

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 - 4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. NASB

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. Here we learn that the **spiritual gifts** are **very diverse** in their **nature**. Even though they come from the **one** and same **source**, God the **Spirit(v-4)**, the **Lord(v-5)**, and **God(v-6)**, as gracious gifts to us, yet they come in much **“variety.”** This is to say that they come in many **forms, functions** and **variations**. This can be clearly seen in any **list** of the **gifts** (Rom 12:6-8, 1 Cor 12:8-10, 12:28-20, 1 Pet 4:10-11). And here they are described as **“gifts, ministries, and effects.”** See here that the gifts are **“ministries,”** that is that they are for the **service** or **ministry** to **others**, and they **produce** an **“effect.”** The **“effect”** is the **product** of our **Spirit wrought effort** that **builds** and **strengthens** the ones we use our gifts in service to. And Paul attributes the working of it to **“6 God who works all things in all persons.”** So the gift is given to us by God, and God **“works”** it in us by the Spirit, to **build up** and **strengthen** the body. See here also the **“spiritual”** nature of the **gifts**, that is, God who is **Spirit** and in the **spiritual realm**, is **working in** and **through us** in the **natural physical world** for the goal of **strengthening** His people. It is **God** who **empowers** the gifts within us.

1 Peter 4:11 - 11 Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, **let him do so as by the strength which God supplies;** so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. NASB
Let us see here that when we **use our gifts** for the **spiritual life** and **faith** of the whole body, it is **God working in us** and through us to manifest His glory through

us, putting His virtue and character on display, “so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.”

It is frequent in Scripture when the gifts are mentioned that there is a **Trinitarian emphasis**, as in these verses, **Spirit(v-4), Lord(v-5), God(v-6)**. This shows the **interest** and function of **each member** of the **Godhead** as active in the working of **spiritual gifts** among the church. Nevertheless, they are referred to as “**7 the manifestation of the Spirit.**” It is the **Spirit of God** we are told who is “**manifesting the gifts**” among us, because He is the “**11 one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.**” But notice here, the gifts are given to **EVERY** Christian. They are for every **member** of the **body**. The Spirit gives **unique** and **special abilities** to **each member** of the Body of Christ to enhance and build up the **spiritual life** and **faith** of the whole body (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

1 Peter 4:10 - 10 As **each one has received a special gift, employ it** in serving one another, as **good stewards of the manifold grace of God**. NASB
Romans 12:3,6 - 3 For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, **as God has allotted to each a measure of faith**..... 6 And since **we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us**, let **each exercise them accordingly** NASB

Clearly God has **allotted to each Christian** a measure of grace and faith in their gifting, and each time this is mentioned it comes with an **imperative** to use it to **serve others** in the body. This Peters says, is a **stewardship** we have received from God and therefore a **duty** and **responsibility (Mark 13:33-37)**. This is a **privilege** as well as a responsibility. The **Spirit** has **gifted each member** with gifts to **edify the body** and called us to be **stewards** of this **grace** He has given us.

Notice here that the gifts are for the “**common good.**” “**7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.**” Here we see the **loving nature** of **spiritual gifts**. Each one must make the **personal sacrifice** of using their **own gifts** in the **service** of **others**, and for **their good**. The gifts are not for **selfish use**, or **self-aggrandizement**, but focused on the loving **good** of **others**.

Philippians 2:3-4 - 3 **Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.** NASB

This was the essential lesson Paul was teaching the Corinthians. This is why the **love chapter** (13) exists in the **middle** of a discussion about **spiritual gifts** (chapters 12-14).

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 - 1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, **but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong** or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, **but do not have love, I am nothing**. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. NASB

Paul could be **gifted** with tongues, prophecy, and service, but **without love**, he was **nothing!** Let us understand the **selfless nature** of our **gifts** and use them for the **“common good”** of others. Peter writes, *“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another”* (1 Pet 4:10). Mark well here dear Christian, the **gift** that **you have** from **God** is for **serving others**. This indeed is the great privilege and duty that we Christians possess as **individual members** of the Body of Christ, and this is one **main way** that we **glorify God** among us and to the world. Let us **receive** this **exhortation** from our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 13:12-16 - 12 So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? **13 "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14 "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. 16 "Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. NASU**

This is indeed how we **glorify God** to a watching world.

John 13:34-35 - 34 "A new commandment I give to you, that **you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.** 35 "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." NASU

Now Paul will elaborate on the **“varieties of gifts, varieties of ministries, varieties of effects,”** by giving a brief list of **several kinds of gifts**. This list includes both **more miraculous** and **less miraculous**, both **revelatory/confirmatory** and **non-revelatory gifts**, both **speaking** and **serving gifts**. Paul does **not explain** the different **functions** or **give details** of each gift here in this context, but only to

show how **diverse** the **gifts are**, that they all come from and are empowered by the **Spirit of God**, and are for the good of all... **“the common good”**.

8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; - Paul now showing that some have this gift and others have a different gift... **“to one is given,”** and **“to another”**... **“according to the same Spirit,”** who is the **One** who sovereignly distributes the gifts according to His **own plan** and purpose, **“11 distributing to each one individually just as He wills.”** Here Paul clearly points out two speaking gifts, **“the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge,”** denoted by the preface **“word”** (Greek logos) of wisdom, **“word”** of knowledge. These are gifts clearly used in **speaking**, and says Paul, are given **“through the Spirit.”** **Wisdom** in the Bible is the **ability** to understand God’s will, and apply it to life’s many diverse circumstances, in **obedience to God**. It’s always held in regard to God’s will.

Proverbs 9:10 - 10 The **fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom**, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. NASB
It is to take the **truth** of **God’s Word**, and to make **skillful** and **practical application** of the **truth** to life’s situations. This is one of the **chief roles** of the **pastor teacher**, who takes from his own **study** and **understanding** of **scripture**, and gives the **exposition** and **explaining** of it, revealing the wisdom of God so that it can be **rightly applied** to one’s life, so that one’s choices are **pleasing to God**.

2 Tim 3:16-17 - 16 **All Scripture** is inspired by God and **profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness**; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. NASU
This is why it is **incumbent** on every **pastor** to **master the Bible**, as the main goal of his **ministry** is to build up the body of Christ, in the **wisdom** and **knowledge** of God, **“to equip the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ”** (Eph 4:12). It is also the **role** and function of a **biblical counselor** to help **Christians** know, and **understand God’s truth**, and **how it applies** to their different questions and problems.

The **“word of wisdom”** is therefore a **speaking gift** empowered through the Spirit, that gives one the **ability** to **understand**, **discern**, and **instruct others** in the right **application** of **God’s truth** to the many, diverse circumstances of life. It can also be given in **greater** or **lesser degree**, as examples are clearly seen in **Jesus** and the **Apostles**. In the Apostolic Age these gifts operated in great degree, this before we

were given a **complete canon** of the **Apostolic** witness and instruction, the New Testament.

Mark 6:2 - 2 And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "**Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him**, and such miracles as these performed by His hands? NASB

Acts 6:8-10 - 8 And **Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people**. 9 But some men from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, including both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and argued with Stephen. **10 And yet they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking**. NASB

Yet this speaking gift is still in **great need** in the **church today** and is one primary means of the **edification** of the **body of Christ**. When **wisdom** is rightly **applied**, it **pleases God** and is **approved by God** as consistent with His Word.

James 3:13-17 - **13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds** in the gentleness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. 17 **But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.**

NASU

The "**word of knowledge**" is a similar **speaking gift**, but has an emphasis more on the **ability** to **perceive, understand** and **retain** the truths of God's Word. It is often accompanied by a gift of **teaching**, whereas teachers and pastors must **communicate insight** into the **knowledge** of **God's Word** for the strengthening of the saints. The Spirit gives some the **special ability** to **study** the Word and gain insight into an **extensive meaning** of the **text** of scripture, its **structure** and **emphasis, context** and **text types**, its **genres** and **styles**, along with all of the wonders, and even divine mysteries, of God's rich and **inexhaustible Word**. Because the Word is so full of **profound spiritual depth** and **meaning**, God gives some the **ability** to help **make it plain** for others so that they can be **taught, reproved**, and **trained** in the **knowledge** of **God**. This gift is also important for **pastors** in **leading** the church, **counselors** in **guiding** God's people, and **crucial** in the **local church** as it **informs** the church of God's will concerning **all matters** of

faith and **practice**. MacArthur comments, *“the ability to comprehend spiritual truth is God-given. The gifted person is supernaturally enabled not only to discover the truths from the facts of Scripture, but to explain and interpret those truths in order to help others understand them. As all other gifts, it comes in many forms and degrees. One believer may have great ability in this one area alone, while another may have moderate ability here, mixed with several other spiritual capabilities..... The human writers of scripture had the gift of knowledge in a unique way. God gave them truths, directly, which they recorded as part of his written Word. Since the closing of the canon of scripture, however, that gift has not involved the receiving of new truth, but only understanding of truth previously revealed. Anyone today who claims to have a divine revelation is a deceiver and contradicts, God’s own word, which expressly warns, that if anyone adds to it, or takes away from it, he will suffer God’s judgment (Rev 22:18). Any word of divine knowledge or wisdom must be based on the Word of God, once, for all delivered (Jude 3).”* **End quote.** Let us see the **design of God** in gifting the body in **various ways** to accomplish His **own plan** and purpose.

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit – The gift of **faith** is obviously **distinct** from **saving faith** given in regeneration to all Christians, or even from the **faith** we live by in our **daily lives**. This is of course a **God empowered gift to trust God** with ardent faith in the midst of **difficult** and even **impossible circumstances**. It is an **ability to trust Him** in the face of troublesome **obstacles** and human **impossibilities**. Clearly at desperate times and difficult trials God sometimes supernaturally empowers His people with a **special ability to trust Him** to lay hold of and believe His promises in order to do things that are **beyond God’s normal provision**.

Hebrews 11:32-35 - 32 And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, **33 who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war**, put foreign armies to flight. NASB

Here Paul also adds, **“and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit.”** Obviously the **“gifts of healing”** is the ability to **heal someone** who is sick, afflicted or **diseased**. This gift was very prevalent in the **Apostolic age** and is often accompanied in biblical phrases speaking of **signs** and **wonders**, much like the gift

of **miracles** (v-10). Surely it was recognized as a **great sign** when **Jesus** or an **Apostle** healed someone, and this is in fact a **confirmatory gift** whereby **God bears witness** to the **testimony** of those chosen by Him to bring the **Gospel message** and **establish** the **Church** in the world.

2 Corinthians 12:12 - 12 The **signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.**

NASU

Hebrews 2:3-4 – 3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the **first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard** [the apostles], 4 **God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit**

according to His own will. NASU

We see this **gift of healing** in action in **many places** in the New Testament when **Jesus** healed people from **all manner** of **sickness** and disease and **various afflictions** such as blindness and lameness.

Matthew 4:23-24 - 23 And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, **and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.** 24

And the news about Him went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him **all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them.** NASB

The **Apostles** followed, having been **endowed** with the **gift of healing** by the Lord Himself.

Matthew 10:1 - 1 And having summoned His twelve disciples, **He gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.** NASB

This was no doubt for the **confirmation** of the **proclamation** of the **Gospel** that was being **carried out** by the **disciples**, which certainly carried on throughout their lives until the **Church** was **fully established** in the uttermost parts of the world (Acts 1:8).

Acts 8:6 - 6 And the **multitudes with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing.** NASB

Acts 14:3 - 3 Therefore they spent a long time there **speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands.** NASB

More importantly, the **record of signs** and **wonders** done by the hands of the **Apostles** is of **historical record**, therefore **bearing witness** to every **subsequent generation** of the **truth** and **veracity** of the **Apostolic message** given in the **New Testament**, which they wrote.

John 20:30-31 - 30 Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; **31 but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.** NASB

This **Apostolic Corpus** became the **capstone** of **special revelation** by God. This precious **New Testament** we hold in our hands today in our **own language**, is **utterly sufficient** for **all matters** of the Christian Faith, doctrine, tradition, and practice until Christ comes again. The **"gifts of healing"** then, played a **major role** in the **confirmation** of the **New Testament** which is why it is included by many scholars in the list of **"sign gifts."**

Nevertheless, it is a **gift** given by **God** to **heal someone** who is **sick**, afflicted or **diseased**. One important observation about the **gift of healing** though is that it wasn't or **couldn't** always be **wielded** by the one who had the gift. Examples would be where Paul left Trophimus **"sick at Miletus"** (2 Tim 4:20), or told Timothy to **"use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments"** (1 Tim 5:23). Surely Paul could have healed these dear associates of his, but chose not to. It appears at times the one with the gift also has some **discernment** as to **whether or not it is God will to perform healing**, such as Jesus at Nazareth or Paul at Lystra.

Matthew 13:57-58 - 57 And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, **"A prophet is not without honor except in his home town, and in his own household."** 58 And He did not do many miracles there because **of their unbelief.** NASB

Acts 14:8-11 - 8 And at Lystra there was sitting a certain man, without strength in his feet, **lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked.** 9 This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, **who, when he had fixed his gaze upon him, and had seen that he had faith to be made well,** 10 said **with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet."** And he leaped up and began to walk. NASB

10 and to another the effecting of miracles, - Here Paul speaks of a gift that is a God empowered **ability** to do **act contrary** to the **laws of nature** that could only

be accomplished by **divine power**. Here again, this gift was **prevalent** in the **Apostolic age** and is often accompanied in biblical phrases speaking of **signs and wonders** (2 Cor 12:12, Heb 2:4). Indeed, a **sign** or **wonder** is by **nature** a **miracle**. **Jesus** turned **water into wine**, **calmed** the **storm** and **sea** with a spoken word, **created food** for 5,000, **walked on water** and many other miracles. The **Apostles**, although did far less, performed **miracles** like Paul **blinding** Elymas the Magician (Acts 13:11), or commanded an **unclean spirit** to **come out** of a girl (Acts 16:18), or **raised Eutychus** from the **dead** (Acts 20:9).

Acts 19:11 - 11 **God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul**, 12 so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.

Acts 8:13 - 13 And even Simon himself believed; and after being baptized, **he continued on with Philip; and as he observed signs and great miracles taking place**, he was constantly amazed. NASB

These events were clearly **confirmation** of the **proclamation** of the **Gospel** that was being **carried out** by the **Apostles** as **God** was **bearing witness** of their message in the New Testament by the **“effecting of miracles.”** MacArthur comments, *“John tells us that Jesus’ turning the water into wine at the wedding feast was the beginning of the “signs Jesus did at Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him” John 2:11. That was the purpose. The miracle was not to improve the party, or to show off great power to the curious. Even with Jesus, the working of miracles, just as the work of healing, was confirmation of His coming as Messiah, the carrier of God’s power and message.... Jesus performed miracles to prove that God was being revealed in Him, that is, in Jesus. At Pentecost, Peter told the crowd to whom he was preaching, “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know (Acts 2:22). **End quote.** The **“effecting of miracles”** like healings, played a **major role** in the **confirmation** of the **New Testament** which is why it is included by many scholars in the list of **“sign gifts.”***

10b and to another prophecy - There is some controversy whether or not **“prophecy”** is a **temporary** or **permanent gift**. The **argument** for the **cessation** of the **gift of prophecy** that is typically made is that it was a **revelatory gift ONLY**, and therefore **ceased** when **revelation ceased**, with the closing of the **canon** of Scripture at the **completion** of the New Testament. Therefore, when someone spoke with this **speaking gift**, as direct revelation of God, it was considered the

very words of God and carried **divine authority** as the Scripture itself. The argument that it is a **permanent gift for ongoing edification** in the church is that it was a revelatory gift **ONLY** for the **authors** of the **Biblical Canon**, and also for the **foretelling prophets** of the Old and New Testaments. But now the gift is used, NOT as a revelatory gift (bringing forth new revelation), but as a **forthtelling** gift of **revelation** already given in the **written Word**. This is the position taken by John MacArthur and others as well.

This view that it is a **permanent gift for ongoing edification** in the church, follows with some discussion concerning the **various places** it is used by **Paul**, as in our text **1 Corinthians 12:10b**. Here Paul mentions “**prophecy**,” a gift which he also mentions in Romans 12:6.

Romans 12:6 - 6 And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly: **if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith**; NASB

In both **1 Corinthians** and in **Romans** Paul exhorts his hearers to seek after the gift, and to use it according to the Spirit’s working. In fact, the gift of “**prophecy**” is mentioned at least **11 times** in **1 Corinthians** chapters **12-14**. It is the subject of quite a bit of instruction from the Paul. In chapter **14:3**, he gives a **definition** of its **function**.

1 Corinthians 14:1-4 - Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, **but especially that you may prophesy**. 2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. **3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation**. 4 One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; **but one who prophesies edifies the church**. NASB

In this way Paul explains that the **whole church** can be **edified**, when one “**prophesies**.” As a **permanent gift** some define it as a **God empowered ability to proclaim the Word** in such a way that others are **strengthened, exhorted, warned, comforted and enlightened**. **Macarthur** defines it as “*a Spirit-given and Spirit empowered ability to proclaim the Word effectively.... Believers today with the gift of prophecy are empowered to speak forth not according to their personal subjective faith but according to God’s already revealed objective faith, His Word.*” **Barnes** says, “*to declare the Divine will; to interpret the purposes of God; or to make known in any way the truth of God, which is designed to influence men.*” As we mentioned, the scripture gives a **definition** of its **function**.

1 Corinthians 14:3 - 3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. NASB

And so we see that when this **speaking gift** is used, it is for;
edification - the building up and strengthening of spiritual life and faith of others
exhortation – to emphatically urge someone, strong encouragement
consolation – to console and offer relief, compassion and comfort, to empathize
When someone **prophesies**, (or proclaims the Word effectively), others can be affected in all the **many profound** ways that the Word surely works in us who believe. When the **gift of prophecy** is used to **proclaim the Word**, others are **strengthened, exhorted, warned, comforted and enlightened**. One of Paul’s arguments in chapter 14 is that **prophecy edifies** all who hear and therefore the church should seek to **excel in those gifts** (like prophecy) that **build everyone up**. He suggests that the gift would have a profound affect even on unbelievers.

1 Corinthians 14:24-25 - 24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; 25 the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you. NASB

Whether it was only for the **pre-canon era** (temporary), or **today** (permanent), when this **speaking gift** is used **effectively** it can have a profound affect on all who hear. This may in fact be why Paul warned the Thessalonians..

1 Thessalonians 5:20 - 20 do not despise prophetic utterances. NASU

10c and to another the distinguishing of spirits, Here Paul mentions another specific gift which he calls the “**distinguishing of spirits.**” This **serving gift** is obviously necessary because **Satan** seeks to **deceive people** concerning the **Gospel** and **God’s truth** to lead them astray through his **influence of lying and deception**. Therefore, **God empowers** some of His people with a **special gift** to **distinguish** between **true and false spirits**. The use of this gift is **vital** for the church, which is why John urged us to distinguish between true and false spirits.

1 John 4:1 - 1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. NASU

Christians must be **warned** when certain **false prophets** or **false teachers** begin to **mislead** them claiming to have some **message from God**.

Romans 16:17-18 - 17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. 18 For such men are slaves, not of our

Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and **by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.** NASB

Such false teachers cause dissension and **divide God's people**, rather than helping them to grow in **unity** of the **faith**. These imposters have long existed seeking to **lead God's people astray** and it is **imperative** that they be **called to account** and marked out as deceivers.

2 Peter 2:1-3 - 2 But **false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies**, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. 2 And **many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned**; 3 and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. NASB

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 - 13 For **such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.** 14 **And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.** 15 Therefore it is **not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness**; whose end shall be according to their deeds. NASB

Because the nature of **Satan's deception** is so powerful and brought forth "*by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming*" (Eph 4:14), it is **vital** for some in the body to have a **special ability** from **God** to discern between truth and error, and have the **ability** to be "**distinguishing of spirits.**" Many places in the scripture call us to be **wary** and **discerning** and vigilant to **guard the truth**.

2 Peter 3:17-18 - 17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, **be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness**, 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. NASB

Clearly the preeminence of **sound doctrine** and **unity in the truth** are of highest **importance**, and it is imperative that we are **careful** and **vigilant** to hold those who teach and preach among us to the **highest standards** of **purity** of **doctrine**.

10d to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. Paul here identifies yet two more speaking gifts which he calls "**various kinds of tongues,**" and "**the interpretation of tongues.**" Quite possibly no single gift is the object of so much controversy as the gift of speaking in tongues. Even in