

Distinction, Authority, and the Unity of the Church: Part II

**Ephesians 4:7-16
November 18, 2007**

A Brief Sketch of Verses 7-16:

1. As Jesus Christ has saved each person in the church, so he has gifted each person in the church. (vv. 7-10)
2. Jesus Christ appoints relatively few to be leaders in the church and he vests them with authority. (v. 11, Heb. 13:17)

A Brief Sketch of Verses 7-16:

3. Jesus Christ commands these leaders to be humble servants of the church and not to lord it over the church. (vv. 1-3)
4. Jesus Christ uses these leaders to equip the rest of the church with gifts for ministry. (v. 12)

A Brief Sketch of Verses 7-16:

5. As the whole church is equipped and utilizes their gifts for the good of the whole, the body of Christ is built up in love. (vv. 12 & 16)

The Office of Apostle:

1. I fixed some details from last week!
2. The reason this issue is so important is because it effects the way we interact with the broader body of Christ.
3. My view on the existence of modern day apostles is shifting.

Philippians 2:25-26

*I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and **your messenger** [apostle] and minister to my need, for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill.*

Prophets & Prophecy:

- The Greek word for “prophet” is a compound word:
 - “pro” means before
 - “phemi” means to speak or declare
- Therefore, a prophet is one who declares the word of the Lord before or in front of others.

Prophets & Prophecy:

- A prophet is one who tells forth or foretells the word of the Lord.
 - “Tells forth” means to speak into a situation with penetrating insight granted by God, through the Holy Spirit.
 - “Foretells” means to accurately predict the future by revelation from God, through the Holy Spirit.

Luke 1:67-80

And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

Luke 1:67-80

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

What is the Function of Prophecy?

1. By granting prophetic insight God means to reveal himself (Ezekiel; Is. 48:3-8).
2. By granting prophetic insight God means to confirm the truth of the gospel (Hebrews 2:3-4).
3. By granting prophetic insight God means to upbuild, encourage, and console the whole church (1 Cor. 14:1-3).

What is the Function of Prophecy?

4. By granting prophetic insight God means to convict unbelievers of their sin (1 Cor. 14:23-25).

Summary:

A prophet is one who tells forth or foretells the word of the Lord based on wisdom granted to him by God, through the Holy Spirit, and prophecy is simply the content of that wisdom. The function of prophecy is (1) to reveal God, (2) to confirm the gospel, (3) to build up the church, and (4) to convict unbelievers of their sin.

For Next Week...

Please take some time and meditate on...

- 1. 1 Corinthians 14 (whole chapter)*
- 2. 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21*
- 3. Any other texts from the list I gave you*