

These Things Ought Not So to Be

“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. . . . Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom” (James 3:10, 13). James said that a fountain is not like humans, for it will send forth either sweet water or bitter water, not both. Likewise a tree will not bring forth two different kinds of fruit. But humans are sometimes different.

The Word teaches that there are three types of spirits that can directly influence us: the human spirit, the spirit of the Lord, and the spirit of Satan. When one is filled with the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Lord dwells in the human spirit, and they are intimately associated together. It is possible for one who has been filled with the Holy Ghost to walk in his own spirit at times, and on other occasions, to walk in the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, out of the same mouth he might bless God and curse people.

James said that it should not be like this (James 3:10). But it is a fact that a person who is born again has two spirits at work in him. Too often we walk after our own spirit, rather than the Spirit of God. When we understand this fact, we can clearly see why Paul told us, “Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (I Thessalonians 5:20-21). In exercising the gift of prophecy, one may be speaking under the influence of the Spirit and yet have his words colored by his human thoughts.

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” (I Corinthians 2:11). This verse of Scripture plainly teaches about these two spirits. While a man can know the things of man by the spirit of man, no person knows the things of God, but the Spirit of God. This shows us that the Spirit of God is infallible. On the other hand, a person may get his words from either his own spirit or from the Spirit of the Lord, for they both dwell in him.

Preaching the gospel may be by the spirit of prophecy; therefore, preaching under the anointing may include prophesying, exhorting, reproof, rebuking, and instructing. Many of us have proved that one can preach a message under a heavy anointing but afterward find that the Word of God did not support every aspect of our message. We have learned, therefore, that we cannot accept everything that is preached as truth, even though the preacher is highly anointed when bringing it forth. So we need to judge preaching, like the gift of prophecy, by the Word of God.

All the trouble we have ever had in our assemblies has come because we have not allowed the Holy Ghost to keep control of our spirit. It is a truth full of mystery how the Holy Ghost can anoint our spirit to preach, testify, sing, or pray powerfully. God can give us a fluency in language that is so uncommon to our own vocabulary and force of words that we are astonished at what we are saying; nevertheless, it is still possible for us to make statements that are not completely backed up by the Word. Therefore, let us judge preaching, not by the anointing upon the preacher, but by its adherence to the infallible Word of God, which does not need to be judged, but rather, judges all people.

There is another truth that God’s people often do not recognize. Our human spirits are so closely connected with and associated with the Spirit of God that many times the human spirit learns from the Holy Spirit. Thus, it is possible for a person who has received the Holy Spirit sometimes to speak in tongues by his own human spirit. Without the anointing, they may still go on speaking in tongues with no uplifting joy that real tongues, spoken by the Spirit of the Lord, brings. We should hold speaking in tongues sacred, and not allow ourselves to drift into a cheap and lifeless prattle. If our speaking in tongues does not lift us up into a place of blessing and edi-

fication, then we know that our spirit has gone off on a crusade of its own and left the Great Teacher behind. An overzealousness to speak in tongues will cause some to follow their own spirit. It is best to wait on God and have the real manifestation of the Spirit.

Because these gifts have been misused and directed by the human spirit, some have gone to the other extreme and do not want anything to do with the gifts. But the truth lies in the middle ground; let us who have caught the vision consecrate our lives to God and let the real gifts be manifested in and through us. When these gifts operate under the Spirit of God and an unbeliever comes into the midst, he will confess that God is truly among us (I Corinthians 14:25).

God has not given these gifts to make a playhouse out of the house of God. Neither has He given them just that we might be blessed or that we might appear to be spiritual, but God gives them as a supernatural witness of His power. Their operation causes hunger to take hold of needy souls. This is the result when the manifestations are real, but where cheap fleshly manifestations are in operation, the unsaved have no conviction and in some cases are driven away.

No one should ever attempt to operate the gifts unless he is living a pure, clean life before God and the Spirit of the Lord is indeed moving upon him. Then God will get glory out of the manifestation.

We need the power of God in our midst, especially in these last days when sin abounds so much all around us. Great movements that once saw mighty revivals have become cold and heartless, with no message for the poor, sin-laden men and women at their doors. God help us to move in the power of the Holy Ghost and contend earnestly for the genuine gifts of the Spirit to be in operation in and through us until He comes!