

prophetic activity present in the various church centers (Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Thessalonica, and elsewhere) mentioned in the New Testament, and that picture is one of marked continuity with both the apostles and the Old Testament prophets.

Our conclusion can be summarized in terms of the fundamental difference between preaching (teaching) and prophecy. Non-prophetic proclamation is based on a text; it receives its legitimation as (proper) interpretation of the inscripturated Word of God or, as the case may be at the time the New Testament was being written, authoritative, apostolic oral tradition. Prophetic proclamation, in contrast, is Spirit-worked speech of such a quality that its authority resides just in that inspired origin. A basic difference between prophecy and preaching is that the prophet has no text. The prophet reveals the Word of God, the preacher expounds that Word.

On the question of cessation, Gaffin (pp. 95-102) states:

Consequently, a major conclusion in our study from Ephesians 2:20 is that the New Testament prophets, along with the apostles, are the foundation of the church. They have a foundational, that is, temporary, noncontinuing function in the church's history, and so by God's design pass out of its life, along with the apostles. The following observations bear on this conclusion and efforts to resist it:

1. As a general guideline for interpretation, the decisive, controlling significance of Ephesians 2:20 (in its context) needs to be appreciated . . . . Ephesians 2:20 makes a generalization that covers all the other New Testament statements on prophecy. [Note: Ephesians 2:19-20 states: "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone."]

2. A frequent objection to our conclusion that prophecy, along with the apostles, has been withdrawn from the church takes the form of a counterposition. This is the view that prophets as bearers of foundational revelation have indeed been taken from the church, but that in addition to and more or less parallel with this foundational function of prophecy, which has ceased, there are other functions, in view, for instance, in I Corinthians 14, which are intended to continue and are in fact present in the church today.

One response to this viewpoint must be to reemphasize what was just said about Ephesians 2:20 and its exegetical "weight"; it makes a generalization about prophecy that covers all its functions and says that they have ceased. Further, granting the fully revelatory character of prophecy . . . such a view inevitably involves a dualistic understanding of revelation. In one form or other, it distinguishes between canonical revelation for the whole church and private revelations for individual believers or groups of believers, between a collective,