

APPLYING TRUTH TO LIFE

Grace Gatherings

THEOLOGY NIGHTS | MAY 31, 2023

GRACE CHURCH
WILLIAMSBURG

Question 3

Describe your position on the nature of **continuing** revelation (i.e., prophecy, tongues, words of knowledge).

In particular, explain whether you believe prophecy is a **present** gift in today's church.

Explain the **relationship** between your understanding of the gift of prophecy and the sufficiency of Scripture.

Thes. 5:19), assurance (Rom. 8:16), and the sealing of believers (2 Cor. 5:5; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30).

The unique work of the Holy Spirit for this age began at Pentecost when the church was born (Acts 2:1-36) just as Jesus had prophesied (John 14:16-17; 15:26). Jesus baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13). The Holy Spirit indwells believers (Ezek. 36:26; John 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19), teaches them the Truth (1 Cor. 2:10-13; 1 John 2:27), fills them (Eph. 5:18), and gives gifts to the Body of Christ (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4:7-12; 1 Peter 4:10-11). The "sign gifts" (e.g., speaking in tongues, prophecy, healing, performing miracles) were given to the prophets, apostles, and those in the apostolic circle, to authenticate their message before Scripture was canonized (1 Kings 17:24; 2 Kings 5:8; John 3:2; Acts 2:22; 1 Cor. 12-14; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:2-4). Having accomplished their purposes, these "sign gifts" ceased historically, apparently, not being intended for the church to practice after the Scriptures were completed.

Question 3

Here is the issue as it bears on how we speak the truth in love to each other, and to how the Lord Jesus sanctifies us in the truth:

- How do believers today **hear from God** so that they receive guidance, help, direction, wisdom, and confidence in following God through the challenges, sufferings, and temptations of daily trials in a fallen world?
- Does God still use signs, wonders, and miracles to reveal Himself and His will to believers today?
- “Are Christians still receiving, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, direct revelation from God? Can people today -- writing songs or books, preaching or teaching, or making decisions -- legitimately claim that they are under divine inspiration?” (MacArthur)

Question 3

What is meant by “**continuing revelation**”?

Continuing revelation concerns the “revelatory gifts (i.e., the reception and proclamation of **new** revelation from God).” (MacArthur/Mayhue)

It means, God is **continuing to add** to His truth in Scripture by means of:

- modern-day prophecies (foretelling future events)
- the gift of tongues (sometimes referred to as “heavenly speech,” the “tongues of angels,” or a “private prayer language”)
- “words of knowledge” (special revelation/wisdom revealed **directly** by God to a person)

People who believe that these revelatory gifts are **in operation** today are referred to as **continuationists**.

Question 3

What is the **counter/opposite** view of continuing revelation?

- “**Cessationists**” (from cease, end, conclude, or discontinue) believe that God’s **special** revelation (revealing Himself and His ways **beyond** what we can know of Him in creation) has been **fully accomplished** and completed by God through what **He has written** in the Bible alone, so that **no further revelation** of Himself or His ways is needed or provided.
- Jude 3

Question 3

How does the doctrine of the **inspiration** of Scripture help us understand revelation's role today?

- The modern-day role of prophecy must be understood in light of Scripture's teaching. The **revelatory role** of the Bible's prophets and apostles was that of **true messengers** of God laying His **doctrinal foundation** for His people to live by.
 - Ex. 20; Eph. 2:19-22; Acts 2:41-43

Question 3

How does the doctrine of the **inspiration** of Scripture help us understand revelation's role today?

- The signs, miracles, and wonders performed by the prophets and apostles (including prophecy as **foretelling**) authenticated their method and message (including prophecy as **forthtelling** or proclamation/preaching) **as being from God**.
- Ex. 4:1-5; Josh. 10:12-14; Acts 6:7-8

Question 3

How does the doctrine of the **inspiration** of Scripture help us understand revelation's role today?

- The following passages refer to the gospel being proclaimed as God's authentic message:
 - Rom. 15:17-19; Heb. 2:1-4; 2 Cor. 12:12

Question 3

How does the doctrine of the **inspiration** of Scripture help us understand revelation's role today?

- The apostolic sign gifts and revelatory gifts were how God chose to give **new** revelation to His church. We see this even with the life and ministry of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the living Word.
- John 2:11, 23; 3:2; 4:48, 54; 6:2, 14; 7:31; 10:25, 37-38; 12:37; 20:30

Question 3

How does the doctrine of the **inspiration** of Scripture help us understand revelation's role today?

- Jesus taught and commissioned His apostles to take His message of being the Christ to their world. He gave them apostolic sign and revelatory gifts to authenticate them as **His** messengers and their message as being from **Him**.
 - Matt. 10:1, 8; Mark 6:12-13

Question 3

How does the doctrine of the **inspiration** of Scripture help us understand revelation's role today?

- The gift of **prophecy** is a good example of how the sufficiency of God's Word is manifested and ministered today. Since the death of the apostles, prophecy is a matter of **forth**telling rather than of **fore**telling. *Why?*
- Because prophecy is about preaching/proclaiming what God has **already delivered** as His Word. God's Word is the only reliable, authoritative, and saving revelation we have of Him and His ways.
- Rom. 12:6-7; Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim 2:2; 4:2; 2 Peter 1:19

Question 3

How does the doctrine of the **inspiration** of Scripture help us understand revelation's role today?

- As God's people think, live, read, and proclaim God's Word **together**, they operate and relate as the body of Christ obeying Him who is the **living revelation** of God -- Jesus, the **living Word**.
- Ps. 19; John 1; Rom. 1:16-17, 12:2; Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:16

Question 3

“What God does in and through us today is not what He did in the apostolic age. He had a special purpose for the apostles and their miracles, and that purpose was served. He also has a special purpose for us, and it will be marvelous, because He is God and what He does is always marvelous.”
(John MacArthur)

Question 3

References:

- Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*
- John MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*
- John MacArthur, *Strange Fire: The Danger of Offending the Holy Spirit with Counterfeit Worship*
- John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth.*

GRACE CHURCH
WILLIAMSBURG