



# the spiritual gifts

## **Small Group Guide:** **The Spiritual Gifts, Week 12**

### **Key Takeaways:**

1. The Bible is uniquely inspired: Both Old and New Testaments were written by people who spoke God's message with His authority; prophets in the Old Testament and apostles in the New Testament.
2. The canon is closed: After John wrote Revelation and warned against adding to Scripture (Revelation 22:18), no new Scripture has been or will be written.
3. Scripture is our final authority: Like Timothy, we are to look to the completed Word of God, not to new "apostles" or "prophets" who claim the same authority as the biblical writers.
4. Jesus is the cornerstone: He connects the Old and New Testaments, fulfilling the role of both prophet and apostle, and giving us the complete revelation of God.
5. The gospel is central: No amount of good works can save us, only faith in Jesus Christ and what He accomplished on the cross.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How does understanding the difference between Old Testament prophets who went into open-eyed trances and New Testament prophets who remain in control of their spirits change your view of modern-day prophecy?
2. Why do you think God chose to transition from the title of 'prophet' to 'apostle' in the New Testament, and what does this reveal about how language and culture can impact our understanding of spiritual offices?
3. In what ways does recognizing that the New Testament apostles were equivalent to Old Testament prophets strengthen or challenge your confidence in the authority and inerrancy of Scripture?
4. How does Paul's bold claim that his writings are 'commandments of the Lord' comparable to the Torah impact your approach to reading and applying his epistles today?
5. What does it mean for Jesus to serve as the 'cornerstone' connecting both Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles, and how does this shape your understanding of biblical unity?
6. How should the fact that God personally ensured false prophets were kept out of Scripture influence our discernment when evaluating modern teachings and spiritual claims?
7. Why is it significant that Paul told Timothy to study the Word rather than appoint a successor to his apostolic office, and what does this teach us about pastoral authority?

8. How does the concept that New Testament prophets speak revelation in their own words rather than word-for-word from God affect how we should judge and weigh prophetic messages today?
9. What does it reveal about God's character that He was patient enough to complete Scripture through the apostles before closing the canon with John's warning in Revelation?

### **Practical Application:**

1. Pastor Allen emphasized that the apostolic office ended, but the apostolic ministry continues. What does this mean practically for the church today?
2. Defend Your Faith: Discuss in your own words why you believe the Bible is trustworthy and inspired. Practice explaining it to someone this week.
3. Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17. Paul tells Timothy to look to Scripture rather than to apostles. How should this shape our approach to Christian leadership and authority today?
4. Take inventory of where you get your spiritual teaching (podcasts, books, social media, etc.). Are these sources subject to Scripture, or do they claim authority over it?
5. Share the Gospel: Pastor Allen mentioned people who believe in salvation by works. Identify someone in your life who may believe good works save them, and pray for an opportunity to share the true gospel with them.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, we thank You for this time of study and reflection on Your Word. We are grateful for the infallible

truths passed down through the prophets and apostles, and for the cornerstone of our faith, Jesus Christ. As we leave this place, help us to hold firm to the authority of Scripture and the teachings of Jesus, recognizing the profound gift of Your revelation. Empower us to live out the lessons we have learned, and to share Your love and truth with the world. Guide us in understanding and applying Your Word in our daily lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

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## 5-Day Devotional

### Day 1: The Word Made Flesh

**Reading:** John 1:1-14

**Devotional:** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." These opening words of John's Gospel remind us that Scripture is not merely an ancient text; it is the very expression of God Himself. When the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, divinity intersected humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. Today, as you hold your Bible, remember you are holding the truth that transforms lives. The prophets spoke God's words verbatim; the apostles completed the revelation through Christ. This Book is your key to life, your guide through every situation, and your pathway to knowing the God who loved you enough to become one of you. Let this truth overcome you today.

### Day 2: Prophets, Apostles, and Divine Authority

**Reading:** Hebrews 1:1-4; 2 Peter 1:19-21

**Devotional:** God has always spoken to His people, but the manner in which He speaks has evolved. In times past, He spoke through prophets who entered trances and spoke His words exactly. In these last days, He has spoken through His Son, Jesus Christ. The transition from Old Testament prophet to New Testament apostle was not a change in authority but in title; both offices carried the weight of divine inspiration. Paul, Peter, and John wrote with the same infallible authority as Isaiah and Jeremiah. This means every page of your Bible from Genesis to Revelation carries God's fingerprints. When you read Scripture, you are not reading human wisdom but divine revelation. Approach it with reverence, study it with diligence, and trust it completely.

### Day 3: The Completed Revelation

**Reading:** 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Revelation 22:18-19

**Devotional:** Paul's final words to Timothy were not to await another apostle but to cling to Scripture. With John's death and the completion of Revelation, God's written revelation was finished. No new books will be added; no additional prophets will write Scripture. This is both sobering and liberating. The Bible you hold is complete, sufficient, and entirely adequate for life and godliness. It teaches what is true, corrects what is wrong, and equips you for every good work. You need not search for hidden revelations or new prophecies to complete God's Word. Everything you need to know about salvation, sanctification, and service is already written. Study it faithfully. The apostolic office ended, but the apostolic message endures forever.

#### **Day 4: Grace Alone Through Faith Alone**

**Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 3:21-26**

**Devotional:** No one is good enough to earn heaven. This truth cuts through every human attempt at self-righteousness and religious performance. You cannot do enough good deeds, attend enough services, or live a moral enough life to merit salvation. The standard is perfection, and we all fall short. But here is the glorious truth: what you cannot do, Jesus has done. When Christ died on the cross, He paid the penalty for your sin completely. When God raised Him from the dead, He declared the payment accepted. Salvation is not about your goodness but His grace. It is not about your works but His work. Today, rest in the finished work of Christ. Stop trying to earn what has already been freely given.

#### **Day 5: Living in Light of Truth**

**Reading: Colossians 1:9-14; 1 Corinthians 14:37-38**

**Devotional:** Paul understood his writings were not mere suggestions but commandments of the Lord, equivalent to the Torah itself. This confidence was not arrogance but revelation; he knew God had called him to complete Scripture. As believers today, we stand on the completed foundation of the prophets and apostles, with Christ as the cornerstone. This foundation does not shift with culture or personal preference. Your relationships, decisions, and daily life must align with this unchanging truth. The most important relationship you will ever have is with God through Jesus Christ. As you age, material things fade, but this relationship grows more precious. Let Scripture guide every decision, correct every error, and illuminate every path. The key to life eternal and abundant is found in these pages.