

The Waiting Room - 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22 - Last One

We have seen that prophecy has a very broad definition; it can include both predicting the future as well as the presentation of God's will for the present. We have seen that the Bible refers to its entire contents as prophecy.

--Our text, on the other hand, deals specifically with prophetic utterances or, as I have defined it, the presentation of the mind of God that comes from teaching, preaching and speaking gifts within the local fellowship.

--In order for this to work, we have to be part of and faithful to a local body—The mind of God for the local believer will come from the local church.

--We have proliferation of this form of despising prophecy because many are not faithful, or they hop around, or they see no real need to be a part of a local body.

--Why do we have leaders? Because God leads us through them. "But they are sinners." Of course, this is why the caveat of "test all things, hold that which is good."

--The Bible describes two offices: elders or pastors, and deacons. Every Christian should be able to say, "I have those that I see every week who know me and I'm submitting myself to them."

--If this is not true for you, you are despising prophecy, you are hurting yourself and your local church, and you are tolerating sin in your life.

1. God is continually speaking to us, directing us, leading us that is why we need to be careful not to quench the Spirit as He does this. John 10:1-9; 27-30

--We must be good at listening.

--A major part of our daily requests to God should be "help me to discern Your voice."

--Again, the best way to know the will of God is to do the will of God.

Some feel that God doesn't speak anymore to us since the Bible has been finished and that He now only speaks through the Scriptures.

--The Bible is the main avenue through which God speaks to us and all other words we receive have to be weighed against what God has said: "**test all things**"

--Nevertheless, God does speak through other avenues which include prayer, circumstances, other believers.

--Honestly, God can speak through any avenue He chooses: He has spoken through donkeys, whirlwind, whisper, rooster, storm, a burning bush, and a giant fish.

--He also, second only to the Bible, will speak through the giftedness that He has given to the Body of Christ.

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, *let us use it* in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness." (Nearly half are speaking gifts)

Romans 12:6-8

"He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers (*all speaking gifts*), ¹² for the equipping of the ¹³ saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the ¹⁴ knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature ¹⁴ which belongs to the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ ¹⁴As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness ¹⁵ in deceitful scheming; ¹⁵ but ¹⁵ speaking the truth in love, ¹⁵ we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even Christ*,"

Ephesians 4:11-15

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*:⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by ^{the} same Spirit,¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues." (5 out of 9 are speaking gifts)

I Corinthians 12:7-10

FYI, I'm not a cessationist (a person who believes some gifts have ceased to exist in the church). I am not because I do not find the Bible teaching this.

--The gifts of the New Testament have not ceased for the New Testament church and the majority of those gifts are communication or speaking gifts as we have seen.

God is speaking; we must be good at listening.

--Are you listening? Are you really open to any and all things He may have to say to you?

Hearing in this sense doesn't mean God will speak to you about what you want to hear as first priority, but that you will hear according to His priorities.

--It is God speaking; He sets the agenda and the order of importance, and our job is to say "Yes, Sir!"

To hear in this since means literally that you are obedient to what you hear.

--There is no biblical hearing of God that is not combined with obedience.

--"My sheep hear MY voice" means that they hear and are obeying what they heard.

--God doesn't speak just to be heard—He's not giving a concert or singing a lullaby; He's directing us!

Again, to know the will of God you have do the will of God—why would God direct you when you already aren't doing the last thing He told you?

--To hear from God requires obedience to what you already know.

--That means you're faithful to church, to Bible study and prayer.

--That also means you're willing to hear whatever He has for you.

--We have way too many Christians who are not disciples—they are doing what they want and not what He wants.

--Jesus says, "why do you say to Me, 'Lord, Lord' and do not do what I say?"

God speaks through His Word, His church, prayer, and circumstances. As most of you know, we came in on a combination of all these things: Bud Abbott saying "I feel that you have a new assignment for Bill"; our good friend having a dream where she saw us leaving; dates and circumstances that sealed the deal for us.