

PROPHECY IN THE REFORMATION TRADITION

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By the Reformation tradition this study means to denote that movement within Christ's Church of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which was based on the recognition of the Bible as the unique, complete and authoritative Word of God, sufficient for all matters of the Christian life and doctrine. This recognition of the sufficiency of Scripture came with the firm conviction that, after the apostles and prophets had laid the foundation for the Christian Church, the canon of Scripture was forever closed. The present article concerns the question whether this conviction leaves room for the possibility of post-canonical prophecy as a form of revelation that is subordinate to God's revelation in the Scriptures.

It is not the purpose of this article to answer the question raised, but rather to investigate how some of the leading theologians in the Reformation tradition have answered this question. Somewhat anachronistically we will begin with Augustine, not only because he was among the first post-canonical theologians to clearly formulate the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture, but also because of his great influence on Reformation theologians. From Augustine we move to Martin Luther, who based his call to Reformation on the unique authority of Scripture. Next we will look at the views of John Calvin, as representing the early Reformed approach, and of William Perkins, who taught most of the Westminster Divines. We will study the works of George Gillespie as one who represented the Divines, and then turn to John Owen, who is credited with the first comprehensive theology of the Holy Spirit. It should be noted that these authors were selected on the basis of their attention to the matter at hand, and the availability of their works, and not because they favoured a particular viewpoint.

Augustine of Hippo.

We will begin with Augustine because he, more than any other early theologian, was used by the Reformers to guide them in their development of the Reformation doctrines. Polman has demonstrated that the doctrines of the necessity, perspicuity and sufficiency of

Scripture can all be found in the works of Augustine.¹ In rejecting the claims of mystics to a direct revelation from God Augustine firmly taught that the Scriptures contain "all matters that concern faith and the manner of life".² Polman's studies also show that Augustine recognised the role of the Holy Spirit in illuminating God's Word.³ In this way Augustine anticipated the Reformation emphasis on the unity of Word and Spirit.

Yet there is also another strain in the writings of Augustine. In his *Confessions* he describes how he came to conversion because he heard a voice like a child's which sang: *Tolle lege*, "take up and read." He explains that, since he could not think of any song or game where these words occur, he took the words to be a message from God himself. Taking up his Bible he was brought to repentance and faith in the Lord.

Throughout the rest of his life Augustine remained open to the idea of prophetic leading by means of dreams, visions and voices. At one time he desired to lay a question before a monk named John, who was gifted in the discernment of spirits, and to whom he also attributed various prophecies.⁴ But here we must keep in mind that, for Augustine, such an approach did not amount to seeking a further leading of the Holy Spirit, for he held to the popular belief that such prophets were guided by angelic spirits. Prophecies from such sources were believed to be much more limited in their authority than God's infallible word. Any vision, revelation or prophecy of this nature was therefore always subject to testing, to see if the prophetic spirit was of God.⁵

Martin Luther.

In his defence before the Diet of Worms Luther stated:

Unless I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture or evident reason ... I am bound by the scriptural authorities cited by me,

¹*De Doctrina Christiana*, II, 14. Cited from A.D.R. Polman, *The Word of God According to St. Augustine* (London: Hoddon and Stoughton, 1961), 66-74.

²Cited from Polman, 73.

³*Ibid.*, 154-159

⁴F. Van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop* (New York: Harper, 1961), 535.

⁵More recently E. Earle Ellis has again suggested that "the spirits of the pneumatics, the inspired speakers, are in fact angelic powers." In *Prophecy and Hermeneutics* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1978), p. 27, cited in T.L. Wilkinson, "Tongues and Prophecy in Acts and 1st Corinthians", *Vox Reformata* 31, Nov. 1978, 14.

and my conscience is captive to the Word of God; I will recant nothing and cannot do so, since it is neither safe nor honest to do ought against conscience. Here I stand! I can do no other! God help me. Amen.

With these words Luther firmly set the Reformation on a course which recognised only one fully authoritative standard for God's people: the Word of God. In doing so Luther rejected two other claims to authority that had grown in importance since the days of St. Augustine, the traditions of the Church and the words of the Pope. The renunciation of these false authorities was summed up in the Reformation slogan, *Sola Scriptura*.

As the Protestant Reformation developed Luther found it necessary to denounce the claim to a further alternative to God's authoritative leading: direct communications from the Holy Spirit. Various "enthusiast" movements, many of them of an Anabaptist variety, claimed to be led directly by the Spirit of God. Against this the Wittenberg theologians replied that "God gives no one his Spirit or grace except through or with the external Word" (*Augsburg Confession*, Art. XVIII.). This view was elaborated by Luther himself in his *Smalcald Articles* where he explained:

In these matters which concern the external, spoken Word, we must hold firmly to the conviction that God gives no one his Spirit or grace except through or with the external Word which comes before. Thus we shall be protected from the enthusiasts - that is, from the spiritualists who boast that they possess the Spirit without and before the Word and who therefore judge, interpret, and twist the Scriptures or Spoken Word according to their pleasure. (Part III, Art. VIII)

Thus, from the beginning, the Protestant Reformation followed Augustine in his teaching of the unity of Word and Spirit.⁶ Later Lutheran theologians sought to make the bond between the Word and the Spirit even stronger by insisting that the Spirit came *in* the Word (*in verbo*), and not just *through* the Word (*per verbum*).⁷ In other words, not only was there no Spirit apart from the Word, but neither was there the Word apart from the Spirit. Reformed theologians rejected this formulation, both because it did not do justice to their conception of the

⁶Note that in the *Apology to the Confession of Augsburg*, written the year after the *Augsburg Confession*, Melancton backs up the article cited above with a reference to Augustine.

⁷Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (London: Banner of Truth, 1958), 611.

freedom of God's Spirit and because it lent support to the Lutheran view that the Spirit's application of the God's grace was resistible. They preferred the formulation that the Spirit came *with* the Word (*cum verbo*).

John Calvin

John Calvin also saw the leading of God's Spirit in terms of the illumination of God's Word. He regarded the testimony of the Spirit as a persuasive confirmation of, rather than an addition to, the inscripturated Word of God. It is the Holy Spirit who both convinces man of the authority of God's Word and enables man to give heed to it:

For as God alone can properly bear witness to his own words, so these words will not obtain full credit in the hearts of men, until they are sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. (*Institutes*, I, vii, 4)

Like Augustine and Luther, Calvin stressed the unity of Word and Spirit. Commenting on Is. 30:1, where the Lord speaks out against those who ignore his Word and Spirit, Calvin writes:

Let it be observed that two things are here connected, the word and the spirit of God, in opposition to fanatics, who aim at oracles and hidden revelations without the word. (*Commentary on Isaiah*, 347)⁸

In other writings, too, the reformer takes firm issue with the enthusiasts. Denouncing those who claimed that they were directly led by the Spirit of God Calvin writes:

... whatever delusions Satan suggests to them, they presumptuously set forth as secret revelations from the Spirit. Such are the Libertines, and other furies of that stamp. (*Commentary on Galatians and Ephesians*, 299)

The "fanatics", "libertines" and "other furies of that stamp" John Calvin was faced with were the same sects that the Lutherans opposed in their confessions. Such groups not only claimed the inner leading of the Holy Spirit, but professed to have all the spectacular gifts of the Spirit. With respect to such claims Calvin comments:

⁸All references to Calvin's commentaries are from the Eerdmans edition (Grand Rapids, 1955)

It is notorious that the Gifts of the Spirit, which were then [in apostolic times] given by the laying on of hands, some time after ceased to be conferred. Whether this was owing to the ingratitude of the world, or because the doctrine of the Gospel had already been sufficiently distinguished by miracles of nearly an hundred years, is of no consequence to the present subject. [*Tracts* III, 290]

In view of the above it is perhaps surprising that Calvin is not prepared to fully include the gift of prophecy among those gifts that have passed away. Calvin held that the more extraordinary gift of predictive prophecy was no longer in evidence.⁹ But he also distinguishes another form of prophecy, the forth-telling of God's Word, and this is a gift which he believed continued in the church today. In commenting on the gifts mentioned in Rom. 12:6 Calvin observes:

Hence prophecy at this day in the Christian Church is hardly anything else than the right understanding of Scripture, and the peculiar faculty of explaining it, in as much as all the ancient prophecies and all the oracles of God have been completed in Christ and his gospel. (*Romans*, 460, cf. 269)

For Calvin prophecy in this sense is an ordinary gift, for he continues:

And it does not appear that Paul intended here to mention those miraculous graces by which Christ at first rendered illustrious his gospel, but, on the contrary, we find that he refers only to ordinary gifts, such as were to continue perpetually in the Church.

A point worth noting here is that Calvin interprets the qualification that one gifted to prophesy must do so "in proportion to his faith" to mean that his explanation must be in conformity to the faith, i.e. "the first principles of religion."¹⁰

Very similar explanations of the gift of prophecy are given in Calvin's commentaries on First Corinthians and Ephesians. In commenting on Eph. 5:19 Calvin explains, "Let, therefore, prophecy, in this passage, be understood as meaning - *interpretation of Scripture properly applied*,

⁸ Elsewhere Calvin writes: "God does not at this day predict hidden events; but he would have us to be satisfied with the Gospel." [*Commentary on Jeremiah* III, 372,373]

¹⁰ *Commentary on Romans*, 461.

according to the time, persons, and things present."¹¹ He adds that "the Spirit of God illumines chiefly by doctrines."¹²

While Calvin clearly links the extraordinary gifts with the extraordinary offices which were present during the foundational years of the church, he nevertheless is reluctant to fully limit the exercise of these offices and gifts to that period of the church's history. Commenting on the offices of apostles, prophets and evangelists he wrote:

The Lord raised up the other three [apostles, prophets and evangelists] at the beginning of his kingdom, and still occasionally raises them up when the necessity of the time requires. . . those three functions were not instituted in the Church to be perpetual, but only to endure so long as churches were to be formed where none previously existed, or at least where churches were to be transferred from Moses to Christ; although I deny not, that afterward God occasionally raised up Apostles, or at least Evangelists, in their stead, as has been done in our time. For such were needed to bring back the Church from the revolt of Antichrist. The office I nevertheless call extraordinary, because it has no place in churches duly constituted. (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV, iii, 4)

In writing about the presence of the prophetic office in his own time Calvin observes that either "none such now exist, or they are less manifest." In other words, Calvin does not know of any such prophets, but he does not rule out the possibility that they might be there. (Later we will see that George Gillespie appeals to this passage in Calvin's writings to defend his view on the continuation of prophecy.)

William Perkins

Many of those who became known as the Westminster Divines had their theological training under William Perkins. Perkins built on the teachings of John Calvin and advanced the cause of Reformed theology through his lectures at Cambridge. He influenced not only the churches in Britain, but also those on the continent, where his books were widely read. He continued in the high view of Scripture which saw the Bible as the only normative and sufficient guide for Christian life

¹¹ *Commentary on Ephesians*, 299; the italicised is taken from the French translation given as a footnote.

¹² *Ibid.*

and doctrine. Commenting on Gal. 3:8 he observes that the Scripture authors wrote "*all the counsell of God*", and adds:

This being granted (which is a certain truth) two maine conclusions follow: One, that the Scriptures alone by themselves, without any other word, are *abundantly sufficient to salvation*, whether we regard doctrines of faith, or manners. For he that delivers any doctrine out[side] of them, & beside them, as necessary to be believed, is accursed. The second conclusion is, that unwritten Traditions, if they be tendered to us, as a part of God's word, and as necessarie to salvation, they are *abominations*, because they are doctrines beside the Gospel that *Paul* preached. (Original spelling and emphasis)¹³

Perkins was not against tradition as such, but against presenting tradition "as necessary to be believed." There is no contradiction, therefore, in Perkins' recognition of the value of tradition for a better understanding of God's will. What is important is that one should identify the "right tradition," i.e. the tradition that stretches back to Christ and the Apostles. For Perkins this tradition is not to be identified with the inscripturated Word of God, rather it serves to interpret Scripture. Nor is it to be identified with the mere word of man, since it has its source in Christ. Right tradition has its origin in both divine and human sources:

. . . the doctrine of the Church in Sermons, and the decrees of councils, is both the word of God and the word of man: The word of God, as it agrees with the writings of the Apostles and Prophets: the word of man, as it is defective, and as it is propounded in termes devised by man.¹⁴

Perkins' concept of the *right tradition* stands very close to his concept of *prophecy*, as this comes to expression in the public ministry of the pastor. He regarded prophecy as revelation which had its source in Christ, but had an admixture of the words of men in a way that brings out the meaning of Scripture without adding to it or contradicting it:

Prophecy (or Prophecying) is a publike and solemne speech of the Prophet, pertaining to the worship of God, and the salvation of our neighbour. . . . There are two parts of Prophecy,

¹³William Perkins, *The Works of that Famous and Worthy Minister of Christ in the Universitie of Cambridge, the Second Volume* (London: John Legatt, 1631), 167

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 159.

Preaching the Word and Conceiving of Prayers. . . . And every Prophet is partly the voyce of God, to wit, in preaching; and partly the voyce of the people, in the act of praying.¹⁵

Like Calvin, Perkins distinguished between ordinary and extraordinary gifts and offices. The ordinary gift of prophecy was expressed in the preaching of the Word. The extraordinary gift of prophecy was expressed by those who had direct inspiration:

Revelation is two-fold: One ordinary, the other extraordinary. Ordinary is, when Christ teacheth men by the word preached, and by his Spirit. In this sense the holy Ghost is called *the Spirit of Revelation*, Eph. 1.17. Extraordinary is without the word preached, and that in foure ways. First by voice, . . . second by dreames, . . . third is vision, . . . The fourth is instinct, when God teacheth by inward motion and inspiration.¹⁶

Perkins' distinction between those having extraordinary revelation and those having ordinary revelation is paralleled in his distinction between those who have an extraordinary calling and those who have an ordinary calling to ministry. The extraordinary calling came directly from God, and was given to those who those who received God's immediate revelation. This method of call was more typical of the apostolic period. The ordinary calling comes through the mediacy of men, i.e. the church. While the ordinary call is the norm today, Perkins nevertheless believed that God might continue to call men in an extraordinary manner in situations where the church has become apostate. Such a call might come by way of an "immediate voice", or an angelic or human messenger of God, or by instinct (an internal voice). While the implication is that those thus called have some special gift of prophecy, Perkins stops short of stating so. He does say that where such an "extraordinary teacher" was in evidence he was to be ordained "as other ordinary ministers."¹⁷

In summary we can say that Perkins continued in the Augustinian tradition which recognised the unity of Word and Spirit: "the Spirit works in, and by the word of God"¹⁸. He limits direct inspiration to those who had a direct calling from God, and regards this as typical of the

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 646, cf. 159

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 172.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 171.

¹⁸ William Perkins, *The Works* ..., 325.

apostolic period. Nevertheless he follows Calvin in maintaining that God may yet make use of the extraordinary offices in extraordinary circumstances. Moreover, where such a call to an extraordinary office is extended it comes directly from God by extraordinary means.

George Gillespie

George Gillespie came out of the much persecuted covenanter tradition of Scotland. Since the Lord had used John Knox to bring the Reformed faith to his people the Scottish church had known no peace. Many a Scot died a martyr's death, and many others were continually in flight trying to elude their persecutors. In these trying circumstances God constantly showed himself to be near to his people, sometimes helping them and encouraging them in a very direct manner. There are numerous accounts of miraculous escapes, many of which are attributed to dreams, visions and prophecies received by those who were persecuted.¹⁹

Not all prophecies were given to allow people to escape the enemy. Some prophecies did no more than predict the martyrdom of God's saints. These were given to remind the people that God was in control, no matter how bleak the situation. Thus there is a well documented tradition that at the ordination of Richard Cameron, in the Scottish Church at Rotterdam, it was prophesied that he would lose his head in the service of his Lord, and that his head would be exposed to sun and moon. Years later this "Lion of the Covenant" was decapitated, and his head was placed on the city gate for all to see.²⁰

George Gillespie makes direct reference to these kinds of events when he addresses the matter of prophecy. He writes:

And now, having the occasion, I must say it, to the glory of God, there were in the church of Scotland, both in the time of our first Reformation, and after the Reformation, such extraordinary men as were more than ordinary pastors and teachers, even holy prophets receiving extraordinary revelations from God, and foretelling divers strange and remarkable things, which did

¹⁹See, for example, D.C. MacNicol, *Robert Bruce, Minister in the Kirk of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1961) and the books listed in the footnote following.

²⁰See John Howie, *The Scots Worthies* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, n.d.), 423, 424; and J.K. Hewison, *The Covenanters* (Glasgow: John Smith and Son, 1913), 326.

accordingly come to pass punctually, to the great admiration of all who knew the particulars. Such were Mr Wishart the martyr, Mr Knox the reformer, also Mr John Welsh, Mr John Davidson, Mr Robert Bruce, Mr Alexander Simpson, Mr Fergusson and others. . . . [A]lthough such prophets be extraordinary, and but seldom raised up in the church, yet such there have been, I dare say, not only in the primitive times, but amongst our first reformers and others; and upon what scripture can we pitch for such extraordinary prophets, if not upon those scriptures which are applied by some to the prophesying brethren, or gifted church members?²¹

Gillespie's closing statement here is aimed against those "independents" who would interpret the prophesying in passages like 1 Cor. 12:28; 14 and Eph. 4:11 as speaking of a gift of preaching exhibited by those who were not ordained to the preaching office (p. 27).²² In contrast Gillespie maintains that these passages speak of "extraordinary prophets, immediately and extraordinarily inspired by the Holy Ghost, and that they are to be reckoned among these other administrations which were not to continue, or be ordinary in the church".²³ The latter statement would appear to contradict Gillespie's claims that he knew of prophets in his own days. However, it is clear that Gillespie only means to indicate that the office of the prophet was not a *perpetual* office in the church. On this point he appeals to John Calvin, who wrote that the Lord, who raised the extraordinary offices for the beginning of his kingdom, "still occasionally raises them up when the necessity of the times requires".²⁴

While Gillespie believed the prophets to be directly inspired by God's Spirit, he also held that they needed to be tested because they were fallible in reproducing their prophecies. At times they mingled their own human insights with the divine message. Thus the prophets who foretold Paul's impending imprisonment in Jerusalem added their own fallible advice that Paul should refrain from travelling to that city.²⁵ No doubt this was one of the reasons why Gillespie, together with the other authors of the Confession, insisted that no word of prophecy could be added to the Scriptures. The Bible was unique not only because of its contents, but also because it alone was infallibly inscripturated.

²¹ *The Works of George Gillespie*, vol. 2, (Edmonton: Still Waters Revival Books, 1991), 30.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 27.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 39. Cited from John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV, iii, 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 35

However, as far as Gillespie was concerned, the inscripturation of God's Word and the closure of the canon did not preclude the possibility that God continues to give prophetic guidance in extraordinary situations through the words of present day prophets.

John Owen

The Puritan John Owen is sometimes recognised as the first theologian to have published a comprehensive study on the person and work of Holy Spirit. He wrote three books on the subject, and according to Abraham Kuyper, these books have remained unsurpassed.²⁶ Owen's views on the gifts of the Spirit continue to find a wide following in Reformed theology today.

As a Congregationalist Owen fully subscribed to those Westminster articles which dealt with the sufficiency of Scripture.²⁷ He strongly opposed claims to a continuing revelation, especially as this was taught in Roman Catholicism. Owen argued that direct revelation belonged to the *extraordinary* gifts of the Holy Spirit which were given to those who held an *extraordinary* office of the church. Since the *extraordinary* officers were directly appointed by Christ or his apostles, these offices, together with the gifts associated with them, ceased with the passing of the first generation of Christians.

Owen did not fully include the gift of prophecy with the *extraordinary* gifts. For him the gift continued on in the preaching ministry today, both by those ordained to the preaching office, and some outside it. Commenting on the Scripture's use of the term *prophecy* he wrote:

But the names of *prophets* and *prophecy* are used variously in the New Testament: for, -1. Sometimes an *extraordinary office* and *extraordinary gifts* are signified by them; and 2. Sometimes *extraordinary gifts* only; and 3. Sometimes an *ordinary office* with *ordinary gifts*, and sometimes *ordinary gifts* only. And unto one of these heads may the use of the word be everywhere reduced.²⁸

²⁶A. Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, "Preface of the Author".

²⁷On these points the *Savoy Declaration* of the Congregationalists are identical to the Westminster confession. For Owen's views on the sufficiency of Scripture see *The Works of John Owen* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1965), vol. 14, pp. 243-257.

²⁸*The Works of John Owen*, vol. 3, p. 451.

As examples of these various categories he mentions Agabus as representing the prophetic office. The second category is represented by the daughters of Phillip and those mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:28 and 14:29-33. They had "revelations from the Holy Ghost occasionally," but did not hold to any office. Gifted preachers, as mentioned in Rom. 12:6, and Eph. 4:7, represent the third category, and this category continues on today.

Yet Owen was unwilling to conclude that the recognition that God gives *ordinary* gifts today implied the end of all divine miraculous activity. For he continued,

It is not unlikely but that God might on some occasions, for a longer season, put forth his power in some miraculous operations; and so he yet may do, and perhaps doth sometimes. . . . [A]lthough all these gifts and operations ceased in some respects, some of them absolutely, and some of them as to the immediate manner of communication and degree of excellency; yet so far as the edification of the church was concerned in them, something that is *analogous* unto them was and is continued.²⁹

Conclusion

While it is clear that all the men we studied were firmly committed to the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture, none of them was prepared to rule out the possibility of some kind of prophecy continuing after the close of the biblical canon. But here we must keep in mind that there was no agreement about the nature of such prophecy as might still occur today.

We saw that Augustine attributed such prophecies as occurred in his time to the work of angelic spirits, whether good or evil. He regarded such prophecies as inferior to the divine revelation of Scripture, and in need of testing by God's Word. None of the Reformation leaders appear to have followed this interpretation of prophecy, although all followed Augustine in his high view of Scripture.

We also noted that the Reformation leaders built on Augustine's doctrine of illumination, insisting that the Spirit speaks to man through God's written Word. But whereas Lutheran theologians tied the Word

²⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 475.

and Spirit together by insisting that the Spirit is present *in* the word, Reformed theologians rejected this formulation as not doing justice to the freedom of God's Spirit, and insisted that the Spirit came *with* the Word.

Since Calvin we find, therefore, a recognition among Reformed theologians that the Holy Spirit does not always work according to the norm, that is, according to ordinary channels. Calvin makes the distinction between ordinary gifts, given to those holding ordinary offices, and extraordinary gifts, given to those holding the extraordinary offices of Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists. While on the one hand he holds that the extraordinary gifts and offices belonged to apostolic times, he nevertheless maintains that such offices and gifts may again be used of God "as time requires".

Perkins and Gillespie follow Calvin's lead in counting the extraordinary offices and the gifts associated with them as belonging to the foundational stages rather than the perpetual order the Church. Yet they, too, are open to God's use of extraordinary methods in extraordinary times. Gillespie goes so far as to identify the turmoil of the Reformation in Scotland with such extraordinary times, and gives various examples of the gift of prophecy being exercised by men he has known.

In the works of John Owen we see the fullest development of another thought that was present with Calvin, Perkins and Gillespie, namely that the gift of prophecy could be recognised in the ability of some preachers to make God's word relevant to the people. It is Owen who most clearly elucidates that the word "prophecy" covers a number of different meanings in Scripture, explaining that today the gift of prophecy is no longer present with the degree of excellency it had in the time of the apostles. But if God's people no longer have the same excellency of gifts displayed in apostolic times, Owen rejects the view that this implies that God has ceased his own miraculous works on earth.

In closing we note that all the Reformation scholars we consulted were firmly committed to the closure of the canon and the unity of Word and Spirit. While this led them to reject the claims to direct divine revelation made by the enthusiasts, none of them was prepared to say that all prophecy of any kind had ceased since apostolic times. All agreed that prophets did not belong to the perpetual offices of the church. However, some maintained that God might raise up prophets in extraordinary

circumstances even today. Others held that the prophetic office had ceased, and that only a form of the prophetic gift continued on today. Where the continuation of such a gift was recognised it was mostly, but not exclusively, linked to the preaching office.