

The Congregation Equipped With All Spiritual Gifts



Foundations (Day 257)
by Derek Prince

The operation and the effect of spiritual gifts within a congregation are described by Paul in somewhat similar terms in 1 Corinthians.

> "I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 1:4-8)

Paul here thanks God on behalf of the Christians at Corinth because they are enriched by God in all spiritual gifts. In particular Paul specifies the gifts of utterance and of knowledge. Paul also mentions two results which follow from the operation of the spiritual gifts in the Corinthian church. First, the testimony of Christ is confirmed in them. Second, they are themselves confirmed or strengthened by God through these gifts.

Furthermore, Paul indicates that it is the revealed purpose of God that these spiritual gifts continue to operate in the Christian Church right up to the return of Christ. In this connection he uses two phrases, each of which carries the same implication.

> "So that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 1:7)

> "That you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 1:8)

Both these phrases indicate plainly that the Church of Christ at the end of this age will not be considered by God to be

complete or blameless unless she is fully equipped with all the supernatural spiritual gifts.

In many sections of the Christian Church today there is an unhealthy tendency to treat these supernatural spiritual gifts like extra chrome fittings or fancy gadgets on a car. The suggestion is that the person who wishes to pay a little extra may have the chrome or the gadgets on his car, but that these are not of any real consequence, and the car would really function just as well without them. In the same way, Christians often seem to think that the supernatural gifts are optional – a kind of unnecessary spiritual luxury which people may seek after if they wish, but which are not in any way essential to the proper functioning of the Church. However, this attitude is not at all in line with Scripture.

According to the New Testament, the supernatural spiritual gifts are an integral, built-in part of God's total plan for the Church. Without these gifts in operation the Church can never function on the level of power and efficiency God intended.

Devotional

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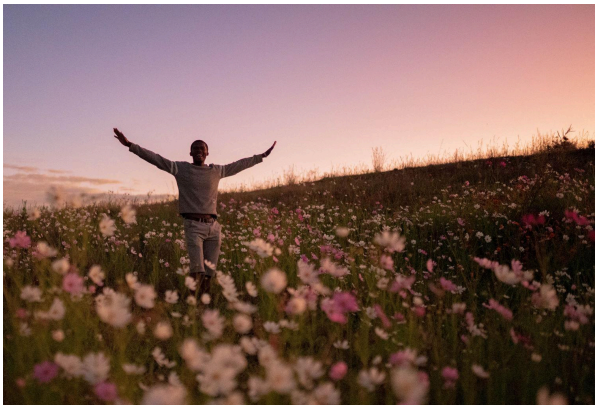

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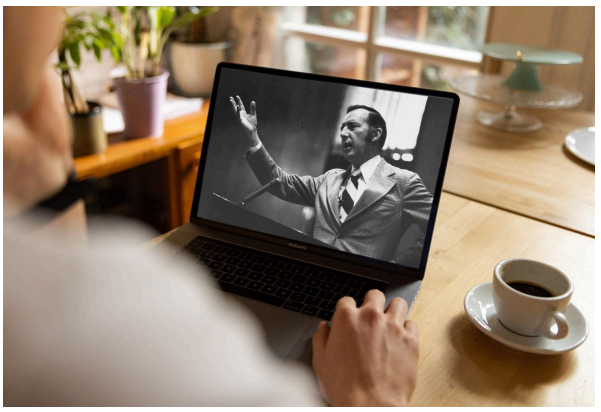

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