

Syria in ACTS 13:3 we read that those of the church of Antioch ...laid their hands on them, they sent them away. This was an expression of their agreement with God, their contract with God (if you will), that these two disciples would be blessed as they made their journey to points unknown for the purpose of spreading the good news concerning Jesus. In ACTS 14:3 we read how this request was answered, for it states this concerning Paul and Barnabas: ...they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

What we have seen in all of the above examples that the laying on of hands was symbolic in one way or another of showing that these believers were in agreement with God. By the laying on of hands in Jesus name many were healed. By the laying on of hands in Jesus name many received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Paul received the gift of the Holy Ghost after Ananias of Damascus laid his hands on him, and 1 CORINTHIANS 14:18 tells us in Paul's own words: *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all.*

The Apostle Paul after years of experience as an Apostle wrote the following Holy Ghost inspired advice unto the Apostle Timothy in 1 TIMOTHY 5:22 Lay hands suddenly {hastily} on no man,... and what we read in ACTS 19:6 is no exception to this rule. Paul got to know these disciples at Ephesus before he laid his hands upon them. Paul got acquainted with what they knew, and what they believed before he laid his hands upon them. Let's read our text again noting especially this time verse 6. ACTS 19:1 *And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.*

The Doctrine of Prophecy

This concludes our discussion of the doctrine of the laying on of hands, however let's examine a little further what has taken place here in verse 6. Paul laid his hands upon these twelve or so disciples for the purpose of them to receive the Holy Ghost, which they did as evidenced by their speaking in other tongues, and other languages, another New Testament doctrine we have already talked about. This was one of the signs that Jesus told his disciples of back in MARK 16. MARK 16:17 *And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;...* . {See again pages 481-484 of these notes}.

There is one more New Testament doctrine that was especially taught by Paul, and emphasized unto these dozen or so Ephesian disciples. Paul himself probably didn't realize this at first here at Ephesus, but I am sure the Lord was revealing certain things to Paul as he ran his race course. Paul would later write unto the Ephesian Saints this statement found in EPHESIANS 3:20 *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,*... and Paul, and these Ephesian disciples witnessed this very thing. Paul laid his hands upon these disciples for the purpose of them to receive the Holy Ghost, which they did as evidenced by their speaking in other tongues, and exceeding abundantly above that, these twelve or so disciples also received the gift of prophecy. The doctrine of the gift of prophesy is a New Testament doctrine especially taught by Paul.

The origins of the gift of prophecy date back to the time of Enoch, an Old Testament full overcomer found listed in HEBREWS 11. Recall that Enoch walked with God, and pleased God, because he was a man of faith, and a man who diligently sought God, (study HEBREWS 11:5 & 6). One day the spirit of the Lord (the Holy Ghost in other words) came mightily upon Enoch, and he prophesied these words found in JUDE. JUDE 1:14 *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the*

Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. There is no way that Enoch could have prophesied things yet future without the spirit of God mightily being upon him.

Moses too had several similar experiences. One is recorded for us in NUMBERS 11. In NUMBERS 11 we find the people of Israel, and the mixt multitude that was among them cried and complained unto Moses. Moses in turn cried unto the Lord and said in NUMBERS 11:14 *I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.* The Lord answers Moses request in NUMBERS 11:16 & 17 -- *And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. 17 And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.* Then we read in NUMBERS 11:24 & 25 *And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle. 25 And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.*

King Saul also prophesied as the Spirit of the Lord came upon him in 1 SAMUEL 10, which you can study for yourself. In all of these Old Testament examples we find that these were able to prophesy as the spirit of the Lord came upon them. In a similar vein the father of John the Baptist, Zacharias, was filled with the Holy Ghost in LUKE 1:67 and prophesied many things concerning our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ from LUKE 1:68-79.

The gift of prophecy really began to manifest itself in New Testament times on the day of Pentecost noted in ACTS 2. Recall after the Holy Ghost came upon them and they began to speak in other tongues on the day of Pentecost, that ACTS 2:11 records: *...we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.* These words essentially define what it is to prophecy, that is to hear in one's own language the wonderful works of God. Peter confirms this in his first sermon that also was preached on the day of Pentecost, stating in ACTS 2:14 *But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. 16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

The Apostle Paul expounds upon the gifts of the Holy Spirit in 1 CORINTHIANS chapters 12 through 14. In 1 CORINTHIANS 12 the Apostle Paul defines the different spiritual gifts. In 1 CORINTHIANS 13 the Apostle Paul proclaims the superiority of love to spiritual gifts, and admonishes that spiritual gifts be administered in love. In other words it is the love of Christ that is to be magnified in our lives, otherwise spiritual gifts come up empty. In 1 CORINTHIANS 14 the Apostle Paul expounds upon the gift of prophecy, and contrasts the gift of prophecy with speaking in tongues, explaining why each is important in it's own place. Let's look at some verse from 1 CORINTHIANS 14 a little closer.

Before we examine some verses from 1 CORINTHIANS 14 let me recall some teaching from Brother Hill, which makes this whole subject matter easier to understand. Speaking in tongues is the sign of being filled with the Holy Ghost, but if none of us know the unknown tongue, then we have no idea what is being said, except if there be

someone who can interpret this tongues message for us. Interpretation of tongues is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in 1 CORINTHIANS 12:10. Prophecy is another gift of the Holy Spirit mentioned in 1 CORINTHIANS 12:10. Prophecy is like an interpretation of tongues, only without the tongues, thus prophecy is spoken in the language we speak. In ACTS 2:6 & 7 & 11 we found that people from all over the world heard these Galilaeans speak in their own language the wonderful works of God. What was tongues to the Galilaeans was prophecy to those who understood what they were speaking.

This brings us to 1 CORINTHIANS 14, and the teaching of the Apostle Paul concerning this subject of prophecy. Let's cover the highlights. 1 CORINTHIANS 14:1 *Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. 2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. 3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. 4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. 5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.*

Note that the purpose of prophesying is to speak unto men words of edification, and words of exhortation, and words of comfort so that the church may receive edifying. Edify means to build up, and we find this word in one form or another eight times in 1 CORINTHIANS 14. The Apostle Paul expounds upon this thought of edification, and the difference between speaking in tongues and prophecy in this next portion of scripture from 1 CORINTHIANS 14.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:12 *Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. 13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret. 14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. 16 Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? 17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. 18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: 19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. ... 21 In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. 22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe. 23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? 24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: 25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.*

The Apostle Paul concludes his discussion on the difference between speaking in tongues and prophecy in this next portion of 1 CORINTHIANS 14 by stating in verse 40 -- *Let all things be done decently and in order.* Paul expounds on how to do this in the following verses.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:27 *If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. 28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. 29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. 30 If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. 31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. 32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. 33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. ...37 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. 38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. 39*

Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. 40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

Paul's Ministry Expands at Ephesus

ACTS 19:8 *And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. 9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. 10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. 11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.*

We have noted in our introduction to Ephesus {See page 477 of these notes} the fact that the church of Ephesus that was founded by the Apostle Paul, and established by the Apostle Paul, and grounded by Paul, and by other followers of the Apostle Paul. No other church founded by the Apostle Paul had so much help in learning Paul's doctrines. ACTS 20:31 further tells us in Paul's own words that he spent three years in Ephesus establishing the church at Ephesus. We find here in ACTS 19:9 and 10 that he spent two years in the school of one Tyrannus, which seems to be the main place that this church of Ephesus was founded. Additionally it is noted in Paul's own words again (found in ACTS 20:20 & 21) where this church of Ephesus was founded: "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Further we have noted in both ROMANS 16:3-5, and 1 CORINTHIANS 16:19 that there was a church in Ephesus in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, close associates, fellow students, and followers of the Apostle Paul. We do not read here in ACTS 19:8-12 of any so called mega-church here at Ephesus, and yet the fame of the Apostle Paul, and the church at Ephesus was such that in the space of two years all they that dwelt in Paul's Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks! {ACTS 19:10}.

Let's study the above verses a little closer. ACTS 19:8 *And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.* By now we know the pattern of the Apostle Paul was to go to the Jewish synagogue in every city he visited upon his arrival at that particular city. And ACTS 18:19 indeed tells us that this is exactly what the Apostle Paul did upon his first arriving at Ephesus. ACTS 18:19 *And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. ACTS 18:20 further tells us that: When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;...* However Paul has now returned to Ephesus, and has once again gone into the synagogue to reason with the Jews. Perhaps the twelve or so disciples that he has recently met with went with him, and may have been a part of that assembly themselves. We don't know this to be a fact for the scripture doesn't tell us one way or the other. One thing is clear however, Paul once again visited this Jewish synagogue as soon as he could upon his latest arrival here at Ephesus. And he was allowed to speak boldly at this synagogue for three months! That is a lot longer than he was allowed to stay in many previous cities that he visited.

There are three key words found in ACTS 19:8 that we will look at a little closer: the words "boldly," "disputing," and "persuading."

The word "boldly" as used in ACTS 19:8 is a verb that is used mostly in scripture in connection with the Apostle Paul that shows his boldness, and confidence, and his freedom of speech. This is the kind of boldness, and confidence, and freedom of speech that commonly comes out of the mouth of one full of the Holy Ghost, and it is the power of the Holy Ghost that can be felt in the ears of the hearer when such words are boldly spoken. In other words there is Divine Power behind these words that are Holy Ghost inspired, and spoken so boldly. The Greek verb that is used here, is parrhesiazomai {par-hray-see-ad'-zom-ahee}, number 3955 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and