

Welcoming the Word

Hearing the Prophets

1Cor 12:4 Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all. 5 There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving. 6 There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work through all of us. 7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church. NLT

1Cor 12:4 Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts (NIV)

Verse 5 - "different kinds of service"

Verse 6 - "different ways God works"

Not only are there different spiritual gifts. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts. Not only are they different in what they do, they are different in how they function.

More about that in a minute. . .

"Spiritual gifts" - are an expression of the grace of God through an individual. When you receive the ministry of a SG through a person, you are receiving the grace of God.

- a Word - a word from the Lord
- a Healing
- Leadership

Back to Text again:

1Cor 12:4 Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all.

- the gifts come from the HS

Verse 5 There are **different kinds of service** in the church, but it is the **same Lord we are serving**.

- we **serve God** by investing our lives and ministering our **gifts to others**

Verse 6 There are **different ways God works** in our lives, but it is the **same God** who **does the work through all of us**.

1Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. NKJV

- What a privilege - partners with God in the Kingdom work
- People are God's "field"
- People are what God is "BUILDING".

The ministry of a Spiritual gift is actually God working through that person. When we receive the ministry of a spiritual gift - we are receiving the grace of God through that person.

Caution: We want to be sure to receive that ministry.

- reject the ministry - lose the grace.
- Gift of Prophecy in just a moment

Verse 7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church. NLT

- All spiritual gifts do the same thing - they edify - build up - the church in one way or another.

Three Lists - Three Kinds of Gifts

There are three major lists of spiritual gifts in the Bible and each list not only gives us list of different gifts, each list is a different kind of gift. I can't deal with all the gifts in the lists, but I would like to look at the gift of prophecy - in continuing our theme of Honoring God's Word and Welcoming His Spirit. In the gift of prophecy - we can do both at the same time - because prophecy is the Spirit speaking through an individual.

The Bible sets the gift of prophecy aside as "special" in two ways:

1) By "special" command.

1Cor 14:1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. . . NIV

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

Prophecy is the gift to be "especially desired". Then, the whole chapter (1Cor 14) is spent telling us why. . .but I can't go there today.

1 - We see that the gift of prophecy is set apart by special command.

2) By Special Mention

Prophecy is the only gift mentioned in all three of the major SGs lists. God ministers the gift of prophecy differently, through people in different ministries - in different ways - but there is a ministry of prophecy in each list.

Rom 12:4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 **We have different gifts, according to the grace** given us.

Parentheses: Gifts & Anointing

We receive gifts to operate in the body - by grace.

“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.”

Anointing comes in a different way:

A) Anointing to Minister Our Gift Powerfully Comes as We Submit to the Work of God in Our Character.

You remember Joseph received a “prophectic word” from the Lord about ruling and reigning - but first came the pit, Potiphar’s house and the prison.

Note: the higher God wants to take you in anointing, the deeper he will work in your character.

B) When We Use our Gifts for the Poor & Needy

That means, your anointing is not just for church ministry – contrary to what we think.

Hear This; The Anointing Is for Trouble

Luke 4:18-19 (Jesus)

18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because
He has anointed Me **To** preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." NKJV

The anointing is for the: poor; brokenhearted, captives, blind, oppressed; and hopeless

In NT, when you see the anointing on the apostles, it was always in places of trouble - for people in trouble.

The anointing took them into prisons.

- . . . people in all kinds of bondage and sin
- . . .to demon possessed people.
- . . .people who needed healing.
- . . .people involved in paganism and idolatry.

That’s where the Anointing Is Released.

The problem for most Christians is that They Want to Have an Exceptional Anointing but They Want to Have Ordinary Battles. You don’t get an exceptional anointing without an exceptional struggle or challenge.

. . .staying in our comfortable surroundings with people just like us.

You don’t need anointing to do what you can do without God!!

It Is the Need That Activates the Anointing.

If we want anointing like the apostles had we have to:

- . . .do what the apostles did.
- . . .go where they went.
- . . .attempt what they attempted.
- . . .preach the good news of Jesus where they preached it.

God will vindicate his Word.

(From last Sunday)

Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. [Everywhere you go-tell them about Jesus] 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: [where? - in the world!] . . .NKJV

Mark 16:17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." NKJV

If we go into the world - signs (product of the anointing) follow. The gospel is the "good news" to troubled people, needy people that Jesus can help.

What do the signs do? The signs vindicate the "good news". . . .God keeping His Word. In and through that scenario the anointing is released to meet the need.

- 1) Gifts are by grace (charis)
- 2) Anointing comes by
Submitting to God's Processing in our
character & Putting our gifts to work in ministry to the poor and needy

Back to the 1st List of Gifts

- Ministry Gifts

Rom 12:6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying . .

Then the scripture lists the gifts of service, teaching, exhortation, giving, administration, and mercy.

About the gift of prophecy here, this is a person who has the gift of prophesying. He/she speaks into a person's life to help them grow in the Lord. These are members of the body, ministering to other Christians. You need to get your associated with someone who can speak into your life - build you up in the Lord - warn you about things that will hurt you.
- person with a grace gift to speak into your life.

Eph 4 - Equipping Ministry Gifts

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, NKJV

These prophets are not people with a gift. They don't have the gift of prophecy. Prophets are who they are. These prophets are often vocational. When they speak into people's lives they are not just building up another Christian - they are equipping Christians to build up others.

1Cor 12 - Manifestation Gifts

1Cor 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 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. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. NKJV

Gift - a manifestation of the Spirit

Phanerosis - temporary outshining vs ministry gift

In this list - the HS retains control of the gift, which means he can use a person to speak into someone's life - who would never preach a sermon

The emphasis in these texts is

- 1) You have a gift
- 2) Prepare yourself and present yourself for the ministry of that gift.

We have looked at the gift of prophecy.

Receiving the Ministry of the Prophet

1Thess 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies. 21 Test all things; hold fast what is good. . . NKJV

1) Do Not Despise Prophecies.

1Thess 5:20 Do not treat prophecies with contempt. NIV

1Thess 5:20 Do not scoff at prophecies. NLT

1Thess 5:20 Do not lightly esteem prophecies; Darby

1Thess 5:20 Don't stifle those who have a word from the Master (MSG)

All of those versions of the bible have a portion of the truth about receiving the ministry of a prophet.

Prophecy comes to us in two ways:

- 1) Publicly in the form of pulpit preaching
- 2) Privately in the form of “word” spoken to us personally

We must realize that God can speak to us that way.

1Thess 2:13 And we will never stop thanking God that when we preached his message to you, you didn't think of the words we spoke as being just our own. You accepted what we said as the very word of God — which, of course, it was. And this word continues to work in you who believe. NLT

Value of spiritual mentors who by the gift of prophecy and the anointing of the prophet can speak into your life. It is appropriate to ask someone who you feel has this gift to help you find the mind of the Lord. Where did we ever get the idea that we have to do that all by ourselves. We have become so skeptical and cynical - that we have no faith in the gifts and ministers God places among us.

God has placed gifted prophets in our churches to help us hear from God.

2) Do Not Quench the Spirit

1Thes 5v19 - Do not quench the Spirit.

Literally - Do not put out the Spirit's fire.

The HS is referred to as a fire in the NT. We want to release the Spirit in our life - not restrict Him, resist Him, grieve Him and quench him. I have heard many preachers use this text to preach about freedom in worship - urging us to not throw water on the Spirit's move in worship.

And they're right - we should not do that . . .

But that is not the point here in 1Thess 5.

In this text the warning is against losing the ministry of the Spirit through prophets - by
lightly regarding them
ignoring them
scoff at them
rebellng against the Word of the Lord that comes through them.

Point: When we resist the word of the Lord through a prophet, we resist the Lord himself.
When we do despise prophecies - we throw water on the Spirit's fire.
When we reject the word of the true prophet - we reject the Word of the Lord.

3) “Test all things”

1Thess 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies. 21 Test all things . . .
NKJV

- test the prophecies.

Just because someone comes up to you and says they have a word for the Lord for you - doesn't mean it is true.

On the other hand, we must be careful to receive a Word if it is from God.

So, what do we do? "We test all things."

We test the Word and we test the Spirit.

- the "word" against the scriptures.
- the spirit - we discern the spiritual source of the Word.

Three spiritual influences -
divine, demonic and human.

Subjective exercise: sometimes not simple.

Sometimes we feel no peace when someone gives us a word - because we are in rebellion against the Word - not because it was not a word from the Lord.

Test the Word - by THE WORD and BY THE SPIRIT in you - who will say, "yes" or "no" - particularly if you are used to talking to him.

3) "Hold Fast" What Is Good

- from the Lord

1Thess 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies. 21 Test all things; hold fast what is good. . . NKJV

Let me tell you what is good - the word of the Lord.

When you have received a Word from the Lord. . .Receive it. Submit to it.

Then when the devil comes to attack you -

Fight for it.

Fight with it.

Do not let it go.

Hold on to it

Agree with God.

Say what God has said. . .

Rom 4 - talking about Abraham the Father of the Faithful

- God promised him a son when he and his wife were old

Rom 4:17 As it is written: "I have made you [Abraham] a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed - the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.

18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations. . .NIV

In other words, Abraham knew that God was able to speak things into existence that do not exist. When circumstances contradicted the Word that the Lord had given - he believed what God had said.

Very powerful thing when we say what God has said. . .
. . . even when we can't see it.
. . . those words set the course of our life.

1. Do not despise prophecies
2. Do not quench the Spirit
3. Test the word
4. "Hold fast" - the word.

Using the Word for Warfare

But I want to show you something else about receiving a prophetic word.

You can use the prophecies you have received to defeat the devil.

1Tim 1:18-19

18 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, 19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, NKJV

We should not be surprised when our enemy attacks us. It is going to happen. Sometimes when the Word of the Lord is declared. . .It makes the devil mad. The Lord gives us a word of favor and the devil comes to attack us and make us doubt the Word.

Remember - first the calling, then the training. At the same time the Lord is testing us and preparing us - the devil is lying to us, and getting in our stuff. He will stir up trouble at work. . .in your family. He will attack your resources. He will lie to you about God.

Point - to shipwreck you.

God has initiated a Word in your life which will bless you, promote you, release you in a powerful ministry and the devil doesn't want that.

The Word is on the way. God is working his word to perform it - in his timing.

The devil wants us to give up - before the blessing comes. - before the ministry is realized.

He wants you to give up your God-given dreams - while you are in the pit of despair - because He knows it is only a matter of time before the Word of the Lord is going to come to fruition.

Gal 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. NIV

Sometimes the warfare is not because bad things happen.
Sometimes it is because good things happen.

Illustration: Abraham came out of Egypt with Cattle in addition to his herds

They were not a gift of God to bless him. They are a gift of the devil to curse him.

Application

Let me tell you - God is not behind every raise, every promotion. When we are dealing with issues like that we need to know not only where something is - but also where it is going. That is something a prophet can help you with at times. When the Lord gives us a word, he wants to do everything he can to get us to give up and lose the faith - while the Word is on the way.

He will arrange circumstances against you. . .

He will lie to you. . .

He will lie about you. . .

1Tim 1:18 This charge I commit to you . . .according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,

God is saying to Timothy, through Paul,

When you get in trouble,

When the enemy attacks you,

When you are tempted to sin,

Remember the words that have been spoken over you. Paul had been Timothy's mentor in the ministry. I have no doubt that he had spoken prophetic words to Timothy over the years.

Paul is saying, "Use those words to fight the devil with when he comes against you".

Song:

When you're up against a struggle

That shatters all your dreams

And your hopes has been cruelly crushed

By Satan's manifested schemes

And you feel the urge within you

To submit to earthly fears

Don't let the faith you're standing in,

seem to disappear

Praise the Lord

He can work with those who praise Him ,

Praise the Lord

For our God inhabits praise,

Praise the Lord

For the chains that seem to bind you

Serve only to remind you

they drop powerless behind you

When you praise him

Now Satan is a liar
And he wants to make us think
That we are paupers
When he knows himself
We're children of the King

So lift up the might shield of faith
For the battle has been won
We know that Jesus Christ has risen
So the work's already done

Hang on to the promises of God. Remember the word of God to you. Sometimes we drop the word,
. . we dismiss the promise.

But God has not dropped the Word. The word that God spoke over you is still real. Even when you drop the word, He picks it up. It never hits the ground. You've got to embrace it again. You don't have to make it come true. You will wear yourself out, if you try to do that. Just say what God has said. Believe that God has said. Use the Word of prophecy given to you to fight the fight of faith.

Satan's Special Assignment Against the Pillars in the House of God