

Message Six

**Prophesying—the Function of the Overcomers**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 14:1, 4b, 12, 23-24, 31, 39

- I. Prophesying in 1 Corinthians 14 is to speak for God and Christ and to speak forth God and Christ, which are to minister and dispense God and Christ to people:**
  - A. To prophesy is also to foretell, to tell beforehand, to predict.
  - B. In 1 Corinthians 14 prophesying does not include foretelling—vv. 3, 24.
- II. Prophesying in the way of 1 Corinthians 14 is carried out in the church meetings and is for the building up of the church—vv. 23-24, 4-5.**
- III. Prophesying in the way of 1 Corinthians 14 causes a seeking one to excel for the building up of the church—v. 12.**
- IV. All believers have the capacity to prophesy and the obligation to prophesy, and they should earnestly desire to prophesy:**
  - A. All believers have the capacity to prophesy—“you can all prophesy one by one”—vv. 31, 24.
  - B. All believers have the obligation to prophesy—vv. 23-24; cf. Rom. 1:14-15.
  - C. All believers should pursue, seek, and desire earnestly to prophesy—1 Cor. 14:1, 12, 39.
- V. In 1 Corinthians 14 Paul charges all the saints to prophesy in the meetings of the church:**
  - A. Paul uses certain verbs in this chapter to encourage the saints to prophesy:
    1. Pursue—v. 1.
    2. Desire—vv. 1, 39.
    3. Seek—v. 12.
    4. Excel—v. 12.
    5. Learn—v. 31.
  - B. Paul promotes all prophesying:
    1. “I desire that you *all*...would prophesy”—v. 5.
    2. “You can *all* prophesy”—v. 31.
    3. “If *all* prophesy”—v. 24.
    4. “He is convicted by *all*”—v. 24.
    5. “He is examined by *all*”—v. 24.
    6. “*Each one* has”—v. 26.
- VI. We need to see the composition of a prophecy according to the way in 1 Corinthians 14:**
  - A. First, we must have the knowledge and experience of God, Christ, and spiritual things—cf. 1 John 1:3.
  - B. Second, we must have the utterance to speak forth what we know and have experienced of God, Christ, and spiritual things—1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Pet. 4:11; Eph. 6:19-20.
  - C. Third, we need the sight under the divine enlightenment concerning the situation and environment in which we are—cf. Mal. 2:7; Rev. 1:20.

- D. Fourth, we need the instant inspiration of the indwelling Spirit that stirs up our spirit to speak—2 Tim. 1:6-7; 4:22; 1 Cor. 14:32.

## **VII. We need to see the patterns of prophesying with Elizabeth and Mary:**

- A. The pattern of Elizabeth's prophesying is seen in Luke 1:39-45:
1. The contents of these verses indicate that Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, lived in the presence of God and in the fellowship with the Lord, in a constant, continual communication with the Lord.
  2. These verses also show clearly that she possessed spiritual knowledge and concern for the Lord's move on the earth—cf. v. 44.
  3. When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary and the baby leaped within her, she was stirred up in her spirit—vv. 41, 44.
  4. Being stirred up in her spirit, she immediately received the instant inspiration of the Holy Spirit (v. 41b), and she had the utterance by exercising her spirit (v. 42a):
    - a. In Elizabeth's prophecy, she blessed Mary, the one who had come to her—vv. 42, 45a.
    - b. By exercising her spirit, Elizabeth was able to recognize the Lord's doing—v. 43.
    - c. By exercising her spirit, Elizabeth had the utterance to foretell the completion of the things spoken by the angel to Mary in Luke 1:30-37, to confirm them—v. 45.
- B. The pattern of Mary's prophesying is deeper and higher than that of Elizabeth—vv. 46-55:
1. First, her spirit exulted in God her Savior, and then her soul magnified the Lord—vv. 46-47.
  2. The utterance of Mary's prophesying was based on her knowledge of the Scriptures; her prophecy was composed of quotations from the Old Testament.
  3. The utterance of Mary's prophesying was based on her knowledge and experience of God—vv. 48-50.
  4. The utterance of Mary's prophesying was based on her knowledge of God's dealing with people—vv. 51-53.
  5. The utterance of Mary's prophesying was based on her knowledge of God's merciful doing to her forefathers—vv. 54-55.

## **VIII. We need to see the basic constituents of a prophecy:**

- A. The first constituent is the personal knowledge of the Scriptures:
1. We must be acquainted with the Word of God literally:
    - a. We must be acquainted with the Word of God literally as the Lord was in Matthew 4:4, 7, and 10—cf. Deut. 8:3; 6:16, 13.
    - b. We must be acquainted with the Word of God literally as the apostle Paul was in Romans 1:17; 3:4, 10-18.
  2. We must know the deep denotations and spiritual significances of the Word of God:
    - a. The Lord's understanding of Exodus 3:6, revealed in Matthew 22:31-32, is an illustration of knowing the deep denotations of the Word of God.
    - b. The apostle Paul's understanding of Psalm 8:4-6, revealed in Hebrews 2:5-9, is another illustration of this.

- c. We can also see Paul's knowledge of the deep denotations of the Word of God in his understanding of Psalm 2:7, as revealed in Acts 13:33.
  - d. The deep denotation of the Scriptures can be found also in John 3:16, which is one of the deepest verses in the Bible; in brief, this denotation is that the Triune God, revealed in Genesis 1, so loved the serpentine people of the satanic world that He gave His only begotten Son, the second of His Divine Trinity, to them in incarnation to die for them in the form of a serpent as their Substitute and become the life-giving Spirit, that those who believe in Him as their Redeemer might be regenerated with His eternal life by Himself as the life-giving Spirit, to be the many sons of God (John 1:12; Heb. 2:10) and His many brothers (Rom. 8:29) to constitute His Body, the church (Eph. 1:23), as His increase and His bride, to satisfy and express Him; this will be consummated in the New Jerusalem, as revealed in Revelation 21—22, to manifest the processed and consummated Triune God for the fulfillment of His eternal economy.
  - e. Paul's knowledge of the spiritual significance of the Word of God can be seen in his interpretation of Genesis 16:15 and 21:2, as revealed in Galatians 4:22-26; it can also be seen in his interpretation of Psalm 68:18 in Ephesians 4:8-10.
3. In gaining a personal knowledge of the Scriptures, we also need to receive spiritual enlightenment and spiritual vision in the Word of God—Isa. 1:1; 2:1; 13:1; 15:1; cf. 1 Cor. 14:26; Rev. 1:11; Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4; Rom. 15:16; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9.
- B. The second basic constituent of a prophecy is the personal experience of life—Acts 5:20; 1 John 1:3.
  - C. In speaking forth a proper prophecy, we must not adhere to personal experiences, testimonies, feelings, thoughts, opinions, affections, and reactions to any persons, matters, and things.

**IX. We need to see the basic obstacle to prophesying:**

- A. To prophesy is to speak for and to speak forth God and Christ; to speak in this way is to cooperate with the speaking Spirit of God and Christ—2 Sam. 23:2; Acts 6:10; cf. Heb. 1:1-2:
  1. The Spirit is always ready and expecting to speak with us and through us.
  2. However, we do not always cooperate with the Spirit to speak.
- B. Our obstacle in cooperating to speak with the Spirit is our natural man with our disposition and habit.
- C. The way to overcome our obstacle is to be against our natural man with our disposition and habit; we have been crucified on the cross (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20), and we should remain on the cross.

**X. The overcomers are the fulfillment of the typology of the prophets:**

- A. Therefore, when the apostle Paul speaks concerning how the church should meet, he stresses and uplifts prophesying—1 Cor. 14:1, 3-6, 24, 31, 39.
- B. Prophesying, speaking Christ into people, makes you an overcomer.
- C. Prophesying is the function of the overcomers.