**A REVIEW OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARGUMENTS**

Windell Wiser

I am certainly thankful this evening for your presence and for this opportunity that we have to study together the word of God. I want to express appreciation to this congregation, (the elders of this congregation), for inviting me here to speak concerning this important passage of scripture: the eleventh chapter of the book of I Corinthians. I know there are many other men who would be more capable, and better qualified to speak concerning these things; but I am happy for this opportunity, and I appreciate the confidence that has been expressed toward me in inviting me to come. I believe it very appropriate that we read the passage. We will read the first sixteen verses of the eleventh chapter if I Corinthians. We will read from the King James translation.

*1Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*

***2****Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.*

***3****But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*

***4****Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head.*

***5****But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.*

***6****For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.*

***7****For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.*

***8****For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man.*

***9****Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.*

***10****For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.*

***11****Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.*

***12****For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.*

***13****Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?*

***14****Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?*

***15****But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.*

***16****But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither* the churches of God.

This passage of scripture has been one of concern to me for a number of years. When I was a student in college this passage was brought to my attention by another gospel preacher: Brother Bill Cavender. At that particular time I took issue with brother Cavender as to what he taught, and what I now believe to be the truth concerning this passage. I argued with brother Cavender that this passage taught that the covering was a *custom* at Corinth which had no meaning whatsoever to us today, and was thus not binding since our customs are different from the customs at Corinth. At that particular time I had never heard of the position known as the spiritual gifts position concerning this passage. In fact, after brother Cavender persuaded me to accept the passage, that it is still binding today I taught the passage for a number of years before ever hearing of the spiritual gifts idea. Brother Gene Frost, in recent years, came up with the idea that the passage is no longer binding because of the word *prophesy* that is found in the passage. Since spiritual gifts ceased as Paul taught in I Corinthians chapter 13, then the idea is that this passage is no longer binding today. So, for several hundred years after the New Testament was written, men did not discover what now many gospel preachers believe the passage teaches, and that is, since spiritual gifts ceased we can just discard these instructions.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

You know it seems to me tonight, at the outset of our study, that even if I am wrong in my position: that even if it is not necessary for a man to come to the worship and engage in prayer bareheaded; or even if it is not necessary that a woman cover her head when she prays, or when she teaches, or prophesies; then what have I to lose as long as I have the proper attitude in regard to these matters, as long as I am not hateful and mean and dogmatic, and as long as I do not manifest that kind of spirit – what do I have to lose? But on the other hand, suppose I’m right, and suppose that these instructions are still binding today: What do people have to lose who take issue with them, and who discard them:

Somebody says, “Well, we don’t prophesy any more, spiritual gifts ceased, and Paul said, ‘every man praying or prophesying’, and so, since we don’t prophesy any more, in the sense of speaking by divine inspiration, then the passage isn’t binding anymore.” But you know, I would want to be real sure that the word prophesy could *never* have a meaning other than the idea of inspired teaching. I would want to make sure that this is the case, because, if the word prophet can be used in the sense of some teaching that is not given directly by the Holy Spirit, then the whole point goes, and I would not even have a point at all. Because for me to do away with the covering in I Corinthians 11 I would have to *know* that the word prophesy could *never* mean anything else, except inspired teaching; and that a prophet could *never* be anything other than an inspired man. If I did not know that to be the case, then I would not even have any argument whatsoever.

But in the second place, if I knew that to be the case, I still could not ignore the instruction in this passage. If I did, I would have to ignore the instruction in many, many other passages, as we shall show tonight. Even if I could convince myself that the word prophet *always* means an inspired teacher, and it *could not* mean anything else; and that prophesy *always* means inspired instruction and it could not mean any other teaching. If I could convince myself that that is the case, I still would not be ready to do away with these instructions and ignore them. One reason why I would not is because the passage says “*pray OR prophesy”*, which means in cases I do either one I should do so with my head uncovered. And if a woman should do either one “*pray OR prophesy”* she should do so with her head covered.

So we notice now the chart [1] that is before us. The word προφητεύω that is translated prophesy in this passage. Now we have written here on the chart a definition taken from Thayer’s Greek English Lexicon. And of course, we did not copy *everything* that Thayer said on the word because of a lack of space but we did copy his definition of the word *as it is used in the eleventh chapter of I Corinthians*. Now in this definition, on page 553, Mr. Thayer says, the word προφητεύω means:

“*to prophesy, i.e. t be a prophet, speak forth by divine inspiration; to predict.”*

In other words, the argument is made that the word means all predictions that are made *must* be inspired predictions, and this is the position that our brethren take who would do away with the instruction here on the basis of spiritual gifts not existing today. The idea is that the word predict must *always* mean inspired prediction or a prediction that the Holy Spirit would directly give, and yet these same preachers would call a weather man a prophet. He predicts weather. He is a weather prophet, but the Holy Spirit does not give him the prediction directly. Now, we ought to be consistent. If the word prophet cannot be used in the sense of other than an inspired man, or one that the Holy Spirit gives the prediction directly to; then we are wrong when we call a weather man a prophet. The definition is to predict. Somebody says, “Well, it has to be an inspired prediction.” Well, is it always? Can we be *sure* as it is used in the Bible that it is  *always* the case? If it is, then false prophets, the prediction that false prophets made, would be inspired prediction: Given directly by the Holy Spirit; but yet, none of us believe that false prophets gave predictions that the Holy Spirit revealed directly to them. Somebody said, ”Well, they claim to.” So if a man claims that his prediction is given directly, then he is a prophet. If that is the case all I would have to do would be just claim that my predictions came directly from God, and then I would have to go bareheaded. Otherwise, when I pray or teach, I could wear a covering on my head.

But let us notice the “d.” definition. That means we *did not copy down a., b., and c.*  But the d. definition is the one that is found in I Corinthians 11. Mr. Thayer says,

“*to break forth under sudden impulse in lofty discourse or in praise of the divine counsels… or under the like prompting, to teach, refute, reprove, admonish, comfort others…* I Corinthians 11 (THAYER, page 553).

That is the way it is used in this passage. Now, can you read that definition and *be sure,* without *any doubt*: Be sure without any doubt, that this breaking forth under a sudden impulse, is an impulse that the Holy Spirit gave you directly? Could you be *sure* about that that you could just say, “We can forget about the covering?” Could you be that definite, from that definition, that this impulse would have to come directly? Suppose you get a sudden impulse, indirectly? You happen to be reading the scripture, you come across a certain truth, and thus as a result of learning a certain truth you have a sudden impulse to refute error, you have a sudden impulse to reprove somebody, a sudden impulse to admonish somebody? What difference does it make whether this impulse comes DIRECTLY, by the Holy Sprit or INDIRECTLY? What difference would it make whether the Holy Spirit gave it to you apart from the scriptures, or whether He gave this impulse to you through the scriptures? Could you *be so sure*, in this case, that prophecy always means that the impulse comes directly by the Holy Spirit? Now those who take the prophetic position, the spiritual gifts position, have to be sure about that thing, because we are dealing with God’s word, and you know you cannot go around here and say, “Here are sixteen verses that the Holy Spirit revealed to the apostle Paul, which he wrote, and we can discard them: they are not binding today;” unless we are *sure* about this thing. Now can you *be sure*? Can you be certain that this impulse to rebuke him before all; because of your reading the fifth chapter of I Timothy: Would you be a prophet? Somebody says, No, because the Holy Spirit didn’t give it to you directly.” Well, can you be *sure* about it? You *have to be sure*, because we are doing away with a passage of scripture. The word προφήτης is the word for prophet. Mr. Thayer says:

“*to speak forth, speak out; hence prop. ‘one who speaks forth’: … therefore prop. i.q. interpreter, hence an interpreter or spokesman for God; one through whom God speaks… one who speaks forth by divine inspiration.”* (THAYER, p. 553)

Alright somebody says, “That is the way it is. You can’t be a prophet unless you speak forth by divine inspiration.” But let us notice, In Greek writings from Aeschylus, Herodotus, and Pindar down,” and these who were Greek writers prior to the New Testament period, it means 1) An interpreter of oracles (whether uttered by the gods or μάντεις)” and this word here refers to those who are soothsayers. In other words the prophets, before the New Testament times, some of them were soothsayers, and some of them were idolaters. The Holy Spirit selected a word when the New Testament was written, a word that the Greeks had used in the days of Herodotus and Pindar that referred to uninspired men, sorcerers, soothsayers, idolaters; and he use the word with reference to God’s men, who received God’s Message. Now soothsayers, it is true, made a claim that they got their message from supernatural powers; that they got their message from God. And idolaters, of course, would claim that their message came from the idols, their idol gods; but the definition is, “an interpreter of oracles;” that is one who would explain a message. So if the Holy Spirit would use a word that had that kind of meaning, before the New Testament period to include uninspired people; then why would the Holy Spirit object to my using the same word to refer to uninspired men, who would interpret oracles? In other words, gospel preachers interpret oracles, the oracles of God; and those who teach God’s word today interpret the oracles of God, and the Holy Spirit used the word prophet, that had already been used by interpreters of oracles, during the time prior to the New Testament age, and they were uninspired men.

Can you be *sure*? Can you be *certain* that the word prophet always means an inspired teacher; and it could not mean anything else? You would have to be that *sure* to forget about this passage. But then he says, “An interpreter of oracles (whether uttered by the gods or μάντεις), or of other hidden things. Look at the second definition, “a foreteller, soothsayer, seer.” Balaam is called a prophet, (in fact the Holy Spirit refers to Balaam as a prophet), and the Bible tells us that Balaam was a soothsayer, and the only time that the message Balaam uttered came from God; or at least the only time we can prove it did, is when Balaam attempted, or went to curse the people of God at the request of Balak. And every time instead of cursing, he blessed; because God did give him the message he spake. But he was a soothsayer, and we could not prove that the message he spake came directly from God, any other time, except on these occasions. Soothsayers and sorcerers, true, claimed their message came from God, but did it? Were they not servants of the devil? Was it not king Saul who passed a law that all witches should be put to death? And does not the Holy Spirit mention sorcery in the fifth chapter of Galatians as a work of the flesh, which would mean that Balaam was not actually a prophet of God, in the sense that men today would define the word; or brethren who would ignore this passage or do away with this passage? And yet this soothsayer is called a prophet by the Holy Spirit.

But let us notice the second definition. “In the New Testament”, in other words it was used this way prior to the New Testament. Now in the New Testament the first definition is”

“*One who, moved by the Spirit of God and hence his organ or spokesman, solemnly declares to men what he has received by inspiration, esp. future events and in particular such as relate to the cause and kingdom of God and to human salvation.”*

Somebody says, “Now brother Wiser, don’t you see that is the way it is used in the New Testament; and in the New Testament a prophet always means one who speaks by inspiration.” Does it? Look at the second definition and this is in the New Testament. “*A poet* (because poets were believed to sing under divine inspiration): So Epimenides Titus 1:12.” Paul said:

*“A prophet of your own said Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.”*

Was Epimenides an inspired prophet? Was he an inspired man? You know, you have to be sure about this thing. If I Corinthians 11 passed with the spiritual gifts, then you have to be sure that Epimenides was inspired, an inspired man. You cannot holler and say, “In the New Testament, it means *always* inspired,” unless Epimenides was inspired.

But you know, when people take the position I just say, “Well, suppose that that is right: I could agree with you that προφητεύω always meant inspired teaching; and προφήτης always means an inspired teacher. I could agree with you, but if I do, to be consistent, what about spiritual?” πνευματικός; this is the Greek word for spiritual. The third definition:

”...belonging to the divine Spirit; a. … Divinely inspired, and so redolent of the Holy Spirit. Co. 3:16; Eph 5:19.” Thayer p. 523

And what is the word spiritual in these passages? Paul said:

“*Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”*  (Eph.5:18-19)

“*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord*.” (Col. 3:16)

The word SPIRITUAL in these passages, Mr. Thayer says, means: “divinely inspired,” thus a spiritual song is a divinely inspired song! We do not sing spiritual songs anymore, or do we? Now these preachers who take issue with me on I Corinthians 11; and say we do not prophesy any more, so we can forget about that passage will talk about spiritual songs; you better believe it! And so, if I Corinthians does not apply today, which talks about prophecy, then spiritual songs have no application today and you cannot sing a spiritual song. I do not suppose you could sing a Psalm that is recorded in the Bible, because it would be a spiritual one, an inspired one. So you see what happens when you start doing away with passages of scriptures: You do away with some you do not want to go away.

The same word is found in some other places. “*One who is filled with and governed by the Spirit of God*.” I Corinthians 2:15. The apostle Paul says that “*he that is spiritual judgeth all things*.” Now, somebody said this definition here could mean something other than inspired: “One who is filled with and governed by the Spirit.” Somebody said, “You can be filled with the Spirit and governed by the Spirit and not be directly.” Well, I recognize that, but I know it is directly in this passage: The context shows it is. In I Corinthians 2 the apostle said, “*we have the mind of Christ”* and he points out that that which he hadtaught was what the Holy Spirit taught, and that the spiritual man is the inspired man. The natural man, in that passage, is the uninspired man. He does not receive the things of God: They are foolishness to him. But the spiritual man “*judgeth all things, but he himself is judged of no man*.” So it does mean inspired. Well, look at this passage: I Corinthians 14:37: “*If any man think of himself to be a prophet or spiritual let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you are the commandments of God.”* Who is the spiritual man there? Can you be a spiritual man and acknowledge that what Paul wrote was the commandment of God or would you have to be inspired before you could acknowledge what Paul wrote to be the commandment of God?

And then in Galatians 6 and verse one, this word spiritual is found. “*Brethren, if any be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness;…”* Is Paul teaching that only inspired men could restore a brother who is overtaken in a fault? I dare say if Paul is teaching that only inspired men were to go bareheaded, and only inspired women were to cover their heads, then he is definitely saying, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that only inspired men are to restore a brother that is overtaken in a fault. I want to ask you a question, would you want to go to face God in the judgment, having failed to make an effort to restore a brother who is overtaken in a fault; and argue with Jesus at the judgment day: “it said spiritual and I was not spiritual, because I was not inspired?” Would you want to face God that way? I had just as soon face God in the judgment day and say, “Now Lord, I preached that you did not have to go bareheaded, as a man; and I preached that women did not need to cover their heads, because they are not prophetesses.” But I had just as soon go to the judgment day, and face my Lord and say, “Now I did not attempt to restore my brother who was overtaken in a fault because I was not spiritual, inspired.” (Let’s have the next chart [2], brother Ward.)

How about you? Think about that. Now what are the consequences of ruling out this passage of scripture? So, we are going to rule it out, because we do not prophesy in the sense of teaching inspired messages. Our messages are not given to us directly by God, but indirectly through His word. So we want to rule out this passage. Well here are the consequences. If I Corinthians 11 does not apply, then Matthew 13:57 would not apply, where Jesus said, “A prophet is not without honor, save in His own country and in His own house.” Now, everyone quotes that passage and applies it to preachers. They say a preacher is not without honor, except at home. And we quote that passage. Well, how can you quote that passage? Well, you cannot, if you take the position that I Corinthians 11 is not applicable today because we do not teach inspired messages, i.e. directly revealed messages. Our messages are inspired, but they are indirect rather than direct. So there are not any prophets, so you cannot use that verse. I Corinthians 14:16 would not apply. You could not use the verse, and these preachers just rule out most of the fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians; About everything in there, except “*decency and in order.”* So you could not use verse sixteen. He is talking about praying in a tongue. And he says, “*How shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?”*  So, if anybody comes in this audience tonight, who knows only the German language, and there is not a soul here who understands German: and we call on him to lead in prayer, and he prays in German: How would you condemn him? You could not use this passage, because he is not speaking in German, as the Spirit gives it to him directly. He is speaking it because he was brought up over there, and he learned it. What difference does it make? The text says that for a service to be edifying, (decent and in order), the man who leads the prayer should be understood. So it does not matter whether his language, that he speaks, is given to him directly by the Holy Spirit, or whether he knows the language. The important thing is that he understand it. In the eleventh chapter of the book of I Corinthians, it is not a matter of praying or prophesying; that would mean you could skip the passage. What difference does it make whether a man teaches his message as the Spirit gives it to him directly; or whether he teaches his message, as he gets it indirectly out of the book? Christ is the head of man, either way you go. And what difference would it make, whether a woman prays, who is inspired; or whether she prays and is not inspired? Is not man the head of woman? So you see, if we are going to rule out I Corinthians 11 and say we are not required to follow these instructions; then let us rule out I Corinthians 14:16, and you can call on a man to lead prayer in a foreign tongue that nobody understands; and there is not a soul anywhere who can condemn you for it because this is written for inspired people, tongue speakers.

What is the consequence of doing away with this passage? Well, we have to do away with verses 29-31 of I Corinthians 14. They would not apply. He said, “*Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted*.” Could not use that passage today! And so, Brother Ward, you can start talking too, right now while I am talking; and brother Hutto, you can; and brother Shear, you can; and we can just all preach at the same time. Somebody said, “Oh, no! That would not be orderly.” Well, you cannot use this passage; because he said, let the prophets do it: he did not say, let preachers speak one at a time. Somebody said, “You cannot apply I Corinthians 11 to preachers, because it said prophesy and preachers do not prophesy today.” Well, you cannot apply this passage here to preachers, because it said prophets. Now brethren, what difference does it make? Is it any more important that prophets speak one at a time, than it is that preachers speak one at a time? Is it any more important that inspired people have a decent and orderly service, than it is for uninspired people to have a decent and orderly service? Is it any more important that inspired teachers edify the church, than it is that uninspired teachers edify the church? I do not see that there is any difference. But the consequence of doing away with the instructions if I Corinthians 11 does away with the instructions of I Corinthians 14:29-31, and even more so here; because this passage is addressed to prophets but I Corinthians 11 is addressed to every man who prays or prophesies. They do away with I Corinthians 11, but they do not do away with this. I wonder why? Could be they do not want I Corinthians 11 and they do want this.

Alright, let us notice further, I Corinthians 14:34,35 would not apply. And they will tell you that it does not. They will tell you, “No, you cannot use I Corinthians 14:34 to condemn women speaking in the church. You must use I Timothy 2.” But suppose there wasn’t any I Timothy 2? They would use I Corinthians 14:34,35, just like they use I Corinthians 14:29-31 to have one speaker at a time. This passage says, “*Let your women keep silent in the churches: For it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is a shame for women to speak in the church*.” And the argument is, “*your women”* are the prophets’ wives. Really, it does not make any difference whether it is the prophets’ wives, or whose wives it is, because it is a shame for women to speak in the church. And it does not make any difference whether it is the prophetess who prays, or an uninspired woman who prays; because it says “*every woman who prays or prophesies uncovered dishonors her head.”*  But let us notice I Corinthians 14:37 would not apply. You could not acknowledge that what Paul wrote was the commandments of God. You could not use that passage today, according to this position. In fact, most of the Bible would not apply because practically all of it is addressed to inspired people and deals with inspired people. Therefore, if you do not like it, it is done away. If you do not like the idea of women being restrained from speaking in the church, then that is done away. If you do not like these other things, then that is done away. Now the same principle applies today, in all these passages. (Bring up chart [3])

Jesus said, “*Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the alter and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave thy gift before the alter and go thy way; first be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer thy gift*.” Can’t use that passage today. Do you know why you cannot use it? We do not have the altar. We do not bring our gifts to the altar; they did when Jesus lived, before the cross they did. They had altars and they brought their gifts to the altars. So, Jesus said, “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave your gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” But preachers dare not use that passage, and substitute worship for altar; and say, “Now if you come to worship and you remember your brother hath aught against you; go and be reconciled, you are in no position to worship yet.” You cannot use it, unless you are going to take I Corinthians 11. If you say, “We do not prophesy today, but preach instead, and you cannot apply it to preaching because it said prophesy,” then I am going to say, “We do not have an altar today, but we worship in a different manner; so you cannot use the worship in a different manner, because it said altar.” But the same principle will apply. If not, why not?

Alright, the second place. “*A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house*.” The same principle applies to a preacher: to any public teacher. You could apply that same principle to a lot of things, just like it said: “prophet.”

In the third place, “*How shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest*?” The principle applies, and it does not make any difference whether the language he prays; the tongue is given to him directly, by the Holy Spirit; or whether he learned it. And so, the principle applies. “*A man indeed ought not to cover his head when he prays”* or when he gets his message, delivers his message, having received it direct or having studied. The same principle applies. It really would not matter. And then, “*Let the prophets speak two or three*.” It would not matter whether it is a prophet, or a preacher; the same principle will apply. Preachers ought to speak one at a time, to have a decent and orderly service; where men are edified. And women ought to cover their head, because man is the head of woman. And man ought not to cover his head, because Christ is the head of man. Principles are applied: the same principle. And it doesn’t matter whether inspiration is there or not.

“Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered dishonors his head.” Now, Paul did not say cover your head because you prophesy; but he said, cover your head when you do; because Crist is the head of man, or man is the head of woman. That is what he said. He did not say for a woman to cover head because she prophesies. He said for her to cover head because man is the head of woman. He said, do it when you prophesy. Paul told the speakers at Corinth to speak one at a time, not because they are prophets; but in order to have a decent and orderly service. So he said, a woman is to cover her head when she prophesies; since man is the head of woman. He did not say cover your head because you prophesy. Neither did he say, every prophet and prophetess, praying or prophesying, should obey the instructions. He said, every man praying; he did not say every prophet. And every man certainly prays. (Now, let us have the next chart [4] brother Ward.)

I want us to consider two passages of scripture that have to do with the word prophesy, as we study this word some more. Now notice, in the first place, I am not willing to admit that the word prophesy is limited to inspired teaching. I am not willing to admit that the word prophet is limited to inspired preachers or teachers. But if I did, I still could not forget about the instructions in I Corinthians 11 or 14, or all these other passages that I mentioned. But let us look at the word prophesy some more. In Zechariah chapter 13 the prophet said, “*In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the House of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness*.” Verse one. Then verse two said, “*In that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land and they shall no more be remembered. And also, I will cause the prophets and unclean spirits to pass out of the land.”* Now, there might be a disagreement as to when this happened, what this passage means. Some say, when they deal with demonology; that what this passage is saying is that, when the miraculous age ended, that demons passed out of the land; that they no longer possess people like they one time did. And I do not believe they possess people like they one time did. But if that be the case; then the prophets passed out of the land, in the same sense: when miracles ended, then prophets ceased; and that is what my brethren say about it. Then when the miraculous age ceased, the prophets ceased, and therefore we do not have any prophets today, and I Corinthians 11 does not apply. Alright, now let us look at the third verse, “*And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy…”* You mean the prophets are already ceased, and they are yet prophesying? Now, if the prophets ceased, in the same sense that inspired men are no longer here, then how could they “*yet prophesy”?* He said, “*Then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.”* That verse kind of gives me some problems. The idea of thrusting through – I do not believe that would be applicable today. If that is what the passage is teaching, that the prophets passed out of the land in the sense that the miraculous age ended, then sense the miraculous age ended, if somebody claims to be a prophet today, and claims to prophesy: We ought to thrust him through – his parents ought to. But whatever the passage is saying, there is one thing definite about it. The Holy Spirit said the prophets would pass out of the land, and then he said, “*yet prophesy.”* Yet they’ll prophesy. “…*and it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed*.” The prophets have passed out of the land, and yet the prophets are still here, and shall be ashamed, everyone of his vision, when he hath prophesied. “*Neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive*.”

Well, let us look at a study of I Corinthians 13. I believe I understand this passage better. Now let us deal with it. “*Charity never faileth*.” He means fail in the sense that it ceases or ends: it will go on in eternity in heaven. “*But whether there be prophecies they shall fail.”* They are going to end. “*Whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*” Now, definitely the word prophesy, in the passage, would mean inspired teaching. He says that it is going to fail. Knowledge, in this passage, means inspired knowledge, i.e. knowledge that is revealed directly by the Holy Spirit. But even though knowledge that is revealed directly by the Holy Spirit ceased, knowledge is still here. And even though tongues as given directly by the Holy Spirit are ceased, tongues are still here. Tongues in the sense of languages that we know from having studied. They are still here, but tongues in the senses of directly revealed tongues by the Holy Spirit, they ceased. Knowledge in the sense of natural knowledge is still here, but knowledge in the sense of directly revealed knowledge passed away. Why would not prophecy, in the sense of natural teaching still be here? But prophecy in the sense of inspired teaching is gone. But somebody said, “Oh, no! We won’t have that.” So they will not have any prophecy except inspired but they will have knowledge that is not inspired, and tongues that are not inspired. Why? Can you be *real sure* and positive, beyond a shadow of a doubt that prophecy cannot ever mean natural teaching? So *certain of it* that you can discard these instructions? Can you be *that sure*? (Let us have that last chart [5], and on this last chart we have a number of questions. I want to ask some questions before you ask some questions.)

So here are my questions. The first question is, is it any more important for an inspired man to pray or teach bareheaded, than it is for an uninspired man? Is it any more important for an inspired man to pray bareheaded than it is for an uninspired man? Is it any more important for an inspired woman to cover her head, when she prays or teaches, than it is for an uninspired woman to cover her head? Is not man the head of woman, or is just a prophet the head of a prophetess? The third question, What does inspiration have to do with it anyway? The fourth question, What does inspiration have to do with a decent and orderly service? Is it not just as important that preachers preach one at a time, as it is for prophets to speak one at a time? Question number five, Does every man who prays with his head covered dishonor Christ or is this just true with reference to those men who were inspired; or those who were prophets in the sense of being inspired? And number six, Does every woman who prays with her head uncovered dishonor man, or is this just true with reference to those women who were prophetesses or inspired women? Are inspired women the only ones who dishonor man for going bareheaded? Number seven, Paul said in verse 7, “*For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, for as much as he is the image and glory of God: But the woman is the glory of the man.”* Should he have said a prophet indeed ought not to cover his head, for as much as he is the image and glory of God: But the prophetess is the glory of the prophet? And the last question, Would you like to face God in the judgment after discarding this passage? If you knew you were going to face God in judgment tonight, what would you say about this passage? I recognize that there is a possibility that I might face Him before tomorrow and therefore I am convinced that we ought to do our best to abide by it and teach it; even though it might not be popular, and even though it might be embarrassing under some circumstances. I do not believe it would be near as embarrassing to teach it as it would be to face the Lord in judgment saying it does not apply. I appreciate your presence and your good attention.

There may be someone here, in our audience tonight, who is not a Christian. If you believe the gospel of Christ we would encourage you to repent of sins, to confess Jesus to be the Son of God, to be baptize in the name of Christ for the remission of sins. If you will do so, the Lord will save you and He will add you to the church. We invite you to come while we stand and sing!

**APPENDIX**

Brother Ward informed me that I am not obligated to reproduce my speech just exactly like it was delivered; but that I could alter it in any way to make it better or more appropriate for print. However, I reproduced my lesson without changing any argument or thought whatsoever. I made a few grammatical corrections and left out a few ambiguous words, but did not change what I said at all. Now, there was a purpose for reproducing this speech just as it was delivered. Brother Tom O’Neal complained about my speech not only in Birmingham, but also to E.R. Hall Jr. of Wise, Virginia. E.R. Hall Jr., along with preachers in Birmingham, brother Ward for one; informed me that brother O’Neal had accused me of mis-representing Thayer. After the foregoing mentioned preachers insisted, brother O’Neal wrote me concerning the matter. In his letter to me he claimed that his objection to my speech was that I left out the c. definition for prophecy which Mr. Thayer gave. You can check my speech and find out that I did not quote the a., b., or c. definitions and told my audience why I left them out. However, these preachers tell me that brother O’Neal was not accusing me of leaving out the c. definition, but that I mis-represented Thayer. I have written brother O’Neal, more than once, and begged him to correct his mis-representation of me, but a the time of this writing he has refused to do so. You can judge as to whether I mis-represented Thayer or not. Brother Tom O’Neal knows I did not. He may not have known it at the time, but he knows it now. If he told the truth that he only objected to my leaving out the c. part, then he had no right to object because I told my audience I left out the a., b., and c. part, for lack of space. If he did claim I mis-represented Thayer, he now knows better. If either case he needs to go to the people he talked to and correct things and apologize to me for what he said about me. The following is a quotation of the cc. definition that he made such a to do about:

“c. *to utter forth, declare, a thing which can only be known by divine revelation:* Mt. xxvi. 68; Mk. xiv. 65; Lk. xxii. 64; cf. vii. 39; Jn. iv. 19.”

If you will notice the scripture references under the c. part, you will notice I Corinthians 11 is not listed. Check my speech and you will find I stated that I left out the a., b., and c. part, but quoted the d. part because this was the way it was used in I Corinthians 11. Now, what does brother O’Neal mean by emphasizing the c. definition? Is he saying that the expression “which can only be known by divine revelation” means all prophecy was given directly to the prophet, and that a prophet can never be an uninspired teacher? If he is, then he makes Thayer contradict himself, as all of his definitions will show. Now, you be the judge as to who is mis-representing Thayer. When gospel preachers utter forth, and declare the gospel of Christ, they are uttering forth and declaring “a thing which can only be known by divine revelation.” Why is this so? “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” (I Corinthians 2:9,10). Now, since they have been revealed, my eyes have seen, my ears have heard, and they have entered into my heart; but these things are such which “can only be known by divine revelation.” Brother O’Neal makes Thayer contradict himself, because Thayer tells us, page 553, that a prophet is “an interpreter of oracles (whether uttered by the gods or the μάντεις).” Thanks very much for your indulgence.

Windell Wiser

Chart 1

**PROPHESYING IN I CORINTHIANS 11**

**Προφητεύω** “To prophesy, i.e. to be a prophet, speak forth by divine inspiration; to predict.” d. “To break forth under sudden impulse in lofty discourse or in praise of the divine counsels: -Or, under the like prompting, to teach, refute, reprove, admonish, comfort others, I Cor. 11” (Thayer p. 553)

**Προφήτης** “To speak forth, speak out; hence prop. ‘one who speaks forth..; Therefore prop. Interpreter, hence an interpreter or spokesman for God; one through whom God speaks; one who speaks forth by divine inspiration; I In Greek writings from Aeschylus, Herodotus, and Pindar down I. An interpreter or oracles (whether uttered by the gods or the **μάντεις** ), or of other hidden things. 2. A foreteller, soothsayer, seer. II. In the N.T. I. One who, moved by the Spirit of God andhence his organ or spokesman, solemnly declares to men what he has received by inspiration, isp. Future events, and in particular such as relate to the cause and kingdom of God and to human salvation. 2. A poet (because poets were believed to sing under diine inspiration); so of Epimenides Titus 1:12” (Thayer pp. 553, 554).

**Πνευματικός** “Spiritual” 3. “Belonging to the divine Spirit, Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19. B. One who is filled with and governed by the Spirit of God: I Cor.2:15; 14:27; Gal. 6:1 (Thayer p. 523).

Chart 2

**CONSEQUENCES IF I CORINTHIANS 11 DOES NOT APPLY**

Matthew 13:57 would not apply. “*A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house*.”

I Corinthians 14:16 would not apply. “*How shall he that occupiety the room of the unlearned say amen at thy giving of thanks seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest*?”

I Corinthians 14:29-31 would not apply. “*Let the prophets speak two or three and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first held his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted*.”

I Corinthians 14:34,35 would not apply. *“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.”*

I Corinthians 14:37 would not apply. *“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.”*

I Corinthians 14:40 would not apply. *“Let all things be done decently and in order.”*

IN FACT MOST OF THE BIBLE WOULD NOT APPLY BECAUSE PRACTICALLY ALL OF IT IS ADDRESSED TO INSPIRED PEOPLE AND DEALS WITH INSPRIED PEOPLE. THEREFORE: IF YOU DON’T LIKE IT, IT DOESN’T APPLY TODAY.

Chart 3

**THE SAME PRINCIPLE**

1. “*Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift*.” Matthew 5:23,24
2. “*A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country and in his own house*.” Matthew 13:57
3. “*How shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth now what thou sayest?”* I Corinthians 14:16
4. “*Let the prophets speak two or three and let the other judge. If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted*.” I Corinthians 14: 29-31
5. “*Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.”* I Corinthians 11:4-5

**PAUL DID NOT SAY:**

1. Cover your head because you prophesy, but because “Man is the head of woman.”
2. Every prophet and prophetess praying or prophesying.

Chart 4

**MORE ON PROPHESY**

1. A study of Zechariah 13
2. “*In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness*.” V1
3. “*In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered; and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land*.” V2
4. “*And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth*.” V3
5. “*And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive*:” V4
6. A study of I Corinthians 13
7. “*Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*.” VV8-10

Chart 5

**SOME QUESTIONS FOR OUR CONSIDERATION**

1. Is it any more important for an inspired man to pray to teach bareheaded than it is for an uninspired man?
2. Is it any more important for an inspired woman to cover her head when she prays or teaches than it is for an uninspired woman?
3. What does inspiration have to do with it?
4. What does inspiration have to do with a decent and orderly service? Is it not just as important that preachers preach one at a time as it was for prophets to speak one at a time?
5. Does every man who prays with his head covered dishonor Christ? Or is this just true with reference to those men who were inspired: or those who were prophets in the sense of being inspired?
6. Does every woman who prays with her head uncovered dishonor man? Or is this just true with reference to those women who were prophetesses or inspired?
7. Paul said, “For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.” V7. Should he have said, a prophet indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the prophetess is the glory of the prophet?
8. Would you like to face God after discarding the passage?