

This time of year, one of my favorite verses that I give you all the time is found in Job 38:22. It is a great verse that I claimed many, many, many years ago on bad weather days when I decided to go ahead and preach or teach the Bible or do Bible study. God has always blessed it.

*Job 38:22*

*Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?*

Where most people see the snow as an impending thing that will keep them from church, I have always looked at it as that is where the treasure really is. God will open up some things that maybe He normally would not do, just based on the fact that there are treasures in the snow.

## I. Review of Previous Principles

With that in mind, let us turn back to Proverbs chapter 25. Last week we looked at verses 11, 12, and 13. As you can see, I am kind of taking these in little sections, sometimes one verse at a time, sometimes two at a time; we just have to work it through. We finished a great little section that really held a lot of good, solid principles for us. As you can see, we are adding principles week by week. We are learning more; we are getting concepts down, principles, and patterns, and that is what we really want to do.

I talked last week about having an obedient ear, based on a wise reprover who will give you words that are fitly spoken. Those were the last three weeks that we took each week on. We talked about the words fitly spoken, then we talked about the obedient ear and the wise reprover. We came up with the idea or the aspect of the ability to hear what God says to us. We talked about the apples of gold and the pictures of silver, the apples of gold representing who God is, and the pictures of silver, what He has done for us.

Then we have been talking about how to apply those things, how to change the direction of your life. But first, you must allow the Word of God to do two things. We talked about this over the last couple of weeks. First of all, it must penetrate your heart, and then get into your head. And then really three things: the third one was, then it will change your life and give you the life-changing effect that we all want.

I also talked about how we should always try to make people better. I think that is a standard mindset that every child of God should have. You and I, with the Word of God and God's salvation and all that God has given us, we are much better. We are better off in the sense that our sins are forgiven. We are better off that we have an absolute standard. We are not like the world who does not have any hope. So we ought to be meeting people and giving them that hope, not leaving them with less hope than they already had before we met them.

I get it; that is not always possible. We talked about the aspect of people wanting to be enabled instead of edified. People always want you to do something for them. Of course, it is not always possible to leave somebody better than you find them because they want to stay in the

circumstances that they are in. To edify someone, you have to be a wise reprovor. You have to use the word fitly spoken. Some people just do not want that. They will never get honest about their lives and the situation that they are in. There is no way that you can take a negative and turn it into a positive as long as the person loves the negativity that they have in their life.

Then we looked at Proverbs 25:13, that we ought to be a refreshing spirit to the ones we minister to, not only to the ones that we minister to, but to the ones that sent us. That would be a reference to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We have looked back in Acts 13:1-2. We have talked about it many times, how that they ministered to the Lord first. We have talked about what that means.

In 2 Corinthians 2:15, it talks about that the death of Christ was a sacrifice. In the Old Testament, they took an animal, and to appease their sins, at least temporarily with God, they would burn that animal on the altar. That burnt flesh, the smell would come up in the nostrils of God, and through that innocent sacrifice and God smelling that, it pleased Him, and He accepted their sacrifice. Those are the things that we can do.

The Bible says that when we, 2 Corinthians 2:15, talk about Christ, tell somebody the story of Christ, witness about Christ, the Bible says it does not matter whether the person gets saved or the person stays lost. That witness to other people is a sweet savor in the nostrils of God because it brings up to God His remembrance of the day that His Son paid the ultimate price for us on the cross. It is a tremendous concept. So when we do those things that God has called us to do, it is not only a refreshing to the people you are giving the cold drink of water to, it is also refreshing to the ones that sent us: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, pleasing God by the things that we do and the things that we say.

## II. The Concept of "Stupid"

Now today, we want to move on into another three verses. I am not sure how far we will get today, probably no farther than the first one, but that is okay. We are going to look at our next section of verses, and as I said, we will see how far we get today.

Over the last couple of years in the ministry, I have had a word forced upon me that I have never really cared to use. I think it is a word that is not very pretty to use. It paints a disparaging picture. It is not a cuss word or anything, but it carries with it a negative connotation. To say this to somebody, I think, I would never do it, but I have been forced into this. I want you to know this, and it is by you folks. I am sorry.

Somebody a while back gave me a plaque back there, or gave me, I found a plaque. They gave me the saying, and I got online and found it because I could not sleep at night. It was so terrible in its nature, but so true in its concept. It is back on the wall back there, and it says, "Life is tough," and we all know that to be true. But then it goes on and says, "but it is tougher when you are stupid." That is an old quote out of a John Wayne movie. I put that up back there because that is true.

I was fine; I never said much about it, but in the day and age that we live in, especially with what I am going to preach on today, God, the author of all things, just saw so fit to deliver this into my hands. It is something, it is another saying that is going to go up on the wall back here, that is so true. Gary Potter says this to me all the time when we talk about circumstances and situations. I never really thought about it, but it is true. I want to use this today, and I am going to make a reference to this, and I want you to help me. I think class participation was a great thing in school, so I need class participation today to help me with this because I do not want to be the only one saying this ugly word. But it is a word that has forced itself upon me. In no Christianity that I live in, I find no other word that is apropos for the time that we live. It is a cute little saying, and it is, "You cannot fix stupid." Right, Gary? That is right.

So bear with me as we walk through our message today that I will make a reference to, because a lot of times when you deal with people in the Bible, you wonder why something so obvious that they just cannot get. Now today you are going to get the answer. The answer is, "You cannot fix stupid." We have got to get a little better than that. The answer is, "You cannot fix stupid." Okay, good deal.

Now you are sitting out there probably saying, "Well, I do not think that is very nice. A Christian should not do that." Hey, you know what? You know why people do not like terms like that? Because they are true. We do not like it because it is true. If you have done any kind of personal work over any years, you have learned that that thing is true. There are people who should know better, who do not know better, who will not know better, and you cannot fix stupid.

You and I know as well as I am standing here that life is tough. But you know what has made life tougher for all of us? The stupid things that we have done. Has life ever been tougher for anybody by the good things we have done? It is the stupid things we do. So you make those kind of statements, and somebody, meaning good-meaning Christian, says, "Well, I do not think that is very Christian." I do not think the way people live their lives who claim to be Christians are very Christian sometimes. But they continue on. The reason is, "You cannot fix stupid." Okay, we are going to have a good time today.

### III. Proverbs 25:14-16 and False Gifts

Now I want to read Proverbs chapter 25 for you. I am going to read 14, 15, and 16 just to get a context, and then we will move through from there.

*Proverbs 25:14-16*

*14 Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.*

*15 By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.*

*16 Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.*

Let us pray. Father, we thank you and praise you, Father, Lord Jesus. We pray your blessings upon us today as we enter into the treasures of the snow. Thank you for the folks that have come

out that are here with us today, and pray your blessings upon our time. Pray your blessing, give us what we need today, and we will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

Here are three more verses that we are going to glean from over the next couple of weeks. But today, let us look at Proverbs 25:14.

*Proverbs 25:14*

*Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.*

Now, the verse is pretty self-explanatory, but it has some really good principles for us to look at in the area of spiritual gifts. What he is basically saying here, and I do not know if you know this or not, but in the Bible, rain is a type of the Word of God.

*Isaiah 55:10-11*

*10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:*

*11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

There he likens a rainstorm as a picture of the Word of God coming down and getting all over everything. Isaiah 55 is the millennial, Second Coming millennial passage, and that is what it is dealing with. The Lord's Second Coming is like a rainstorm. In fact, you are told, "as lightning cometh from the east into the west, so is the coming of the Son of Man." Joel talks about the Second Coming being in a cloudy day. He comes in a bit of a rainstorm, and that rain comes down just like if you get a summertime, you know, you go for five or six, seven, eight days without any rain, everything, the air is thick and dirty, all the, and the grass is dry, and then you get one great rainstorm. The grass is greener, the flowers come out, the air is cleaner. That is all a picture of this dusty old world, and when the Lord comes back as rain, He makes everything green again.

Simply put, what he is saying here, if a man who preaches or an organization claims to have a spiritual gift that they really do not have, then it is like a rainstorm without any rain. The preaching will have no power. The preaching will have no purpose. It will have no seemingly effect. It is just a lot of empty words that somebody will get up and they will talk, have a service, have a sermon, but it never changes anything. There is no power to it. There is no punch to it. It is just getting up, and you might as well be reciting a recipe for chocolate chip cookies from your grandmother. There is no life-changing effect that comes at you like a rainstorm comes.

I was listening to the news all this morning, and they are talking about this storm of the century coming through Missouri. They are talking about that in some areas during the snow, you are going to have thunder and lightning. That is a snowstorm. Of course, it is a thing where thunder and lightning, I mean, that is a terrible storm. Everybody is going to be affected by it. It is going to slow the city down tomorrow. It is going to change everything. That is the way a preacher's

message should be. It should hit you, it impacts you, and change everything instead of getting up and just giving you the daily bread, so to speak, or your verse for the day.

## IV. Examples of False Gifts

You see this all the time in the religions of the world and with their claims. The first thing that comes to mind to me is the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church claims the gift of apostolic succession. That means that every pope, that Peter was the first pope as they teach, and every pope down the line was in the accession of Peter, and that was a gift given to the church that every pope and leader of that church could trace his line back to the Apostle Paul. And yet, no pope ever had in any way, shape, or form the apostolic succession that they claim to have. It is a false gift that they boast of.

First of all, they base it on Peter in Matthew chapter 16 where Jesus calls him the rock and He is going to build His church upon him, and that is not what He said, but that is where they start this boasting of a false gift.

1. Peter was never in Rome.
2. Peter was married.
3. The biblical qualifications that you had to have to be an apostle, you just did not go get a card that said, "I am an apostle" on it. There were some qualifications found in the Bible that you had to have to be able to do that. No pope in the history of the world ever had those, and nobody today can have them. That is why there are no apostles today.

If that was not enough, in 2 Corinthians 12:12, you have what the Bible calls the signs of an apostle.

*2 Corinthians 12:12*

*Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.*

No pope ever had them, ever. As a pope with a gift of apostolic succession, so-called, there is absolutely no power from God in any of that. The only power that the Roman Catholic Church has is based on the military and political alliances that she has made down through history. The underground movement of the Jesuits that have subverted every opposition that they have, their power lies in a complete totalitarian system that holds their members and people and countries down through history and the world in a grip of fear.

They force their people to have church membership in their church. They do that by making a political alliance with the king, the political government. Then the Roman Catholic Church, as in all of South America, much of Europe, they now set up a church-state system by which when you are born, you are born into the Catholic Church. That is their deal. That is how they do it. They make you, if you have your children, you have to sign a paper that you raise your kids Roman Catholics. That is how they do it.

They come up with the concept of purgatory. Purgatory is the idea that when you die, you do not go straight to heaven. You have to go to purgatory for a while to get purged out before you can go to heaven. It is kind of like the intermediate place between heaven and hell. It is not hell, but it is not heaven. It is kind of like Topeka, Kansas, in July.

When your grandma dies, your father dies, your mother dies, your child dies, a terrible tragedy. Instead of getting up and telling the truth and winning them to Christ and talking about the joy of going to heaven, no, no, no, no, no. They will use that as a system to tell you that your dear, sweet grandmother who you love dearly, or your father or your mother who you love dearly, or your child who you love dearly, now has died and are in purgatory. You can only get them out. Of course, you get them out by praying, but then you also get them out by paying. You pay money. You light candles, and the priest will pray him out, get him out. I am not sure how they get that money down there or who they pay, but they get him out. It is a system, see? That is the only power they have. It is a man. It is totally corrupt. It is clouds without rain. It is men claiming to have a false spiritual gift that they do not have.

Now the next one is one of my favorites. This will be the Charismatic Movement. The word Charismatic comes from the Latin word that means gifted. So if you are a Charismatic, you are supposed to be gifted. Now this heresy is for saved people. You are going to find that heresies come in two flavors. You can get the saved version, which would be Charismatic if they are saved. Then you have the unsaved version, which would be Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Jehovah Witnesses and that crowd.

I wrote a book years and years ago. In fact, it was the second book that I ever wrote. The first one was "How to Study the Bible." The second was "A Biblical View of the Charismatic Movement." As all my books, it sold well under a million copies. But it is a book where it walks you through the Charismatic Movement. As one guy used to buy, he is dead now, but he used to buy them 50 at a time. He would go down in South America, and he would pass them out. He said that was the greatest book he ever read on the Charismatic Movement. He says it gets right to the point; his words, "it will kill you or cure you." That is what I like about it.

Charismatics are also called Pentecostals. They are called Pentecostals because in Acts chapter 1, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down, and somebody spoke in tongues. So they think that when they speak in tongues that they call themselves Pentecostals. So they go back to Pentecost. Sometimes they are called the Church of God. You will find that title. You will find that many neo-evangelical groups and even some Baptist groups are getting more to align with them.

Now we get into the spiritual gifts that they boast of. They are all false gifts, by the way. We call them the sign gifts: healing, speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues was not enough for them, so they came up with an unknown tongue to make tongues even more spiritual and have a gift. They talk about raising dead people. They talk about drinking any deadly thing out of Mark 16. There is a group down in southern Missouri, Oklahoma, more down south, that are the snake handlers that during their church services, when they get all lathered up in a spiritual moment, they will pick out the copperheads or they will pick out the rattlesnakes. I do not think too many

of them. Rattlesnakes are bad. Copperheads are bad. But the meanest snake on the block is a water moccasin. They will come after you.

These guys, they will pick up a... I will tell you, if you are gentle and you do not scare him and you do not make him afraid, you can pick up a poisonous snake and hold it up. If you go after it, he is going to defend himself. But if he is just laying there, and you pick him up, and they do all this, but there have been times, and they do that. The fact that Paul, when he was on the way to Jerusalem, they got off there, got shipwrecked, and they built a fire, and Paul was getting some wood and the fire there, and a big viper came out and bit Paul on the arm. Paul sees a big old snake dangling off, and all the unsaved people see it too, and he takes that snake off and throws it in the fire, and he never died. So they think that they have the gift of handling snakes. Unfortunately, over the course of time, some of them have been bitten. You can get bit with a copperhead, and if you are a full-grown adult, you probably will not die. Rattlesnake probably too. If you are a baby or a child or a young guy or you are not in good health, it will probably get you. But you can usually survive. It hurts like crazy, but you can survive it. But there have been records of that thing, and of course, they claim these gifts.

All the top men, and I have watched this for years, almost 50 years. We had a guy in Akron, Ohio. I am from Canton. He was in Akron, Ohio. His name was Ernest Ainsley. I do not know if he is dead now or not, but he was around for a long time. He was a charismatic up in Akron, Ohio. He would have healing services where they would come across the stage and all kinds of physical ailments, and he attributed their disease to demons. He would have two big guys standing there behind these people, and he would call the demons out, and he would hit them. They would fall back, and he would turn around and say, "Praise the Lord, the demons are gone." He would just run them through like that.

His wife's name was Angel. This is a true story. When she died, I mean, he was the greatest healer in Akron, but his wife died. He was so sure that God was going to bring her back that he put a telephone in her casket. If you would go there, you would see a phone line running off the pole into her casket, into the phone. Is that not true? It is a true story. She has never called. She is wondering where all these long-distance bills are coming from.

There was another lady back in my day by the name of Katherine Kuhlman. Katherine Kuhlman fancied herself in the fashion of Amy McPherson, who started the Charismatic Movement around 1900. She died in 1976. She died in 1976 because, and now she was the greatest, she has been called one of the greatest healers of the 20th century by her own peers. She died in 1976 after open-heart surgery because she had heart issues. Now I am asking myself the question: Everybody in the world went to her to get healed, but when she had an issue, she died like the rest. She only lived about 40 miles down the road in Oklahoma from a guy by the name of T.T. Osborne, who was another great faith healer that she could have went to. She never went to any of them.

A medical doctor took 23 of her cases that she claimed were completely healed. After he examined each one of them, he came up and said that none of them were healed. She had a woman who had spinal cancer who came across the line of the stage, who was on crutches, who

Katherine Kuhlman proclaimed her to be 100% healed. The woman threw her crutches, ran off the stage. The next day, her spine collapsed, and in four months she was dead. And yet people would go to those things. People would believe in that, and people would believe it today. Do you know why that is so? You cannot fix stupid.

I am not the smartest guy in the world. I consider myself maybe the fastest one in the slow class, but I am no brain rocket math science guy. I have my stupid issues like anybody else, and let me just say, I thank God when you guys gave me this that the cord was not bigger because I would have had to wear this around my neck. Because many times I did not want to fix stupid.

But I am telling you, I watch guys like Jimmy Swaggart. Jimmy Swaggart, he said that if you did not have the gift of the Holy Ghost and the evidence of speaking in tongues that you would not go in the rapture of the church. Now I do not know if he said that before or after he got caught with that hooker down in Louisiana. But I know he believed that you could lose your salvation for sin. And yet when he got arrested because he picked up a hooker by the vice squad down in wherever he was, and he lost all of his radio stuff and all of those things that went on, he got back on the radio, he made an apology, but he never one time said he ever got resaved. You see, you have to get resaved. He does not.

I watch him teach the Bible and talk about how God heals. He would say, "Let me read for you a passage of scripture." And he would pick up his glasses and put them on. Are you kidding me? You have the power to heal, you need glasses?

Oral Roberts, Tulsa, Oklahoma, one of the most proclaimed healers, faith healers in the 20th century. One time he built a prayer, had so many followers he built a prayer tower and went up in that prayer tower and said that God told him to stay in that tower and die if the people that were his followers did not raise \$8 million so he could do the work of the Lord. He got his \$8 million. I do not think he missed even lunch.

Greatest healer on the planet in his day. Oral Roberts University, get this, it is a medical college. He trained the greatest healer on the planet instead of training out other healers who had the gift. He started a school to train doctors just like you and I go to. And people look at that and never get it. You know why? Because you cannot fix stupid. I mean you look at something like that and you think to yourself, hey, come on, even I can see the inconsistencies. Their boasting of a false gift is so apparent to anybody who can read, it is absolutely incredible.

I mean you do not need, you are a faith healer, hey come on, you do not need to get a tent on a back lot someplace. Go down to KU Med Center and the Children's Cancer Ward. Take your gift down to the hospitals where people are at ICU. Do the work of an evangelist. What do they, you know how many, whatever, you want money? Is that what this is about? There are parents down at KU that would give you every dollar you ever wanted if you just take the cancer from a little five or six year old kid. Where are you? How come you are not down there? How come it is always some sleazy tent or some church where everything is controlled? Why do not you come with me down to KU? We will walk down the halls together. We will go into the room. We will announce to them. Why do not you come to me to the next funeral I have to do? Wow, we can make everybody happy. You know if you just put a small price on it, \$500 or \$1,000 and I will

bring your loved one back. You know how much money you would have in a week? Why do not you do that?

Jesus raised Lazarus in John 11, and he had been dead four days and he stunk through decay. How come none of this lines up to anything like anything in the Bible? Oh, I know, I know, I know, I know, I know. You know what? You do not get healed. We cannot do that because people do not have enough faith to believe. Really? Well, Jesus raised dead people. How much faith can a dead man have?

At first glance, the Roman Catholic system and the Charismatic system seem to be totally different. But when you put the book to it, you will find that they are much the same because they both boast of false gifts.

4. Both steal the gifts that are clearly given in the Bible to the nation of Israel.
5. One is apostolic succession, the other one is the gifts that were given to Israel through the apostles.
6. Both think that they are the only way to heaven. The Pope and any church, if you pin a Catholic down, I do not care how nice he is to you or how much he gets along with a neo-evangelical crowd or even the Baptist or whoever. You pin him down, he will tell you there is no salvation outside the Roman Catholic Church. At the end of the day, if you do not become Catholic, you are not getting to heaven. Of course, Jimmy Swaggart, he talked that if you did not have the baptism of the Holy Spirit of God, you were not going to go into rapture either.
7. They both replace the clear teaching of God's Word with something that gives them the false gift. If you are talking to a Roman Catholic and what he is doing in his church does not go against the Bible and you ask him why that is, he will tell you that the traditions of the church will override the Bible. In the charismatic crowd, if they are speaking in tongues and you show them in the Bible where the Bible says, "tongues shall cease," he will claim the same thing on his side and say, "Well, you cannot deny my experience." Sure, I can. In both cases, the final authority will not be the Bible.

## V. Spiritual Gifts in Mainstream Christianity

Now when it comes to that, when it comes to Bible Christianity, we see the same thing in many Baptist churches and neo-evangelical churches too, mainstream Christianity, if you would please. I have never seen a more messed up, ridiculous teaching that you have today on spiritual gifts that you have in Bible churches today, saved people.

Let me say, there have been many young men who claim to have the gift of being a pastor, and as you will see in a few moments, being a pastor is one of the spiritual gifts, we will get there in a moment, and he does not have it. He worms his way into the ministry; he was not called by God, but he called himself through the system that we have today, and it is very clearly that he has no business being a pastor. He lacks the number one qualification of a pastor, and that is he knows nothing about the Bible.

You will find that the books in your Bible that are the instructions for me as a pastor and anybody else that is a pastor, you will find that it is found in four books: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy,

Philemon, and Titus. Titus and Philemon. You will find that in your Bible, Paul wrote those books, and they are called the Pastoral Epistles. In those books, you will find what you are to look for in a person's life if they have that gift of being a pastor.

Paul says to young Timothy, in 1 Timothy 4:14, he says:

*1 Timothy 4:14*

*Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*

That is his ordination, stirring up the gift of him being a pastor. And of course, we see that a lot of wannabes today, they have no clue. Paul wrote to Timothy in 1 Timothy, he gave him 12 qualifications of being a pastor. If you would ask the average pastor what those 12 qualifications were today, he would not even know. But he got in somehow.

What you got first Timothy, then you got second Timothy. He really goes to work laying out what a pastor is supposed to do in second Timothy. Of course, you do not find this today. You find the pastor wannabes like I talked about a couple of weeks ago that had a marital issue that was a terrible deal, and his answer to it was love potion number nine, start dating again. In most cases, it just winds up making a greater mess out of it and never accomplishes the person that God really wants to get done. All of that is nothing more than rain or clouds without rain. Preaching and teaching with no life-changing power, no thunder, no lightning, no freshness, no cleansing. Now it is just clouds without any real rain. In short, they have never been called of God to the pastorate, but rather they have called themselves, and now they have no evidence of that. So they boast of this gift.

Without a doubt, all of this will go back to a complete lack of understanding of the people's position on it, and we know that. Over the years, there have been thousands of Christians, thousands of Christians that have been duped by the Christian medicine men who go from church to church and sell their snake oil for spiritual gifts. The standard Baptist teaching is and Neo-Evangelical teaching is that if you are saved, you have one main major spiritual gift. Your job is to, you may have some secondary ones, but you have a main gift that you have to find out what that is. When you identify that gift, then you build your life around that gift, something along those lines.

I have in my files at home the amazing spiritual gift test. There were actually churches that brought men in or the pastor got his hands on him and who actually took to his congregation, "We are going to find out what your spiritual gift is." So you take this test. When you take this test, the one I have has 60 questions on it. You answer those questions, each question on a scale of 0 to 5. 0, "This is not me." 5, "Oh, this is me." There are 60 basic questions about your walk with God, your relationship with God, your attitude about the things of God. When you take the test and then you tally up your score, it shows you what your spiritual gift really is.

Now let me just say something to you. Do not ever allow your flesh to decide how spiritual you are. I love the Lord, I love the book, I love you, I love God, I cheat on that test. You know why? Because we all have one fundamental problem. We all think of ourselves more highly than we

really are. Oh yeah, we do, I do. We all think we are better than we really are. So I am going to take a test, a spiritual test that is going to tell me what my spiritual gifts are, and I get to decide how spiritual I am on all 60. Man, I hope he gives that test at the judgment seat of Christ. You have got to be kidding me. Your human nature is going to decide.

Is there anybody, do not raise your hand. Is there any, and it probably is, I am not one of them. Is there anybody here, do not raise your hand. Is there anybody here that you are so in touch with the Holy Spirit of God that the moment you sin it does not go 10 seconds, you know it, you confess it, you get it right and you stay unevenly with God all day long? I am not one of them. And you are not either probably. So given that, I am going to allow myself to take a 60 question test to judge and gain my own spirituality, each one of them. We always think of ourselves better than we are.

I never met an unsaved drunk anywhere who did not have something good to say about himself. I try to deal with him. They would brag about the fact that everybody else had to go, they would always have enough money to buy their own drinks. I want them to brag one time that he would get sick from drinking, but he would never throw up. They always have something great to say about themselves. Human nature, yours and mine, can never be left to decide how spiritual we are. What is wrong with you? You cannot. And that is stupid, man. You kidding me? I am going to decide what I do.

Hey, you know what? When you get into a church, you get involved in the Bible, and you get into the Word of God. If any man loved God, the same is known of him. The Holy Spirit of God will show you exactly who you are. Now this has been put together by men and pastors who could not take the Bible and lay out the spiritual gifts if their life depended on it. They have no clue where the definitive passages are in the Bible on spiritual gifts. So they make their living by going around to stupid Christians that they pray every day will not get fixed. Come in and have their spiritual gift rallies, their revival time, and want to give everybody leaving, give everybody their spiritual gift. So take this test and this will show you what your primary spiritual gift is. The boasting of a false gift.

Let me ask you a question. Allow me to ask this in light of our gift test, which in reality is the gift of stupidity. What was Jesus Christ's primary spiritual gift? Think about that one for a moment. Some of you ones who have fixed stupid probably already know where I am going with this. What was Jesus' primary spiritual gift? I mean he was the embodiment of the Holy Spirit of God and having all of the Spirit of God, God gave him the gifts of the Spirit to do all the work that God called him to do. Did he have one main spiritual gift and the rest of them were just secondary gifts or was he the embodiment of the Holy Spirit of God? And when God called him to do a work, God empowered him with whatever he needed to get that job done.

You know the model, the patterns in the Old Testament, they never see it. In Isaiah chapter 11, in the Old Testament, the Spirit of God was not manifest into a person. Isaiah chapter 11 tells us that the Holy Spirit of God in the Old Testament was manifested through seven distinct spirits called the seven spirits of God. Here is how it worked: When a man had a task to do for God, God would give him one of those seven, multiples of those seven, or all of the seven. God would

give him whatever of those seven spirits he needed to get that job done. When the job was done, those spirits could leave. Now in the Old Testament, there was no sealing of the Holy Spirit of God like there is for you and for me in Ephesians 4:30 and 2 Timothy 2. It came upon them, the seven spirits, and then it could leave.

Now here it comes. In the New Testament, you have all of the Holy Spirit of Christ, the same spirit that Jesus Christ had, the same exact spirit that is the Spirit of God, you have it at the point of salvation, comes inside your body, seals you, never to leave until the day of redemption, and now your body becomes the temple of that Holy Spirit of God, the absolute complete Holy Spirit of God, the same one that Jesus had. In John 16, the great definitive passage in the Bible on the Holy Spirit of God, you will find the seven manifestations of that Holy Spirit of God in your life and my life in what He does for you. But in the New Testament, here is the difference. He lives and dwells inside you and I, 1 Corinthians 6:19, you are sealed Ephesians 4:30, and He never leaves. But you have the same Holy Spirit of God in you that Christ had.

Jesus Christ was called the Son of God. He was called the Son of God because He was born of the Spirit of God. You and I are called the Son of God, 1 John chapter 3, because we are born of the same Spirit of God and we have the same Spirit of God in us that He had in Him. So when we get saved, the Holy Spirit of God, all of Him came into you and me, and now your body becomes His temple. Now you and I are supposed to grow spiritually. In fact, the Bible says in 2 Peter 1:5 that once you get saved and you get all the Holy Spirit of God, there are some things that you add to your faith. Those things you add to your faith are the very same spiritual gifts that they talk about that you may or you may not have. You have preachers out there giving you a test that tells you you may have one of the major seven, but you have a Bible that tells you that you are to add all seven to your life. Oh golly. The idea of you and I having a primary gift and you needing to find it is totally ridiculous.

My Bible says in Ephesians 4:15:

*Ephesians 4:15*

*But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

You are to be Him. Your maturing process is to make you grow up into Him. If you will ever grow up into Him, you will get all of the Holy Spirit of God working with you. Now here is the confusion. You have all the Holy Spirit of God there is, but the Holy Spirit of God does not have all of you that there is. See? Oh, that is the problem.

Pastors like to limit you in your spiritual growth. I do not think they do it on purpose. They do it because in their lives, you cannot fix stupid. They were taught and trained that you are stupid people. That they have to give you everything. So what they do is in their very ministries they want to hold you back.

8. First of all, they will tell you that you cannot learn the Bible on your own. You will have to go to a Bible college or come to the pastor who will tell you with the Greek and the Hebrew what it really means because you are too stupid to figure it out yourself. When you buy that

because you are stupid, then he limits you. You will never build that book in your life as long as you are hanging on to somebody else who is going to have to give it to you. It is your book!

9. The next thing he does is he tells you who want to read it and study it that the Bible that you do have is not any good. So he limits you.
10. Then he tells you that the Holy Spirit of God that God put inside you that is the same Spirit of God that Jesus had that do the work of God that you only got one maybe two aspects of it. And he limits you.

You go through your whole life, wind up at the judgment seat of Christ, going to a church, listening to a pastor who his whole ministry and through your whole life had one goal, whether he knew what he was doing or not, that is to limit you in every aspect of your relationship with Christ. And you fall for it. You fall for it. I have seen God's people take that spiritual gift test. I have watched them take it and brag about, "Well, I have got this gift or I have got that gift." Wow! That was a great test. This was a great thing. And never do one thing with that gift. You just want to wear the badge.

Here I have got one a better badge for you to wear. As you grow spiritually, as you mature spiritually, in that process of growing up into Him, not unto Him, into Him, you will find in the Bible seven stages of your spiritual growth. As you grow, God will develop you in those stages, and every character quality that Christ has as you grow up into Him, He will put into your life. As you do the work, He will give you the gifts that you need, whatever the situation may be, for you to do that job. God will always supply you to the work He called you. Hey, He gave everything to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ came to do the work of the Father, but God cut Him short, took Him up to heaven, put in the church age, made you His replacement, gave you the same Holy Spirit of God, and you are supposed to finish the work with what? One or two? How ridiculous. How absolutely asininely ridiculous God's people are today, pastors are today, and any church that teaches that garbage. You have got everything that Jesus Christ had. He had every gift that God had, and as you grow up into Him, the problem is you are not growing. You are stuck in a rut, so some shyster comes in selling his 50 cent bottles of snake oil wrapped in a spiritual gift test, you take it and think you have made great progress for God. You are an idiot. You want to make great progress with God? You get in that book, you fall in love with that book, you fall in love with Him, you grow up into Him, you start that process of spiritual growth in your life, and I guarantee you have got to give everything you need.

## VI. Understanding the Categories of Spiritual Gifts

Now let me talk to you about spiritual gifts for a moment so we get this straight in our minds. The definitive passages in the Bible for understanding spiritual gifts are 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14. All three chapters will go together under the heading of spiritual gifts. It starts out with 1 Corinthians 12:1.

*1 Corinthians 12:1*

*Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.*

It is one of the seven things that God's people are told not to be ignorant of, which are the exact seven things we all are ignorant of. He starts it in 1 Corinthians 12:1, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." Then he goes through the rest of 12, all of 13, all of 14, and he lays out spiritual gifts which I am going to show you very quickly. Then when he gets to the end of chapter 14, which closes out the three definitive chapters, he says in 1 Corinthians 14:40 after he laid out everything about spiritual gifts:

*1 Corinthians 14:40*

*Let all things be done decently and in order.*

Ah, so there is an order to the spiritual gifts. Let us get that order, let us do a terrible thing. Let us do a terrible, terrible thing. Let us go to the Bible, get the order. Now I want you to notice that this is the Church of Corinth, and this is the first letter that he writes which clearly tells us who know anything about the Bible that the Church of Corinth was the most messed up church in the New Testament. It is very clear from 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14 they are screwed up on spiritual gifts, much like we are today.

When you lay it all out, here is what you have. Spiritual gifts will fall into three distinct categories. You must get each category defined. 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14 defines each category along with some other places in the Bible. It is a lot like you remember we did an incredible message study a while back on wine in the Bible. Remember we talked about the issue of wine versus new wine. The new wine was grape juice and wine, just wine was fermented, and many, many, many people think that you can drink wine today as a Christian and it is okay because Jesus drank wine and all that stuff. Of course, we know that he never did. I showed you how to straighten that out. You go back to Deuteronomy chapter 32, if you remember, and back in Deuteronomy chapter 32, he defined for you what new wine was and what the devil's wine was. Once you have that definition, then every time you read wine in the Bible, whether it was new wine or not, the context of who is drinking it will tell you, based on a definitive passage in Deuteronomy 32, which one it is. You do not have that definitive passage. You are going to be a wine bibber. You are going to be with Captain Morgan. You are going to be with Morgan David. You are going to be in Napa Valley. It is a lot like this, that.

Now here is the order of spiritual gift that you are told that spiritual gifts are supposed to be done in order.

- The Gift of Officers to the Church (Leadership Gifts)
- The Sign Gifts (Apostolic Gifts)
- Gifts to Individual Christians (Powering Gifts)

When God will give, and the gifts are given to individual Christians who as the Holy Spirit of God does the work of God and God develops you. God will give you whatever you need to do whatever He has called you to do. The key is growing up into Him. You may never have the gift of being a pastor, but you will have all the other gifts that you are told to add to your faith. You will have everything that you need. You will lack nothing. You will see that you are going to set

yourself up with one major spiritual gift, and the rest of your life that is all you are going to do. That is exactly what the devil wants you to do.

Charismatics will never get to that. He reads over there in 1 Corinthians 13:8 where the Bible says, "tongues shall cease," and he just blows right through it. He never even stops to consider there are only three places in the Bible where somebody ever speaks in tongues, and they are all found in the book of Acts. We are trying to make 1 Corinthians the fourth one, but the 1 Corinthians is not a how-to. The 1 Corinthians is false, straighten them out, and trying to get them to the right order.

You see, the problem in 1 Corinthians is really not a problem, but it would be for some people that he puts all of the gifts together and does not tell you which is which because you are supposed to get the definitive passages on it to know, just like the wine, which is which when you see it. Sometimes in the church of Corinth at that particular time, you still have tongues because they are still in effect. They have not ceased yet. So you are going to have in the New Testament local church early where they have the pastor gifts, you have the individual power for gifts, but they are still using the sign gifts because they are still reaching people out there that are requiring a sign. But when you understand the three definitive passages on it and understand how they are defined and lay out the order, then just like the wine, whenever I read this one, I know what it is, when I read this one, I know what it is, and when I read this one, I know what it is. The Bible always defines it for you. The problem is we march into the Bible without any definitions, and then we make it up any way we want to. Now you need to see this, and this is unknown today.

## VII. Fruit of the Spirit vs. Gifts of the Spirit

Now here is how it really works for you, or it should work for you. In your Bible, you have two main concepts on the Christian life dealing with spiritual gifts.

- Fruit of the Holy Spirit
- Adding to Your Faith

First you have the fruit of the Spirit. Now you have the gifts of the Spirit. We now know that they fall into three categories or three orders.

11. We have the gift of a pastor or leadership.
12. We have the individual gifts that are given to child of God, you and me as Christians. No tests needed.
13. Then you have the gifts, the sign gifts that were only given to the apostles that are not to the church.

Now the body of Christ of the three can have two. We have men who have the gift of being a pastor. We have every saved person who has the gifts that are given to them to do the work of God. Now listen to me. The fruit of the Spirit will represent the character of God. The gifts of the Spirit will represent the power of God. I am going to say it again. Where the fruit of the Spirit

will represent the character of God and the gifts of the Spirit will represent the power of God, you cannot separate the two. They have to be viewed and studied and applied together. There will be no power of God in your life, the spiritual gifts, without the character of God in your life, the fruit of the Spirit. You are kidding yourself, you are wasting your time. Because it is only through the character of God, the qualities of Christ, as you grow, that God will reveal the power of God in your life, not through some stupid asinine test.

Philippians 4:10 says that I may know Him and the power of the resurrection.

*Philippians 3:10*

*That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

You know Him first, then the power of the resurrection. You get the character of God first through knowing Him, then you get the power of God in the spiritual gifts. How easy is that? Everything in your Christian life will come back to that book and you loving it so much that you allow it into your heart first, into your head second, and then let it into your life to change your life.

So when you do not, Proverbs 25:14, you have to boast of a gift you do not have. You have to pretend you are something that you are not. You have to take some stupid, ridiculous, asinine spiritual test to try to determine your spiritual gift, and you get to choose your spiritual level of which one it is. It does not get any better than that. Well, the gentleman is here to cry. God trusting you and me to find out how spiritual we really are. Are you kidding me? I mean 800,000 sperm and you were the fastest one to the egg? You have to boast of a gift that you do not have. You have to now become a phony. You have no power of God in your life. You are a storm without any, with clouds, with no rain, no thunder, no lightning, no power, no passion. Unfortunately, that is God's people today for the most part. All talk.

I have seen them, they have been in church 5, 10, 15 years. I have had in my own ministry that they got, please allow me to say this, in my own personal opinion, some of the best Bible teaching that they could ever find anywhere. I get them on a Ruckman's tapes. I have taught them and trained them and given everything I know that I have learned in almost 50 years of my life. I have seen them after 4 years, 5 years, 10 years. I have seen people that in 5 years time, their life was so different. They were so on fire. I mean you take the word, "old things are passed away, brother, all things become new." You look that verse up there, pictures there. Then I have seen some that get the same teaching and nothing about them ever changes. They are still struggling with the same stuff. They are still whining every day about the same issues. They still have no clue when it comes to the Bible. Somebody always has to continually feed them. You do not have the character qualities of Christ so you get the power of God in your own life. You just all your life wait for the next person to teach you the Bible. Your whole life is going from person to person to teach me this, give me this. But you just never do anything with what you have. You are trying to live off somebody else's spiritual knowledge. Never work.

Your whole life, I have seen it all my ministry. People that just go from one study to another. One person to another. I mean we have discipleship here, discipleship 1, discipleship 2, coming up with a discipleship 3. We have Bible Institute, we have the people ministry, we have all those things. But you know what? I watch 95, 98% of you, I watch you come through all of those things and you come through them because you are doing something with them and there is a progression. You are not 5, 6 years staying at the same level. I mean living off somebody's spirituality is okay for a while. I mean the Bible makes it very clear when you first get saved you have to be nurtured. You have to be taken care of. You are like a baby. It is a good deal. I give you somebody to work with you and to disciple you and to bring you through discipleship 2 and to help you change and face the issues in your life.

You know as well as I do that if you are just to sit down and discipling somebody, listen to me, you know this is true. If you just sit down and disciple somebody and you just simply go through the lessons and they are not, it is not opening up things in their life that they want to talk to you about that you are changing, you are wasting your time. Those lessons are not designed, they are designed with a mind behind them things. Mind! Scary thought. Those lessons were not designed to teach you the Bible. Yeah they were, but those lessons were designed to get inside your heart. Open it up! Let me tell you lesson one and you start to babble on they say you know what I am having problems with my marriage, I am having a problem with my kids. And you put lesson one aside and it is designed to open up the tables of the heart because you cannot teach somebody the Bible without changing their life and you cannot change their life without getting into it and teaching them the Bible.

So if you just go through, I have seen it in all my ministry, one class, another class, go through this, go through that, and you never do a thing with it. You are no farther along the road now after what, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine years. Five, six, seven, I mean it is okay when you are a baby, but five, six, seven years later and you still have to be breastfed with the Bible. I mean I get it, 1 Peter 2:2 says, "as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word," you take those baby Christians and you feed them.

*1 Peter 2:2*

*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

But Isaiah 28:9 says:

*Isaiah 28:9*

*Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*

It is all right to be breastfed as a baby spiritually speaking, but there has to be a time in your life when you have got to dig it out yourself. Quit living off everybody else. Let me tell you something. You give me your undivided attention. You give me your life, you do what I tell you to do the way I tell you to do it with the book, and I will have you in two years time when you have a working knowledge of the Word of God. You give me four years and I will have you thoroughly finished. You give me five to six years, do what I tell you to do the way I tell you to

do it, put the right things in your life, get those seven classes in your life like I am bringing you through an institute, and I will put you up against anybody in this world when it comes to that Bible. But in that process, listen to me, you have to change some things, and that is what most of God's people are not willing to do. So they go through their whole life. No character of God. No power of God. Go into a dumb, stupid church. Listen to a dumber, stupid pastor who wants to give you some stupid, asinine spiritual gift that you will take that test that you will grade your own spirituality. What a deal, man. Why if I could do that, get away with it, I would bump St. Peter off the gate, I would be in charge of that thing. Tell me you would not either.

Never trust yourself with your own spirituality. That is why Paul said, "prove all things." That is why he gave you the book. That is why you have people that you are accountable to. That is why you have principles and patterns. If we just are left to themselves, it is like the book of Judges. No king in Israel and every man does what is right in his own eyes. That is what we do. Growing up into Him. Coming through the process where as you grow, you add those things to your faith. You are not just going through the classes. You are going to start cataloging principles. Cataloging verses. "Oh look at my book of principles." I do not want to see your book of principles. I want to see the changed life because of those principles.

So what happens? You take the spiritual test. Somebody says, "I think you have got the gift of mercy." "What is your gift?" "My gift is the gift of humility." Let a guy tell me that one time. And I said, "What is your spiritual gift?" He says, "I have the gift of humility." I said, "You mean you had the gift of humility. You just lost it." Oh, I love dealing with it. You have got to be half enough to deal with him. But that is me. Look, you have to grow up into Him. God gave you His mind. He gave you His body, and He gave you all of His Spirit. It is all you need. When you put the character of God into your life, you will have the power of God in your life. No matter what God calls you to do. He may never call you to be a pastor, but there is plenty of things that He will give for you to do, and just like the Old Testament, He will give you exactly what you need to do the job. Only this time it does not leave, it stays. And then you add to your faith. And out of all the gifts that you could have, the greatest gift He says is charity. He says it is a gift, but He tells you that you have to add that to your faith. It may be a gift, but it is something you get as you build the character of God in your life. That is all of them are. See how simple that is. It is one of the most easiest things once you just explain it. Well, we will hold up there. I do not know what the weather is doing outside, but we had a good morning this morning. Let us have a word of...