

## THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - PART XIV The Gift of Prophecy - Part 2

Text: I Corinthians 12:10h

**Key Word:** Prophecy

**Key Thought:** The Ninth Gift of the Holy Spirit Is the Gift of Prophecy

I can clearly say I am so glad that God has given the Gift of Prophecy to His Church.

Prophecy has been called the "poetry of the Spirit" because the thoughts expressed and the language used often rises above the ability of the chosen vessel. Prophecy is essentially a personal revelation of the mind and will of God through direct impression on the mind of the spirit-filled believer.

Through the Gift of Tongues men speak to God supernaturally (I Corinthians 14:2); while through the Gift of Prophecy God speaks to mankind supernaturally by using the vocal organs of a surrendered spirit-filled believer.

The Gift of Prophecy is used in a service like a fresh blowing wind that brings life to a church. It flows like the dew of Mount Hermon waking up our parched spirits. It is like the sound of a bird awakening our spiritual drowsiness with its cheerful songs of delight. It is like a fountain that overflows its container in order to germinate a lifeless seed in the nearby garden. It is like catching a ride on the back of an eagle and delighting in the view that lifts one beyond their concerns.

Today I want us to search the Scriptures to see what **the purpose of the Gift of Prophecy is for the Church.** God has a specific reason for any gift He wishes to give us. As we understand His purpose for their use we can better serve Him.

### **A. TO EDIFY THE CHURCH (I Corinthians 14:3)**

I have yet to see a church that doesn't need to be edified by the Spirit. The word means literally "***to build up.***" The Lord came to build His Church and not even the gates of hell will prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).

**The Gift of Prophecy is limited to the Church.** The Prophetic Office on the other hand can extend to such a point that its message is given to a city, a nation or even the entire world.

It is by God's grace that we have been given the Gift of Prophecy. It proves God's love for His Church. He wants to speak words that build us up spiritually (I Corinthians 14:4). The one reason many churches have looked to other methods of ministry is because they've laid aside the Gifts of Holy Spirit.

## A. TO EDIFY THE CHURCH (I Corinthians 14:3) (Contd.)

If we discard the original we will be left with substitutes. Our replacements are always inferior and incapable of matching the potential found in the Gifts of God. I'm not looking for a generic manifestation of God. I am striving to lead this congregation into an **authentic encounter with the manifestation of the Holy Spirit** in such a way that the temptations of the flesh are given no place for freedom or manifestation in our services.

What we need is time when God can move sovereignly in our services in such a way that our carnal nature is consumed on God's altar. We must allow God and only God to be given ultimate leadership in our services. **People are searching and striving for the reality of the presence and power of God.**

God wants to pour out of His Spirit upon His thirsty Church more than we desire to invite Him. There are many in the Church who long for God to speak to them and have fellowship with them like Adam and Eve had in the Garden of Eden. **This gift has been OFFERED to the Church to re-open that door to an intimate divine communication.**

But it is not God's pattern to seize someone against their will.

"The exercise of the gift depends upon our willingness and readiness, not upon an overwhelming, uncontrollable force."

Dr. David Lim  
"Charismata"

**Are you open to be used to EDIFY God's Church?**

## B. TO EXHORT THE CHURCH (I Corinthians 14:3)

I have witnessed times in the church when the spiritual fervour of God's people becomes lukewarm. We can become engrossed in organization structure, political events, business, or social concerns that we fail to notice our **spiritual mercury dropping**. This is NOT the time to replace that craving with carnal manifestations in our services.

The word "*exhort*" means "*a calling near.*" I have met people who believe that this gift is used to rebuke and threaten a congregation to change from their sinful ways. They are grossly misinformed if that is what they believe.

Instead, we should sense the healing balm of Gilead being poured out upon a wavering congregation. I have never seen my children drawing near to me when I was scolding them for their misbehaviour. Remember the word means "*to call near.*"

## **B. TO EXHORT THE CHURCH (I Corinthians 14:3) (Contd.)**

God does have a way of correcting His church but it is NOT through the Gift of Prophecy. It is rather through the anointed preaching of a humble servant sharing the Word of God that a Church is to be corrected.

*"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction.*

*3. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.*

*4. They will turn their ears away from truth and turn aside to myths."*

*II Timothy 4:2-4*

\*\*\* Thousands of Japanese commuters literally ran for their lives from their subway system years ago. Initial investigations discovered that a deadly gas had been discharged.

Further investigations discovered a link to a doomsday cult that had been producing a war time chemical. Their leader used the Word of God to promote this dastardly act of terror.

What his followers needed was the Word of God preached and taught in its purity. They could have really benefited from the Gift of Prophecy.

Instead their itching ears lead them into a spineless act of terrorism. They were following a leader who subjected them to total obedience of his word not God's Word. \*\*\*

The true Word of God could have protected them from such acts of cruel violence. God has given His Word to keep us on the straight and narrow road. The Word will correct us if we allow it to and we are willing to be obedient to it.

*"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, correcting and training in righteousness, 17. so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

*II Timothy 3:16*

## **B. TO EXHORT THE CHURCH (I Corinthians 14:3)(Contd.)**

The Holy Spirit is gentle. When someone attempts to correct an assembly by means of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit they are in turn placing themselves in a vulnerable position that could draw criticism to themselves.

\*\*\* I will always remember one service we attended on Resurrection Sunday in the early 1980's. We had received a phone call earlier that morning from one of the children's Sunday School teacher requesting that they bring an egg for their morning craft.

We chose to stay at home for the Sunday School time. I came to the Morning Service with a great weight upon MY human spirit. At (what I thought was) an appropriate time in the service I began to shake (under what I thought was the anointing of God). I have since come to realize that it was simply my strong feelings toward the attempt of replacing the Resurrection message with an Easter bunny fantasy.

I shook while I "prophesied?" to the congregation. I now realize that I misused a Spiritual Gift to display my great concern about what the church was allowing to happen.

It was the responsibility of the pastor to preach and teach the Word to keep the congregation from entering into the mire of the world's replacement for God's truth.

I was sincere and no one probably could have convinced me that I was wrong in declaring a message of strong warning and rebuke to the congregation. **I thought exhorting was a means of chastising a congregation for their wrong doings.**

I now know that I was sincerely wrong and was motivated by my carnal nature and not by the Spirit of God. It has helped me to understand how very meaningful Christians are still led by their human spirit rather than the Spirit of God.

Never use Spiritual Gifts to promote your own beliefs at the expense of condemning the God's Church. \*\*\*

**Are you open to be used to EXHORT the Church?**

## C. TO COMFORT THE CHURCH (I Corinthians 14:3,31)

The word "*comfort*" means "*consolation, solace, comfort in trial and distress.*" This Spiritual Gift is an avenue for God to work through. We must always remember that God wants to comfort His struggling Church.

*"who comforts us in our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God."*

*II Corinthians 1:4*

We need to set our hearts to help **build up, stir up and cheer up** (Ellicott's Translation) God's people. Just because we are Christians does not mean we don't need to be comforted. I have been pastoring long enough to know that not everyone carries the same cross or equal problems. Some have suffered much more than others. We will all sorrow but not as the world sorrows.

\*\*\* In 1985 I remember being asked to help out in a funeral. The Senior pastor forewarned me that this was not going to be a typical funeral.

The daughter of the father that died asked that the service be a time of celebration and not sorrow. She believed that her father wanted it to be that way since he was a sincere Christian man.

The daughter tried so hard to make it a time of celebration that it lost its balance. Everyone could feel the forcefulness of this unrelenting daughter. I left that funeral service feeling that it had been phoney.

She would have been better to allow people to shed a few tears. Tears do not mean that we are lost in our sorrow. It is not wrong to weep for the lost or to comfort those who sorrow.

The congregation would have been better served if a **godly sorrow** had been given freedom to be expressed. \*\*\*

**Are you open to be used to COMFORT the Church?**

#### **D. TO BRING CONVICTION TO THE SINNER (I Corinthians 14:24,25)**

Prophecy blesses believers while at the same time it convicts sinners. But we must be very careful in recognizing that **conviction is not necessarily conversion.** This Gift is not usually sufficient to bring about conversion. This is why the preaching of the Word is so necessary in our services. Prophecy is intended principally for believers. But it can also have a convicting influence upon unbelievers.

We must also address the "*unlearned*" which are spoken about by Paul. Paul is referring to a layperson who has not yet understood Spiritual Gifts. It is this person who has the "*secrets of his heart laid bare.*" It will cause that unlearned person to declare,

*"God is really among you"*

*I Corinthians 14:25*

Many sincere Christians have come to an abrupt change in their beliefs once they witness a true manifestation of the Holy Spirit through the Gift of Prophecy. This could also explain how God uses the Gift to teach people the mind and will of God.

*"For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged."*

*I Corinthians 14:31*

Again may I emphasize the Scriptural guidelines for this Gift.

*"Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking tongues.  
40. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way."*

*I Corinthians 14:39,40*

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Date: Oct 4/20

Place: FCA

Time:10:30 Am

Song: Come Holy Spirit I need Thee - C

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*I Corinthians 14:25; I Corinthians 14:31; I Corinthians 14:39,40*