

Kaleo Notes: Paul and the gift of Prophecy in I Corinthians 14

	Cessationists	Continuationists
Belief	The NT gift of prophecy came to an end when the NT was completed and people had the full Scriptures.	The NT gift of prophecy is different from what we have in the OT Scripture and the gift will continue until Jesus returns.
Definition of Prophecy	The NT gift of prophecy is similar to OT prophecy in that it contains the actual words of God and is thus unable to error. ¹	“Prophecy is the speaking forth in merely human words something the Holy Spirit has sovereignly and often spontaneously revealed to a believer.” ²
Key Texts	Ephesians 2:20 “Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone...” Duet. 18:15-22, Acts 11:27-28, Acts 21:11 and 28:17.	Acts 2:17-18, I Corinthians 13:8-12, I Corinthians 14:1, 30-31, 39, I Thessalonians 5:19-21, I Timothy 2:12 and I Corinthians 11:1ff, Acts 21:4, 13-14.
Burden of Proof	The burden of proof lies on those who believe that the NT gift of prophecy is different from what we see in the OT.	Given Paul’s specific command to earnestly desire to prophesy (I Corinthians 14:1, 39), the burden of proof is on anyone who says that we don’t have to follow this command anymore.
Value	The sole and final authority of Scripture.	The authority of Scripture and obedience to Paul’s command..
Concern	If we say that the gift of prophecy continues, then it would threaten the sole and final authority of the Scripture.	If we say that the gift of prophecy has ceased we will fail to earnestly seek a gift that God has provided for the building up of his church. We may also fail to give the Spirit credit for things he is doing.
Does God still Speak to his people?	It is possible; but if he does, it would be better to call them <i>Impressions</i> and remember they must always be tested by Scripture.	Yes. We should call it the same thing Paul called it in Corinth (Prophecy), and we should test it with Scripture in the same way he called them to (I Cor. 14:30-31, I Thes. 5:19-21).

¹ For a fuller definition: “Prophecy is an act of intelligible communication, rooted in spontaneous divine revelation and empowered by the Holy Spirit, which results in words that can be attributed to any and all Persons of the Godhead and therefore must be received by those who hear or read them as absolutely binding and true.”

² Sam Storms. *Understanding Spiritual Gifts*. p. 161

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COMMON GROUND³:

Both believe in the final authority of Scripture. Both believe that we no longer have people speaking infallibly like the OT prophets did. Because of this both believe that we should avoid saying “Thus saith the Lord...” or using God’s name to get our way or try to manipulate others. Both believe that God still leads and guides and even speaks to his people, and both believe that anything someone says is from God should be tested by Scripture. Both believe that disagreement about this matter should not divide God’s people.

APPLICATION:

Let’s grow in our awareness of the work of the Spirit in our lives. Let’s be eager for him to guide us and give us words that might encourage and build up others. Let’s create space in our lives for us to listen as if we expected the Spirit who dwells within us to have an impact on our daily lives. Let’s seek to speak biblically about the work that the Spirit is doing in us and the ways we sense him guiding us. Let’s avoid using God to shut down conversation or win an argument or control another person; but let’s not be afraid of giving God the credit for all of the good he may use us to do. Let’s be open to having what we believe God is doing or saying tested by Scripture as well as others Christians since they are also filled with God’s Spirit.

FURTHER STUDY:

Article: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/wilson-schreiner-spiritual-gifts>

Books:

1. Thomas Schreiner. *Spiritual Gifts What They are and Why They Matter*. (Cessationists)
2. D.A. Carson. *Showing the Spirit*.
3. Sam Storms. *Understanding the Spiritual Gifts*.

QUESTIONS:

We will be offering some Q/A time over the next few weeks, so please write down your questions!

³ This common ground is not between all Cessationists and Continuationists; but it is common ground between what I (Tim) believe are the best Cessationists arguments and the best Continuationists arguments. Both sides have some proponents that would disagree with some of these common grounds.