The Gift of Prophecy

~Other Speakers S-Z: Smith Wigglesworth:

In 1 Cor. 12:10, speaking of the diversities of gifts by the same Spirit, Paul writes, "To another prophecy." We see the importance of this gift from 1 Cor. 14:1, where we are told to follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that we may prophesy. We see also that he that prophesieth speaketh unto man to edification, and exhortation and comfort. How important it is then that we should have this gift in manifestation in the church in order that the saints might be built up and made strong and filled with the comfort of God. But with this as all other gifts we should see that it is operated by the Spirit's power and brought forth in the unction of the Spirit; so that everyone who shall hear prophecy, as it is brought forth by the Spirit of God, shall know that it is GOD who is bringing forth that which is for the edification of those who hear. It is the Spirit of God who takes of the deep things of God and reveals them, and unctionizes the prophet to give forth that which is a revelation of the things of God.

Utterance in prophecy has a real lifting power and gives real light on the truth to those who hear. Prophecy is never a mind reflection, it is something far deeper than this. By means of prophecy we receive that which is the mind of the Lord; and as we receive these blessed, fresh utterances through the Spirit of the Lord the whole assembly is lifted into the realm of the spiritual. Our hearts and minds and whole bodies receive a quickening through the Spiritgiven word. As the Spirit brings forth prophecy we find there is healing and salvation and power in every line. For this reason it is one of the gifts that we ought to covet.

While we appreciate true prophecy, we must not forget that the Scriptures warn us in no uncertain manner concerning that which is false. In 1 John 4:1 we are told, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." And John tells us how we can tell the difference between the true and the false, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; but this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come." There are voices which seem like prophecy and some have got into terrible darkness and bondage through listening to these counterfeits of the true gift of prophecy. True prophecy is always Christ-exalting, magnifying the Son of God, exalting the blood of Jesus Christ, encouraging the saints to praise and worship the true God. False prophecy deals with things that do not edify and is designed to puff up its hearers and to lead them into error.

Many picture Satan as a great, ugly monster with great ears, eyes and a tail; but the Scriptures give us no such picture of him. He was a being of great beauty whose heart became lifted up. He is manifesting himself everywhere today as an angel of light. He is full of pride, and if you don't watch he will try to make you think you are somebody. This is the weakness of most preachers and most men-the idea of being somebody! There are none of us who are anything, and the more we know we are nothing, the more God can make us a channel of His power. May the dear Lord save us from all these pride side-lines they are the devil's traps. True prophecy will show you that Christ is all in all, and that you are in yourself less than nothing and vanity. False prophecy will not magnify Christ but will make you think that after all you are going to be some great one. You may be sure that such is inspired by "the chief of the sons of pride."

I want to warn you against the foolishness of continually seeking to hear voices. Look in the Bible. Here we have the voice of God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, and hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son. Don't run away with anything else. If you hear the voice of God it will be on the line of the Scriptures of truth given in the inspired Word. In Rev. 22:18, 19 we see the danger of attempting to add to or take from the prophecy of this Book. True prophecy, as it comes forth in the power of the Spirit of God, will neither take from nor add to the Scriptures, but will intensify and quicken that which already has been given to us of God. The Holy Ghost will bring to our remembrance all the things that Jesus said and did. True prophecy will bring forth things new and old out of the Scriptures of truth and wall make them living and powerful to us.

Some may ask, "If we have the Scriptures, why do we need prophecy?" The Scriptures themselves answer this question. God has said that in the last days He will pour out of His Spirit upon all flesh, "and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." The Lord knew that in these last days prophecy would be a real means of blessing to us, and that is why we can count on Him giving us, by means of the Spirit, through His servants and His handmaids, true prophetic messages.

I want to give you a warning concerning listening to voices. I was at a meeting in Paisley in Scotland and came in touch with two young women. One of them wore a white blouse but it was smeared with blood. They were in

a great state of excitement. These two girls were telegraph operators and were precious young women, having received the Baptism in the Spirit. They were both longing to be missionaries. But whatever our spiritual state is we are subject to temptations. An evil power came to one of these young women and said, "If you will obey me, I will make you one of the most wonderful missionaries that ever went out." This was just the devil or one of his agents acting as an angel of light. One of these young women was captured immediately and she became so excited that her sister saw there was something wrong and asked the overseer to allow them to be free for a time.

As she took her into a room, the power of Satan, endeavoring to imitate the Spirit of God, manifested itself in a voice, and led this young woman to believe that the missionary enterprise would be unfolded that night if she would obey. This evil spirit said, "Don't tell anybody but your sister." I reckon that everything of God can be told everybody. If you cannot preach what you live, your life is wrong. If you are afraid of telling what you do in secret. Some day it will be told from the housetop. Don't think you will get out of it. That which is pure cometh to the light He that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

The evil power went on to say to this girl, "You go to the railroad station tonight, and there will be a train coming in at 7 :32. Buy a ticket for yourself and your sister. Then you will have six pence left. You will find a woman in a carriage dressed as a nurse, and opposite her will be a gentleman who has all the money you need." She bought her ticket and had just six pence left. The first thing came right. Next, the train came in at exactly 7:32. But the next thing did not come. They ran from the top to the bottom of that railroad train before it moved out and nothing turned out as they had been told. As soon as the train moved out the same voice came and said, "Over on the other platform." All that night until 9:30 these two young women were rushed from platform to platform. As soon as it was 9:30 this same evil power said, "Now that I know you will obey me, I will make you the greatest missionaries." Always something big! They might have known it was all wrong. This evil power said, "This gentleman will take you to a certain bank at a certain corner in Glasgow where he will put all that money in for you." Banks are not open at that time of night in Glasgow. If she had gone to the street this evil spirit mentioned, there probably would not have been a bank there. All they needed was a little common sense and they would have seen that it was not the Lord. If you have your heart open for these kind of voices you will soon get into a trap. We must ever remember that there are many evil spirits in the world.

Were these two people delivered? Yes, after terrible travail with God, they were perfectly delivered. Their eyes were opened to see that this thing was not of God but of the devil. These two sisters are now laboring for the Lord in China and doing a blessed work for Him. If you do get into error on these lines, praise God there is a way out. I praise God that He will break us down till all pride leaves us. The worst pride we can have is the pride of exaltation of self.

Paul wrote at the commandment of the Lord, "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the others judge. If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." If you are not humble enough to allow your prophecy to be judged, it is as surely wrong as you are wrong. Prophecy has to be judged. A meeting such as this one that Paul suggests would certainly be the greatest meeting you ever had. Praise God, the tide will rise to this. It will all come into perfect order when the church is bathed and lost in the great ideal of only glorifying Jesus. Then things will come to pass that will be worth while.

Coupled with prophecy you will have the fruit of the Spirit that is goodness. They were holy men who spoke in prophecy in days of old as the Holy Ghost prompted them, and so today the prophet who can be trusted is a man that is full of goodness, that goodness which is the fruit of the Spirit. But when he gets out of this position, and rests upon his own individuality, he is in danger of being puffed up and becoming an instrument for the enemy.

I knew some people who had a wonderful farm, very productive, in a very good neighborhood. They listened to voices telling them to sell everything and go to Africa. These voices so unhinged them that they had scarcely had time to sell out. They sold their property at a ridiculous price. The same voices told them of a certain ship they were to sail on. When they got to the port they found there wasn't a ship of that name. The difficulty was this, to get them not to believe these false voices. They said perhaps it was the mind of the Lord to give them another ship, and the voice soon gave them the name of another ship. When they reached Africa they knew no language that was spoken there. But the voice did not let them stop. They had to come back, brokenhearted, shaken through, and having lost all confidence in everything. If these people had had sense to go to some men of God who were filled with the Spirit and seek their counsel, they would soon have been persuaded that these voices were not of God. But listeing to these voices always brings about a spiritual pride that makes a man or

woman think that they are superior to their brethren, and that they are above taking counsel of men who they think are not so filled with the Spirit as they are. If you hear any voices that make you think that you are superior to those whom God has put in the church to rule the church, watch out, that is surely the devil.

We read in the Revelation that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. You will find that true prophetic utterance always exalts the Lamb of God.

No prophetic touch is of any good unless there is fire in it. I never expect to be used of God till the fire burns. I feel that if I ever speak, it must be by the Spirit. At the same time remember that the prophet must prophesy according to the measure of faith. If you rise up in your weakness, but rise up in love because you want to honor God, and just begin, you will find the presence of the Lord upon you. Act in faith and the Lord will meet you.

May God take us on and on into this glorious fact of faith, that we may be so in the Holy Ghost that God will work through us on the line of the miraculous and on the lines of prophecy, where we shall always know that it is no longer we but He who is working through us, bringing forth that which is in His own divine good pleasure.