

Prophecy in the New Testament Church

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1. How many levels of the prophetic are there in the NT church? What are they?

- The prophecy of scripture (*2Pet. 1:20-21*)
- The spirit of prophecy (*1 Sam. 10:10-11, Rev. 19:10*)
- The gift of prophecy (*1 Cor. 12:10, 1 Cor. 14:21, 14:31*)
- The office of the Prophet (*Eph. 2:20, 4:11*)

2. Who was the last of the Old Testament prophets? Why?

- John the Baptist (*John 1:6-7*). Because he was the last Old Covenant prophet to foretell the coming of the Messiah.

3. What is the difference between NT and OT prophets/ prophecy?

In the OT, prophets were servants of God who mostly operated alone and spoke the will of God for to His people. They generally spoke words of warning, judgment and encouragement to Israel and Judah, and answered only to God Himself. In the New Testament, prophets are accountable to and are an integral part of the Body of Christ, and speak to bear witness of Christ in order to build up believers.

4. For what three purposes do we prophesy in the NT church? (*1 Cor. 14:3*)

- To **edify** (build up, strengthen) (*1 Cor. 14:3, 1 Cor. 14:31*)
- To **exhort** (convince, convict, encourage) (*1 Cor. 14:3*)
- To **comfort** (reassure, encourage) (*1 Cor. 14:3*)

5. Can everyone prophesy in the NT church? What are the two types of prophecy? What are the differences between the two?

Yes. (*1 Cor. 14:21, 14:31*)

“**Forthtelling**”- speaking forth the “mind of God”- both preaching and personal prophecy can fall into this category.

“**Foretelling**”- Prediction of future events.

6. Are the criteria for authenticity of prophets, prophecies and/ or prophetic words the same in the NT as in the Old? What were they?

No, they are not the same, yet technically, they are.

According to Deut. 13:1-5, a prophet who led Israel to serve other gods was to be put to death, not because his prophecy did not come to pass, but because of whom he served, and his desire to lead the people away from God. NT prophecy is judged by the criteria of **edification, exhortation and comfort**. Also, when speaking of “false prophets,” Jesus said that we would know them “by their fruit,” (*Matt. 7:15-16*) or by the character of their lives, as opposed to man’s natural tendency to accept men by their giftings. Besides this, the surest way to test a prophecy or the one who prophesies is by the infallible **Word of God**.

7. Who is prophecy judged by in the NT Church?

By the church body and by the church leadership according to 2 Cor. 13:1.

8. What does Paul mean when He says, “And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets?”

Although one’s unction to speak may be from the Holy Spirit, because “God is not the author of confusion,” He does not usurp our ability to exercise self-control, so that the meeting can be done in “decency and order.”

9. What does “try the spirit by the Spirit” mean? Is it found in Scripture? If so, where?

It means nothing. This saying is just one of many that is used in the church, yet has no biblical basis whatsoever. The correct biblical directive is from 1 John 4:1- “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

We try, or test these spirits by Jesus’ admonition that we would know them by their “fruit,” or character. John goes on to state that “And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God...” which means more than a verbal acknowledgement of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, but a lifestyle which exalts and exemplifies Christ.

10. Is it wrong to want to prophesy? Why or why not?

No. Paul said that we should “covet (or desire) to prophesy (*1 Cor. 14:26, 14:39*).