

# 40 Days *WITH* the HOLY SPIRIT

## Small Group Curriculum

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### Session Seven THE VOCAL GIFTS (A)

#### The Gift of Prophecy

*1 Corinthians 12:10 (nkjv) to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.*

**Definition:** The Gift of Prophecy is a spoken message inspired by the Holy Spirit, which reveals the will of God and encourages and benefits the hearer/s.

The Greek word for prophecy implies *'to speak for another.'*

Prophecy is speaking on behalf of God, through the influence of the Holy Spirit.

**'Prophecy' means both forthtelling and foretelling.**

- To foretell is to tell something of the future.
- Forthtelling is to give a message from God, not specifically about the future, just something from God – to make public. *EG: Old Testament Prophets and John the Baptist in the New telling people to repent.*

#### Purpose of Prophecy

- **Revelation:** revealing hidden things that God desires to reveal.
- **Edification:** to build up and to strengthen.
- **Exhortation:** GK: encouragement, to urge someone onto greater things.
- **Consolation:** to comfort particularly to those in sorrow and need.

#### Believers are encouraged to prophecy.

*1 Corinthians 14:1-5 (niv) Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. <sup>2</sup>For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one*

understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. <sup>3</sup> But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. <sup>4</sup> Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. <sup>5</sup> I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

In the Church (*in a meeting or a gathering*), prophecy is more beneficial to those gathered than speaking in tongues.

*vs 4: Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who **prophesies edifies the church.***

Paul is saying that prophecy is more desirable because those present understand it. But this does not mean that speaking in tongues has no place in the Church meeting.

Firstly, Paul says, *Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves...*

Secondly, Paul qualifies that when the gift of Interpretation of Tongues is linked with the gift of Tongues, then these twin gifts have the same value as prophecy.

*vs 5: I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.*

## Five Ways to Judge Prophecy

- i. Does the character of the person prophesying bear witness to the gift?**  
*Matthew 7:16-20 ...by their fruit you will know them.* Godly character is essential.
- ii. Does the prophecy glorify Christ?**  
*(John 16:14, Revelation 19:10, 1 Corinthians 12:1-3, 1 John 4:1-3)*  
If the prophecy glorifies anything or anybody but Christ - then it is not from God.
- iii. Is the prophecy in alignment with the Bible?**  
The Spirit of God will not contradict Himself. The Word and the Spirit agree.  
If the prophecy does not align with the Word of God, it is not from God!
- iv. Does the prophecy produce freedom or bondage?**  
*(Romans 8:15, Deuteronomy 13:1-50)*
- v. Is there a witness in our spirits to the prophecy?**  
*(John 16:13, 1 John 2:20; 27)*

## DISCUSSION

- Ask questions for clarification or provide comments from the teaching and discuss as a group.
- Share with your group examples of your own experience with a prophecies.
- As a group, you may wish to discuss some of the points in the 'Further Study' section below to generate further discussion.

## PRAYER

Please take time before you finish your discussion to pray for any needs that those in your group may have and in particular those who need healing.

## FURTHER STUDY

### Practical Advice

- You may sense a quickening that urges one to speak. You may only be given the first few words speak out in faith. The first few words are like taking a cork out of a bottle, then it flows.
- Having received a quickening, wait for the right time to bring it forth. Sensitivity is the key.
- The one prophesying should always be in full control of himself/herself. Too much emotion can be counterproductive.
- You may not have words but may simply sense a burden or see a picture in your mind's eye.
- Don't be surprised if the prophecy is brief. Long prophecies are not evidence of being spiritually mature – nor to long prayers!
- It is not necessary to introduce the prophetic word in the first voice (EG: “*Thus saith the Lord or I the Lord would say.*”) You can simply say, “*I believe that God is saying....*”
- Prophecies should reinforce and often will include Scripture.
- Prophecy should be delivered in our natural voice. IE: there is no need for a “*religious monologue!*”
- If you are visiting another church, seek approval from the leadership before speaking forth. This is ethical.
- The exercise of the gift of Prophecy is normally for when people gather in either congregational meetings or in small groups, etc. for accountability.
- Refrain from scolding, lecturing or judging people through prophecy.
- Avoid prophesying (speaking out) pet doctrines.
- Avoid the temptation to give out ‘*personal counselling*’ to a situation you are aware of.

### Prophet or Prophecy?

It is important to understand the distinction between a Prophet and Prophecy. The basic differences between the Spiritual Gift and the Ministry of a Prophet.

#### a. Spiritual Gift of Prophecy

- It's a gift of the Holy Spirit *1 Corinthians 12 & 14*
- Every Spirit filled believer is encouraged to prophesy
- It's for edification, exhortation, and to comfort
- Prophetic utterance is a gift from the Holy Spirit
- Is delivered mostly in a foretelling nature

#### b. Ministry Gift of a Prophet

- A Prophet is called by God and a ministry gift to the Body of Christ (the Church)
- A prophet is part of the five-fold ministry to equip the saints *Ephesians 4:11-12*
- A Prophet is to train, equip, direct, correct, warn and govern
- Is a ministry calling, much the same as a calling of a pastor, or Apostle etc
- A Prophet generally uses both methods of delivery, foretelling and forthtelling