

Dealing with them at your Door

Some Non-Prophet ORGANIZATIONS

Mark W. Fenison, Ph.D.



!FALSE PROPHETS!

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All Biblical quotations are taken
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Introduction

“I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die - Deut. 18:18-20

What solemn and serious words to consider for all who claim to be a prophet and/or claim to prophesy in the name of God!

Does God have a prophetic ministry today through which he provides ongoing inspired revelation to His people?

Do the modes of revelation (dreams, visions, etc.) used to produce the scriptures still operate today?

There are at least two current religious movements among professing Christendom today that answer these questions in the affirmative:

1. The Roman Catholic Church
2. The Restoration Movements

Roman Catholicism

Most are familiar with the Roman Catholic Church and its continuing belief in ongoing revelation. According to Rome there have been multitudes of visions and apparitions of Mary, and other

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saints providing revelation. When the Pope sits *ex cathedra* he acts as the prophet of the Church providing inspired revelation. Rome argues that through the centuries there has been progressive revelation which enabled them to develop their dogma. Indeed, they claim that final authority for dogma is obtained through the combination of Sacred Scriptures, Sacred Traditions, general counsels and Papal revelation. Thus, they deny the Bible alone is their sole basis for faith and practice. They believe in ongoing revelation through the Papal office.

The Restoration Movements

After the Reformation in the 16th century along came the Restoration movement in the 19 and 20th centuries. The Restoration movement claimed that the Reformation failed. In the Restoration movement there arrived on the scene those who claimed to be prophets sent by God to restore true Christianity.

Some of the more well-known prophets are Joseph Smith (Mormons), Charles Taze Russell (Jehovah's Witnesses), Ellen G. White (Seventh Day Adventists), and the nineteenth century Pentecostal restoration movement and its innumerable prophets (Benny Hinn, Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, etc.).

The Goal of this Book

The first part of this book will assume there is ongoing revelatory gifts accompanied with authenticating signs and wonders and merely apply the Biblical guidelines for testing and distinguishing between true from false revelatory gifts and authenticating signs and wonders.

The second part of the book will provide a Biblical based argument that the prophetic office and/or prophetic gifts with their authenticating signs and wonders has ceased between the apostolic period and the 70 the week of Daniel. It will be argued that the

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only kind of prophets with authenticating signs and wonders occurring between the end of the apostolic period and the future 70th week of Daniel are apostate in nature (Mt. 24:24-25).

The ultimate goal of this book is to provide the reader with clear, reasonable and Biblical guidelines to easily identify false prophets and false prophetic produced movements (denominations).

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Some Obvious Problems for the Modern Day Prophetic Movement

There are at least three obvious problems for those claiming that the prophetic office and revelatory gifts are for today.

These three basic problems are (1) The problem of disunity; (2) The problem of self-authentication; (3) The problem of confusion with predicted last day false prophets and apostasy.

1. The Problem of Disunity - *“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”* - Eph. 4:3

Of course, division can be found in all aspects of Christendom. However, not all aspects of Christendom claim prophetic revelation and/or special anointing by the Spirit of God.

It is significant that all of these groups equally claim prophetic revelation by the Spirit of God, and yet none of them agree with each other. Surely any thinking person can see there is something wrong with that picture. How can all claim special revelation from the same Spirit, and yet be so fragmented, condemnatory and contradictory among themselves and toward each other???? Is God the author of confusion and disunity?

For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. - 1 Cor. 14:33

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It should be obvious that it cannot possibly be the same spirit behind all of these prophetic movements or they would be unified in their revelations and working together as one.

Moreover, not one of these revelatory movements recognizes the others as valid representatives of Christ.

a. The Roman Catholic Denomination

For example, the Roman Catholic Church asserts that salvation is within their church, and that true prophets and prophecy occurs only within their church.

On June 29, 2007 the office of the Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith in Rome issued a statement that even denied Protestant churches to be valid churches and even the right to be recognized as churches.

FIFTH QUESTION

Why do the texts of the Council and those of the Magisterium since the Council not use the title of “Church” with regard to those Christian Communities born out of the Reformation of the sixteenth century?

RESPONSE

According to Catholic doctrine, these Communities do not enjoy apostolic succession in the sacrament of Orders, and are, therefore, deprived of a constitutive element of the Church. These ecclesial Communities which, specifically because of the absence of the sacramental priesthood, have not preserved the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery cannot, according to Catholic doctrine, be called “Churches” in the proper sense. – Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith – June 29, 2007

So, Rome denies that ecclesiastical communities outside of their

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denomination can “be called ‘Churches’ in the proper sense.” Hence, they alone claim to be the true church of Christ.

b. The Restoration Denominations

Also, all of the denominations within the restoration movement condemn each other as valid churches of Christ. For example, Mormons, JW’s and Seventh Day Adventists all mutually condemn each other as cults and all condemn Rome as a false church.

The most glaring example of utter disunity is the Pentecostal/charismatic movement. Ecstatic utterances (they call tongues) can be found in all divisions within the Pentecostal movement and all equally claim to be empowered and led by the Holy Spirit and yet, they are hopelessly divided and characterized by all kinds of doctrinal confusion, while all are equally claim to have a special anointing of the Spirit of Truth???? It does not help Pentecostals to point out there is division within non-Pentecostal denominations because non-Pentecostal denominations do not claim special anointing by the Spirit as they do! If, a denomination(s) is going to claim a special anointing of the Spirit of God then they deserve special scrutiny over those who do not make such a claim.

The primary passage in scripture dealing with tongues comes from the Pauline letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 12-14). The whole purpose of the Corinthian correction by Paul was to remove confusion in the assemblies. They were speaking in tongues without interpretation so that none understood the other. They were all speaking at the same time creating utter confusion. 1 Corinthians 14:26-33 is specifically designed to prohibit that very kind of confusion, and yet the very same thing is observed in many Pentecostal assemblies today. If the Spirit of God is not the author of such confusion, then what spirit produced that confusion in the church at Corinth and in these churches today (1 Jn. 4:1,6)?

However, that is just the beginning of confusion within this

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particular prophetic movement. There is confusion of doctrine between the various aspects of the Pentecostal movement and yet all claim and share the same supernatural experiences that define them as “Pentecostal” (tongues and baptism in the Spirit). For example, the doctrine of the Trinity is repudiated by the United Pentecostal Church. The doctrine of Christ is perverted by the Word of Faith movement. The gospel of justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ without works is categorically repudiated by the vast majority of denominations within the Pentecostal movement.

Division, confusion and false doctrine characterize all of these denominations within the Restoration prophetic movement. Such obvious division and confusion presents a real problem to any objective person looking at their claims for special revelation and special anointing by the Spirit of God.

2. The Problem of Self-Authentication - *“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good”* - 1 Thes. 5:21.

Biblical Christianity is primarily objective in nature, or truth centered as the objective basis for validating true or false experiences. In contrast, apostate Christianity is more subjective in nature, or experience centered as the subjective basis for validating truth from error.

Most, if not all those claiming the prophetic gift, also claim self-authentication (subjective authentication).

For example, The Roman Catholic Church claims to be the absolute final authority for determining truth. They claim that truth is determined by their counsels, sacred tradition and inspired statements from their chief prophet - the Pope.

The Mormons claim their revelations from Joseph Smith take precedence over all other revelations from God. Indeed, they claim that their own newer prophetic revelations take precedence over their own older prophetic revelations.

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The Watchtower Society claims to be the sole mouth piece of God on earth today, and its teachings take precedence over all other religious groups today. Indeed, like the Mormons, they claim their newer prophetic revelations take precedence over their own older prophetic revelations (making God the author of confusion).

Most of the Pentecostal/charismatic prophets condemn all who would scrutinize or challenge their prophesies. Most claim their interpretation of scripture is by Spirit revelation, and all who challenge their prophetic insights are challenging the Spirit of God, and in danger of blaspheming the Spirit of God. Hence, their own experiences are self-authenticated and take precedence as final authority for interpreting the scriptures.

All of these prophetic movements claim new revelation in addition to the scriptures. Indeed, that is the very function of a prophet - to provide new revelation from God. Mormons claim the Book of Mormon and their other writings are new revelations from God for America and therefore are superior to the older Biblical revelation. Seventh Day Adventists claim that Ellen G. White's writings provide new revelation from God. Pentecostal prophets firmly proclaim "thus saith the Lord" providing new revelation from God. The Roman Catholic Church claims new inspired revelation each time their prophet (the pope) sits *ex cathedra* and speaks in behalf of Christ.

Therefore, the vast majority of self-proclaimed prophets within these revelatory denominations operate by self-authentication and yet they contradict each other and condemn each other. But should such claims be accepted at face value or does the scripture command us to test and prove their authenticity?

Both common sense and scripture dictate that any, and all new revelation should be authenticated by previous authenticated scriptures. This is precisely what the Bible demands:

"To the Law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." - Isa. 8:20

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Scripture claims that all new supposed supernatural insights/revelation must be subjected to that which is already recognized as scripture.

This should be common sense since God is not the author of confusion and since truth never becomes untruth. Therefore, all new revelation ought to be tested by older revelation and if it does not harmonize with tested scripture then it should be rejected.

Most of the prophetic movements ignore that already completed scriptures, claim precedence, and final authority in determining the validity of any new revelation. For example, the apostles claimed their writings should be used to test if others were speaking according to the Spirit of truth or the spirit of error:

“We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error - 1 Jn. 4:6

The Apostles confirmed the Old Testament to be God’s inspired word and most of the New Testament scriptures were either directly provided by them or under their direction (Mark under Peter, and Luke under Paul). This means that all post-apostolic revelation must be authenticated by conforming to the Old and New Testament Scriptures as these scriptures have been fully authenticated and confirmed by God.

The Bible commands Christians to “*try the prophets*” and “*test all things.*”

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. – 1 Jn. 4:1

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. – 1 Thes. 5:21

3.The Problem of Confusion with Predicted last day false

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Prophets:

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. - Mt. 24:24-25

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; - 1 Tim. 4:1

Since the New Testament Scripture clearly predicts the rise of false prophets and a last day apostasy, how do those who claim to follow modern day prophets know they are not following the very false prophets and apostasy predicted by scriptures?

How do you know their revelations and miracles come from the Spirit of God? How do you know for sure? If self-authentication were the answer to these questions, then every holy book and every professed miracle worker would have to be equally presumed to be from God and there would be no such thing as a false prophet.

However, both the Old and New Testament scriptures warn about the rise of false prophets and provide simple tests to expose them.

Moses warned about prophets that predicted things which would actually come to pass and the performance of actual miracles but nevertheless, such prophets failed the prophetic test of truth in regard to the content of their teachings:

Deut. 13:1 *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,*
2 And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;
3 Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth

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you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

4 Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.

Moses made it clear that a true prophet of God is not authenticated merely by the miraculous fulfillment of predictions (“*the sign and wonder come to pass*”) but in addition to the prophetic fulfillment, his message/doctrine/teaching must conform to the scriptures already confirmed as truth. Hence, with regard to professed prophets, truth content is to be taken over and above miracles and prophetic accuracy.

Peter and Paul gave several warnings of predicted last days apostasy characterized by false prophets and apostolic like miracles (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-13; 2 Pet. 3:1-8; etc.).

However, the Biblical writers also provided several tests so that Christians are not left in the dark but can actually determine if a prophet, or sign, or wonder is produced by the Spirit of truth or the spirit of error. Hence, the scripture that has already been authenticated in the first century by Christ and the apostles provides several tests to expose false prophets and false revelations. Would it not be foolish to fail to apply these tests to all who profess to be apostles and prophets after the New Testament era?

Remember, Biblical Christianity is primarily objective in nature, or truth centered as the objective basis for validating true or false experiences. In contrast, apostate Christianity is more subjective in nature, or experience centered as the subjective basis for validating truth from error.

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The Command to Test Prophets

If God provides specific tests for His people so that they are able to distinguish between true and false prophets, wouldn't it be reasonable that God expects his people to apply those tests to all who claim prophetic capabilities?

The Clear Biblical Command

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world - 1 Jn. 4:1

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good - 1 Thes. 5:21

Both texts above are found in the context of prophesying, as that is what prophets do - they prophesy. Both texts use the imperative mode of command, and therefore these texts don't give advice or provide options, but are commandments to be obeyed.

Both texts use the same Greek word *dokimazo* translated "test" (1 Jn. 4:1) and "prove" (1 Thes. 5:21). Strong's concordance gives the following meaning for *dokimazo*.

1) To test, examine, prove scrutinize (to see whether a thing

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is genuine or not), as metals. 2) To recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy, means to examine with intent to verify authenticity. - Strong's Concordance.

Therefore, to “try” does not mean to experiment with, or try in the sense of taking a taste, but to examine thoroughly in order to determine if it is genuine or not.

Some Unbiblical Tests

How are we to prove that a prophet is speaking by the Spirit of truth? There are some unbiblical tests that many often substitute in the place of Biblical tests that we should first consider before looking at the true tests provided by the Scriptures:

1. Pray about it: Some come to your door and ask you to pray about whether a certain prophet (Joseph Smith) is from God. They attempt to use James 1:5 to validate this as a Biblical test.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. - James 1:5

However, James 1:5 is not given as a test to authenticate a prophet. This text has reference to seeking God in order to find out why certain trials/tribulations come into the believer's life (James 1:2-4).

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work,

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that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. –

James 1:2-5

God has a purpose for every trial that occurs in your life. The Bible provides many reasons why such a trial may be occurring. However, determining precisely which of those Biblical reasons may be applicable in your specific case requires going to God in prayer and seeking His wisdom.

Therefore, James 1:5 is instruction on how to deal with things that are not explicitly spelled out in scriptures but may have various reasons for their explanation. However, we are never instructed to pray about what God's word explicitly and clearly teaches. We are commanded to obey what God's Word explicitly teaches. You don't need to pray about what God clearly commands - you need to do it! To claim you need to pray about what God clearly commands is disobedience rather than piety. Prayer is never given as a Biblical means to test the truth of a prophet.

With regard to those who claim to be prophets, God's word provides certain clear commands and explicit tests. Moreover, you are never told to pray about obeying these commands or applying these tests but you are to obey and apply these to the supposed claims and prophecies. Indeed, anyone who claims that through prayer they have been led to disobey God's word is being led by the spirit of error. God is not the author of confusion. He will never lead anyone through prayer to disobey what He clearly commands in scripture.

2. *Feelings about it:* The very same false teachers that come to your door requesting to pray about their false prophet also tell you that if you feel a "burning in your bosom" that is the answer to your prayer and evidence their prophet is from God.

However, God's word never instructs you to follow your feelings as validation of a true prophet.

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Feelings change from moment to moment. One day you might feel lost and the next day you might feel saved. Feelings are usually based upon changing circumstances or your own physical condition at the moment. What might be a “burning in your bosom” may be due to heart burn, or gas, or even demonic influence. Never substitute feelings for disobeying explicit commandments by God.

3. *Sincerity*: Some people trust a person if they believe that person is sincere or good. They think that if a person is sincere and good; then that is sufficient to accept their prophecies and miracles as proof they are of God.

However, you can be sincerely wrong! I am sure those who followed the false prophet Jim Jones in committing mass suicide were very sincere and accepted Jim Jones as a sincere and good person.

Moreover, Paul warns that those sent and empowered by Satan have transformed themselves into “*angels of light*” and ministers of righteousness:

*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers,
transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.*

*And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel
of light.*

*Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be
transformed as the ministers of righteousness; - 2 Cor. 11:13-*

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God has provided specific objective tests in His word to validate a true prophet and no Christian has the authority to replace them with his own subjective sense of sincerity or perceived goodness.

4. *The Miraculous*: Many accept a prophet or prophetic predictions, sayings, and visions as authentic, based upon their miraculous nature

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and likeness to apostolic signs and wonders. However, here is the very crux of their deception. God's word never denies the credibility of the miracles performed by false prophets. Neither does God deny their prophecies may come to pass. Indeed, the scriptures clearly teach that false prophets in the last days will do apostolic like miracles signs and wonders (Deut. 13:1-2; 2 Thes. 2:9; Mt. 24:24-25).

Miracles do not necessarily prove or disprove a prophet is from God. Remember, John the Baptist was pronounced by Christ as the greatest prophet of God born of women, and yet there is not one recorded instance in scripture where he performed one miracle, or spoke in tongues, or got slain in the spirit, or healed anyone, or performed any miracle whatsoever.

None of the above methods (prayer, feelings, sincerity, miraculous appearances) are provided as the scriptural tests to distinguish a true from a false prophet. The next chapter will provide seven clear Biblical tests for prophets.

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Seven Biblical Tests for Prophets

The Old and New Testament provide a total of seven clear tests to distinguish true from false prophets. They are:

1. The Test of Lying Wonders - Deut. 13:1-5/Isa. 8:20
2. The Test of Fulfillment - Deut. 18:21-22
3. The Test of Prophetic Visions - Jer. 23:32
4. The Test of Plagiarism - Jer. 23:25, 30
5. The Test of Good Fruit - Mt. 7:15, 20
6. The Test of Confusion - 1 Cor. 14:33-37
7. The Test of Christ's Person - 1 Jn. 4:1-6

1. The Test of Lying Wonders: God's purpose for miracles, signs and wonders was to confirm the truth content in the message of his prophets (Exodus 3:1-3; Acts 2:22; Heb. 2:4-5). Satan counterfeits this method of confirmation in order that God's people will embrace false doctrine:

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and **lying** wonders - 2 *Thes.* 2:9

Remember, the ultimate distinction between a true and false prophet is not the miraculous, but the ultimate difference is between truth and error (1 Jn. 4:6).

In 2 Thessalonians 2:9 and Matthew 24:24, the very terms that

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characterize the power, signs and wonders of Jesus and the apostles are also attributed to a last day's miracle movement empowered by Satan. However, there is one significant difference and that difference is found in the word "*lying*."

They are not called "*lying*" because they lack real power, or are not true miracles, but they are called "*lying*" because Satans purpose behind these miracles, signs and wonders is to deceive people into believing the message by his prophet is to be received as truth.

If a prophet's message is contrary to God's Word then his miracles, signs and wonders are attempting to validate error as truth, and therefore are "*lying*" signs and wonders.

Deut. 13:1 *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,*
2 *And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;*
3 *Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*
4 *Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.*

God allows such false prophets to arise and come among his people to prove them, "*to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul*" Love for God is manifested in obedience to His commandments ("*ye shall walk after the LORD....and keep his commandments, and obey his voice...*").

However, God can speak through lost people such as the high Priest who prophesied correctly about Christ:

And this spoke he not of himself: but being high priest that

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year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;
Jn. 11:51

Yet, you must remember that this same man disobeyed God, rejected Christ as the Messiah, and led others to crucify Christ.

Remember the false prophet Balaam could not speak his own mind and admitted this repeatedly to King Balak that he could not speak anything other than what God placed in his mouth:

And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say anything? The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it. - Num. 22:38; 23:20

Yet this same prophet intentionally led Israel to disobey God's commandments to commit fornication.

The Church at Ephesus tried some who claimed to be Apostles and found them to be liars:

I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: - Rev. 2:2

So, the final proof that a person speaks in behalf of God (even if they are lost or a false prophet) is not miracles, signs and wonders. The final proof is that their message is in harmony with already confirmed truth:

To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. - Isa. 8:20

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2. The Test of Fulfillment: And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him. - Deut. 18:21-22

False prophets do not only preach false doctrine but many times predict false things.

True prophets of God preach the truth and what they predict always comes to pass. Why? Because it is God who places his message in their mouth and ordains what they say to come to pass as predicted:

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. - Deut. 18:18

Whenever God does use lost people to prophesy (e.g. Caiaphas the High Priest, Balaam) they cannot say anything but what God puts in their mouth and it always comes to pass.

Now compare this to a leading prophet within the Pentecostal movement:

*The Spirit tells me - Fidel Castro will die - in the 90's. Oooh my! Some will try to kill him and they will not succeed. But there will come a change in his physical health, and he will not stay in power, and Cuba will be visited of God - **Benny Hinn**, Orlando Christian Center, December 31, 1989*

Of course, this was a false prophecy and Fidel Castro did not die in the 1990's but died November 5, 2016. God has not visited Cuba

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in any kind of revival. How many false prophecies does it take to be regarded as a false prophet? The answer to this question will be dealt with in a later chapter.

3. *The Test of Prophetic Visions Behold, I am against them that prophecy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all saith the Lord.* - Jer. 23:32

Prophetic dreams and visions of future events that do not come to pass are evidences of a false prophet.

For example, Ellen G. White claims by dreams and visions that some of the people that were then presently sitting in her conference were to be alive at the coming of Christ while others present would be objects of destruction due to the last plagues.

*I was shown the company present at the conference. Said the angel: "Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus." - Ellen G. White, **Testimonies**, Vol. 1, p. 131*

This is but one of her many false prophecies proving her to be a false prophet. However, many in the present-day Pentecostal/charismatic movement have false visions that could be quoted right along with hers.

4. *The Test of Plagiarism: I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied Therefore, behold I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words everyone from his neighbor* Jer. 23:25, 30

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God places His own words in the mouth of His own prophets. Their prophecies come directly from God rather than from other prophets or men.

However, there is indisputable documentation that Ellen G. White, Kenneth Hagin, Joseph Smith and other self-proclaimed prophets have plagiarized from others, and that most of their written works (which they claim they received directly from God), were stolen from other human sources. Even SDA scholars now admit that as much as 90% of Ellen G White's writings (that she claimed to have received directly from God), were in fact borrowed from other writings without giving those writers any credit:

Much has been written on Mrs. White's extensive plagiarism of the writings of others. Prior to the publication of Walter Rea's the White lie in 1983, Adventists maintained that 8% to 10% of Mrs. White's work was copied. The SDA church hired Adventist scholar Dr. Fred Veltman to examine the Desire of the Ages and he found 30% or more, depending upon the chapter examined. After great expense and almost eight years of research, that depending upon the material examined, the copy work could be as much as 90% Dr. Veltman noted - Ministry, Dec. 1990, p. 11

Those who have researched Kenneth Hagin's writings in regard to the "Word of Faith" doctrine (which he claimed to receive directly from God), verify that most of his writing on this subject had been directly copied from the writings of E.W. Kenyon without giving Kenyon any credit.

In many instances, Hagin has, indeed copied word-for-word without documentation from Kenyon's writings. The following excerpts of plagiarism from no less than eight books by E. W. Kenyon are presented as evidence of this

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charge. - D.R. McConnell, **A Different Gospel**, updated Edition, p. 8

Anyone can read the book of Mormon (which Joseph Smith claimed was given to him under the direction of angels inscribed on golden plates in Egyptian hieroglyphics), can see that whole chapters are copied word for word from the book of Isaiah in 18th century King James English. Yet the book of Mormon claims these chapters were originally delivered to Mormon prophets that were contemporary with Isaiah 2200 years prior to the publication of the King James Version. Some believe the vast majority of the book of Mormon were stolen from an unpublished manuscript called the “Spalding” manuscript which was a fiction novel about the new world.

Only false prophets plagiarize others and then claim they received it from God.

5. *The Test of Good Fruit - Beware of false prophets...Ye shall know them by their fruits* - Mt. 7:15, 16

The fruit of a prophet includes both the fruit of his lips (his teaching) and the fruit of his spirit (moral values) as manifested in his life. God’s prophets are godly in both their teachings and life. To even qualify as a Bishop/Pastor, one must meet a moral standard and have a good testimony from those within and without (1 Tim. 3; 1-13; Tit. 1:5-13).

Some ways that a false prophet is recognized is by lying, immorality and/or dishonest business practices. They are greedy for money, self-advancement and preeminence.

For example, there is clear documented evidence that such self-proclaimed prophets as Joseph Smith, Charles Taze Russell, Amee Sempleton McPherson, Benny Hinn, Jimmy Swaggert, among many others, were all morally deficient in character.

Jesus characterized himself as a poor man who had no place to

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lay his head and had to send Peter to fetch money from the mouth of a fish just to pay his taxes. God's prophets were not rich and wealthy, but were more interested in giving than receiving.

However, these ravenous wolves devour the pennies of widows while promising them the demonic doctrine of "health and wealth." The Trinity Broadcasting Network is literally characterized by such ravenous wolves who bask in the wealth of others under the false doctrine of "name it and claim it." Paul taught the very reverse:

*1 Tim. 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.
7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.
8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.
9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.
10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. {erred: or, been seduced}
11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

6. The Test of Confusion - God is not the author of confusion but Of peace as in all the churches.....If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord - 1 Cor. 14:33,37

This is found in the very context of apostolic instruction concerning the order and use of spiritual gifts in the assemblies. Both the office of prophet and the gift of prophecy, as well as, speaking in

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tongues are directly addressed by Paul in this very context.

The Holy Spirit does not inspire prophets to write scriptures and then lead other prophets or Christians to violate those scriptures. That is confusion. The Holy Spirit does not confirm prophets to say conflicting things. That is confusion.

The Holy Spirit was not leading and empowering the Corinthians in their use of gifts to disobey Pauline instructions. Paul spoke and wrote under the inspiration of the Spirit.

Paul says that those who are real prophets or spiritual will acknowledge that his instructions were not based upon his own personal opinions or upon cultural conditions, but that he is writing under the inspiration of God and these are the commandments of God.

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other ^{judg^e}.

30 If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

34 ^ Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is

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not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

36 ^ What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. - 1 Cor. 14

Here Paul lists specific guidelines for the use of Biblical tongues in the assembly:

1. No more than three in a single service
2. No more than one speaking at a time
3. None speaking if there is no interpreter
4. No women speaking after this manner (tongues or prophesying) before the assembly

The Pentecostal/charismatic movement as a whole violate every single one of these Pauline commands proving they are neither spiritual or have prophets among them.

They attempt to claim that Paul's commands on women in the congregation were cultural rather than based upon pre-cultural order established by God in creation. They actually believe that the positional order God commands in the home (Eph. 5:22-25) is reversed when a woman enters the assembly.

The position of men and women in the home and in the churches is established upon the pre-cultural order God established in creation (1 Cor. 11:3, 9; 1 Tim. 2:13-15; Eph. 5:31-33). This has nothing to do with inequality of "persons" as the same kind of order in regard

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to “position” of authority is found within the Godhead (1 Cor. 11:3). Hence, it is no more demeaning to women to hold an inferior position to men than it is to the Son of God and to the Holy Spirit to hold an inferior position to God the Father. It is a matter of position rather than person. Without such order and positional authority in the home and in the church there is only chaos, confusion and anarchy.

Pentecostalism reverses this creational order. If the Pentecostal view is true of the positional order of the woman, then why is it not also equally true for the positional order of children as the same God that commanded one also commanded the other? Why not have both women and children in positions of authority in both the home, and in the congregation???? Both secularism (Hollywood, the media) and Pentecostalism scorn the Biblical position of the man in the home and in the congregations. Isaiah wrote in a time of apostasy and characterized part of that apostasy in the reversal of God’s creative order for men, women and children:

As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. - Isa. 3:12

In every single passage where Paul or other Biblical writers establish the order of position and/or duties of men versus women it is never once established upon current cultural traditions but in every instance established upon the pre-cultural creative order by God.

False prophets lead people into confusion or pit scripture against scripture making God the author of confusion.

7. The Test of Christ’s Person - Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus is come in the flesh is of God: and

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every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world. - 1 Jn. 4:1-3

In the historical context, John is dealing with professed prophets who had embraced Jewish Gnosticism. Gnosticism denied that Christ was human born or the son of Mary. Instead they believed that Christ was one of the eon's or spirit beings sent into the world to represent God, and who empowered and directed Jesus, but was not the human Jesus. So, they distinguished between the words “*Jesus*” and “*Christ*” making them two different beings. According to their views, spirits must not be contaminated by material or flesh. Hence, they denied that Christ actually existed in a human body, thus denying the incarnation and deity of Christ (as they claimed he was merely one of many aeon's or spirits emanating from God).

In essence, John is asserting that it is the spirit of the antichrist that perverts and/or denies the true Person and character of Jesus Christ. Those who pervert his humanity also pervert his deity, as He is both fully God and fully man. John asserts his preexistence by claiming that God the Son took upon himself the nature of man.:

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.....and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us... - 1 Jn. 1:1,14

The prophets of Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, United Pentecostalism and Word of Faith movement all pervert the nature of Christ. Kenneth Hagin, the founder of the Word of Faith movement said,

In the new birth, god imparts His very nature, substance, and being to our human spiritsevery born again man is an incarnation....the believer is as much an incarnation

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as Jesus of Nazareth....That's who we are; we 're Christ. -
D.R. McConnell, **A Different Gospel**, Updated Edition,
Hendrickson Publishers, 1988, p. 120

Jesus Christ was never “born again” as he had no defective depraved human spirit. It is true we are partakers of the “divine nature” but both Peter and Paul are referring to the moral aspect of the divine nature (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10) not to the aspects that make God to be God or what theologians identify as his non-communicable attributes (omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, immutability, etc.).

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that Mary the mother of Jesus is “the Mother of God” rather than the physical means to provide the human nature of Christ. Their true teaching is reflected by how they venerate Mary on an equal level with God and give her titles that make her at the very least equal to God, if not superior to God, as she is made much more preeminent in actual Catholic worship than any of the Godhead.

Conclusion

Here are seven explicit and clear tests to determine whether a person is a true prophet of God. True prophets pass all these tests. False prophets **always** fail at least one or more of these tests.

But some may object, “no one is perfect” and prophets are but redeemed but still fallen humans. However, not all people claim to be prophets, do they? The Biblical standard for the prophet is higher than the normal person because they claim to be God’s mouth before men. If they do not want to be made subject to the tests of a prophet then don’t claim to speak in behalf of God.

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What is the Biblical Definition of Failure or of a false prophet?

But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. - Deut. 18:20

And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death. - Deut. 13:4

Death was the penalty for failing any test of a prophet. There were no second chances. Of course, that penalty was administered under a theocratic government. However, that still makes it clear from God's perspective that one failure is all that is necessary to expose and condemn such to be a false prophet.

Often when a self-proclaimed prophet fails one of these tests they dismiss it with the argument that no one is perfect and everybody makes mistakes. This is true, but it begs the question. Not everyone claims to speak in behalf of God. Not everyone claims to be a prophet of God. Hence, these tests are applicable to all who make such a claim. True prophets *always* speak and write the truth, simply because they are called and controlled by God's power instead of their own power:

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*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, **and I ordained thee a prophet** unto the nations. Then said I, Ah Lord God! Behold I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for **thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak** - Jer. 1:5-7*

It is God's choice of men and God's power that makes them a true prophet. God worked through imperfect prophets to provide His perfect word. Thus, Paul could say:

All scripture is given by inspiration of God... - 2 Tim. 3:16

This is why Peter could say,

*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of men: but holy men of God spake **as they were moved by the Holy Ghost**. - 2 Pet. 1:20*

This is why the apostle John could say,

We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. - 1 Jn. 4:6

God makes sure by his own power that His chosen prophets pass all these tests.

It is one thing to claim leadership by the Lord in a matter but quite another thing to claim God is speaking through you. The former is personal opinion subject to error while the latter is claiming inspiration which is not subject to error, and places you under the tests of a prophet.

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False prophets are revealed by their failure to pass these tests. It is a very serious matter to claim that God spoke to you through a dream, or vision, or to claim that God told you to say something, or showed you something.

If you do not want to be made subject to these tests then don't make these claims. If you make these claims then, whether you like it or not, you become the subject of these tests.

So, a false prophet is defined as a person who claims to speak in behalf of God but fails at least one of these tests just one time.

Many false prophets have failed on one or more occasions such tests and attempt to claim that they are not prophets in the Old Testament sense of a prophet but only have the "gift" of prophecy thus attempting to distinguish between the "office" of a prophet and the "gift" of prophecy in order to avoid being condemned by these Biblical tests. This argument is made upon the failure to distinguish between the general versus technical use of the term "prophecy" in the New Testament. In a general sense "prophecy" means simply "to speak forth" and can be applied to anyone who simply preaches or teaches the Word of God. However, the technical sense has to do with the "office" of a prophet or calling to be a prophet as one who speaks in behalf of God providing inspired revelations. See Appendix II (p. 95) for a fuller examination and repudiation of this argument.

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The Evidence of False Prophecies

This chapter will provide documented false prophecies that characterize all non-cessationists movements.

Documented evidence of false prophecies will be provided for the founders of Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, Pentecostal/Charismatic prophets and Roman Catholicism. The movement (denomination) is merely a product of its false prophet(s).

Remember, just one false prophecy fails the test of a prophet.

Mormonism

Joseph Smith was the founding prophet of Mormonism and made many false prophecies:

1833

On January 5, 1833 Smith predicted:

“by the authority of Jesus Christ that not many hears shall pass away beforepestilence [epidemic disease], hail, famine and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land [the U.S.], to open

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and prepare the way for return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country.” - **Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith**, pp. 17-18

1835

“President Smith then stated that the meeting had been called, because God had commanded it, and it was made known to him by vision and by the Holy Spiritit was the will of God that they should be ordained to the ministry and go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, for the coming of the Lord, which was nigh - even fifty six years should wind up the scene.” - **History of the Church**, Vol. 2, p. 182

1838

On April 17, Joseph Smith said,

“Verily thus saith the Lord: It is wisdom in my servant David W. Patten, that he should settle up all his business as soon as he possibly can, and make a disposition of his merchandise, that he may perform a mission unto me next spring, in company with others, even twelve including himself, to testify of my name and bear glad tidings unto the world.” - **Doctrine and Covenants** 114:1 (David W. Patten died in October 15, 1838 and thus never went on a mission the following spring).

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1843

On May 18, Joseph Smith declared,

“I prophesy in the name of the Lord God of Israel, unless the United States redress the wrongs committed upon the Saints in the state of Missouri and punish the crimes committed by her officers that **in a few years** the government will be **utterly overthrown and wasted**, and there will not be so much as a potsherd [a broken piece of pottery] **left...**” - Ibid. p. 302 - emphasis mine

The Watchtower Society

Charles Taze Russell was the founder and first prophet of the Jehovah's Witnesses. However, the Watch Tower itself also claimed to be God's Prophet on earth.

“So does Jehovah have a prophet to help them..... and to declare things to come?.... The answer can be answered in the affirmative. Who is this prophet?..... This ‘prophet’ was not one man, but was a body of men and women.... known at that time as International Bible Students. Today they are known as Jehovah's Christian Witnesses.” - **The Watchtower**, April 1, 1972, p. 197

This claim has been repeated many times in many different ways:

“Jehovah's theocratically controlled organization under the immediate direction of Jehovah God Himself.” - **The Watchtower**, June 1, 1965, p. 352

Both its founding prophet Charles Taze Russell and his

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organizational prophet have consistently predicted that 1914 would be the final end of the times of trouble and the sitting up of the kingdom of God. In 1894 Russell claimed this was God's date which could not be changed. From 1880 to 1908 this date was repeated as the final date for the end of the age of the gentiles and thus the end of this age:

1880

“We need not here repeat the evidences that the ‘seventh trump’ **began its sounding A.D. 1840, and will continue until the end of the time of trouble, and the end of ‘The times of the Gentiles,’ A.D. 1914,** and that it is the trouble of this ‘Great day,’ which is here symbolically called the voice of the Archangel when he begins the deliverance of fleshly Israel. ‘At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince (archangel) which standeth for the children of thy people and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.’ Dan. Xii. 1. Nor will we here, again present the conclusive Bible proof that **our Lord came for his Bride in 1874,** and has an unseen work as Reaper of the firstfruits of this Gospel Age.” - **Zion's Watchtower**, November, 1880, p. 1

1888

Charles Taze Russell predicted:

“In this chapter we present the Bible evidence proving that the full end of the times of the gentiles, i.e., **the full end of their lease of dominion, will be reached in A.D. 1914; and that the date will be the farthest limit of the rule of imperfect men.** And be it observed, that if this is shown to be a fact firmly established by the Scriptures, it will prove; Firstly, that at that date the Kingdom of God, for which our

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Lord Taught us to pray saying, Thy kingdom come, will obtain, full, universal control, and that it will then be set up, or firmly established in the earth, on the ruins of present institutions.” - **Studies in the Scriptures**, “The Time is at Hand,” vol. 2

1889

“Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A.D. 1878, and that **the battle of the Great day of God Almighty (Rev. 16:14) which will end in A.D. 1914** with the complete overthrow of earth’s present rulership is already commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God’s Word.” - **Studies in the Scriptures**, vol. 2, “The Time is at Hand,” 1889 Ed. P. 101. [The 1915 edition of these texts change “A.D. 1914” to read “A.D. 1915]

1894

“Now, in view of recent labor troubles and threatened anarchy, our readers are writing to know if there may not be a mistake in the 1914 date? They say that they do not see how present conditions can hold out so long under the strain. We see no reason for changing the figures-nor could we change them if we would. **They are, we believe, God’s dates, not ours. But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble.**” - **Zion’s Watchtower**, “Can it be Delayed until 1914?” - Charles T. Russell, July 15, 1894

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[also reprinted in Watchtower Reprints, 1894, p. 1677]

1908

“In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, **we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished at the end of A.D. 1914.**” - **The Time is at Hand**, 1908 edition, p. 99

“True, it is expecting great things to claim, as we do, that within the coming twenty-six years all present governments will be overthrown, and dissolved.” - **The Time is at Hand**, 1908 ed. P. 99

Since 1914 they have constantly changed the dates (1915, 1925, 1935, 1975) predicting the same thing. Both Mormonism and Jehovah Witnessism attempt to recover from their false prophecies by claiming that newer revelation replaces the older false revelation as though God is the author of such confusion.

Seventh Day Adventism

Ellen G. White is the founding prophet of the Seventh Day Adventist Church and its diverse branches (Seventh day Church of God, etc.).

At one of her conferences she prophesied of those attending that very conference that some would be alive at the coming of Christ but all have long since died:

“I was shown the company present at the Conference.

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Said the angel: ‘Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, **some will be alive and remain on earth at the coming of Jesus.**’ - **Testimonies**, Vol. 1, p.

131 [emphasis mine]

“My accompany angel said, ‘**Time is almost finished. Get ready, get ready, get ready....now time is almost finished....and what we have been years learning, they will have to learn in a few months.**’ - **Early Writings**, pp. 64-67 [emphases mine]

In 1846 Mrs. White claimed to have had a vision of the solar system. Mrs. Truesdail, a dedicated and sincere Adventist, was present during this vision. She describes how Mrs. White saw a “tall, majestic people” living on either Jupiter or Saturn:

“Sister White was in very feeble health, and while prayers were offered in her behalf, the Spirit of God rested upon us. We soon noticed that she was insensible to earthly things. This was her first view of the planetary world. After counting aloud the moons of Jupiter, and soon after those of Saturn, she gave a beautiful description of the rings of the latter. She then said, ‘*The inhabitants are a tall, majestic people, so unlike the inhabitants of earth. Sin has never entered there.*’” - Taken from Mrs. Truesdale's letter written January 27, 1981 [emphasis mine]

Pentecostalism

Of all the non-cessationist movements, the Pentecostal/charismatic movement is only surpassed in size by the Roman Catholic Church.

However, there is no other movement so diverse and fragmented within Christendom than the Pentecostal/charismatic movement.

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(Assemblies of God, Church of God, Foursquare, Vineyard, Word of Faith, Full Gospel Association, Promise Keepers, etc., etc.).

Nevertheless, all divisive fragments equally claim special relationship with the Holy Spirit and all fragments equally claim to speak in Biblical tongues as evidence of the baptism in the Spirit.

No other non-cessationist movement claims more direct ongoing revelation than this movement. No other movement claims to have more apostles, prophets and revelatory gifts.

In spite of the highly divisiveness of this movement, there have been attempts to unify it. Some Pentecostal historians present the movement as three historical “waves.” The first wave from 1906 to 1959 which includes what they call the “mainline” Pentecostal denominations. The second “wave from 1960 to 1983 they call the Charismatic movement where Roman Catholics became involved. The third wave is from 1983 to the present which infiltrated evangelical and/or Reformation denominations.

Paul Crouch the owner of **Trinity Broadcasting Network** has attempted to unify this movement on his TV stations. **The International Charismatic Ministries** has had on its board Oral Roberts, Kenneth Copeland, John Hagee, Marlyn Hicky, John Avanzini, Paul Crouch, Benny Hinn, Rodney Howard Browne, Earl Paulk, Moris Cerullo, etc., as an attempt to show some kind of unity between all of its factions.

There has been no other more predominate high profile representative for Pentecostalism than Benny Hinn. He is endorsed by **Trinity Broadcasting Network** and **The International Charismatic Ministries**, as well as, the Word of Faith Ministries, Vineyard Movement, Four Square Churches, Full Gospel, and until recently the Assemblies of God. His conferences are attended and his books are read by nearly all fragments within Pentecostalism.

The larger part of Pentecostalism can be defined by those self-proclaimed prophets and apostles among them, whom they financially support, attend their conferences, watch their TV programs and buy their books and none is more prominent among all

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factions of Pentecostalism than Benny Hinn.

Benny Hinn

“The Spirit tells me - Fidel Castro will die - in the 90’s. Oooh my! Some will try to kill him and they will not succeed. But there will come a change in his physical health, and he will not stay in power, and Cuba will be visited of God.” - Benny Hinn, **Orlando Christian Center**,
Dec. 31st 1989

[<http://op.50megs.com/ditc/BENNY-HINN-ON-CASTRO-DYING.mp3>]

“The Lord also tells me to tell you in the mid 90’s about 94-95, no later than that, God will destroy the homosexual community of America [audience applauds]. But He will not destroy it - with what many minds have thought Him to be, He will destroy it with fire. And many will turn and be saved, and many will rebel and be destroyed.” - Benny Hinn, **Orlando Christian Center** Dec. 31, 1989
[<http://op.50megs.com/ditc/BENNY-HINN-HOMOSEXUALSCASTRO.mp3>]

“....Jesus, God’s Son, is about to appear physically, in meetings and to believers around the world, to wake us up I am prophesying this! Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is about to appear physically in some churches, and some meetings, and too many of his people.” - Benny Hinn, **TBN Praise-a-thon**, April 2, 2000
[<http://op.50megs.com/benny-hinn.wav> The above information was obtained from the following
online address -

<http://www.biblelight.net/tbn.htm>

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Pat Robertson

“God spoke through a word of Prophecy in May 1968 and said, ‘I have chosen you to usher in the coming of My Son.’” - Sermon on Satellite Network Seminar, Word of Faith Outreach Center, Dallas, TX, Dec. 9-12, 1984, as cited in “The Freedom Writer,” - 1986

Kenneth Copeland

Copeland claimed by a vision from God that God has a body and weighs about 200 pounds and stands about six foot two or three inches tall.

“God is a spirit-being with a body, complete with eyes, and eyelids, ears, nostrils, a mouth, hands, fingers, and feet” -
Kenneth Copeland Ministry Letter, July 21, 1977

Kenneth Hagin

In a meeting conducted by Kenneth Hagin from October 12-24 in 1999 at Chesterfield, Missouri recorded on live video on the third night Hagin began to manifest a serpent like spirit with his tongue sticking out and writing in and out while hissing. On Thursday night, as he began to hiss, many of the people began to slither down out of their seats feet first like snakes and some hissed back at him. -
<http://www.cuttingedge.org/news/n1823.html>

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Oral Roberts

Roberts claimed that Jesus told him that he had been chosen of God to find an effective treatment for cancer. Roberts recorded the words of Jesus as follows:

“I would not have had you and your partners build the 20-story research tower unless I was going to give you a plan that will attack cancer this is not Oral Roberts asking [for the money] but their Lord.” - Hank Hanegraaff, Christianity in Crisis, 1993, p. 31

However, no cure was ever found and due to a lack of finances the project was shut down and sold.

Mark Taylor

Mark Taylor not only claims that many of his writings are as inspired as scripture but are scripture. In 2011 he gained notoriety by predicting that Donald Trump would become President. However, his prophecy declares “the Spirit says” that Trump would become president in 2012 and nothing would prevent it:

*9 The Spirit of God says,
in this next election they will spend billions to keep this
President in.
It will be like flushing their money down the toilet.
Let them waist their money.
For it comes from and it is being used by evil forces at work.
But they will not succeed.
For this next election will be a clean sweep*

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for the man I have chosen. – Commander-in-Chief – 2011-04-28 – emphasis mine

Unfortunately, Liberty Baptist University founded by former conservative Jerry Falwell is sponsoring and supporting Mark Taylor and his prophecies. This shows how far into apostasy Liberty Baptist University has advanced.

Roman Catholicism

Roman Catholicism is the largest non-cessationist denomination on earth consisting of roughly 1.2 billion members.

There are countless appearances of Mary and other dead saints giving messages that are on record and can be accessed on line at many Roman Catholic web sites. The Pope claims to speak infallibly when sitting ex-cathedra over church magisterial counsels.

The Roman Catholic Church denies the scriptures are final authority but claim the Scriptures are only one among many other authorities (tradition, counsels, and papal decrees) for faith and practice.

Miracles are required by the dead in order for the church to canonize them as saints.

Kneeling before statues and praying toward them is common.

There is no other “Christian” organization on earth more cultic and occultic than Catholicism and yet Pentecostals and Charismatic Catholics share the same spirit and gifts.

At the following online address there is quite a long list of false prophecies by the apparition they call Mary:

[<http://www.miraclesceptic.com/catholicprophecy.html>](http://www.miraclesceptic.com/catholicprophecy.html)

How to Identify a False Religion

All spiritual power and religious teaching will originate with one of two sources “*the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error*” (1 Jn. 4:6). Behind all false doctrine there are demonic spirits (1 Tim. 4:1). Thus, any religious denomination embracing that prophet and his doctrines are just as false as that prophet and his doctrine.

1. *The Spirit behind this Prophet is demonic*

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world - 1 Jn. 4:1

We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. 1 Jn. 4:6

Behind every prophet there is either the Spirit of truth - The Holy Spirit or the spirit of error - demonic spirits. It is this spirit that is responsible for what the prophet teaches and it is God's Word that determines whether that spirit is teaching truth or error.

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2. *False Prophets teach false doctrine*

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils - 1 Tim. 4:1

Any prophet teaching false doctrine is energized by demons. False doctrine originates with seducing spirits/demons.

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. - 2 Pet. 2:1

3. *The Origin of Denominations by False Prophets are Demonic*

When people follow a false prophet and his false teachings and then form a church/denomination that is precisely how the scriptures teach that false churches/denominations come into existence:

Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. - Acts 20:30

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing? Not one. - Job 14:4

The spirit behind the prophet is the spirit behind his doctrine and it is this same spirit behind any denomination or group of people following that prophet and his teachings. The Holy Spirit does not lead anyone to form a church or denomination in connection with false prophets and/or with their false teachings.

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4. *The Miracles and Signs of that denomination are Demonic*

If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass....thou shalt not hearken unto that prophet. And that prophet or dreamer of dreams shall be put to death. - Deut. 13:1-3,6

The same spirit behind the false prophet and his doctrine is the same spirit behind the power of that prophet and the denomination/church he originates.

If its doctrine is false, then its miracles, signs and wonders have the same source of power - demons.

Remember God's ultimate purpose behind miracle and wonder workers is to confirm that their message comes from God and is truth. This is the stated purpose behind every miracle worker in the Scriptures from the very first miracle worker (Moses) to the Apostles:

And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

2 And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.

3 And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it.

4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

5 That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee. - Exodus 4:1-5

And call you on the name of your gods, and I will call on the

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name of the LORD: and the God that answers by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. - 1 Kings 18:24, 36

We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet: neither is there among us any that knows how long. - Psa. 74:9

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: - Acts 2:22

which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? - Heb. 2:3-4

Satan has duplicated this miracle confirmation method to seduce men into believing his false doctrine is from God. That is why Paul calls his confirmation method “lying” as it confirms lies.

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, - 2 Thes. 2:9

The spirit behind Catholicism is the same spirit behind its premier prophet - the Pope! The spirit behind Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventism is the same spirit behind their

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originating prophets whose doctrines they still follow.

Every division within Pentecostalism/Charismatics has originated by false prophets and there are scores of proven false prophets throughout its history and scores of them today.

Any and all religious movements that claim to originate with a prophet(s) sent from God can be easily tested by applying the seven Biblical tests of a prophet. If their prophet(s) fail one or more of these tests they are demonically empowered and led by false prophets, teaching demonic false doctrine. Any denomination formed under that kind of prophetic leadership manifesting miracles, signs and wonders is demonically empowered, as the Spirit of God does not confirm false prophets or their doctrine and denominations who follow or teach their doctrine.

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.
- 2 Cor. 11:13-15

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How to Deal With them at your Door

If you find yourself confronted with a non-cessationist either at your door (e.g. Mormon) or in a conversation or wherever else it may occur, the very first thing you want to do is to establish final authority. What do I mean by that? I mean you want to establish the logical premise upon which any supposed new revelation or new scripture must be authenticated or tested. The Bible claims that new revelation must be authenticated by conforming to previous confirmed and authenticated scriptures.

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. - Isa. 8:20

The Bible claims that God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33) and therefore any new revelation will harmonize with previous confirmed scripture.

Preparation

Study the seven tests of a Prophet. Especially familiarize yourself with the first two tests (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:18-20). Have ready and accessible the evidence that their particular prophet(s) have violated

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one of these tests. Select one or two very clear false prophecies.

If they come to your door don't invite those who reject the God of the Bible into your home (2 Jn. 9-11 - JW's, Mormon's, United Pentecostals; etc.). Speak with them either at the door or outside your house.

Remember, that in most cases, those who come to your door consist of a trainee and a trainer. The trainee is the one who usually begins the conversation, while the trainer remains silent until the trainee needs help. Quietly pray for the Holy Spirit to guide and bless your witness when you recognize who is at your door or wherever you may be found talking with them. Be kind and loving but firm and do not allow them to take control at your door or lead you in a closing prayer because they are being led by and praying unto a demonic spirit.

Response

When those coming to your door finish their introduction, they will usually ask you a question of some kind in order to lead you down their line of reasoning. Don't answer their question but inform them that you know who they are and that the Bible furnishes tests to distinguish between a true and false prophet and you know their denomination either originated by a prophet or has self-proclaimed prophets and that their prophet(s) have failed these tests. Be kind but be firm.

Presentation

Have the scripture test ready and read it and point out that failure just once to pass any test means death - no second chances and that singular failure identifies them as a false prophet. Give them the

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evidence that their prophet failed.

Be prepared for the following type of responses:

a. “*Nobody is perfect*” - Response: Not everyone claims to be a prophet and that kind of mistake is precisely what the Bible claims to identify a false prophet.

b. “*Nobody knows everything*” - Response: A Prophet is God’s mouthpiece and God does know everything and never speaks falsehoods through his prophets or says anything through his prophets that needs to be corrected later. He is not the author of confusion and that is precisely what they are claiming.

c. “*What he teaches proves he is a true prophet*” - Response: Whatever other truth he may teach does not change the fact he failed the Biblical test of a prophet. False prophets are deceptive because they have a mixture of truth and error and their error always outweighs any truth they may embrace.

d. “*You cannot deny what you have not experienced*” - Response: I don’t have to experience murder or adultery to know such things are wrong! God’s Word trumps personal experiences (Isa. 8:19-20) because not all experiences originate with God.

Closing Argument

False prophets are led and empowered by demonic spirits.

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 are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby

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know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. - 1 Jn. 4:1, 6

If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, 2 And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; - Deut. 13:1-2

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, - 2 Thes. 2:9

Denominations/churches that embrace these prophets and their teachings are led and empowered by the same demonic spirits, and by that very implication are to be regarded as false churches.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; - 1 Tim. 4:

Don't let them lead you in prayer as they are led by "*another spirit*" (2 Cor. 11:4). Don't wish them well upon their departure as they are not working for the Lord or for truth.

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. - 2 Jn. 10-11

Remember they are going to your neighbors to seduce and deceive them. Instead, give a gospel witness and then tell them you will pray for them that the Lord will save them and deliver them from this error.

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Are Saved People in Such Denominations?

The short answer is yes! Genuine children of God can be deceived and led astray.

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. - Rev. 18:4

In the above text it is God speaking. God knows the difference between “my people” and “tares” or lost religious people. God has children within false religion that need to be recovered from the snare of the devil:

And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at (Gr. eis - for) his will. - 2 Tim. 2:26

True children of God can be deceived and led astray by false prophets:

For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; [desires] and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple - Rom. 16:18

Understand that all false prophets and false denominations possess some truths or they could never keep true children of God within

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their ranks. It is this mixture of truth and error that provides the basis for deception.

However, possessing some truth does not change the false prophet into a true prophet or a false denomination into a true denomination. Moreover, their error is always extremely serious and damning.

Every single denomination today that claims progressive revelation or non-cessation has been originated by a prophet(s) who has failed one or more of the seven Biblical tests of a prophet. Every single self-proclaimed current prophet today has failed one or more of these seven Biblical tests.

Dear reader, are you saved but deceived? Apply the seven Biblical tests of a prophet and see if you have been deceived into joining a denomination that originated by a false prophet which has embraced his false teachings.

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Conclusion

False prophets and their doctrines are demonically originated and therefore, so is the power behind their miracles, signs and wonders.

Churches/denominations which originate from these false prophets are also empowered by the very same spirit as demonstrated by their embracing that false prophet and following his/her teachings.

God's prophets never fail any of these prophetic tests simply because God's power prevents that. False prophets always fail one or more of these tests simply because they are not prophets chosen and empowered by God.

Remember, God's primary purpose for miracles, signs and wonders is to confirm the truth spoken by his prophets (Acts 2:22; Heb. 4:3-4; etc.). Hence, the final authority is not miracles, signs and wonders but confirmation to God's Word (Isa. 8:20).

Therefore, Biblical Christianity is chiefly objective in nature or is truth centered as the basis for, and final authority for all subjective experiences. (1) The Spirit "of truth." (2) The church is the "pillar and ground of the truth." (3) "Thy word is truth." (4) Jesus said, "I am the truth" and "ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

In contrast, false denominations are chiefly experiential in nature. The miraculous is their primary basis for determining truth from error. For Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Seventh Day

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Adventists the subjective element that determines their truth is their false prophet and claims of supernatural experiences and confirmation by God. For the Pentecostals, their own supernatural experiences are primary in determining truth from error and especially in determining interpretations of critical passages of scripture.

Some may object that the position of this book condemns the vast majority of professing Christendom as the Great Apostasy. Exactly! Jesus and the apostles predicted that deceivers would wax worse and worse (Mt. 13; 2 Tim. 3:11) and Christ rhetorically asked if he would even find “the faith” when he returned due to such apostasy (Lk. 18:8).

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Biblical Evidence for Cessation

There is a distinct difference between revelation, inspiration and illumination. These are often confused by non-cessationists.

Revelation has to do with God revealing truths to prophets either directly or indirectly through dreams and visions.

Inspiration has to do with prophets presenting that revelation to other men through oral or written means so that it reflects God's word without error.

Illumination has to do with God giving insights or understanding in the content of what has been revealed and communicated by inspiration to men either orally or in writing.

So, Revelation is the communication of God's Word **unto** God's Prophets. Inspiration is communication of God's Word **through** the Prophet to God's people. Illumination is providing God's people with understanding of God's Word which has been communicated to and through prophets to God's people in oral and/or written form.

Does the Scripture clearly predict that scripture will be finished and revelatory gifts will cease at a particular time in history prior to Christ's return?

The following evidence is presented to prove that revelation and revelatory gifts with their authenticating signs did cease with the completion of the final book of the Bible - the book of Revelation.

The Messianic Prediction

13 Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

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14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

15 And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

16 ^ Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

17 And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

18 Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

19 And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

This passage is found in the middle of a Messianic prophecy that occurs between Isaiah 7:14 and Isaiah 9:6.

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. - Isa. 7:14

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given: and the government shall be on his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. - Isa. 9:6

What is encapsulated between these two verses is a Messianic

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prophecy. Not only is Isaiah 8:13-20 found in the middle of a Messianic Prophecy but it is a Messianic prophecy. Isaiah 8:14-15 is directly quoted by New Testament writers (Lu 2:34; Mt. 21:44; Ro 9:32, 33; 11:9-11, 35; 1Pe 2:8) and applied directly to Jesus Christ. Isaiah 8:18 is quoted in the book of Hebrews (Heb. 2:11) and applied explicitly to Christ and the apostles (Heb. 2:3-4).

Isaiah 8:13-20 has both an historic and Messianic application. This passage has a partial historic application to Isaiah and his disciples and the completion of his scriptural writings which ultimately became known as the book of Isaiah. However, New Testament writers make it abundantly clear that it has its final prophetic application to Jesus Christ and his disciples who completed the New Testament Scriptures, thus completing the whole Biblical canon.

Isaiah 8:16-17 explicitly predicts the completion of written revelation prior to the Second Coming of Christ:

*Bind up the testimony; seal the law among my disciples.
And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from
the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. - Isa. 8:16-17*

Notice that after the binding and sealing of the scriptures the only other revelation anticipated by Isaiah is the revelation of the Living Word coming from heaven at His Second Advent. This is exactly the same application in the fulfillment of the New Testament Scriptures by the Apostle John. John provides the last book of the New Testament canon and at its conclusion seals it:

*18 For I testify to every man that hears the words of the
prophecy of this book, If any man shall add to these things,
God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this
book:*

*19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the
book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of
the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things*

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which are written in this book.

After sealing it, the next revelation he looks for from God is the coming of Christ from heaven at the Second Advent:

20 ^ He which testifies these things said, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Not only do the events of Isaiah 8:16-17 correspond with the events of Revelation 22:17-20, but just as “*the law and the testimony*” were to be bound up and sealed in Isaiah 8:16, so, the last living apostle bound up the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ:

*Who bare record of **the word of God**, and of **the testimony of Jesus Christ**, and of all things that he saw. - Rev. 1:2*

*Bind up **the testimony**; seal **the law** among my disciples. - Isa. 8:16*

*To **the law** and to **the testimony**, if they speak not according to **this word**, it is because there is no light in them. – Isa. 8:20*

Isaiah understood “*the testimony*” and “*the law*” together to be the completed unified Word of God (“*this word*”) and final source of authority (Isa. 8:20). The writings of the Apostles and those who wrote under their direction were regarded as providing “*the testimony*” of Jesus. The New Testament was the “*testimony of Jesus*” and was completed “*among my disciples.*”

The Testimony of Jesus

Re 19:10 *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said*

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unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Notice he says that the testimony of Jesus “*is the spirit of prophecy*” that “*thy brethren have.*” Jesus instituted the office of Apostle to be a witness of his whole ministry, teachings and resurrection. When filling the vacated office of Judas Iscariot, Peter said,

Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness¹ with us of his resurrection. - Acts 1; 21-22

The purpose of the apostolic office was to provide an oral and written “*testimony of Jesus*” as the authorized witness of the life, ministry, doctrine and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Confirmed by Christ

Did Jesus understand the Isaiah 8 prophecy referred to himself and his apostles? Christ alluded to this text in regard to his own mission (Mt. 21:44).

Did Jesus understand that his apostles were to complete the Biblical revelation? Yes! In the upper room discourse he explicitly told them:

¹ The same Greek term translated "witness" in Acts 1:22 is the same Greek word translated "testimony" by John consistently in Revelation.

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*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he will guide you into all truth**: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and **he will shew you things to come**. - Jn. 16:13*

*But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, **he shall testify of me** - Jn. 15:26*

*....and **bring all things** to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. - Jn. 14:36*

*He shall glorify me; for **he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you**. - Jn. 16:13,14*

Hence, the words “*all truth*” and “*all things*” are comprehensive in nature, as it included, not merely what Jesus said in the past, but “*things to come*.”

In his High Priestly prayer recorded immediately after these words in John 17 Jesus predicts that future generations would become believers through their word:

*17 ^ Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth**.*

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

*20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me **through their word**; - Jn. 17*

Notice carefully that Jesus prays these apostles would be sanctified through “*thy truth*” and then defines what truth he is speaking about

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to be “*thy word*.” Then he proceeds to claim that both he and these apostles had been sanctified by that same truth (v. 19). It is that same truth (“*thy word*”) he predicts that future believers will be sanctified by but it will be “*through their word*.” In other words, “*thy word*” would become inclusive of “*their word*” as it would be through them the New Testament would be provided and the Biblical canon of revelation would be bound and sealed.

Acknowledged by Apostles

Did the Apostles realize they were furnishing and completing the Scriptures? Did they understand that the Holy Spirit was using them to write inspired scriptures with the ultimate aim of binding it up and sealing it among themselves?

Peter certainly viewed the writings of Paul as inspired scriptures as he explicitly compared Paul’s writings to “*other scriptures*.”

And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also other scriptures unto their own destruction - 2 Pet. 3:15-16

Paul certainly understood he was writing inspired scriptures as he told the church at Thessalonica:

For this cause also thank we God with ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. - 1 Thes. 2:13

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In the conference at the Jerusalem church in which all the apostles participated, James said,

For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things - Acts 15:28

The Apostle John when speaking of all of the apostles who personally saw Jesus Christ (1 Jn. 1:1-3) said:

We are of God, he that knoweth God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. - 1 Jn. 4:6

John as the last living apostle fully realized their predicted responsibility of finalizing a written testimony of Jesus Christ and sealing it:

Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. - Rev. 1:2

He then finished the last book of the scriptures with a seal (Rev. 22:18-19).

Twenty two of the twenty seven books of the New Testament were written by apostles. Three of the five not written by apostles were written by those directly under the direction of apostles (Mark, Luke, and Acts). The remaining two were written by the Lord's brothers (James, Jude) who may have replaced apostles that died. Remember, in Acts 12 James was killed. All were written by "*my disciples*" (Isa. 8:16) or those alive during the Lord's own earthly ministry.

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The Period of Fulfillment

The Isaiah prophecy divides the scriptures into two parts “*the law and the testimony*”

The Old Testament Scriptures are often referred to as merely “*the law*” because all historic, poetic and prophetic scriptures after Moses merely expounded the books given to Moses by God and/or recorded how Israel obeyed or disobeyed Moses.

The “*law*” part of scripture was finished by Malachi, and the Jews believe it was canonized by Ezra the prophet scribe who lived at the time of Malachi.

The “*testimony*” aspect or New Testament was completed between 44 A.D. and 96 A.D. The vast majority of the New Testament (98%) was completed before 68 A.D.

Between Pentecost and 96 A.D. both oral and written prophetic revelation were being furnished to the churches. The Thessalonian epistles were some of the earliest scriptures furnished by Paul in which Paul refers to both oral and written apostolic revelation:

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

– 1 Thes. 2:15

By the time the apostles had died they had provided the full New Testament Scriptures as the permanent and authorized replacement of their oral teachings. So, the churches no longer had to depend upon an apostle to come and provide oral teaching, nor did they have to depend upon memory but the apostles provided written revelation that Peter claimed was “*more sure*” than the personal oral testimonies of apostles.

Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

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16 ¶ *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*

17 *For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

18 *And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

19 ¶ ***We have also a more sure word of prophecy;*** *whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*

20 *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*

21 *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

Peter said these things in view of his soon approaching death as predicted by Christ (v. 15). Although, they were eyewitness reporters (v. 16) of the supernatural events of Christ (specifically describing one event in vv. 17-18), and had orally reported it to the churches, Peter claimed that the written word of God was “*more sure*” than oral testimony by apostles. It was “*more sure*” because after their death they would not have to depend upon fallible memories of men. It was “*more sure*” because scriptures were not the personal opinions of those men who penned the scriptures (v. 20). It was “*more sure*” because it was not a product of the will of man (v. 21b) but of God’s will “*as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*” (v. 21c).

During this time when the New Testament scriptures were being written, the churches did not have the New Testament to guide them, nor were there apostles present in every service to instruct them. Therefore, there was a need for not only the revelatory gifts in the

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congregational services but signs and wonders to authenticate that these oral and written revelations were from God.

During this process period God spoke to the churches through revelatory gifts confirmed by signs and wonders. At first, these revelatory and sign gifts were exercised only by the apostles (Acts 2:43; 4:33; 5:12). However, the apostolic office had the peculiar ability (2 Cor. 12:12) to convey such gifts to others through the laying on of their hands (Acts 6:6; 8:17-19; 19:6; Rom. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:6). All revelatory gifts and authenticating gifts were conveyed to the churches through apostolic laying on of hands.

As the Lord provided more scriptures confirmed by signs and wonders, the revelatory gifts with their confirmation signs and wonders decreased until by the time the book of Hebrews which was written in about 66 A.D. the writer could speak of the confirming signs and wonders as something largely in the past:

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him;

God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? - Heb. 2:3-4

Significantly, the writer of Hebrews directly associates this confirming work by the apostles with Isaiah 8:16-20 as he continues in the very same chapter and quotes Isaiah 8:18 in regard to these confirming signs and wonders:

And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God has given me. - Heb. 2:13

Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion. - Isa. 8:18

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By the time the gospel of Mark had been written, Mark regarded the promise of confirming miracles, signs and wonders as having been largely already completed as Mark speaks of it in the past tense:

And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen. - Mark 16:20

This period of time or the period in which the New Testament was being completed is referred to by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:11-12 as “*now*.” “Now” was the period of incomplete revelation or when revelatory gifts and their authenticating gifts existed. Through such gifts the churches were provided only partial revelation that was much inferior in contrast to the coming completed (“that which is perfect” or complete) written revelation. A more comprehensive study of 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 will be given in Appendix 1 at the close of this book.

Isaiah anticipated the sealing up and binding of the Old (the law) and New (the testimony) Testament Scriptures as he said in view of its completion:

“To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to THIS WORD, it is because there is no light in them- Isa. 8:20

Isaiah said this in direct response to those who would speak in unknown tongues and see visions and claim additional revelation (Isa. 8:19).

And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that

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***mutter:**² should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?*

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. – Isa. 8:19-20

The Bible Reads as a Finished Revelation

Not only does the Bible predict its own completion by the Disciples of Christ prior to His return but it reads as you would expect a finished book to read.

Halley's Handbook of the Bible presents the case that the Bible reads as a finished book as follows:

“The Bible is all one story. The last part of the last book of the Bible reads like the close of the story begun in the first part of the first book of the Bible.

The First word in Genesis: “*in the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*” - Gen. 1:1

Almost the last word in Revelation: “*I saw a new heaven and a new earth*” - Rev. 21:1

‘ *The gather together of waters He called the sea* ’ - Gen. 1:10

‘*And the sea is no more*’ - Rev. 21:1

² There is a vast difference between ecstatic utterances (“that mutter”) and the gift of Biblical tongues and what is commonly called “tongues” today is nothing but occultic “mutter” that has been found in nearly all religions since the time of Isaiah and earlier.

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‘ *The darkness He called night* - Gen. 1:5 ‘ *There shall be no night there* - Rev. 21:25

‘God *made the two great lights* [sun and the moon]’ - Gen. 1:16

‘*The city had no need of the sun or the moon*’ - Rev. 21:23

‘*In the day you eat thereof you shall surely die* - Gen. 2:17

‘*Death shall be no more* - Rev. 21:4

‘*I will greatly multiply your pain*’ - Gen. 3:16 “*There shall be pain no more*” - Rev. 21:4

‘*Cursed is the ground for your sake* - Gen. 3:17

‘*There shall be no more curse* - Rev. 22:3

Satan appears as deceiver of mankind - Gen. 3:1, 4 Satan disappears forever - Rev. 20:10

They were driven from the tree of life - Gen. 3:22-24 The tree of life reappears - Rev. 22:2

They were driven from God’s presence - Gen. 3:24 ‘ *They shall see his face* - Rev. 22:4

Man’s primeval home was by a river - Gen. 2:10

Man’s eternal home is by a river - Rev. 22:2”

(Quoted from **Halley’s Handbook**, p. 740)

Genesis tells us how everything began and Revelation tells us how everything will end. In Genesis we see the beginning of sin and in Revelation we see the full and final development of sin in the Great

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Harlot, the false prophet, the beast and the dragon.

In Genesis physical death is introduced but in Revelation it is completed in the Second death (Rev. 20:14-15).

In Genesis we have the promise of a coming Savior (Gen. 3:15) but in Revelation His final coming is realized in glorious fulfillment.

The Bible reads as a finished book because it is a finished.

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God Does Not Speak by Prophets Today

Heb. 1:1 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake IN TIME PAST unto the fathers BY THE PROPHETS, Hath in THESE LAST DAYS spoken unto us BY HIS SON, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

The book of Hebrews was written about 66-67 AD just previous to the fall of Jerusalem. Most of the New Testament had already been penned (excluding some writings by John). In Hebrews 2:4 the writer speaks of the miracles, signs and wonders by Christ and the apostles as a completed action in the past. This is another indication of the late writing of this letter.

Notice that he says speaking "*by the prophets*" occurred "*in time past unto the Fathers*" instead of to us! When it comes to us, he says that God does not speak to us "*in these last days*" by prophets but only "*by His Son*."

The writer does not say Jesus "IS" speaking but "*hath.... spoken*" which represents the Aorist punctiliar completed action. In other words, it is a past tense completed reality rather than an ongoing speaking. He is not presently speaking to us, but already has spoken!

But when, where and how did he speak to us? Did Jesus write any

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book of the New Testament? No! So, when, where and how did he speak to us?

A. When and Where

Jesus spoke to us when he lived on earth and walked among us. John the Baptist was the final prophet in the line of Old Testament prophets to live before the ultimate Prophet appeared on earth. Moses predicted the coming of the ultimate prophet (Deut. 18:18) or "the prophet" Jesus Christ.

B. How?

Jesus chose 12 men and later a 13th man (Paul) as his official authorized representatives to reveal WHAT HE SAID unto the world:

Jn. 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, WHATSOEVER I HAVE SAID UNTO YOU.

Joh 17:8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

Joh 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Jn. 17:20 ^ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me THROUGH THEIR WORD.

Heb. 2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be SPOKEN BY

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THE LORD, and was CONFIRMED UNTO US BY THEM THAT HEARD HIM.

The New Testament Scriptures are "*the Testimony of Jesus Christ*" and which are added to the scriptures of the Prophets (Old Testament Word of God).

Re 1:2 *Who bare record of the word of God, and of **THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST**, and of all things that he saw .*

The New Testament is the completion of the Biblical canon of scripture which is "*the testimony*" of Jesus Christ" (Isa. 8:16-18). That is why the apostolic writings are the final authority for discerning the Spirit of truth from the spirit of error:

1 Jn. 1:1 *That which was from the beginning, which **WE HAVE HEARD**, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of **THE WORD** of life. 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and **BEAR WITNESS**, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested UNTO US;) 3 That which we have seen and HEARD **WE DECLARE UNTO YOU**"*

1 Jn. 4:6 *We are of God: he that knoweth God **HEARETH US**, he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.*

Jesus and his disciples furnished "*the testimony of Jesus*" which is now what is called the New Testament. This body of writing by the apostles is what Paul anticipated as the basis for final authority when he wrote shortly before his death in A.D. 66-67 the following words:

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All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. – 2 Tim. 3:16-4:6

The New Testament Scriptures are the last prophetic voice until we come to the final seventieth week of Daniel (Rev. 11:1-15).

All self-proclaimed prophets between the close of the New Testament prophetic Word of Christ and Daniel's 70th week are ALL FALSE PROPHETS - Mt. 24:24-25; 2 Thes. 2:9-12.

There are no prophets recorded between the death of John the Revelator and today which have passed all seven Biblical tests of a prophet – none!

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Post-Biblical Evidence Of a Completed Biblical Canon

The Dead Sea Scrolls prove that the entire Old Testament Scriptures existed and were finished prior to the life of Christ. The Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) prove that the Old Testament Scriptures were finished and completed prior to the life of Christ.

No one but those who deny inspiration of the scriptures dispute that all of the books that now makes up the entire New Testament as it now exists were completed in the Apostolic era. Why? All those books were penned by people living in the first century! Hence, all those books had been sent and received within the apostolic age. Thus, the entire New Testament was completed and finished in the first century. There is ample testimony from writers in the Second Century to prove that all of the books that now compose the New Testament were known and used.

The only argument seems to be that some Christian scholars in the 2nd and 3rd centuries were not settled on the authenticity of a few epistles (Hebrews, 2 Peter, 2nd and 3rd John and Revelation). However, only some geographical regions rejected some while other geographic regions accepted them.

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So, all of these books were accepted by some from the earliest period after the apostles. The earliest canonical list of New Testament books that is identical to the present New Testament is found in the Paschal letter of Athanasius of Alexandria in 367 AD. However, that does not mean it did not exist earlier. Indeed, Tertullian in about 200 AD argued that the entire New Testament canon existed from the death of the last apostle.

The Testimony of Tertullian

Obviously, all the writings of the apostles were completed prior to their death. As late as 250 A.D. the originals of the apostolic writings were still found with the congregations they had been addressed unto.

“Come now, you who would indulge a better curiosity, if you would apply it to the business of your salvation, run over the apostolic churches, in which the very thrones of the apostles are still pre-eminent in their places, in which their own authentic writings are read, uttering the voice and representing the face of each of them severally.” – Tertullian, **On Prescription Against Heretics**, Chapter xxxvi. p. 260

Tertullian argues that the churches had received their rule of faith from the apostles, and the apostles received it from Christ, and that this rule of faith is the “entire volume” of scriptures. He speaks of the scriptures as a completed or “entire volume”

“One man perverts the Scriptures with his hand, another their meaning by his exposition. For although Valentinus seems to use the entire volume, he has none the less laid

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violent hands on the truth only with amore cunning mind and skill than Marcion.” – Tertullian, Ibid., chapter xxxviii, p. 260 – emphasis mine

Marcion was an early Christian Gnostic that lived in the 2nd century AD prior to Tertullian. Tertullian says that Marcion did not use “the entire volume” but cut out what did not harmonize with his Gnostic beliefs. Hence, Marcion produced an edited version of the New Testament.

However, Tertullian claimed that right from “the beginning” of the second century the churches possessed “the entire volume” from which they never added unto or subtracted from:

“Now, what is there in our Scriptures which is contrary to us? **What of our own have we introduced, that we should have to take away again, or else add to it, or alter it,** in order to restore to its natural soundness anything which is contrary to it, and contained in the Scriptures? What we are ourselves, that also the Scriptures are, (and have been) **from the beginning.**” – Tertullian, Ibid., chapter xxxviii, p. 261 – emphasis mine

Without question early Christians read other Christian writings, but did not include them within “the entire volume” of the Scriptures. It is true that the authenticity of a few books of the New Testament were being challenged in the second and third centuries by some among those churches that later apostatized into Roman Catholicism but it cannot be proven that such books were challenged by apostolic churches.

As argued by Tertullian, “the entire volume” of scripture was confirmed right from the beginning of the second century after the death of the last living apostle.

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There were early translations of the New Testament into old Syriac and old Latin which had occurred as early as 150 A.D. Very few remnants of these early translations survive. It is true that the few remnants of these translations we possess have some missing books but that does not mean they were missing in all early translations. Moreover, they are not missing in later Old Latin and Syriac translations.

Appendix 1

The Better Way of Love - 1 Cor. 13

1 Corinthians 13 is universally regarded as the chapter of Love - it is a literary classic on love. However, we should ask why love is introduced at this point in this context of spiritual gifts. Remember, this context is not one that condones or approves of the Corinthian use of spiritual gifts but condemns the way they were being used (1 Cor. 12:1-3). They possessed all the spiritual gifts in their church body but they were not "*spiritual*" but "*carnal*" (1 Cor. 3:13). Spirituality has to do with the fruit of the Spirit not the gifts and the singular fruit of the Spirit is love.

Let's first give an outline of the chapter:

1. The Hyperbole's and love - Love is Essential - vv. 1-3
2. The Character of Love - Love is Spiritual - vv 4-7
3. The Completeness of Love - Love is Superior - vv. 8-12
4. The Continuity of Love - Love Abideth - v. 13

A. The Hyperbole's and Love — Love is Essential - vv. 1-3

Paul lists several things, all of which, are quite impossible to achieve, but even "*though*" achieved would be "*nothing*" without

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love and that is his point.

1. ALL languages
2. ALL understanding
3. ALL knowledge
4. ALL faith
5. ALL things given up for others

He is not saying that any human being, including himself, can or ever has attained such things. In fact, only God could and does attain the three things in this list. Only God has “all” understanding, and/or “all” knowledge, and/or “all” faith. Is there any recorded instance in the Bible where any man, including Christ, that actually had “*removed mountains*”? Is there any case in scripture where any man gave all his belongings to the poor and then gave his body to be burned? No! So, it is clear that Paul is using pure hyperbole, or considering things impossible to achieve. Why? To show that without love the greatest possible goals are worth nothing.

However, Pentecostalism wants to interpret these things as not only possible for men but actually attained as they want to claim that 1 Cor. 13:1 proves that Biblical tongues are inclusive of angelic languages. This interpretation is essential for them to explain why none in the Corinthian congregation could understand tongues but God.

But is Paul saying that? Notice the repetition of the word “*though*” introducing each thing listed followed by the word “*all*” demonstrating maximum attainment in each aspect listed.

***Though** I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*

*2 And **though** I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all*

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faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

*3 And **though** I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

Pentecostal scholars cannot pick and choose here. If they claim one is possible they must claim all are possible because all are equally put forth to prove the same point.

Paul is saying no such thing. He is inferring the very reverse, "though" one could do such, but you cannot, it would be worthless without love. Furthermore, an exegetical based study of the gift of tongues will prove beyond any reasonable doubt to any unbiased person that the Biblical gift of tongues was the gift of human dialects acquired without learning. The problem of such tongues being "unknown" in the congregation is due to speaking a human dialect foreign to the speaker and congregation, not that it was the actual language of angels. Failure to understand what was said is due to its being used outside of its Biblical design and purpose (1 Cor. 14:20-22).

B. The Character of love — Love is Spiritual - vv. 4-7

The characteristics of love presented here are the fruit of the Spirit which are also presented by Paul in Galatians 5:21-22. The Corinthians had all of the gifts, but were not spiritual, but were carnal (1 Cor. 3:13).

I am afraid what many may call "love" today is nothing more than a sloppy agape or an all-inclusive love. True love is not all inclusive. True love has clear Biblical boundaries. In verses 4-6a you notice the repetitive "not". These verses show us what love excludes or is "not."

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth

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*NOT; charity vaunteth NOT itself, is NOT puffed up,
5 Doth NOT behave itself unseemly, seeketh NOT her
own, is NOT easily provoked, thinketh NO evil;
6 Rejoiceth NOT in iniquity,*

The first two descriptions of love in verse 4 are in reaction to mistreatment by others. Love "suffereth" long or puts up with mistreatment and in reverse is kind toward them. There were those members among the Corinthians who were objects of abuse and were mistreated all in the name of "spirituality."

In regard to spiritual gifts and their abuse, love is not about self - it does not envy what God has not chosen to give them and God does not give tongues or any other gift to all believers (12:29-30). Love does not BUILD UP SELF - "vaunteth not itself" but that was exactly what was occurring among the tongue speakers at Corinth. Love does not act "unseemingly" but that was occurring in their worship service which was disorderly and full of confusion (14:33, 41). Love is not "puffed up" proud of their spirituality, but that was the case among the Corinthians (ch. 6). Love "seeketh not her own" but is self-denying. However, such members at Corinth were absorbed in "self-edification" - building up self at the expense of others. They were rejoicing in iniquity (1 Cor. 5:1-3) thinking it was more "spiritual" to overlook open sin as they thought that was "longsuffering" and therefore an attribute of spirituality. They thought "evil" of Paul.

Hence, love is "not" these things. What is love?

*5 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; 6...but rejoiceth
..... in the truth; Beareth all things,
believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

Verses 5a, 6b-8a reveals what love IS rather than what it is NOT! These are the positive boundaries of love. Love is found within the boundaries of truth. Verse 7 is referring to "all things" within that boundary of truth. It "beareth all things" within the boundaries of

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truth. It believeth "*all things*" within the boundaries of truth. It hopeth "*all things*" within the boundaries of truth. It endureth "*all things*" within the boundaries of truth. The Spirit is called the "*Spirit OF TRUTH.*" The "*house of God*" is called the pillar and ground "*OF THE TRUTH.*" God is the God "*of all truth.*" Jesus is "*the truth.*"

What the Church at Corinth believed and practiced in regard to spiritual gifts was not within the boundaries of truth and neither are the beliefs and practices of Modern Day Pentecostals.

C. The Endurability of Love — vv. 8-12

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

Paul selectively chooses to compare the endurability of love with three revelatory gifts as selective or representative for all other revelatory gifts. Most likely, these three revelatory gifts were regarded by the Corinthians as the more desirable revelatory gifts. No one can successfully deny that prophecy is a revelatory gift. He is talking about the gift of prophesy ("we prophesy in part" – v. 8). No one can successfully deny that the gift of tongues is also a revelatory gift. That leaves "knowledge" to consider. He is not speaking of general knowledge as that never vanishes away but only increases in this age and in the age to come. He is referring to knowledge in the sense of special revelatory insight. Most likely, this is the gift used by prophets to judge the validity of a prophetic utterance as commanded by Paul when he says:

Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.
– 1 Cor. 14:29

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Love never fails in the sense of cessation but all revelatory gifts do fail or cease. However, not all revelatory gifts cease in the same manner. Paul drops tongues in verse 9 from the discussion because tongues ceases in a different manner and prior to the gifts of prophesy and knowledge. Paul uses the middle voice when describing how tongues cease – they cease of themselves or just die out. The limited divine purpose for tongues determines when and how it ceases (see 1 Cor. 14:20-22; Isa. 28:13-18).

However, Paul uses the passive voice when describing how prophesy and knowledge fail – something occurs yet in the future that causes them to cease. Verse 10 identifies “*when that which is perfect is come*” as the cause for the cessation of the revelatory gifts of prophesy and knowledge.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

These two gifts are said to be “*in part*” and thus incomplete, as a “*part*” is not the whole of anything, but only a segment or aspect of something. Naturally what terminates something “*in part*” is that which is complete. Thus, in verses 10-12 he provides three propositional truths that illustrate this very point. (1) The incomplete cease when it is made complete - v. 10; (2) the state of immaturity ceases when the state of maturity arrives - v. 11; (3) the obscure ceases when clarity arrives – v. 12

Love is never “*in part*” and therefore, never “incomplete” and so, nothing can come to make it more complete than it already is. However, that is not true with revelatory gifts because of their very nature and design.

How is prophecy “in part” as a revelatory gift and what is the objective end that makes it complete? With regard to revelation,

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prophecy is the divine means to ultimately produce Scriptures as final authority for faith and practice. Peter says,

*We have also a more sure **word of prophecy**; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*

*20 Knowing this first, that no **prophecy of the scripture** is of any private interpretation.*

*21 For **the prophecy** came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. – 2 Pet. 1:19-21*

Note the connection between prophecy and scripture. The design of prophecy is to ultimately provide scripture. James calls this product of prophecy “perfect.”

*But be ye doers of **the word**, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*

*23 For if any be a hearer of **the word**, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:*

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

*25 But whoso looketh into the **perfect** law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. – James 1:22-25*

Oral prophecy is not complete until it is put in inspired written form. Until the whole Biblical canon is completed revelatory gifts continue and remain “in part.”

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D. The Progressive Completion

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

Paul uses two analogies to convey how revelatory gifts become obsolete after producing the completed Biblical canon of scripture. The first analogy is that of a child becoming mature. The second analogy is one of obscurity versus clarity in the use of a brazen mirror.

The phrase “*that which is perfect*” does not refer to the coming of Christ as Paul uses a neuter gender. Moreover, Paul’s description of the arrival of “*that which is perfect*” is a progressive and developmental action rather than a sudden appearance as in the coming of Christ or the new creation. A child does not immediately become mature but maturity is a progressive and developmental action. So, the completion of the Biblical canon is a developmental progressive action that arrives at completion through the use of revelatory gifts. Once, the Biblical canon is completed that terminates the use of revelatory gifts as they are inferior and can only provide “in part” revelations whereas the completed scriptures provide a much greater or more perfect revelation which renders “in part” revelatory gifts invalid and no longer needed.

The second analogy is that of a mirror. The prophet received revelation from God in a variety of ways. The primary ways were through dreams and visions. God identifies these two ways as “*dark speeches*” or as Paul says “*see darkly*.” Another way that God revealed his will was directly “*face to face*.” In the case of Moses, God wrote down the law on two tablets and gave it to Moses in

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written form.

Numb. 12:6 *And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a VISION, and will speak unto him in a DREAM.* 7 *My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. 8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, EVEN APPARENTLY, and not in DARK SPEECHES; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?*

Notice that God is addressing prophets among them. He declares the general methods through which revelation is given to prophets (“in a vision....in a dream”) and describes such methods as “dark speeches.” In direct contrast, God spoke “apparently” or “mouth to mouth” with Moses. **God is not saying that Moses looked upon the face of God because the scripture clearly denies that he ever did.** He is describing the difference between indirect and direct means of revelation. With Moses, God gave him written revelation upon two stones without going through the indirect prophetic methods of dreams and visions. With Moses, God spoke directly to him or “face to face” bypassing the prophetic gifts.

Paul is describing the progressive and developmental work of prophecy in producing the perfect law of liberty in its completed form as a process from childhood to maturity. He then contrasts the present revelation through prophetic gifts with the completed written revelation as the difference between indirect and direct revelation to God’s people. The prophet and his gifts is a middle man between God and His people. The written word is more direct revelation to His people. It is the difference between looking into the common brass mirror of that day and trying to see yourself and looking directly at yourself and seeing yourself as you’re are seen by others. It is simply an additional analogy to contrast why “in part” revelatory gifts are

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inferior to the completed written word. The written word is more direct and personal than going through a middle man (prophet). The brass mirror is like going through a middle man, whereas the ability to see yourself as others actually see is more direct and that is the difference between the prophetic gifts and the written word of God.

E. Now versus Then and Abiding versus what is stopped - 1 Cor. 13:13-14:1

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.1 Follow after charity,

Notice the contrast between “now” and “then.” The period of time defined as “now” is the apostolic age when the completion of the written word is in progress. The period of time defined as “then” is when that process has been completed. Paul was writing them in that “now” period when the process was incomplete and his epistles to the Corinthians were part of that completing process.

It is within that time frame defined as “now” that tongues will cease and prophecy and knowledge remain “in part.”

Up to the writing of this epistle they had no written revelation to guide them in conducting the worship service and the proper use of spiritual gifts.

Paul’s apostleship had been questioned by some at Corinth. Although, he believed that what he was providing in written form to them was the commandments of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:37-39), he chose to provide them with various analogies coupled with an indisputable

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principle to correct their misuse of spiritual gifts. That indisputable principle is love.

They could question his apostleship and prophetic office to convey written revelation but what they could not deny was the superior guiding principle of love. They could not dispute that “now” abideth faith hope and charity (and it will still be abiding “*then*” as well, because love “*never faileth*” and love is inclusive of both hope and faith). So, Paul defines what love is and what it is not and then introduces chapter 14 with the words “*follow after charity...*” In chapter 14 he simply applies the various aspects of love as guiding principles in determining the proper decency and order of the worship service with regard to the use of spiritual gifts.

How is love greater than faith, hope and revelatory gifts? Love is greater because faith and hope are its fruit (Gal. 5:22), thus, such are inclusive of love. Remember, Paul said that love “hopeth all things” and “believeth all things” and so is inclusive of both hope and faith. So, hope and faith do not cease “then” and are just present “now” but like love continue “now” as in the apostolic age. Love is greater than all spiritual gifts because they are worthless without love (1 Cor. 13:1-3). Love is greater because spirituality is defined by love not by gifts because they had all the gifts but yet were “carnal” (1 Cor. 3:1-3). Hence, love defined true spirituality.

Therefore, Paul exhorts them to earnestly “follow after charity” (14:1) as “charity” defines what is the proper “spiritual” use of gifts. In 1 Cor. 14:1-41 the principle of love is applied to their worship service to define the proper use of spiritual gifts. Especially the characteristic of love that “*seeketh not its own*”, or the rule of edification of others above selfish designs. Not only so, but the characteristic that love “*doth not behave itself unseemingly*” but does all things decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:41). Finally, love “*rejoiceth in truth*” and therefore, past written revelation (1 Cor.

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14:20-21) and Paul's present WRITTEN REVELATION OF GOD'S WILL takes precedence over the prophet or he who thinks himself to be spiritual:

36 ^What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? 37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. 38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignoran

What causes revelatory gifts to be stopped now? It is what God provides to complete (v. 10) mature (v. 11) and replace with greater clarity (v. 12) than revelatory gifts. It is arrival of the finished revealed written Word of God (Isa. 8:16; Rev. 1:3; 22:1819).

If you are interested in a comprehensive study of the Biblical gift of tongues and the Baptism in the Spirit please go to our church website and read the books entitled "The Baptism in the Spirit" and "Outline Study of 1 Corinthians 12-14" and "Counterfeit Revival."

http://victorybaptistchurch.webstarts.com/books_by_mark_fenison.html

Appendix II

Modern Day Loop Holes?

There are two opposing camps within professed Christendom today with regard to the idea of ongoing progressive revelation beyond the Biblical canon.

1. The Cessationist
2. The Non-Cessationist

The Cessationist

One camp is called “cessationist” simply because they believe the spirit of prophecy and apostolic signs and wonders ceased with the completion of the Biblical canon.

They believe that God still performs miracles and heals the sick in answer to prayer. However, they deny that the offices of Apostle and prophet with their confirming signs and wonders continued beyond the completion of the Biblical canon.

The cessationist does not deny that God may at times uniquely lead or guide his people by subjective dreams and/or other supernatural experiences or circumstances. However, it is one thing to say “I believe God is leading, showing, teaching me something” and quite another thing to claim to be God’s mouth by saying “Thus saith the

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Lord” or “the Spirit told, showed me such and such.”

The former is merely personal opinion subject to error while the second is the claim of inspiration which is not subject to error. Cessationist deny that the prophetic office and its authenticating signs and wonders continues beyond the finished Biblical canon of scripture. Cessationists believe God speaks today through the scriptures and leads through providential circumstances.

The Non-Cessationist

The non-cessantionist believes that God is still providing ongoing revelation in the form of dreams, visions and direct revelation in addition to the Scriptures. The Roman Catholic Church and the Restoration movements fall into this category. The Mormons are a good example of this category with their new revelation from their god in the new world (North and South America).

Two Opposing Camps within Non-Cessationism

Within the non-cessationist view there are two camps. The first camp believes that God speaks today exactly as he did during the times when the Bible was being completed. They deny the Bible is the completed or the final revelation from God. They believe in ongoing progressive revelation today. They believe they have prophets and apostles today in the very same sense as in the Biblical days. They would quote the author of Hebrews in saying “*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever*”³

³ Of course, Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever, but he does not work in the same manner yesterday, today, and forever. For example, we don’t see any miracle worker opening up seas or rivers and walking across on dry land. We don’t

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There is a second camp of non-cessationists that take a different view of revelatory gifts today.

This second camp of non-cessationist realize that if one claims that God continues to speak exactly as He did when the scriptures were being furnished, then, all that is spoken or written by such persons would be equally inspired as the scriptures and therefore we should be adding to the Biblical canon the words of present day prophets and apostles.

Furthermore, if all revelation today is equal to the Scriptures, then all the tests of the prophet must be applied to all who claim to speak in behalf of God. This presents a real problem because no self-proclaimed prophet after the close of the Biblical canon can be found who has not failed at least one or more of these Biblical tests.

Therefore, the second group denies ongoing revelation in the sense of the scriptures and accepts the scriptures as final revelation from God. Moreover, they deny the revelatory gifts practiced today reveal the inspired Word of God but rather contain a mixture of truth and error and it is the duty of the church to discern between what is true and false.

The Legal Loop Hole

This second type of non-cessationist tries to make a distinction between Old and New Testament Prophets.

They regard the office of the Old Testament prophet to be equal to the New Testament office of apostle, both of which, they confess spoke and wrote by inspiration. However, they deny that the New Testament prophet is equal to the Old Testament prophet or to the New Testament apostle.

According to this view the New Testament prophet and the spirit of prophecy is a lower level of prophetic gift that should not be

see anyone walking on water, etc.

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regarded as containing God's own words. Instead, they believe that revelation today is expressed in human words subject to error.

Wayne Grudem is professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School at Deerfield, Illinois and he explains this view as follows:

*So prophecies in the church today should be considered merely human words, not God's word, and not equal to God's words in authority....For example, Bruce Yocum, the author of a widely used charismatic book on prophecy writes, "Prophecy can be impure - our own thoughts or ideas can get mixed into the message we receive - whether we receive the words directly or only receive a sense of the message." - Wayne Grudem, **Systematic Theology**, Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, England, 1994, p. 1055*

Since such prophesying may contain both truth and error, they argue that it is the job of the church to discern between what is true and what is false. According to this theory, error does not indicate one is a false prophet because there is no claim to speak by inspiration.

Obviously, this position is designed to justify the claim of having the prophetic gift, but escape the tests of a prophet. How do they support this position by the Scriptures?

The Biblical Evidence

They primarily use the fourteenth chapter of first Corinthians to support their idea of this lower level of the prophetic gift.

Their line of logic is as follows. They first attempt to show that all church members can have this gift of prophesy, and then the church through other gifted members is to discern the true from the false

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content of any given prophecy.

But if ALL prophecy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of ALL, he is judged of ALL ALL may prophesy one by one. - 1 Cor. 14:24, 31

On the surface these verses seem to support their idea. However, what they fail to tell their readers is that the term *prophesying* has both a general meaning and a technical meaning in Scripture. The term in a general sense simply means to “speak forth” and does not always refers to the prophetic office but rather to simply preaching/teaching the scriptures already produced by the prophetic office. In context, this kind of prophesying is spelled out by Paul at the very beginning of this chapter where he says:

But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort - 1 Cor. 14:3

Paul’s point in verses 24 and 31 is that, if lost people are present in the assembly, then speaking forth the word of God is used by the Spirit of God to reveal their sinfulness (Heb. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:16) and evangelize them.

However, they reject this general sense of prophesying, and they continue in their line of reasoning to show that other gifted members are to distinguish the truth from error in the content of what is prophesied. The following text is their proof text for this idea:

Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. - 1 Cor. 14:29

There are several problems with their use of this text. First, those addressed in this text are called “*prophets*.” Paul is no longer talking about general prophesying in the sense of merely speaking forth the

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word (vv. 3-24), but is addressing the Prophetic office or those who claim to be prophets.

The prophets are restricted to only two or three just as the tongue speakers are restricted in a single service. However, prophesying in the general sense of speaking forth the Word of God (preaching/teaching/exhortation) is not limited but “*all may prophesy one by one.*” In one context “all” may prophesy one at a time but in another context only two or at the most three can prophesy. The problem is that the former is speaking of prophesying in the general sense, while the latter is speaking of the office of the prophet.

Hence, their position is correct that the use of the term “prophesying” in 1 Corinthians 14 is to be understood in lesser sense in a general context, but they are wrong that it refers to the New Testament prophet. The office of prophet is clearly distinguished from those who prophesy in a general sense.

Furthermore, they are also wrong that the New Testament office of a prophet is not equal to the Old Testament prophetic office through which God speaks by inspiration:

And as we tarried there days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. - Acts 21:20-11

Agabus plainly declares what he is saying is not “human words” but are the words of the Holy Spirit - “*Thus saith the Holy Ghost*” Furthermore, scriptures clearly contradict the conclusion that other church members are merely to judge the true versus false **content** rather than a true or false **prophet**. John says that it is the prophet that is to be judged whether he/she is a true or false prophet:

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Beloved, believe not every spirit but try the spirits because many false prophets have gone forth into the world - 1 Jn. 4:1

If there is any content of error, that error exposes and condemns a person to be a false prophet or prophetess.

Conclusion

Some non-cessationists want their cake and eat it too! They want to be recognized as prophets with the prophetic gift of speaking in the name of the Lord but do not want to be held responsible to the Biblical standards or tests of a prophet.

They want to introduce their messages, dreams and visions authoritatively by saying “*Thus saith the Lord*” or by other such equivalent language, but at the same time they want to claim a legal loop hole in case later what they speak is proven to be false.

They simply cannot have it both ways. There are no legal loop holes for those who claim revelation from God and introduce their messages by saying “*Thus saith the Lord*” or with words equivalent to that declaration. They are either acting as the mouth of God or they are not. It is just that simple.

In a general sense all who take up the written product of the prophetic office (the scriptures) and speak forth what the scriptures declare are prophesying in a general sense.

However, since the close of the Biblical canon there cannot be found any self-proclaimed prophet who has not failed one or more of the Biblical tests required to be recognized as a prophet of God. Hence, the prophetic office ceased with the completion of the Biblical canon. The Apostles and prophets were foundational rather than ongoing offices set in the church (Eph. 2:20). Pastors, deacons and evangelists (missionaries) are the permanent offices in the church and their responsibility is to “*preach*” and “*teach*” (“speak forth”) that

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Word of God (2 Tim. 4:1-6) which has previously been provided by prophets and apostles and previously confirmed by miracles, signs and wonders.