

Introduction

In Essentials Unity, In Non-Essentials Liberty, In All Things Charity

These categories can vary by individual and by church (or parachurch organization), and affect who we are willing to fellowship with, work with, etc. Ultimately, each Christian should determine for themselves how the different doctrines fall into each category for themselves. Here are some examples:

1. Essentials that are not negotiable
 - a. Divinity of Christ
 - b. Salvation by grace alone, through faith alone
2. Non-essentials that are negotiable
 - a. Our views of the end times
 - b. The age of the earth
3. Non-essentials that are not negotiable
 - a. Spiritual (sign) gifts have ceased
 - b. All spiritual gifts are still happening

10-minute (or less) summary of each position

1. Cessationism (Ed)
2. Continuationism (Jordan)

Questions

1. **Jordan:** In your introduction you said that neutrality [between these two views] doesn't seem to be an option.

Practically speaking, does this mean that our individual views of the spiritual gifts fall into the "non-essential that are not negotiable" category?

2. **Ed:** Can you clarify which spiritual gifts have ceased? All of them? Specific gifts?

How do you determine which gifts have ceased and which haven't?

3. **Both:** You both seem to include, for example, apostles or being an apostle as a spiritual gift. I've always viewed being an apostle as an "office" in the church, something distinctly different from speaking in tongues or having the gift of teaching.

Am I wrong in this view?

4. **Ed:** Jordan stated that in 1 Corinthians 12:31 Paul was encouraging his readers to “pursue the gift of apostle” as it was (apparently) one of the higher gifts that they should be desiring.

How do you understand that verse?

5. **Jordan:** Why does it seem that prophecy changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from an infallible word from God to a potentially fallible message?
6. **Jordan:** In your presentation you said that gifts are “not a sign of maturity nor even of faith.” I agree with gifts not being a sign of maturity, but you also quoted Matthew 7:22-23 as a proof text that shows gifts are not a sign of faith.

Are you suggesting then that non-believers can have the Holy Spirit, and/or demonstrate gifts that are, supposedly, from the Holy Spirit?

7. **Both:** Tell us (briefly) about your view of tongues in the New Testament. Actual human languages? Heavenly language? Both? Neither?
8. **Both:** How confident are each of you in your positions on this issue?

Put another way, there are some things that God, through Scripture, has chosen to make explicitly clear to us, i.e. that Jesus is the only path to salvation.

For other things, for whatever reason, God has not given us a definitive answer (who is the author of Hebrews, and arguably end-times theories).

Would you say that there is enough biblical support for your position for you to hold it at the same level of confidence as other clear biblical truths?

If so, how so, with no clear proof text for either side?

9. **Both:** Do either of you know of any evidence in early church records of (sign?) spiritual gifts soon after the death of the apostles?
10. **Both:** If someone started “speaking in tongues” in our church next Sunday, how would you react? What would you be thinking?