

Ryrie (p. 90) says: "Discerning spirits is the ability to distinguish between true and false sources of supernatural revelation when it was being given in oral form. It was a very necessary gift before the Word was written, for there were those who claimed to bring revelation from God who were not true prophets."

D. Evangelism

Ephesians 4:11 -- "It was he [Christ] who gave some to . . . evangelists."

Edgar (pp. 320-322) states:

Acts 21:8 states that Philip was an evangelist but reveals nothing regarding the ministry of an evangelist.

Ephesians 4:11 states that the evangelist is a gift to the Church. It also shows that this is an edifying gift to be utilized in training believers.

2 Timothy 4:5 indicates nothing regarding the ministry of the evangelist. This verse does indicate that this type of ministry was necessary in order for Timothy to fulfill his ministry.

Although these passages yield nothing describing the gift of evangelist, Acts 21:8 states that Philip was an evangelist; therefore we may look at Philip's ministry in Acts 8 for some possible clues regarding the gift of evangelist. His ministry to the Samaritans is described as follows.

He preached Christ to them (KERUSSO) (verse 5).

On this occasion he performed signs (verse 6), cast out unclean spirits and healed many (verse 7), and performed miracles (verse 13). We do not have enough information to know whether he performed such miracles at any other time.

He preached concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ (verse 12).

He baptized the converts.

The converts did not receive the Spirit until the apostles came and laid hands on them.

Philip's ministry is also described in Acts 8:26-40, where he ministered to the Ethiopian eunuch. This ministry is described as follows.

An angel instructed Philip to go to a specific location (verse 26).

The Spirit told Philip to go to a specific man (verse 29).

Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch (verse 35).

Philip baptized the converted eunuch (verse 31). The Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away (verse 39).

Philip traveled to and preached in various cities (verse 40). It is obvious from the context that he preached Christ to them.