

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY - A SPEAKING GIFT

Text Rom. 12:6; I Cor. 12:10, 28; 14:3, 29-32

I. WHAT WAS INVOLVED IN THIS GIFT

- A. This gift was the gift of preaching. The word prophecy means to forth tell and it does not mean just to foretell or predict future events.
- B. Primarily prophecy has to do with a declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means.
- C. This gift involved proclaiming the Word of God and applying it in a such a way as to meet the particular needs of different people at different times. There was also a particular purpose involved to win, correct, comfort or to edify others (I Cor. 1:21; I Thess. 5:14; II Tim. 4:2; Rom. 10:13,14).

II. HOW THIS GIFT WAS EXERCISED IN THE N.T.

- A. This gift was exercised in a variety of ways prior to the completed revelation of God's word.
 - 1. Prior to the completion of the Scriptures we see that certain individuals stood up and gave certain revelations to warn others (Acts 11:27,28; 21:11).
 - 2. Before the scriptures were completed certain individuals received revelation from God in the form of dreams, and visions and these were used to direct them and these were then declared to others (Heb. 1:1; Acts 9:11,12; 10:3-8; 9-20; 16:9,10).

3. Also before the Scriptures were completed the revelations that certain men received not only became a part of the Scriptures but these were read and proclaimed in the different churches (Gal. 1:11,12; Col. 4:16; I Thess. 5:27).
- B. This gift was then exercised in a different way as the Scriptures were being completed and after they were complete.
1. Notice when a question arose about something it was settled by the forth telling of that revelation which they had already received (Acts 15:7-11, 30-32).
 2. Then after the completed revelation of God's Word, all prophecy became a proclamation of that which had been given. A test for discerning a true prophet from a false one was determined by his testimony concerning Jesus (I Jn. 2:22,23; 4:2,3). Also there were faithful sayings that a true prophet or one called to preach would adhere to (I Tim. 1:15; II Tim. 2:11,12; Titus 3:8).
- C. This gift was exercised then to meet particular needs by applying God's Word to a particular situation.
1. Such exercise sometimes was in the form of a rebuke (Gal. 2:11-14).
 2. Sometimes it was giving forth the Word to comfort (I Cor. 4:13-18).
 3. Othertimes it was to correct or admonish (II Thess. 3:6-15; Titus 3:9,10).
 4. Still other times it was to charge and address certain people and problems (I Tim. 6:17,18; Titus 1:9-13).
 5. The gift of prophecy became a Spirit-given ability to proclaim God's written Word with clarity and apply it to particular situations for the purpose of edification or correction.

III. HOW THIS GIFT OPERATES AND APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALS IN OUR DAY.

- A. The gift of prophecy is the gift to preach the Word of God.
Today it is exercised by the forth-telling or proclaiming the written Word of God. It no longer involves dreams or visions, and it does not involve foretelling future events apart from what the written Word of God prophesies them to be.

- B. Notice while some may see this gift extended in a variety of ways in our day, I personally believe it is extended only to those who are called to preach (Gal. 1:15,16).

- C. The gift of prophecy is the gift of preaching. For this reason those who are given the gift or apostleship (missionary), pastoring or evangelism will also possess this gift (I Cor. 1:1; 9:16).
The question arises then can a man have this gift and not be called to pastor or be an evangelist or missionary? It seems apparent that there are individuals in local churches who possess this Spirit-given ability to preach but are not given the spiritual gift of pastoring, apostleship (missionary), or evangelism. For these there are a variety of ways in which they can minister through their local church such as speaking at nursing homes, jail ministries, school gathering, open-air meeting, etc.

- D. It is evident that while women have other areas of ministry in the N.T. church they are not given the gift of prophecy and called to preach (I Tim. 2:11,12).

IV. WHAT IS FALSELY PROPAGATED CONCERNING THIS GIFT?

- A. Some claim to possess the gift of prophecy in our day and they are infact false prophets. They appear to minister in

forth-telling God's revelation.

These false prophets are counterfeits sent out by Satan to deceive and damn the souls of men. Oftentimes they present themselves as ministers of righteousness and what they say is close to the truth but they propagate error and lead men astray (II Cor. 11:13-15). They in one way or another deny our Lord Jesus Christ and their message is a worldly message. (I Jn. 4:1-6)

- B. Some insist upon exercising this gift in a predictive sense of fore-telling rather than propagating and applying God's completed revelation. Some of these would include cult leaders like Joseph Smith, or psychics like Jean Dixon.

The Scriptures warn us about adding to the Word of God (Rev. 22:18,19). And people who speak apart from God's Word are not enlightened by the Lord (Isa. 8:20).