

resulting in knowledge!

2) For edifying. (v. 3). This is the Word meaning to "build up." kGod is not concerned with anything which breaks up (cf. v. 12).

3) For exhorting. (v. 3). This is the common word for "calling alongside." It is used in reference to the Spirit as the Paraclete (John 16:7). The revelation really gets to the heart!

4) For comforting. (v. 3). The word used here is somewhat synonymous with the previous term which is so translated later (v. 31). It is a stimulating term and suggests incentive. Take any one of these specifics and they express what the Word of Gos Should do for every child of His today!

Conclusion Before thw written Word of God, the gift of prophecy was exercised at the will of God (1 Cor. 12:11). He sovereignly bestowed it for His own glory. The written Word today has the same ministry. Do you heed it as men listened to prophets earlier? Amen.

## THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

"Prophecy and Tongues" (1)

1 Cor. 14:1-40

### Introduction

1. Gifts may be temporary in the plan of God. This appears certain in view of the transitoriness of the apostolate (Acts 1:21-26). When the apostles moved off the scene, those gifts related to them did also (2 Cor. 12:12).

2. One gift which was "set at naught" by the Lord is prophecy (1 Cor. 13:8). But until that which was perfect had come (the full complete special revelation of God in the Word), prophecy was God's way of getting the special revelation to His own. In Paul's day this gift was operative.

3. Both prophecy and tongues are studied in detail by Paul in this chapter. Mark the truths related to the prophetic gift:

1. The gift of prophecy RECORDED.
  - a. In lists. That the gift of prophecy was extant in the early church is clear. It is found in at least three lists of gifts (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10; 28). It is given a sense of priority amongst the Corinthians (1 Cor. 12:28).
  - b. In uses. The will of God was not known in the early church thru the written revelation as it is now possessed. Rather, God made known Himself and His purpose by direct special revelation. The Book of Acts is a transition book and gives evidence of such revelations and prophetic utterances (Acts 11:27, 28; 13:1; 16:6, etc.).
  - c. In words. Semantically, the word "prophecy" means to speak forth or before. But it was critical that a prophetic word include a special revelation. Furthermore, the prophet had to have divine guidance in the declaration of the revelation corresponding to the inspiration of the written Word of God. The message which the prophet delivered had to bear with it the authority of God. It was free from error and was a special divine revelation from God Himself!

2. The gift of prophecy EXERCISED.

a. Temporally. As noted above, this gift had a definite time relationship with the apostolate. With the passing of the one, the other followed. Actually, the apostolic period was a tremendous time for doctrinal transition. The N.T. was not written and there was a specific need for an authoritative source of revelation concerning the will of God. Guidance was needed in the formulating of the doctrine of the church. The "gift of prophecy" was the divine method of obtaining the necessary goals in these matters.

With the completion of the canon of Scripture, there was no further requirement for the gift. It passed away by divine arrangement. Now God reveals His will through His Word and not beyond it! Scripture proves that prophecy and special revelation (knowledge included) were set at naught by God (1 Cor. 13:8). Severe penalties are in store for those who trifle with this truth (Rev. 22:18, 19).

b. Orderly. When the gift was actually exercised in the apostolic era, it was done in a way consistent with God's plan of order (1 Cor. 14:40). It was assumed that the saints would gather quite frequently (present tense of verb "come together" in v. 26). When this happened, everything was with a view to edification. There was a proper course for prophets to follow (vv. 29-31). There was no sense of confusion (v. 33). There was careful discernment throughout to make certain that the true Word and Will of God was presented (v. 29).

c. Submissively. No prophet operated with his gift indiscriminately. He himself was subject to self control and order (Lv. 32). The wild idea that one cannot withhold himself is thoroughly and soundly rejected by the Bible though often professed in modern movements. In true prophecy outlined in the Word, self consciousness and self command were never lost by the prophet. God gives a reason for this (v. 33). He is the Author of peace and not commotions (cf. Luke 21:9; James 3:8). It should be the way in all the assemblies of the children of God.

3. The gift of prophecy PURPOSED.

a. For believers. The provision of special revelation has a prime concern for the children of

God (v. 22). The participial form of the verb used for "believe" suggests an act which carries over into a character. In contrast with tongues, prophecy is for believers.

b. For unbelievers. Prophecy has a double-barreled involvement. When the unsaved man hears the Word of prophecy, something happens to him. He is styled as an unlearned person (v. 24). The original Greek term used means one who is without professional knowledge, unskilled. He is without question an unbeliever (cf. v. 23). Prophecy brings him directly to conviction. (v. 24). The verb employed here is the same as used in John (16:7-11). Hence, the gift of prophecy obviously involves the work of the Spirit through special revelation. Deep conviction is the result. Furthermore, the word "judged" is the verb meaning to "put on trial or sift judicially." Tremendous and person-shaking events follow this conviction and judging (cf. v. 26):

1) Heart manifested. It is difficult for one to see himself as he really is before God. Only the convicting work of the Spirit will bring this about. This sort of experience is a rarity today. Too often the sinner is given a sweet pill which is so palatable anyone could swallow it and hence reports of many being saved are circulated.

2) God worshipped. The verb "falling down" is aorist pointing to an abrupt action. The low position indicates the deep conviction of the Spirit. It is concluded with worship. This is what all true conviction ultimately brings.

3) Mouth opened. A pronouncement is given in the face of prophecy that God indeed is in the midst of the assembly. When the Bible (God's special revelation) is lifted up in these days, it should produce similar results! Away then with other messages! The particle used for "truth" is interestingly used elsewhere (Luke 24:34).

c. For specifics. Prophecy has some definite designs and these are carefully outlined in the Word.

1) For learning. (v. 31). The prophetic gift had informational concerns. It is revelation