

## What is Prophecy and the Prophetic?

Prophecy is the other side of prayer. It is God's side of the conversation between Him and His people. It is a specific revelation of God's heart that is released at a specific moment. It is intended for the building up, encouragement, and comfort of a specific person or group of people.

The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. Jesus' testimony was everything He did and said. He is God made flesh.

Prophecy is a gift. We cannot earn it just as we cannot earn salvation. The gift of prophecy is one of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. An important goal of prophecy and the prophetic is not simply to impart information to the hearer. It is to draw the hearer into a deeper love relationship with Jesus and His Body.

## Purpose of Prophecy

The purpose of prophecy and the function of the gift of prophecy is to prepare and equip the body of Christ for works of service corporately and individually. As a body, we are to prepare the way of the Lord and trumpet the anticipated return of Christ. John the Baptist was the greatest Prophet sent to prepare the way of Christ according to the word of God.

Prophecy is intended to edify, build up and encourage the body of Christ and each individual. ***But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. 1 Corinthians 14:3-4***

It is often easy to see someone's shortcomings, but to prophesy helps others to see that God is real, He has a plan, and He has placed treasures within them. This often comes when you are praying for someone and God will show you who He made them to be or what is hindering them or what He is thinking about them. I have seen many times people receive freedom and healing when they hear a word from the Lord. God allows us to feel the love He has for them, to share that love with them, to tell of the greatness He has placed in them and to tell them of the wonderful things He has planned for their life. It is important to realize that prophecy is not fortune telling. We are to stay within the boundaries given by the word. We should not prophesy about whom someone should marry, or if they will have children, whether they should leave their city or church, about deaths, or dates. That would fall outside of the boundaries mentioned. Please be mindful that you are speaking for God. In the Old Testament false prophecy was punishable by death!

God wants all His people to prophesy. In the Old and New Testament it is proclaimed that a time would come when God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh and people would prophecy, so it is a wonderful gift from God.

## How To Prophecy

To prophecy we must be able to know and recognize the voice of the Lord. ***My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27***

- \*Reading, meditating and praying the word
- \*Pray
- \*Worship – draws you into His presence
- \*Silence – you have to be quiet and listen for the Lord to speak

As you begin to listen for the Lord, write down what you are sensing, seeing or hearing. Research in the word to see if what you are hearing is supported by scripture. Prophecy will always line up with the word. You can also gain greater understanding this way. For most believers God will speak through His word and the still small voice. It is important to quiet the noise of our soul and the noise of this world so that we can hear His voice. Don't give up or be discouraged, this takes time and practice. As you train your spiritual ears to hear the voice of the Lord, you may begin to notice Him giving you tasks. He may share with you that someone is going through a difficult time and ask you to pray for that person. He may ask you to speak some kind words to another person or bless a friend with a small gift. Each of these is a prophetic unction or act given to you by the Lord.

Being good stewards of God's word, written or spoken is crucial for building up the body in a way that is holy and honorable. We must be sensitive to the way and time God wants us to speak a word of prophecy.

There are a variety of ways and examples in which we can receive prophetic direction from the Lord:

- \*Hearing – still small voice inside
- \*Dreams – during sleep
- \*Visions – daytime picture, with or without your eyes open. Can be like watching a movie.
- \*Personal Prophecy – through a minister of the Lord
- \*Arts – music, singing, painting, movement, dance and sculpture
- \*Audible voice – God will sometimes speak audibly, but this is rare
- \*Impressions – you may have an impression or feeling about something
- \*Senses – your physical senses may be involved in receiving a message from the Lord such as smell, taste, seeing in the physical realm, hearing an audible sound
- \*Divine prophetic appointments – many times a “coincidence” is a divine set up by God to allow some kind of ministry to take place
- \*Worship – often in worship when our hearts are open before Him, the Lord will speak to a congregation or an individual
- \*Prayer – while praying for someone, the Lord may show you something to pray specifically for them
- \*Angelic Visitation – these are messengers of God sent to bring a word

## **Anatomy of a Prophetic Word**

Prophecy is usually structured in this way:

1. What has happened in your past – to understand God knows who you are, even the very things you've never shared with anyone else.
2. What is currently going on in your life – to understand He has not left you nor forsaken you and His eyes are on you with love.
3. What He has intended for you in your future – He has a plan for us and He wants to encourage us that we have a future. His desire is for us to jump on board and partner with Him, to be in agreement with what He has designed for us.

The easiest way to describe the process is also in 3 parts.

1. Revelation – What is heard and spoken by the person giving the word.
2. Interpretation – What does it mean? The person giving the word should not interpret it.
3. Application – What we do with the word whether we understand it or not.

## **Steps to Receiving a Prophetic Word**

- A. Judge all prophecy according to scripture. It is right to judge a prophetic word. Prophets and prophetic people can make mistakes without being false prophets.
- B. It must line up with or not contradict scripture. If you are unsure of the integrity of the prophecy, seek godly counsel.
- C. Write it down, pray over it and meditate on it.
- D. Prophecy is conditional. God's desire is that we would partner with Him and believe what He is saying to us. Pray about taking some steps of faith toward seeing the fulfillment of your prophetic word.
- E. Witness or no witness from the Spirit inside you. Do not completely discount a word if it does not strike your spirit. Keep it in mind and wait to see if God will confirm it. It may not be the time yet for its fulfillment.

Remember, we prophesy in part according to 1 Corinthians 13:9. We must be humble and let the Spirit lead. Test the spirits to see if they be from God, 1 John 4:1.