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Here's a question about spiritual gifts. Our listener wants to know, Does every Christian have at least one spiritual gift?

The answer to the question is definitely Yes. Peter said that every believer has a spiritual gift (1 Pet 4:10) so there can be no doubt about it.

Perhaps you should explain just what a spiritual gift is.

A spiritual gift is an ability that God gives us to use in serving Him. These abilities are listed in three passages in the N.T.--1 Cor 12, Rom 12 and Eph 4. Some are very specialized and given only to a few, like the gift of apostleship. Some are very general and most believers have them. For example, all Christians can help others, and helping is a spiritual gift.

How can I know what spiritual gift or gifts I have?

You're right to say gift or gifts, for I believe that most Christians have several gifts. There are two suggestions I can give you about discovering your spiritual gifts. First, know what the spiritual gifts are, for if you do not know what gifts you could have, you will not likely discover what gifts you do have. In other words, study those 3 passages, Rom 12, 1 Cor. 12 and Eph 4. Second, serve the Lord at every opportunity that comes your way. Don't worry whether or not you have the gifts with which to perform that particular service. Just seize the opportunities offered you in your church and other places, and the Lord will enable you to do the job. And that enablement will be your spiritual gifts. In other words, don't sit around and try to discover your gifts, be up and doing and God will bring to light those abilities He has given you.

Here's a question about prophecy. What part does China play in future events? According to the Bible there will be a coalition of nations from the east that will enter the final campaign that leads to the ~~the~~ Armageddon. In Rev. 16:12 they are described as the kings of the east. Directions are given in relation to Palestine so this would refer to a group of nations to the east of Palestine. Undoubtedly the coalition will include China. ^{strength of the} The armies of this coalition is placed at 200 million in Rev. 9:16, and they will be influenced by demons. The prospect of such a horde of demon influenced people unleashed on this world is horrifying, but God says that it will happen.

Such an army will require enormous economic resources to back it. Before our very eyes in the past decade China has come to life technologically. She has proven oil reserves of 20 billion barrels (vs. 35 billion for the US) and in 1973 became an oil exporting nation, Japan being one of the ~~major~~ buyers. As long ago as 1966 China successfully test fired her first guided missile ~~was~~ armed with a nuclear warhead. And China will not be the only nation involved in this coalition.

~~Do you think~~ How near do you think the world is to Armageddon?

No one knows for certain, but all signs point ~~Christ's~~ Armageddon and Christ's coming being very near. And that makes it even more urgent for each person listening to be very sure that he or she deliverer from the wrath to come, JC, as personal Savior from sin. If He is your Savior you will not be here on earth when Christ and other nations march the roads to Armageddon.

Will the United States play any role in the coming events of the tribulation days? Personally I think the Bible is completely silent about any role the U.S. will play in the coming years of tribulation that will climax at Armageddon and with the return of JC. But this silence says something to me as well: it says that either the U.S. will be subordinated to a relatively unimportant role in world affairs, or the U.S. will by that time be wiped out by nuclear war or natural catastrophe. The great power blocs of nations in those last days will be in Europe, in Russia and in the East. No mention is made of any nations in the western hemisphere.

But if the western hemisphere was undiscovered when the Bible was written, how could we expect it to be mentioned?

Perhaps by a phrase such as the remote parts of the west. God used ~~the~~ a similar phrase in describing an invasion of Palestine from the remote parts of the north (Ezek 38:15), so He could have used something similar if indeed the U.S. is to play some role in those last days. Our country stands in great need of a turning to the true God and His son JC. Our spiritual heritage has been so dissipated by materialism, secularism and atheism that we are ripe for judgment. But a nation can turn to God only as individuals do. So the responsibility is on each of us, first to receive ~~the~~ and then to live for Him.