

Integrity

Proverbs 2:6–15, 21–22; 4:3–6; 13:6

- The Lord guards those who walk in integrity.
- The Hebrew word translated “integrity” in these passages is *tom*, which literally means “completeness” or “full measure.”
- The definition of the Greek word for “sin” (*hamartia*) is missing the mark of what God intends.
- Integrity is the opposite. It’s hitting the mark, living in the fullness of what God intended for humanity.

Proverbs 2:6–15, 21–22; 4:3–6; 13:6

- It's more than not doing wrong; it's doing what's right.
- It's seeking God's will, pursuing how He would have us live. That doesn't mean we do everything perfectly all the time; no one can. But it's pursuing God's design for our lives and the world around us.
- In English, we have the same nuance for the word "integrity" when talking about structural integrity. It's the state of being whole, unified or undivided.
- It's having internal consistency, lack of corruption, or being sound.

Proverbs 2:6–15, 21–22; 4:3–6; 13:6

- A building is sound when it has structural integrity: when things are complete and whole, and built correctly and consistently throughout; when everything functions the way it is supposed to.
- A building must have structural integrity to stand.
- The same is true for human beings.
- If we want to stand firm against the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:10–18), we must have spiritual “structural” integrity:

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- Soundness: Knowing what we believe theologically and making sure it is “sound doctrine” (Titus 1:9)
- Consistency: Living out what we say we believe (not hypocrisy) and being the same person no matter what environment we are in (not acting differently around our church friends versus our work friends, neighborhood friends or family)
- Lack of corruption: Not being corrupted or swayed by the world, but keeping our minds and hearts on the things of God (2 Corinthians 10:5; Colossians 3:2)

Proverbs 2:6–15, 21–22; 4:3–6; 13:6

- Firmness: Being firm in our moral principles, beliefs and actions
- Completeness: Not having divided loyalties or purposes. A person of integrity focuses solely on pursuing God's kingdom and His righteousness, not the things of this world (Matthew 6:24, 33).
- Walking in integrity demands consistency in your walk (not saying one thing and doing another) and commitment to following God's way, not your own wisdom.

Proverbs 2:6–15, 21–22; 4:3–6; 13:6

- Proverbs tells us that righteousness “guards” those who live in integrity (2:11; 13:6).
- Integrity is like a fortress that protects us from attack.
- It’s like a shield that guards us against the flaming arrows of the evil one (Ephesians 6:10–18).
- When you live an honest, non-duplicitous life of integrity, someone may try to attack you, but they won’t be able to knock you down.

Proverbs 2:6–15, 21–22; 4:3–6; 13:6

- The Lord is a shield to those who walk in integrity (2:7).
- This passage doesn't mean He protects us from all bad things, trials or suffering, but that He protects us from the Evil One (John 17:15).
- In fact, Scripture tells us to “count it all joy” when we face trials (not if) because it produces steadfastness, and steadfastness, in its full effect, can make us “perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (James 1:2–4).
- God's purpose isn't to protect us from all pain and suffering but to use suffering to build integrity in us.

Proverbs 2:6–15, 21–22; 4:3–6; 13:6

- All of this is consistent with the overall theme of Proverbs. The way of true wisdom is to follow God's wisdom, not our own.
- When we follow God's ways, our lives will be better. God is the Creator of the universe and of us.
- He knows what is best for us better than we do.
- This is what Proverbs means when it says those with integrity will "inhabit the land" (2:21). They would enjoy God's blessing.

Proverbs 10:9; 11:3; 14:2; 20:7; 28:18

- Those who don't walk in integrity will be found out.
- Proverbs share the practical side of why people should walk in integrity.
- Those who are “crooked” in their ways will be found out eventually.
- People can only keep up a lie for so long before the truth comes out (10:9).
- The contrasting imagery in many of these Proverbs is between those who walk in integrity and those whose ways are “crooked” (10:9).

Proverbs 10:9; 11:3; 14:2; 20:7; 28:18

- The Hebrew means literally “twists his ways” or “makes his ways crooked.”
- Figuratively, it can mean to “pervert” his ways, to take something good and pervert it or twist it into something bad.
- The imagery gives us a stark contrast. God’s ways are straight, while the way of wickedness is crooked.
- “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths” (3:5–6).

Proverbs 10:9; 11:3; 14:2; 20:7; 28:18

- We will have a more direct path to success in life with fewer bumps along the way when we follow God's wisdom.
- This doesn't mean we will have no bumps at all, but the bumps we do have will be things that happen to us, not troubles we cause for ourselves by straying off the straight path.
- When we follow the crooked path and live by deception, cheating and manipulation, we bring those hard things on ourselves. We cause our own destruction (28:18; 11:3).

Proverbs 10:9; 11:3; 14:2; 20:7; 28:18

- But when we follow God's ways, He makes our paths straight; this is how integrity "guides" us.
- God's Word shows us the way to live, the right path to walk.
- There are two paths we can follow, one leading to life and blessing and the other to death and destruction (12:28).
- Sadly, Jesus said few would choose this narrow path (Matthew 7:14).

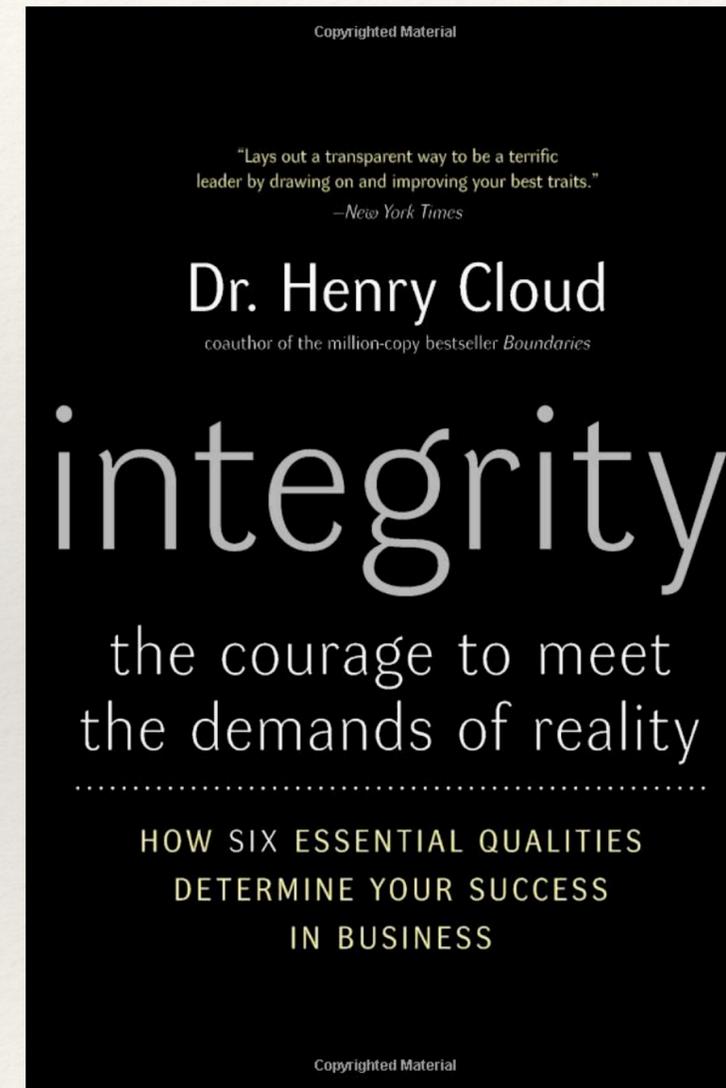
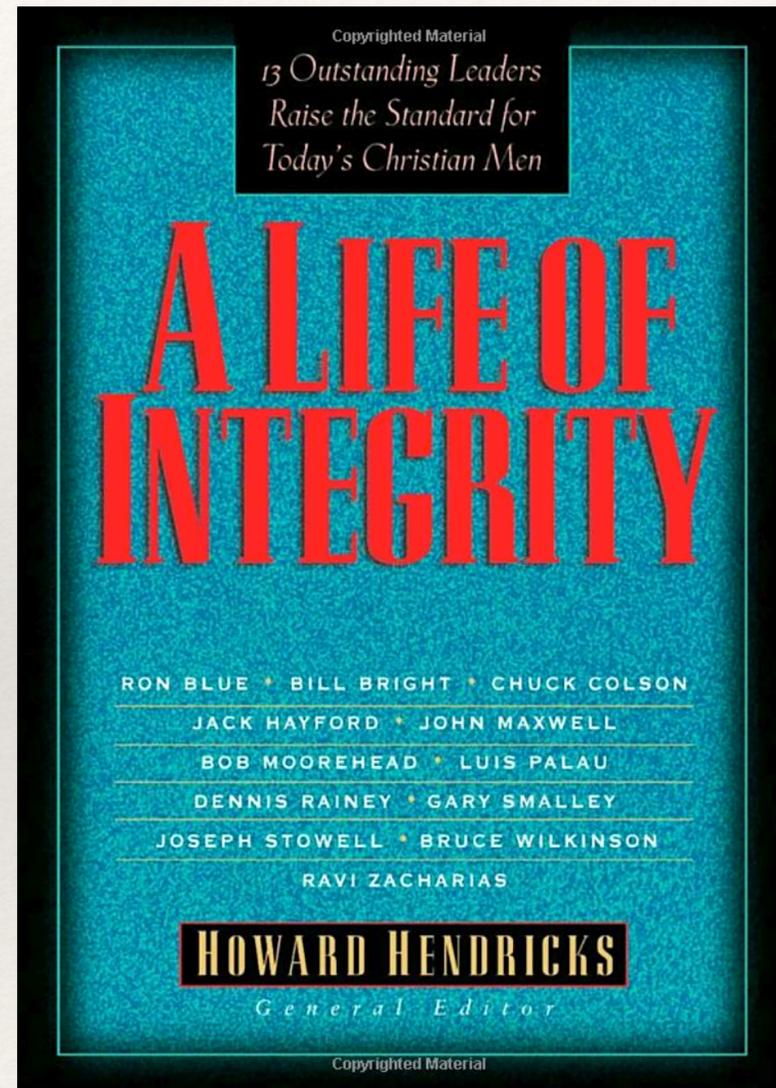
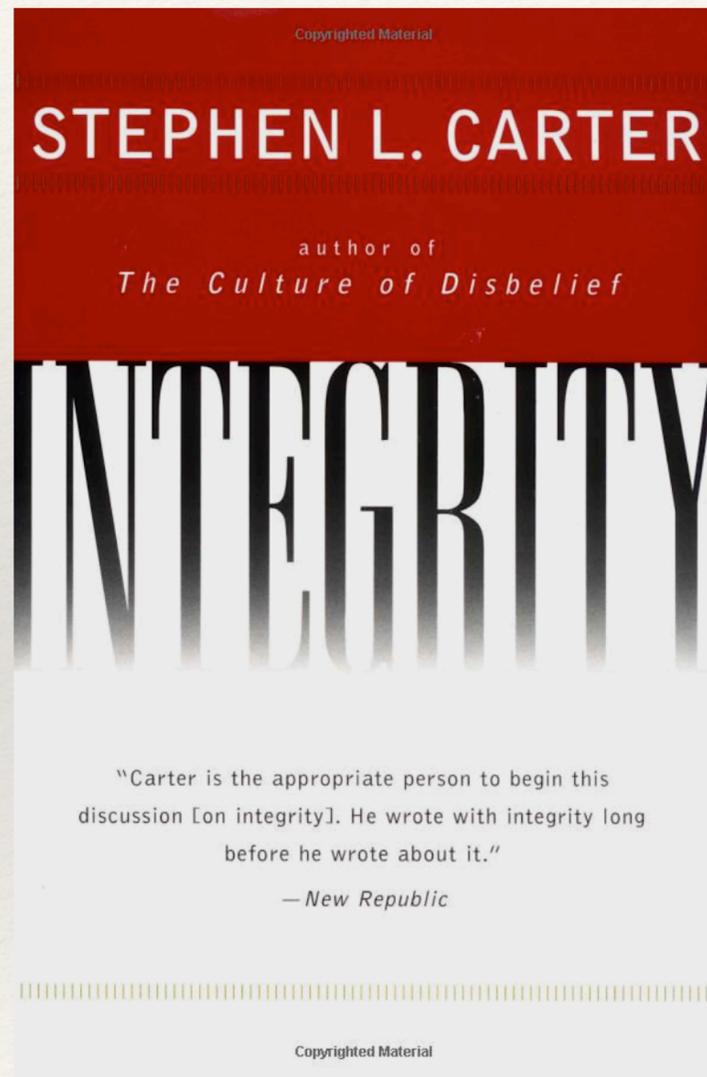
Proverbs 10:9; 11:3; 14:2; 20:7; 28:18

- It's better to have less with integrity than riches gained by wickedness.
- Integrity leads to blessing and life: it is better to have integrity than riches.
- Having wealth isn't a bad thing, but it is not worth trading your integrity for.
- If you must use dishonesty or injustice to gain it, you will not be better off, because wickedness leads to destruction.
- As Solomon wrote in wisdom literature elsewhere, wealth is meaningless in and of itself; it will never satisfy (Ecclesiastes 5:8–20).

Proverbs 10:9; 11:3; 14:2; 20:7; 28:18

- Proverbs is not saying it is always the case that the wealthy have gained their riches by trading their integrity. Many people of integrity gain wealth in honest ways and use it for the kingdom of God.
- Solomon warns us about this temptation: to trade integrity for power, fame, or something else other than wealth. Maintaining our integrity takes intentionality in a fallen world.
- Solomon said the upright “gives thought to his ways” (21:29). The Hebrew word here literally means to “be firm,” to “determine,” or “establish” his ways, steps or path.

Resources





Are there biblical prophets today?

What is their role in today's churches?

Is prophecy only for the Old Testament?

Prophets

- The gift and office of apostleship were given at the beginning of the church age. One of the gifts mentioned is the gift of prophecy.
- Prophets in the Old Testament spoke the very words of God (Jeremiah 1:9).
- Prophets were both foretellers and forthtellers.
- Christian theologians today can be put into one of two groups:
 - Cessationists - certain gifts and offices have ceased
 - Continuationists - all spiritual gifts continue

Prophets

- Cessationists believe certain gifts have ceased:
 - The “revelatory” gifts of the Spirit mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12–14.
 - Specifically prophecy, tongues / interpretation in 1 Corinthians 12:10.
 - They ceased sometime between the deaths of the apostles and the confirmation of the New Testament canon.

Prophets

- Continuationists believe that all the gifts continue:
 - The gifts of the Spirit listed in these chapters are meant to continue.
 - They are used according to the sovereign Spirit's purposes.
 - They are used throughout the church age until Jesus returns.

Prophets

- Both groups will point to 1 Corinthians 13:8:
- “Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.”
- What is the time frame for passing away?
- The next two verses (13:9-10) give the reason for why prophecies and knowledge will pass away: “For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.”

Prophets

- Two different interpretations:
- If you believe the perfect is the completion of the Bible (canon of Scripture) then the prophecy will pass away.
 - We don't need further revelation and don't need confirmation of the truth of Scripture any longer.
- If you believe the perfect looks to when Christ returns, then you believe prophecy is still a spiritual gift today.

Prophets

- Question for Pentecostal and charismatic Christians:
- If these revelatory gifts (prophecy, miracles, tongues, knowledge) did not cease, why don't we see examples of them in church history?
- Their usual answer is:
- Joel 2:28 – “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.”



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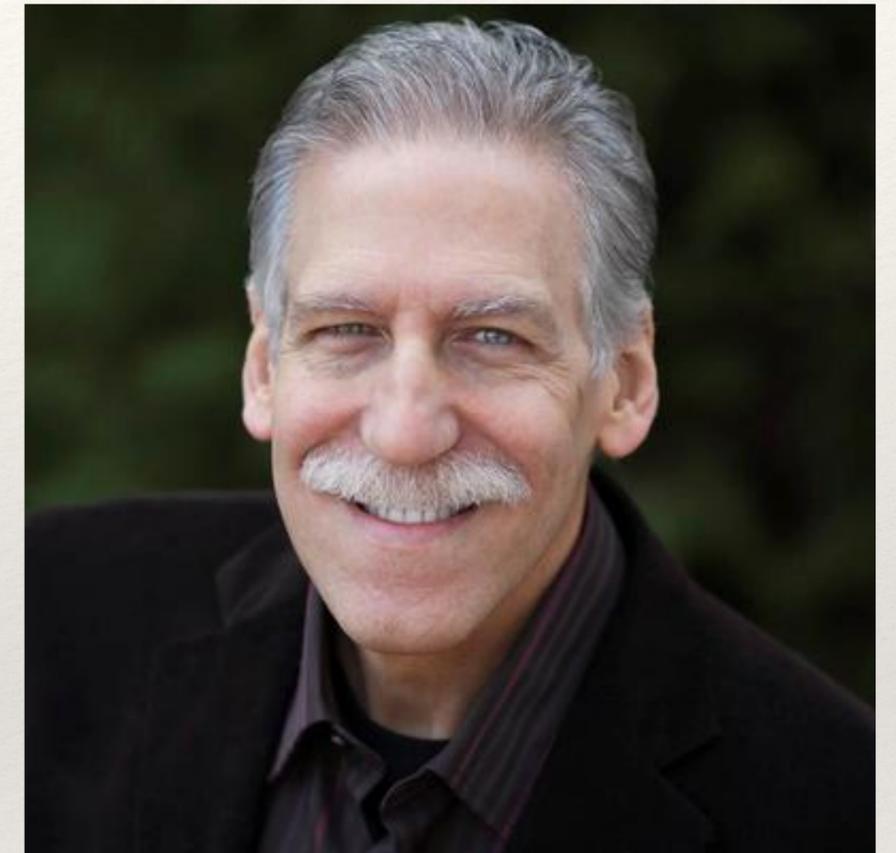
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RELIGION

Trump prophet Jeremiah Johnson ends ministry, saying 'we need to humble ourselves'

By Emily McFarlan Miller

March 12, 2021 at 5:47 p.m. EST

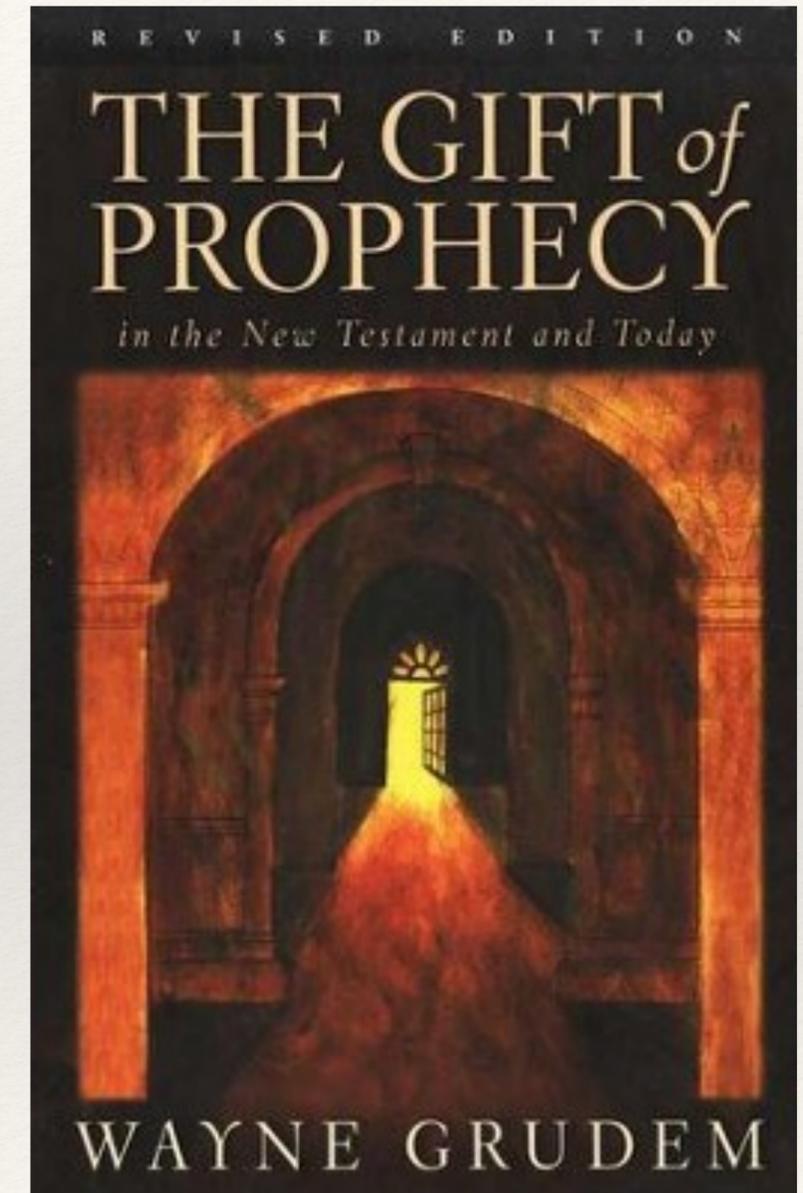


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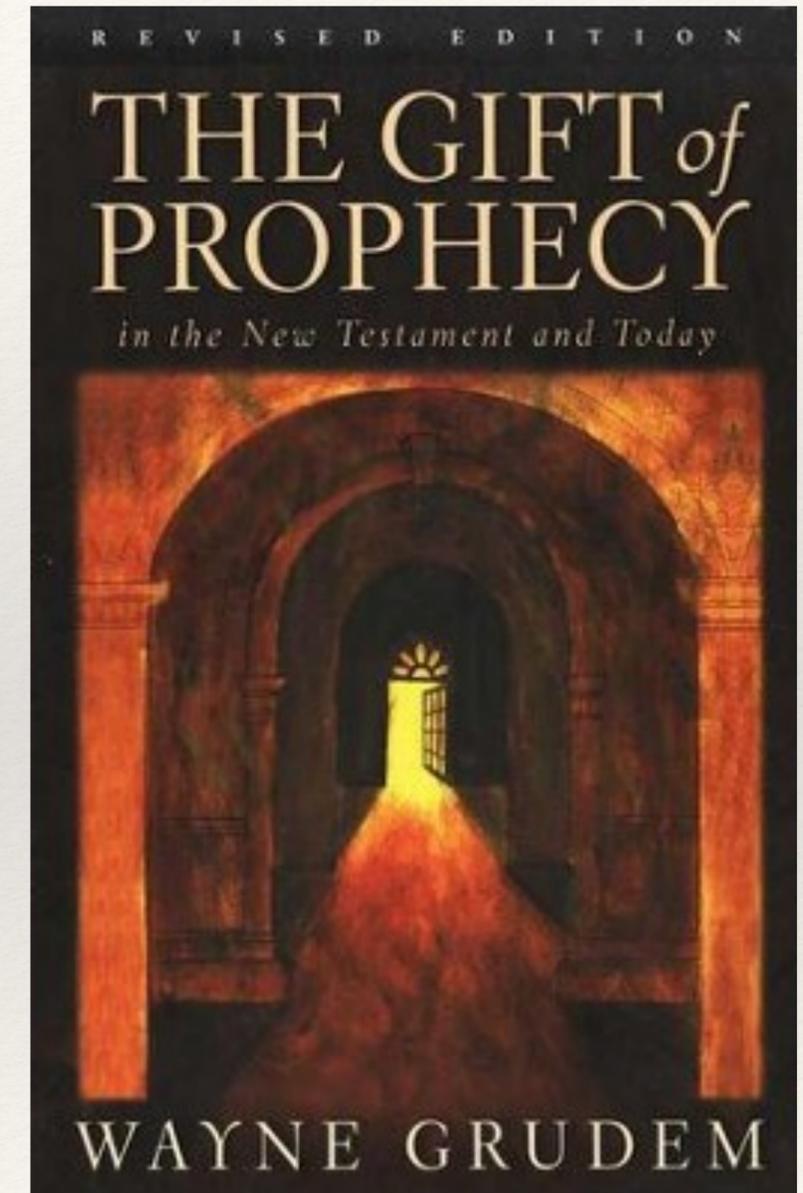
Prophets

- Cessationists point to examples modern biblical prophecy that is false.
- This jeopardizes the primacy of Scripture as God's authoritative word
- But they are wrong to oppose charismatics (continuationists) who point to New Testament writers who expected prophecy to continue.



Prophets

- The finality of the canon is preserved when we recognize that what the NT writers meant by “prophecy” (when they referred to the phenomenon in ordinary NT churches) was not equal to Scripture in authority.
- Prophecy was simply a very human (and sometimes mistaken) report of something the Holy Spirit brought to someone’s mind.



Resources

