

- In talking about the Gift of Prophecy, let me acknowledge upfront that I know this gift has been heavily misused by individuals, particularly when attempting to predict future events on the horizon ... Their misuse of the prophetic gift has contributed to the misunderstanding of the prophetic gift, leading to the avoidance of learning about and rightly practicing a gift that God desires to give individuals in the church ... He gives the Gift of Prophecy to people in order to speak through them to strengthen, encourage, comfort, and instruct others whom God has prepared a message for ... So, then, the misuse of prophecy should not lead us to the disuse of prophecy ... The misuse of tongues led Paul to instruct the church on how to properly use the gift, not toss it aside ... He does the same with prophecy

What the Gift of Prophecy is not

- OT Prophets spoke in an authoritative way – ‘The Lord says’ ... They wrote down God’s authoritative message for His people to follow ... He spoke of warnings and coming events He would use for the purpose of His redemptive plan ... These messages did not come from themselves: [2P1:20-21](#), [He1:1](#), [Lu24:44](#) ... In [Ep2:20](#), Paul mentions a group of NT prophets who, with the main apostles, spoke with God-given authority, truths that the Spirit revealed and led them to write down, building the church’s foundation on which we stand: [1Th2:13](#), [Ts1:3](#), [1Th4:27](#), [2P3:16](#)
 - This type of prophecy is not what Paul is referring to in [1Cor14](#) ... The canon of Scripture is closed ... The Spirit no longer leads a person to write down newly inspired Scripture ... Nor is Paul referring to individuals predicting future events ... Though God may disclose to a person information concerning a future event, I do not think He does this on a regular basis ... The type of prophecy that Paul is referring to seems to be the reception of prophetic words, either person to person or person to congregation, in order to strengthen, encourage, comfort, and instruct, “so that everyone may learn and everyone may be encouraged” (31)
- The Gift of Prophecy is not the same as teaching or preaching ... While God uses all three to encourage and equip, each is different: [Preach](#) – herald gospel; [Teach](#) – give instruction; [Prophecy](#) – speak what is revealed ... Teaching and Preaching concerns the unpacking of what the Bible teaches ... Gift of Prophecy, as Paul indicates, concerns speaking forth, in your own words, something the Holy Spirit has revealed to you, often spontaneously, for another person to receive

What the Gift of Prophecy is

- [14:3, 31](#) ... The Holy Spirit reveals to a person a specific word or picture or message meant for another person ... [Grudem](#), “[A person] reports things that have been shown to them or revealed to them by God, yet their words have merely human authority, not absolute divine authority ... They have to be tested and evaluated.”
 - As noted by Storms, Grudem, and others, there are 3 elements to prophetic words: Revelation by the Spirit, human Interpretation, and human Application ... The Spirit is never wrong in what He says ... We may get wrong what we interpret ... And, we may go on to say more than what the Spirit intends for us to say
 - This does not mean that we should forgo the Gift of Prophecy ... Because to do this would mean to forgo obeying what the Holy Spirit – the Author of Scripture, actually commands you and I to pursue and practice ... God knows our fallibility ... And yet, God still chooses to speak infallible words through fallible people in order to strengthen and encourage and comfort others
- God graciously works through this gift to bring people guidance, assurance, confirmation, instruction, and healing ... [Prayer at Council](#) ... There may be a time when the Lord brings a word of conviction ... In this instance, make sure what you heard is truly from the Lord, and when delivering the word to the intended person, be sure your posture is one of great humility and sincerity ... [Luke 6:46](#)

Practicing the Gift of Prophecy

- All words of prophecy will match God's character and Scripture ... Never will prophetic words go against them ... By these 2 standards do we evaluate all prophetic words ... [1Th5:19-22](#) ... Don't reject prophecy; don't look down on the gift ... Doing so stifles the Spirit ... Test whatever is received – does this align with God's character; does this align with God's word ... Or does this tear down my identity and position in Christ ... *Voice of Father vs Enemy*
 - Receiving prophetic words comes by God's initiative, not our own ... Meaning, though God has given me prophetic words and pictures for people, I cannot force His hand ... I can ask, but it's up to Him
 - If the Lord does give you a word for someone, it would be wise to process the word, and to discern when to give the word ... It would also be wise to phrase the word, *"I believe the Lord has given me a word for you"* ... Don't try to apply the word or picture for the person, let that process be between them and the Holy Spirit
 - The Gift of Prophecy is available for all believers to pursue and practice ... When Paul says **"you can all prophesy one by one,"** and commands the Corinthians (and us), **"be eager to prophecy,"** no one is excluded ... So, what does Paul mean, then, by **34-35** ... In **1Cor11**, he encourages women to publicly prophecy and pray ... So, what's he saying here ... Vs **34-35** stem from the evaluation of prophecies in **29** ... The specific issue being addressed: when is it appropriate for a woman to ask questions concerning things she does not know or understand ... A woman's education was less than a man's education ... For an unlearned person, it was inappropriate for them to interrupt a teaching in order to ask questions of the speaker
 - Some considered women speaking in public forums as disrespectful – church was viewed as such a place ... Some also looked down upon a woman addressing a man not her husband, especially when not directly spoken to ... So, instead of a woman interrupting the teaching and church service, Paul says, remain still and ask your husband to explain things when you're at home
 - Paul is not against women learning; he advocates for it ... Paul is not against women praying publicly in mix company ... Paul includes women in his call to desire the gift of prophecy ... **14:34-35** is Paul's solution to an issue within the church for that time period ... Paul's exhortation: be imitators of Christ in every way; do not intentionally give outsiders a reason to see the Church as an enemy or threat
- All the Gifts of the Spirit remain in effect today ... None of them have ceased to exist ... All of them are open to men and women, young and old ... No believer is excluded from the invitation to experience more of the Holy Spirit's presence and power