

# Lifecentre & Continuationism (Prophecy)

MINISTRY RESOURCE

Our mission is rooted in how we are growing together with Jesus to make a difference in our city.



# Continuationism (Prophecy)

## People Over Postures.

In line with our core values, clarity is kindness. It is essential we are clear on both our absolutes, which is our Statement of Faith or Statement of Fundamental Essentials and Truths and our convictions, which are also defining beliefs.

When it comes to following Jesus, we also embrace there is a spectrum of spiritual maturity and thinking. Each of us may have different questions and opinions on matters found in the Bible. In difference, we wish to be clear and kind to the work of the Holy Spirit in all our lives to make us more like Jesus. We are different.

The heart isn't for you to be more like me, but we us all to be more like Jesus. To do this well requires both truth and grace, convictions and conversations. All this we express as people over postures. It is easy to say, more challenging to live out well in difference. Yet Jesus was clear, *"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* John 13:35

Lord, in our difference, help us love one another well.



At Lifecentre, we believe all the spiritual gifts and five-fold ministry evident in the books of Acts are necessary and empowered by the same Holy Spirit today. Our Statement of Faith articulates this in our understanding of our Triune God and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

To best articulate our conviction regarding how all the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the five-fold ministry continue to be necessary and active in the church and the life of the believer, we will utilize resources from Pastor Jack Hayford's sermon series on the Force, Facts, and Fullness of the Spirit, Sam Storms The Gospel Coalition article, and Dr. Bobby Clinton's 'Unlocking Your Giftness' book. Finally, Lifecentre is in agreement and will articulate a renewed focus on vital Prophetic and Spirit-filled Standards necessary for the church.

When most people think of the force or power of Pentecost, they think of spiritual authority over demons, miracles, signs and wonders, speaking with tongues, gifts of the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit, and the ability to witness and persuade people to open their hearts to Christ, or spiritual savvy and discernment because of the Holy Spirit power that you have.

All those are Scriptural and thoroughly available today. But they are not the power of Pentecost. They are the outflow of it. For example, the light that comes from a lamp isn't the power; the power is the electricity. What comes from the lamp is the flow of what comes from the power. The electricity, the force, is the Person. There are things about Him that are different from what He produces through people. Understanding His Person is vital to our responding to the heart of God.

Embracing this, let's look at how the Holy Spirit is at work in the life of believers and the church today. Dr. Jack Hayford, in his sermon series on the Fullness, Facts, and Force of the Holy Spirit, lays out the following Continuationism convictions.



## The Holy Spirit is the Fullness of Pentecost

Read Ephesians 5:15-20

The Greek verb translated in v. 18 as “be filled with the Spirit” is in the imperative, which means it is a command, not a suggestion. It’s in the passive voice, which means you need to allow it, but it is being done to you. It’s in the present tense, which in the Bible Greek means “in continuum.” The idea of being filled with the Spirit as it occurs here is that it is a command you let yourself be continually filled with the Holy Spirit.

Our initial experience of being filled with the Spirit never substitutes for our fullness of it in this present moment. There are multiplied millions of believers who have a genuinely valid experience in the Holy Spirit but they do not live in the fullness of the Spirit. This text tells us a) the need, b) why it’s necessary, and c) how to keep full of the Spirit. The “how” is simple, practical and uncluttered with religious baggage: by singing (v. 19). It almost seems too easy, but just like salvation itself, while the fullness of the Spirit is not an accomplishment of ours, it does require responsiveness on our part.

Beginning with Pentecost and continuing throughout the book of Acts, whenever the Spirit is poured out on new believers, they experience his charismata. There is nothing to indicate these phenomena were restricted to them and then. Such appears to be both widespread and common in the NT church. Christians in Rome (Rom. 12), Corinth (1 Cor. 12-14), Samaria (Acts 8), Caesarea (Acts 10), Antioch (Acts 13), Ephesus (Acts 19), Thessalonica (1 Thess. 5), and Galatia (Gal. 3) experience the miraculous and revelatory gifts.

It’s difficult to imagine how the NT authors could have spoken any more clearly about what new covenant Christianity is supposed to look like. In other words, the burden of proof rests with the cessationist. If certain gifts of a particular class have ceased, the responsibility is theirs to prove it.

So, what is Spirit-filled living all about?

- a. Walk in practical good sense & wisdom (v. 15). We are to keep aware of things happening around us. Spiritual fullness is not a euphoria than transcends reality or gives place to mindless acts for which we can then blame God.
- b. Capture every opportunity of the Lord’s purpose for you (v. 16). The “evil” referred to is not just in the sense of sinfulness, but more literally, as some translations put it, “the days are filled with many cares.” You can be so overwhelmed with your own problems that you miss seeing opportunities for what Jesus wants you to be in a situation. The fullness of the Holy Spirit in us allows for our moving into a situation where the life of Jesus needs to be. And remember, He is sufficient in us! (1 John 4:4)
- c. Wisdom is the will of the Lord (v. 17). The will of God is not difficult to perceive; it works out in the life of every person who simply keeps full of the Spirit. The will of God happens through your life from moment to moment as you walk with Jesus in the fullness of the Spirit.
- d. Do not waste what God has given you (v. 18) The word used for “dissipation” here is the same used with the prodigal son—a wasting. The Bible says don’t get your thrills from the world’s way because you will waste what Father has given you. Spirit-fullness is God’s way of keeping your life energized, fulfilled, and growing. The world’s way dissipates life.

Spirit-fullness is an ongoing experience. We can look to the biblical basis for recognizing that Spirit-fullness is not accomplished simply based on a one-time experience:



Acts 19:2-6 — Paul says, “Keep that happening; keep filled with the Spirit.”

Galatians 3:3 — The power of God gets you started, and staying filled with His Spirit sustains us in that grace of healing, deliverance, forgiveness toward others, giving and so forth. Everything that begins by the Spirit is sustained by the Spirit.

Acts 4:8, 31 — Peter, who was baptized at Pentecost, has a fresh surge of Holy Spirit power. Paul wrote to the Ephesians—and the Bible speaks to us today—about keeping the recurring fullness of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Acts 9:17 — Paul, who was saved on the road to Damascus, was not only healed of blindness, he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Following that initial experience, he is filled with recurring “fullnesses.”

Acts 13:9 — “Filled with the Spirit,” Paul completely overwhelms the confounding works of Elymas, the sorcerer, and as a result, there comes an advance of the Gospel in that situation.

The clear evidence of the Word is that to “keep on being filled with the Spirit” is essential to us, not only because it was a pattern in the early Church, but because it holds principles that are key to our life!

Furthermore, the extensive New Testament evidence of so-called miraculous gifts among Christians who are not apostles. In other words, numerous non-apostolic men and women, young and old, across the breadth of the Roman Empire consistently exercised these gifts of the Spirit (and Stephen and Philip ministered in the power of signs and wonders).

Others aside from the apostles who exercised miraculous gifts include (1) the 70 who were commissioned in Luke 10:9, 19-20; (2) at least 108 people among the 120 who were gathered in the upper room on the day of Pentecost; (3) Stephen (Acts 6-7); (4) Philip (Acts 8); (5) Ananias (Acts 9); (6) church members in Antioch (Acts 13); (7) anonymous converts in Ephesus (Acts 19:6); (8) women at Caesarea (Acts 21:8-9); (9) the unnamed brethren of Galatians 3:5; (10) believers in Rome (Rom. 12:6-8); (11) believers in Corinth (1 Cor. 12-14); and (12) Christians in Thessalonica (1 Thess. 5:19-20).

We must also give room to the explicit and repeated purpose of the charismata, the living a Spirit-filled life: namely, the edification of Christ’s body (1 Cor. 12:7; 14:3, 26).

Nothing we read in the New Testament or see in the condition of the church in any age, past or present, leads us to believe we’ve progressed beyond the need for edification. We freely admit that spiritual gifts were essential for the church’s birth, then why would they be any less critical or needful for its continued growth and maturation?

Now, a shorter but essential word.

As Lifecentre, we believe in being filled with the Spirit, again how all the gifts of the Spirit, whether Word, Power, or Love gifts are essential for our continued growth and maturing in following Jesus and serving a lost and broken world. We also acknowledge how the charismatic or Spirit-filled church has not, for a variety of reasons, upheld the Apostle Paul’s warning in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-24.

*Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. 1 Thessalonians 5:19-24 (ESV)*



For us not to despise all the gifts, but namely prophecy, we need a revival of Prophetic Standards. Lifecentre is in agreement and alignment with a Statement developed and published on April 29, 2021.

It reads...

At a time when there are many questions in the Body concerning the gift of prophecy and the ministry of the prophet, and in light of the needs of local pastors as well as individual believers to have practical guidelines for processing prophetic words, as Pentecostal and Charismatic leaders, we felt that now was the opportune moment to produce this current document.

It is not the purpose of this statement to condemn or accuse. Instead, our purpose is to help provide scriptural guidelines for the operation of the gift of prophecy and the functioning of the prophet's ministry while at the same time affirming the importance of these gifts and ministries.



## Our Convictions Regarding: The Gifts of the Spirit (Prophecy)

### We Believe

- A. We believe the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including the gift of prophecy and the ministry of the prophet, are essential for the edification of the Body of Christ and the work of the ministry, which is why Scripture exhorts us to earnestly desire spiritual gifts, especially that we may prophesy (see 1 Cor. 14:1, 39). Prophetic ministry is very important to the Church and must be encouraged, welcomed, and nurtured.
- B. We believe it is essential to create an environment in which prophecy can flourish, side by side with the other gifts of the Spirit and together with apostolic, evangelistic, pastoral, and teaching ministries. To create this environment, we need to encourage freedom in the Spirit in a faith-filled atmosphere, making room for spontaneous utterances as the Spirit wills. But all this must be done with proper accountability and oversight.
- C. We believe that the general function of the gift of prophecy, as it relates to the church, has to do with edification, exhortation, and comfort (see 1 Cor. 14:3). As this gift relates to unbelievers, it can reveal the secrets of their hearts and bring them to repentance, demonstrating God's reality to them (see 1 Cor. 14:24-25).
- D. We believe that the essence of the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus, hence the ultimate goal of prophetic ministry is to exalt the lordship of Jesus Christ, even though we recognize that not every prophetic word will specifically point to Him (see Rev. 19:10; 1 Cor. 12:3).
- E. We believe in the five-fold ministry of the prophet, recognizing that such prophets will also be used to bring correction, instruction, and directional clarity to the Body, but not independent of other leaders, and therefore different from the model of the independent Old Testament prophet.
- F. We believe that prophecies should first be tested by the Word, then if the prophetic word is not contrary to the Scriptures, it should be evaluated by other mature leaders. If a prophecy is given in the context of a local church, then mature leaders in that setting should evaluate it. If a prophecy is given in the context of a region or nation, then mature regional or national leaders should be invited to evaluate the word (see 1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Thes. 5:19-21). Those who refuse to have their words tested should not be given a platform.
- G. We believe that all spiritual leaders, including those serving as prophetic ministers, should be vetted and qualified by their respective churches, networks, or movements based on the standards of leadership set forth by Paul the apostle as found in 1 Timothy 3:1-8; Titus 1:5-9.
- H. We believe that all spiritual leaders, including five-fold ministry prophets, should be above reproach and should live a life worthy of their calling (see Eph. 4:1-3). Consequently, we believe that prophetic leaders whose lives violate the moral and ethical standards of the Word disqualify themselves from the ministry irrespective of how much influence or anointing they have.
- I. We believe it is essential that all spiritual leaders, including prophetic leaders, have a presbytery of peers and seasoned spiritual leaders who can hold them accountable regarding their life and ministry. In keeping with this, we reject the notion that to judge a prophet's words is a violation of Psalm 105:15 (where God exhorted the ancient nations not to touch the



patriarchs or harm His prophets). Prophets who err must be willing to receive correction from peer leaders with whom they are in an accountable relationship. Those refusing such accountability should not be welcomed for ministry.





## We Recognize

- A. We recognize prophets do not serve as spiritual fortune tellers or prognosticators, nor is their role to satisfy our curiosity about the future or reveal abstract information. God's purpose in prophecy is redemptive, calling for repentance, giving supernatural guidance, bringing comfort, deliverance, restoration, and glorifying Jesus as Lord.
- B. We recognize due to the nature of prophetic ministry; some prophetic words can be submitted for evaluation before they are delivered, while other words will be evaluated after they are delivered. But in all situations, those claiming to speak for God should welcome the godly evaluation of their prophecies.
- C. We recognize prophets receive supernatural revelation from God, but they depend on other five-fold ministry leaders for the interpretation and application of the revelations they receive. It is the Lord's will that all these various ministry gifts, including the ministry of the prophet, work in harmony rather than independently. Only then will the Body come into full health and maturity.
- D. We recognize the unique challenges posed by the internet and social media, as anyone claiming to be a prophet can release a word to the general public without any accountability or even responsibility. While it is not possible to stop the flood of such words online, we urge all believers to check the lives and fruit of those they follow online and also see if they are part of a local church body and have true accountability for their public ministries and personal lives. We also urge prophetic ministers posting unfiltered and untested words purportedly from the Lord to first submit those words to peer leaders for evaluation.
- E. We recognize the Scriptures instructs us not to despise prophecies but to examine prophetic utterances carefully and to hold fast to that which is good (1 Thes. 5:19-21). This also means that we should cultivate honour and respect for true prophetic ministries rather than an attitude of skepticism or scorn.
- F. We recognize the greatest requirement for all leaders in the church, including prophetic leaders, is to endeavour to reflect the character of Christ and to utilize their gifts out of love for God, His people, and the lost (1 Cor. 13:2; Rom. 8:29). We all need humility, integrity, and accuracy in prophetic ministry in order to protect the faith and trust of those who hear a word that is stated to be from God. It is a sacred thing to claim to speak for the Lord and, in keeping with the words of Jesus, to whom much is given, much is required (see Luke 12:48). And just as those who teach are held to a higher standard of accountability (see Jam. 3:1), so also those who prophesy should be held to a higher standard. They can have a powerful influence over people's lives for better or worse, because of which we urge sobriety and circumspection together with faith and boldness.
- G. We recognize prophecies can be conditional and that many prophecies will take time to come to pass. We also recognize that prophetic language is often mysterious and symbolic, requiring interpretation and insight. This means that prophecies that do not contradict the Bible or that are not contrary to the fact should be evaluated over time and not immediately rejected. On the other hand, if a prophetic word is delivered containing specific details and dates in which the stated prophetic word will come to pass and that prophecy contains no conditions to be met in order to be fulfilled, and that word does not come to pass as prophesied, then the one who delivered the word must be willing to take full responsibility, demonstrating genuine contrition before God and people. Any statement of apology and/or explanation/clarification should be delivered to the audience to whom the erroneous word was given. For example, if it was given to an individual, the apology (and/or explanation/



clarification) should be delivered to the individual. If the word was delivered publicly, then a public apology (and/or explanation/clarification) should be presented. This is not meant to be a punishment but rather a mature act of love to protect the Lord's honour, the integrity of prophetic ministry, and the faith of those to whom the word was given.

- H. We recognize true prophetic words can be faith-building and can sometimes call for a faith-filled response. Still, we reject the idea that prophets can use Old Testament texts about believing the prophets in order to gain blanket support for their words as if everything a prophet utters today must be believed. On the contrary, we can only believe the prophetic word if it is not contrary to Scripture, it is not factually in error, and our own spirits bear witness to it. Only then can we add our faith to that word coming to pass (see 1 Tim. 1:18). Those wanting to use Old Testament prophetic texts to exercise influence or authority over their followers should remember that inaccurate prophecy under that same Old Testament standard was punishable by death. New Testament prophets, along with other New Testament ministry leaders, do not lord it over their people or demand submission and faith. Instead, in humility, they serve the flock (see 1 Pet. 5:1-4).



## We Reject

- A. We reject any threatening words from prophets today, warning their followers that judgment will fall on them if they fail to obey the prophet's words. We see this as a dangerous form of spiritual manipulation.
- B. We reject the spiritual manipulation of the prophetic gift for the personal benefit of the prophet or of his or her ministry, whether to garner favor, power, or financial gain. And under no circumstances can a prophet charge money to deliver a prophetic word. This is spiritual abuse of the worst kind and is detestable in God's sight.
- C. We reject the notion that a contemporary prophetic word is on the same level of inspiration or authority as Scripture or that God always speaks inerrantly through prophets today, since the Bible says we only know in part and prophesy in part (1 Cor. 13:9). It is the written Word alone that can lay claim to being "the Word of God" (2 Tim. 3:16); prophecies, at best, are "a word from the Lord," to be tested by the Word of God.

Finally, while we believe in holding prophets accountable for their words, in accordance with the Scriptures, we do not believe that a sincere prophet who delivers an inaccurate message is therefore a false prophet. Instead, as Jesus explained, and as the Old Testament emphasized, false prophets are wolves in sheep's clothing, in contrast to true believers who might speak inaccurately (see Matt. 7:15-20; Jer. 23:9-40; Ezek. 13:23). Thus, a false prophet is someone who operates under a false spirit masquerading as the Holy Spirit.

Therefore we acknowledge the distinctions between a Christ-follower who gives an inaccurate prophecy (in which case they should acknowledge their error), and a believer who consistently prophesies inaccurately (in which case we recognize that this person is not a prophet and we urge them to stop prophesying), and a false prophet (whom we recognize as a false believer, a lost soul, calling them to repent and be saved).

Because God's gifts and calling are irrevocable (see Rom. 11:29), we understand that a person who has been prophetically gifted might be able to function in that gifting even though they are no longer in a right relationship with God. That is why it is imperative that we judge a prophet by the fruit of their life and ministry rather than by their gift, also recognizing that there are some who started right but will be rejected in the end (see Matt. 7:21-23).

This is also in accordance with our value of Christlike character before spiritual gifting.



## Resources

### The Prophetic Standards Statement

Link: <https://propheticstandards.com/>

### Recommended Reading

- Unlocking Your Giftedness by Dr. Robert J. Clinton
- Deliverance by Jon Thompson
- Convergence by Jon Thompson
- The Prophetic Equipping Series Volumes 1, 2, and 3 by Graham Cooke
- The Prophetic Warrior by Emma Stark
- Beautiful Resistance by Jon Tyson

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WITH JESUS  
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
IN OUR CITY.** *this is our heartbeat.*