

# Spirit of Prophecy

#0978

Study given by W.D. Frazee—May 14, 1966

Our text this morning is found in Ephesians, the fourth chapter, the eighth verse. This is the day set apart by the general conference as Spirit of Prophecy Day, and I thought as I received that announcement what a wonderful thing that we can have a day set apart all through the denomination to think of this wonderful gift that God has given His people.

Now, our text in Ephesians 4:8 says:

“...When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive,  
and gave gifts unto men” Ephesians 4:8.

We all like presents, don't we. We like to get a gift. When Christmas comes, we hear people—especially if they're little folks, you know—I wonder what I'm going to get for Christmas. Sometimes when birthdays come around, we begin to wonder what we're going to get, and even some of us that are older—we wonder if somebody's going to remember our birthday.

Well, it's a good thing, both at birthday time and Christmas time, to be thinking about the great Giver, who has given us life in the gift of Jesus, not so much about what we're going to receive in these material things, but there are gifts that God wants us to look forward to receiving, be very anxious to receive, and be very, very happy about receiving, and one of these is this gift we're studying about this morning.

Now, you notice, He says that when He ascended—when Jesus ascended up on high—He gave gifts unto men—that is, to His church. In the 11<sup>th</sup> verse, we're told what these gifts are:

“And he gave some, apostles; and some...” Ephesians 4:11.

What?

“...prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers” Ephesians 4:11.

The particular gift that we're studying this morning is, of course, this gift of prophecy—He gave some prophets. In the Old Testament, we think of men like Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Daniel, and many others, to whom God sent His angel, giving them visions of heavenly glory, in some cases presenting to them great events of the future.

In many cases, He instructed them to write out that which He showed them that many more might receive the benefit of these revelations. That's the way we get the Old Testament:

“...holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” 2 Peter 1:21.

Peter says. And then, in New Testament times, what a constellation of prophets God used. Many of the apostles were also prophets. We think of Peter and his vision on the housetop that led him to welcome Cornelius' servants. We think of Paul who had so many revelations that he had to have a special, personal, physical affliction lest he should be exalted above measure.

We think of Philip and his four daughters, all of whom prophesied. We think of Agabus and Cyrus and Jude—all of them prophets of the early church. And then we think of John, the last one of the twelve, banished to Patmos in his older years, and there receiving such revelations of glory as overwhelmed him and caused him to kneel in wonder at the feet of the angel, Gabriel, who had been the agent in the revelation.

But you remember that the angel gently reproved him and said, No, John. Don't worship me. I'm only serving *with* you in the manifestation of this gift.

“...worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” Revelation 19:10.

Yes, this gift of prophecy is a special gift because it is the message of Jesus. It is the special channel through which Christ brings to His church His messages of warning, of instructions, of reproof, of encouragement. It was through this channel then, as well as in ancient times, that God spoke in the New Testament days.

And thus, in the Gospels and in the epistles, in the Revelation, we have the testimony of Jesus. Is this not sufficient? Yes. It is *all* sufficient. The sacred canon from Genesis to Revelation give us a complete revelation of the will of God.

But, my dear friends, we human beings need not only a textbook but a teacher. We find it so in school. Suppose we take a child and we present to him, as he comes there in the first grade, a great library of all the textbooks in the first, second, third grade, right on up, and we say to him, Now here it all is. Was it sufficient? Yes, it's sufficient. Is this what he must know to graduate? Yes, this is it. Turn him loose with it.

What does he need? Well, he needs what that man from Ethiopia told Philip he needed. Do you remember, as he was reading the prophet Isaiah, Philip said, Do you understand what you're reading? What did he answer?

“...How can I, except some man should guide me...” Acts 8:31.

And Philip stepped up into the chariot, and as they rode along over the desert sand, the messenger of God helped him to understand the holy word. Did he add anything to the scripture? I trust not, for it is written:

“Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it...” Deuteronomy 4:2.

The work of any messenger of God, whether an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, a pastor or teacher, is not to add to the word. If he does, he comes under the curse. But, my dear friends, it's one thing to add to the Word of God. It's an entirely different thing to magnify it—to magnify it—and this is the purpose of the gift of prophecy in all ages.

The work of the prophets in the Old Testament times was to magnify God's law. The work of the prophets in New Testament time was to magnify the Old Testament. The work of the gift of prophecy in these latter days is to magnify the entire scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation, and enable us, as apt scholars, to understand the will of God as revealed in His word and as magnified through this latter day revelation. For it is written, in this book, which is the accepted rule of faith of all Christian people—it is written in *this* book:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...” Acts 2:17.

Yes, that's Acts 2:17 and 18. That's right. And so, to those who call for a Bible and the Bible alone, we answer, indeed we join you in the call for the Bible and the Bible alone, but if we are to have the Bible and the Bible alone, let us have the whole Bible including those statements *in* the Bible which call for the prophetic gift in the last days in the last church.

For it is written:

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which...”

Do what?

“...keep the commandments of God, and have...”

Something. What do they have?

“...the testimony of Jesus Christ” Revelation 12:17.

They have this gift. They've received the gift—the gift of Jesus—the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy.

I thought this morning, that it would be a pleasure to me, and I trust one for you, if I were to give you some personal experiences in how this gift has affected my

life, and doubtless as I do this, many of you will be reviewing the providence of God in what blessings this gift has brought into your life.

The truth of the matter is, dear friends, none of us know how to measure all this gift has meant to us. I pick up a book here called *The Great Second Advent Movement*. This is not the original binding on this book. If you were to look at this volume inside, you would see its pages are yellowed with age.

This was a book written by Elder J.N. Loughborough before I was born. My father and mother shortly before they were married were reading this book together. This book convinced them of two things—that Ellen G. White was a prophet of God and that the Seventh-Day Adventist Church—the great advent movement—was indeed the church of God for this hour.

My mother had been a member of one of the popular Protestant churches. My father was a member of no church, but together they were convinced, through the wonderful evidences given in this book, of the life and work of Ellen G. White in connection with this movement—that here indeed God had touched this earth in these latter days, that He'd raised up a prophet as He did Moses in the Exodus movement, as he did John the Baptist to prepare the way for Christ's first coming.

Just look at those yellowed or brown pages there. This is an old book. This volume is older than I am. This is the book that brought my father and mother into this message, and—mark you—it was the wonderful evidences of the gift of prophecy in this movement that, along with the truth of the Sabbath, convinced them that *here* was the church of God for these latter days.

Well, I grew up then, as you see, in a Sabbath-keeping, Spirit of Prophecy believing, home. But things don't always grow quickly. My father and mother were very poor, their poverty being due to the fact that they had accepted this message, and we had very few of the Ellen G. White books in our home when I was a little fellow.

I remember a little *Volume 7* and a *Volume 9* we had. That's all we had of the testimonies until I was 10 years old. Those had been given to us by an aunt of my father's, who was an ardent Seventh-Day Adventist.

But when I was 10 years old, my father and mother moved to San Diego, California, and there we met Dr. Henry Tindall, Elder Tindall's older brother. Dr. Henry is sleeping now up in the little cemetery on the hill here, but back in 1915, he was a man in the prime of life, a practicing physician in San Diego, California, the first elder of the San Diego church, and he was a great lover of the Spirit of Prophecy. He read the testimonies in season and some people thought out of season.

But we boys fell in love with Dr. Tindall. He had a broad smile and a hardy handshake. I can still remember the first time I met him. I was not yet 10 years old, and my mother had come to teach in the church school there in San Diego. My father wasn't very well at that time, and the four of us went down one evening where some ministers were holding an evangelistic effort. Dr. Tindall was there, of course,

and I remember how he stretched out his hand to us and greeted us. He said, Hello, boys, and the smile was from ear to ear.

Well, as I say, he was an ardent student and an ardent advocate of the testimonies, and under the inspiration of his leadership, my parents quickly went further in the study of these books than they had before. In fact, they became so anxious about it that they got the rest of the testimonies, and we had more of the testimonies in our home.

My father began to have us memorize quotations from the testimonies. He had already been drilling us in learning these verses from the Bible, particularly chapters from Daniel and Revelation and Matthew, but now, along with this, I was given assignments in the testimonies to memorize.

There was a little book—I might have brought it along this morning—called *Taylor's Outline Studies of the Testimonies*. Some of you have seen it. It's now been revised and republished in the Christian Home Library Series, and this had 150 lessons on many different subjects with quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy in it, and there was a memory gem in each one of those 150 lessons.

So, my father set me at the task of learning those 150 memory gems, and so by the time we had that through, I had 150 quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy fixed in my mind. That was when I was about 12 and 13 years old.

So, you see, I was beginning to get acquainted with these books. This little book, *Steps to Christ*—this, of course, is not the particular volume—but this is the same book. I used to carry this around in my pocket. It was my pocket companion. I wore out more than one of them carrying them around. I suppose I got more help from this little book, *Steps to Christ*, in my early teens than any other one book. I appreciate it very, very much, and I know that many of you do.

How many of you have found a real blessing in *Steps to Christ*? May I see your hands. Well, that's good, and I hope all of you will.

When I was about 14, the Lord helped me to make a new surrender to Him and begin more of a personal study of the books myself, and I started in with *Volume 1*. I enjoyed this story of the early life of Sister White and her experiences as a teenager. By the way, children and young people, if you haven't read these experiences of the early life of Sister White, you'll enjoy it.

Here on page 33 of *Volume 1* are some wonderful experiences that Sister White had when as a young girl of 15. Before she was ever called to the prophetic office, she was working for her young friends and helping them to find Christ.

Well, there were three chapters in this *Volume 1* that especially appealed to me and they were all addressed to young people. They are called, Young Sabbath Keepers on 154, Dangers of the Young on 390, and Address to the Young on 496, and these I read again and again. They helped me form some convictions with reference to amusements and some other matters.

Now, I would not have you get the picture, for it would be an entirely false one, that I was always a good little boy, or even always a good big boy. Nothing of the kind, friends. I had one of the most perverse and stubborn spirits that any boy ever had to deal with, or that his parents had to deal with, and but for the grace of God in these books, I would have landed, I'm sure, somewhere out in the world, perhaps in the penitentiary, I don't know, but I thank the Lord that over and over again in these books Christ spoke to my heart.

I failed many times. *Many* times I had to go to my parents and say, Papa or Mama, forgive me for this or that or the other. It wasn't easy. It never got to be easy. I'm glad it didn't. It isn't easy for me now to tell somebody that I've made a mistake and that I'm sorry, but I have to do it. Do any of you have to do that? That's some of this weed cutting we've been studying about on Friday nights, isn't it. My point is, these books had an influence upon my perverse, selfish, stubborn disposition that I thank the Lord for very, very much.

When I was in my high school age, I had the privilege, as I had had in most of my younger years, in having my father and mother for my teacher, and I remember in our English course, my mother, who was teaching that subject to us, gave me the book, *Christ Object Lessons*, to—the earlier chapters of it—to outline. I was to take, beginning with the first chapter here, and write a topic sentence for each sentence in the chapter. Well, of course, that way I had to study it.

This is the very volume that I studied—a different binding on it, of course—I wore out the first binding—but I can look at these pages now and I can still my little penciled numbers here on the paragraphs—1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and so forth. I can see the underlinings that I made back there when I was in the ninth or 10<sup>th</sup> grade. This book had a great influence on my life—*Christ Object Lessons*. I loved it then. I love it now.

A little later, a book came out which was destined to have quite an influence in my life. It's the little book, *Christian Service*. This, too, doesn't have the original binding on. It's been rebound. But here I found a chapter especially on the call to young people, and when I was in my late teens, the Lord helped me with this chapter to plunge into soul winning work for young people, getting them to work for others.

When I was a student at Loma Linda, we had some precious experiences in these lines, and later when I was asked by Elder Tindall to come and help him in the work in San Francisco and train on the job in medical evangelism.

This little chapter on the call to young people was the basis of our young people's work in San Francisco. This helped me to organize the young people into little prayer bands and to encourage them to work for other souls. A number of those young people are now active in the work.

One of them visited here on the campus the other day—Elder Wittenberg. Some of you know him. Elder Wittenberg was a high school boy in San Francisco when I went there. His birthday and mine are the same day. I'm four years older. We got acquainted. We began to study these things together. He plunged into the

work with me and, of course, through the years God has used him in a wonderful way to win hundreds of souls to Christ. I could mention others.

Do you think I'm thankful for that little book? Oh, yes. That little volume—that particular volume—even the second binding is wearing off now, you see, but that little volume is very precious to me.

Here's another book that's exceedingly precious to me, the *Ministry of Healing*. Now, you can see that old book is really old, but this is the third binding on that book. In fact, I've retired this book. It's on sustentation. I just picked it out to bring down for this study this morning.

This old book, as it drew near the time for its fourth rebinding, I said, Oh, book, I'll put you up on the shelf and get a new one, and I have the new one now with its second rebinding on, but this is the book that I used at Loma Linda when I was a young man there in the medical missionary course. As I said, it's been rebound a couple of times since.

This book, I suppose I've read as much as any of the books, and I love this *Ministry of Healing*, this textbook on how to live, this book that has taught me the joy of physical health, mental health and spiritual health. I know that many of you have found in this book a great joy. I thank the Lord for it.

Then, here is this book, *Desire of Ages*. This particular copy has been rebound, too. I've had this one for 35 years—this copy. This has been a great blessing to me in giving me a view of the life of Jesus, as the one who came to this world to show us the beauty of love, the spirit of loving ministry.

This is the book that helped me to see why rivalry and competition are not the way to be happy. They came from Lucifer. They are the things that have made him restless and dissatisfied for 6,000 years. And as I began to see the beauty of love as revealed in the life of Christ, my poor selfish heart longed for something different, and I'm so glad that God is helping me get acquainted with it.

Then, here's this book, *Great Controversy*. I became better acquainted with it after I grew up, and I turn here to page 435, and I see a mark that I made here nearly 40 years ago in this book, and I want to share it with you, and I want you to see what this book has meant to me—this gift.

This is speaking of God's law in the ark in the most holy place, as discovered in 1844 by the early Adventists after the disappointment:

“None could fail to see that if the earthly sanctuary was a figure or pattern of the heavenly, the law deposited in the ark on earth was an exact transcript of the law in the ark in Heaven; and that an acceptance of the truth concerning the heavenly sanctuary involved an acknowledgment of the claims of God's law, and the obligation of the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment” *Great Controversy*, page 435.

I put in the margin of that, as I say, nearly 40 years ago, Key for the Sabbath. I meant by that, Here is the key on how to present the Sabbath. That little paragraph led my mind to study how to present the Sabbath from the standpoint of the law in the ark in the most holy place in the temple of God. From that little seed has grown our series of studies on the sanctuary, which have been a blessing to many. I use this as an illustration of the inspiration that there is in this gift.

It's something like a man once said who was asked why he thought the Bible was inspired, and he says, I know it's inspired because it inspires me, and I know that these books are inspired. They inspire me, and I thank the Lord for them.

Then, here's a little volume that I thank the Lord for, *Messages to Young People*. I remember when this came out. We were in active young people's work in San Francisco in the bay region out there in California, and how thrilled we were in this young people's work to have this marvelous volume where the cream of all the messages given to the young people through the Spirit of Prophecy was gathered and we could have it all in this one book.

I appreciate especially the closing section of this book on courtship and marriage. I was unmarried at the time—a young minister—trying to help other young people with their problems and facing the decisions of life myself, and this book gave me the guidance I needed as a young man, as well as a young minister, in finding a companion of God's choice. Oh, I love this little book. It gave me the girl that God had intended for me. I needed this guidance. I know that other young people need it.

Well, these are some of the books, and I see another one here that I brought along, too. Yes, I want to tell you about this one. This is *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*. This book I have valued through the years but especially in recent years, as the various winds of doctrine have been blowing from different quarters. I have been blessed in a restudy of this book to help me to be sure of my bearings and help me to know my personal relationship to the church.

Notice the opening sentence on page 15:

“Dear Brethren of the General Conference: I testify to my brethren and sisters that the church of Christ, enfeebled and defective as it may be, is the only object on earth on which He bestows His supreme regard” *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 15.

Isn't that a wonderful sentence, friends? No matter how weak and defective the church may be, Christ loves the church as He loves nothing else on earth. And so, identified with the church, we share in that love.

Then, on page 22:

“When men arise, claiming to have a message from God, but instead of warring against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, they form a hollow

square, and turn the weapons of warfare against the church militant, be afraid of them. They do not bear the divine credentials” *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 22.

[Tape skipped.]

...relationship to certain movements that have arisen within the church and do exactly what this describes. Instead of warring against the powers of the world, they turn the weapons of warfare against the church militant, and God has said to me through these pages:

“...be afraid of them. They do not bear the divine credentials”  
*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 22.

Sometimes, you know, we are challenged to not be afraid of anything. We are told, Why, surely you ought to be willing to read *anything*, investigate *anything*. I notice that the only way some animals investigate foods is just to smell them, and that’s enough. I’m glad we’re not required to eat everything in order to investigate it. Aren’t you? Oh, yes.

And this tells me, how things smell—that I don’t have to go any further. Be afraid of them, it says.

Then, on page 50 of this same wonderful book:

“God has a church on earth who are lifting up the downtrodden law, and presenting to the world the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. The church is the depository of the wealth of the riches of the grace of Christ, and through the church eventually will be made manifest the final and full display of the love of God to the world that is to be lightened with its glory. The prayer of Christ that His church may be one as He was one with His Father will finally be answered” *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 50.

I think that’s wonderful, friends. So, I’m thankful this morning to be a member of the remnant church. I’m thankful that in spite of my many failures, which I see—at least some of them—looking back over the years—I thank God that I’m accepted in the Beloved, and I thank God that I’m a part of that group to whom He has given this wonderful gift.

But, you know, a gift, friends, is enjoyed only as we enjoy it. These precious volumes are ours only as we make them ours. First of all, we need them in our homes, and then in our heads, and then in our hearts and in our hands. In other words, we need to be in possession of the volumes. Then, we need to read them so that we know what they say. We need to pray over them so that we’ll love what they say. And then we need to carry them out in action, till they become a part of our very nerves and muscles, till the organs of our bodies simply get used to doing what these books say, and as we do, we shall find indeed that this is the precious gift of Jesus to His remnant church.

Now, I'm sure there are many of you here this morning that have something to share with us, and we have time now for you to speak on this Spirit of Prophecy Day—what has Jesus done for you through this gift? We exalt Jesus, not the human agent. Sister White was the messenger that God used, but all that she gave us, for which we thank the Lord, she received from heaven.

And so, for Jesus' sake and for the praise of the glory of His grace this morning, we return thanks for this gift of the Spirit of Prophecy. What is your witness?

[Testimony meeting.]

Brother A: In the year that I had of college in another church—another denomination, though it was a Christian college—denominational college—I had to search through a lot of books, and they were full of error and half truths, and in the years that I went to college, I found myself just doubting so many things that the teachers would say—so many things that I had to sit there and think, Now, surely that can't be true, or, Is that really true.

And then I became an Adventist, through God's providence, and as soon as we began studying through these books, it wasn't hard at all for me to know that this was truth, and it took me a while before I could sit there and accept the things—just what the Lord said—and I was glad for that one point—that it doesn't take but just a little bit of reading to know that these books are full of truth, and I'm so thankful that the Lord showed me early in my advent experience that the Spirit of Prophecy was to be depended upon and was the guide—the basis—for the advent movement, and I'm thankful to the Lord for His providences.

Elder Frazee: ...Our Father, we thank Thee for the glorious light streaming from the most holy place. We rejoice to walk in its blessed rays. We go forth in Thy name to share with others the beauty of Thy light, the joy of Thy light, through Jesus, our Lord, amen.

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