

such a quality that its authority resides just in that inspired origin. A basic difference between prophecy and preaching is that the prophet has no text. The prophet reveals the Word of God, the preacher expounds that Word.

On the question of cessation, Gaffin (pp. 95-102) states:

Consequently, a major conclusion in our study from Ephesians 2:20 is that the New Testament prophets, along with the apostles, are the foundation of the church. They have a foundational, that is, temporary, noncontinuing function in the church's history, and so by God's design pass out of its life, along with the apostles. The following observations bear on this conclusion and efforts to resist it:

1. As a general guideline for interpretation, the decisive, controlling significance of Ephesians 2:20 (in its context) needs to be appreciated. . . . Ephesians 2:20 makes a generalization that covers all the other New Testament statements on prophecy. [Note: Ephesians 2:19-20 states: "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone."]

2. A frequent objection to our conclusion that prophecy, along with the apostles, has been withdrawn from the church takes the form of a counterposition. This is the view that prophets as bearers of foundational revelation have indeed been taken from the church, but that in addition to and more or less parallel with this foundational function of prophecy, which has ceased, there are other functions, in view, for instance, in I Corinthians 14, which are intended to continue and are in fact present in the church today.

One response to this viewpoint must be to reemphasize what was just said about Ephesians 2:20 and its exegetical "weight"; it makes a generalization about prophecy that covers all its functions and says that they have ceased. Further, granting the fully revelatory character of prophecy . . . such a view inevitably involves a dualistic understanding of revelation. In one form or other, it distinguishes between canonical revelation for the whole church and private revelations for individual believers or groups of believers, between a collective, inscripturated revelation of what is "necessary for salvation" and revelations that "go beyond" the Bible and bear on individual life situations, needs, and concerns.

Such an understanding of revelation is in irreconcilable conflict with the Bible itself shows to be the covenantal, redemptive-historical character of all revelation. God does not reveal himself along two tracks, one public and one private. As long as revelation is viewed in the first place as God's Word to me as an individual and as given