

ESSENTIAL SKILLS OF CHRISTIANITY: AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROPHETIC

Hearing God's Voice: Recognizing a Prophetic Word

Simply stated, a prophetic word builds up (edifies), stirs up (exhorts), and/or cheers up (comforts) an individual and their life. Prophetic words often describe what you are like, where you have been, who you are, and/or where you are going. (1Corinthians 14:3)

Ultimately, the prophetic shares the way God sees you. It is a part of how individuals learn about their personal identity in Jesus. Although you may not see yourself in the same way, you have the potential to become exactly what God has planned for you.

The prophetic includes God speaking to you through others, speaking to you as an individual, or speaking to others through you.

Three Basic Ways of Hearing God:

SEE IT: a still or motion pictures in your mind.

HEAR IT / KNOW IT: continual or spontaneous thoughts, words or phrases

FEEL IT: an intuition, an emotion, and/or a physical sensation that gives you knowledge regarding the subject.

Be open-minded, but listen to Holy Spirit for confirmation of what has been expressed. God speaks to us in many creative ways. Limiting how God speaks is not biblically sound. (The Book of Job)

Once we sense that God has spoken, we seek to test the prophetic word according the leading of Holy Spirit and the Word of God (1Thessalonians 5:20-21). True prophetic words are not anti-biblical. They may be outside of the content communicated in the Bible, but the themes and guidelines are consistent with God's written word.

Giving a Prophetic Word:

- **BE CLEAR AND SPEAK PLAINLY:** Do not use Christian terminology. Say everything in simple clear language.
- **AVOID TEACHING:** Do not teach or add anything to what you hear the Holy Spirit revealing. Let Holy Spirit give the interpretation. If you don't know what the picture means, share only what you are seeing. Avoid repeating yourself.
- **LOVE WELL:** We prophesy to strengthen others, not to show off our gifts.
- **BE POSITIVE:** If you hear or see something that is negative or implies a correction, ask Holy Spirit what He wants to say. We encourage you to reframe anything negative and address it from a positive perspective (i.e. we sense depression and say "God is bringing you into joy).
- **BE CAREFUL:** Don't control through prophecy. Avoid giving specific direction, especially while learning. Let people hear God's voice for themselves for their most important life decisions.
- **BE ATTENTIVE:** Awaken your spiritual senses, especially hearing, seeing and feeling.
- **BE HUMBLE:** You may miss it – you are not God – you know in part and prophesy in part.
- **BE CONFIDENT:** Refuse the spirit of fear and claim the spirit of power, love and a sound mind. God has given each of us spiritual gifts and we can all prophesy by faith. God wants to speak to the person. We can be confident that God will speak.

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Receiving a Prophetic Word:

Remember the person ministering is a person. Allow flexibility – there may be other interpretations to what they speak and sense. Embrace the words that resonate with you. Talk to God about them.

When you receive prophetic words you don't understand, put them aside for later. Ask God about what He thinks about them. Understanding the word or its timeframe is not necessary in order for the promise to come to pass.

If a prophetic word causes a negative reaction in your heart, let go of the word for the time being. If possible, talk to someone who can bring you clarity and understanding. Show appreciation and honor to the prophetic person, but do not put them on a pedestal.

We see in part, we prophesy in part, often we only know in part. God is faithful to do the rest. Enjoy the journey with God. (1 Corinthians 13:9)

Stewarding a Prophetic Word:

Growing in maturity and understanding about how God speaks prophetically is important in stewarding prophetic words. Prophetic words of vision and destiny have to be walked out. Prophetic is potential. It requires you to continuously listen to God and actively pursue Him and His words. God will bring you into your destiny and create in you a pure heart as you follow Him. Be conscious, prayerful and obedient to God and how He moves in your life. (Hebrews 12:2a, Hebrews 10:23, James 1:22, Psalms 51:10, 1Timothy1:18)

Cherish the words that God has given you. Thank Him for them. Write them down or type them out. Review them and ask God to bring them to pass.

Make God your source, not prophetic people or prophetic words. Allow prophetic words to confirm God's guidance in your life. They may also open your heart to new possibilities that you haven't thought of yet.

Comparing and measuring yourself and your prophetic words in ways, that result in pride or shame is not wise. (2 Corinthians 10:12).

Biblical Overview:

- Romans 12:6 - In His grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. If God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you.
- 1 Corinthians 12:7 - A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.
- 1 Corinthians 12:31 - Earnestly desire the most helpful gifts.
- 1 Corinthians 13:2 - If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing.
- 1 Corinthians 14:1 - Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives—especially the ability to prophesy.
- 1 Corinthians 14:3 - But one who prophesies strengthens others, encourages and comforts them.
- 1 Corinthians 14:39-40 - So, my dear brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and don't forbid speaking in tongues. But be sure that everything is done properly and in order.
- 1 Timothy 4:14 - Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecy spoken over you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you.
- 2 Thessalonians 5:20-21 - Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good.
- 2 Timothy 1:6-7 - This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.