

Do The Gifts Of The Holy Spirit Still Exist Today?

What does Two Rivers Church believe as it relates to Cessationism?

By The Elders of Two Rivers Church

“Do all spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament exist today for the purposes of advancing the Gospel and the Kingdom of God? We at Two Rivers Church believe the answer to this question is “Yes!”

However, knowing that many of our fellow believers espouse a different viewpoint commonly called ‘Cessationism’.

A Cessationist is commonly understood to be *“someone who thinks that certain miraculous spiritual gifts ceased when the apostles died and Scripture was complete.”*

This article is intended to provide a brief description of the main argument used by Cessationists, as well as the beliefs that we hold at Two Rivers Church in response to those arguments.

The Cessationist Viewpoint

The main Cessationist argument opposing belief in the existence of the miraculous Spiritual Gifts today is drawn from the text of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13:

“Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.” [1 Corinthians 13:8-13](#)

Those holding Cessationist views hold the line of reasoning proposing that ‘perfection’ refers to the canon of Scripture. When the last words of Scripture (perfection) were written, spiritual gifts such as those mentioned in verse 8, ceased. Therefore, the Cessationist position is: Since Scripture is complete and no further revelation is required beyond the Bible, sign gifts have ceased.

Our Belief

It is our belief that the word ‘perfection’ in 1 Corinthians 13:10, does not refer to the completion of the canon of Scripture. It is our understanding of this passage that ‘the perfect’ referenced by Paul is the person of Jesus Christ who will arrive with His second coming.

It is our understanding that this position is reinforced in 1 Corinthians 13:12 when Paul uses the words ‘now’ and ‘then.’

Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; **then** we shall see face to face. **Now** I know in part; **then** I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. [1 Corinthians 13:12](#)

A good expositional question is: “To what time is Paul referring?”

It appears Paul is referring to the time mentioned in verse 10 – when “the perfection comes.” Paul says in verse 12, “Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”

It is clear this ‘perfection’ does not represent a time when the canon of Scripture was completed. We have the Scripture, but we do not now see God face to face. We do not yet know fully – but we will, when Jesus returns and we see Him ‘face to face.’

Second, let us also consider Acts 2:14-21 occurring on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem:

“Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” [Acts 2:14-21](#)

Here Peter is referencing the prophecy given in Joel 2:28-32a. Peter explains to those listening that the time in which they live is ‘the last days.’ Peter further explains that Joel’s promise of the New Covenant blessing for those living in the last days was prophecy, a gift of the Spirit (v. 17). He explains that God’s Spirit will be poured out to everyone (men, women and servants), and prophecy will occur (v. 18).

Have the last days come to fulfillment? No – that will not occur until Jesus’ return.

Therefore, it is our conclusion that because we are living in the last days, and because Joel foretold and Peter confirmed that in the last days prophecy would occur, prophecy cannot logically have ended.

Conclusion

We at Two Rivers believe that all of the gifts mentioned in the New Testament are active in the church today, and are to be used in accordance with Scripture for the building up of the body and to the glory of God.

