

Is The Church a “Non-Prophet Organization”

By Gerald Cowan

I once wrote a bulletin article with this title, but my elderly secretary corrected it to read “Non-Profit’ Organization. I took a bit of razzing for it. One member joked, “Just what I always thought: the church is in it for the money.” But jokes aside, the question is valid: does the church have prophets or does it not? To answer that we must first define the term: what (not who, but what) is a prophet?

The common understanding is that a prophet is one who can see and foretell the future, what is going to happen – some woe or weal that is coming. That is actually only part, sometimes a relatively small part, not even a necessary part of a prophet’s message. Prophets are forth-tellers not fore-tellers – like a president’s press secretary They speak for another, by revelation or instruction; they speak what they are given by or have received from the one for whom they speak. It may be instruction or information, approval, or warning – not always a forecast but sometimes an explanation or summary of past or present conditions. The prophet himself is not the source but only the conduit of a message from the one for whom he speaks, an oracle -- literally a “mouthpiece” through whom the source speaks. Oracles have been common, sometimes famous and revered because of the import and impact of the messages they delivered. The true source from which the oracle receives the message must be identified separately. The Christian preacher, teacher, oracular disseminator of the word of God is the oracle, the mouthpiece of God – the message he or she delivers can also be called an oracle. Apostle Peter says anyone who speaks the message and words of God is an oracle of the Lord (1 Peter 4:11).

The test of validity of a message delivered in the name of the Lord – that is, the words from a prophet – is simple: if it is a prediction or pronouncement of something to come does it come to pass as stipulated, does it actually happen? (Deuteronomy 18:22). If it is information, it must be proved true. If words given in God’s name or the name of Christ or the Holy Spirit are not true and/or do not come to pass, the speaker is proved to be a false prophet.

Does the church have prophets today? None who are receiving messages directly from God – that kind of prophecy has ended (see 1 Corinthians 13:9-10). We can repeat what was taught by prior prophets, revealed in scripture – which makes us prophets too, prophet preachers. Any profit we seek is for God or our audience. Preachers and proclaimers can tell forth the message of prior prophets – it happens anytime we repeat the prophetic message of God. Even you can be that kind of prophet.



That meets at 701 South Wilbur, Sayre, PA 18840

(570) 886-1838

Arthur Barry, Evangelist- (607) 280-1732

February 28, 2021

WELCOME!

Sunday

Bible Class- 9:30 a.m.

Worship- 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study-6:30 p.m.

All the churches of Christ greet you.

Romans 16:16

Today’s Sermon: *A Need for a Faith*

Sermons are recorded and are available for listening on the church website.

Bulletins are archived on the website.

valleycitieschurchofchrist.org

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www.facebook.com/valleycitiescoc

Headphones are available for the hearing impaired.

Scripture Reading: Acts 6:8-11

ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS...

- **Sunday Morning Bible Class:** Teachings from the Psalms
- **Wednesday Evening Bible Class: March 3rd at the building, 6:30pm-** we will continue studying Zechariah
- **Sojourners: Mike and Nadine Huddleston, Larry and Kay Little, Doug and Sandy Zimmerman and Dave and Kristy Bell** hope to be here the last week in June and the first two weeks in July.



NEWS

- **Rhonda says that Jerry is recovering well from Covid-19, for which we are thankful.**

Paul will be preaching today.



PRAYERS

- **Arthur's older brother Chris** who lives in Yorkshire, England has been diagnosed with early onset dementia. He has been cleared to begin taking medication to slow progression of his condition.
- **Pat Guthrie** has had lung cancer reoccur in his left lung. He has recently begun chemo. Please pray that he can go into remission once more.
- Pray for **Don Myers** of Elmore, AL. He is in constant pain from a back injury and reactions to the pain medication has caused him to have to give up his preaching duties.
- **José Rivera**, Molly's husband, has been laid off work until he can stabilize his blood sugar levels. Pray for him.
- Pray that **Darlene**, who still tests positive for Covid, can recover fully.
- Pray for **Linnett Short, a former coworker of Paul's**. She has asked for prayers because she has a severe bronchial infection, and she is afraid of cancer.
- Pray that **Dan Rowe**, who lives at Elderwood in Waverly, can receive visitors and leave the facility for visits soon so he can join us in worship. Also pray that Arthur can study the gospel with **Rick Stapleton** who lives near the church building.
- **Pray that we can make a decision about whether to continue livestreaming our worship services and if so, how in depth we want to go with the process.**

If you have any PRAYERS or NEWS that you would like included in the bulletin, please contact Sandy at barncat7237@gmail.com or text or call (607) 261-0911.