



Life Principles Notes™

Living in the Power of the Holy Spirit

Part 4: The Gift of Prophecy

Summary:

Have you ever wondered why Christians behave as they do? What factors motivate our actions? One important answer is the nature of a believer's spiritual gift. Whatever you do in life, you will do your best and find the greatest sense of fulfillment by using your gift in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The gift of prophecy is one of seven motivational gifts identified by God's Word in Romans 12:6-8. Prophecy means much more than to foretell the future. It also means "to speak the truth" or

"to proclaim." Very seldom does the Lord God reveal a future event to us. The motivational gift of prophecy is primarily concerned with speaking forth the truth.

The Word of God helps us to understand characteristics and avoid misunderstandings associated with the gift of prophecy, and it shows us how we use that gift when we walk in the Spirit.

Key Passage: Romans 12:6-8

Supporting Scripture: Matthew 14:25-29; Luke 5:8; John 6:68; 1 Peter 3:14.

Scriptural Principles:

1 Those with the gift of prophecy have a strong need for verbal expression.

Believers with this gift are likely to be the very first to speak in any situation. They rise and state their feelings, particularly when they observe some act of injustice. Peter is an excellent example of someone with the gift of prophecy, because he was always the first disciple to speak out. Those with this gift don't necessarily speak publicly, but they often give counsel. They tell us exactly what we should do, then they check with us to see if we did it.

2 Those with the gift of prophecy have a strong ability to discern the character and motives of other people.

Christians with this gift may walk into a room and immediately sense any harmony or discord among those present. They are very sensitive to the hidden motives of people, because the Spirit of God has given them the power of discernment. They are also committed to God, and therefore prone to correcting behavior that isn't true to His Word. Christians with the gift of prophecy are often misunderstood because of their quick judgments.

3 Those with the gift of prophecy become wholeheartedly involved.

Believers with this gift devote all their effort to every activity in which they become involved. Their nature is to pay whatever price is necessary to get a job done. Therefore, they have little patience with those who continue to spend valuable time laboring too much over a decision. They make their choice quickly, get to work, and expect others to do the same. Peter exemplified this tendency when he jumped into the water at Jesus' invitation to step from his boat and walk on the sea. (Matthew 14:25-29) These believers work with all their heart and conviction.

4 Those with the gift of prophecy are open to correction.

Because they are committed to obeying God's Word, these believers are willing to be shown their spiritual shortcomings. They enjoy seeing righteousness in the lives of others, but they want to see it in their own lives as well. Therefore, they are dedicated to doing the right thing. Peter doubted Jesus when He told him to go out to sea and put down the fishing nets, but when the bounty of Jesus came through, Peter saw his mistake, and fell at the feet of Jesus saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man" (Luke 5:8).

5 Those with the gift of prophecy are extremely loyal.

In marriage, among their children or parents, or in any other setting, believers with the gift of prophecy always show loyalty. The gift will not allow them to be fickle, and they will stand beside even those friends or leaders who have done wrong, not to justify their sin but to help them. Jesus once asked His disciples if they, too, were going to desert Him when so many others did. Peter replied, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

6 Those with the gift of prophecy are willing to suffer for what is right.

Believers with this spiritual gift are greatly opposed to wrong and injustice. They will take a stand for what is right, even if it requires sacrifice. Peter wrote, "But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed" (1 Peter 3:14). How many Christians today are willing to stand by the church during hard times?

7 Those with the gift of prophecy are persuasive in defining truth.

You will never be in doubt about the beliefs of someone with the gift of prophecy. They speak their convictions with great clarity. They also validate their beliefs through the Word of God. Believers with this gift will always make certain that their words are understood, because they want their listeners to do the right thing. Therefore, they will take care to speak at the level of understanding that is appropriate for that audience.

8 What are some common misunderstandings about the gift of prophecy?

Those with the gift of prophecy are often seen as being intolerant because of their strong sense of right and wrong. They are thought to be poor listeners because they are eager to proclaim the truth. Their frankness may be viewed as harshness, and their interest in the whole group may be misinterpreted as lack of interest in a particular individual. Because they find new methods of accomplishment, they are accused of using gimmicks. These believers focus on their personal decision, and others accuse them of neglecting spiritual growth. Finally, their public boldness and strict standards can hinder them from experiencing intimate personal relationships.

9 What if someone with this gift fails to walk in the Spirit?

Those with the gift of prophecy are always truthful in the Spirit, but walking in the flesh will make them deceptive. Their sincerity in proclaiming the truth will quickly become hypocrisy when they are not allowing the Spirit to direct their lives, and their strong commitment to living morally will give way to impurity. Although this gift encourages boldness, when we live in the flesh we become fearful and ineffective. When walking in the flesh, this believer will be less forgiving and more prone to cruelly reject others.

Conclusion:

Walking in the Spirit makes all the difference in your life. We are joyful and fulfilled when we let God guide and direct how we use the gifts He gives us. Yet we are ineffective and frustrated when we try to live under our own power.

My friend, it is essential that you and I walk in the Spirit every day, whatever we do. When we walk in His power, we keep in step with God's plan

for our lives. Then, when we need to be corrected, God will send someone with the gift of prophecy to correct us in a loving and constructive way.

Do you have a humble, correctable attitude? If so, you will grow stronger and more obedient, and then you can begin to operate effectively through your spiritual gift. 🙏

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