



Berean Christian Fellowship

DEVOTIONAL 69.0

April 23
2015

Desire Prophecy

“Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy” (1 Corinthians 14:1).

Prophets were men and women upon which a spirit rested and gave them knowledge about the nature of things, whether past, present, or future. True prophets were inspired only by God’s Spirit while false prophets got their information or knowledge from deceiving spirits, demons, or themselves (Jeremiah 14:14).

Under the New Covenant of Christ’s blood, God’s Holy Spirit is poured out upon every person who believes and obeys Jesus (John 3:36 and 2 Corinthians 1:22). This is the same Spirit that God poured out upon individual prophets of old. While not every Believer is given prophecy as a gift of the Spirit, Paul earnestly encourages Believers to desire the gift of prophecy. Unfortunately, many Believers think prophecy is only visions of future events, and it is perhaps the most misunderstood gift of all the gifts of the Spirit. Paul says the *“one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation...one who prophesies edifies the church”* (1 Corinthians 14:3-4) and he stresses that *“prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers but to those who believe”* (1 Corinthians 14:22b). Biblical prophecy is for the building up of the Church by Holy-Spirit inspired edification, exhortation, and consolation through the Word of God. Peter tells us that Believers should pay attention to Biblical prophecy *“as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke*

from God” (2 Peter 1:19-21). God speaks in His Word, but it cannot be properly understood or applied to the situations in life without the Holy Spirit’s inspiration.

The gift of prophecy includes the mysteries and knowledge of God (1 Corinthians 13:2), which today are in His Word and revealed to Believers by the Holy Spirit. A large part of prophecy is the application of the Word of God through the Holy Spirit to any situation in life, for there is no “new” revelation outside of God’s Word. In this way, we too say, *“hear the Word of the Lord”* (Isaiah 66:5a) when we open the scriptures and apply His Word to the needs of the Church. This is different from teaching, because a teacher is passing on only what he has been taught without necessarily exhorting or consoling the Church under inspiration from the Holy Spirit.

Part of the knowledge God shares by the prophecies in Scripture are about future events. We would do well to pay attention to what He tells us about these things, which are for our edification, exhortation, and consolation NOW. It is a tragedy how many Believers avoid God’s knowledge of the mysteries to come, just as many in the modern Church also avoid the knowledge and mysteries He has revealed to us in His Word for our lives today.

Now *“Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away”* (1 Corinthians 13:8a), for today *“we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away”* (1 Corinthians 13:9-10). Prophecy will cease when Jesus returns, for God will give us “all things” as a possession (Romans 8:32). For now, however, *“many false prophets have gone out into the world”* (1 John 4:1) and true prophets are needed in the Church to speak the Word of God in every situation, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Even so, Amen.

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