



Article Title— "Spiritual Giftedness"

Article Category— The Visible Church



After church on a Sunday morning more than a decade ago, a relatively new member of our evangelical church greeted me with something like this: "Hello, Brother Newsome. I'm really enjoying your Sunday School lessons. My wife and I are learning a lot more about the Bible than we were learning at our former church." I was gratified and told him so. He smiled, too. Then came a really somber expression and this: "The Lord told me something about you that I've gotta share; hope that'll be okay with you, sir." Immediately skeptical I responded, "I'm all ears!"

"God has some really big plans for you, sir," he began. "He's gonna use you to reach thousands upon thousands of good Christian people and prepare them for the end times that are rapidly approaching. Thousands of unbelievers will come to know Jesus as a result of your ministry, too."

"God's good," I replied, "but tell me why you're convinced that He would've told you that but not me?"

Smiling again, he followed with something resembling this: "Well, you believe in the spiritual gifts. I've heard you say so. You see, I have the gift of prophecy. That's my primary function within the body of Christ."

"Tell me about how you learned that you have that gift," I probed.

"After several of the elders at our former church had prayed for me and my wife a few years ago, there was a message in tongues. The interpretation was that I had been personally blessed with the gift of prophecy and that I should stay especially close to the Lord so that I might learn things from The Holy Ghost that will be of great benefit to other Christians."

I smiled and bid him adieu, but I didn't buy-in to any of what I had heard. How might YOU have responded? (If you have questions about pentecostal "messages in tongues" and such, that is among the critical topics of Lesson 13 of our Online Study series: <https://www.link1.info/online-study>.)




In the early Autumn of 2016, someone engaged a member of our **Link1™** Bible Research Team in dialog about the books of Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelation. My colleague had observed that there is still MUCH in those books that we are to understand "later." He continued that most of the end-times-prophecy *experts* who're successfully convincing others that, today, THEY can understand all or most of what's written there are actually reading between-the-lines:

- > "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part...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." —Paul, at 1 Corinthians 13:9,12

That person countered that those books are actually *easy* to understand—for those who have been blessed with the gift of supernatural interpretation. He continued with lots of conclusions that he claimed to have gained from an extensive study of the scriptures...and from The Holy Spirit. My colleague's recognition that most of it had been gotten via extra-Biblical revelation was driven by the fact that the cited scriptures cannot sensibly yield those conclusions. That "gifted" person's frequent use of seminary terms confirmed, for my colleague, that he had actually gotten most of it from Bible "experts."

(Have questions about what's true and what's new about end-times-prophecy? You can find lots of eternal value in Lesson 12 of our Online Study series. Go to [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3\\_d0bbc486877c49acb5393dc32e00bdec.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3_d0bbc486877c49acb5393dc32e00bdec.pdf) for a really quick study on extra-Biblical revelation.

I was a successful Bible teacher for a LOT of years—big sanctuary classes.  
I knew what my denomination believed and that's what I taught.  
Yes, I should've checked it out to make sure it was true.

So why didn't I do that? Well, maybe I didn't do that for the same reason that you haven't really checked out what your denomination teaches. 

"In religion and politics, people's beliefs and convictions are in almost every case gotten at second hand, and without examination." —Samuel Clemens



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As I had done in the first scenario, above, my colleague gracefully moved away from that dialog. Was that the appropriate response? You may recall from my "Ears to Hear" article that Jesus never shared *anything* important with folk who hadn't first demonstrated "ears to hear." Here's the link to it: [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3\\_535c17bf8a0048689ba7acfd2087f12a.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/a359a3_535c17bf8a0048689ba7acfd2087f12a.pdf).

> "But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant." —1 Corinthians 14:38

Spiritual giftedness? Yes, I believe that *can* be genuine. So why the push-back? It's because there is an easy-to-observe profusion of presumed "gifts" that've been bestowed by men in the visible church. Some of those "gifts" are even like a "selfie!" That's neither a legitimate assignment, nor a credible privilege for men:


> "God also bearing [them] witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will" —Hebrews 2:4

One must wonder if maybe our Heavenly Father has resolved to withhold most genuine Spiritual giftedness until so many in the hyperspiritual precincts of the visible church stop counterfeiting it...and until so many naive and ill-informed believers quit buying-in to it.

—T. C. Newsome 

PS: To participate in Bible discussions about articles like this one – or to just read and enjoy them – join us at TC's Friends Club. Here's the hot link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/136708110091989/>

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