

P. Prophecy

Romans 12:6 -- "We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith."

1 Corinthians 12:8, 10 -- "To one there is given through the Spirit . . . , to another prophecy"

1 Corinthians 13:2 -- "If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge"

1 Corinthians 14:1 -- "Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy."

Dennis and Rita Bennett (p. 99) say:

The gift of prophecy is manifested when believers seek the mind of God, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and not from their own thoughts. It is supernatural speech in a known language. Prophecy is not a "private" gift, but is always brought to a group of believers although it may be for one or more individuals who are present. In this way it may be "judged", that is, evaluated by the Church.

Carter (pp. 277-271) states:

The "gift of prophecy" (v. 10), in the New Testament sense, is more often forthtelling or preaching than foretelling future events. That prophecy, in this sense, is the very special endowment of God to certain chosen individuals is too well known in Christian history to require emphasis. The line of gifted Christian prophets is long and illustrious from Peter and Paul through Luther, Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, Moody, and on to Graham, to mention but a few. And the gift will go on to a long line of others. Prophecy is the greatest of the instrumental gifts, as it is the means by which Christ's saving grace is made known to man.

Michael Green (pp. 169-170) writes:

It is not easy to be clear precisely what early Christian prophecy was. It could vary from the predictions of a man like Agabus, the mysteries of the Book of Revelation (a remarkable example of early prophecy, see Revelation 1:3), to the indication of a Christian for a particular office (1 Timothy 4:14), testimony to Jesus (Revelation 19:10), and use in evangelism, edification, consolation, or teaching (1 Corinthians 14:3f, f24f, f29f). It was certainly very varied, but of two things we can be sure.

First, it was a direct word from God for the situation at hand, through the mouth of one of his people (and on occasion, this could apparently be any Christian, including those not reckoned to be "prophets" [Revelation 10:7, 11:10]). The other