

With the Spirit and Understanding

by G.W. North

The gift of Prophecy is superior to Tongues because it engages both the spirit and understanding, making it universal and adaptable.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 14:1

Topics: "Spiritual Gifts", "Prophecy vs. Tongues"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes the superiority of Prophecy over Tongues in the church, explaining that while Tongues engages only the spirit, Prophecy involves both spirit and understanding, making it more beneficial for communication and comprehension among believers. He clarifies that both gifts are divinely given for spontaneous utterances in the church, but they serve different purposes and should not be conflated with preaching or other forms of speech. North argues that Prophecy is adaptable and universally applicable, while Tongues is a specific expression of prophetic utterance, highlighting the need for clarity in understanding these spiritual gifts.

Transcript

Having acquainted ourselves of these things, we must note that the real purpose for Paul's emphasis upon the superiority of Prophecy enables a man to speak in the Church with both his spirit and his understanding, and is set here in contrast with speaking with Tongues. This is because when speaking with Tongues only the spirit of a man is engaged, his understanding remains entirely inoperative and unfruitful. Considering this, it is at once obvious why Tongues is inferior to Prophecy. Tongues is only a specific demonstration of prophetic utterance, but Prophecy is the overall gift, capable of universal adaptability to any situation needing divine thought and pronouncement, and is profitable to the intelligence of both speaker and hearer alike.

Herein lies the superiority of the latter over the former. Both these gifts are given by God to be the basic media of all unprepared, unpremeditated utterances spoken directly in the churches by Him throughout the length of this age. There are also other forms of speech which are sanctified and used by God, such as preaching, teaching, counselling etc., which are for use both in and out of church gatherings, and to be effective for God all of these must to some degree have a prophetic quality about them. But none of them is to be confused in thought with the special gift of Prophecy, any more than they are ever imagined to be the gift of Tongues.

It is as manifestly unwarrantable to think or say that God intends us to believe that the gift of Prophecy is really nothing other than preaching, as it is wholly improper and incredibly stupid to say that the gift of Tongues is only Preaching in other languages. Although Prophecy and Tongues (with Interpretation) are most often expressed in the form of preaching, that is as declarations unto men, they are no more Preaching than Preaching is Prophesying, even though in course of utterance at times preaching partakes of a prophetic nature.

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