

Editorial: "Desire Spiritual Gifts"

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"DESIRE spiritual gifts." Do you? If not, why?

Surely this is as plain an injunction as there is in the Bible. Why, then, should you not obey it?

Perhaps you will say that you have long desired to see spiritual gifts manifested in the church, and have even wondered why they were not.

But that is not what the Scripture says; it does not say, Desire spiritual gifts manifested in the church; but, "Desire spiritual gifts;" that is, Desire them manifested *in yourself*.

"Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God" (Rom. 14:22). Suppose you should see all the gifts manifested *in the church*, and yet none of them be manifested *in yourself*, what good would that do? You could even see all this, and yet be lost yourself. Do you not know that thousands, yes, *the whole world*, will see all these gifts manifested in the church, and yet it will do them no good!

No; this is an individual matter. True, the gifts are to be manifested in the church; but this can be only by their being manifested in *each individual member* of the church. The gifts are divided "to every man *severally*."

Are you a member of the church? Do you belong to the body of Christ? Do you believe in Jesus? Then you are to desire that the gifts of the Spirit will be manifested in yourself. If this is not so *with yourself*, you cannot be ready *to meet the Lord*.

Yet to "desire spiritual gifts" is only a part of the injunction,—the subordinate part, too. The whole of it is, "Pursue love¹, AND desire spiritual gifts" (1 Cor. 14:1).

To desire spiritual gifts is altogether proper. Yet to do this without love's being held solely in view, would be altogether vain; because though we had all the gifts, and yet had not love, it would profit us nothing, and we would be nothing.

Then as the only true way to desire spiritual gifts is to desire them *upon yourself*, and as the only proper connection in which to desire them is to *follow after love* and desire them, it follows that you must follow after love *yourself*, and desire spiritual gifts manifested upon yourself in order that you may attain that thing after which you are following.

And the love after which you are to follow is the bond of perfectness, it is the love of God. And as "this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments," then it is certain that the thing after which we are to follow while we are desiring spiritual gifts, is the

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keeping of the commandments of God. And the *keeping* of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus is the third angel's message.

There can be no true keeping of the commandments of God without love; there can be no true love without spiritual gifts; there can be no spiritual gifts without the gift of the Holy Spirit; therefore without the gift of the Holy Spirit, there can be no true third angel's message.

"Ask, and it will be given to you." "Receive the Holy Spirit." "Be filled with the Spirit."
"Desire spiritual gifts."

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