

Exploring the Holy Spirit

Point of Light Group

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Week 2: Prophecy – Edifying or Terrifying?

What is prophecy?

The gift of prophecy

- Prophecy is a Spirit-induced and Spirit-filled spoken revelation of God that can happen spontaneously among a group of believers. It is “speaking on behalf of God” that is not pre-planned.
- It is a gift of the Spirit that Paul strongly emphasizes in 1st Corinthians 14:1-3
- It is a vital part in the order of a church meeting found in 1st Corinthians 14:31-33

Prophecy is for the Church

- The main purpose of prophecy is edification, exhortation and encouragement to fellow believers. (1 Cor. 14:3)
- The Old Testament has many instances where prophecy precluded God’s wrath. Prophecy at that point in history sometimes portrays a “doom and gloom” picture that I don’t believe the Church operates in today. The beauty of the Cross is that Jesus redeemed us of our sins without us having to suffer God’s wrath. So this view of prophecy has now been replaced with a much more community-minded prophecy meant to help the church persevere through life’s many challenges. At the time of the early church, that challenge was persecution.
- Imagine life is caving in all around you and all of a sudden God speaks directly to your situation by someone operating in the gift of prophecy. It is a powerful tool for believers.

Is Prophecy the word of God?

Prophecy is subject to the one who prophesies

- In 1 Cor. 14:36-38 Paul asks “Did the prophecy come from you or from God? Was it only meant for you? ”. Ultimately, he leaves the intended readers to decide within themselves whether something is from God or not.

Prophecy is not infallible

- Although an initial revelation from God may be infallible, humans are flawed and sometimes that can get in the way.
- Prophecy should come under the same scrutiny as a sermon or teaching.
- Prophecy should never contradict scripture or cause division.

- Romans 16:17-19 Paul tells us to avoid false teachers or those who cause division. If someone claims to prophesy and it causes division in the church or it contradicts doctrine laid out in scripture, we are to avoid their words.

How do I operate in the gift of prophecy?

Learning to listen

- Like tongues, I believe that prophecy is prompted of the Holy Spirit within us.
- If you are praying for the gift of prophecy: listen. God may speak to you concerning something and you might feel it deep within yourself.
- Prophecy is a gift and it is not for everyone. However, Paul tells us to desire this gift. Everyone should ask to prophesy and God may meet us where we are.

Exhort, Edify, and Encourage

- Like every gift, Prophecy is always pointing us to Jesus and encouraging us to look more like Him.
- Prophecy convicts but doesn't condemn. An example of this would be "I *feel* like God sees your struggle in this area and He wants to help you with this"
- Use wisdom if you get a prophetic word concerning a specific person. It may be wise to find another leader within the church to verify what you feel like God is saying (1 Cor. 14:29)
- Prophecy always encourages and lifts each other up in love.

Questions or Notes:
