

Only Two Limitations For Prophecy In The Church



Foundations (Day 230)
by Derek Prince

Yesterday we saw how Paul encourages us as believers to earnestly desire for spiritual gifts. God wants every member of the church to function in spiritual gifts. If we do not see that in practice, it is not because He does not want to give those gifts, but because we do not always reach for them.

Paul says also:

> "Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret." (1 Cor. 14:13)

God's Word never tells us to pray for something out of God's will. Therefore, we know it is God's will for anyone who speaks in tongues to also interpret that utterance. Since Paul has already said it is God's will for all to speak in tongues, it is therefore also God's will for all to interpret.

> "For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged." (1 Cor. 14:31)

Nothing could be plainer than this. It is within the revealed will of God for all the members of the church to exercise the spiritual gift of prophecy.

Paul imposes only two limitations. Here in the verse just quoted he says, "One by one." That is, believers are to exercise this gift by turns, not more than one believer prophesying at any one time. The purpose of this is obvious and is stated a few verses further on. It is to avoid confusion.

The second limitation on the use of the gift of prophecy is mentioned by Paul a few verses before:

> "Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others [the other members] judge." (1 Cor. 14:29)

Paul here limits the number who may prophesy in any service to "two or three." The purpose of this is that the whole service should not be monopolised by one particular form of spiritual manifestation. The exercise of prophecy has its

place in the service, but it does not make up the whole service. The ministry of the Holy Spirit through God's people is much more varied than that. Many other different forms of ministry are required to make up a complete service.

Devotional

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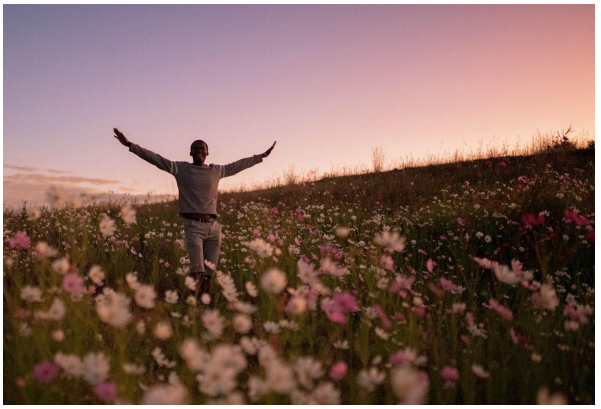

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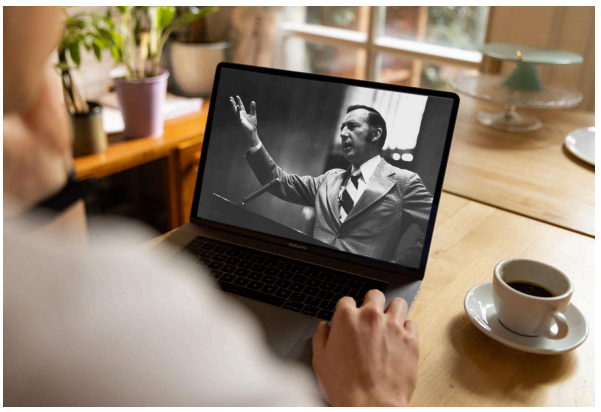

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