

session 9 study guide

sharing the good news

the gift of evangelism and the gift of prophecy

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Evangelism and prophecy are both spiritual gifts that have to do with speaking. Those with the gift of evangelism are gifted at spreading the news about Jesus' life, death and resurrection, while those with prophetic abilities are able to warn people about the consequences when they are headed in the wrong direction.

the gift of evangelism

"He gave some to be . . . evangelists" (Ephesians 4:11).

The word "evangelist" appears only three times in the entire New Testament (see Acts 21:8, Ephesians 4:11 and 2 Timothy 4:5). Although the word isn't used many times, its meaning is clearly defined: "one who proclaims the Good News." While the gift of evangelism and the gift of the apostle (see session 3) are often related, they do have some differences. The gift of evangelism is the ability to share the Good News of salvation through Jesus, whereas the gift of apostle allows individuals to go forth and cross cultural boundaries to establish churches, overcome differences and teach about Jesus.

1. Read Matthew 28:16-20. This passage has often been called "The Great Commission." Jesus had been crucified and three days later had risen from the dead. He called His

disciples together on a mountaintop in Galilee. Why do you think this passage is called “The Great Commission”?

2. Why are there only 11 disciples with Jesus at this point? (See Matthew 27.)

3. Verse 17 reads, “When they saw [Jesus], they worshiped him; but some doubted.” These are the disciples, some of Jesus’ closest followers and yet even some of them doubted. What comfort can this verse give to us?

4. Look closely at the verbs in verses 19-20. What are the disciples asked to do? List just the verbs here.

Verse 19: _____

Verse 20: _____

5. What do you notice about these verbs?

The Great Commission is a call to action. These verses do not say, “Sit at home and pray” or “Join a committee to plan an outreach.” Jesus’ first command? Go.

Yet evangelism is not always easy, even for those with the spiritual gift of evangelism. Thankfully, God gives us help.

6. Read Acts 1:8. According to this verse, who empowers us to go and share the Good News?

7. The Bible tells us that Philip was an evangelist (see Acts 21:8). Read Acts 8:4-8 and describe the actions of Philip and the actions of the crowd.

8. In Acts 8:12, what message is Philip spreading?

The job of an evangelist is not to nurture Christians but rather to preach to unbelievers the message of salvation in Christ.

the gift of prophecy

“But one who prophesies, preaching the messages of God, is helping others grow in the Lord, encouraging and comforting them” (1 Corinthians 14:3, *TLB*).

When we hear the word “prophet,” we often think of someone who can predict the future. That is indeed one way God uses prophets—as foretellers of things to come—but He also uses people with the gift of prophecy as “forth-tellers,” from the Greek meaning “to speak forth” or “to proclaim.” As forth-tellers, prophets have the role of proclaiming God’s truth, pointing out the sin in people’s lives and warning them about the consequences of their actions.

John the Baptist is one example of a prophet who warned people about the consequences of their sinfulness. Read the account of John the Baptist in Luke 3:2-18.

1. According to Luke's reference to the prophet Isaiah, what was John the Baptist's job?

2. In verses 10-18, what kind of advice and wisdom did he give to the people?

3. What did John the Baptist explain was the difference between him and Jesus?

4. What are the roles of the prophet? Read the following passages of Scripture to determine the various jobs of those with the gift of prophecy:

Deuteronomy 18:17-19

1 Corinthians 14:3

Jeremiah 46:1; 47:1; 48:1; 50:1

5. Paul stresses the importance of the gift of prophecy in 1 Corinthians 14:1-5,39. Read these verses. Why do you think Paul views prophecy as being so important?

6. What issues do you think a person with the gift of prophecy would speak on in the present day?

7. Do you know someone who has the gift of prophecy? If so, how does he or she make you feel when you hear him or her speak?

reflect

1. Why is sharing our faith a scary experience sometimes?

2. What hinders you from sharing the Good News?

3. Have you ever shared your faith with someone who wasn't a believer? Describe the experience.

4. Do you think we still have prophets today? Who?

5. How can you tell if a prophet is from God?

6. Church growth experts estimate that 25 percent of people would come to church if you asked. With the Great Commission in mind, who are two people you could invite to church next week?

meditation



But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

1 PETER 3:15