

PROPHECY – WHAT IS IT?

1. PROPHECY IS A GIFT FROM GOD

“There are different kinds of gifts but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working but the same God works all of them in all men.

*Now to each the manifestation of the spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another message of knowledge by means of the same spirit, to another faith by the same spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one spirit, another miraculous powers, **to another prophecy**, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. **All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.**” (1 Corinthians 12:11)*

To prophesy means to be a yielded vessel through whom God, by His Holy Spirit, will speak. A prophet or prophetically anointed person is a spokesperson for God in as much as they surrender to God’s Spirit speaking through them. This may involve foretelling the future (which we do so in the Spirit of Truth who guides us into all truth. *“He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.” John 16:13*), speaking of the past or speaking into the present. It may involve interpretation of a dream or vision; it may include speaking a word of knowledge or a word of wisdom.

Whatever way God uses us to prophesy we must learn to operate in our gift in Grace. We don’t have to strive to perform or produce anything because prophecy is a gift that flows from God to and through His children. It is God who confers the gift and through the Holy Spirit it flow to and through believers. The bible teaches us that God’s gifting and calling are irrevocable *Romans 11:29*

Operate in your gift in joy! 😊

2. THE OFFICE OF PROPHET IS ONE OF THE FIVE GOVERNMENTAL MINISTRY GIFTS JESUS GAVE TO THE CHURCH AT HIS ASCENSION

“But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.” Ephesians 4:8

*“It was he who gave some to be apostles, **some to be prophets**, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare god’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-13*

Not all are prophets (i.e. in the office of prophet), however the Bible teaches us in the last day that **all may prophesy**:

*“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. **Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.**” Acts 2:17, 18*

It is no coincidence that the Bible teaches about Holy Spirit gifts, then love, then operating in one's gift of prophecy. It is a beautiful sandwich of love, clearly outlining that character is every bit as important as anointing. Take time to read the following three chapters: *1 Corinthians 12, 13, 14*

MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS FROM FATHER

When we prophesy, we exercise faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 12 details some of the motivational gifts from Father and gives us the instruction to operate in faith as we prophesy:

*“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. **If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.** If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage, if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.” Romans 12:6-8*

Faith and love should co-labour in us as we prophesy:

*“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. **Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.**” Romans 12:9*

“Let no debt remain outstanding except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law ... Romans 13:8

Gifts are given at birth and you can operate in your gift all the time by God's grace. Please remember that all things flow from the Father's love

REMEMBER CHRIST'S LOVELY NATURE AS YOU OPERATE IN YOUR GIFT

Jesus sacrifice on the Cross of Calvary released your gift. It is costly! As you learn to operate in the gift of prophecy, it should reflect the beautiful nature and character of Christ.

3. GOD WANTS US TO EAGERLY DESIRE THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

*“and **eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy**” 1 Corinthians 14:1b*

It's ok to want to prophesy! In 1st Timothy Chapter 3, we learn that one may desire to be an overseer. *“If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task.”*(v1) Acting upon Godly desire leads us into fulfilment of our Kingdom destiny.

THE FUNCTION OF NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECY

*“But everyone who **prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.**” 1 Corinthians 14:3*

Apostle Paul lays some foundations in functioning in the gift of prophecy in a New Testament context, teaching that the gift of prophecy is to strengthen, bring encouragement and comfort. Prophecy also releases blessings, breaks yokes and looses divine destiny. In this particular passage of Scripture Apostle Paul places a greater emphasis on prophecy than tongues (see verse 2). We see from Paul's three-fold directive that the gift of prophecy is given to build up the church so that the church will be a blessing to the world.

ORDER IN PROPHESYING

There should be Godly order in prophesying i.e. one at a time and with biblical testing of what comes forth

*"Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should **weigh carefully** what is said. And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop. **For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged.** The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace." 1 Corinthians 14:29-32*

DESIRE TO PROPHECY RATHER THAN BE PROPHESED OVER

Prophecy is a servant ministry. Operate in your gift with a heart to serve and bless the church and the lost. Let your heart cry remain, "Lord, don't let me harm the body."

*"Now to each one **the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.**" 1 Corinthians 12:7*

4. THE ANOINTING TO PROPHECY FLOWS OUT OF LOVE

Be rooted and established in love (Ephesians 3:17)

Build each other up in love

"From him [Christ] the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." Ephesians 4:1 (Emphasis mine)

Live a Life of Love

*"Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and **live a life of love**, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Ephesians 5:1, 2*

Follow the way of Love (1 Corinthians 14:1a)

God's love in our hearts enables us to walk in humility in His authority

Without love we are nothing (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

CHECK YOUR MOTIVATION – LOVE WILL BE THE BAROMETER

- If you want to grow in your gift, purpose to grow in God's love
- Balance – Find the right balance in moving in anointing with rest and intimacy.
- Prophetic people ought to be worshippers and those who enjoy God's word and spending time in prayer and fellowship with Him. The bible will transform your prayer and prophecy language
- Watch your attitude – if you deliver harsh, judgemental words, it may be an indication that you may need healing in your own life.
- Sensitivity – don't be oversensitive. All prophetic people have sensitive 'spiritual DNA' and this needs to be honed to separate flesh from the Spirit. God will permit rejection in your life to grow you up in grace. It is a normal part of the training of a prophetic person. It may be painful, but it helps develop our character to be more Christ like. Don't dwell on past pains. Get healed from your hurt and the Lord will use you to heal others
- Accountability – prophetic people need to be accountable to leaders and they also need to be in fellowship in a local church
- Practise prophesying - God wants to edify and bless His bride and the prophetic gift is part of the blessing.

5. EVANGELISM IS A FRUIT OF PROPHECY!

“But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, ‘God is really among you!’” 1 Corinthians 14:24, 25

The Spirit of Jesus brings conviction and convinces us of our need of His grace and forgiveness. The Lord can use the gift of prophecy to reach non-believers. When we use the gift of prophecy over non-believers it is called prophetic evangelism.

“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord, will be saved.” Acts 2:17-21

6. LEARN TO TEST PROPHETIC WORDS BUT DO NOT DESPISE THEM

“Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.” 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

DEFILED/FALSE WORD

Sometimes when a person is learning to prophesy they may make a mistake and prophesy only in part, what was on God's heart. Or a person may need healing and/or deliverance and if this is the case then the word they deliver will be filtered

through their personal pain, wounding or sin. This causes a distortion of what God wanted to say and may be a source of defilement. In such a case a believer may need a cleansing prayer to release them from the effects of such a prophetic word that is either a mixture of the Holy Spirit and/or flesh or word that is totally false and demonic in origin. The Bible teaches we are not to condemn prophecy. Rather we are to test it, accept what we believe is from the Holy Spirit and walk in the fruit of that word.

God wants to heal the church from emotional baggage and heal people who have been wounded by a prophetic word that may have been defiled

BE DISCERNING – WHEN A PROPHETIC WORD COMES FORTH, NOT DESTRUCTIVE OR DISAPPROVING!

- Don't move in suspicion
- Do not move in fear
- It's not a guessing game; use the gift of discernment

IT'S ABOUT GETTING THE COUNSEL OF GOD

"Do not interpretations belong to God" Genesis 40:8

1 Timothy 4:1 states that in the latter times some will abandon the faith and following deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. We need to be able to discern what is true from what is false/defiled. We must use Scripture, and the counsel of the Holy Spirit and church elders to discern holy from unholy.

There are three possible sources of revelation

- Holy Spirit
- Demonic spirit
- Self

Don't prophesy your own opinion. Ensure you have received inner healing from any past trauma. Never minister out of need, greed, hurt or envy.

Here are some practical suggestions to help you to test a prophetic word.

A prophetic word from the Holy Spirit will:

- Flow from Father
- Exalt Jesus
- Display the nature/character of God
- Line up with Scripture
- Bear witness in your spirit
- Will produce good fruit in the prophet's life and in other people's lives

7. THE CHURCH IS BROKEN AND GOD IS GOING TO USE THE PROPHETIC MINISTRY TO HEAL HER

The prophetic ministry is to bring restoration not devastation.

- If you have received a word that has wounded you, forgive the person who gave the word

- Keep what (if any) is from God (acc to 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21)
- Ask the Lord to heal/deliver you from the effects of the defiled word

It can take time for a prophetic word to come to pass. Do not be passive but engage in prayer and “war” for your word until it comes to pass; pray, pray, pray and step out in faith!

May the Lord bring much glory to His name through your servant ministry! Bless you!

Yours in the love of Christ

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