

# Weekend Workshops



## The Gift of Prophecy

Prophetic ministry in the local church

the **Vineyard** church  
*Love God. Love people. Period.*

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## Part 1: Biblical and Historical Foundations

### I. The value of prophecy

- A. Moses wished that everyone could participate in the gift of prophecy:  
“A young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp. " Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses' assistant since youth, spoke up and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them!" But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!"(Num 11:27-29)
  
- B. Promise of future blessing focuses on the widespread distribution of prophecy:  
"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. (Joel 2:28-29)
  
- C. A lack of prophesying is a sign of God's judgment:  
“Her gates have sunk into the ground; their bars he has broken and destroyed. Her king and her princes are exiled among the nations, the law is no more, and her prophets no longer find visions from the LORD.” (Lam 2:9) See also 1 Sam 3:1; 28:6, Ezek 7:26
  
- D. It is a gift to be sought after because of its benefits to the whole body:  
“Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.” (1 Cor 14:1,39)
  
- E. Prophecies are not to be treated with contempt:  
“Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good.” (1 Thes 5:19-21)

### II. Prophecy in the New Testament

- A. Prophecies did not carry divine authority and could be silenced:  
“And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop.” (1 Cor 14:30)
  
- B. Prophecies needed to be tested:  
“Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said.” (1 Cor 14:29) see also 1 Thes 5:19-21

C. Prophecies were imperfect:

"...we know in part and we prophecy in part..." (1 Cor 13:9)

D. Prophecies contained truth mixed with error:

After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem... When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul at the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and seized him (Acts 21:10-12, 27)

1. Agabus's revelation was correct, but his interpretation was flawed. The Holy Spirit told Agabus that Paul would be bound; he assumed it was by the Jews. He was actually bound by the Romans.
2. Agabus's revelation was correct, but his application was flawed. The Holy Spirit told Agabus that Paul would be in danger. Everyone assumed this revelation was for the purpose of dissuading him from going. However, Paul had been compelled by the Holy Spirit to go to Jerusalem.

III. Prophecy in the Early Church.

A. Justin Martyr (100-165) in Dialogue with Trypho. "From the fact that even to this day the gifts of prophecy exist among us Christians, you should realize that the gifts which had resided among your people have now been transferred to us. (Yocum 21)

B. Irenaeus of Lyons (130-200). "In like manner we do also hear many brothers in the Church who possess prophetic gifts, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of men..." (Yocum 21)

C. Melito, Bishop of Sardis (late 2nd century). While preaching on the Passover he broke into prophecy. "Who will contend against me: let him stand before me. It is I who delivered the condemned. It is I who gave life to the dead. It is I who raised up the buried. Who will argue with me? It is I, says Christ who destroyed death. It is I who triumphed over the enemy, and trod down Hades, and bound the strong man, and have snatched mankind up to the heights of heaven. It is I says Christ. So then come here all you families of men, weighed down by your sins and receive pardon for your misdeeds. For I am your pardon. I am the Passover which brings salvation. I am the Lamb slain for you. I am your lustral bath. I am your life. I am your resurrection. I am your light. I am your salvation. I am your king. It is I who bring you up to the heights of heaven. It is I who give you resurrection there. I will show you the eternal Father. I will raise you up with my own right hand." (Yocum 21-22)

IV. What is prophecy?

- A. Prophecy originates from God. In the New Testament, "revelation" always comes from God the Father (Mt 11:25, 16:17; Gal 1:16; Phil 3:15), God the Son (Mt 11:27; Gal 1:12) or God the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:10; Eph 3:5).
- B. Prophecy is spontaneous, not prepared in advance like teaching or preaching  
*And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop.” (1 Cor 14:30)*
- C. Prophecy reveals God’s heart or mind about a given subject or situation
- D. Prophecy does not necessarily predict the future. It could be about the past, present or future.

V. The Purpose of Prophecy

- A. The primary purpose of prophecy is to strengthen, encourage, and comfort other believers  
*But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. (1 Cor 14:3)*
  - 1. Preparation or strengthening in important areas (1 Tim 1:18)
  - 2. Practical application of scripture
  - 3. Highlighting underused gift
  - 4. Release or discernment of gifting (1 Tim 4:14)
  - 5. Release physical or emotional healing
  - 6. Confirmation of mission or ministry (Acts 13:1)
  - 7. Exposure of Satan's tactics or secret sin (Acts 5:3; 1 Cor 14:24-25)
  - 8. Inspiration towards worship (1 Cor 14:25)
  - 9. Warnings (Acts 20:23, 21:10-11)
- B. Secondary purposes of prophecy
  - 1. Guidance and direction (Gen 41:25-32)
  - 2. Prediction (Acts 11:28)
  - 3. Conviction of unbelievers (1 Cor 14:24-25)

## Part 2: Growing in Prophecy

- I. Biblical guidelines for the use of prophecy
  - A. Prophecy is to be eagerly desired (1 Cor 14:1), however the Holy Spirit dispenses spiritual gifts as he desires, to whomever he wishes (1 Cor 12:11).
  - B. Prophecy should be exercised in love (1 Cor 13:2)
  - C. Prophecy is not to be despised (1 Thes 5:19-22)
  - D. Prophecy is to be orderly (1 Cor 14:32-40)
    - 1. Prophecies are controllable
    - 2. Prophecies are to be given in turn
    - 3. Prophecies are to be given under the leadership of the church, to assist the governmental leadership rather than usurp it
  - E. Prophecy should be weighed and evaluated (1 Cor 14:29-32; Acts 21:10-15)
- II. How prophecy might come
  - A. Scripture, as text or reference
  - B. Pictures in mind's eye, moving or still
  - C. Seeing words or tickertape superimposed over natural vision
  - D. Phrase pops into your head
  - E. Impressions
  - F. Sympathetic sensations in your body
  - G. Dreams
  - H. Emotions

- I. Smells
- J. Tastes
- III. I think I have a prophecy, now what?
  - A. Is it consistent with scripture?
  - B. Is it consistent with the character of God?
  - C. Ask God if it is from him; this should be a two-way conversation. Don't rely on physical sensations, these may dissipate over time.
  - D. Ask God for interpretation
  - E. Ask God for his heart on the matter
  - F. Ask God what to do with it
    - 1. Pray it
    - 2. Deliver it
    - 3. Shelf it
- IV. How to deliver a prophecy
  - A. Is now the time?
    - 1. Should a pastor/leader hear it first?
    - 2. Is it appropriate in this setting?
    - 3. Do I have peace about this word?
  - B. Speak simply, don't dress it up
    - 1. Speak with love. Make sure it is encouraging, edifying or comforting.
    - 2. Usually third person. Not "thus says the Lord..."
    - 3. Don't let your pet peeves affect the delivery
    - 4. Occasionally first person in small contexts where emotional/relational content is primary
    - 5. Speak revelation and interpretation

- C. Leave room to be wrong
  - D. Protect individual's dignity
  - E. Write it down, even if spoken
- V. Other rules for prophecy
- A. Never subvert testing process or authority of individual to run his/her own life
  - B. No prophecies about weddings, romances, or babies
  - C. No secret prophecy: "don't tell anyone..."
  - D. Don't prophecy negative consequences
  - E. Respect individual's dignity & privacy (especially if prophecy is about past or current sin)
  - F. Don't resolve conflict with prophecy
  - G. Don't make major decisions based on a single prophetic word
- VI. How to grow in prophecy
- A. Saturate yourself with Scripture.
  - B. Fast for the purpose of prayer and meditation. Allow God to have his way in you first.
  - C. Worship.
  - D. Cultivate a still spirit. Learn to wait on God in a state of prayer without worshipping or speaking. Know the still small voice. (1 Sam 3:1-10)
  - E. Immediately write down anything you feel God is suggesting to you. Pray over it and ask for his guidance and confirmation.
  - F. Be willing to take risks.



- G. Ask your pastor or a prophetically gifted person to lay hands on you to receive the gift. It won't always be released in this way as the Holy Spirit ultimately distributes gifts according to his sovereign plan (1 Cor. 12:11) but often the laying on of hands does have something to do with the impartation of a spiritual gift. (Rom 1:11; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6)

## Part 3: Sifting and Testing

### I. Testing prophetically gifted individuals

“Unless we know the character of the one prophesying we ought to remain quietly agnostic about what is said. Churches should prove the character of those prophetically gifted before allowing them to share their words” (Mallone 43-44).

#### A. Consider the character of those who prophesy (Mt 7:15-23)

1. Do they have a passion for Jesus?
2. Do they honor and uphold the Bible?
3. Are they living accountably and growing?
4. Do they submit to the authority of the church in which they minister? Are they in community with other people and under loving pastoral care?
5. Are they servants? "Learn the lesson that if you are to do the work of a prophet, what you need is not a scepter but a hoe." (Bernard of Clairveaux)
6. Are they emotionally and psychologically stable?
7. Are their motives usually pure?
8. Are they growing in maturity?

#### B. Consider the ministry of a prophetically gifted individual

1. Does it produce godly fruit? Does it cause people to repent and seek God?
2. Is it consistently accurate and effective? Testing individual prophecies can be difficult and is not the best method of discernment. It is more advisable to test a collection of them from various settings over time.
3. Does it glorify Jesus Christ or does it exalt the one prophesying?
4. Does it reflect God's heart or does it have a vindictive, sharp edge to it.

#### C. Don't get tripped up

1. Myth: Anointing equals character.
2. Myth: Anointing equals God's endorsement of one's ministering style.
3. Myth: Anointing equals complete doctrinal truth.

## II. Testing a Prophecy

### A. Important Attitudes When Testing Prophecy

1. Test prophecy with sincerity and love.
2. Test prophecy with an open heart. (1 Thessalonians 5:20)
3. Test prophecy with confidence. You are appointed to discern good from bad for yourself. Your spiritual growth is your own responsibility.

### B. Distinguish between true, false, and "non-prophecy."

1. True prophecy is a revelation from the Lord that is accurately communicated by the person prophesying. It can suffer from some degree of impurity, poor delivery, imperfect grammar, bad diction, etc. and still remain in essence a true prophecy. It is inspired by the Spirit of God and has power that produces godly fruit.
2. False prophecy is inspired by an evil spirit. It has evil power and produces ungodly fruit. The message is twisted in content or tone and is damaging in its sense.
3. "Non-prophecy" is a message given in prophetic form with an acceptable content, but it comes out of the thoughts of the speaker rather than the inspiration of the Lord. Sometimes called 'a blessed thought,' it produces nothing and has no power. It will fall flat, possibly even as it is delivered.
4. How rigorous you are in testing prophecy depends on the content. Inspirational prophecy does not need the same scrutiny as directional or corrective prophecy does.

### C. Test the content of the prophecy

1. What is being said? Keep what is good; strain out what is not beneficial. (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22)
2. Is the prophecy confirming something God is already doing?
3. Is the prophecy consistent with what is being taught from the Scriptures?
4. Does God seem to be speaking the same thing to many individuals?

### D. Test the prophecy against Scripture

1. True prophecy adds focus and perspective to Scripture.
2. True prophecy does not add or conflict with Scripture. (Revelation 22:18-19)
3. Don't throw out a prophecy because it doesn't match your interpretation of a scripture.

### E. Test the prophecy by determining its benefit

1. Has a prophecy given previously been beneficial and true?
  2. Do predicted occurrences actually take place? (Deut. 13:2-6, 18:15-22; 2 Kings 3:14-20)
  3. Does the prophecy glorify the name of Jesus Christ?
  4. Your guidance should be a combination of supernatural and natural factors. Prophecy will either confirm what God has already been speaking, or initiate a flood of him speaking.
- F. Test the prophecy by the witness of your own heart and the Holy Spirit in you. This test will most accurately be applied by the pastors and experienced prophetic ministers. (Luke 24:31-32)

## Part 4: Dreams and Visions

### *Dreams - Biblical Foundations:*

- I. God speaks through dreams
  - A. He speaks to his prophets:  
"When a prophet of the LORD is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams." (Num. 12:6)
  - B. He speaks to leaders:  
(Abimelech: Gen 20:3), (Pharaoh: Gen 41:1,25), (Solomon: Kings 3:5),  
(Nebuchadnezzar: Dan 2:28-29)
  - C. He speaks to average people:  
(cupbearer and baker: Gen 40:8-23), (Jacob: Gen 28:10-15), (soldier: Judges 7:13),  
(people: Job 33:14-18; Acts 2:17), (wise men: Matt 2:12)
- II. Why does God speak through dreams?
  - A. To reveal parts of the future.  
(death/life: Gen 40), (Joseph's life: Gen 37:5-10, 42:6,9), (kingdoms: Dan 2:45),
  - B. To give direction or encouragement.  
(Jacob: Gen 31:11-13, 46:2-3), (Gideon: Judges 7:15), (Joseph: Mt 1:20, 2:13,  
2:19-20)
  - C. To warn.  
(Abimelech: Gen 20:1-7), (Laban: Gen 31:24), (Midianites: Judges 7:13-15), (Magi:  
Mt 2:12), (Joseph: Mt 2:22 ), (Pilate's wife: Mt 27:19)
  - D. To bless.  
(Solomon: 1 Kings 3:5-15)
  - E. God "may speak in their ears and terrify them with warnings, to turn man from wrongdoing and keep him from pride, to preserve his soul from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword." (Job 33:14-18)
- III. Not all dreams are from God
  - A. Many dreams are your mind dumping. "dreams come when there are many

- cares." (Ecclesiastes 5:3) see also Isaiah 29:8
- B. Sometimes people will make up divine dreams. (Jeremiah 23:25-32, 27:9-10, 29:8-9; Deut. 13:1-5)
  - C. Some dreams come from deceiving spirits. (Zech 10:2)
- IV. Can non-Christians have divine dreams?
- A. He gives dreams to unbelieving leaders. (Pharaoh: Gen 41:1,25), (Nebuchadnezzar: Dan 2:28-29), (Pilate's wife: Mt 27:19)
  - B. He gives dreams to average unbelieving people. (Cupbearer and baker: Gen. 40:8-23), (Midianites: Judges 7:13-15)
- V. Interpreting divine dreams
- A. Interpretation originates with God. (Gen 40:8, 41:16; Dan 2:19, 22-23; Job 33:14-18.)
  - B. God usually gives us the interpretation at some point. (Abimelech: Gen 20:1-7), (Jacob: Gen 20:10-15), (Joseph: Gen 37:5-11; Joseph's dream wasn't fulfilled for 22 years: Gen 42:8-9)
  - C. God sometimes gives another person the interpretation. (Joseph: Gen 42:12, 18), (Midianite soldier: Judges 7:13-14), (Daniel: Dan 1:17, 2:19,30)

***Dreams - Experiential Foundations:***

- VI. The benefits of divine dreams
- A. Dreams can give us greater understanding of events occurring around us, through us, or to us.
  - B. Dreams can reveal things to which our rational mind would not normally be open.
  - C. Dreams can have significant impact on our attitudes, actions, or emotional states.
  - D. Dreams can give us warnings, encouragement, and direction.

## VII. Types of divine dreams

## A. Dreams about yourself:

- Deal with heart issues (Dan 2:30)
- Concern our personal longings, opinions, and emotions
- May be a healing dream to bring love / forgiveness to another person
- Can be predictive (like Joseph's dream about his future or that of the baker & cupbearer)
- Sometimes relates to God's calling on our lives
- Can reveal our condition at the time (like Nebudchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 4)
- Sometimes false dreams from the evil one are often accusing, frightening, or sensual
- Sometimes illness, pregnancy, or different foods are the cause of our dreams
- Flushing dreams run us through the events of the day. No divine message here

## B. Dreams about others; people, nations, cities, the Church, etc. (Gen 41)

- These dreams are very likely calling us to pray
- Repeated dreams of this kind may indicate they will happen shortly (Pharaoh: Gen 41:32)
- This category represents approximately 5% of dreaming for most people
- Prophetic people may have many dreams like this, but usually after a history of self-dreams and after having allowed God to work significantly in their own lives

## VIII. Interpreting dreams

A. Determine first if the dream was a "mind dump," a dark dream, or a dream from God. Dark dreams will often leave you with a feeling of fear and uneasiness. Divine dreams often produce comfort, prayer, or a desire for interpretation.

B. Write down the divine dreams right away. Reduce it to the most important parts. Ask yourself what the main point seemed to have been. Record the feelings and impressions you had in the dream.

C. Ask God for the interpretation (Gen 40:8, Dan 1:17). He may reveal it quickly, or he may wait. Pray about it.

D. Check your Bible. We can often find help in scripture as to what some of the

- elements may mean, because dreams are very symbolic. (ex: bread in a dream may signify the Word of God)
- E. Consider your "dream vocabulary". Certain objects may have unique meaning to you. (ex: Gideon understood barley cake to symbolize him because he threshed wheat and barley)
  - F. As a last resort, seek help from those who are known to interpret dreams. Don't seek interpretation from friends. What they know about you can skew their interpretation.
  - G. Remember, God is trying to speak to you. He will enable you to understand what he wants you to know.
  - H. Don't base your life on dreams (Ecclesiastes 5:7)

### ***Visions - Biblical Foundations:***

- IX. God speaks through visions much like he does through dreams, only you are awake.
  - A. He speaks to his prophets (Num 12:6, 24:4; 1 Sam 3; 2 Sam 7:17; 1 Kings 22:17-23; 2 Kings 6:17; Isaiah 1:1; Ezek 1:1; Dan 1:17; Hosea 12:10; Amos 1:1; Obad 1:1; Micah 1:1; Nah 1:1; Hab 1: 1, 2:2-3)
  - B. He speaks to his people (Abraham: Gen 15:1), (Jacob: Gen 46:20), (servant of Elisha: 2 Kings 6:17), (David and the elders: 1 Chron 21:16), (Ps 89:19; Prov 29:18; Joel 2:28), (Peter, James & John: Mt 17:1-9), (Ananias: Acts 9:10), (Paul: Acts 9:12, 16:9, 18:9, 26:12-19), (Cornelius: Acts 10:3), (Peter: Acts 10:9-17), (John: Rev 1:1-2)
- X. What does God show us in visions?
  - A. Coming judgment (Amalek: Num 24:20), (Eli: 1 Sam 3:11-15), (Babylon: Is 21:2), (Israel's leaders: Ezek 11), (Israel's neighbors: Amos 1), (Edom: Obadiah), (Samaria & Jerusalem: Micah 1), (Nineveh: Nahum), (Assyria: Hab), (Revelation)
  - B. Blessings (Abram: Gen 15:1-6), (Israel: Num 24:1-10), (David: 2 Sam 7:4-17), (Israel: Micah 2:12-13), (birth of Jesus: Luke 1:11-19), (resurrection: Luke 24:23)
  - C. Angelic figures (1 Chron 21:16; 2 Kings 6:17; Dan 8:16, 9:21, 10:4-10; Luke 1:19, 24:23; Acts 10:3)



- D. The awesome glory of God (Is 6:1-4; Ezek 1:1-28, 8:1-4, 43:1-5; Rev 1:9-19, 4:1-11)
  - E. The plans of God (2 Sam 7:4-7; Ezek 9-10; Dan 7:15-17, 8:1, 15-17, 26, 10:14; Hab 2:2; Acts 9:10-15; Acts 10:1-6, 10:9-17, 16:9-10, 18:9-10, 26:12-19, 27:23; Rev 4:1)
  - F. The appearance of the Lord (Gen 15:1; Josh 5:13-15; 1 Sam 3:10; Acts 9:10, 18:9, 26:12-19)
  - G. The sins of God's people (Ezek 8:5-18)
  - H. The actions of God's enemies (2 Kings 6:12)
  - I. Other people (Moses & Elijah: Mt 17:3), (Ananias: Acts 9:12), (Macedonian: Acts 16:9)
- XI. Possible reactions to a vision
- A. Comfort (2 Kings 6:17; 2 Sam 7:7-14)
  - B. Fear of God (Num 24:4; 1 Chron 21:16; Is 6:5; Ezek 1:28, 3:23; Dan 10:4-8; Rev 1:17; Acts 10:4)
  - C. Overwhelming sense of awe (Ezek 3:15)
  - D. Pain, bewilderment, fear, trembling (Is 21:3-4; Acts 9:9)
  - E. Exhaustion, illness, confusion (Dan 8:27)
  - F. Speechlessness, anguish, helplessness, difficulty breathing, lack of strength (Dan 10:15-17)
  - G. Faith (Ananias went to pray for Paul: Acts 9:10-17), (Paul went to Macedonia: Acts 16:6-10)
  - H. No apparent physical reaction (Jer 1:11-19; Acts 10, 16:6-10; 2 Cor 12:2-6)
- XII. What's the difference between a vision and a trance?
- A. There is little difference. Acts 10:10 calls Peter's experience a "trance." But in 10:17 it

is called a "vision" (see Acts 11:5 also).

- B. The only possible difference is that a trance seems to always occur with the eyes open, while visions can happen with eyes opened or closed. Paul's experience in 2 Cor 12:2-6 seems to have been so vivid it was almost "out of body." John's vision was similar in Rev. 1:10, 4:2, 17:3.

***Visions - Experiential Foundations:***

XIII. Types of visions

- A. Internal - seen with the spiritual eye. Sometimes these are missed because they are so subtle. - We think our minds made it up. They are only a flash across our minds. We may not even have been in prayer.
- B. External - seen with the eyes open. Sometimes called open visions; this is seeing something superimposed over your natural sight.

XIV. Interpreting visions

- A. Visions are usually not as symbolic as dreams. They are more literal.
- B. The meaning may or may not be fully understood by the recipient.

## Appendix A: For Pastors and Church Leaders

Prophecy needs pastoring. As the shepherd of a flock, the responsibility lies with the pastor to oversee prophetic ministry, and those who do it. The New Testament pattern for church government places pastors and elders above prophets positionally (See Grudem pgs 183-189). That means God has given pastors and elders authority and giftings uniquely designed for leading his church. Pastors should not abdicate their position in the face of prophetic people, nor feel that prophetic people should lead the flock because they hear from the Lord more frequently than the pastor. The leadership of the church is to be exercised by the pastor in love and wisdom.

### I. Foundational values and perspectives

A. Value on balance of evangelical and charismatic approaches and perspectives

B. Value on balance in the church of the pragmatic and the supernatural

C. Desire for a church that has and does it all. Not "the prophecy church".

D. Prophecy is extremely helpful tool—yet a lot of failure and foolishness as it is commonly used. So I am committed but not enamored.

E. Balance must be sought and abuses dealt with in order to maintain a healthy use of the gift.

### II. Preconditions for developing prophetic ministry in your church

#### A. Theological

- A clear Biblical understanding of prophecy and its importance—avoiding both deism and "spiritualism"
- A clear understanding of the role of prophetic in relation to the church, (a supporting role, to build up, not prophecy for prophecy's sake)

#### B. Structural

- Leadership in place and able to lead—trust
- Small groups and large celebrations. People who prophesy should first get experience in a small group and then be released by their small group leader. Their ability to prophesy for the benefit of the group ought to be proven.
- Training process for ministry

### C. Climactic

- Vision for the church is clear—Unity in the congregation
- Environment where safety, risk-taking, learning and loving correction are norms and accepted. This is better if the congregation is more informed biblically

## III. Nurturing the use of prophecy for the congregation as a whole

### A. Incorporate prophecy into the church life

1. Encourage the use of and development of this gift in small group contexts
2. Structure prayer meetings in such a way that prophecy can be smoothly integrated into the flow of worship and prayer. Invite the use of prophecy.
3. Communicate guidelines and ground rules for prophetic ministry in word and on paper.
4. Establish an easy way for people to submit prophetic words to the leadership, both in meetings and outside of meetings.
5. Describe to newcomers the role prophecy has had in your corporate life, cite examples of how God has used it, and acquaint them with the protections in place.
6. Let people know that there is a responsible evaluation of prophetic words happening
7. Talk privately to both those who need encouragement in their gift and those who are not being helpful

### B. Receiving Public Prophecies in Large Celebrations

1. Have the person write down the word on a piece of paper and get it to you. This prevents you from misquoting the word. It also keeps people who receive words periodically from "getting the microphone" whenever they want it.
2. Consider whether the word fits for the moment, or whether to shelve it for now. Some words may be given with more impact at a different time, or a different service. Keep it to two or three at the most—people can't remember more than that.
3. Explain to your congregation why you read some words, and why you don't read others. This can dispel any hard feelings from people who feel they had a significant word once, but you didn't give it.
4. Prophecy to the assembly ought to follow the 1 Corinthians 14:3 categories: edification, exhortation, and consolation. Prophecy that includes direction or guidance should be cleared through the leadership of the church before it is given.

### C. Be aware of dynamics of prophetic ministry

1. There is an incredible accessibility of revelation. Often God sends a radio broadcast, not a sealed envelope. Be aware of how prophetic people can get stirred up. You need to sort, exhort and encourage.
  2. Those who move in the greatest power must have special awareness and protection from the dangers of power/pride, using ministry to meet personal needs to be liked or affirmed or have control. Anonymity may help avoid stylistic and ambition problems.
  3. Be aware of reality of revelations with warnings
- IV. Nurturing those with a extra measure of gifting in the prophetic
- A. Pray for them to come, pray for their development along the way
  - B. Test their character
  - C. Hide them from public awareness while testing
  - D. Chase off "bad apples"
  - E. Build a strong relationship with them
  - F. Teach them about using the gift as well as a pastoral perspective
  - G. Encourage/push
  - H. Sort together the revelations and experiences
  - I. Protect
  - J. Give them settings in which to function

Remember, prophecy is an invitation not a guarantee. God looks for obedience from his people. Ignoring his written word or living in sin will probably negate a given word from the Lord. On the other hand, obedience and walking in the Spirit, can bring great benefit. The Israelites were prophesied good on the condition that they rid the land of Canaan of foreign peoples and their gods. Repeated disobedience brought repeated punishment. Repeated repentance brought repeated mercy and goodness.

## Appendix B: Old and New Testament Prophecy

- I. Prophets in the Old Testament.  
Old Testament prophets spoke and wrote the very words of God. To disobey them was to disobey God.
  - A. Prophets were God's messengers (Hag. 1:13; 2 Sam. 12:25)
  - B. Prophets spoke the very words of God (Ex. 4:12; Deut. 18:18; Jer. 1:9; Num. 22:38; Ezek. 2:7).
  - C. Prophets' words were absolutely authoritative (Deut. 18:19; 1 Sam. 3:19, 9:6; 2 Chron. 25:16).
  - D. Many prophets wrote Scripture such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, etc. However, there were other prophets who spoke the words of God but did not write Scripture such as Elijah and Elisha (1&2 Kings), Nathan (2 Sam. 12:1-14), Ahijah (1 Kings 14:1-18), and Micaiah (1 Kings 22:1-18).
- II. Apostles in the New Testament.  
In the New Testament, the office of prophet was replaced by the apostles. They were the New Testament equivalent to the OT prophets.
  - A. Apostles were the messengers of Christ (Jn. 20:21; 1 Jn. 1:1-2).
  - B. Apostles were connected to the Old Testament prophets (2 Pt. 3:2).
  - C. Apostles received the words of God (Gal. 1:11-12; Jn. 14:26, 16:13-14).
  - D. Apostles spoke and wrote the words of God (2 Pt. 3:2; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Thess. 2:13, 4:8).
- III. Prophets in the New Testament.
  - A. New Testament prophets did not carry the authority of Old Testament prophets.
  - B. New Testament prophets were subject to the apostles' authority (1 Cor 14:36-38)
  - C. New Testament prophecies were always subject to testing by the congregation (1 Cor

14:29).

#### D. Examples

1. Agabus: In Acts 11:28 he "predicted" a famine. This is a loose expression like "indicated." It does not imply authority without error. In Acts 21:10-11 Agabus told Paul the Jews would bind him and hand him over to the Gentiles. Actually, it was the Gentiles who bound Paul to protect him from the Jews (Acts 21:27-35).
2. Antioch prophets: Acts 11:27 and 13:1 mentions prophets who lived in Antioch. However we have no record of their prophecies.
3. Philip's daughters: Acts 21:9 speaks of Philip the evangelist who had four prophetic daughters. Their prophecies are not recorded either.
4. Judas and Silas: These men were prophets from Jerusalem (Acts 15:32). No recorded prophecies.

#### IV. Prophecies about:

- A. Battles (Num. 13:30; 14:6-9)
- B. Individuals (2 Sam. 3:18; 7:8-17)
- C. Family (Gen. 49:1-27)
- D. Children (Gen. 5:29; 48:13-20)
- E. Obedience (Num. 14:24; Josh. 24:14-15; 2 Sam. 23:2-7)
- F. Disobedience (Num. 14:20-23; Deut. 32:18-29)
- G. Food (Ex. 16:6-7)
- H. God's goodness (Deut. 32:1-4; 1 Sam. 2:1-3)
- I. God's justice (Deut. 32:39-42; 1 Sam. 2:9-10)
- J. Rain (2 Kings 3:14-20)

## Appendix C

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