Prophecy and Prophets

Introduction

Series Overview- All In, Holy Spirit, Spiritual Fruit vs Spiritual Gifts.

Holy Spirit glorifies and points to Jesus. Spiritual Fruit develops in us as we mature. Spiritual Gifts are given to any believer at anytime.

1 Corinthians 12:1 (ESV) 12 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.

1 Corinthians 12:4–7 (ESV) 4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities. but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

We said last week that there are 9 gifts listed here.

- 1. Word of Wisdom 2. Word of Knowledge. 3. Faith 4. Healing 5. Miracles 6. Prophecy 7. Discerning Spirits 8. Tongues and 9. Interpretation of Tongues.

Last week we talked about Speaking in tongues and the difference between speaking in tongues in a human language and praying in tongues in a heavenly language.

It is not complicated. The gift of tongues involves a known human language needed to help people understand the gospel that would not be available without the gift of the Spirit.

The grace of tongues is a prayer language, spoken in the Holy Spirit's heavenly language. It makes no sense to any human and occurs when the mind is silent and spirit is praying.

Any believer can be used by the Holy Spirit to speak in a foreign language. And every believer has a prayer language. That's it. It is simple...If in a service someone starts talking in a foreign language....and no one understands the language...it is not a message from God for the church. If they are praying in a language and anyone does understand it, it is not from God because the utterance of the Spirit are not known to man.

1 Corinthians 14:9–11 (ESV) 9 So with yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air. 10 There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, 11 but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me.

1 Corinthians 14:27–28 (ESV) 27 If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or a most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. 28 But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God.

So there are nine gifts listed here. Only the Holy Spirit possesses the gifts. He gives them, when He wants, to whom He wants, and which gift He wants. The purpose is always to glorify Jesus and advance the gospel message.

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

There is no limit to the number of spiritual gifts that you may experience in your lifetime. you may at different times be used by the Holy Spirit in different gifting. So having used a gift does not make you the owner.

The believer is a passive conduit for the work of the Spirit. We don't make anything happen. We can't make anything happen. We can be open to being available. We can be surrendered to the desires of the Holy Spirit. We can obey when prompted. But we don't own any gift, don't possess the gift and should not, In my opinion, claim the gift.

Claim the Gift? Yes. You will hear people say "I am a prophet" "I am a healer" when they should say, I am a sinner saved by grace who has in the past been used by the Holy Spirit to reveal...or heal...what He desired in a moment in the past to advance the gospel and glorify Jesus. Just as the Holy Spirit never promotes Himself, and only speaks of the glory of Jesus. I believe that in our gifting we should, never promote ourselves, and only glorify the Holy Spirit.

When I hear of a prophetic or healing service, I ask myself. If the person...oh let's say Benny Hinn....didn't show up or got sick....would no one get healed? Do they believe that it takes the presence of Benny Hinn to heal someone? Who is doing the healing? Is it God or Benny Hinn or has he confused the two?

Stones can cry out and if God desires any believer can heal or prophesy at any time. It is not dependent upon any man.

Since no one owns the gifts...they cannot be given to you by someone else, you can't be taught to have them or develop them. You don't grow in Spiritual gifts because the Holy Spirit doesn't need to improve.

Being used by the Holy Spirit through gifting is a humble and worshipful experience. It is not a stamp of maturity, spiritual one-up-manship, or pride.

You can't turn it on and you can't turn it off. You can't decide when it happens. When you see healing services at 7pm tonight where a healer is going to show up and heal you.....stay home a study your bible, pray and thank God that the Holy Spirit has given you discernment.

So we are learning about some of the Spiritual Gifts....Today we will look at prophecy.

Corinth Location

Map 1Las Vegas, New Orleans, San Francisco, Add to it a Port City like South Beach Miami Remove any and all moral barriers or issues You have Corinth

At its height it probably had a population of 200,000 free men and 500,000 slaves. It was a place where many religions and cultures mingled. It was under Roman rule and laws. The Worship of Many Gods was expected both culturally and politically. In Roman times the city was notorious as a place of wealth and indulgence. "To live as a Corinthian" meant to live in luxury and immorality

Corinth, at the junction of sea routes to the E and the W and of land routes to the N and S, was from ancient days one of the most important cities of GREECE PHOTO 2

Port City of huge commerce Ships carried across land...PHOTO 3 Sailors with time to kill As a seaport it was a meeting place of all nationalities and it offered all of the attendant vices. PHOTO 5

The temple of Aphrodite PHOTO on Acrocorinth was unique in Greece. Its priestesses were more than a thousand hierodouloi, "sacred slaves," who engaged in PROSTITUTION. (TEMPLE PHOTO 7

Ecstatic Utterances Women out of Control Issuing loud commands Drawing attention to themselves PHOTO 8 Encouraging the crowds with seductive suggestive words Long Braided hair Costly Jewelry Little if any modesty Constantly building the emotion in the temple Provocative Dancing That leads to prostitution and numerous sexual acts An orgy created to worship the Pagan God Aphrodite The Greek Goddess of Love and Beauty

Paul's Visits to Corinth

Established church in his Second Missionary Journey (Photo 8) He established the church there in about 50 AD Then he went to Ephesus and stayed there for 3 years During that time he started getting reports about Corinth

We know of 4 letters Paul wrote from Ephesus to Corinth. The first 2 have been lost but we can surmise their content. The first letter dealt with sexual immorality A huge problem amongst new believers in Corinth They wanted to include the worship of Jesus with other religious practices

The second letter also lost... Dealt with sexual immorality, social snobbery and dysunity The church in Corinth had gone wild

Paul received a letter from the Corinthians about theological confusion: marriage, divorce, participation in pagan religions, order within corporate worship, and the bodily resurrection of Christians

First Corinthians

It is in response to their letter that Paul writes a long letter of correction His third letter to the Corinthian church....that we call 1st Corinthians

Primary focus was to try to control some of the craziness Their worship services were beginning to look a lot like Aphrodite's Temple Loud ecstatic utterances of tongues that sounded like gibberish Women adorned and dressed to draw attention to themselves Seductive dancing with women trying to lead the services

No focus of unity...new believers....all about me...my wants...my desires Tongues had become prominent.. Because tongues draw attention to me

Paul wrote this stern letter...to remind them At the root of much of the immorality and idolatry in Corinth, was a lack of appreciation for the holiness that God requires of his people.

God's people were to be "set apart"—a people marked off from their culture— In addition, the dwelling of God's Spirit within each believer and the new unity that believers have with the resurrected, living Christ implied that the Corinthians needed to make a clean break from the moral impurity of their culture.

Context is critical to our study today In 1 Cor 12..Paul teaches them about the Spiritual Gifts IN 1 Cor 13.Paul teaches them of the importance of love as the most important And now in 1 Cor 14.. Paul transitions to speak about their public worship experiences

The context of this passage...is all about controlling what happens in God's house To create an environment where God can be found and pursued. Paul clearly defines the purpose of this passage

1 Corinthians 14:12 (ESV) 12 So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.

1 Corinthians 14:26 (ESV) 26 What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

1 Corinthians 14:33 (ESV) 33 For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.

1 Corinthians 14:40 (ESV) 40 But all things should be done decently and in order.

Paul tells them... Your church is under attack...Build it up Your worship services should not be a circus Peace..not confusion. All things...all things..done decently and in order

The church in Corinth is sadly.... Not a lot different from some churches today They have allowed cultural trends to malign the church The church reflects culture more than God God's holiness becomes absent...the message becomes confusing

Their is disorder rather than peace Sadly..they use the presence of the Holy Spirit As the reason for services that are out of control

Yet Paul clearly taught that when the Holy Spirit is truly active There is a sense of peace, order, and stability

Paul teaches us and teaches them... When culture attacks your church...build up the body of believers Paul is going to teach us about body building. Particularly in the setting of our public worship services

Turn to 1 Cor 14

1 Corinthians 14:1 (ESV) 14 Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.

The Spiritual Gift of a Word of Prophecy.. We are told to earnestly desire the Spiritual Gifts Especially that we may prophesy

Prophecy... Mind usually jumps to predicting the future We think of Nostradamos..The Mayan Calendar....or others who believe they can tell the future Our culture moves in throngs toward Psychics, Mystics, and Fortune Tellers Psychic Hotlines in American bring in \$400 Million per year

But besides psychics humans have an insatiable appetite To try to find some sense of peace By trying to predict the future. There are many options... Card reading...astrology...Palm reading...horoscopes...Ouija boards Communicating with dead spirits...8 Ball...Good luck charms... Many claims skills in "readings"....

Some claim to predict the future by interpreting... The way a rooster picks at grain... Patterns of melting or dripping wax By gazing into a fire Looking into crystals or a crystal ball Even tea leaves or coffee grounds

Some seem harmless... Magic 8 Balls targeted at children Girls made paper Horoscopes...Palm readings Fortune cookies

They all seem harmless... God calls them sin....

Leviticus 19:31 (ESV) 31 "Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the LORD your God.

Manasseh was an evil king

2 Chronicles 33:5–6 (ESV) 5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. 6 And he burned his sons as an offering in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, and used fortune-telling and omens and sorcery, and dealt with mediums and with necromancers. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger.

Leviticus 20:6–7 (ESV) 6 "If a person turns to mediums and necromancers, whoring after them, I will set my face against that person and will cut him off from among his people. 7 Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God.

Note that in all these passages... God is angered... Why? Because seeking anything about the future... Apart from God...violates the first and second commandment You shall have no other gods before me. And second..no idols

If you want to know the future.... Pray to the One who hold it in His hand Anything less is a horrible sin...no matter how harmless it seems

Look at God's response to Saul

1 Chronicles 10:13–14 (ESV) 13 So Saul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with the LORD in that he did not keep the command of the LORD, and also consulted a medium, seeking guidance. 14 He did not seek guidance from the LORD. Therefore the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.

The True Prophet Isaiah had warned them.

Isaiah 47:13 (ESV) 13 You are wearied with your many counsels; let them stand forth and save you, those who divide the heavens, who gaze at the stars, who at the new moons make known what shall come upon you.

Isaiah 8:19 (ESV) 19 And when they say to you, "Inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter," should not a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living?

My Small Group Story

Acts 19:18–20 (ESV) 18 Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. 19 And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.

If you have participated in any of these practices...now or in the past No matter how harmless you think they were... You need to confess that as sin Denounce that activity as not of God Repent...ask God to forgive you And commit to seeking God and God alone...about any concerns you have.. About your future

Also be careful with physicians. Sometimes we put more faith in the word of our physicians than in the true word of God. If you are sick and need healing, it comes from God. He may work through man....a doctor...but don't place your faith or bet your future on man.....trust on the One who holds it and truly knows.

Look at what happened to the early church in Acts The burned all of their stuff.. Then look at the next verse...

Acts 19:19–20 (ESV) 20 So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.

Their sin...was preventing the word of the Lord to advance But when they came clean with God... The Word of the Lord increased and prevailed mightily We will pick that theme up again next week. But if you feel stalled with God... These sins are often overlooked Confess them and repent.. Watch God increase and prevail mightily in your life

God never wants us... To Go to any source other than Him

All In Week 12 "Prophecy and Prophets" Frank Burns MDiv

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Parents you know how this feels You raise you kids...pray for them...pray over them.. Teach them...guide them...sacrifice for them You have been thinking about their future before they even existed You love them more than they will likely ever know

You have what they lack... Wisdom and Experience And your advice comes from a heart of selfless love You motive is solely in their best long term interest

Then one day usually around age 12, they have a decision to make about their future And rather than turning to you...they go to their friend..

Who has sacrificed nothing, has no real vested interest in their future, likely doesn't truly love them. And this teenager...with all the worldly experience of a prepubescent adolescent Seems to have more influence in your child's life Than you...and is now the quoted authority source for your child regarding truth

There seems to be an age where peer pressure trumps parent love You loved...raised...guarded..prayed..planned...and when they really need you.. They turn to a cheap substitute.. That is exactly how God feels.. When we turn anywhere but to Him regarding our future and truth. If the source is not God...We must reject it.

So lets look at the prophecies we should pay attention to..

The three that come from God. OT Prophets Jesus Himself Word of Prophecy from the Holy Spirit

The OT Prophets

People who God set aside to be His voice piece to the Jewish People They were selected by God...empowered by God...and spoke only for God They started their prophetic messages with a phrase..."Thus Says the Lord" or something similar

The message being...what I am about to say... Is not from me...it is God speaking through me. Prophets in the Bible included.... Samuel...Daniel..Jeremiah..Isaiah... Nathan...Ezekiel...Jonah and others They didn't turn to stars, Ouija boards, tarrot cards.. The only source of their truth was from God Himself

Deuteronomy 18:20–22 (ESV) 20 But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.' 21 And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?'— 22 when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

Note that real prophets...you should be afraid of They were often sent with a word of correction A warning or a rebuke. OT Prophets did not show up and say "good job" But the validity of the prophet was based on the outcome of the message

Jesus is a prophet

He was God...so when He spoke His words were true..all of them Jesus was the Word of God...The Word..the essence of God John said..."and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" Jesus was a prophet in the sense that every word He said Was from God.

Then Jesus leaves...And He gives some the Spiritual Gift of a Word of Prophecy It is the Holy Spirit...God...speaking through us.

Each member of the Trinity speaks to us. God the Father...spoke through Prophets And gave us the Holy Scriptures

God the Son...Jesus..spoke for Himself And the Gospels record His words

God the Holy Spirit speaks...through the Gift of The Word of Prophecy... And gives us the Holy Spirit...

The Word of Prophecy...

Prophecy is speaking forth the mind and heart of God as revealed by the Holy Spirit. Prophecy means hearing what God is saying and communicating that revelation to the Church in an appropriate time and manner. A message of encouragement from God delivered through a human vessel to another person or persons.

It is important to note what a Word of Prophecy is NOT It is not..

Discouragement...correction...rebuke..or judgment The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Prophecy... Unlike OT warnings and rebukes Are words of encouragement and comfort

The Holy Spirit...flowing though us... To encourage one another.. Literally putting courage into someone Paul said it this way...

1 Corinthians 14:3 (ESV) 3 On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation

The first question to ask to test a word of prophecy is this... Did that word of prophecy encourage, build up or comfort the hearer?

The second question is... Does the Word of Prophecy align with what I know to be true in Scripture?

Because a Word of Prophecy always stands under the Word of God

3 Benefits... Upbuilding...encouragement...and consolation Strengthen...encourage....comfort When someone offers a word of Prophecy....

Word of Prophecy vs Scripture Let me make this critical point

Scriptures are INSPIRED by God

Inspiration means that although God's word came to us through humans It was supernaturally protected from contamination or error So the Words written in the

original manuscripts of the Bible Are the actual words that God intended. God did not allow the human scribes to make mistakes

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV) 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

That's why we are never told to test Scripture. God assures us it is reliable.

A word of prophecy is revealed by God... But not inspired by God. Humans can mess it up

Prophetic revelation is a "now" word. Its specific direction for a specific situation. Like manna, it's only for today. Scripture, on the other hand, is eternal truth; it applies in every situation.

Prophecy also differs from Scripture in its reliability. Prophetic revelation is given via a fallible human vessel. It is not complete

1 Corinthians 13:8–10 (ESV) 8 Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

We prophesy in part... Our Word of Prophecy is incomplete It is almost never a full explanation Just a thought or idea...a piece of the over all puzzle. Remnant Example March 2014

Also a Word of Prophecy may be corrupted by the personality of the person who speaks it. For that reason, the Bible tells us that prophecy must always be tested

1 Corinthians 14:29 (ESV) 29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said.

1 Thessalonians 5:19–21 (ESV) 19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies, 21 but test everything; hold fast what is good.

In our church...Elders and Pastors... Test a Word of Prophecy Before it is shared with our congregation

With all of that understood...Next week we will go back to Corinth....to our passage. Just remember the Context...Public Worship Service Crazy Town of Corinth...totally out of control...despite two letters of warning

But before we go too far....I want to finish today by addressing one more related issue. The difference between prophecy and a prophet. We often throw these terms around as if they are interchangable and they are definitely not.

Prophecy as we have discussed, is an encouraging word that builds up the body of believers. It is a love note from God, spoken by the Holy Spirit, and it is His message. Again we are

passive participants. God using our voice box to speak to us about Jesus' love. We may be used by the Holy Spirit to share a word of encouragement or support to someone.

A Prophet Is one who speaks for God and reveals His truth. In the Old Testament and Early Church these people spoke for God and revealed new truth.

The early church clearly had people with roles of apostles and prophets. As the books of the New Testament were completed, there would not have been the same need for apostles and prophets to reveal new truth about God.

While God intended for prophecy to be a gift for us to encourage and build us up....Satan has sent false prophets to tear us down. Sadly, I have experienced several false prophets during my tenure as a lead pastor. Each time they almost destroyed the church and clearly struck some devastating blows to church unity.

Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Matt 24:11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Matt 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

False prophets fall into two categories: 1) those outside the church, who are really no grave danger to believers; and 2) those inside the church, wolves in sheep's clothing.

Paul told the Ephesian elders that men would rise up from their own midst and draw men away with false doctrines (Acts 20:29,30). These are the ones the church must beware of and be able to identify before they wreak unprecedented havoc. The Bible does give us guidelines for recognizing false prophets, apostles and teachers.

The major reason why there are so many false prophets in the church today (especially the charismatic church) is because we have lost the ability to exercise discernment. The Bible is so clear on how to recognize false prophets, you have to be blind to miss it. It baffles me how so many prominent pastors allow their congregation to be hoodwinked by traveling con men who call themselves prophets, but are nothing more than imposters looking for quick cash from gullible Christians.

Another reason is that Christians are so hungry for "revelations" outside of God's word – "personal revelations". The problem with these Christians is that they are more concerned with their own lives and affairs than the kingdom of God. These are the sheep who leave the protection of the fold, and make themselves open prey to ravenous wolves. The bible tells us to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow

Christ (Luke 9:23). If God's will is not good enough for you, then you are exactly what wolves in sheep's clothing are looking for.

2 Timothy 4:2–4 (ESV) 2 Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

Note that Timothy is instructed to Preach the Word...nothing else. People will want something different. They will turn to those who don't preach the word to get what they want.

Though there do not appear to be prophets today as in the New Testament period, two concessions must be noted. First, it is still possible God can speak through people in whatever way He chooses to reveal certain information at certain times. This "revealed" information will not contradict what God has already revealed about Himself in the Bible.

Second, the need for "prophets" in the sense of those who speak truth to a sinful culture are still of great value. Though these individuals may not be prophets in the same sense as the New Testament prophets, the role of bold speakers of God's truth remains greatly needed today. But these bold teachers are not revealing new truth from God, but rather bolding proclaiming what God has already proclaimed.

How do we discern false prophets today? What about a prophetic Word?

Matthew 7:15–20 (ESV) 15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

You will recognize them by their fruit. In other words they will have the fruit of the Spirit evident in their lives.

Galatians 5:22–23 (ESV) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

It really is simple if you are open to it. Wolves and False Prophets are sent by Satan. They can't really hide that. You don't see love of the Spirit in them....

Galatians 5:19–21 (ESV) 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

I can cut to the chase for you. If the focus in on themselves, their gifts, and their need for money....run. But even easier. The Spirit in you will begin to vibrate. He will make

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you uneasy. You will have a deep sense that this is not right. They will offer you something that is too good to be true. They play on your emotions and twist the Scriptures to entice you.

The actions of the Spirit of God go against your nature. They are usually against the trends of culture. They don't make sense to those without the Holy Spirit. Because the things of God make no sense to fallen man.

1 Corinthians 2:14–16 (ESV) 14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. 15 The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. 16 "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

We have the mind of Christ....He will guide us away from False teachers and prophets if we are tuned in. The problem is that many of us are not paying attention.

Next week we will continue to unpack the Spiritual Gift of Prophecy. It is a powerful gift. An enormous blessing to the church and one we will embrace together. Lets Pray.