardly a person will be seen, heard, thought and said to be in possession of a gift, but inwardly he must know to whom it belongs and be used of God in it. He must not attempt to use it himself; if he does so it will be as of himself, and will only manifest himself, not the Spirit of the body. What each man must understand is that his functional gift is not really the gift to the body, but that he himself is that gift. In order for this to be, he must become utterly identified with the gift, so that to the members of the body he is identifiable and his position known. To a certain extent also, he himself will be evaluated by it. This can be quite easily understood by us as when for instance a man becomes so known by his use of the gift of prophecy that he is called a prophet.

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