

This We Teach About God, The Holy Spirit (Part 2)

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Date: 10 July 2016

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[0 : 00] Luke chapter 24. I want to begin there just kind of by way of introduction to our subject this morning.

! Verse 45, and we'll just read a few verses here. And he opened their understanding that they might comprehend the Scriptures. That's pretty important, isn't it?

Then he said to them, Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry...this is the part that I want you to see to begin with...

But tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. Of course, this is a reference, of course, to the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Reference to Pentecost. And he said, Stay here. Wait a while. You may want to just go out and begin ministry and do the ministry, but tarry here until you are endued with power from on high.

[1 : 58] Now, what does Jesus mean? I mean, why did he say this to his disciples? Well, I think we understand. And this, of course, is Luke's version of the Great Commission.

But we can turn to another example of when Jesus gave his commission in Acts chapter 1, verse 8. And it explains what Jesus is talking about here.

And in Acts chapter 1, verse 8, he says, You will receive what? Power. You will receive power when?

You know this passage? When the Holy Spirit has come upon you. So he's talking about the same thing here, isn't he? And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

All right, so we're familiar with that passage, especially that one, that example of the Great Commission. You shall receive power. You will receive it after or when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be witnesses unto me.

[3 : 05] The Holy Spirit. See, according to what Jesus said here in these two examples, how important is the Holy Spirit? We've been studying our doctrinal statements, what we teach about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Holy Trinity, the Godhead.

And so what is Jesus saying about the importance of the Holy Spirit here? John R. W. Stott made this observation. He said, Before Christ sent the church into the world, he sent the Spirit into the church.

Now, this is important. He sent the Spirit into the church. And then Stott went on to say, The same order must be observed today. The meaning being, of course, that whether it's to go out to the world to proclaim the gospel, to be witnesses, or whether it is any point of service within the church, we must have the Holy Spirit.

We must have him. Someone has also said that if the Holy Spirit were to die, most churches would just go on as usual and not really even know the difference.

That's a pretty sad testimony, but I'm telling you that there are churches today. Churches today, maybe even in our own city, I'm sure, right here in our own city, that are operating as if the Holy Spirit were dead.

[4 : 37] That is, in this sense, thinking that somehow that we can do all the things that we've been commanded to do as the church, to serve the Lord, even to worship the Lord, that we can somehow do any of those things apart from the Holy Spirit, without the Holy Spirit.

Now, there are a number of reasons for that, why this is happening, but a lot of the problem, I think, is ignorance when it comes to understanding what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit, who this Holy Spirit is, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, what role the Holy Spirit plays within the Holy Trinity as the third member of that Trinity.

Ignorance about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and so that makes our current study, I think, so very important. And again, we're looking at Highland Park's doctrinal statements, five doctrinal statements, and we're taking them one at a time, going to take as long as it takes to be able to work through these, looking at them line by line, and not necessarily delving into the scriptural basis for every point, because we know most of it, but some of those areas within our doctrinal statements that might be a little bit confusing, and maybe we're not as completely acclimated to the foundation, scriptural foundation for each one of those, so we're going to take a little time on all of those. And again, those five doctrinal statements are what we teach about God. That's what we're doing right now.

We've started three weeks ago on that, and that includes the Trinity, each member of the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, and we're now on God the Holy Spirit.

[6 : 26] Next week, what we teach about the Holy Scriptures, and then third, what we teach about man, fourth, what we teach about salvation, and then finally, what we teach about the church.

All right, and by the way, you can look at our five doctrinal statements on our website. You can pick up a copy of our bylaws out there, and they're printed there.

We're going to be talking more about that at our business meeting later this month. But these are the five doctrinal statements. These are the things that we teach as a church.

All right, so with that as our introduction, then what do we teach about God the Holy Spirit? And we started to look at this last week, and I want to finish that this morning, and then again next time, we'll look at the second doctrinal statement, what we teach about the Holy Scriptures.

But let's take up where we left off there, concerning the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also, because this is a continuation of our statement, also indwells, already talked about that, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, them being, of course, born-again believers.

[7 : 46] He empowers us for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption. Now, again, we've covered some of these already.

He indwells us. The Holy Spirit comes and takes residence within the life of the believer at the moment of salvation. His work is a sanctifying work.

He is working in us and through us to make us more like God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He instructs us. The Bible says He guides us into all truth.

We understand that aspect of the ministry of the Holy Spirit very clearly. He empowers them, or us, born-again believers, for service.

You cannot hope to serve the Lord with any kind of strength, with any kind of effectiveness, with anything that really honors God apart from the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

[8 : 42] And then this last one, seals them, seals them, seals believers unto the day of redemption. Now, kids, when I say seal, I'm not talking about something you might see at SeaWorld, you know, that swims in the water.

And some of you who are mechanics, I'm not talking about the seal inside of an engine or anything like that, or maybe if we still have some ladies here who can vegetables, I'm not talking about the seal on a canning jar.

We're talking about a certain kind of seal. So let's talk about this seal. I want to spend a little time on this because this is so important in our understanding of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians chapter 1, verses 13 to 14. And actually, if you have your Bibles there, I'd really like to start reading a little earlier than that, starting, say, with verse 11 of Ephesians chapter 1.

Now just listen to this. In him that is in Christ also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of his glory.

[10 : 00] In him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also, having believed, and this is the passage, part of the passage I have presented there on the PowerPoint, having believed, you were, what?

Sealed. Sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who, the Holy Spirit, who he is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession to the praise of his glory.

Now this is just, you know, all the passages that I read, in fact, all of Ephesians chapter 1 is just so rich with truth, but even this portion of the passage is just chock full of very incredible, wonderful truth from God's word.

And I want us to look at this to just kind of pick this apart a little bit. And so first of all, having believed, you were sealed. That's the first part of it. Having believed, that is, you believed, that is the moment that you responded with faith to the message of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, that very moment your salvation was sealed.

That's just what it says, isn't it? Sealed. That is, literally, God placed a seal on you. Now, some of you have done some study on this so-called doctrine of eternal security, a doctrine that I believe in very strongly.

[11 : 44] And the Bible is just full of passages that substantiates this doctrine, eternal security, or the perseverance of the saints. But I'm telling you that this passage is probably the most profound on the subject and, I think, impossible to dispute.

the moment you believed, that is, you placed your faith in the message of the gospel, you trusted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you were sealed.

God sealed you. The Greek word there is sfragizo. You'll spit all over yourself if you try to say it. Sfragizo.

In fact, it's very difficult for me to even pronounce it correctly. And it's just, it's a technical word. It's not a word that is just strictly a theological word. Paul didn't make up this word in order to, you know, to convey some kind of truth.

He used a word that's very common from the secular world and it just simply means to mark or mark something with an official seal.

[12 : 46] An official seal. Now, official seals have been used all throughout history, the history of mankind. And a seal signifies a number of things, but I'm going to just mention three things, three primary things that a seal signifies.

In the first place, it signifies security. And that's probably the best thing about this. Well, I don't know if I could say it's the best thing. All these things are awesome.

But it signifies security. The security of the believer. When I was a Walmart manager, I would receive, our store, of course, would receive, you know, truckloads of merchandise nearly every day. And when the trucker would back up that trailer to our docks and it would be time to unload that thing, the door on that trailer was sealed.

It had seal on it. Some of you may have worked for Walmart, maybe you know, or maybe some other company. And so, you know, they have a little seal on there. And so, when the trucks would back up to the docks, that seal had to be cut first in order to, you know, unloose the latch of the door, roll up the door, and then unload all the merchandise.

[14 : 07] And on that seal, and it was just really a piece of metal that looped around through kind of the lock, the hole where you would sometimes put a paddle lock, and it looped through that and then it would be attached, fixed together, so that you couldn't take it apart without actually cutting the seal.

And on that seal was imprinted a number. And the number would have to be verified with the manifest for that truckload of merchandise before it could be unloaded.

And then, once verified, then the seal would be cut, the door would be opened, and the merchandise would be unloaded. All right? So the seal served to secure the contents of the trailer. That was its purpose. Now, any reasonable-thinking person would say, well, you know, the contents were not secured, you know, because of any material strength in the seal.

It wasn't anything about the seal. I mean, it was just made out of soft metal. It was easily cut. You could take a pair of scissors and cut it. I don't know what they used today, but that's what they used in those days. So there's nothing inherently strong about the seal that is the material part of it, the physical part of it.

[15 : 27] And in ancient times, you know that seals were quite often made out of wax, weren't they? They would melt the wax and then they would dabble or drip a little of the wax on the document or to seal an envelope and then they would take what is called a seal matrix or a sealed die.

Sometimes it would be a signet ring or maybe some other, you know, piece of metal, a little cylinder or something would have that die printed in it and then they would just stamp that on that soft wax and then it would become the seal, right?

I mean, you've seen that, you know that. All right, so the seal signifies security not because of any physical strength inherent in the seal itself, but rather what?

In the authority behind the seal. The authority behind the seal. And so that leads to a second thing here about a seal and that is it signifies authority, not just security.

In fact, it's not secure without this second thing and that is authority because the sealed contents are only as secure as the authority behind the seal, right?

[16 : 45] And so officially a seal could, was to be broken only by those of equal or greater authority, right? In order to break the seal.

Now, you surely remember, by the way, the Jews, after Jesus died on the cross and he was put in the tomb, the Jews, they wanted to have the tomb secured.

They wanted to have Jesus' body secured because they believed that Jesus' disciples would come and steal the body and then claim later that he'd been raised from the dead and then continue to propagate their false religion in their opinion.

So they approached Pilate and asked for permission that not only would a stone cover the entryway to the tomb, a heavy stone, but also there would be guards there and then they asked for a seal to be affixed to the stone there covering the entrance to the tomb.

A seal. And Pilate consented to that, didn't he? And so a seal was placed on it and that seal carried the authority of the Roman government and so the contents of the tomb were secured by the authority behind the seal.

[17 : 58] In this case, the Roman government. Now, you know that the seal of Jesus' tomb was broken though, wasn't it? Right? It was broken by whom? Higher authority.

Higher authority. Higher than the Roman government, higher than any man, of course, but this is the meaning of the word. It signifies an official seal.

It signifies security. It signifies authority. And really, it signifies at least one other thing, ownership. And this is wonderful too, isn't it? When you think about that we are sealed, it signifies ownership. And so like, for example, a seal that would be affixed to a deed, what does the seal signify? It authenticates that the name and the signature on that deed to be that of the rightful owner of that property.

Right? So it signifies ownership. So the seal signifies these things. It signifies security and authority and ownership. Now, having said all of that, and that's just kind of a brief history of the meaning of a seal, you know that Paul is not talking about just any seal, is he?

[19 : 16] Just any everyday run-of-the-mill seal. He's talking about the seal that God placed upon those who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Those who have been redeemed. And so Paul is talking about our security. Right? This is important. He's talking about my security, your security as a believer.

And he's talking about the authority that is behind that security. And Paul is also talking about ownership. Ownership.

That we are a purchased people. And so God has sealed us for himself. literally, we who have believed have been sealed in him, in Christ.

And what, actually who, is the seal? Well, what does the scripture say?

[20 : 23] We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. The Holy Spirit. Now think about this. Anyone can break an earthly seal.

Anyone can. I mean, they were made out of very soft substances. I mean, they could easily be broken. certainly broken by an equal or greater authority. Broken by the official person who has the right to break a seal.

But they can be broken by those who have no right. They can be broken unlawfully. And it happens every day. Even with Walmart. Sometimes those seals were broken and contents were stolen before they ever arrived at the store.

So a seal can be broken. An earthly seal can easily be broken by anyone. Let me ask you something. Who can break God's seal? Who can break his seal?

The answer is no one. Every believer. This is good news. Great news. Every single believer. The moment he or she believes in the Lord Jesus Christ is sealed with the Holy Spirit.

[21 : 41] Now that's security. Isn't it? And it's a security that's backed up by the sovereign authority of God. And who can break his authority? No one. No one.

But I also mentioned ownership didn't I? And so look at the rest of this passage. Who is, that is the Holy Spirit is, the guarantee.

That's the word that's used in this particular translation, New King James. We could say down payment. He's the down payment or the earnest, earnest money like you would put down a little money for a car or for a house, you know, to hold it until you could pay the full price.

And so he, the Holy Spirit, is the guarantee, the down payment, the earnest money, the pledge, some versions would translate it, of what? Of our inheritance.

And what is this inheritance? Well, you really have to back up a few verses in Ephesians chapter 1, back up there to verse 3, where the Bible says, Paul writes, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us, and here's our inheritance, who has blessed us, that's past tense, so it's something we already have, has blessed us with what?

[23 : 02] With every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. It's our inheritance. Now he doesn't give us all the details of it, does not yet appear to us what we will be like, but it's there for us, all of it, Christ included, he's our inheritance.

But we don't have it all yet, do we? Do we? No, we don't have it all yet. No, we have it in terms that it's ours, it's been given to us.

Remember, it's, has, he has blessed us, so it's, it's a done deal. It's ours, as good as ours, in Christ, and it's waiting for us in heaven, and it's, it's there for us, it's ours, nobody can take it away from us. But we haven't taken full possession of it yet, have we? Haven't fully realized all of this inheritance, every part of this inheritance.

inheritance. So how do we know we're going to get it? How can you be sure about that? The indwelling Holy Spirit in us is the down payment, the guarantee, the, the pledge, the earnest, a little now, and all of it later.

[24 : 27] But again, the Holy Spirit is a sure pledge. God's not going to back out on this deal. No matter what you do, you can't back out on it either.

You've been sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, and he has become the very down payment for the full price, for the full inheritance. And how long?

Well, what does it say? Until the redemption of the purchased possession. And that means the full redemption. The full thing. Until that day.

When is that? Well, when you die, or when Jesus returns for us, whichever comes first. That's a sure thing.

And the Holy Spirit is not only the seal on us, and nothing can break that seal, but he is also the down payment, the pledge that we will receive the full inheritance of God.

[25 : 30] And all of this, of course, as the passage says, to the praise of his glory. So it's not for our glory, but for his glory. glory. Now, I wanted to spend a little extra time on this aspect of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit because it's so important, and we need to understand this for what it means to us in terms of our security in Christ.

But let's move on. We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guided the authors of the Holy Bible into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation.

And I'm going to spend a lot more time on this when we get to the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, so we'll kind of leave that for now and move on. And we've already talked a little bit about this as well.

Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, from that very moment.

Romans 8, 9, but you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. And then he goes on now, if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ indwelling in you, he is not his.

[26 : 55] He is not his. That's pretty important. As if the Holy Spirit is not in you, dwelling in you. Well, some days he's not, some days he is.

No, it doesn't work that way. He comes as a permanent resident in the life of the believer. And if you don't have him, you don't belong to God.

That is, if the Holy Spirit is not in you, you're not saved. Period. And so how do we know, by the way, what is the evidence of the Holy Spirit, that the Holy Spirit dwells in you?

What's the evidence of that? Well, one big one is the fruit of the Spirit. the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians chapter 5, 22 and 23, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

And it's not just, well, I've got one of those and maybe another one of these. It's all of that. Fruit is singular. It's all of this. It's in the life of the believer. The evidence of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

[27 : 58] And so every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit of God from the moment of salvation and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with the Spirit.

It's your duty. In fact, it's commanded. Ephesians chapter 5, verse 18, that famous passage, so often misunderstood and misinterpreted and misapplied, but it's really very simple, where Paul said, and do not be drunk with wine, in which is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.

Be filled with the Spirit. Now, he's not talking about being baptized by the Spirit. He's not talking about getting the Spirit in your life. He's already there.

He's talking about being controlled by the Holy Spirit. Yielding yourself to the leadership, the authority, the power of the Holy Spirit of God in you.

Very much like wine controls us when we drink it and it turns into debauchery. Don't do that. But the principle applies to the filling of the Holy Spirit.

[29 : 24] That is, it's yielding to the control of it. It masters you. Not it, he. God the Holy Spirit. And by the way, the verb here is very important.

It literally means be being filled. Being always filled. Every moment, every day. It's not a one time and you're done.

Every day, be filled. Every day, yield to. the leadership, the power, the authority of God in your life in the person of the Holy Spirit.

And then next, and this is without a doubt, I think, the most neglected work of the Holy Spirit. We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church.

Spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 4, there are diversities of gifts, all kinds of different gifts. You can go a number of places and find them listed.

[30 : 31] Diversity of gifts, but the same Spirit. Capital S, that is the same Holy Spirit. So differing gifts, various kinds of gifts, but coming from the one and only Holy Spirit.

He is the one who gives them. Verse 7 in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, the manifestation of the Spirit, that is the various gifts that are given by the Holy Spirit, that's the manifestation of the Spirit within the body of Christ, the giving of gifts.

The manifestation of the Spirit, the gift giving, is given to each one. Does that leave anybody out? No. To each one and for the profit of all. For the profit of the body. Given to each one of us for the profit of all.

And then verse 11 in that same chapter, the same Spirit, that's the Holy Spirit, works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

[31 : 46] As He wills. We'll come back to some of that here in a minute. But the Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by, and you've got to love this word, ostentatious displays.

Showy displays. You know, grand displays. Your gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit doesn't do that.

Remember, the gifts are given what? For the profit of all. For the profit of all. For the greater good of the body of Christ. As Adrian Rogers used to say, God did not give you the Holy Spirit so that you can toot your own whistle.

He gave it to you to get on down the track. That is, we are given these gifts for the work, for the service, for the benefit of all. And so that said, he does glorify Christ.

He does glorify Christ by implementing his or Christ's work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith.

[33 : 10] And we teach in this respect that God, the Holy Spirit, is sovereign, just as much sovereign as God the Father, God the Son.

Remember, we studied that. Co-equal. He is sovereign in the bestowing of all his gifts for the perfecting of the saints today.

Again, need to get this down. 1 Corinthians 12, 7. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.

Now, folks, listen. That's why I say this is one of the most neglected doctrines of the Holy Spirit in the church today. The Holy Spirit has given each and every single one of you a spiritual gift.

Every one of you. Find out what it is if you don't know what it is. Find out. And if you know what it is and when you find out what it is, start using it.

[34 : 30] Start using it for the glory of God and for the good of his kingdom. And in the immediate sense, his church.

Start using it for his glory and for the profit of all. And so that leads us to really one final point of teaching concerning the Holy Spirit it.

And this one, by the way, is a bit controversial and so I want to be very careful as we talk about this, but let me just put all this together.

I've already read, we teach in this respect that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all the gifts for the perfecting of the saints today. We just talked about that.

And that speaking in tongues, you know this was going to come up eventually, didn't you? Speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days, which occurred in the beginning days of the church, were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth.

[35 : 50] In fact, I would even add that it authenticated their true apostleship, which we shall see. So let's take this part of it and make sure we understand, or at least you understand what our doctrinal statement says, whether you agree with it or not.

Certain manifestations of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, things, and the working of sign miracles, healings, other things like that, in the beginning days of the church, were for the purpose of what?

Pointing to the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and authenticating the disciples, the apostles, as revealers of divine truth.

And by the way, I shouldn't have to explain this, and we don't have time to explain every part of this, but there are no apostles today. When I say apostles, I'm talking about in the official sense, not just simply the meaning of the word, but the official sense, apostles, ended, ended, ended with the apostle Paul.

After all, the apostles died, the twelve, and those selected to replace, the one selected to replace Judas, then Paul, who was born out of due season, he said. There are no apostles today.

[37 : 30] So, these manifestations of the Holy Spirit that we read about in Scripture, in the Gospels, and to an extent in the book of Acts, they pointed to, they were for this purpose, to point to the apostles as the revealers of divine truth, and to authenticate them, to authenticate the apostles as revealers, the chosen revealers of divine truth.

Now, a couple of scriptures. 2 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 12, the signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with perseverance, with signs and wonders and mighty works.

These were the signs of a true apostle. Signs and wonders and mighty works. Now, in this chapter, if you were to go back and look at it, you would find that Paul is defending his apostleship.

And in this particular verse, Paul says that his apostolic credentials are signs and wonders and mighty works. Now, what about these three words?

The word sign refers to the purpose of the miracles that they were allowed to perform, that they did perform. That is, they pointed to something. The purpose was to point to something, and in this case, the authenticity of the apostle and his message.

[38 : 59] the word wonder refers to the effect, the effect that these miracles had upon those who witnessed them.

That is, they produced amazement. The word mighty refers to the nature of these miracles.

That is, they were done through supernatural power. These were divine. They were supernatural works, miracles. Here is another scripture related to this.

Hebrews 2, 3, and 4. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?

Right? Talking about Jesus. Revealing the gospel, the good news that had come, and he's come, and the message that he preached.

[39 : 59] All right, so how shall we escape if we neglect that message? First, preached by Jesus. And was confirmed to us, and us is us today, includes us today, confirmed to us by those who heard him, who heard him, the apostles, the immediate disciples.

apostles. And how was it confirmed? I mean, when the apostles started preaching, after Jesus died and was buried and resurrected and ascended back to the Father, he's no longer there here on the earth, and all we have now, all they had then were the apostles, and so the apostles were

preaching the same message.

Why should anyone believe them? To take their message as being true. You say, well, they can just get out their Bibles and check them out. Problem is, they didn't have one.

The New Testament hadn't even been written yet, when this was written. So they can't do that, right? So how? How can we confirm that the apostles' message is God's truth, the same way that Jesus confirmed that his message was the truth?

signs or manifestations of the Holy Spirit. God also bearing witness both with what?

[41 : 35] Signs and gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his own will. Now here is the important point. Speaking in tongues, this is part of our doctrinal statement, speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles, other sign miracles, tongues is a sign miracle, and other miracles, sign miracles, in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth and were not intended to be characteristic or normative for the lives of believers then and now, believers today.

That is, this manifestation of the Spirit were never intended to be normative for believers today. They were for a purpose, a set purpose to validate the message and the messenger, and they were for a limited time.

Now not everybody agrees with this, of course. It is kind of the standard cessationist point of view when it comes to tongues and other sign miracles.

They were for a time, for a purpose, and they've ended. Not everyone agrees with it. But it's basically this, they were for that purpose, pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth until that truth was written down in God's, God's word, God's holy word, the Bible, and that having been completed, and it has been completed, these sign gifts have now ceased.

Their purpose has been, has come to an end. No need for them anymore. Now, I want to interject something here before we look at a passage of Scripture.

[43 : 50] Does that mean that if it's not normative, characteristic of all believers today, does God in certain instances still use some of these sign gifts?

things. And I'm going to tell you, I think he does. Where there is no word of God, no printed word of God, no revelation, not, certainly not here, but in some parts of this world where there is absolutely no access to the word of God at all, and all they have is the testimony, the preacher, God.

And I think God sometimes will use some of these same gifts at that particular moment for his purpose, same purpose that he had back in the early days of the church.

Now, not everyone of my cessationists, not any of my cessationists, brethren, would believe that, would hold to that, but I do. I think there are examples where God uses certain miraculous things in order to confirm his word, bring someone to Christ.

He has no access to the word of God, all right? That's Don Coleman. All right. That's not part of our doctrinal statement, okay? All right. Well, we can talk about that later if you want to talk to me about that privately.

[45 : 27] But how about this passage? passage, and again, when I'm, when I talk about the cessation of these certain sign gifts, like speaking in tongues, healings and such, I'm talking about it in terms of what's normative, what is provided for all believers today.

And in those terms, these things have ceased. They're done. Here's a passage, 1 Corinthians 13, 8. Through 10.

Love never ends. So that tells you Paul's main theme here is the continuation of love, even on into eternity.

But then he says this, as for prophecies, they will pass away. As for tongues, they will cease. As for knowledge, it will pass away.

for we know in part and we prophesy in part. Now, quickly, how about these three words here? It's important if we're going to understand the intent of this scripture.

[46 : 40] We need to understand what Paul intended by using these words. And so the word prophecies refers to, I believe, the ability to proclaim God's truth publicly.

That's what I'm doing here today. I mean, there are a couple of ways to understand the word prophecy. And really, it's not understanding the meaning of the word, but maybe the usage of the word.

And some usage in the Bible, it refers to the foretelling of things in the future. We don't have any of those kind of prophets anymore. If we did, then it'd have to be added to the Bible.

We'd have to, instead of having our bound scriptures, we'd have to have a three-ring binder so that we could add new word from the Lord every day because there are people who claim to be given a word of prophecy.

But in that sense of prophecy, there's no more of that. The word God's completed. But the other usage of the word prophecy and the way that Paul is using it here refers to the ability to proclaim or preach God's word publicly.

[47 : 53] The word tongues, and this is controversial, but this is what I believe. The word tongues and every place you find it in the word of God does not refer to some kind of heavenly language or some ecstatic utterance, some gobbledygook or whatever.

It always refers to the ability to speak a foreign language that had not been learned by the speaker. It's an unknown language, unknown to me.

To be able to speak it, to speak God's word. The word knowledge refers to the ability to understand God's word, understand the truth, and then to be able to communicate that understanding.

All right? So this is also a speaking gift. All three of these are speaking gifts. The important thing to observe in this passage, though, are not the meanings of these three words, but the verbs attached to them.

You know, I can't try to explain this without getting into grammar. grammar. And it's important. I mean, you've got to understand the meaning here by some of the words and the grammatical forms of the words.

[49 : 16] And so there are verbs here, and if you're going to study Scripture, you better pay attention to the verbs. Think how important verbs are even to our English language. You can't even communicate without verbs.

And so what about the verbs here? Well, verbs, Greek verbs have different, several different aspects to them that help convey meaning.

And it's the way they are spelled in the text that tells us what kind of verb it is, the kind of form of the verb. And I want to point out just one particular aspect of a Greek verb, and that is its voice.

Verbs have voice. Some of you who've taught grammar, you know that even in English, verbs have voice. And the Greek language, there are three voices.

English, just two. In the Greek, there are three. There's the active voice. All right, so if I were to convey the active voice, it would be like this. I hit the ball.

[50 : 21] That's active voice. I hit the ball. The action is done by the subject. Toward the object. I hit the ball. That's active voice.

Second, passive voice. Didn't know you were going to get a little grammar lesson here this morning. Passive voice. And it would be like this. The ball hit me.

So the action is done to the subject. Right? The ball hit me. That's passive voice. And then in the Greek, we have middle voice.

There's no middle voice in English. But we could convey it this way. It's a reflexive, if you understand that in grammar. And we could say it this way.

I hit myself with the ball. That's middle voice. I hit myself with the ball. That's bad English.

[51 : 20] Okay. But this is found in the Greek. All right. So let's apply these verbs to the words, the nouns they're attached to.

And let's begin with tongues first, even though it's not the first one listed. But it is different. The verb form is different from the other two. Paul said, as for tongues, they will cease.

That's how the New King James translates it. They will cease. And the verb is middle. Middle voice. Remember? The action is done to the subject by the subject.

By himself or itself. All right. And it means this. The meaning is simply this. That this gift, this gift of tongues, this sign gift, will cease on its own.

It'll just come to an end. By itself. All right. Nothing has come to replace it. It comes to an end by itself. That's the middle voice.

[52 : 25] And so I believe tongues have ceased. They just ceased on their own. Primarily because their purpose no longer existed.

No longer exists today. Remember, God gave the gift of tongues as a sign gift. These are sign gift. Right? And they no longer exist.

They're sign gifts to authenticate the apostle and to authenticate his divine message, to authenticate the apostles as the divine revealers of God's truth.

That's the gospel. And when the last apostle, and we could extend it to some of the closest associates of the apostles were gone, and when the scriptures then were completed, then the gift of tongues ceased permanently.

Permanently. All by itself. But now, for prophecy and knowledge, what about these two things?

Well, the verbs there are passive.

[53 : 35] Both of them are passive. There's a subject receives the action. And so the idea is that something will come, something will come that will bring prophecy and knowledge to an end.

Something will come and bring it to an end. It won't end of its own self when it loses its purpose. It will be brought to an end. Passive voice.

And why? Because prophecy, Paul said, prophecy and knowledge are limited. He said, and that's what Paul said. He said, for we know in part and we prophesy in part, he said.

And notice he didn't mention tongues here. Why is that not included in this second part of what he says? Because for the very simple reason that very shortly all of that will end by itself after Paul's gone.

But prophecy and knowledge will continue even after Paul. Prophecy and knowledge will continue until something causes those two things to pass away.

[54 : 46] Are you following me? What will that be that will cause those two things to pass away?

Next part of that verse. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part, what's in part?

Prophecy and knowledge will be done away. Will be done away. Something will come to end those two things.

Prophecy and knowledge. Now the question is, what is this perfect? Okay? And I tell you, I have had to, over the years, have studied this a lot.

Try to figure this out because it's just not really explicit. So what is it? Well, for years, I believed it to be the completed word of God. And perhaps that's what some of you believe.

[55 : 53] That the perfect that will come, that will do away with these things, prophecy, tongues, knowledge, will be the completed revelation, the complete revelation, the word of God.

You know, there's just one problem with that. The word is completed. Right? Been completed for almost 2,000 years.

And yet, in no way has prophecy and knowledge ceased. If we correctly understand what this prophecy and knowledge is, and I believe it is. Prophecy is the ability to proclaim God's truth. Knowledge is the ability to understand that truth and communicate the understanding of God's truth. We could include even application. That hasn't stopped, has it? I hope not.

I'd go find another job. Go back and work for Walmart. No. God forbid. I'm sorry.

[57 : 01] So, it just, you know, it can't be the word of God. There are those who teach that it is the rapture of the church. That's the perfect and so that will bring an end to the need for all these things.

Well, there's a big problem with that. And that is, God's truth will still be preached when the church is gone. If I understand scripture and I believe that I'm right on this, not everyone would agree with this, but I believe the gospel will be preached during the tribulation and on into the millennium.

So, I can't be the rapture of the church. So, some go a step first and say that it's the second coming of Christ. That's the perfect that will come. the coming of Christ.

But that doesn't fit either because of the grammar here. Paul said that which is perfect. Jesus is not a that or an it.

He's a he. He's a person. And if Paul meant the coming of Christ, he would have worded that differently. it has to be heaven.

[58 : 17] It has to be heaven. It has to be the eternal state that will come for us. That will bring an end to knowledge and prophecy.

The eternal state. Paul further wrote in verse 12 of this same chapter for now we see in a mirror dimly or darkly but then face to face.

When is that? Not just when Jesus comes but I mean when we're with him in eternity. Face to face. We see all that darkly through a smoked glass right now.

Then we'll see him face to face. Now I know in part that's a reference to the limitation of knowledge and prophecy. I know in part but then when is that?

In eternity. I will know just as I also am known. Now I want to wrap this up by reading the last part of this and now abide faith, hope, and love.

[59 : 30] Right now these things exist today. faith, hope, and love. These three Paul said and the greatest of these is love.

That is right now our faith is dependent upon hearing the word of God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

Dependent upon that. That's why there's such need for prophecy and knowledge produces faith in us. Right now that's the case.

Hope, right now hope, comes from believing the truth of God's word. Our hope is firmly anchored in Christ of course, but it's the Christ revealed in scripture.

And if you want your hope to be fortified, then get into the word of God. Right now these things are true. But in heaven there won't be any need for faith because faith will be turned into sight.

[60 : 44] In heaven there won't be any need for hope because hope will be replaced by reality. And don't misunderstand me, our hope now is real.

It's not a hope so, it's a hope that's firmly grounded in the promise of God. It's a sure thing. But from our perspective our hope is limited because our knowledge is limited and our understanding is limited.

But in heaven that hope will be real, it'll be reality. We'll see it, we'll experience, we'll be there.

Right now we look through a glass darkly but then face to face. But love, what about that?

Love will continue, continue on into eternity without end. Thank you.