

The *Contender*

"CONTEND FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS" JUDE 3

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The Body Of Christ, Part 2



Rev. Raymond M. Jackson

WE ARE ON A MESSAGE DEALING WITH THE TRUE BODY OF CHRIST, WHAT IT IS, HOW IT FUNCTIONS, WHO IS IN IT, AND WHERE IT WILL FINALLY END UP, AND IT IS GOING TO BE A LENGTHY MESSAGE, REQUIRING A NUMBER OF VOLUMES OF OUR PAPER TO PRINT IT ALL, SO READ IT

PRAYERFULLY, AND ALLOW THE SPIRIT OF GOD TO MAKE IT MEANINGFUL TO YOU. WE ENDED PART 1, IN VERSE 7, OF 1ST CORINTHIANS, CHAPTER 13, SO THAT IS WHERE WE WILL PICK UP FOR THIS PART, AND FINISH THE CHAPTER OUT, BEFORE WE START DEALING WITH THE NINE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT, GIVEN TO THE CHURCH TO EXEMPLIFY JESUS CHRIST, WHO IS THE HEAD OF THAT MYSTICAL BODY. I WILL NOT TRY TO RUSH THROUGH ANY OF THIS, FOR I FEEL THAT IF IT IS IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO DEAL WITH AT ALL, WE NEED TO DEAL WITH EVERY ASPECT OF IT, THAT ALL LOOSE ENDS MAY BE TIED TOGETHER BEFORE WE FINISH. BY THE TIME WE FINISH THIS MESSAGE, WE SHOULD BE WELL ABLE TO RECOGNIZE THE TRUE BODY OF CHRIST, AND FIND OUR PLACE IN IT. GOD ALREADY KNOWS OUR PLACE,

Contents

LOVE BELIEVETH ALL THINGS 2

LOVE WILL ENDURE 3

PROPHECIES FAIL - TONGUES
CEASE..... 4

THINGS DONE IN PART 6

WHAT GENTILES ARE LIKE 8

GUIDELINES FOR SEEKING
GIFTS 11

YOU MUST SEEK GOD..... 13

GOD ACTS SOVEREIGNLY 14

THE WORD OF WISDOM 16

HOW GOD DEALT WITH ME 17

HOW GOD GOT MY ATTENTION.. 18

WHAT SOME PEOPLE SAY 20

INTELLECT GIFTS..... 21

THE GIFT OF DISCERNMENT 23

WHAT FAITH IS 25

GIFTS OF HEALING 27

MIRACLES 28

REVIEW OF CHAPTER 13 30

DID KNOWLEDGE VANISH?..... 31

PROPHECYING IN PART 32

THAT WHICH IS PERFECT 33

MATURE CHRISTIANS..... 35

THREE VOCAL GIFTS 36

CHRISTIANS PORTRAYING
CHRIST 37

HOW PROPHECY COMES 39

THREE KINDS OF PROPHECY 42

VARIOUS TONGUES 42

ILLUSTRATION OF TONGUES..... 43

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES.. 46

BUT WE MUST LEARN HOW TO BE LED INTO IT. HE ALREADY KNOWS WHAT WE WILL DO, BUT WE STILL HAVE TO FIND OUT; SO LET US STUDY THESE SCRIPTURES TOGETHER, AND ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO GUIDE OUR THINKING, AND WE WILL ALL PROFIT BY IT.

LOVE BELIEVETH ALL THINGS

We were talking about how the love of God in a true believer, enables him, or her to believe all truth, no matter how strange it may sound at first. As I said, We are using the word L-O-V-E, instead of the word C-H-A-R-I-T-Y, as we read these scriptures, for the word charity, does not mean the same to us, as it did to those who translated the King James version of the Bible. In their day, it meant love; but in our day, when we hear the word charity, we think of making a donation to some cause. Many organizations today, are referred to as charitable organizations, simply because our language structure is different than it was three or four hundred years ago. Therefore we say (verse 7) “Love believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.”

God cannot lie, and God is love. Therefore when the Spirit of God is in us, it enables us to recognize truth, and believe it, even though it may sound very strange to us at first. When I was still a Methodist, I heard Bro. Branham say a lot of things that were totally strange to me. My natural mind just simply could not understand, but the love of God in me, helped me lay those things up, until such time as my understanding was opened, without rejecting any of them. It is the Holy Ghost that helps us believe all things, and naturally we are talking about all truth, not a bunch of lies. That same love in you, will enable you to try every spirit that speaks, to see whether it is speaking truth or lies. That is how we grow in grace and knowledge, by believing all truth. Then we come to the word HOPE. In our modern terminology we say, I hope it does not rain today, and all such as that. But in the scriptures, when it says love hopeth all things, it is referring to that inner feeling that causes us to believe everything is going to turn out alright. Not to have that kind of hope is to be pessimistic, always looking at the negative side of things. No farmer has any guarantee that he is going to have a good crop of corn, but he just has to be optimistic enough to plow his fields and plant his seed corn anyhow. If they did not have that kind of optimistic hope, there would never be one stalk of corn grown, and the corn cribs would be empty. So the best way I can describe that kind of hope, that hopeth

all things, is just to say, It is that inner feeling of optimism, that motivates us to do what we do. It is that inner something, that causes us to look at all the uncertainties of life, and our walk with God, with an optimistic feeling that everything will work out right. Why? Because God's word says so. He does not paint the picture clear for us, and show us every little detail ahead of time, because He expects us to walk by faith, with that inner hope to lead us on. That hope gives us a forward look, in the midst of all uncertainties.

LOVE WILL ENDURE

Now the last thing in verse 7 is, "Endureth all things." That means we equip ourselves to deal with every situation, no matter how rough it gets for us. That does not mean that we just tolerate it, but we must master it. Remember, Jesus said, He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. Therefore we must realize, that the man that endures, always has to be able to cope with adversity. Did not Jesus say, In the world, you will always have trials and tribulations? He also said, That in Him, we would have peace and joy, that the world cannot give. That is what helps us endure all of this evil and filth that is all around us. We are in the world, but we are not of the world. That love of God that is in you, is what motivates you, and

causes you to be able to endure all things. Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. The weapons of our warfare are not guns and knives, but they are mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds. Therefore Paul says, Love never faileth. Why? Because it is guided by all the other purpose of God, for our benefit. In the gospel of John, Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, when ye have love one for another." It is sad, but there are thousands of church-goers that do not look for true disciples under that kind of identity. They are concerned about whether you have spoken in tongues, or something like that. If you speak in tongues, they will declare that you have the Holy Ghost, no matter what your life is like. The Pentecostal movements in the world today, have hung their plaques on evidence. They have characters that can speak in tongues from daylight till dark, and then go to sleep with someone else's wife, and they still claim to have the Holy Ghost. Recently I received a letter from a young man in jail, where some of the other fellows receive our literature, and he had gotten hold of our issue on the Two Laws of Eden, and read it, and wrote to me saying, This serpent seed doctrine is out of the pit of hell; I would not let my children read it for anything. He went ahead to say, I have the Holy Ghost, with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues, and I believe in the trinity, and so on. I did not write

him back, but I did think to myself, You are just like thousands of others; you think speaking in tongues is the thing that makes you so spiritual, and you are ready to teach others, but you are as blind as a bat. A true disciple of Christ will love God first, and hunger for the truth of his word, and then all these other things will fall in place in due time. As we get closer to the end, you are going to find out that there are thousands of people that do not really love God. They say it with words, but in reality, they are far from it. "Love never faileth." The true love of God will never fail to lead you to truth. God puts that desire within you, or it would not be there. But when God puts that love, and that hunger in your heart, you just simply cannot get enough.

PROPHECIES FAIL - TONGUES CEASE

Alright now, this next part of verse 8 is what the Church of Christ likes to read and dwell upon. "But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease." They will really bear down on those two things. Brother they will all agree on that. Stay away from those holy rollers; for this scripture proves that all of that ceased with the death of the early apostles, they will say. But notice the rest of that verse: "Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." Now if the first part of that verse

means what they say it does, so does the rest of the same verse, so that makes them a bunch of morons. You cannot know as much as they claim to know, if knowledge vanished with the apostolic age. I say, If you are going to interpret one phrase literally, you have to interpret all of it literally, and that last phrase really gets them. They are supposed to be giving out so much truth, and they do not have the knowledge to do it with. Brothers and Sisters: Paul was not even suggesting that any true prophecy would ever fail. On the other hand, some exhortative prophecies are given, with certain conditions attached to them, and when the conditions are not met, the prophecies naturally fail. That should not be hard for anyone to understand. God presents some people with certain opportunities, but when they fail to meet the conditions, they fail to receive the benefits offered. Even Cain was given the opportunity to claim firstborn heirship, but he would not meet the conditions God laid down for him. After his offering was rejected, he was sitting with his lips all drawn down, his countenance all gone, and God said to him, "Why art thou wroth? Why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? But if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." God was speaking His will to Cain, but Cain was too bitter to take heed, and that was because of his very nature. As I said, God was actually speaking to

him of the law of heritage which would fall to the firstborn, and it was being offered to him, but he just did not take heed, nor understand. Thou shalt rule over him, and his desire shall be unto you, meant, He will be jealous of you, and will want your place. God did not have to say, Thus saith the Lord, but He was truly offering him everything he needed right at that time, to do the right thing. Well, he missed it, and became even more jealous; therefore the prophecy did him no good at all. Because He failed to meet the condition, he did not get to rule over Abel, and the moment he slew Abel, God's judgment fell upon him. God just reversed the whole thing, and Cain had to leave the area because his guilt, and his punishment was too great. He could not remain in the presence of Adam and Eve after that, so he left them, and went to the land of Nod. Therefore let me say this, those written prophecies of the old prophets, concerning future events, never fail, but those conditional prophecies sometimes do, simply because the conditions are not met. I hope I have made that clear to all of you, so let us move on now. "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." Now tongues never did cease to exist, so what did Paul mean by that? Well in the 14th chapter, he explains how tongues in the Church were a sign to the unbelievers. As unbelievers would come in and hear this; to them, it was an unusual, miraculous thing, to hear people speak a dialect they did not

know, and then hear someone else interpret it. This was a miracle, and it was a sign to those unbelievers. But there came a time, when some of those unbelievers had sat in that environment so long, that tongues ceased to have that affect on them. It no longer means anything to them to hear tongues and interpretation. I will never forget the first time I heard tongues and interpretation. I had been in the Methodist Church, where you never even hear of any such thing, and then I get into one of those Holy Ghost meetings, and heard a message in tongues. Brother that was just like setting a beagle hound after a rabbit in a brush pile. I felt like all heaven had turned loose. You would too, if you had sat in a Methodist Church for years, and never been exposed to anything of the supernatural. You know you would. It is supposed to have that kind of affect on you. That is what their function is primarily for. Instead of scaring me, and running me out, it scared me, and made me run to the Lord. The next thing I knew, I was down in the old cow stable praying, Lord I want everything you have for me. Hallelujah! Praise His Name! I have never seen the day since then, that a supernatural move of the Lord failed to stir me, but some do. That is why Paul wrote this. Sooner or later, God requires a person to either get in, or get out, but the tongues do not cease to exist. Neither is Paul saying that knowledge will vanish away from those that have it, He is only pointing

out that the manifestation of that imparted knowledge that comes by the gift of knowledge, will not always be ever present. In other words, Those who have knowledge will still have it, even when the manifestation of the gift of knowledge has ceased to function among them. In other words, These gifts of the Spirit did more or less, go into obscurity through the ages, but we are living in a day when I believe we will see a full restoration of them all, used the right way. They have their place in the revealed body of Christ, but God never meant for any of them to be used as a moneymaking gimmick, as is so obviously being done in this present age.

THINGS DONE IN PART

In verses 9 & 10, Paul says, “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” No prophecy ever fills in all the details, but it does give a profile of that which it pertains to, and other prophecies many times, will add to prior prophecies, but still without filling in all the details. Therefore we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but that which we have is always sufficient for what God requires out of us in our day. The gift of prophecy will always bring a comforting, edifying affect, wherever it is exercised

properly, regardless of what it pertains to, and even though they do not fill in all the details. Nevertheless until we reach that place of perfection, we will only know in part, and be able to prophesy in part. But like I said earlier, Perfection is not a sudden thing. There are phases of perfection, and there are also various areas of perfection. We will reach maturity in some areas, before we do in others. Every individual child of God must move with the leading of the Spirit, to ever reach that stage of perfection Paul speaks of so often. Actually verse 11 lets us see that he really is pointing to a time of spiritual maturity, and he goes on to say, "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." Love never fails. Of course he goes right ahead in chapter 14 to say, Follow after love, and desire spiritual gifts, but let love be the motive behind it all. Now this really points us back to the first part of chapter 12, where we will take a look at the nine gifts of the Spirit. As I said, We have all experienced manifestations of the various gifts of the Spirit at times, but we have not yet seen the Church of the living God in action. We came through various denominational systems to reach the hour we have come to, and in many ways, those denominations did do us harm. For there was a time when that sectarian spirit was so strong,

Methodists did not know whether Baptists were saved, and Baptists did not know whether Methodists were saved, and there was no way the Assemblies of God could ever accept the idea that the United Pentecostals were saved, because to them, that oneness of God doctrine was out of the pit. That is why when God sent a messenger to the age, He did not send him to any certain denomination, nor to any certain non denominational group, for Christianity was in dispersion and confusion, and true believers had to be called out of all those systems, and back to the word of God. Therefore we have to realize that the true body of Christ is an organism of people that are free from all of those systems. They are Bible believing, Spirit filled children of God, every one standing before God as an individual, yet God deals with them as a body of people, and they are called the body of Christ. Through the years God has dealt with that body in various ways, and He is now in the process of culling and sifting, to purify it, as we approach the end of the age. Therefore we can expect Him to deal with individuals of that body in various ways, as He perfects His purpose in them. I have said many times lately, God will not let them drag on for another 40 or 50 years; we are seeing the signs of the end time. The image of the home has already been destroyed, governments are failing, and society in general is going to the dogs. America, that was founded upon Christian principles, no

longer wants God in the picture. Oh yes, there are multiplied thousands going to some kind of religious service every Sunday, but they are like Paul spoke of, they have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. Young women of our day are no longer interested in being keepers of the home, as the Bible says they should be. They want to have a baby, to fulfill that motherhood part of their makeup. But after a few weeks, they are ready to toss the little thing into the hands of a babysitter, and pursue a career of some sort. Brothers and Sisters: It is the trend of the times we are living in, and I realize that economic circumstances force a lot of mothers to work, that would like to be at home with their little children, but I am speaking of those that would rather pursue some career, than to be a homemaker. They would never want to listen to a preacher like me. To them, I belong to a museum someplace: my ideas are so outdated. Nevertheless I know what the Bible teaches about these things, and that is what I base my remarks upon. As I have said many times, This society is fast returning to what the world was like two thousand years ago, when the gospel first came to the Gentiles. In other words, our ancient forefathers were a pitiful mess. That is why Paul started out like he did, here in 1st Corinthians, chapter 12, where we want to pick up with verse 1.

WHAT GENTILES ARE LIKE

These Corinthians had recently been converted from paganism, so Paul says, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, (This was to be his topic.) I would not have you ignorant. (That simply means ill informed.) Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.” He knew what they were before they received the gospel, for he was the one that led them to receive the plan of salvation in the first place. Saints, I have been privileged to be in the ruins of old Corinth, where the guide pointed out various places that pagan temples stood. In those days, Corinth was a metropolitan city, much like Louisville, Kentucky and Chicago, Illinois. They had a temple housing some kind of pagan god for every type of circumstance of life. That is what Paul was reminding them of; they were carried away unto those dumb idols, and it was all through ignorance, so he goes on saying, “Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.” In other words, Paul is saying to them, No true child of God will be found using the name of Jesus Christ in a vain way. They may have used the names of their idols in cursing, prior to becoming Christians, but no Holy Ghost filled person is going to use that

holy name in a slanderous or blasphemous way. I imagine when some of those pagan people got mad, it was about like it is out here in the world today, they probably used the names of those gods in some pretty vile ways, and that no doubt, is what caused Paul to speak as he did here. How is it today, Gentiles whose lives have been brought into contact with a Christian influence, when they mash a finger, or get mad for some reason? Brother they will blankety-blank the name of Jesus Christ, or God, and just carry on something awful. You never hear them use the devil's name like that, so why do they have to use God or Jesus in their vile language? Do they actually feel that this will accomplish something? The devil just sits back and laughs. He really likes to hear that kind of talk. But Paul says, No Holy Ghost filled person will use the name of Jesus like that, and he also says, that only Holy Ghost filled people, can truly say that Jesus is the Lord. The word Lord, here, really takes on the thought of master, my Master. The Spirit of God in us is our teacher, therefore we must yield to the fact that He (Jesus) is the master of our lives. Now something had come up, in that Corinthian church, that caused Paul to write as he did. He was not speaking these things verbally to them, he was writing this letter to the congregation, to explain some things to them. Therefore when he comes to verse 4, he says, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." This is why I stressed the

difference between the gift (singular) of the Spirit, and the gifts (plural) of the Spirit. There is within this GIFT of the SPIRIT, nine spiritual gifts, nine different manifested attributes of that same Spirit. There are nine different manifestations, but they are all operated by that same Spirit that is in you. Not nine different spirits within one God. A lot of people get confused when they read in the scriptures, of the seven spirits of God. But that is not speaking of God actually being seven spirits, but only that there are seven certain attributes expressed from the one God who is a Spirit. This no doubt, is where ancients of the past as they lost their revelation of the true God, through centuries of time, began dividing God up into spirits, then into idols and so forth. They had a god of fertility, a god of wisdom, a god of love, and all such as that, one for every situation. So Paul says, There are diversities of gifts, but they are all of the same Spirit. None of the gifts are exactly alike, but they are grouped in categories of three sets of threes, and there is three distinctions made concerning them, "There are diversities of gifts, but the same SPIRIT. And there are differences of administrations, but the same LORD. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same GOD which worketh all in all." The word changed from Spirit to Lord, and then to God, in those three verses, but we know for sure that Paul is not speaking of three different beings, nor three different

spirits. What was the Spirit in the first illustration, then takes on a higher meaning in the second illustration. You realize that the Spirit is to be in the church, and the church is in the believers, therefore the object of attention is to be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. You will not recognize Him after His flesh, but you must definitely see him by that Spirit, in all of His characteristics and attributes. All of that, is to know what He was, and what He became to man, after He was baptized by John in the river of Jordan. For three and one half years He manifested something to the human race. He revealed God, the Creator, whom man had never seen at any time. That is why Jesus said, in John 16:14, speaking of the Comforter that was to come, "He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." A lot people read that, but they never even stop to think what he meant. But it lets us know that the Church was to be an extension through time, of everything Jesus was in the 3 ½ years after His baptism. There was to be a continuation of the manifestations of God through His church, but in the office work of the Holy Ghost, and through the office work of the Holy Ghost, all attention must be pointed toward Jesus the Christ. Thereby He is recognized, not only as your Savior, but also as your Lord and master. Just as He sought to glorify the Father, the Holy Ghost will seek to glorify Him, and it is doing through His Church. Therefore Paul

takes some time to break this thing down, before actually going into the nine gifts themselves, saying, that, just as there are nine gifts, and all by the same Spirit, there are also differences of administration, so let me try to explain what the word administration means, for we must see what it is point to. There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord, or master operating them, to whom just be given all attention. Because it is the Lord that operates these gifts, not the instrument in which they are placed. Therefore He is the one that should be seen at all times. But the nine gifts are broken down into three categories, when you think about it. You have three vocal gifts, or utterance gifts, prophecy, tongues and interpretation. Then you have three power gifts, faith, healing and miracles, and after that, three intellect, or revelation gifts, which are wisdom, knowledge and discernment. These last three work through the intellect of the person through which the Spirit is operating them. Therefore the administration is different, because the anointing is different. The anointing for these intellect gifts is much different than the anointing for the utterance gifts. The Spirit uses the vocal organs of the individual, more or less bypassing the intellect of the person through which the gift is being operated. This way, I believe we can see what it means by, there are differences of administrations. For when you consider the anointing for the power

gifts, you find that it is altogether different than the anointing for the others. Well the point is, even though the administrations are different, it is still the same Lord operating them, and He is the one that is to be glorified through it all, so let us look at the term diversities of operations, in verse 6.

GUIDELINES FOR SEEKING GIFTS

There are nine specific gifts mentioned, and we must realize that it is the Spirit of God, that has placed them within the body, and He is the one that divides to every person severally as He wills, so the operation of every gift is designed to cause the believers to worship God. The Spirit of God knows exactly how to deal with the flesh as well as spirit of every individual believer, therefore He is the one that divides the gifts among the body of Christ severally as He wills. Regardless of what the gift or gifts may be, the individual receiving them, has to go through a little schooling process, in order to learn to recognize the specific anointing, and how to yield to it. But it is still the Spirit of God that gives the gifts, and does the schooling. No preacher is spiritual enough, smart enough, nor dedicated enough, to walk the aisles and pass out spiritual gifts. That sort of thing has been done, but as

you well know, God was never glorified in any of it; only the flesh of the individuals involved benefitted momentarily. One thing we should remember, is that every person who has the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is that Spirit of eternal life, is a potential candidate for any of these nine gifts mentioned here. But not everyone learns how to present themselves to God, so that He has opportunity to cultivate these things in their lives. Administrations therefore, is how the Spirit deals with individuals in administering the gifts, and operations points to how the individuals are used in the operation of them, but all to the glory of the eternal Spirit, the Creator of all things. Always remember this, You cannot pass your anointing on to someone else. God will anoint someone else, if you fail to yield, but you cannot yourself, pass that anointing on to them. In the 5th chapter of 1st Thessalonians, Paul wrote “Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.” That feeds into the general picture of what he is dealing with here. For it is a well known fact, many times we are literally scared of the Spirit of God. We should not be, but many times when the anointing begins to get hold of someone, the person begins to get scared, and that puts the mind of the individual into a frame of fear. They do not want to make a mistake; and of course no one does, but that is why I try to take these other categories, and

teach on them, in order that we may see Paul's guidelines for seeking the gifts. He uses all those various illustrations, showing how people with inferiority complexes, will allow the devil to kick them around, and make them feel unfit to be used by the Spirit of God in any way. If you are always fighting a battle about whether you are holy enough to be used of the Spirit, you probably never will be, for you will never learn how to yield yourself to Him. Therefore let me say this to you: When you know with all your heart, that you have surrendered your life to God, and you have done your best to obey the things His word requires, and you have purposed in your heart, that you are going to live a clean, godly, holy life in obedience to Him; then do not allow the devil to sit on your shoulder, and lie to you. There is no reason to put up with that. You just begin to meditate upon the sweet presence of the Lord, and cultivate that presence with a sincere desire in your heart to be pleasing to Him, and that inferiority complex will be overridden. God desires to be worshiped, and it is His will for these gifts of the Spirit to be a part of that worship, so do not feel that you are being selfish, or trying to be super-spiritual, if you have a desire for one or more of these gifts. Just be sure it is the love of God that is motivating you, and then earnestly desire whatever you feel led of the Spirit toward. If your heart is right before God, you do not have to be concerned about getting in the flesh, with the

operation of a gift you just leave that up to the Holy Ghost. I am not telling you that you will not have some measure of fear, when that anointing first begins to come upon you, for I did myself. But I am telling you that as you yield yourself a few times, that fear will diminish. I have already mentioned the first time I ever gave a message in tongues in the Branham Tabernacle, but I did not tell how I received the baptism of the Holy Ghost without speaking in tongues, and had to seek God for the tongues at a later time. But first let me tell you this, The greatest battle you will ever go through concerning these gifts, is after you yield the first time, if someone makes a remark against it, or gets up and stomps out of the assembly. That is what happened to me at the Tabernacle. So let me say this, right now, If any of you ever jump up and stomp out of here when a gift is operated, I will point my finger at you and say, Do not ever come back, as long as you feel like that about these things that are precious to the Lord. The devil is always sitting close by saying, Are you sure that is of the Lord? What if that is just fleshly zeal causing you to do that, and all such as that? Well saints, you just have to realize that there will come a time when you will recognize a certain anointing, but at first you just have to yield to the Spirit, and if you do make a mistake, realize that the Lord does not condemn you for it. He will teach you through those mistakes. But as for

people, someone will find fault, no matter how perfectly a gift is operated. That is why you just have to commit yourself to the Lord, and not worry too much about what people will say. As I said about myself, The first time I spoke a message in tongues, up jumped about three women, and stomped out of the tabernacle, and the remark was made by someone else, if that had really been of the Lord, those people would not have left. But I just happened to know that those people did not like tongues, and they did not want to have anything to do with people who spoke in tongues. That is why they left. Of course we realize that in Pentecost there have been a lot of fanatical things take place, and that sort of thing is all some people ever see. But we are not talking about fanaticism, for that is what follows people who have never been taught anything. We are here to learn how to yield ourselves to the Spirit of God, so that somewhere along the way, we can find our places in the body of Christ. Therefore let me say, The difference between administration and operation, is how the anointing moves for the operation of the gifts.

YOU MUST SEEK GOD

Now I started to say earlier, when I received the baptism, I did not speak in tongues at that time. But I was so thankful to God for the experience, for it made the whole outlook for my future, completely different. I had been around Pentecostal people though, that would not believe you had the Holy Ghost unless you spoke in tongues. Well that gives me the desire to speak in tongues, and I began to seek the Lord for that experience. But I did promise the Lord two things. I said, I am not seeking this, just to prove to those people that I have their evidence, and I promise you also, that if you will let me speak in tongues, I will never teach it as being the evidence of the Holy Ghost. I could already see that just speaking in tongues was not getting anyone any place. It takes more than just that. May I say this though, I truly did have to seek God with my whole heart, before I received what I was looking for, and I will say also, It is the same way with every gift of the Spirit. You do not just sit on a band wagon somewhere, and the Lord forces the gifts upon you. That is why Paul said, Covet earnestly the best gifts. In other words, Seek with your whole heart. I have actually heard people say, Well I would speak in tongues, if the Lord would put it upon me. Well saints, I do not want to belittle that kind of statement, but sometimes that is just an excuse people use, when they will not go into their bedroom, get down on their knees and seek God. You just have to know, God

is not coming down the road forcing us to do things we do not want to do. Some people are so busy seeking after things of the flesh, they have no time to pray and seek God. They have every intention of living for God, but somehow there is just still a lot of flesh to deal with, and not enough time to seek God for spiritual depth. If your whole attention is given to ball games, tennis, golf, and such like, you are never going to partake of these spiritual gifts. Can you just imagine God's prophet always concerned with things like that? No. Somewhere there has to be some time for seeking after God. Now you may say, Oh, Bro. Jackson: Brother Branham liked to squirrel hung. Yes, and I have heard him say many times, I do not go squirrel hunting just to kill squirrels. He said, I go out into the woods, just to get away from everything else. I remember one time years ago, when he came down home. It was one of those drizzly days, and they stayed all day with us. That evening we went out into the woods, and do you know what he did? He found a big old Beech tree, and sat down at the roots of it, and went to sleep. When he awakened, God gave him a sermon. Then he said, Well my day out there was worth it all, for God gave me a sermon while I was sitting there. It just lets us know that wherever he was, or whatever he was doing, his mind was still on the Lord. Brothers and Sisters: If you think the only important thing is just going to church and believing the right thing, and going

through the regular functions of the services, you are badly fooled. None of these things that really produce any spiritual depth are going to come to you, until you begin to desire to be found portraying the image of Christ in your life. In other words, you are not just going to coast into glory, dragging the world behind you. But please do not get the idea that I am just up here preaching against ball games, and such like; that is nonsense for a preacher to do that. But I will say this, if things like that is what occupies all your time, the next time you get into trouble and run to the preacher, maybe he should just say, Go, play ball. It is a wonderful thing to feel that someone can pray the prayer of faith for you, when you have a problem, but do not just depend upon that. Your preacher is not a man with super words. He has a part to play in your spiritual growth of course, but do not depend upon him to do all of your praying for you. Pray that the Lord will help you be a little more like Him every day, for growing up into His image is what the Christian life is all about. If we have no desire to be like Him, His love is not really in us. I hope you are all following what I am saying to you, for this is serious business.

GOD ACTS SOVEREIGNLY

Alright now, it is not just what Raymond Jackson says, but what the

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Bible says, that counts, so let us read verse 7. "But the manifestation (or display) of the Spirit is given to EVERY MAN (or to every true child of God) to profit withal." Those words were written in the apostolic hour (in the first church age) but they were not just for them; they were for all Christians, in every age. In every little assembly back then, these gifts were cultivated, and exercised. That is why Paul could say, All along the way, the Holy Ghost bare witness that he should not go up to Jerusalem. One big difference between then and now, is that every one of those churches were made up of nothing but Holy Ghost filled people. That was before the tares got in. However the fact remains, every individual Christian person, regardless of how important you may, or may not feel, should be seeking these gifts of the Spirit. That is how the Lord desires to operate His church. Do not ever get the idea that prophesying, speaking in tongues, and interpreting, is all there is to it, for it is the purpose of God for all nine of these gifts to operate in the church. I am not saying that we should be like popcorn in a popper, but we should be in a place with God, where He can use us when He desires. World achievements should not be allowed to rob our minds of all spirituality. You can become just like a shell of some kind, that always looks like it should be more than what it really is. Sooner or later, every individual should manifest something of the Holy Ghost. As you read the

book of Acts, you read of a man named Phillip. He was referred to as an evangelist, but he had four daughters, that prophesied. I realize it would be hard for our young girls today, to prophesy, for their attention seems to be more on their outward appearance, than on their inward appearance before the Lord. A good Holy Ghost girl, or boy, will come to church with Jesus on their mind, instead of worrying and fretting about how they are dressed, and so forth. They will comb their hair, and take care of all those other little details, before they come to the house of God. Our purpose for gathering together, should be to worship God, and present ourselves as vessels He can use. Then we can experience the reality of what we are dealing with. Verse 8, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit, to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues." There you have the whole list of gifts of the Spirit, so let us look at the various ones for a little while. The distribution of them is the administration we were talking about. This distribution is made by the Holy Ghost according to the will of the Lord, among those that covet the gifts for the right reasons, and love is the most important of all reasons. Your

love for God, and your love for each other will cause you to want to be used of the Lord in a way that will glorify Him, and be a blessing to your brothers and sisters of the faith.

THE WORD OF WISDOM

Now the first gift mentioned, is the word of wisdom. That is an intellect gift. It will not start your tongue to running, just speaking in a tongue of some sort. The Holy Ghost can make you do that, but that is not the word of wisdom in operation. The word of wisdom is that which is given by the Spirit of God many times, when the natural mind is faced with a situation it strictly does not have the answer to. He will take your mind and run it back and forth, until you know exactly what to say. Furthermore the word of wisdom does not need to be spoken in a large vocabulary of words, that take an hour and a half to speak them. Just think, God has sent angels at times to speak a few words, that men have preached on for years. In a very few words, God can say something that it takes us forever, trying to explain. The word of knowledge is the same way. These gifts can be either for your own benefit, or for the benefit of someone else, as the case may be, especially the gift of knowledge, when God just takes over your intellect, and causes you to know what to do, in a certain situation.

But let me say this, The word of knowledge, and the word of wisdom, as we are reading here, is not something you have twenty four hours a day. These came by an anointing, and whatever we have twenty four hours a day, is a natural thing, something we learn in life. Bro. Branham had these gifts operating in his ministry, in the highest caliber, but they were still by the anointing that came upon him. It was not something he had naturally. God can use a person to speak a word of wisdom one minute, and the next minute, that same person can be completely ignorant about other things. That is why I say, You do not have to have educational degrees, in order for God to work those gifts through you. But the main thing is, let us be in a place with God, where He can use us, if He sees fit to do so. I will never forget Bro. Allen's testimony, about how through natural circumstances, he was planning to go out west a few years ago, with some other fellows. In his mind he was just trying to do the right thing, but the Spirit of God intervened, and showed him enough to cause him to know better than to go with them. God uses many ways to accomplish His purpose in these things. He can give you a dream, a vision or just simply take control of your intellect. Let me say also, These intellect gifts are not operated in the person who is all emotionally charged up, they operate in a much calmer atmosphere. God has to be able to deal with your mind.

HOW GOD DEALT WITH ME

Many of you will remember hearing me tell how God dealt with me in April 1955. That was the year He spoke to me about starting this church. Up until that time, if anyone had mentioned anything to me about starting a church, I would have replied, That is the last thing on earth I want to do. That is how I felt about it. But one April day, when I was plowing for corn, sitting there on that old farm tractor, I heard the Lord speak to me. Not by an audible voice, but I knew it was Him anyway. Something just dropped on me, and took over my mind; just literally took my thoughts all day long. I could hear these words over and over, Now is the time to start the church; Now is the time to start the church; just like a tape recorder. When I came in to eat that day, I said to my wife, There is something going on inside of me; I cannot get it off of my mind. Monday morning, I must go to town and see what I can do about it; I must find out. I went ahead and plowed, the rest of that day, (Friday) and all day Saturday, and that was all that was on my mind, the whole time; Now is the time to start the church. When Monday morning came, I said to my wife, We are going to town. I did not know how to go about it, but I knew I had to make some physical effort to set it in motion. I left

her off in a store in New Albany, and in my mind I said, I am going to run every street in New Albany if I have to, looking for a suitable building, and I started up Main Street. But no sooner than I got started, something took my mind again, saying, Don't do that, go to a realtor. He did not say which one, so I went to Cora Jacobs. The lady at the desk asked, What can we do for you? I said, Would you have a building for rent, suitable to start a mission work in? She said No, but if you will go right around the corner to Bernard Weber, he might be able to help you. I did so, and as I walked in the door, something within me said, 904 State Street. His receptionist asked, May I help you, and I asked her the same question. She said, There is one at 904 State Street, owned by a man named Potter. Well needless to say, That is where this church got its start, and we moved three times, but we have been right here for 18 years now; and have no thoughts about moving again. Now brothers and sisters: I realize these are small illustrations, but there is one thing sure, It is important that the body of Christ realize the importance of being sensitive to the Spirit of God. We cannot just coast on through life, right into the rapture. We all have a part to play, in how ever much time we have left here, and our natural wisdom and knowledge will not always be sufficient to enable us to walk in the perfect will of God. We will need that imparted wisdom and knowledge from time to time, as we go along. But

remember, We do not have to be in church, in order for God to speak to us, He can talk to you in the corn field, or any other place, if your mind is open to Him. If I had been thinking only on getting a new tractor, and more fields to farm, and all such as that, He never would have spoken to me as He did, but my mind was upon Him. That is what makes the difference. I was definitely concerned about what my life was going to be like in the realm of Christianity, and in the calling I felt that the Lord had placed upon my life. I had been earnestly seeking the will of God for my life. Just a little more than a year before that, I had already been rejected as pastor material for the Methodist Church, I really needed some guidance, and I am thankful to God for granting it to me. I have gone for months, even years since the, without having anything like that taking place. Some people think you are supposed to have something like that going on all the time, but I do not feel that we have any right to expect it that way myself. When people get to the place where they feel that they just have to have something every week, they have a tendency to become very slothful in their attitude about such things. Well God is never going to turn His Church into a vending machine. He is very jealous over everything that pertains to His true Church. He wants it to be respected. He wants His people to learn to be wise in a spiritual way.

HOW GOD GOT MY ATTENTION

In October last year, when we had that little meeting here, I told of a dream that I had during the week before. I saw myself in a way that made me aware of the shortness of time, and that I must redeem the time. There was a lot about it, that I did not understand, but realizing I was supposed to preach Sunday morning, I went home Saturday night, with that on my mind, and had a dream that night, wherein I saw myself come in here, and a sheet of paper had been passed up and down the aisles, and back and forth across the church, and the only thing written on it was Luke 17:30. Now I had expressed in a limited way, many times, how I felt about that verse, but I had no idea of the far reaching effect of the teaching that others had been doing on that one verse, so that is how God got my attention, to deal with the subject, The Son of Man, Who is He? A lot of people had been affected by that teaching, and they had tried to get free from it, but somehow or other just never could, because it had been hammered into them. Anyhow it was after that dream, that the message really opened up to me, and I could see from the Bible, the importance of dealing with it. I made a few references here on Sunday morning, and later, one sister was crying, and said to me, Bro. Jackson: You will never know what

that message meant to me this morning. She said, I have been so confused, and so worried over that very thing. Where they live, different ones are always hammering on the idea that Bro. Branham was the Son of man of Luke 17:30, and a lot of people have tried to get free from that thing, but just never could grasp the real truth, and spiritual significance that could help them break from it completely. The sister said to me, That has helped me so much. We went to Mexico right after that, and it was the same way down there. They had been hearing that for the last 15 years, so it just made me realize why it was so important that I should have an understanding of the total significance of that terminology. It had to be more than just explaining a verse of scripture, to get this thing straightened out satisfactorily. But when I could take Paul's own testimony, how God had separated him from his mothers womb, that He might reveal His Son in him, not the Son of man, but the Son of God, it was God's way for the thing to be cleared up. The whole gospel that Paul preached and wrote about, was always pointing every Gentile to Jesus Christ, the crucified Son of God. Paul's life did truly exemplify Jesus Christ in all of His characteristics, as Paul lived and demonstrated the gospel he preached. But look what the devil did with that gospel, after Paul left the scene, through the Gentile church world. He tore the true revelation all to pieces. Jesus Christ was made the second

person of a trinity, and the Catholic Church declared Mary to be the queen of heaven. In other words, The gospel of Jesus Christ has been minimized. The Reformation was ordained of God to begin a restoration of the gospel message, but it became harnessed by later generations, and the church world as a whole, is not really preaching the gospel of the crucified Son of God, the way Paul preached it. That is why God sent a little man to this age, filled with the Holy Ghost, and anointed in a way that no other man had ever been, this side of that apostolic hour. He was an uneducated man, but he spoke as a man unctioned by the Spirit of God, things that men could not learn through their education. His phraseology was not even good English, but his simple illustrations made the Bible come alive, as you sat and listened to him. The Holy Spirit used him to discern people, just like Jesus did. The word of knowledge worked through him, so that he would stand on the platform and tell people their name, their city and state, and even their street and house number. Yet that did not make him Jesus Christ, nor the Messiah, nor the Son of man, nor any of those things that some are declaring he was. Therefore brothers and sisters, I believe you can see why God had to deal with me like He did; this Son of man thing needed to be set straight, for the honest hearted souls that desired to be set free from that spirit. Bro. Branham was not THE Son of man; he was A son of man, just like the rest of

us, in the sense that he had to be redeemed by the shed blood of Jesus Christ, just like all of us did. Yes he had those gifts, those attributes of the Lord Jesus Christ, but God wants us to have them too. They are to be distributed to the whole body, according to the sovereign will of God by the Holy Spirit, to those who earnestly seek after them in the right way, and with the right motive. God used that little simple man, to take the gospel Paul preached, and put it back together, after it had been ripped to pieces for so many centuries, and He vindicated his ministry with those gifts of the Spirit, to this age of intellectualism. Preachers from almost every denomination came and sat under his ministry, and a lot of them jumped right on that Son of man wagon, when it passed by, and many of them that used to believe in the gifts, no longer feel that we need them. They feel that the revelation he brought is all they need, so they are contented to preach Bro. Branham instead of Jesus Christ. His ministry should have set some people on fire for God, and it should have caused them to seek to glorify God in their own lives by yielding themselves to God like he did. They should be seeking the same Holy Spirit that worked those gifts in his life and ministry, but no; They feel that what he did was sufficient for all of them, and they dare not seek what he had. Well those disciples that walked with Jesus, did not feel like they were doing wrong, when they received a

measure of what He had, did they? How many of you, can see what I am getting at? The whole body of Christ is supposed to be like that.

WHAT SOME PEOPLE SAY

One of the brothers in that prison in Pennsylvania, sent us a mimeographed copy of a little tract that is being printed and distributed by a group called, The Christian Gospel Hour, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. They have taken excerpts from the Spoken Word books, statements made by Bro. Branham, and compiled them into a little tract, and the heading is, Bro. Branham, A Prophet of Satan. Then on one page it says, If you follow this man William Branham, you are following Satan, because he worshiped Satan. Brothers and Sisters: Things like that are prepared by people who never knew the man; they only go by what they have heard from others. You can just pull out excerpts from any book, and make them say just about anything you want them to say. That is how the Church of Christ people do the Bible. They can take the Bible, and by using certain select verses of scripture, taken out of context, disprove everything I have said about 1st Corinthians 12. They can explain it all away, but when they have done that, what have they accomplished? They are still sitting right where they were, with nothing to

build a revelation on. They will even tell you that not all of those 120 disciples in the upper room spoke in tongues; only the apostles spoke in tongues. Religion just goes from one extreme to the other, and attention is being focused on that fact, and investigations are being made by certain officials, so we had better know that what we believe is right, for there will come a day when we will have to defend it. Paul had to stand before the Sanhedrin Council and defend what he believed. His reply to them was, In the way that is called heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers. He knew his revelation was right, so he was willing to die for it if necessary. Of course I do not want anyone to get the idea that I think I have all the answers. I only want to say, by the grace of God, what I feel that He has put on my heart to say. God is never without a voice in the land; but He does not force anyone to listen to that voice. However those that are truly hungering and thirsting after God, will always recognize truth when they hear it, and God's five fold ministry of this end time, is where that truth is going to be coming from. He will have them scattered strategically around this world, so that every bride person will have access to everything they need. Furthermore as we deal with these verses of scripture, I believe you are going to see that He desires to deal with every individual person of the body of Christ, through the gifts of the Spirit, in various situations. What the apostle Paul wrote, was not just for his

hour of time; it was written to be applied at all times. So as we look at these gifts, let us be aware that God desires to be in touch with all of His people, all of the time. Now that does not mean that we will have the gifts operating in our individual lives twenty four hours a day, every day, but if we are sensitive to the Spirit of God, what we need, will be there when we need it. These nine gifts of the Spirit will cover every area of our lives; therefore we should never feel that our situation is too difficult for God to handle. As I said, many times we are faced with situations where there just seems to be nowhere to turn. God lets that happen from time to time. But that gift of wisdom, and of knowledge, is His way of showing us what to do, and even when to do it, not in every detail, but certainly enough to get us started in the right direction.

INTELLECT GIFTS

Another illustration of wisdom, was how King Solomon handled that situation where two women were claiming the same baby. They were both harlots, both had a child, and both slept in the same bed, but one smothered her child to death, and took the other woman's as her own, and that caused them to get into a fight, and the issue was brought before King Solomon to be settled. The testimony

of both of them sounded convincing enough; therefore no decision could be made on the basis of what they said, so Solomon called for a sword. His method was very crude, but it revealed the true mother of the little baby. The king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other. Then the real mother spake, saying, Oh my lord, give her the living child, and in now wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. That let the king know which one was the mother of the child, for a true mother would rather see someone else have the little thing, than to have it's life taken from it. Therefore the king said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it; she is the mother thereof. After that, it says, "And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king; for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment." The wisdom of God did not let him know which one to believe, just by listening to them tell their stories, but the wisdom of God was present anyhow, and Solomon was enabled to make a right decision. He was allowed to see a mother's compassion displayed, and that let him know which one to believe. Now that kind of wisdom is not learned from a school book; that comes from the Spirit of God. That is why Jesus said to His disciples. (Luke 12:11-12) "And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto the magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or

what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." In other words, Let the Spirit of God take over your intellect, and you will confound the gainsayers. It will do you no good in a court of law, just to tell how you read the Bible, nor to tell all the dreams you have had. Those lawyers and judges will not be impressed with any of that; it will take the Holy Ghost to leave them speechless. When He gives you something to say, they will listen, and take heed. That is how the word of wisdom works; through the intellect, by the anointing of the Spirit of God. You do not necessarily fight the devil in your immediate problem by being able to quote scripture verses. If you are being tempted to go against, or contrary to the scriptures, then it is needful to throw the scripture in his face, but that is not always the case. When Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness, the devil was trying to get him to go contrary to the scriptures; therefore Jesus just threw those scriptures right back at him, and that was sufficient, but there are many situations in life where a person needs words of wisdom, beyond that of just quoting scripture. The word of knowledge is the same way. It is an intellect gift, and the manifestation is for a certain situation, and once it is over, you could not get it to work that way again if you had to. It is not something that you can put in your pocket, and carry around. You may

plan to do the same thing again, and this time, God may just let you go through it by your own practical understanding. He is sovereign; He can do either one, but what He does, usually depends upon our attitude and motive, and whether we are a person that He can speak to, and lead in the direction He wants us to go, or not. As I said, The anointing for these intellect gifts is completely different than the anointing for the vocal gifts. Because when God uses the intellect, He can use it while the person sleeps. If that is the way He does it, then it is a dream.

THE GIFT OF DISCERNMENT

All right, there are three gifts in each category, and in the Bible, they are not listed in that order, but the other intellect gift is the gift of discernment. It is referred to as discerning of spirits, and the manifestation of this gift will never be seen as long as everything is going well. It is for times when things just seem to go a little contrary to the way they should. You do not always possess the knowledge of whether something is of God or not; therefore this gift of discernment will work through your intellect, by the anointing of the Holy Ghost, to let you know the difference, so let us look at a Bible illustration of what I mean. When the apostle Paul went into Macedonia, with some other brethren, they were

followed by a certain young woman that kept crying out, These men are the servants of the most high God, which have come unto us, to show us the way of salvation. Now as far as who they were, and what they were there for, you would have to say she was right, but to Paul, there was something that was just not quite right about what she was doing. A lot of people would have just loved what she was saying, because they would have thought she was doing them a service. But what she was actually doing was trying to get the officials of the city alerted to what they were there for, and possibly get them thrown into jail. It was all a plot of the devil, for she was a fortune teller in that city, and these men were just about ready to upset her apple cart. Let us open our Bibles to Acts 16:16, and we will read of the incident. "And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. (What she was saying was true, but there was just something about it, that vexed old Paul's spirit, and it was the gift of discernment that came into operation to deal with the situation.) And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour." She had been

selling this fortune telling gift, and the Bible says, She had masters that profited from it. Therefore when Paul cast that demon spirit out of her, they lost their money making gimmick, and that made them mad. They had them arrested, and beaten with many stripes, and then thrown in jail. But it all worked for the glory of God, for that is when the old Philippian jailor and all of his family turned to God, and was baptized. You all know the story of that, but it was the gift of discernment in operation, that I wanted to call to your attention. It is that other intellect gift that can work one minute, and the next minute you are back to what you can discern naturally. When a person speaks by that anointing, they absolutely speak the mind of God, and God never makes a mistake. But like I said, when that thing is over, you are left with just your natural discernment. Something else could come along, and God might not show you a thing. You may just have to let it kick up its heels. God will never let the devil make a fool of His Church though, you can believe that.

Now I want to tell of a personal experience, where the operation of that gift of discernment worked. Years ago, there was a man that would come here, from a certain other area. He always seemed to have a good testimony, but there was just something about the way he conducted himself, and the way he

went about saying things, that always gave me an uneasy feeling. Then one time his wife, who had never been here, called me on the telephone, long distance, and bawled me out because he had told her I do not allow the Spirit to move here, as he thought it should. After that, I really had a strange feeling about the man. So he came again, and this time he wanted to go home with us and spend the night, so I took him home with us. I said, God, I do not want to be a hypocrite, but I just simply do not feel right about this man. When he talked to you, everything sounded great, but I still had that feeling, and I said once again, God, I just do not feel right about this man, and I do not like that cramped feeling. Well that night I had a dream, and saw the man characterizing his exact mode of spiritual life. I will not go into details, because I do not want it on the tape, but the man was trying to live in the realm of something he had seen somewhere in the realm of Pentecost, and thought it should be like that everywhere. God showed me that he only lived on old bread. He was always standing, waiting until they were ready to give the old bread away. He was always waiting for his loaf. I knew immediately what it meant, and after that, I knew he would never walk in truth, no matter what he heard. He was still living back in some previous hour of time, and was not going to walk on with God. So God has His ways of showing us things, and He desires to deal with His Church more and more

in that way, but first the Church has to desire spiritual gifts, and cultivate a God-like kind of love that will cause everything to be kept with a right balance. The true body of Christ will seek to glorify God in the use of every gift of the Spirit, and not use them for self edification.

WHAT FAITH IS

Well just as there are three intellect gifts, there are also three power gifts. There is the gift of faith, and gifts (plural) of healing, and the working of miracles. We ended chapter 13 when we were over there, by reading the last verse, and then just going right on into verse 1, of chapter 14. But chapter 13, verse 13 says this, "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." The reason I am calling your attention to that verse, is to say this, The word faith, in chapter 13, is not the gift of faith. Faith over there is that attribute of the Spirit of Christ, that fortifies your life in the Spirit. That is the faith we grow by. It is what keeps us walking with God. But this gift of faith is something else altogether. The manifestation of the gift of faith is usually only a momentary thing, to meet a specific need, and it can be either for your own personal life, or someone else, or even for the whole assembly. As we look back in the book of Acts, and check the

ministry of the various men of that apostolic hour as they prayed for the sick, more than just a few times, what you are reading of is the gift of faith, coupled with the gifts of healing, and miracles, all working hand in hand. Why? Because they are three gifts all within the same realm of anointing. Faith in both instances, is a revelation. One we grow by in our every day life, and the other is a momentary impartation for some specific need. Again when you are found in a situation, where it looks like there is just no way out, God can impart faith to you in such a way, that without anything else to go on, you know within you, that everything is going to turn out all right. It is an inner assurance that overrides all natural circumstances. You could face the greatest storm of all storms, and by faith, know, not assume, that everything will turn out right. It is not something that can be put up on a billboard, but when it is in operation, it is as solid as anything you have ever seen. Every person must learn to recognize their own anointing though, for there is no one else that can tell you when it is there. Well what is faith in the every day realm? It is what God gives a measure of to every believer, and it grows from day to day, as it is exercised toward the word of God. It is something that grows a little every time you see a promise of God fulfilled. But without God imparting a measure of it, we could not even believe the gospel in the first place.

This faith is a progressive thing, that increases with your understanding of the word of God. From the time you become a child of God, until the day you are laid in the ground, you are going to live by faith. Where do we get it? God gives it, but only in a sufficient measure. He is the one that gives us the ability to believe, and then He rewards us when we believe, so how can we help but love a God like that? Now you will never have more faith than you need, no matter what kind of testimonies you may hear, but if you are a true child of God, you will always have enough. God is the faithful one. He is the one that watches over His word to perform it. That is why I use that verse in 1st Corinthians 10:13, it shows God's faithfulness. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but GOD IS FAITHFUL. (We can rest our faith on that) who will not suffer (or allow) you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Your faith exercised in these promises of God, will grow every time it is invested, for God will not fail. But like I said, There are levels of faith, for faith and revelation of the word of God go hand in hand. Saints I just have to say, I thank God for the way He has taught His word to me. I would not trade it for anything in the world. Many times there have been verses of scripture that I could not seem to understand. I had heard the thoughts of others projected on them, but for some

reason I would not be satisfied to try and preach on them myself, so I would just leave them alone. But when the time is right, God always deals with me in a way that I know it is Him. The man that was found among the wedding guests, not having on a wedding garment was one of those verses that I am speaking of, (Matt. 22:11) which a lot of men had preached on. But I just never could believe that this was a heavenly setting, so I would just avoid answering questions on it, and I certainly was not going to preach on it until I knew for sure what it was. Then came the time when I was in Texas, some years ago now, and they asked me about the king that prepared a wedding feast for his son, and asked how the man without a wedding garment on, was thrown out. I somehow managed to avoid answering them, but it bothered me something awful, because I did, so I just kept it turning over in my mind. I could not accept the idea that he was thrown out of heaven, for I knew God never makes a mistake, but what could it be? I said to myself, That has to have an earthly setting somehow, for God would not take a man to heaven, and then suddenly decide that He had made a mistake. Well they took me to the airport on Monday morning, and I caught a plane for home, but as soon as the plane leveled off, that parable popped back into my mind, but now it was coming to me, what it was. I said, Praise God! Thank you Lord! That

could never have come out of a Bible school. After that, I preached on the parable, and we have it in print, but until the Lord showed me what it was, I just stayed away from it. That is progressive growth. God never reveals everything to a man as soon as He calls him to preach. The Bible tells us to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and growth takes time, but that is the way God ordained it to be. By faith we receive salvation, and revelation adds to our faith. Do you see how beautiful that is? Brother when you know the truth, you do not have to sell your testimony for some little old church program. Those that major on church programs are not looking for truth anyhow; they are satisfied with what they have. Let me say this though, There is soon coming a day when God will cause that which is in you, to really shine, so just let this world of religion call you a heretic, or a cult, or whatever, for now. Our day is coming, and it will be glorious. If I am still alive then, I want to be walking with God in every truth he has made available to me.

GIFTS OF HEALING

After faith, comes the gifts of healing. In other words, It is not one gift that you just use to heal everyone you meet up with, but the anointing works as individuals are prayed for. Some get

healed, and some do not. If it was one gift of healing, and you had it all the time, then every time you prayed for someone, they should be healed. I hope you see the difference. You pray, and God supplies the anointing, but not every person that you pray for gets healed, so what makes the difference? The difference is, GIFTS of healing, according to the sovereign will and purpose of God. Bro. Branham had those gifts operating in his ministry, like no other man I have ever seen or heard of, this side of the apostolic hour, but he prayed for people that never did get healed. I have even noticed the gifts of knowledge and discernment worked on some that never did get healed. As he prayed for the sick, I could not help but notice, it was usually the gift of knowledge working in harmony with the gifts of healing. Some people thought when he was under that anointing, every sickness and disease that stood before him was healed, but the gifts of healing were imparted according to the individuals. In the apostolic hour, those apostles did not line people up, and discern them, and tell them the secrets of their heart. No. They just prayed for the sick, and the anointing of the Spirit of God did the healing, as He was allowed to express Himself through those vessels. Even as we examine the ministry of Jesus, not everyone got healed. One place He would go, maybe one person would get touched; and in other places, whole multitudes were healed. It is all in how the Spirit

purposes to work. Paul stayed in one place for over two years proclaiming the gospel, and they brought handkerchiefs and aprons for him to touch, and they went and laid them on their sick folks and they were healed. There were no gifts of knowledge and discernment in operation, on behalf of these that were healed in that way though, and that just proves that we cannot dictate rules and regulations for these things, for God works according to His plan and purpose. When a certain anointing comes upon a man, then he can know what to do, but without that anointing, we just have to pray and trust God. In other words a certain anointing may cause a person to know how to approach certain situations, but it does not always work like that. Therefore we just have to see that the gifts of healing operate according to how God sees each individual case, and we cannot just say that Bro. So and So has the gift of healing, and believe that everyone he prays for is going to be healed, for it is all controlled by the Spirit of God.

MIRACLES

Now we come to the other power gift, the working of miracles, and here again, we are looking at a manifestation of the Spirit of God. These miracles are not put on display, for monetary gain, like some men

would have it. Many times, they come about in ways that are the least expected. I just have to thank God for the way He does things. We received that letter a while back, concerning that little girl that we sent the anointing handkerchief to, last October. A man and his wife from the area of West Virginia, came and stood here for that little girl. I believe it was a kidney condition she had, if I remember correctly. They had told us about the little girl's condition on Saturday night, and said that the doctors had given her up; there was nothing else they could do, so they asked if we ever send out prayer cloths, and we said, yes. So the next morning they stood here, and we anointed a handkerchief, and they took it and placed it on the little girl. We later received a letter stating that she was doing fine. Oh how I praise God for His wonderful grace. When the doctors say, there is nothing else we can do, and then all of a sudden the condition is reversed, you just have to say, That was a miracle. Well God does not do these things just to please our flesh; He has a much higher purpose. He does not always do things that way, but when He does, it is wonderful. But many of you can relate similar situations, where you would just have to say, What happened here was nothing short of a miracle. It happens somewhere all the time, but you cannot calculate it ahead of time. I have colds, I have had the flu, tooth aches, and all sorts of things, but when I had that bad wreck years ago, that

brought me within an inch of my life, God performed a miracle, or miracles on my behalf. When I came out of the army, I had had Malaria Fever, and continued to have attacks of that thing, right on up until I had the wreck. Saints, if you have never had anything like that, it may be hard for you to realize just how grateful I am. When that fever rises in your body, it just seems like it could burst the thermometer. It shakes you all to pieces, you get chills, you get sick and vomit, and feel like you are just coming to pieces. I remember the last time the doctor gave me some medicine to take for it; he said, You will need to take this, for that condition will just lie there in your bloodstream, and can pop out any moment, and I just thought to myself, Do I have to go through life plagued with this thing? Then I had the wreck, that almost took my life, and half scalped me, and the doctor said I would never be able to close this eye again. Well, I can close it, and that in itself is a miracle. Dr. McCulley, one of the best surgeons around, at that time, said, There is no way he can close that eye, for all the leaders have been cut out. But, praise God, I can close it, so that was a miracle. But what makes it even better, I have never had an attack of Malaria Fever since then; God took that away too. I still get sick as a horse, in other ways, but thank God the Malaria is no longer a problem in my life. Now Saints, there are just some illustrations of what miracles are, but miracles can

go into major dimensions, like when Peter was in jail, and an angel tapped him on the shoulder, and said, Follow me, and he walked out through locked gates. We may be approaching an hour such as that; who knows? An angel of the Lord told Phillip to leave Samaria, and go into the desert, and there he met the Ethiopian eunuch, explained the scriptures to him, and then baptized him, and then the hand of God just picked Phillip up, and sat him down in another city. That was a miracle. Phillip's obedience brought about that manifestation of God's miraculous power, and God is the same today that He was then, but we just have to wait, and see what He will do, in every situation. As far as the gift itself, it is not an anointing that gets a person worked up in an emotional way. Yet the anointing for faith, miracles, and healing does require that the vessel being used, be sensitive to the Spirit of God, to recognize it when it comes. You may not show any emotions at all, but you will recognize the presence of that anointing when it is there, if you are a person that God uses in these gifts. Now of course our illustrations have been more to show you what miracles are, than to demonstrate how the gift works, for that is something God deals with every vessel He uses, in a particular way, to activate the gift.

REVIEW OF CHAPTER 13

Before we take the last three gifts of the Spirit, I want to go back into chapter 13, and back to verse 8, and finish the chapter out, for through the week, these things have been rolling over and over in my mind. As I said, In chapter 13, Paul is illustrating to the believer the proper motive one should have when they set out seeking for the gifts and things he has been dealing with in chapter 12. He is not discrediting any of those things, he is just showing by illustrations, the proper motive of life. In other words, Love must always be the focal point of everything, whatever we do. He is stressing the point, that nothing should ever exceed the pure love of God. Just like Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, when ye have love one for another." When Jesus said this, the disciples were all in one accord, as to what He had said, and he knew that the Holy Ghost would take what He had said, and lead them into a fuller understanding, so we would have to say, The early church was all in one accord. That is why Paul stressed that in one of his epistles, Let this mind be in your which was also in Christ Jesus, and also, Be ye all of the same mind. Therefore the Church of the living God was never meant to be just a mass of people believing anything they chose to believe, nor was it to allow anything to supercede that

Godlike quality of love. So in verse 8, Paul says, "Love never faileth." Why did he express it like that? Because that kind of love is what keeps us in tune with God. It is not how much we know, but the quality of that inner love and feeling toward God, that really counts. If we have the right kind of love toward God, we will automatically love our brothers and sisters in Christ with that same kind of love. Therefore love never faileth, it will always keep you pressing on. "But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." As we have already said, It is those prophecies that are spoken to individuals, that may fail to come to pass, if that person fails to meet the conditions that the prophecy was hinged on. Paul is not trying to create any negative thinking about prophecies, he is just merely pointing to the fact that there are things about them that can fail, but that this pure love of God will never fail. Let me restate also, that no prophecy of the scriptures will ever fail. Paul was not even talking about those prophecies here. Those prophecies of the scripture, state things that are sure to come to pass, for God never fails. Now in these personal prophecies, God always speaks to the highest potential, and makes an allowance for His permissive will in the matter, but some people even fall short of God's permissive will. Flesh gets in the way, and tries to work things out in a carnal

way. Nevertheless, even though they sometimes fail, Paul was not trying to discredit prophecy. For to the Thessalonians he wrote, “Despise not prophesyings, quench not the Spirit, prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” So we would have to say, Paul always spoke everything in a positive way, but at the same time, faced reality. That is why, when we come to the part about tongues ceasing, and knowledge vanishing away, we have to look at those from the standpoint of time itself. Tongues was a gift in the Church, and in early Christianity they never ceased at all. But history will tell us that as the centuries passed, tongues ceased to have its place in the average assemblies. Tongues, as a manifestation of the gift itself, has had its fragmental use in every century, but there came the time, when tongues did cease to have their place in the average assemblies. Paul did not know what the church ages was going to lead to, in time, but he wrote these things as he was moved by the Spirit to do so, and he was already gone from the scene before tongues ever ceased to be in operation in any assembly, but we can look back at history, and see where they did cease to be a part of the regular church services, and remained so for centuries.

DID KNOWLEDGE VANISH?

Well what about knowledge vanishing away? Was he referring to the gift of knowledge, when Paul said that? No, he was referring to that progressive knowledge that comes as the believer grows in the grace of God from day to day. From time to time, as we live for God and study His word, the Holy Ghost imparts knowledge to us as a progressive thing, and that is the knowledge that Paul was referring to here. God does not withdraw knowledge from those who have it, but as time moved on, and other generations came to be what was looked upon as the Church, that knowledge of the pure revelation of Jesus Christ vanished away. Time itself brought the Church to the place where she has lost everything. She lost the revelation of the Godhead. She lost the true formula of baptism. She lost the usage of the gifts of the Spirit, and the knowledge of every other true doctrine. They were all replaced by carnal knowledge, which just became mere tradition. Therefore there was no way for what was called the Church in the Dark Ages, to reflect the true love of God, because all they had was a carnal love. Their whole church system was ruled and dominated by fear, and in no way was Jesus Christ exemplified. You cannot ever convince me, that anyone can become spiritual by burning old wax candles, praying the rosary, and repeating what they call, the apostles creed. That is all a product of the flesh of carnal mankind. No, God did not take

knowledge from anyone, mankind just simply lost contact with it. People were forced by the sharp tip of those Crusaders swords, to become Christians, but it was in name only. That virtue of the pure love of God was not among them. They were called Christians, but they knew nothing of the pure love of Christ. There was nothing among them, that even remotely resembled the first Church, that we see in the book of Acts. But was God going to leave it like that forever? Absolutely not. That is what the Reformation was for. God restored His word to the Church. Many times you hear people say, God restored His word. No. His word has always been the same, but it had to be restored to the Church. That is what the Reformation gradually did. God had no intention of just restoring knowledge, and nothing else, as the Church of Christ would have you believe. From a fundamental viewpoint, they will try to convince you that they are the true Biblical New Testament Church, saying, We are not a denomination, nor organization; every church is independent. But regardless of what they say, they do not all believe alike, as the true Church of Christ in the book of Acts did. Well regardless of what anyone says, the Church that leaves here in the rapture is going to be just like that first Church, except for one thing. She will know more than they did back then, because the book of Revelation was not even

written until 96 A.D., and most of that first Church was gone by then.

PROPHESYING IN PART

Alright, verse 9 says, “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.” That has been true in every age. God has never revealed a complete picture of His eternal plan for the ages, to anyone, at any time. Therefore regardless of what anyone has ever known, no matter how much knowledge they may have had, it has only been in part, as far as God’s whole plan and purpose is concerned. People through the years have asked questions about things that we are not even supposed to know yet. We have no right to play with the mind of God. Our knowledge is progressive, but we can only attain knowledge as God allows us to. Therefore there are some things we would be better off, just to leave alone. There is quite a bit written about the Millennium, yet there is so much about it that is not written, who could even begin to describe what it is going to be like? We will just have to wait until we get there, and see. Then on the eternal age, about all we have is Revelation 21 and 22, so can we even think of exploring the endless ages of it, with so very little to look at? No. God will not allow it. We are still too carnal. You can look back at history, and see what carnal minds will do,

over a period of time. Therefore I say this, Whatever God imparts to us, let us be grateful for it, knowing how second and third generations will play with it. Naturally we believe that we are the generation that will see the coming of the Lord, and that God will continue to reveal His word to us, but let us not become matter of fact about it, and fail to be grateful. After what Noah and his sons saw, when it rained for forty days and nights, you would have thought they would have taken those little children that were born later, and really kept all of that fresh in their minds, but less than three generations later, they were building idols, and sacrificing to devils, and trying to build a tower to heaven. Brothers and Sisters: I am so thankful that God knows what He is doing. He always knows when to step into the picture, to keep things from going too far. He just came down and confused their language, and that brought the building of their tower to a halt. Well let me get back to the subject, we know in part. Paul knew exactly what he was talking about. Even with all that he knew, he only knew in part, but he sure knew how to teach those Corinthians and Galatians, to lift them up out of their pagan ways. What a knowledge he is imparting to them, and at the same time showing them how vain it would be to have this great storehouse of gifts, if love were not the motivating force of their lives. If love is in the forefront, all these other things will fall right into place. Yet we only know in

part, and can only prophesy in part as long as we are still here in this mortal flesh.

THAT WHICH IS PERFECT

Verse 10 says, "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." We have two things to look at here. One is how certain men apply that verse, and the other is how it really should be applied. A lot of people say that Bro. Branham was the perfect one, and that he brought the perfect word to us; therefore that is all we need. Well let me say with all sincerity, I know who Bro. Branham was, and what he was, but he was not the perfect one. The perfect one is Jesus the Christ. The Bible does not tell you that you are going to be made into the image of Bro. Branham. It says that we are predestined to be conformed into the image of the Son of God, and that is none other than Jesus the Christ. Then in 1st John 3:2, we read these words, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He (Jesus Christ) shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see him as He is." A lot of us know what the fleshly person William Branham looked like. I also know that he had headaches, and carried a little box of aspirins with him. You say, Bro. Jackson: I don't believe

that. Nevertheless we were rabbit hunting together one time, when he showed them to me. You may not want to believe the prophet would take an aspirin, but I say there are a lot of things that are very immaterial, when we are talking about the prophet. But one thing is sure, he was not the perfect one. The One he was pointing us to, is the perfect One, but He is invisible, and we cannot see what He is like, but the Bible says that even though we do not know what we will be like, we will be like Him. Hallelujah! You have not yet seen what immortality looks like. Immortality does not die, nor lose teeth, but Bro. Branham had lost some teeth. I only say these things to make a point. If you think William Branham was that which is perfect, you have missed the boat somewhere. Alright then, what was Paul talking about? He was talking about something that is still ahead of us yet. The Church is made up of mortal people, and no matter how great the Holy Spirit may work among them, they will only know in part, and prophesy in part, according to the scriptures. No mortal human being can ever do anything in that kind of completeness, to be looked upon as perfect. Therefore even though this end time element of the body of Christ will have all the gifts working among them, they will still only know in part, and prophesy in part, but there will come the time when she (the Church) will reach the peak of all of that, and that will be when the perfect One comes to take her to be with Him.

But until that time comes, the Church still has a job to do down here, exemplifying Christ, and it will be done through love, faith and hope. That is why Jesus said, When the Comforter is come, He will take the things of mine and show them unto you. It would be Jesus on display, through the Church. While He is in His high priestly role, the church is to reflect to the world, what Jesus did when He was here, and she will do that right up to the time for Him to come for her. But when that time comes, and Jesus takes His bride church to be with Him, there will no longer be any need for that kind of example to be presented. Then when the bride comes back to earth, to rule and reign with Christ for a thousand years, there will be no more prophesying in part, for her. So let us read that verse again, and know what it pertains to. "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part, shall be done away." That is talking about the coming of Christ, for His Church. When He takes her unto Himself, then that which is in part shall be done away. Why? Because when we are changed into immortality, we will know, even as we are known by Him, Jesus laid aside His prophetic role when He ascended to heaven to take up His role as high priest, and He will never be a prophet again. Well would we say He has gone into a lesser position? Absolutely not, for He has gone into the very presence of that eternal life, whom no man hath ever seen, nor can approach unto.

What a position for Him to be lifted up to! Yet it is only for a period of time, and then He will assume another role. The Bible says He will be King of kings, and Lord of lords. He is going to be invested with attributes of the eternal Spirit, that have never yet been manifested. In other words, He who conquered death, hell, and the grave for us, will one day come invested with all the wisdom and omniscience of the mind of the great eternal Spirit, to judge and rule all nations with a rod of iron for a thousand years. But the Bible tells us, that we are going to be lifted up also, to be made kings and priests, and that we shall rule with Him. Where? Right here on earth. Now if that be true, and we know it is, then we should see also, that this immortal, incorruptible Church is going to be lifted to a place where she will not just know anything in part. Her knowledge will be complete.

MATURE CHRISTIANS

In verse 11 Paul goes ahead saying, "When I was a child, I spake as a child." You do not expect a child to know what a forty year old person would know. The Creator ordained that we be born into this world with a little ball of matter in the top of our heads, that is capable of learning and retaining things, but it has to be taught. He ordained also, that in our Christian

life, it is to be much the same way. But in both cases, a lot of things are learned by practical experience. You can tell a child to stay away from a hot stove, and it may forget it, but you let the little thing touch that stove when it is red hot, and I guarantee you, it will never forget that. This is just an example of what we call practical experience, and it is the same way in one's Christian life. Many times a person has to get caught up in some kind of adverse circumstances, before they will ever learn to be discerning, so we do learn by practical experience. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Through their stages of learning, children do not always grasp everything the first time. They just have to learn the hard way. Then we could say, Sometimes their thinking is very foolish, and they just do not take things serious enough. But under normal circumstances, when they grow up, all of that changes. Those childish traits are left behind. Now saints, do not get the idea, that Paul is saying, to seek after the gifts is childish. He is only pointing to the fact that those who have the gifts, should grow up, in the use of them. Appreciate them, and do not play around with them. Conduct yourself in an adult manner, instead of being childish with them. You give a six year old child a hundred dollar bill, and just see what he does with it. That example may be a little on the extreme side, but I

believe it will get the point across, and that same example applies to spiritual things. We do not need to be childish with them. Alright, then Paul says this, "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." What we see spiritually at present time, is as though we are looking through a darkened glass. When we look at Jesus, through the scriptures, we only see a profile, but when that which is perfect comes, then shall we see Him face to face. Our vision will be cleared up, and our knowledge will be made perfect. That is what immortality will do for us. We will know, even as we are known. Paul is just sort of comparing the present life with what it shall be later, so he says in verse 13. "And now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." This is that progressive faith that God imparts to every soul, to enable them to start believing on Him in the first place. In another place, Paul calls it, the measure of faith, therefore faith and knowledge is a progressive thing, that should continue to be enlarged all the time. Then as I said earlier, the word HOPE, no longer carries the same meaning that it carried back in the 16th century. It is used here, with the thought of conveying an optimistic outlook on things. What you are looking at, may be a very dismal picture, but this kind of hope will enable you to have a positive attitude and outlook about it. Something inside

of you just lets you know that everything is going to be all right. The opposite of that is to be a pessimist, always looking at the dark, negative side of everything. I do not even like to be around people like that; they will even make you feel bad. Therefore through eyes of faith, let us look for the best of everything, and let love be the motivating force behind all that we do and say, and we will fulfill the perfect law of God. That divine love of God should be the greatest desire of our hearts.

THREE VOCAL GIFTS

We have three other gifts left here in chapter 12, verse 10. They are the three vocal, or utterance gifts of the Spirit. Of course we realize that Paul did not group these gifts in chronological order of three threes; he just wrote a letter, and man has divided it up into chapters and verses, as translations were made. Therefore when we read verse 10, we find one of the intellect gifts listed there among the vocal gifts, but we have already talked about it, along with wisdom and knowledge, so we just want to catch these three vocal gifts now. As I said, the anointing for these vocal gifts, is a completely different kind of anointing, than the anointing for the intellect gifts or power gifts. These last three have been grossly misused, it is true, but that still

does not diminish from them, the importance they have in the true body of Christ. Let us read verses 10 and 11 now, and you will see that it is the same Spirit both administering and operating all of them. "To another the working of miracles: (We have already had that) to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; (We covered that) to another divers kinds of tongues; (that means different kinds) to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit dividing to every man severally as He will." You see, it is God that does the distributing; man cannot control that. When the Bible was translated into what we call the King James Version, the usage of a lot of words and terms was a lot different than what we have now, but there is still no reason for us not to catch the true thought expressed. Therefore verse 11 simply means that all nine gifts are distributed among the Church according to the sovereign will of God, and then He gives the anointing for that operation of the particular gifts according to His own will and purpose. The important thing for us to understand, is that up until the first advent of Christ, no one knew exactly how God wanted a Godly minded person to portray himself. The old prophets were able to portray certain things that set them apart as holy men, but man in general, did not know how to portray Godliness. It took the man called Jesus, to really live and demonstrate to mankind, a true

example of a Godly life. He was the manifestation of the righteousness of God. Those who saw Him, saw a God man, a man invested with the fulness of God. They saw no human faults in Him, because He did not have any. He was the perfect Son of God.

CHRISTIANS PORTRAYING CHRIST

My daughter just handed me a magazine article, in which it states that certain groups are wanting to change every verse in the Bible, that discriminates in any way against the sex of humans. They may just as well throw the Bible away, as to do that. A man is still a man, and a woman is still a woman, no matter how many scripture verses they change. God knew what He was doing, when He inspired holy men to write those scriptures. When they say man, or son, that is exactly what God meant for them to say. Why don't some of these people fuss at evolution. If they believe they got here by a process of evolution, and they are all that unhappy, I say, Let them fuss at evolution. One bunch does not want God in the picture at all, and another bunch wants to talk about God, but they do not like the mention of man, him, his, nor any term that might not include the female. (It is strange, you never hear of animals fussing

about sex discrimination.) They will take a verse that speaks of Jesus being the Son of God, and change it to say that He was a child of God. How do people like that expect to get anywhere in eternity, when they refuse to give the very Son of God His proper recognition? Brothers and Sisters: We are at the end. No wonder the apostle Paul said there would be a falling away. Man in his fallen state, does not want truth. He wants to interpret the Bible to fit his flesh, so he can glory in his own carnal achievements. Brother, the Bible says, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. That is the state of lost mankind, before God seeks them out, and changes their lives, and those who truly partake; of God's great plan of salvation, are not always trying to change the Bible. They know the hope of their salvation lies in the fact that the Bible is true. If this is not the word of God, then why bother about it at all? Jesus Christ set the perfect example of what God is after. That great eternal Spirit that had never been seen by man, took possession of His perfect Son, and controlled His thoughts, His emotions, spoke through His lips, saw through His eyes, healed through His hands, and only those that God gave a revelation, saw Jesus as the anointed Messiah. All the rest just looked at Him as another Jew, trying to be something. But in John 14:11, Jesus said, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else

believe me for the very works' sake." Multitudes of church people read that verse, and never see a thing. The Jewish nation was judged, and cut off from accessibility to the gospel, because they could not see it. They every one had an opportunity to recognize Him. They saw the miracles, listened to Him preach, and yet their traditions outweighed what they had witnessed, so they turned away from every bit of it, and cried, Crucify Him! The Church started out with converted Jews, but compared to those that just simply rejected Him, these were only a minority, and most of these were not the ones that had witnessed so many miracles, and heard him preach. They were Jews from other nations, that had come to Jerusalem to worship, as this feast of Pentecost drew nigh. Now what they heard did not make them Catholics, Baptists, Lutherans, and such like, but it did give them access to God's throne of grace. Then when the Spirit of God turned from the Jews, and began to work among Gentiles, the Gentiles were given every one the same gospel the Jews had received. Jesus Christ was the central figure, and every revelation was built around Him, and still there was no reason to divide off into denominations. The gospel message was to convict lost sinners of their unbelief, and turn them to the righteousness of God. Therefore the Spirit that fell on the day of Pentecost and started the Church, is the same Spirit that operates these 9 gifts that we have been studying about. Through

those spiritual manifestations, the very attributes and character of Jesus was still seen, just like it was when He walked among them. Gentile pagans were lifted up out of their paganism, and given the very nature of the man that was crucified for them. How did God do that? By a constant process of renewing their minds, and placing a revelation in their hearts. Gentiles have never had the opportunity to know Christ after the flesh, we only know Him through eyes of faith, as the Holy Ghost takes the things of Christ, and illuminates Him to our understanding. Nevertheless the important thing is that we see that the Gentiles received the gospel in the same magnitude and characteristics of Christ that the Jews had it. These vocal gifts were definitely manifested, as well as all the others, throughout the first century of Christendom. Even on into the second and third centuries, they were still in operation, but in a lesser degree, as Satan was already working his plan to gain control of the Church. As I said, There definitely did come a time when these gifts of the Spirit ceased to operate in the average assembly, and even today, after all that has been restored back to the Church, there are still a lot more churches without the gifts in operation, than there are with them.

HOW PROPHECY COMES

Alright let us try to give some explanation, concerning these vocal gifts. Prophecy is one of them, and the anointing of the Spirit of God is what causes that gift to operate, just like all the others. Now I grant you, it is possible to hear all sorts of prophecies, but they may not necessarily be uttered by the anointing of the Holy Spirit; therefore you have another situation where something that is called prophecy, can fail. That is the reason Paul said prophecy should be judged. If someone speaks a prophecy to you, it is your responsibility to judge it, if it requires you to do something to activate it. I have heard people stand up and prophesy doom and destruction upon certain ones, unless they would do certain things, and a spiritual person would know for sure that it was only a prophecy of selfish carnal flesh, yet other immature Christians might have a tendency to become fearful. That is why they have to be judged. As far as the gift of prophecy, that is something a person must desire, in order for the Spirit to anoint you for it. God knows the ability of every person. He also knows our psychological makeup, and our desire to be a vessel He can use, so do not think you can just sit there in your pew with the idea. Well if God wants me to prophesy, I will. Unless you have a desire in your heart to be used of God, you may as well forget

about it. That is why Paul taught as he did in the 13th chapter. That is also why the first verse of chapter 14 says, "Follow after love, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." Now brothers and sisters, I am not telling you that you have to do this, that, or something else, but Gentile time is running out, and I am convinced that something is soon going to hit this old world, that will cause us all to realize just how short time is. Therefore should we not be seeking to find that place with our God, so that He can use us if He sees fit? What is the gift of prophecy? It is the Spirit of God using a Holy Ghost filled Christian to foretell something, and I believe we are right on the threshold of conditions requiring that, for the benefit of the Church. As I said, The administration is how God allots the gifts, and the operation is how He uses them, but every individual has to learn how to be sensitive to the Spirit, or there will be no gifts in operation. Some people actually do believe that God will just simply reach down, and drop the Spirit of prophecy upon certain people, without them ever doing one thing to cultivate it, but that is not right. If you believe like that, chances are, that unless you change your way of believing, you will go right on through life, never knowing one thing about spiritual gifts. There is an old saying, you cannot play the game, unless you know the rules. Well, this is not a game we are playing, but you still have to know the rules to

participate. The anointing for these gifts works in your spirit, much the same as the Spirit of conviction. When conviction is working on you, no one need tell you what is taking place, you know it immediately. That is why Jesus said, No man can come to me, except the Father (which is Spirit) draw him. How does He draw you? By putting conviction upon you. A person definitely has to feel conviction, before they will come to God. Well where do you feel it? In your spirit. Your thumb does not ache, nor your ear turn red, nor your back hurt, but inside your soul, you begin to feel miserable, and you know what it is. Let me say also, Holy Ghost conviction is not something you can run from. There is not a hole deep enough for you to hide in, once that Spirit of conviction zeroes in on you, to draw you to His purpose. What does it affect? It affects your spirit. You feel something in your spirit that you just cannot describe. One day you may feel good, and have your mind set on doing a certain thing. But if God has other plans for you, He comes on your spirit in a way that causes you to feel bad, until He gets what He wants. No matter what you do, to try to get away from it, the hurting is still right there. Brothers and Sisters: I am not saying that the anointing to prophesy is necessarily something like that, but it will definitely affect your spirit in much the same way, once the gift is cultivated and it is nothing to fear either. It is just the way God has chosen to get our

attention. Sometimes when people are a little on the timid side, have a tendency to be a little shy, they have to feel a strong anointing before they will ever open their mouth to say one thing, so do not look at me and say, Bro. Jackson: We are not supposed to go by feelings. It is true, we do not base our salvation, our walk with God, necessarily on feelings, but when the time comes, that the Spirit of God wants to use you in this way, you had better get your mind off of that kind of idea, or you will go right on down the road of life running from everything. When that anointing begins to be felt, just know that it is the Spirit of God getting ready to use you, and cultivate His presence. I know how I have felt many times, but over a period of time, as you allow yourself to become sensitive, you begin to learn what is going on. When that feeling starts to move upon you, the first thing you do is search your mind, and be sure everything is clear between you and God. If it is, then you know it is an anointing, and not the Spirit of conviction. First it will work on you to lift you up, and get you ready to use, and then you will begin to relax and entertain it. That does not mean that you will be saying anything; it just means that you will cultivate His presence. Then as the anointing builds, it will begin to have some affect on your physical, fleshly makeup. Your nerves begin to act up, and sometimes you may get to feeling like you could explode. But do not allow that to

hinder you from obeying God: for I read in the Bible, how some of the old prophets fell down like dead men, when that anointing came upon them. I am not telling you that you necessarily need to feel like that; I am only reminding you that it could be like that. But the first thing is to realize that there is an anointing working on you, and then if you get to feeling like your heart could just simply leap out of you, do not get scared, just yield your vocal capacity to whatever He desires to use it for. If you begin to feel like that, and your life is clean before God, just entertain it, and keep your mind upon Him until He gets your spirit ready to manifest whatever it is for. The anointing may have to get so strong it almost picks you up, but that is all right, just as long as you do not fight against it. Then when your mouth does fly open, you may not even understand what you are saying, until it is all over. But please, saints, I am not laying down rules for you to follow, I am only giving all due respect to the sovereignty of God, and trying to get you to understand that the individual makeup of people are not all the same. Our spirits are not all alike. Our mentality is not all the same, and neither are our emotions. Therefore we every one must learn how to recognize the anointing when it comes to us for whatever purpose it comes for. Remember this, prophecy will always be spoken in the language of the people it is being spoken to. I mean, If they are English speaking people, the prophecy

will be spoken in English. Because the prophecy is the Spirit of God speaking directly to the people of the assembly, or to an individual, as the case may be.

THREE KINDS OF PROPHECY

Alright then, we introduced the gift of prophecy by saying that it was the Spirit of God foretelling something that is to be. But it is not limited to that. The Spirit of prophecy can deal with past, present, or future; therefore it is not necessarily foretelling things that are to be in the future. In chapter 14 Paul said, “but he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” Then over in verse 24 he said, “If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all he is judged of all: and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest: and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.” The greatest percentage of the prophecies given by the prophets of the Old Testament, were present tense prophecies of exhortation and rebuke to the children of Israel, for their rottenness. Even far reaching prophecies were hidden in present tense prophecies and rebukes a lot of times. While exhorting and rebuking, they would reach way into the future, and pull it right in with the other, thereby hiding it from those who

heard it. That is how God many times, concealed those far reaching prophecies. Prophecy can even reach back into the past, and we know that, because of the way some of those prophets of old spake. Just for example, that Spirit of prophecy would say, Am I not the Lord God that brought thee out of the land of bondage? Did I not deliver thee, at the Red Sea? That is speaking in the past tense, but it is by that Spirit of prophecy. So in every generation of people, God sometimes finds it necessary to go back and remind the people of what they have strayed from. But prophecy that goes into the future tense, is prophecy of the highest magnitude, and that is what we desire, when we think of prophecy. Regardless of what kind of prophecy God may use you for, that still does not make you a prophet like those old Testament prophets, for we are talking about a gift of prophecy, that may be a one time thing in some instances. We just have to leave it for God to deal with people however He chooses.

VARIOUS TONGUES

Now we have the gift of different kind of tongues to consider, and Paul speaks of this, the manifestation of the gift of tongues in the assembly, as being a sign to the unbeliever, for man, as a general rule, learns only one language. But the Church began 1900 years ago,

with a great manifestation of speaking in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. When that 120 disciples came out of the upper room where they had been waiting for the promise of the Father, they were all speaking in other tongues. No they were not unknown tongues, they were just unknown to those speaking them, and to those local Jews, that had hardened their hearts toward the things of God. Pentecost in this century, has said, This is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, but no, you have gone too far when you say that. God was fulfilling a prophecy of Isaiah, and Paul mentioned it in 1st Corinthians 14:21, "For with stammering lips and another tongue will He (God) speak to this people." That is Isaiah 28:11, and Paul mentions it and says, "And yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord." Those old hard hearted Judaistic Jews had gathered there in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and all of a sudden, there came this 120 Galileans out of an upper room, all speaking in other tongues. None of them were speaking in Hebrew or Aramaic, therefore the local Jews did not know what was being said. But there were Jews present, from 16 other nations, and every last one of them heard someone speaking in their native tongue, and magnifying God. Those from Rome were hearing Latin, and those from Athens were hearing Greek, and so on, and it says that every one of them heard some of the 120, speaking in their own tongue the

wonderful works of God. Every Jew there could have understood Hebrew, their mother tongue, so God just spoke to those that were there from other nations, and bypassed those who had been privileged to hear Jesus for 3 ½ years, and then rejected Him. Those Galilean Jews had no control over what they were saying; it was a sovereign operation of God. Well this causes a lot of people to say, I just do not understand tongues. But if you are a true child of God you should believe in them anyway. Do not forget, God was the one that came down and confused the language, when all men after the flood did speak the same language, and decided to build them a tower that would reach into heaven. Therefore if God is the one that caused all these different languages to be spoken in the first place, why could He not reverse the process if it would suit His purpose? The truth is, God anoints yielded vessels to speak in tongues, and he anoints yielded vessels to interpret those tongues, and it is a sign to the unbeliever that God is truly in the midst of you.

ILLUSTRATION OF TONGUES

Let me just say, for the sake of illustration, that I was born in Athens Greece. I know the Greek language, because it is my native tongue, but if I am a Jew, I also know Hebrew, the

mother tongue of all Jews. That is the one thing that has helped keep the Hebrew people together through the centuries, their mother tongue. They do not always use it, except in religious functions, but they all know it. So here I am in Jerusalem, and my native language is Greek, and all of a sudden, there appears these Galileans who do not know Greek, and they are speaking to me in my native language. I have to know that there is something strange taking place, for I am hearing of the wonderful works of God, spoken to me in my own language. This same scene was being repeated all over the place, and it caused the question to be asked, What meaneth this? Now naturally those local Jews, that had not heard one word they could understand said, These men are full of new wine. It sounded like just a lot of jabbering to them, maybe much like a drunk person. But to those of other nations, it was as clear as a bell to them. That statement fired up old Peter though, and he stopped it all right there. While the other apostles stood right there with him, he began to say, "Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell in Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day." He went on to tell them, that this was the fulfillment of prophecy, and preached Jesus to them, and reminded them of how they had crucified the one that should have been their Messiah. Brother every Jew standing there heard

Peter's words because he was speaking in the Hebrew tongue. None of it meant anything to that local bunch though, for in their hearts they had already rejected Jesus, but there stood three thousand devout Jews from other nations, that Peter's words did mean something to, and they gathered around and asked, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter's answer was, Repent every one of you, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. They believed his words, and obeyed his instructions, and the Church was more than three thousand strong, that first day, and it was all triggered by a manifestation of the Spirit of God. There was a similar manifestation of speaking in tongues, in the house of Cornelius, when Peter preached Christ to them that day, and they were Gentiles. Then in the 19th chapter of Acts, when Paul laid hands on some men that had just been baptized, they not only spake in tongues, but some of them prophesied. Therefore if you are going to have to have evidence, it could be prophecy, just as well as tongues. But thank God, we do not base our experience with God on those vocal manifestations.

Alright now, let us pull our thoughts back to the gifts of speaking in tongues. I have read how at various times, as God wanted to show His

supernatural power as a vindication among groups of people, He would move upon some person to speak in another dialect. It was unknown to the person speaking, but someone in the congregation, usually a stranger, would be understanding every word. The interpretation would come forth, to allow the rest to know what God had said, but many times the stranger would ask, Can you explain to me why that person spoke in that certain dialect, and then someone else stood up and repeated it in English? That happened at the Branham Tabernacle years ago. There was a minister sitting present in the service, that had sort of backslid and gone away from God. He went up to be prayed for that morning, and this message in tongues came. The interpretation that followed was speaking directly to the man, and he just broke down and wept, and his wife screamed and said, That is right. When the service was over that morning, and everyone was going out the door, there was a man standing just outside the door. He had come into the service late, had just been passing by, and stepped inside in time to hear what was going on. The man right in front of me stopped to shake hands with him, and he asked this question, Can you tell me why that person spoke in German, and then it was interpreted in English? I understood every bit of it, he said. Now I just used that to say, Do not ever try to understand everything about why God would use something like that. You can wrestle with it, but you will

still not know, for God has many reasons for doing things a certain way. Furthermore if you question things too much, Satan will fill your mind with unbelief, and you will be out of the picture, as far as any gifts are concerned. One thing is sure enough, No individual can speak in a tongue that they have not heard unless the Holy Ghost anoints them to do so. However, many people, after they receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, are able to speak in tongues in prayer. You do not know what you are saying, but you can communicate with God in that manner, because He hears you from the depths of your soul. That is not the gift of tongues, that is to be used in the Church. The anointing for the gift of tongues will affect you much the same way as the anointing to prophesy. I do not like to be specific about feelings, but there definitely are some feelings that go with it, and every individual has to learn to be sensitive to those feelings. There have been times when I felt like, if I did not speak, I would pass out. But I do want to say again, the anointing for those vocal gifts affect your feelings in a much different way, than the anointing for the intellect gifts, and it is different with each person, so just seek God for your own experience, and do not try to receive someone else's experience. Most of you could not speak German under any circumstances, apart from the Holy Spirit anointing you to do so. But when that anointing does come, all you have to do is open your mouth and

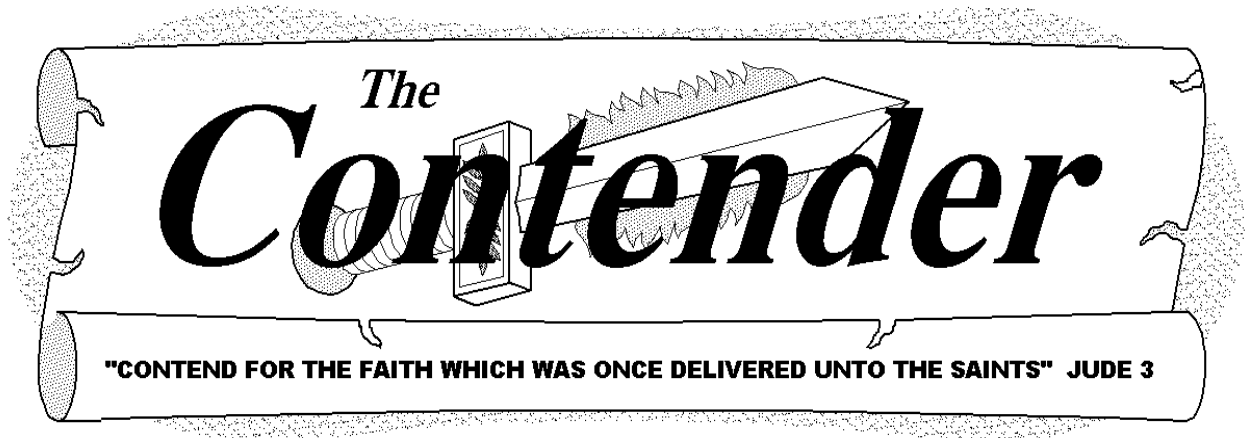
let it come out, and it will come out all right. On the other hand, I have seen people pray for people to speak in tongues when they are seeking the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and I do not mean to belittle them for doing that, but I am fully persuaded that God does not need any help, when He chooses to deal with someone in that way. God is unique, He has his own ways of doing things.

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

We come now to the last gift, the interpretation of tongues. What is it? It is the anointing for someone to speak out, in the language of the people present, the interpretation of a message in tongues. A lot of people feel that an interpretation coming forth, should be word for word of the tongues, but there are some things to take into consideration. Languages differ one from another, and it does not take the same amount of words to say the same thing. Interpretation is conveying the thought of what was said, rather than trying to have the same amount of words. Bro. Strommen explained to me, that their Norwegian language does not even have words to convey the true meaning of every English word. That is why many times, when he is interpreting for me, I will say a

dozen or so words, and the interpretation may not require half that many. Therefore do not allow yourself to get hung up on the idea that an interpretation should be exactly the same length, and the exact amount of words, or you will miss God completely in it all. It is the thought of what was said, that is the important thing. The main thing is to say, in the language of the people present, what was said in the tongues, in a way that they can understand. When the Lord first began to move upon me in this way, I was sort of shy, when I was away from my own little mission. But I went to a meeting over in Louisville, with another preacher, and we sat on the back row. The evangelist preached, and then started to pray for the people. But then he stopped and gave a message in tongues. The older preacher that was with me stood up, and gave the interpretation. Then the evangelist gave acknowledgment to the Spirit of the Lord, and went right back to praying for the people. He soon stopped again, and started giving another message in tongues, and as soon as he started, I could feel that anointing start to stir around within me. But I was in a strange church, and there was a lot of people present, and I was shy, so I said, No, Lord, Not me. When he finished speaking, I said, Lord let him interpret it, but nothing happened. I was sitting there wanting to sink lower down in my seat, but I could not get away from that feeling. Then the thought came to me, I feel

like I could literally explode if this does not leave me. The thought came to me then, If he says just one more time, Speak Lord, I will speak, and as soon as I thought that, he said, Speak Lord. Then I could not do anything but open my mouth and begin to speak. There is no reason to explain all the feelings I had, for they were my feelings. Yours may be different altogether, and you will have to yield accordingly. Again I will remind you, that the apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, Quench not the Spirit, and despise not prophesying, prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. Every true gift of God is good, so let us be sensitive to the leading of His Spirit, and seek to be used by Him, and we will have that true joy that the scriptures speak about. We still have some more to say, so look for a continuation of this message in our next issue.



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