

# **Earnestly Desire Spiritual Gifts**

## **1. Is God Still Giving Gifts Like Prophecy? 1 Corinthians 13 and 14**

### **Introduction**

Charles Spurgeon: "I could tell as many as a dozen similar cases in which I pointed at somebody in the hall without having the slightest knowledge of the person, or any idea that what I said was right, except that I believed I was moved by the Spirit to say it; and so striking has been my description, that the persons have gone away, and said to their friends ... he must have been sent of God to my soul, or else he could not have described me so exactly." (*The Autobiography of Charles H. Spurgeon*, [Curts & Jennings, 1899], Vol. II, pp. 226-227).

### **Why are spiritual gifts so important? (1 Corinthians 14:1-3)**

It's because we are called to love others, and spiritual gifts can bring great benefit to those around us.

We see a powerful example in Acts 11:27-29.

### **What is the spiritual gift of prophecy? (1 Corinthians 14:29-31)**

It involves God bringing a revelation to someone (v.30). This means he supernaturally and spontaneously brings into their mind something he wants them to share.

Prophecies should not automatically be accepted; they needed to be weighed to see if they are biblical and if God confirms them to us as true (v.29).

### **Is God still giving supernatural gifts like prophecy? (1 Corinthians 13:8-12)**

Paul says that supernatural gifts will end when "the perfect comes" (v.10).

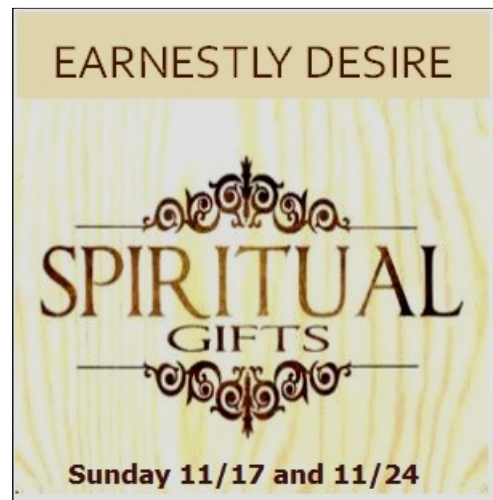
Some think this refers to the completion of the Scriptures (which has already happened); others that it refers to the Second Coming of Christ (which is still in the future).

My conviction is that it makes more sense to take "the perfect" as referring to Christ's return. One reason is because Christ's return will bring about a much more dramatic change of knowledge than the final completion of Scripture did. Another reason is because seeing "face to face" sounds more like what will happen at the Second Coming, when we will see Christ face to face.

### **So what should we do about spiritual gifts?**

Earnestly desire them (1 Corinthians 14:1).

Pray for them (1 Corinthians 14:13).



## **HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING**

*(Sometimes in our home groups we talk about Sunday's teaching, so we can work together on responding to God's Word — asking questions, sharing insights, talking together.)*

What questions did Sunday's teaching raise in your mind?

Are you persuaded that "the perfect" in 1 Corinthians 13:10 is referring to the Second Coming of Christ? Why or why not?

Does it make sense that because we love people, we will earnestly desire spiritual gifts? Why or why not?

Many of us have been taught that God has given us 2 or 3 spiritual gifts, and that we should be content using what he's already given. But why then would Paul urge us to desire spiritual gifts (1 Cor 14:1) and to pray for spiritual gifts (1 Cor 14:13)? (Could it be that God gives believers different gifts in different situations to bless those around us?)

What have you experienced as you earnestly desired and prayed for spiritual gifts? What further questions were raised?

Maybe take time to pray for spiritual gifts for this coming Sunday, for work tomorrow, or even for right now in your group.

