

# Men's Discipleship

## False Religions: Seventh Day Adventist Part 4

### 1. Gift of Prophecy (Ellen G. White)

- **SDA teaching:** The Adventist beliefs affirm an ongoing prophetic gift: “One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. ... This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church, and it has been manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White” [szu.adventist.org](http://szu.adventist.org). They thus ascribe “prophetic authority” to Ellen White’s writings, though they also assert Scripture’s primacy.
- **Historic Protestant (WCF/LBCF):** Protestant confessions insist that divine revelation is *complete* in Scripture and that new direct revelations have ceased. The Westminster Confession teaches that “those former ways of God’s revealing his will unto his people” (e.g. speaking through prophets) “being now ceased” [thewestminsterstandard.org](http://thewestminsterstandard.org), and that “nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men” [thewestminsterstandard.org](http://thewestminsterstandard.org). In other words, God gave us the full canon, and claims of continuing prophecy must bow to the Bible’s authority (Isaiah 8:20).
- **Puritan commentary:** Puritan divines likewise warned against modern prophecy. Edmund Calamy (1708) insisted that any self-styled prophet who fails the test of Scripture’s truth is false: “When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not... the Lord hath not spoken... [you] shall not be afraid of him” [quintapress.webmate.me](http://quintapress.webmate.me) (see Deut. 18:22). False prophets will contradict Scripture, which “God cannot be charged with” [quintapress.webmate.me](http://quintapress.webmate.me). Classical and modern theologians viewed claims of new revelation with great suspicion, confining God’s voice to the written Word.
- **Biblical note:** The Bible warns that Satan and human error can produce counterfeit prophets (Matt. 7:15–20; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 19:10 says “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy,” but John adds “not to be rereleased until we prophecy,” indicating the book of Revelation completes prophecy. Historic Protestants cite 2 Tim. 3:16 17, John 16:13, and Heb. 1:1 2 to affirm that Scripture (now finished) is the final Word.

### The Nature of Revelation in Old vs. New Testament Prophecy

**Old Testament Prophecy:** Under the Old Covenant, prophecy was a primary means of *special revelation* by which God disclosed His will and redemptive plan. The prophets spoke with divine authority – often introducing themselves with “Thus says the Lord” – conveying both immediate guidance and future promises. Their messages included calls to repentance, warnings of judgment, and foretold the coming salvation through the Messiah. In Reformed thought, all Old Testament prophecy ultimately pointed forward to Christ. The “*Spirit of Christ*” was at work in the prophets, indicating “the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow” long before Jesus’s incarnation [hillcountrypca.org](http://hillcountrypca.org). In fact, “**the whole of Scripture is one grand prophecy**” centered on redemption, so that even when not explicitly predictive, every prophetic word in the

Old Testament somehow prepared the way for the gospel [sb.rfpa.org](http://sb.rfpa.org)[sb.rfpa.org](http://sb.rfpa.org). Old Testament prophets often communicated through *types, shadows, and symbolic visions* that veiled the full clarity of the gospel. Yet, their God-given revelations were **infallible** and authoritative, forming part of the progressive unveiling of God's covenant plan.

**New Testament Prophecy:** With the coming of Christ (the **ultimate Prophet** of God), revelation reached its climax (Heb. 1:1–2). New Testament prophecy centers on the open proclamation of Jesus's person and work. According to Reformed theologians, the **nature of prophecy** in the New Testament remains essentially the *same as the inspired revelation* in the Old, even as it becomes clearer and more widely distributed. On the day of Pentecost, Peter declared that Joel's prophecy had been fulfilled – God had poured out the Spirit so that “sons and daughters” would prophesy in the last days (Acts 2:16-18). This indicated a greater *scope* of prophecy under the New Covenant (no longer limited to a few select individuals), but not a lesser quality [sharperiron.org](http://sharperiron.org)[sharperiron.org](http://sharperiron.org). “*There is no indication... that the nature of NT prophecy will differ... from that of the OT,*” for Joel's audience would have understood it as “**special revelation in the fullest sense**”, just as authoritative and infallible as God's Word through Moses or Isaiah, [sharperiron.org](http://sharperiron.org). In other words, New Testament prophets, like the apostles, spoke *words inspired by the Spirit* that revealed God's redemptive truth about Christ. Paul confirms this continuity, teaching that the previously hidden “*mystery*” of Christ is now revealed “by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets” in the New Testament era [sharperiron.org](http://sharperiron.org). Thus, New Testament prophecy provided “**fresh redemptive revelation**” about the gospel, completing the once-for-all revelation in Christ [sharperiron.org](http://sharperiron.org)[sharperiron.org](http://sharperiron.org). Importantly, Protestant confessions affirm that with the completion of the apostolic age and the inscription of God's Word, *special revelation* through prophets has ceased. The Westminster Confession notes that “*those former ways of God's revealing His will unto His people [have] now ceased*” [thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org), underscoring that Scripture is the final, sufficient record of God's prophetic word in the New Covenant.

## “The Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy” – Understanding Revelation 19:10

Towards the end of the New Testament, we encounter this profound statement: “*For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*” (Rev. 19:10). Protestant interpreters take this to mean that **the ultimate purpose and essence of all prophecy is to bear witness to Jesus Christ** [thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org). In other words, the “*spirit*” (core) of true prophetic revelation – in every age – is the testimony about who Jesus is and what He has done. Major Reformed theologians emphasize the **continuity** signaled by this verse: from Genesis to Revelation, the many prophetic voices form one chorus, and the theme of their song is the person and work of the Savior. As the Reformed Study Bible note puts it, “The purpose of all prophecy...is to tell about Jesus” ([biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)). The Apostle Peter said much the same when he wrote that the Old Testament prophets were serving New Testament believers, “*preaching the good news*” in advance, because the Spirit of

Christ in them pointed to Christ's sufferings and subsequent glory (1 Peter 1:10-12). On this point, Reformed expositors see **strong continuity**: the Old Testament prophetic message and the New Testament gospel proclamation share the same "*testimony of Jesus*." The Prophets anticipated Him; the Apostles announced His arrival; and in both cases, the Holy Spirit was testifying to Jesus. As one commentary explains, "*all genuine prophecy is organically linked to the person and work of Christ. His life, ministry, death, and resurrection stand at the center of biblical revelation – fulfilling ancient promises and ensuring future hope*" [biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com). Thus, Revelation 19:10 is practically a motto for a Christ-centered understanding of Scripture: **every prophet's words, rightly understood, direct us to Christ** [biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com).

At the same time, Protestant theologians note how this verse guards against **discontinuity** errors. For instance, any claim to prophetic authority that does *not* exalt Christ or deviates from the apostolic testimony of Jesus is, by definition, not of the Holy Spirit. The angel's reminder to John ("Worship God!") and the explanatory phrase ("for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy") together emphasize that neither angels nor human prophets are the focus of our faith – Jesus is. True prophecy, whether in Isaiah's day or in John's vision at Patmos, never draws attention to the prophet himself or to novel doctrine, but to **Jesus's glory and gospel**. In the context of Revelation 19, the "brethren" of John who *hold to the testimony of Jesus* are those exercising the prophetic gift by proclaiming Christ. The Reformed tradition has often applied this by saying that **the canon of Scripture – the Bible as a whole – is the comprehensive "testimony of Jesus," and thus the very spirit (essence) of all prophetic revelation**. This reinforces the belief that with the closure of the canon, we have the complete prophetic testimony God intends for the church. Contemporary commentators argue that *if* someone were to claim a prophecy today, it could only be valid in a *derivative* sense – i.e., insofar as it conforms to and exalts the finished testimony of Christ in Scripture. Any so-called prophecy that does not point to Jesus or that adds to the finished gospel is not animated by the Spirit of prophecy spoken of in Revelation 19:10. In sum, the verse is read as a **capstone on the continuity between Old and New Testaments**: it reveals that the one Holy Spirit, across all ages, had a single driving purpose in inspiring the prophets – namely, to bear witness to the saving lordship of Jesus. As the 19th-century theologian Patrick Fairbairn wrote, "*The old and new dispensations are one in their grand design – one in Christ. The testimony of Jesus is the soul of prophecy, the living principle that pervades the whole*". All prophecy, therefore, lives to magnify Christ. This Christocentric focus unites the prophetic ministry of Moses, David, Isaiah, Peter, Paul, John, and every true messenger of God. It is a continuity of the message that showcases God's **one plan of redemption** from promise to fulfillment.