

here. Prediction may be associated with the office of prophet, but is not of the essence of it. The primary and essential meaning of the term is not that of foretelling or foreannouncing. "The prophet is the outspoke; he who speaks out the counsel of God with the clearness, energy, and authority which spring from the consciousness of speaking in God's name, and having received a direct message from him to deliver." For manifestations of the Spirit similar to this comp. 2. 4; 10. 46; Num. 11. 25-29.

8. Reasoning and persuading concerning the kingdom of God. It is well to notice that the activity of Paul while at Ephesus centered in these words. When the historian condenses his record, as he has done here, it is difficult for the reader to get the true perspective. It would be a great mistake to carry away from these verses the impression that the "speaking with tongues" and the "healing with handkerchiefs" hold the first place. The kingdom of God is Christ's ideal for the race. It is this term, which daily fell from the lips of Jesus with a significance wrapped up in it, as yet but imperfectly comprehended, that occupied Paul's thought. In regard to the twelve men, what Paul wanted to know was, "Whether they had received the Holy Ghost?" He did not want them to identify Christianity with a rite, or to make the first step equivalent to the whole. Had they come into touch with the energies of the living God? had they become spiritual since they believed? This was the significance of his question. In the Jewish synagogue, **for the space of three months**, it is the kingdom of God that he discusses and persuades men to enter; and when no longer able to continue this work to advantage there, he withdraws to the school of Tyrannus, and reasons for the space of two years, "so that all they which dwell in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks."

The Lesson Council.

Question 1. *Is there a baptism of power for service, distinct from the indwelling of the Spirit in the believer?*

There certainly is a baptism for service. Our Lord was anointed in his human nature before he began his ministry. He commanded his disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high. They already had received salvation. Their names were written in heaven. Their Lord had breathed on them, and had said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" but they were not clothed with power effectively to preach the Gospel till they received the baptism that came upon them on the day of Pentecost.

Question 2. *Was the miracle-working power*

confined to believers temporarily? If so, why? Or might it be a permanent possession of the Church, and on what conditions?

The miracle-working power in the early Church ceased before the end of the third century of the Christian era. It was given to prove that the truths of Christianity were divinely revealed and possess absolute authority over human conscience as the will of God. When this proof was fully established and attested by the prophetic work, spirit, and mission of the Christian Church, the miracle-working power ceased, since its continuance would have refuted the Bible theory of miracles.

Analytical and Biblical Outline.

Saint Paul's Church.

I. A CHURCH OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

Have ye received the Holy Ghost? v. 2.

"Baptize....with the Holy Ghost," Matt. 3. 11.

"Put my Spirit within you." Ezek. 36. 27.

II. A CHURCH OF NEW LIFE.

The baptism of repentance. v. 4.

"Cease to do evil....do well." Isa. 1. 16, 17.

"Put on the new man." Eph. 4. 24.

III. A CHURCH OF FAITH IN CHRIST.

Believe on....Christ Jesus. v. 4.

"By grace....through faith." Eph. 2.

"Believe on....Jesus Christ." Acts 16. 31.

IV. A CHURCH OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

Spoke with tongues. v. 6.

"Desire spiritual gifts." 1 Cor. 14. 1.

"Be filled with the Spirit." Eph. 5. 18.

V. A CHURCH OF AGGRESSIVE WORK.

Spoke boldly....persuading. v. 8.

"Preach....to every creature." Mark 16. 15.

"That....I may speak boldly." Eph. 6. 19, 20.

VI. A CHURCH OF SPIRITUAL POWER.

1. *All....heard the word.* v. 10.

"Power of God unto salvation." Rom. 1. 16.

2. *God wrought....miracles.* v. 11.

"These signs shall follow." Mark 16. 17, 18.

Thoughts for Young People.

Some Lessons from Paul's Behavior.

1. Paul found certain disciples because he was looking for them. We lose many blessed experiences because we do not search for opportunities.

2. Paul's questions should be the self-query of every heart: "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" and "Unto what were ye baptized?"

3. Full Christian experience can only be attained by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. For the character of this experience see Paul's prayer for these same Ephesians (Eph. 3. 14-19).