

The Gift of Prophecy

1 Cor 12 7-11f

I. Intro

● Anecdote

• Prophets

- The Bible is filled with prophecies that present us with the future in advance.
- And it might interest you to know that - more than one fourth of the Bible is prophetic in nature.
- This statistic is based on the research of J. Barton Payne - who assures us that 27 percent of the Bible is prophetic.
- And this really shouldn't surprise us - especially as we consider the number of prophets who were led by the Holy Spirit...
- ...to produce many of the books that we find in the Bible.
- This includes the four major prophets in the Old Testament - better known as Isaiah - Jeremiah - Ezekiel - and Daniel.
- And then there are the 12 minor prophets - which include Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

• Final

- It's also interesting to note that - Abraham was the first person to be given the title - prophet.
- And there's a long list of individuals in the Bible who were known as prophets - though they aren't found in the list of prophetic books.

- This includes Asaph and David - Heman and Iddo - Nathan and Oded - - and the list goes on and on.
- According to one count - there are more than 70 men who were either called prophets - or who presented prophetic words.
- And as we consider this long list of prophets - we must not forget that that Lord Jesus identified John the Baptist...
- ...as the greatest prophet - ever born of women - - and with that being the case....
- ...it seems clear to me that the office of prophet is now closed.

II. Outline

● Points

- The Gift
- At the same time - Paul assured the Christians in Corinth - that the Holy Spirit is still empowering some believers with the gift of prophecy.
- It's for this reason that many Christians are confused about the difference between the office of prophet - and the gift of prophecy.
- And if this is something that you've struggled to understand - then it's my hope that this study on the gift of prophecy - will clear things up for you.
- And as we study the scriptures before us today - we'll begin to see that...
 1. ...the Gift of Prophecy provides us with Edification
 2. ...the Gift of Prophecy provides us with Exhortation
 3. ...the Gift of Prophecy provides us with Consolation
- With this as our outline - let's open our Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 12...

- ...where we find Paul - presenting the Christians in Corinth with a list of charismatic gifts.

III. Edification

● Set up

• Context

- As we make our way to the 12th chapter of 1st Corinthians - - we should take a moment to put our text - back into it's context.
- We find ourselves in the middle of a study of the charismatic gifts that Paul presented here in this chapter - and up until this point - we've considered...
- ...the word of wisdom - the word of knowledge - the gift of faith - the gift of healings - and the working of miracles.
- Now - here in our time today - we're going to consider the charismatic gift that Paul calls - Prophecy.
- And with this as our focus - let's turn our attention to this list of spiritual gifts - found here in 1st Corinthians chapter 12.
- Look with me - beginning there at verse 7 - where we learn that...

● Text

1Co 12:7 ...the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

1Co 12:8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,

1Co 12:9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,

1Co 12:10 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.

1Co 12:11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

- Prophecy
 - As we take another look at this list of charismatic gifts - I wanna focus your attention on the word - prophecy - found there in verse 10.
 - Now - in order to understand the gift of prophecy - it'll first help us to consider the meaning of this word.
 - One reason why is because - we tend to think about this word - as the FOREtelling of future events.
 - And in many cases - prophecy is exactly that - - it's a divine message from God - that reveals the future in advance.
 - At the same time - prophecy is not only the FOREtelling of future events...
 - ...prophecy is also the forth-telling of God's word.
- Forth-telling
 - I like the way that Pastor Chuck Smith explained it in his book - Living Water where he writes...

“Most of prophecy is forth-telling, or speaking forth the word of God. In fact, the gift of prophecy as it was practiced in the early church was more often used for edification, for exhortation and for comfort than it was for predicting future events.”
 - That's right - those who were empowered with the gift of prophecy in the primitive church...
 - ...were more often than not - presenting the word of God - in order to edify - exhort - and comfort the recipients.
 - And what this means is that - the gift of prophecy is typically given to those...
 - ...who are empowered to exhort other believers - with the truth of God's word.

- And in order to make my case - let's take some time to consider some misconceptions about this charismatic gift.
- Office
 - We should begin by considering the difference between the office of Prophet and the gift of prophecy.
 - With this as our focus - hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to Hebrews chapter 1.
 - As we make our way to the first chapter of Hebrews - I should take a moment to remind you that...
 - ...the last Old Testament prophet was actually John the Baptist - who - according to the Lord Jesus...
 - ...was the greatest prophet ever born of women.
 - And seeing how John the Baptist was the prophet who prepared the way of the Lord...
 - ...then - there's good reason for us to believe that the office of Prophet is currently closed.
- Past
 - Let's consider how Paul put it - here in Hebrews chapter 1 - look with me beginning there at verse 1 - where he declared...

Heb 1:1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

- When Paul wrote this letter to the Hebrew believers of the first century...
 - ...God's protocol for presenting His plans and purposes through those who held the office of prophet - was over.

- And while there is coming a day - during the tribulation - when two prophets will be sent to warn the world about the second coming...
- ...we currently live in a dispensation - during which the office of prophet is closed.
 - At the same time - we can rejoice in knowing that the gift of prophecy is still in operation.
- Joel
 - With this as our focus - let's consider the way that Peter explained it on the day of Pentecost.
 - Continue holding your place there in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to Acts chapter 2.
 - And as we make our way to the second chapter of Acts - I should take a moment to point out that...
 - ...the prophet Joel was one of the 12 minor prophets - who probably penned this prophetic promise - in the 9th century - BC.
 - And while some scholars place the prophet Joel in the 7th century BC...
 - ...what we can say for sure is that - his prophecy about Pentecost - was fulfilled - 50 days after the resurrection of Jesus.
- Fulfillment
 - Let's consider how the apostle Peter put it - here in Acts chapter 2 - look with me - beginning there in the middle of verse 14 - where he declared...

Act 2:14b "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.

Act 2:15 "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

Act 2:16 "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

Act 2:17 ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,
That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your young men shall see visions,
Your old men shall dream dreams.

Act 2:18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.

- Here in these verses - we find the apostle Peter - helping his audience to understand that...
- ...they were witnessing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit - according to the prophecy that the prophet Joel presented - in Joel Chapter 2.
- And according to this prophecy - the outpouring of the Holy Spirit would empower believers to prophesy - throughout the church age.
- And just to be clear - - the prophet Joel did NOT tell us that believers would occupy the OFFICE of prophet.
 - No - instead - he simply said that the Holy Spirit would enable believers to prophesy.
- Prophets?
- With that being said - we should take a moment to consider the list of Christians who were called prophets - in the book of Acts.
- It's in Acts chapter 11 - beginning at verse 27 - where Luke writes...

Act 11:27 ...in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch.

Act 11:28 Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.

- From this - we can see that - there was a prophet named Agabus - who was sent by the Holy Spirit - to warn the church about a famine.
- Luke also presented a list of prophets and teachers from Antioch - which included Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul.

- Luke also informed us that Judas and Silas were prophets - - and then there were the four virgin daughters of Philip - who also prophesied.
- And while these people were given the title prophet - - they weren't occupying the office of prophet.
- No - instead - they were Christians - who had the gift of prophecy.
- 5-Fold?
- In order to make my case - let's consider another misconception about this charismatic gift - which is based on some bad exegesis.
- I'm referring to something Paul wrote - in Ephesians chapter 4 - it's verse 11 where he informed the Christians at the church in Ephesus that God...

Eph 4:11 ...Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers

- Using this verse as a proof text - there are many Charismatic leaders who believe that...
- ...every church should have five governmental offices - often times called the fivefold ministry of the Holy Spirit.
- Simply put - they believe that every church should have an office for apostles - prophets - evangelists - pastors - and teachers.
- And while this is a common belief in many Charismatic churches - - there are a few problems with this interpretation.
- With this as our focus - let's take a moment to consider the reasons to reject this doctrine of the 5-fold ministry.
- Foundation
- I should first point out that - the church was initially built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

- Let's consider how Paul put it - in Ephesians chapter 2 - beginning at verse 20 - where we learn that the household of God has been...

Eph 2:20 ...built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

Eph 2:21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

Eph 2:22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

- So - according to Paul - the foundation of the church was built upon the apostles and prophets.
 - Just to be clear - I believe that Paul was referring to the scriptures which were written - by those who held the office of Apostles and Prophets.
 - I should also point out that - Paul also presented this in the past tense - as he helped his audience to realize that...
 - ...the church had already been established upon the foundation of apostles and prophets - at the time he penned this epistle.
 - Therefore - there's no reason for us to think that the church still needs believers - to fill the office of apostles and prophets.
- Pastor/Teacher
 - Not only that - but - when Paul presented pastors and teachers on the list that we find in Ephesians 4 - verse 11...
 - ...he was actually referring to a single leadership position which is occupied by those who are called to pastor - AND teach.
 - That word - AND - was translated from a Greek conjunction that has both copulative and cumulative force.
 - Simply put - we aren't talking about two different offices - - no - this is one office - occupied by a pastor-teacher.

- And what this means is that - Paul was NOT presenting us with a five-fold ministry that should function in every church.
- At best - he was presenting us with four-fold ministry - - with two of those offices being closed for business.

- Overseer

- I should also point out that - Paul described the role of pastor-teacher - as the leader who is called to oversee the church.
- It's in Acts chapter 20 - beginning at verse 27 - where Paul helped a group of pastors to understand their position - by declaring...

Act 20:27 "I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

Act 20:28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

- According to Paul - the Holy Spirit is the One Who ordains the leaders who are called to oversee their Christian congregation.
- And we should notice that Paul compared this leadership position to a shepherd of a flock.
- For the sake of clarity - the shepherd of the church is the pastor-teacher - who is called to oversee the church.
- That being the case - those who insist that every church should include the five-fold ministry of Ephesians 4...
- ...are failing to realize that - Paul actually pointed to the pastor of the church - as the shepherd of the flock.

- Shepherd

- The apostle Peter presented us with the same pastoral perspective in 1st Peter chapter 5.

- It's beginning at verse 2 - where Peter directed those who occupy the position of Pastor - by declaring...

1Pe 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

1Pe 5:3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

1Pe 5:4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

- So - according to the apostle Peter - - it's the pastor who is called to Shepherd the flock that congregates at the local church.
- And listen - the apostle Peter didn't present a hierarchy of apostles - prophets - and evangelists - who are over the pastor-teacher.
- No - instead - he assured his audience that the sub-shepherd is under the leadership of the Chief Shepherd - Jesus Christ.
- That being the case - there's no reason for us to think that the five-fold ministry interpretation of Ephesians 4 - verse 11...
 - ...is a valid take on that text - - and to the contrary - there's good reason for us to reject this faulty interpretation.
- Prophets?
 - With all of this in mind - there should be no doubt that the gift of prophecy is different from the office of prophet.
 - And while it's true that the office of prophet ended with John the Baptist...
 - ...it's also true that the Holy Spirit is still empowering some Christians with the gift of prophecy.
 - And in order to understand the purpose of prophecy for the church age...

- ...we should consider something that Paul wrote - here in the epistle that Paul sent to the Christians in Corinth.
- With this as our focus - let's flip forward to 1st Corinthians chapter 14...
- ...where we find Paul helping his audience to understand the importance of this spiritual gift.
- Importance
 - Look with me - there at the 14th chapter of 1st Corinthians - let's begin reading there at verse 1 - where Paul declared...
 - 1Co 14:1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.
 - 1Co 14:2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.
 - 1Co 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.
 - 1Co 14:4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.
 - 1Co 14:5 I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.
 - Here in these verses - we find Paul - helping his audience to understand that...
 - ...the gift of prophecy is the most important - of all the charismatic gifts.
 - And while the Christians in Corinth seemed to be super excited about the gift of tongues...
 - ...Paul corrected them - by helping them to realize that - those who prophesy - are greater than those who speak in tongues.

- The reason why is because - those who prophesy are presenting words that edify - encourage - and comfort other Christians.

- Purpose

- Notice with me again - there at verse 3 - where Paul declared...

1Co 14:3 ...he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

- Now - as we consider the way that Paul described the gift of prophecy - it should be clear to us that...
 - ...this charismatic gift has less to do with foretelling the future - - and it has more to do with forth-telling the word of God.
 - And while it's true that those who held the office of prophet - we're often times used by God - to foretell future events...
 - ...the Christians who currently receive the gift of prophecy will be empowered By the Holy Spirit...
 - ...to speaks words of edification - to the believers who need to be built up in the faith.

- Edification

- Proof of my point is found in the fact that - the word - edification - found there in verse 3 - was translated from a Greek word...
 - ...was used of the architecture - by which a structure is built up.
 - In a Christian context - this word was used of those who build up their brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - Thayer helps us to understand that this word was used of those...
 - ...who promote another's growth in Christian wisdom, piety, happiness, holiness.

- And with this as the goal - the Holy Spirit empowers some believers with the gift of prophecy...
- ...so that the church might be edified - according to the prophetic word of God.

● Application

- Edify
- I like the way that Paul put it - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 14 - - look with me there at verse 12 - where he declared...

1Co 14:12 Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.

- Regardless of the spiritual gifts that we've received - - it's important for us to remember that...
- ...the Holy Spirit wants to use us to build up the body of Christ - with words that edify others.
- And with that being the case - those who have been given the gift of prophecy...
- ...should look for every opportunity to use this incredible gift - to promote growth of other believers...
- ...according to the wisdom, piety, happiness, and holiness of our Savior Jesus.

● Transition

- Points
- Now - this brings us to our second point - because listen...

1. ...the Gift of Prophecy not only provides us with Edification...

2. ...but - the Gift of Prophecy also provides us with Exhortation.

- Rather than turning back to 1st Corinthians chapter 12...
- ...let's take another look at the way Paul described the gift of prophecy - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 14.
- Look with me again - beginning there at verse 1 - where Paul declared...

IV. Exhortation

● Text

1Co 14:1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

1Co 14:2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

1Co 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

- Exhortation
- Now - that word - exhortation - was translated from the Greek word - paráklēsis - which speaks of admonition - and instruction.
- Greek scholar - Spiros Zohdiate - pointed out that - All of Scripture is described as a paráklēsis...
- ...and the reason why is because - the scriptures strengthen and establish the believer in the faith...
- ...through exhortation - admonition - and encouragement.
- And the believer who receives the gift of prophecy - will be led to exhort other believers...
- ...as we admonish - instruct - and encourage others with the prophetic word

- Gift of Exhortation

- Now - I should take a moment to point out that - the gift of prophecy should not be confused with the gift of exhortation.
- The proof of my point is found in Romans chapter 12 - it's beginning at verse 6 - where Paul declared...

Rom 12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;

Rom 12:7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;

Rom 12:8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

- Here in this list of charismatic gifts - we find Paul mentioning the gift of prophecy - - as well as the gift of exhortation.
 - And while it's true that the Holy Spirit uses both of these charismatic gifts to exhort those who trust in Jesus...
 - ...it's also true that the gift of prophecy will include the exhortation that comes from an encouraging quote from the Bible...
 - ...while the gift of exhortation might be less Biblical - and more relational.
 - The gift of prophecy will typically include scripture - while the gift of exhortation will be more personal.
- Prophets
 - To further grasp the way in which the gift of prophecy brings exhortation - let's consider how Judas and Silas exhorted the church in Antioch.
 - It's in Acts chapter 15 - beginning at verse 32 - where we learn that...

Act 15:32 ...Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words.

Act 15:33 And after they had stayed there for a time, they were sent back with greetings from the brethren to the apostles.

Act 15:34 However, it seemed good to Silas to remain there.

Act 15:35 Paul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

- Here in these verses - we find Luke - describing the way that two men with the gift of prophecy...
- ...were used by the Holy Spirit - to strengthen and exhort the Christians as the church in Antioch.
- Luke also informs us that Paul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch in order to teach and preach the word.
- And it seems to me that the word ALSO - presents us with a parallel that helps us to see that...
- ...the words that Judas and Silas used to exhort and strengthen the brethren - were also based on the word of the Lord.

● Application

- Encouraged
- And while it's true that the gift of prophecy should be based on God's word - this gift should also be judged by God's word.
- Let's consider how Paul put it - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 14 - - look with me - there at verse 29 - where he declared...

1Co 14:29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.

1Co 14:30 But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent.

1Co 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - presenting the Christians in Corinth with instructions...
- ...for how this gift might be used in the context of a church service.
- And while Paul once again used the Greek word translated exhortation there in verse 31 - as he informed his audience that...
- ...this gift should be used to encourage the body of Christ...
- ...he also challenged the Christians in Corinth to judge the words of those who exercise this gift.
- Judge
- Notice with me again - beginning there at verse 29 - where Paul declared...

1Co 14:29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.

1Co 14:30 But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent.

- Christian - listen - the believer claims to be presenting the gift of prophecy should be judged.
- And just to be clear - we're not talking about a hypocritical - or unjust judgment.
- No - instead - that word - judge - was translated from a Greek word - which was used of the righteous judgments that are based on truth.
- The same word was also used of those who separate themselves from those who apostatize.
- And what this means is that - we will do well to judge the words of those who try to exhort us - with a word of prophecy.
- False

- One reason for why we should be critical of those who claim to have the gift of prophecy - - is because - there are false prophets.
- Let's consider how the apostle John put it - in 1st John chapter 4 - - it's verse 1 where he declared...

1Jo 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

- Christian - listen - just because a person claims to be speaking by the power of the Holy Spirit — doesn't mean they are.
- And even if their words are encouraging - and exhortative - - doesn't mean that their words are true.
- That being the case - we will all do well to test the words of those who claim to have the gift of prophecy.
- With this as the goal - we should judge their words - in light of God's word.
- And if their words contradict the word of God - then - we can be sure that they are not speaking by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Quench
- I like the way that Paul put it - in 1st Thessalonians chapter 5 - it's beginning at verse 19 - where he declared...

1Th 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit.
 1Th 5:20 Do not despise prophecies.
 1Th 5:21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.
 1Th 5:22 Abstain from every form of evil.
- When it comes to those who claim to have a prophetic word from the Holy Spirit...
- ...Paul took the time to exhort every Christian to have an open heart - and a critical mind.

- It would be wrong for us to quench the Spirit - by immediately rejecting the message - given by those who speak prophetically.
- At the same time - it would also be wrong for us to receive the message - without first testing the message.
- And so - let's be open to the exhortations of those who present us a prophetic word...
 - ...while simultaneously testing their message - with the truth of God's word.

● Transition

• Points

- Now - this brings us to our third and final point - because listen...
 1. ...the Gift of Prophecy not only provides us with Edification...
 2. ...and - the Gift of Prophecy not only provides us with Exhortation...
 3. ...but - the Gift of Prophecy also provides us with Consolation
- Rather than turning back to 1st Corinthians chapter 12...
- ...let's take another look at the way Paul described the gift of prophecy - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 14.
- Look with me again - beginning there at verse 1 - where Paul declared...

V. Consolation

● Text

1Co 14:1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

1Co 14:2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.
1Co 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

- Comfort
- As we take another look at Paul's description of this gift - it'll help us to understand that...
- ...the word - comfort - found there at the end of verse 3 - was translated from a Greek word...
- ...which was used of any address - that a persons presents - in order to console - and calm those who are agitated.
- Greek scholar - Spiros Zohdiate expounds upon this definition by informing us that this word rendered - comfort...
- ...expresses a greater degree of tenderness, at least by word of mouth, than *paráklēsis* - which is also rendered - comfort.
- What this means is that - those who exercise the gift of prophecy will be led to console those who need to be comforted.

- Consolation

- I like the way that the scholars who created the Amplified Bible rendered verse 3 - they put it like this...

1Co 14:3 ...the one who prophesies speaks to people for edification [to promote their spiritual growth] and [speaks words of] encouragement [to uphold and advise them concerning the matters of God] and [speaks words of] consolation [to compassionately comfort them].

- From this - we can see that - those who exercise the gift of prophecy will develop a compassionate desire...

- ...to speak Spirit-filled words that console - and comfort those who are struggling.
- And as we consider the way that So many Christians were being persecuted there in the first century...
 - ...I have no doubt that Holy Spirit was leading those with the gift of prophecy...
 - ...to speak words of consolation - - rather than words of condemnation.
- Condemnation
 - I'll remind you - it's in Romans chapter 8 - beginning at verse 1 - where Paul comforted the Christians in Rome - by declaring....

Rom 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

- Now - I don't know about you - but - in my opinion - this is one of the most comforting passages found in the entire Bible.
- And the reason why is because - it helps us to see that - those who have been born of the Spirit...
 - ...have been set free from the condemnation of the Old Testament law.
 - And as we consider the prophetic implications of this promise - - those of us who have been given the gift of prophecy...
 - ...should speak words of consolation - not condemnation - because there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus

● Application

• Faith

- Finally - I should take a moment to encourage those who have the gift of prophecy - to present the prophetic word - by faith.
- Let's consider how Paul put it - in Romans chapter 12 - it's beginning at verse 4 - where he declared...

Rom 12:4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

Rom 12:5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

Rom 12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;

- Christian - listen - if the Holy Spirit has given you the gift of prophecy - then - you should exercise that gift - by faith.
- And if you think you're supposed to present a prophetic word to another believer - - but you're still not sure about it...
- ...then - I encourage you to keep it to yourself - until you have the faith to believe that the Holy Spirit is leading you.
- Until then - I encourage you to remember that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.
- And so - spend some time studying the scriptures - so that you can prophesy in proportion to your faith.

VI. Conclusion

● Wrap up

- Now - as we begin to wrap up this study - there should be no doubt that the gift of prophecy is still in operation - here in the 21st century.

- And while it's true that the office of prophet is complete - and the cannon of scripture is closed...
- ...it's also true that the Holy Spirit is empowering some Christians with the gift of prophecy - for the benefit of every believer.
- That being the case - it'll help us to remember that...
 1. ...the Gift of Prophecy provides us with the Edification that we need...
 - ...to grow in the wisdom, piety, happiness, and holiness of our Savior Jesus.
 2. ...the Gift of Prophecy also provides us with the Exhortation we need...
 - ...so that we might receive the admonition - and the instruction that encourages Christians to continue walking by faith.
 3. ...and finally - the Gift of Prophecy provides us with Consolation we need...
 - ...so that we might remember that - there is no condemnation for those who trust in Jesus Christ.
 - And knowing that the Holy Spirit is empowering some with the gift of prophecy - - let's ask the Lord to use us in this way...
 - ...so that we might speak the words that edify - exhort -and console others in our Christian congregation - and all for the glory of God.