

The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:8-11

1. The Description of Spiritual Gifts (vs.8-10)

Paul's description of the gifts of the Spirit is not intended to be a complete catalogue of every gift which He gives to the church (cf. Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28; Eph 4:11). These gifts were common for the experience of the local churches at the time, and so they would not have required such an exhaustive list (cf. Gal. 3:5). The gifts which Paul describes here, and the way in which he describes them, are part of the larger purpose of his corrective teaching in chapters 12-14.

2. Prophecy (v.10a)

Prophecy is a word which describes both the proclamation of God's message (cf. Ex. 4:15-16) as well as a foretelling future events (Acts 11:28). This is a gift of the Spirit which is related to, but distinct from, revelation, knowledge, and teaching (1 Cor. 14:6) and is to be exercised according to the proportion of the faith (cf. Rom. 12:6; Jude 3). Prophets, as an office in the church, were a gift of God for the foundation of the church (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph 2:19-20).

A. A Definition:

Prophecy are the true words spoken by the mouth of the prophet which the Lord Himself has given the prophet to speak (cf. Ex. 4:15-16). Prophecy, though it can be written down and part of Scripture (1 Sam 2:27-36; Acts 11:28; cf. 2 Pet. 1:16-21), is primarily a revelation from the Lord which is spoken word for word (Ex. 7:1-2; cf. 1 Tim. 1:18; 4:14).

B. A Consistency:

The common formula by which a prophet begins his message varies throughout the Scriptures, but the authority of the message given does not. It is common for prophets in the Old Testament to begin their prophecy with a variation of "Thus says the Lord" (Ex. 11:4; Isa. 43:6; Hag. 1:7). The New Testament model differs slightly with variations of "This is what the Holy Spirit says" (Acts. 8:29; 13:2; 21:11; Heb. 3:7; Rev. 2:7). The Lord does not make a distinction in the requirements for prophets of the Old Testament and New Testament.

C. An Evaluation:

A validity of a prophecy is to be determined by its absolute accuracy. A self-proclaimed prophet whose message did not perfectly align with God's prior revelation (Deut 13:1-5; Acts 20:29-30; 2 Pet. 2:1) or whose future predictions did not come to pass (Deut. 18:20-22; Ezek 13:3-9) was not to be followed.

D. A Danger:

The subjective word from supposed and self-proclaimed prophets or teachers has been a constant danger (Acts 20:29; 2 Pet. 2:1). There will be no shortage of people who will claim to have spoken words from the Lord as they are consigned to eternal judgment (cf. Matt. 7:21-23).

The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:8-11

1. The Description of Spiritual Gifts (vs.8-10)

Paul's description of the gifts of the Spirit is not intended to be a complete catalogue of every gift which He gives to the church (cf. Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28; Eph 4:11). These gifts were common for the experience of the local churches at the time, and so they would not have required such an exhaustive list (cf. Gal. 3:5). The gifts which Paul describes here, and the way in which he describes them, are part of the larger purpose of his corrective teaching in chapters 12-14.

2. Prophecy (v.10a)

Prophecy is a word which describes both the proclamation of God's message (cf. Ex. 4:15-16) as well as a foretelling future events (Acts 11:28). This is a gift of the Spirit which is related to, but distinct from, revelation, knowledge, and teaching (1 Cor. 14:6) and is to be exercised according to the proportion of the faith (cf. Rom. 12:6; Jude 3). Prophets, as an office in the church, were a gift of God for the foundation of the church (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph 2:19-20).

A. A _____:

Prophecy are the true words spoken by the mouth of the prophet which the Lord Himself has given the prophet to speak (cf. Ex. 4:15-16). Prophecy, though it can be written down and part of Scripture (1 Sam 2:27-36; Acts 11:28; cf. 2 Pet. 1:16-21), is primarily a revelation from the Lord which is spoken word for word (Ex. 7:1-2; cf. 1 Tim. 1:18; 4:14).

B. A _____:

The common formula by which a prophet begins his message varies throughout the Scriptures, but the authority of the message given does not. It is common for prophets in the Old Testament to begin their prophecy with a variation of "Thus says the Lord" (Ex. 11:4; Isa. 43:6; Hag. 1:7). The New Testament model differs slightly with variations of "This is what the Holy Spirit says" (Acts. 8:29; 13:2; 21:11; Heb. 3:7; Rev. 2:7). The Lord does not make a distinction in the requirements for prophets of the Old Testament and New Testament.

C. An _____:

A validity of a prophecy is to be determined by its absolute accuracy. A self-proclaimed prophet whose message did not perfectly align with God's prior revelation (Deut 13:1-5; Acts 20:29-30; 2 Pet. 2:1) or whose future predictions did not come to pass (Deut. 18:20-22; Ezek 13:3-9) was not to be followed.

D. A _____:

The subjective word from supposed and self-proclaimed prophets or teachers has been a constant danger (Acts 20:29; 2 Pet. 2:1). There will be no shortage of people who will claim to have spoken words from the Lord as they are consigned to eternal judgment (cf. Matt. 7:21-23).