

# Fit or Misfit? (Part 5): The Gift of Prophecy

by Richard Siple

---

*The sermon explores the gift of prophecy, its characteristics, challenges, and the vital role prophets play in the church and society.*

**Duration:** 40:57

**Scripture:** Romans 12:3

**Topics:** "Spiritual Gifts", "Prophetic Ministry"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker expresses deep concern for the people of North America, believing that they are on a destructive path. The speaker discusses the role of prophets, who have the ability to see and understand the times they live in. They can perceive God's will, their own sins, and the state of the people around them. The sermon then transitions to discussing the first of the seven motivational gifts, which is the gift of prophecy. The speaker emphasizes that prophets have the ability to see the future and understand the direction of civilization. The sermon concludes with a reference to a biblical story about Elisha, highlighting the unique ability of prophets to see things that others cannot.

---

## Transcript

All right, tonight we begin with the first one of the seven motivational gifts. And as, if the Lord is willing and nothing happens to interrupt it, we're going to go right on through the seven. So each Sunday night there will be another one and we'll go right on through those seven motivational gifts.

Please open your Bibles tonight to Romans chapter 12. And I'm going to read verses three to six and then 1 Corinthians 14, verse three. Romans 12, three to six, 1 Corinthians 14, verse three.

For by the grace given me, I say to every one of you, do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members and these members do not all have the same function. So in Christ, we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others.

We have different gifts according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. And actually I should say, if a person's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith because this gift is not just for men, there are also women with this gift.

So that's the first gift in the list. 1 Corinthians 14, three, gives a very short definition of this gift. But one who prophesies speaks to men for, and men meaning human beings in general, speaks to them for edification, that is to build up, and exhortation, that is to stir up, and consolation, that is to cheer up or comfort.

So that's the way he speaks, that's what he is trying to do, that's what his gift is for, to build people up, to stir people up, and to cheer people up and comfort them, that's what he does when he speaks. Now God has a design for each one of our lives. He has put within every human being a basic motivational drive or gift.

And these are listed in this scripture, the first one of course being prophecy. Now, it's very interesting to me, as I have fellowshiped with, and talked with, and counseled with, and worked with young people of our day, how difficult a time they have with any idea about what they're supposed to do with their life. You know, it's a tragedy.

Because I can remember the time I was a young man when I was 16, I knew what I was gonna do with my life. And it's never changed since. So that's a great relief, you know, know what you're gonna do.

And you're not always wondering, and waffling, and starting here, and then starting here, and then doing this, and then doing that, and then changing this, and then going this way, and going around in circles, and wondering if what you're doing is right, and backward and forward. That's an awful way to live, especially when you're young and need to be getting your life going. And I am absolutely convinced that God has designed every human being with a motivational drive for their life.

And if they get a hold of that and go with it, they'll be going straight ahead for the rest of their life. So it's extremely important. Prophets are people who start revivals or riots.

They get crowned or crucified. Prophets are gifted with vision and voice. God has designed them to see and to say.

I'm gonna read that again, because you need to get a hold of this right at the beginning. Prophets are people who start revivals or riots. And really, all you gotta do is just read the story of Paul, right? And there it is.

One city, a revival, the next one, a riot, or the revival first, and then the riot, or whatever. They get crowned or crucified. They are gifted with vision and voice.

They can see and say. Prophets are the eyes and mouth of the human race. And this goes far beyond the church or Christians.

Prophets are the eyes and mouth of the human race. We sometimes call them visionaries. So first, they are the eyes of God.

All Bible prophets were characterized by this ability to see. And a great passage for this is found in Isaiah 6, verses one to nine. I guess I've read this so many times in my life, I can almost quote it without a mistake.

But it's a great passage that gives you a picture of a prophet, the prophet Isaiah. In the year that King Uzziah died, I, what's the next word? I saw. He's a man who is designed of God to be a prophet, and he

can see.

So in the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. And he goes on to describe this tremendous vision of God. And then when he gets a little farther on with it, he is overcome with his own sinfulness.

And he says, woe is me. Oh my, this is terrifying, because I'm a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips for mine eyes have seen the Lord. And he is really disturbed, and he is full of fear and anguish, because he not only has the eyes to see God, but he has the eyes to see himself, and he has the eyes to see the people around him.

And that can be a very, very crushing responsibility. I think one of the hardest things of being a prophet is being able to see the people around you and to know where they're headed and what's happening to them. It is a terribly disturbing thing.

It is one of the most upsetting things in my life. And sometimes I watch the news for a while, and then I reach the point where I say, I've had it, I've got to sleep tonight, I can't listen anymore. I just, my heart aches for the people of North America on their way to destruction.

And prophets are always crying out, you know, you're on your way to destruction, because they can see, they can see God, they can see themselves, and they can see the people around them. And then the angel takes a coal from off the altar, touches his lips and says, your sin is purged, you're cleansed. And then God says, whom shall I send and who will go for me? And he says, I will go.

And then God says, go and tell this people. So now he's not only one who sees, but he's one who speaks. Okay, there it is, a description of a prophet.

He saw his times. He understood his times. He understood what was happening around him.

He could see the future. He could see where civilization was going in his day. He could see where Israel was going.

He could tell what was about to happen. He had a keen sense of the direction of mankind around him in his day. And that's the gift and the burden of the prophet.

Prophets see things others do not see. I think one of the remarkable examples is in Elisha, or rather, there's no book of Elisha, I'm sorry. It's about Elisha, and it's in 2 Kings chapter six, if you'd like to turn there.

I'm going to read that passage because it's so unique. 2 Kings chapter six, in verse eight to 17. Now the king of Aram was warring against Israel, and he counseled with his servants saying, in such and such a place shall be my camp.

And the man of God, that's Elisha, sent word to the king of Israel saying, beware that you do not pass that place for the Arameans are coming down there. And the king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God had told him, and thus he warned him so that he guarded himself there more than once or twice. Now, over and over this happened.

Now, the heart of the king of Aram was enraged over this thing, and he called his servants and said to them, will you tell me which of us is for the king of Israel? Who's the spy here? And one of his servants

said, no, my lord, O king, but Elisha the prophet who is in Israel tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom. You better be careful. You say, well, the things I say in my house, nobody knows but us.

Well, God knows. You might be amazed how much the prophet knows. And so he said, hey, Elisha knows what you're saying even privately in your own house.

And so he said, go and see where he is that I may send and take him. And it was told him saying, behold, he is in Dotham. And he sent horses and chariots and a great army there.

And they came by night and surrounded the city. They're gonna get him. Now, when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, that's the assistant pastor.

Behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city and his servant said to him, alas, my master, what shall we do? So Elisha answered, do not fear for those who are with us are more than those who are with them. Then Elisha prayed and said, oh Lord, I pray open his eyes. Make him able to see.

And he opened his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the servant's eyes and he saw and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. That's great.

So prophets can see things that other people don't see. And sometimes that creates a problem because the other people say, I don't see it. They say, yeah, but I see it.

God has made it clear to me, I see it. This is what God wants. This is where God wants us to go.

This is what God is doing. This is what we need to do to cooperate with God because he can see it. And it's hard sometimes for others because he can't see it.

So you better be sure that you've got a prophet you can trust, huh? Because if he says something and it doesn't come to pass, God says, he's not a prophet. In fact, sometimes God says stone him. So I try to be careful.

I really don't wanna be stoned. So they can see things other people can't see. Prophets, their ability to see, they have perception into the hearts of people.

For instance, the prophet Nathan and King David, remember King David had committed adultery. The woman became pregnant. He called her husband home from the war to sleep with her to try to get away with it.

And they think it was his child and he wouldn't go sleep with his wife because he said, all of my brothers are out there sleeping in the open field and tents and I'm not going to go in and sleep with my wife. And he went back to the war and David was stuck. And so he had the man killed.

And committed murder on top of his adultery. And then after the man was killed, he sent and took Bathsheba as his wife and thought he had covered it up. There was one other man that really knew what happened.

That was Joab, the head of his army. But he wasn't telling anybody. He had lost respect for David.

And then Nathan came and he said, oh King, I want to tell you a story. He said, this is a true story. He said, go ahead.

He said there was a man that was wealthy and he had huge flocks of sheep. And he had a neighbor that lived right next door to him that had one little pet lamb that he carried around in his arms as a pet that he loved. And the rich man had some friends that came to visit him and he had everything.

But instead of taking one of his sheep, he took this little pet lamb of his neighbor's and slew it and prepared it and fed it to his friends. And David got up and he said, that man shall surely die. And Nathan said, you're the man.

Now he could have gotten killed for that in those days. You see, he had a special ability from God to see into the hearts of people and see things that they didn't think he could see. Of course, David repented deeply.

He paid seriously for his sin. But he did repent and God did spare his life. Prophets exposed dishonesty and hypocrisy.

For instance, Peter in Ananias and Sapphira, huh? Ananias comes in and he said, we sold the land for so much. And Peter said, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit? And he fell down dead. And his wife came in and he said, did you sell the land for so much? And she said, yes.

And he said, why have you agreed together to tempt God? The young men that carried out your husband are coming for you. And she fell down dead. That puts some fear in the church.

That's what it says. Prophet exposing dishonesty and hypocrisy. One of the problems with prophets is that in their natural state, everything is black and white, good and evil.

There's no in between. That makes it hard on them and sometimes hard on others. They have an ability to see through complicated things and clarify them and make them simple.

They believe there's a way to solve every problem. They are reformers and crusaders and world changers. Prophets want everything to be logical.

They cannot stand inconsistency in themselves or others. That's one of the greatest problems. One of the greatest burdens of being a prophet is that you can't stand inconsistency in yourself.

In other words, if you're gonna preach it, you'd better live it. So, I put my finger into the mirror and say, Dick Simply, if you're gonna preach it, live it or shut up. That's the way prophets are made.

They will work and labor and preach and push and try to get the job done, but if they are opposed endlessly and feel rejected, they're ready to quit. That's one of the weak sides of a prophet's gift. They're ready to leave, ready to quit.

That's it, I've had it. You can have it, I'm out of here. You say, really? Yes, really, absolutely.

If you don't think that's true, ask my wife. One of the great preachers and teachers of our day said that he used to resign every Monday morning and then go back to work every Tuesday. It's about the way it is.

But, you know, that's what happened to Elijah, right? I mean, Elijah had a great day. It was marvelous. And he went up there, you know, showdown at Mount Carmel Pass.

Elijah got them up there, and, of course, there was no God, Baal was no God. And then he cried out and said, "O Lord, hear me!" And the fire fell and it burned up everything in sight. And then he said to the king, "Now it's gonna rain, hurry!" And then he girded up his robe and he outran the horses and chariots." I mean, he had a busy day.

He was worn out. And then he said, "Bring all the prophets of Baal!" And they brought them 850 and they slew all of them. And all the people, you know, they fell down and said, "The Lord, He is God, the Lord, He is God." And then what happened? And then Jezebel sent a message to him and said, "The God's due to me and more also than what you've done to these prophets if you're not like one of them by this time tomorrow." And what did he do? He quit and ran.

I mean, it's a great picture. I understand him perfectly. He headed out.

And he ran way out in the backside of the desert and finally God spoke to him and said, "What are you doing here?" And he said, "I've had it. I'm finished. I'm through.

I'm the only one left that wants to serve God. Just kill me right now. I'm out of here." Go back and read it.

"That's the weak side of the prophet. One part of them I like, they don't hold grudges. They're quick to forgive.

If they don't call down fire and destroy you, they'll forgive you." Whatever you do. So they can see. Second, they are the mouth of God.

Jesus said that John the Baptist was a prophet, more than a prophet. And when they said to John, "Who are you and what are you?" He said, "I am the voice. I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare a way for the Lord." So not only could he see, but he could say.

He could proclaim the word of God, the truth of God. That's part of the gift of being a prophet. One time in great discouragement, Jeremiah said, in Jeremiah 20, verse nine, "But if I say," because he got discouraged and he had reason to.

"But if I say, I will not mention him or speak anymore in his name. His word is in my heart like a burning fire, shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in.

Indeed, I cannot." That's interesting. That's part of the gift of being a prophet. The word of God, the truth of God is inside, burning, and you can't hold it in.

And Paul said, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel of Christ." He said, "I will preach it whether I'm paid for it or not." That's just the way it is. Elihu is one of my favorite characters in the Bible. A young man in the book of Job, he had the same experience.

He had listened to the older men. And then Job 32, 18 to 22, he said, "For I am full of words. The spirit within me constrains me.

Behold, my belly is like unvented wine, like new wine skins. It is about to burst. Let me speak that I may get relief.

Let me open my lips and answer. Let me now be partial to no one nor flatter any man, for I do not know how to flatter, else my maker would soon take me away." That's the prophet, that's the prophet. "I am full of the truth of God.

I have to speak it. I cannot withhold it. I cannot keep from telling the truth.

I can't, it doesn't matter who the people are or what their place in life is or anything like that. I don't know how to give flattering titles unto men. I have to just speak the truth." That's your prophet at his best.

The one who is the mouth of God. Prophets are persuasive people. Jonah, he's another great prophet of the Bible.

Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh, why? Not only because he really wanted God to destroy those people, he didn't want anything to do with them because he's afraid they're gonna destroy Israel. But he didn't wanna go there because he knew if he preached, there would be a revival and they would repent and then God wouldn't destroy them and it would ruin his reputation as a prophet. Now that's true, go read it.

He said to God, isn't this what I told you before I came? That you wouldn't destroy. Because he said 40 days and Nineveh will be destroyed. And you know, they've dug up some tablets from that part of the world and they tell about Jonah and they call him the silver-tongued orator, great preacher.

And he knew, that's something. He knew that if he went there and preached, they would repent and they did. Prophets speak with authority.

King Balak saw the Israelites coming into his land and he was afraid they were gonna destroy his nation like every other that they had come to. And so he sent for the prophet Balaam and asked him to curse Israel. And he went out and looked at Israel, stretched out over the plains, three million people in all their tents and he opened his mouth and the only thing that would come out was the truth of God.

And Balak said, wait a minute, I asked you to curse them. Here, come over on this mountain and maybe you can curse them from there. So he took him over on that mountain, he just blessed them again.

And he said, how is it? In fact, it says he smote his hands together. He's getting upset that you have blessed them. He said, listen, if you gave me your whole house full of silver and gold, I couldn't say anything but what God gives me to say.

Fantastic. Prophets speak with authority. Prophets appeal to the will.

They say you must choose. Joshua said, choose this day whom you will serve. The gods that you worship on the other side of the flood or Jehovah.

Choose, choose, choose, make your choice. They appeal to the will. Prophets are how-to people.

Prophets are initiators, leaders. Even if another is the government ruler, a prophet is pressed to tell him what he should do. Examples, many in this, oh, many in the Old Testament.

Some of them lost their lives over it. Some of them went to jail over it. But they told him, Elijah and King Ahab.

Elijah was really after King Ahab because he had stolen Naboth's vineyard and had him killed. And so he went and confronted him with the truth. So prophets are the eyes and the mouth of God in the world.

And for us who are Christians, especially in the church, this gift is designed right into the heart of the individual at birth. It is a DNA implanted there by God. In Jeremiah chapter one, beginning with verse four, we read these words.

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. And before you were born, I consecrated you. I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.

Then I said, alas, Lord God, behold, I do not know how to speak because I am a youth. But the Lord said to me, do not say I am a youth because everywhere I send you, you shall go. And all that I command you, you shall speak.

Do not be afraid of them for I am with you to deliver you, declares the Lord. Then the Lord stretched out his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, behold, I have put my words in your mouth.

See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant. A tremendous passage indicating how God had designed Jeremiah in his heart even before he was in his mother's womb and how God put him together in his mother's womb and meant for him to be a prophet. There it is.

The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 1, 15 to 17, but when he who had set me apart, even from my mother's womb and called me through his grace was a pleased to reveal his son in me that I might preach him among the Gentiles. Paul said, and Paul, you know, he was the enemy of the church, the enemy of Christ, the blasphemer who arrested Christians and tortured them to death to get them to deny Christ. But he said, God designed me in my mother's womb to be a prophet.

That was God's design. And God carried it through and made him a great mouthpiece for Jesus Christ. He or she tends to be motivated by this gift whether or not they are a Christian.

Let me give you another passage. You see, we think only of the gifts mentioned in the Bible as being spiritual gifts, but I'm talking now about the motivational gift that one which is designed into every human being and whether they ever become a Christian, that doesn't make any difference. The gift is there and the motivation is there and the tendency is there.

And probably the most dangerous men on earth are prophets who haven't surrendered their life to God. And some of them have almost destroyed the world. Jeremiah 14, beginning with verse 14.

Then the Lord said to me, the prophets are prophesying falsehood in my name. I have neither sent them nor commanded them nor spoken to them. They are prophesying to you a false vision, divination, futility, and the deception of their own minds.

What a statement, but they can't keep quiet. They do it anyway. How terrifying.

And they have the ability to do it. They're designed to do it. And they do it to the destruction of the people around them because they're prophesying lies and distortions and the deception of their own minds.

Therefore, thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who are prophesying in my name, although it was not I who sent them, yet they keep saying, there should be no sword or famine in this land. By sword and

famine, those prophets shall meet their end. The people also to whom they are prophesying will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword, and there will be no one to bury them, neither them nor their wives nor their sons nor their daughters, for I shall pour out their own wickedness on them.

And he is saying here a very terrible truth that there are people designed in the womb by God with this motivational gift of prophecy, but they have not surrendered their lives to God and they are not speaking the truth of God and they're speaking the deception of their own hearts, but they can't refrain from speaking. And so they become those who influence society to their own destruction and the destruction of the people around them. Right? Hmm, you better believe it.

Some are politicians, some are presidents, and some are leaders of nations, all kinds of people. Some are teachers in universities and there are different kinds of teachers in universities, but there are some who have the gift of prophecy and have great influence. And they not only are destroying themselves, but they're bringing those around them to terrible destruction because of this gift that is not given to God.

Jesus made a statement that I think really speaks to this. Matthew 6, 22 and 23. He said, the lamp of the body is the eye.

That's the prophet. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness.

If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness? See, if the one who's supposed to spread the light doesn't have the light, how great is the darkness that they spread? So they're very dangerous people without being surrendered to God. I think one of the great examples in the Bible, and then I'm going to be finished, is the example of Moses. So I wanna read you two different passages about Moses, one in Acts 7, and then go over to Exodus for when God called him 40 years later.

But Acts 7, 17 to 29. But as the time of the promise was approaching, which God had assured Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt until there arose another king over Egypt who knew nothing about Joseph. It was he who took shrewd advantage of our race and mistreated our fathers so that they would expose their infants and they would not survive.

He was slaughtering all the male babies. And it was at this time that Moses was born and he was lovely in the sight of God. And he was nurtured three months in his father's home.

And after he had been exposed, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and nurtured him as her own son. And Moses, this is an interesting statement, by the way. And Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians.

He'd gone through their universities and had the PhDs. And he was a man of power, mighty in words and deeds. Later he said, I can't speak.

Come on, Moses. The word of God says that in Egypt, at that point in his life, he was educated. He was mighty as a leader in both words and deeds.

But when he was approaching the age of 40, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel. And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was

granting them deliverance through him, but they did not understand.

Neither did he. But see, he had the gift. And he said, I know I've been brought up as a prince of Pharaoh, but I'm really an Israelite.

And these are my people and I'm going out and deliver them and lead them. Not yet, because you're not surrendered to God. You can't do it in your own strength.

It won't work that way. Now, the following day, he appeared to them as they were fighting together. And he tried to reconcile them in peace saying, men, your brethren, why do you injure one another? But the one who was injuring his neighbor pushed him away saying, who made you a ruler and judge over us? You do not mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you? And at this remark, Moses fled and became an alien in the land of Midian.

So there's a total flop. Not because he wasn't designed by God to be a prophet, but he wasn't surrendered to God and filled with the spirit of God and able to serve God in the very thing he was actually supposed to do. And so he failed completely.

40 years later, Exodus 4, Moses said to the Lord, oh Lord, I have never been eloquent. Don't lie, Moses. You were eloquent 40 years ago.

Neither in the past nor since you've spoken to your servant, I am slow of speech and tongue. The Lord said to him, who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go, I will help you speak and will teach you what to say. And of course, Moses still didn't want to go.

And God said, well, your brother Aaron's coming. He has a big mouth. We'll use him.

Boy, he got him in lots of trouble. But finally you see Moses with his inborn gift was in the hands of God and was filled with the Holy Spirit of God. And now had spiritual gifts added to his natural gifts and became a mighty man and leader for God.

One of the greatest that's ever walked in the face of the earth. So out in the workforce of the world, prophets will be business leaders, politicians, presidents, statesmen, reformers, crusaders, judges, musicians, artists, writers, poets. And in the home, they will seek to set the standard of behavior.

And that can create a little problem if the woman has a gift of prophecy and the man doesn't. And she naturally tries to set the standard of behavior in the home. In the church, they will be preachers, pastors, evangelists, teachers, board chairman, committee chairman, et cetera, et cetera.

People who naturally speak out and seek to lead. If they are wicked, they do great harm, such as Adolf Hitler, which you are all to remember. Lenin, Marx, Fidel Castro, Bin Laden, and the list goes on and on.

Bin Laden, I have no doubt, has the motivational gift of prophecy. I keep praying that God will save him. I keep praying, oh God, save Bin Laden, make him another Apostle Paul.

Save him and keep him alive long enough to stand up and testify for Jesus Christ before the whole world. Why not? He has the gift and boy, he can sway people by the thousands. He's sending young people to their deaths and they go because he has that motivational gift.

Because of sin, there's a weak side to this gift. Prophets can become harsh and insensitive and even cruel. Pride and arrogance are a great danger.

They've only been a minimal danger with me because I have a good wife. And she is willing to say, Dick Sibley, you're getting arrogant. So I haven't been able to get very far with it.

I am right, my way or the highway. Okay. You'll run into some pastors like that too.

When resisted too long, they can be discouraged and ready to quit like Elijah. And they may not properly respect or use other gifts until they learn. But my friends, they are essential to the work of God.

Absolutely essential to the work of God. And the scriptures say where there is no vision, the people perish. The eyes and the mouth of the body of Christ.

Let us pray. Father, we thank you.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/9/SID9489.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/richard-sibley/fit-or-misfit-part-5-the-gift-of-prophecy/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**