

What's the Deal With Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophesying?

Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

(1 Corinthians 14:1)

Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy

(1 Corinthians 14:39a)

But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

(1 Corinthians 14:24-25)

Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

(1 Corinthians 14:29-32)

1.) How many people are told in church to love one another, but are not being told to pursue prophesying and to “desire earnestly to prophesy”? (1 Corinthians 14:1, 39)

These are amazingly overlooked statements, not commonly taught about in churches, and I think it may be so because most pastors and teachers have no idea what it means (nor am I completely sure!). If they do, perhaps they are fearful of its implications. People need to be told to prophesy and shown how to do it “decently and in order.” (1 Corinthians 14:40)

2.) What is prophecy, if when church members do it, it can “convince”/“convict” unbelievers to worship God, and acknowledge His presence in their midst? (1 Corinthians 14:24-25)

Aren't altar calls when unbelievers are 'convinced' or 'convicted'? That's been the model I've seen utilized in the past, and I would venture to say that the majority of believers going to church on Sunday morning have no clue that what they may prophesy from God can lead to the convincing of unbelievers in their midst. I don't completely understand how this works.

[“Convince” - Greek, elegchō, “1. to convict, refute, confute; generally with a suggestion of shame of the person convicted; by conviction to bring to the light, to expose; 2. to find fault with, correct; to reprehend severely, chide, admonish, reprove; to call to account, show one his fault, demand an explanation.” Thayer's Greek Definitions]

3.) “you can all prophesy one by one” (1 Corinthians 14:29-32)

Do Christians know that they can and should be prophesying in church fellowships? I'm not sure this is being taught or explained to congregants in most churches. How can this be implemented? I think it is best that the leadership of each church/fellowship determine before God how to best bring this passage to fruition in their midst. Ignoring the admonition will not make this statement in 1 Corinthians go away.

What I do know is that God is omnipotent, but in today's western church, it seems that as Jesus laid aside His divinity while a man, God lays aside His omnipotence when co-laboring with us in ministry. That makes no sense and is actually a limitation the church has placed upon God and itself.

May the church become equipped and act as God's powerfully enabled ambassadors of the good news! The world is waiting, and in some cases, turning to dark powers since we appear to them as 'kingdom talkers' and not "kingdom walkers".