

Gift of Prophecy / Introduction

I Corinthians 12: 7-11 *To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,

10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

As I have explained on several occasions, the simplest way to describe the gifts of the Spirit is to say that:

Three of them say something.

Three of them do something.

Three of them reveal something.

Three gifts of utterance that say something:

Prophecy

Divers kinds of tongues

Interpretation of tongues

Three gifts of power that do something:

The gift of faith

The working of miracles

The gifts of healings

Three gifts of revelation that reveal something:

The word of wisdom

The word of knowledge

The discerning of spirits

In this message, we will begin our discussion of the three gifts of inspiration or utterance.

Of these three gifts, in my opinion, prophecy is most important.

The reason is that it takes the other two inspirational gifts, divers kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues to equal prophecy.

Let's take a look at ***1 Corinthians 14: 5 ESV*** *Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.*

1 Corinthians 14: 5 KJV *I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.*

To be clear, the reason why I believe that prophecy is more important than tongues and interpretation is because it only involves one individual.

It only requires one gift to be completed.

Prophecy is a supernatural utterance in a *known* or *understood* language.

Divers kinds of tongues is a supernatural utterance in an *unknown* tongue.

Interpretation of tongues is a supernatural showing forth of that which has been said in an unknown tongue.

The Hebrew meaning of the phrase, "to prophesy" is to *flow forth*.

It also carries with it the thought: *to bubble forth like a fountain, to let drop, to lift up, to tumble forth, and to spring forth.*

The Greek word that is translated “prophesy” means *to speak for another.*

So, prophesy can mean to speak for God, or to be His spokesman.

Let’s look again at ***I Corinthians 14: 1, KJV Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.***

I Corinthians 14: 1, ESV Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.

We are told to desire spiritual gifts, but especially that we might prophesy.

This doesn’t mean we are not to desire the other gifts, but we are to especially desire to prophesy.

Again, in ***I Corinthians 14: 39, ESV So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.***

So, would we be out of order if we said that God through Paul spoke to the Church at Corinth, (and it applies to the Church everywhere) to desire spiritual gifts, but rather that we may prophesy.

Foretelling vs. Forth Telling

The simple gift of prophesy should not be confused with the prophetic office or with prophetic utterance that may come forth in the prophet’s ministry.

I Corinthians 14: 3 ESV On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.

I Corinthians 14: 3 KJV But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

So, we can see that the simple gift of prophesy in the New Testament, there is no revelation involved.

The simple gift of prophesy is given for edification, exhortation, and comfort.

However, in the office of the prophet, we very often find that revelation and foretelling does come forth, and at times through the vehicle of various gifts.

Its also interesting to note the difference between prophesy in the Old Testament and prophesy in the New Testament.

In the Old Testament, prophesy was essentially *foretelling*, but in the New Testament, we see that the gift of prophesy shifts strongly to *forth telling*.

Forth-telling may be simply defined as speaking forth (out) God's Word to those whom God desired to hear it.

The Gift of Prophesy vs. the Office of the Prophet

As we have said, the gift of prophesy should not be confused with the prophetic office.

The simple gift of prophesy has no new revelation in it.