

Prophecy

1 Corinthians 12:4,10 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit...
¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy...

How many people have heard a weird or crazy prophecy recently?

False prophecies I have seen recently:

- One “prophet” claims to see roller coasters, mountains of Jell-O, pudding ponds, cows on tractors and the fictional character of Santa Claus in heaven.
- Another said she saw souls getting second chances after they die.
 - This is dangerous! The Bible says, “And as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27).
- And another said there is a secret code that prophets know, and we needed to trust the prophets who possess this code in order to understand a deeper level of the Bible.

It can get very easy with what we see today especially on social media to get very cynical of prophesy.

But the Bible says

- **1 Thessalonians 5:19-20** Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies.
- So where does that leave us?

What is prophecy

To speak on behalf of another, in the case of biblical prophecy, God.

Listen to this description of Aaron as a prophet of Moses:

- **Exodus 4:16** So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.
- **Prophecy is hearing God’s voice, and then speaking that.**

We are created to hear God's voice

- God speaks not only to believers, but also to unbelievers. Like Nebuchadnezzar, King Herod's wife.
- If God can speak to those not under the blood, how much more...
- If you are a believer, then you have heard God's voice.
 - It is not a question of whether or not God is speaking, but rather do we recognize His voice.
 - He did not draw us in only to be silent. Raise your expectations.
- It's not dissimilar to obedience. If you have heard God say to do something and you did it, you heard His voice and acted on it.
 - Ex of hugging a woman at Grace that had not been touched in over a decade.
 - Prophecy is just the same except instead of an action, it's speaking.

Can anyone prophesy?

1 Corinthians 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

- Every believer that is filled with the Holy Spirit may prophesy.
- We can all hear God's voice and in turn say what He said.
- Some may walk in that gifting more than others, but it is the same as with all the gifts. We may operate in all of them, but have one or two that are our primary giftings.
- In fact, we are told to desire prophecy.
 - **1 Corinthians 14:1** Pursue love, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy.
 - We should actually desire to move in all the gifts of the Spirit. But especially prophecy.
 - Why prophecy? Because it is hearing God!
 - How can we be like Jesus doing only what He sees the Father doing if we can't hear from God? Just add speaking to that and you get prophecy.

- our main motive is love. Not the recognition, not the cool factor. Love.

Has prophecy ceased?

Acts 2:16-18 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ "And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.

- When the disciples received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they realized that the prophetic word from Joel was coming to pass for them right then.
- But was it only for them, or was it only for that time, or is it still happening?

2 Arguments against it:

1. The gifts of the Spirit, including prophecy, were only for the original apostles. Only the original 12 (and Paul) were eligible.

- If this is true, then why was Paul writing instructions to the Corinthian church on how to properly use the gifts? 1 Corinthians 12-14?
- How do we explain these passages?
- **Acts 19:1-7** And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples ² he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." ³ And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." ⁵ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ **And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they**

spoke with tongues and prophesied. ⁷ Now the men were about twelve in all.

- **Acts 21:8-10** On the next *day* we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was *one* of the seven, and stayed with him. ⁹ Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. ¹⁰ And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

2. Prophecy (and other gifts) will cease when the Bible is canonized.

1 Corinthians 13:8-10 Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰ But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

- This passage is used to declare that the gifts will cease when that which is perfect comes.
- The Bible is perfect.
- If the Bible contains all of God's word, then we don't need prophecy, tongues, or words of knowledge any more.

Is that what is meant by this passage? NO!

Keep reading:

1 Corinthians 13:11-12 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

- Child to Adult is like law to Grace and then now to Heaven
- See in a mirror, or shadows of things to come are always references to heaven.
- Face to Face.
- Do we now have full and complete knowledge? Do we know God as well as He knows us?
- These are references to life after death – where Spiritual gifts will not be needed. We still need them now!

- Some people have problems with spiritual gifts, so they try to fit the Bible to justify their experience.
 - Do not alter the Bible just because you feel powerless.

How to prophecy

Holy Spirit empowers us

- **Acts 1:8** But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- He has given us the Holy Spirit.
- Whether you are a prophet or not, whether you have the gift of prophecy or not, we still carry the Holy Spirit in us. We have the ministry of comfort and counsel within us.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

- The Holy Spirit declares our identity in Christ.
- **Romans 8:1** *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.
- He builds us up and does not condemn. Same for us towards others.
- If the Holy Spirit does not condemn, then who are we listening to if we condemn?
- Describing others the way God sees them can be considered prophecy.

1 Corinthians 13:2 And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

- Our agenda as believers is to bring the love of the Father and to serve others in love.

1 Corinthians 14:32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

- There is no excuse for being rude or mean. If this is through the Holy Spirit, then it should sound like the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

- Don't pray for others striving to get a prophetic word, rather enter into the Father's presence with thanksgiving for that person and then God may give you a word for them.
- Feel, hear, or see. This is how prophecy generally comes. What we do with this determines the level of prophetic ministry. Dreams and Visions are common. We can ask for the interpretation.

How to judge prophecy

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22 Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies. ²¹ **Test all things;** hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil.

- We are told to test the prophecies
- The Bible and Prophecy go hand in hand. It's like a checks and balance system God created. The only way to fully understand Scripture is by revelation of the Spirit. The way we know the words of the Spirit are truly of the Spirit is how they measure up against the Word of God. The logos and the Rhema word work together to give us a complete revelation of God.

Matthew 7:15-16 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?

- If a prophet is not bearing good fruit in their lives – something else apart from prophecy – do not give them the time of day.
- If they are asking for money for prophecies consider them pagans.

Deuteronomy 18:20-22 But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.’²¹ And if you say in your heart, “How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?”—²² when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

- We do not need to kill false prophets, but consider their track record. If it is not perfect, do not consider them a prophet.

What is the office of the prophet

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

- Teacher and prophet go hand in hand. Teacher weeds out false teaching and keeps solid doctrine in the church.
- Prophets keep out false prophecies and help keep the solid word of God in the church.

2 Peter 2:1-2 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.² And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.