

Prophecy to be Proven

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"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things." 1 Thess. 5:20-21.

"Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the others discern (discriminate)." 1 Cor. 14:29-33.

When Paul said, "You may all prophesy," he by the Spirit opened the door to a universal distribution of the gift. And he added, "that all may learn and be comforted," or "exhorted." Learn both by receiving messages of instruction, and also he who had the gift learn by its operation.

In the young Ecclesia among the Gentiles Paul planted the charismata or gifts of the Holy Spirit. They were freely and liberally bestowed not to matured people. They were heathen recently converted from idolatry that was full of demon power. It was a mighty miraculous renewing of the Holy Ghost. Paul pointed out to them that the worship they had been in where hysterical wildness was common—under uncontrollable demon spirits, was to be a thing of the past. The prophetic Spirit of God did not take away self-control (see verses 32-33).

In thought, the Apostle said that if any man thinks he is developing to be a prophet let him not become too ruling, starting on an independent line, but let him stay in fellowship with me and accept these commandments, as from the Lord (verse 37). These are Spirit given instructions to beginners in spirituals, not to mature sons of God. There were none among them.

The gift of prophecy was soon seen to be of supreme merit. All desired it, so it was necessary that Paul lay down to them the fact that perfect prophecy required careful training, and was to be proven, discerned and tested, that none might rise up from the beginnings of prophecy to the rank of a prophet without severe discipline and proper training.

There are two elements in prophecy; The miraculous Divine impartation that comes from God, and the coloring or natural characteristic that comes from the human vessel. The Divine impartation comes in an anointing or endowment. The fulness or depth of the anointing varies in different individuals. It may be deep and large, or it may be small and shallow: according to the state and capacity of the vessel, and the extent of the Divine plan for the individual. All these and other elements and reasons cause innumerable variations.

This is no road for blind, blundering people, but demands a most thorough preparation and careful walk and an intimate relation with Jesus Christ and His Spirit.

After this general glance at the varied phases of beginnings of prophecy and the state of a prophet, we take up the methods of proving prophecy:

1. It has already been set forth that prophecy should be proven by discernment. It may be easily understood that if no one present has discernment of prophecy by the Spirit—and this is a rare gift in these days—then there is a mixture of one's own mind working, especially when people are not deeply anointed, or are quite inexperienced in prophecy.

2. Another means the Lord sometimes provides is a confirmation or corroboration; that is, by repeating the message to or through another individual. This is very satisfactory when it is given.

3. A common and very useful means is a Spirit witness given to other individuals, and sometimes to a whole congregation. This is also very satisfactory, and perhaps the most common method.

4. Sometimes a prophecy can be proven by comparison with Scripture which will show it to be correct and in unity with the Scripture or contrary thereto.

5. The Lord is sometimes willing, if asked, to direct to some method or proof; as the fleece in Gideon's case.

6. The Lord provided for ancient Israel the Urim and Thummim, Pillar of Cloud and Fire, and a number of other methods.

There is no doubt that God is quite as willing to verify His Word today as in those days, and concerning prophecy, to make known the truth. It is not the lack of willingness on God's part, but the shallowness on man's part. If we knew the intense yearning of God over His people that has been made known by the sacrifice and passion of His Son, and has been touched upon in various prophecies and revelations in these last days. The depth of the Divine eagerness, concern and heart yearning that is in the Godhead is simply unfathomable. It does seem that we would get in earnest ourselves, that we might know His plan and His power, and be abundantly supplied with His charismata or gifts of the Holy Spirit. It may be boldly asserted as a God ordained certainty that God is willing to show us everything for our good, and would leave us in doubt concerning nothing; but we are spiritually too in-

dolet to make the necessary effort or to see what is plain in the plan of God because there is a cataract over our eyes.

But, to return to prophecy, there was a reason why the Spirit said, "Despise not prophesyings;" it was because some light, trifling persons degraded prophecy to where it was despised. Satanic influences are ever busy with man to lead him to degrade God-given and precious gifts, so He said, Test them out, throw away their degraded prophecies, hold fast that which is good.

What we need to learn in our day is the necessity of discernment of prophecy and separation of that which is so highly colored with human characteristics that it smells of the flesh.

We are entirely too shallow in Divine power. As I have sought the Lord more recently over and again, it dawns upon me that we have gotten away off from the Divine standard, and it is time to do something about it.

At every turn of the kaleidoscope there bobs up that same old natural man with purpose to insert his decisions. He has been the ruin of the Pentecostal work, and if he gets a chance to speak he will soon ruin all spiritual operations.

All this makes us know that something must be done, and I have been Divinely persuaded that this is the Day of the Lord, and He has begun to correct the evils that haunt His tabernacle like a nightmare. There is now coming forth a company of grown-up, restored sons of God who will know the genuine and have power to put down the false. Hallelujah, Amen!

God is always willing to give proof of that which He puts forth, and has established the law of two or three witnesses. This law runs through the Scripture, is God announced, and always adhered to by Him.

Missionary Bulletin

The January Missionary Bulletin, with the financial statement for 1943, may be had by addressing a request for the same to Carlton Spencer.

Commencement Notice

Make plans now for attending the Spring Commencement to be held April 14-16 inclusive. Come in faith believing for God's best.

Fellowship Meetings

Honesdale, Pa., Saturday, Feb. 5, 1944.
Milburn Sickler, Pastor.

The 42nd Anniversary Service will be held at the Sullivan Street Mission, Elmira, N. Y. on Sat., March 11, 1944.
Mrs. Minnie Easton, Pastor.