

Testing Spiritual Gifting and Prophecies

One of the most important issues in working with persons from charismatic churches or backgrounds is to test spiritual gifts, tongues, prophecies, dreams, and visions. I have found that many of these manifestations are not from the Lord.

I believe in spiritual gifting and believe it is for our time. Sadly, however, many well-meaning Christians are operating in false gifting. These people are not evil, but they have been deceived.

When I first began my ministry I was praying for a woman named Margo who was hearing voices. A woman named Donna had befriended her and prayed with Margo for months. Somehow they found out about Moriah Ministry and called for an appointment.

As Donna and I prayed for Margo we were able to get the demons removed. At the conclusion of our ministry time, Donna began praying in tongues. Although I had heard about tongues I had never seen or heard anyone pray that way and assumed that Donna was just worshipping the Lord.

After a few minutes Margo grimaced and said “the demon is back.” Surprised, I went after it to find out what legal right it was claiming. The spirit spoke and declared that it had been invited back. “How?” I asked, binding it to the truth and commanding in Jesus’ name. It finally spit out that Donna had invited it back. At the time this was very confusing to me. I asked Donna not to pray and was able to cast the enemy out again. This time it stayed out.

I immediately began to probe this anomaly. I was certain that Donna was a Christian, but I had not yet encountered a Christian with a demonic tongue. We concluded that Donna’s tongue might not be from the Lord. As I commanded the spirit that spoke in a tongue to come forward Donna recognized that a spirit was there. It admitted being a demonic spirit—not the Holy Spirit. That day we renounced the spirit and commanded it out of her life.

The incident drove me to a thorough study of this confusing situation. The result was that I discovered one of the most formidable tools that we have in spiritual warfare. Neil Anderson had recorded an encounter with a false tongue in a young man whom he called Alvin. He recorded the event in *The Bondage Breaker*.

“Recently a man in his thirties was referred to me. Alvin was discouraged and defeated. For several years he believed he had a special gift of prophecy from God. He was invited to church after church to speak as an oracle for God by prophesying in his unique way. But over a period of months his personal life began to fall apart. Alvin eventually reached the point where he could no longer function in society and he began to withdraw from people completely. By the time he came to see me he had been unemployed for two years, he was being cared for by his father, and he was a slave to prescription drugs.

“Alvin and I read 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21: ‘Do not put out the Spirit’s fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good’ (NIV).

“I said, ‘Alvin, I’m not against prophecy; it’s a spiritual gift. But Satan can counterfeit spiritual gifts and deceive us into believing they’re from God. That’s

why the Scriptures instruct us to put everything to the test.

“After a lengthy discussion about false prophets and teachers, Alvin admitted, ‘I think my problems began when I failed to test the “gifts” of tongues and prophecy conferred on me by false teachers. Not only was I deceived, but I have deceived others myself.’

“‘Would you be willing to put your gift of tongues to the test?’ I asked. I assured Alvin that I was interested in putting the spirit to the test, not him. Alvin really wanted to be free of deception and right with God. ‘Yes,’ he answered. I instructed Alvin to begin praying aloud in his ‘spiritual language.’ As he began to chant an unintelligible prayer, I said, ‘In the name of Christ and in obedience to God’s Word, I command you, spirit, to identify yourself.’ Alvin stopped in the middle of his chanting and said, ‘I am he.’ At this point a novice may have been tempted to take off his shoes, thinking he was on holy ground. But I continued, ‘Was born under Pilate, buried, raised on the third day, and who now sits at the right hand of the Father?’ Alvin almost shouted the response: ‘No! Not he!’

“...I am not against spiritual gifts, even prophesy and tongues. But I am committed to obeying Scripture, and 1 Corinthians 14:39 says, ‘Desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues.’ But Scripture also requires that all spiritual phenomena be tested.”ⁱ

I use the same method to test any revelation that might be masquerading as Christ. In the example above, Anderson applies the test to two aspects of revelation—tongues and prophesy.

I also use the test in a more extended way. Charismatic Christians will sometimes share that there are two types of tongues. One is a tongue that requires interpretation for corporate worship. The other tongue is the person’s private prayer language. They claim that this second type of tongues will excuse them from the test of interpretation Paul prescribed in 1 Corinthians 14:26-28. Although personally I have a difficult time validating the second type of tongues scripturally, I can still use 1 John 4:1-4 to test either tongue. In either case the spirit behind the tongue should be the Holy Spirit and subject to testing. I also use it to test dreams and visions.

My approach, like Neil Anderson’s, is to get the tongue operating. Once it begins I then ask permission to test it and for it to switch to my language. If it is the Lord, He will shift to English because He has commanded me to test Him (1 Thessalonians 5:18-20).

I will then challenge the tongue to say, “Jesus came in the flesh” (1 John 4:1-4). If it is the Lord I will immediately hear “Jesus came in the flesh.” Usually a few more phrases will be added. (i.e., “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” “born of a virgin,” etc.). If it is not the Lord the communication may cease or the spirit will say something such as “Yes” or some other indirect response. I have often had the tongue curse at me, which surprises the person who is speaking. Sometimes the tongue will just continue without acknowledging the question. Any of these

latter responses exposes the antichrist spirit. I have the person renounce it and remove any curses that it has spoken using the client's voice.

If I am testing a prophecy, dream, or vision, I call in the spirit that gave the revelation. Then, as in the case of tongues, I challenge the spirit to declare that "Jesus came in the flesh." Since the Holy Spirit is in each Christian, He will reveal himself in us and we will know in our spirit.

Let me share an example of how this might work. As a pastor, I often have people come to me with "a word from the Lord." Since the Lord has commanded us to test the Spirit, I say to the person: "Let's test it." I may ask for another person to join us. Then I say, "Spirit that brought that word: Does that spirit confess that Jesus came in the flesh?" At that point we are usually all in agreement with what we thought or heard in our spirit. God does not want us to be deceived. He will allow us to test Him this way. In fact, we literally quench the Spirit if we do not test Him (1 Thessalonians 5:18-20).

If the test fails I make sure that the person who brought it is not embarrassed or in any way demeaned. Rather, I use it as a teaching opportunity. My conviction is that the more we test, the more we will hear true words from the Lord.

A more troubling case I came across in my research was an account in *He Came to Set the Captives Free* by Rebecca Brown, M.D. Dr. Brown's co-author Elaine records eight ways that as a satanist she would infiltrate churches and try to destroy their ministries. The first step is recorded as follows:ⁱⁱ

#1) Profession of Faith

First of all the satanist must make a "profession of faith." He or she must pretend to be saved in order to gain credibility with the church people. In churches who have altar calls, the person will go forward, usually with tears, and pretend to "get saved." If the particular church is a charismatic church which places great emphasis on the gift of speaking in tongues, the satanist will speak in tongues. This is no problem, demons can speak in tongues very easily. Remember that when I was indwelt by Mann-Chan I was able to address any of the foreign dignitaries in their own language fluently. This is why the Lord places such emphasis on interpretation:

"When ye come together ... If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God." 1 Corinthians 14:26-28.

Alas, how much damage is done because churches do not heed this simple warning. It is the custom in charismatic churches for many people to speak and pray in tongues at the same time without interpretation during their services and prayer meetings. Satanists take great advantage of this. During the time I served Satan, I spoke in tongues regularly in all the meetings and prayer meetings, so did the other satanists I was working with. No one interpreted.

We were cursing the church, the pastor, the members, and God! And no one knew! We challenge churches everywhere to take heed of this Scripture. When you come together as a group, restrict your speaking in tongues as the Scripture directs. If you do so, you will have taken a major step in restricting Satan's attack on you. Three other Scriptures most churches overlook are:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." 1 John 4: 1-3

"And he said, take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name ..." Luke 21:8

"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:21-23

This seems to be one of the areas of greatest confusion amongst Christians. Satanists can and do use the name of Jesus. They can teach and preach about in Luke and Matthew clearly show this. The one thing they can't do is pass the test given in 1 John 4. They cannot look you square in the eye and say, "Jesus Christ who is God, who came in the flesh, died on the cross and three days later arose from the grave and now sits at the right hand of God the Father, this Jesus is my Lord and Savior and Master.' Oh, they can say "Jesus saved me." But which Jesus are they talking about? Jesus Himself said that many would come claiming to be Him. They can also read or repeat a confession or profession of faith in Jesus Christ. They can and do read the Scriptures. If you ask them if Jesus Christ who came in the flesh is their Savior, they can lie and say "Yes." But they cannot, with their own mouth, make the declaration as given above. God gave us a test to use, dear brothers and sisters in Christ. Let us use God's word.

I can verify this testimony from other sources. I have ministered to several former satanists who give similar accounts. Elaine's testimony is the clearest summary of one troubling aspect of satanic practice as others have shared it with me.

Pastor and author Mark Bubeck records a time in his own life when speaking in tongues had become an issue. Mark experienced a false tongue and was able both to test and to eject

the false spirit. The result was that he was able to enjoy a true spiritual tongue after expelling the false spirit.

“A problem arose in my life, however, when I began to find myself seeking such an experience as an evidence of God’s speak. I can recall one such occasion when the results after the feelings had been there were discouraging indeed. The message had been delivered with great difficulty and a complete lack of liberty. I began to ask the Lord why. It was revealed through meditating on the Word that I was beginning to function on feeling and experience rather than upon fact and faith. I was impressed to see that when Satan draws near, the emotional and feeling responses of the body can be very similar to what had been experienced in the Holy Spirit’s presence. Eliphaz, Job’s friend, testifies to this fact in Job 4:15 when he states, “Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up” (KJV). The first time I read those words after the experience just related, I saw how my experience was similar to that of Eliphaz. The supernatural presence of any powerful spirit being can and often does precipitate some unusual body and soul feelings and sensations in us mortals. Those who have attended séances and other spiritualist meetings testify to such fact. The point of this observation is to emphasize strongly that we must not depend upon feeling and experience as an evidence of our being filled with the Holy Spirit.

“Even the so-called experience of speaking in tongues must be exercised with much care. Whenever anyone tells me that he speaks in an unknown tongue and that this is an evidence of the fact that he has been filled with the Spirit, as kindly as I can I ask him if he has tested the spirit? The Holy Spirit tells us to do this in 1 John 4:1-4. He will not be insulted by such a test. If you speak in an unknown tongue, I urge you to obey this instruction of the Spirit. While using a tongue, your own mind must be largely inactive. In your mind you can command the spirit behind the tongue to answer clearly with an answer to your mind, “Has Jesus Christ come in the flesh? Is Jesus Christ Lord?” Insist upon a clear definite affirmative yes. The Holy Spirit will always respond with a praising yes. Another spirit may well respond with some evasive answer or even a very blunt no. I know of cases where such testing has revealed the invasion of a wicked spirit into the experience of believers.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Two important things to note from Bubeck’s testimony are:

- (1) **Do not let emotions be the “test of the spirit.”** People may feel a sense of peace or elation after speaking in false tongues. Mormons use a “burning in the bosom” to be the definitive test of “truth.” The enemy can give feelings of peace.
- (2) **Just because a person has a false spiritual gifting does not mean that once the enemy is evicted he or she will not have a true gifting.** When a person has experienced a false gifting I try to encourage them with the prospect that God will still use them. Often these people are so hurt to learn that they have been deceived

and may in fact have deceived others that they are very ashamed and could possibly quench their spirit for valid ministry.

Anita came to me from a charismatic church. When she would pray in her tongue her emotions would become so enraged that she would actually attack her brother physically. He was the pastor of a mid-sized church in Los Angeles. It was obvious to everyone in their church that Anita had a false tongue.

Anita brought her sister-in-law (the pastor's wife) as a prayer partner. (I always encourage people to bring Christian prayer partners with them to sessions.) We were able to isolate the spirit very quickly, but when it came to casting him out I encountered a difficulty. Apparently one of the beliefs in their church was that "tongue speaking" was a sign of salvation. If you could not speak in a tongue you were not saved. We could get rid of the spirit, but Anita simply could not speak in tongues without the enemy. Her chant to start her tongue was actually an invocation for calling in the enemy.

In Anita's case, I was more confident of her salvation than she was. She gave me a clear testimony that "Jesus saved her from her sin....." Judging from her presentation I would suspect that most congregants in her brother's church would also give a clear confession. Her sister-in-law tried to argue the theology with me, but she could see the evidence right in front of her face in the form of Anita. She had a choice: either Anita was not a Christian or her theology about tongues being a requirement for salvation was in question. Despite her arguments, I reminded Anita's sister-in-law that I did not do anything but remove a demon that had cussed at us when it was directed to say "Jesus came in the flesh." I had taught no theology. Anita and her sister-in-law left troubled because they had a severe paradigm shift to make in the next few days.

Another example of false tongues is "The Way International," an organization or "church" where all congregants are encouraged to experience the "gift of tongues." According to the testimonies of its members, in fact, having the gift of tongues is practically equated with one's salvation. They speak about Jesus and teach that He is the way, yet the title of a book that the sect's founder penned is *Jesus Christ is Not God*.

ⁱ **Anderson, Neil.** *The Bondage Breaker*.

ⁱⁱ **Brown, Rebecca.** *He came to set Captives Free*. 235-237

ⁱⁱⁱ **Bubeck, Mark.** *The Adversary*. 40-42.