



School *of the prophets*

Manual

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SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS

A NEW COVENANT MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL
(NCMI) RESOURCE

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FOREWORD

This work has been adapted from a series of talks at the NCMI School of the Prophets conference in Johannesburg, South Africa in March, 2015 at Cornerstone Church Bedfordview.

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Chapter One:

JESUS THE PROPHET

What is the Prophetic?

Prophecy is hearing and doing what God says. It sometimes involves words, and sometimes doesn't. It's important that we understand what New Testament prophecy is and realise the responsibility of prophecy on the Church. We have been called, by God, to prophesy and to be his Voice in this age. For some this may be an incredibly uncomfortable thought. On the other hand, some love prophecy even more than the Lord, leading them to misuse and misunderstand our prophetic calling. This has led to many rejecting the validity of prophecy today. Therefore, we must have a solid grasp on what the task is all about and how it is meant to function in the Church.

Jesus - our prophetic example

Christ is the Church's cornerstone. (Ephesians 2:19-22.) So much has been said about Jesus being Priest (Hebrews 6:20) and King (Matthew 27:11) but not much has been said about Him being a prophet.

Jesus called himself a prophet. In Matthew 13:57 (cross reference John 4:44), speaking about himself, he says that "A prophet is not

without honour except in his hometown and in his own house." (NET.) This is in the context of people being astonished at the miracles taking place through Jesus but then becoming offended because he is only Joseph's boy - the mere carpenter. Jesus is saying here that what he is doing is under the auspices of the prophetic.

In Luke 7:11-17, Jesus raises the dead and is called "a great prophet in the land" (verse 16). What makes this so significant is that from Malachi until this time God had been silent (about 400 years of silence) but they still understood how to recognise what was prophetic - that raising the dead was linked to the prophetic. We see the people call Jesus a prophet in Matthew 21:11 as well.

God is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). So if there needs to be any changing, the change must be with us. Therefore, we need to re-think some of our ideas of what the prophetic looks like and broaden it to include more than just verbal communication but also signs, wonders and miracles. We also need to understand that the prophetic is a wonderful key to effective evangelism. In John 4:1-43 we see Jesus tell a Samaritan woman her past, present and future (so the prophetic is not just telling the future, as some think) and the result was that many people became followers of Christ.

Jesus says in John 5:19 that "the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise." When Jesus heals in unusual ways it is because he saw the Father doing it. **This is the prophetic.** John 5:20 -- "For the Father loves the Son and shows

him all he does, yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these..." Because Jesus operated under a prophetic anointing much of what He declares has a prophetic consequence, such as when Jesus declared in John 14:12, "Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." God wants to amaze us.

Acts 10:38 tells us that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and Power, and He went around **doing good** and **healing all** who were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him." What we see here is that:

1. God Anointed
2. God gave the Holy Spirit
3. God gave Him Power
4. He was doing Good
5. He was healing All
6. God was with Him

This is a mandate for prophecy - it's not just telling people things but is about doing good and working with God in what we do. It's about being anointed, having the Holy Spirit, and working in power. The outcome of Jesus' ministry was that:

1. The dead were raised
2. There were healings and miracles

3. He spoke of past, present and future realities

4. Evangelism took place

New Testament prophecy includes these aspects. Here are some of the **mandates of Jesus**:

- The Son came to seek and save the lost. (Luke 19:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18.)
- The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 3:8; Matthew 10:8.)
- Jesus came to serve and not be served. (Matthew 20:28.)
- Jesus reconciled man to God. (2 Corinthians 5:19.)

If Jesus was a prophet, it follows that this is all what the prophetic looks like. We've all been given the ministry of reconciliation. God opens people's hearts through the prophetic. God has already prepared good works in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10) and all we need to do is just step into them - no pressure! When people are touched by the Living God their life is changed forever. He wants to use us to liberate people! He is about redeeming everyone! We bring joy to people! (John 15:11.) But if we're not being fishers of men (Matthew 4:19; Mark 1:17) then what are we doing? Many of us are not sure of what it is God wants us to do. We need not complicate this. Jesus is our model.

God's desire is that we rise to the occasion and become what he wants us to be. The early church didn't have any manuals, just a mandate. God's Plan A is that we would do this. This is not rocket

science and this isn't complicated - we are to hear what God says and do it.

Chapter Two:

WE NEED THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus was a man who needed the Holy Spirit. If Jesus needed the Holy Spirit, how much more do we? For as the scripture says, "As many are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8:14). Let's see some examples in scripture that highlight Jesus' relationship with the Holy Spirit:

1. Jesus was filled by the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:21,22; 4:1)

We see the Holy Spirit descend on him 'like a dove' in Luke 3:21,22 and the scripture says he was now 'full' of the Spirit in Luke 4:1.

2. Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:1)

Luke 4:1 tells us that he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he was tempted by the devil.

3. Jesus returned in the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:14)

We're to receive the Holy Spirit *and* power. Why do so many people get filled with the Holy Spirit yet not have power? It's interesting to note that Jesus went into the wilderness *filled* with the Spirit but when he came out of the wilderness he had *power*. Being filled and receiving power are two separate things. They can happen at the same time but they are not necessarily the same thing. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8.) We can stop complaining that we don't have power and rather get into a private place with God and pray and wait until we have some! There are things we have to do and comply with to get the results God wants us to have (John 14:12).

4. Jesus declares that the Holy Spirit was on him and had anointed him (Luke 4:17-21)

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

1. The Holy Spirit puts things in perspective

The Holy Spirit is the greatest gift from God! Jesus said, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you." (John 14:16,17.)

By having a solid grasp on why Jesus sent the Holy Spirit, how the Holy Spirit works with and in us, and the benefits Christians can freely enjoy because of the Holy Spirit, prophecy begins to make much more sense. In the times we are living we need the Holy Spirit as never before. Zechariah 4:6 says, "'Not by might, nor by power, but my Spirit,' says The Lord." Unfortunately, we soon look to

achieve our calling to the world as the Church by might and power, with a “We’ll take it from here, Lord” sort of approach! No, we will only be successful in God’s mission in the power of the Holy Spirit, not our own.

Jesus knew this. Have you ever wondered why Jesus didn’t stay on the earth? Why did he have to leave? “It is better for you that I leave,” he says in John 16:7. “If I don’t leave the friend [the Holy Spirit] won’t come. But if I go, I will send Him to you.” (The Message.)

We’ve seen that Jesus needed the Holy Spirit. There are over twenty benefits we receive from the Holy Spirit. Undoubtedly there are more but these twenty help to put prophecy in perspective. Given that the Holy Spirit is God as part of the Trinity, these benefits are profound.

2. The Holy Spirit fills you

Acts 2:4

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

3. The Holy Spirit lives in you

Romans 8:11

“If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your

mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”

1 Corinthians 6:19

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own.”

4. The Holy Spirit gives life to your body

Romans 8:11

“If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”

5. The Holy Spirit anoints

1 John 2:20, 21, 27

“But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

“But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie-- just as it has taught you, abide in him.”

6. The Holy Spirit guides and leads us into truth

John 16:13

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”

7. The Holy Spirit sanctifies (makes us holy)

Romans 15:16

“...to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”

2 Thessalonians 2:13

“But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.”

8. The Holy Spirit confirms our Sonship

Romans 8:16

“The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...”

Hebrews 10:16

“This is the covenant that I will make with them
after those days, declares the Lord:
I will put my laws on their hearts,
and write them on their minds”

9. The Holy Spirit helps us

John 14:16-26

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's

who sent me.

“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”

10. The Holy Spirit gives us joy

Romans 14:17

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

11. The Holy Spirit gives us discernment

1 Corinthians 2:10-16, 1 John 4:1-4

“These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.”

“The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them

because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ."

1 John 4: 1-4

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

12. The Holy Spirit makes us bear fruit

Galatians 5:22-23

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

13. The Holy Spirit gives gifts

1 Corinthians 12:3-11

"Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say

“Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”

14. The Holy Spirit illuminates our mind

1 Corinthians 2:12,13

“Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.”

Ephesians 1:16-17

“I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him.”

15. The Holy Spirit comforts us

Acts 9:31

“So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.”

16. The Holy Spirit reveals things from God

1 Corinthians 2:10-11

“These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.”

Isaiah 40:13-14

“Who has measured[a] the Spirit of the Lord,

or what man shows him his counsel?

Whom did he consult,

and who made him understand?

Who taught him the path of justice,

and taught him knowledge,

and showed him the way of understanding?”

17. The Holy Spirit helps our weaknesses

Romans 8:26

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”

18. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us

Romans 8:26-27

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”

19. The Holy Spirit leads us

Romans 8:14

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.”

20. The Holy Spirit frees us from fear

Romans 8:15

“For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,

but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

21. The Holy Spirit counsels and teaches us

John 14:26

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."

John 16:13-14

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

22. The Holy Spirit gives you power

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

23. The Holy Spirit edifies us

1 Corinthians 14:4

“The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.”

24. The Holy Spirit gives rest and refreshes us

Isaiah 28:11-12

“For by people of strange lips

and with a foreign tongue

the Lord will speak to this people,

to whom he has said,

“This is rest;

give rest to the weary;

and this is repose”;

yet they would not hear.”

Be filled!

We are encouraged in the scriptures to “not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit.” (Ephesians 5:18.) We are told that, “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25) and “do not put out

the Spirit's fire" (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

The Holy Spirit is God's idea. Jesus said that it is for our good that He goes away, for if He does not go away the Holy Spirit will not come to us. (John 16:7.) Let us therefore embrace the Holy Spirit, the great "helper from God". God has given Him to us for our success in his mission.

As we can see, if we're filled with the Holy Spirit, prophecy will always result. This is because prophecy is hearing and doing what God says. Most often when we think of prophecy we are thinking of someone who tells the future. We think of Nostradamus and not Jesus. This is an incredibly limited (and pagan) view of prophecy and doesn't follow Biblical truth. While prophecy might include telling the future, it is usually much broader than that. Jesus is our standard.

John 5: 19,20,30

"Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel."

"I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgement is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me."

John 12: 49,50

"For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who

sent me has himself given me a commandment--what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

Jesus only did what he saw the Father doing and said what the Father said to him. This is prophecy - doing what God does and saying what he says. It isn't spooky. It's a relationship. But it is a relationship we cannot have in fullness unless we are filled with the Spirit, because the Spirit is to be our help and to tell us what the Father is doing and saying. Many times we think that Jesus must take up his cross and follow us and bless what we are doing! But it's the opposite. We should be consulting him about everything and taking up our cross. The lordship of Jesus is rarely mentioned in church anymore. We need to come under his lordship, hearing and doing what God is saying, and we will see greater fruit and greater results.

Understanding baptisms

There is a lot of discussion and speculation in theological circles around the baptism of the Spirit. We are filled with the Holy Spirit when we come to Christ, but many encounter further experiences in the Spirit which we call 'baptism' or 'baptisms' in the Holy Spirit. People attest to receiving power in such experiences. There are many speculations as to what this means - some say you were not truly saved until you received a separate experience (baptism) in the Spirit. Others say there is no additional baptism in the Spirit, it all happens when you come to faith. There are dozens of views inbetween and this has led to much confusion.

The best way to understand this is by noticing that one can be 'filled' by the Spirit at conversion or water baptism, but *baptised* in the Spirit at a different time. The differences have to do with who is doing the baptising and what you are being baptised into. The diagram on the next page helps to make more sense of this.

SALVATION (JUSTIFICATION)

Baptiser	“Element” (Baptised into)	Participant
The Holy Spirit	Body of Christ	Anyone who receives Christ by faith

Scripture reference: 1 Corinthians 12:13

WATER BAPTISM

Baptiser	Element	Participant
Any believer	Water	Anyone who receives Christ by faith

Scripture reference: Matthew 3:11

BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Baptiser	Element	Participant
Jesus	Holy Spirit	Anyone who is a believer

Scripture reference: Matthew 3:11

The Holy Spirit baptises us into the Body of Christ when we come to faith in Christ. "For in one Spirit we were all baptised into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:13.) We are crucified and buried with Christ and raised in him (Romans 6:4 and many other scriptures). Water baptism, administered by any believer, is symbolic of this spiritual fact. But Jesus also baptises us into / with the Holy Spirit. As John the Baptist said: "I baptise you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. **He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**" (Matthew 3:11.) We need Jesus to baptise us so we can live the Christian life as powerfully as he did!

Chapter Three:

SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE MOST HIGH GOD

In 1871, Horatio Spafford lost many properties and businesses in the Chicago Fire. Two years later he and his family decided to take a holiday to Europe. Due to some business delays his family went ahead of him to England. But tragedy struck -- the ship they were sailing on was hit by an iron sailing vessel and it sank. Spafford's four daughters drowned in the accident, while his wife managed to survive. His wife sent a telegram saying, "I'm OK, but alone." On his journey to England, sailing over the area where his daughters had died, Spafford wrote the famous hymn, "It is Well with My Soul."

It is in our most difficult times we must know and believe that "for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28.)

It is crucial we understand that God loves us! Personally!

**We are loved completely and at all times by
God**

He is in covenant with us. The word *covenant* means, "Abandoning

the right to give up". God has abandoned the right to give up loving us. God loves mankind! When God says, "He is not willing for any to perish," He means it (John 3:16-17).

In Genesis 4 Cain is given a personal warning from God: "Sin is crouching at the door, it desires to have you, but you must master it." This does not contradict what scripture says in 1 Corinthians 10:13, "You will not be tempted beyond what you can bare... God will always make an avenue of escape". This is because it shows us that sin is a choice. Yet, despite our choices, God still loves us.

In Genesis 18:16-33 we see God's concern for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, despite their sin. In Numbers 22, God sends an angel to destroy Balaam -- judgement has already been determined and sent -- but God also enables a donkey to speak to Balaam, to get him to repent. God tries to change Saul's mind four times in his concern for him (1 Samuel 19:19) even saying that "When you prophesy you will be changed" (1 Samuel 10:6).

Jonah was angry at God for saving Nineveh, because he wanted God to dish out judgement on them and knew that if they repented then God would save them. Notice God's concern for the people of Ninevah in Jonah 4:11 -- "These people just don't know their right hand from their left hand". We see Jesus have the same concern, not condemning a woman caught in adultery (John 8:3-11) as one example among many.

God will create a fix to fix you. He "does not treat us as our sin deserves or repay us according to our iniquities." (Psalm 103:10.) God is love! (1 John 4:16.) What and who can compare to him and

to his love? He is the very essence of all that love is! He shows love to a thousand generations, of those who love and keep his commandments (Exodus 20:6). That is 40,000 years. That speaks of an eternal love that transcends time!

Psalm 21:7

"For the king trusts in the Lord; through the unfailing love of the Most High he will not be shaken".

Psalm 25:1-7

"According to your love remember me, for you are good, O Lord".

I John 4:19

"We love because He first loved us."

I John 3:1

"How great is the love the Father has **lavished** on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"

Love makes a difference

For us to impact our city and our nation we must be people of love. Here are some ways that we can love that makes a difference.

Matthew 5:14, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Matthew 19:19, "Love your neighbor as yourself".

John 13:34&35, "Love one another...By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

John 14:15, "If you love me, you will obey what I command." Then verse 23, "The Father and I will come and make our home in you".

5. Romans 5:5 ..."God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us."

God gives us his love!

Romans 5:8

"God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us".

Romans 8:28-39

"Nothing can separate us from the love of God".

Ephesians 3:16-19

"that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God."

Our understanding and operating in the love of Christ releases us to operate out of "all the fullness of God."

God never asks to do something that He himself hasn't empowered us to do

Ezekiel 36:26

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove from you a heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh".

It is all done by God;

I will give - a new HEART

I will put - a new SPIRIT

I will remove - a heart of STONE

I will give - a heart of FLESH

Let us allow God to reach into the deep recesses of our hearts and remove our fears and anxieties. Let Him remove every obstacle, hurt, barrier and restriction and fill us with the love of Christ. Christ's love releases us into God's full intent for our lives.

Isaiah 54:7-10

"For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, **but** with everlasting kindness [loyalty] I will have compassion on you, says the Lord your redeemer. To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again. Though the mountains be

shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you".

Ezekiel 39:29

"I will no longer hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel (The Church), declares the Sovereign Lord."

Application:

Let's let God love us. If you don't feel loved, God wants you to know you are absolutely loved by God. If there are areas that need to change or improve, yield those areas to God right now. Let us demonstrate Gods love where ever we go.

Maybe you don't know God's love today. He would like to demonstrate His love to you today. For you are a son or daughter of the most high God.

Scriptures that speak of being a son or daughter of God

John 14:18

"I will not leave you as Orphans; I will come to you."

An orphan is fatherless. So often in the body of Christ people are looking to have a spiritual father. This is a heart attitude. We have looked and what we want has not been fulfilled because we have looked in the wrong direction. Jesus is all we need!

Isaiah 9:6-7

" For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of His government and peace there will be no end"

Jesus is, has, and will continue to be what we need Him to be. He continues to call us to intimacy and to Himself. It is by knowing the love of Christ that we are filled to the measure of all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:17-19).

John 15:15

"I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know what His master is doing. But I have called you friends, because all things that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you."

Who wants to be a servant of God? Shame on you! **We are no longer called servants but we are called friends and sons.** We are in the family of God as sons and daughters of the most high God! The Father wants us to know all that He is saying and doing (John 5:19). He has called us to be His children!

1 John 3:1-2

"How great is the **love** the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

God always wants the very best for us! He will come to us. He will put obstacles in our path to try to redirect us to go in the right direction. He has loved us before time and is always concerned for our well being. He is working to our good.

God wants to raise our expectations

John 5:20

"Because the Father loves the Son and shows him all He does. Yes, to your amazement He will show Him even greater things than these."

John 14:12

"Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."

Unless we understand that we are sons and daughters of God we will not have very high expectations. God loves us as his own and

has sent His Spirit to be with us. We are not orphans! We are part of the family of God. Ask God to reveal your identity to you so that out of it you can operate in **love, authority, and rest, in Him.**

Chapter Four:

PEOPLE WITH SUPERNATURAL ENCOUNTERS

Now that we've established the benefits of the Holy Spirit and understand who we are in God, it would be good to look at some examples of people who have walked in prophecy and who have had supernatural encounters with God, so that we can begin to unpack what prophecy looks like.

We've established that prophecy isn't spooky. Supernatural encounters and manifestations and signs and wonders from God are also not spooky. We need not be frightened, even if they are unusual. God is the creator and is able to do all things. He is quite creative in the things he does! Signs and wonders and supernatural encounters are useful for evangelism and encouragement and edification and faith and they glorify God in unique ways. We see this affirmed by the scriptures and the examples we have there.

Jesus

Luke 3:22; 4:1

"...and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a

dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

"And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness"

If Jesus needed to be 'filled by the Spirit' to fulfil his ministry, how much more do we need to be! Being filled with the Spirit is for everyone, not for a select few with a special ministry. We've already examined how Jesus was filled with the Spirit, but what other kinds of supernatural encounters did he have?

1. Angels

In Matthew 4:11, angels came and ministered to Jesus. Hebrews 1:14 calls angels 'ministering spirits'. "For He will command His Angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways." (Psalm 91:11.) Jesus said, "Do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:53.) Angels are real and are a part of our lives. We should use all the resources God has given us.

2. Transfigurations

In Matthew 17, Jesus was transfigured before the disciples. Moses and Elijah also arrived, talking with him. Then a 'bright cloud' overshadowed them and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; **listen to him.**" (Matthew 17:5.) But the disciples got caught up with the manifestation -- Peter offered to build three tents; one for Moses, one for Elijah, and one for Jesus. When God spoke to them from

the cloud they fell down, terrified. But what does Jesus say to them? “Rise and have no fear” (17:7) and then “tell no one the vision” (17:9). **The focus is never on the manifestation but on Jesus and what He says.** Also, Jesus tells us not to be afraid of such manifestations!

3. Healings and miracles

Jesus’ healings and miracles are well known. We needn’t go into detail here. Many of these miracles included encounters with demons where he always had authority over them. Likewise, we have authority over them and can tell them to go in Jesus’ name.

4. Other signs and wonders

Jesus commands a storm to stop in Mark 4:35-41. Then, of course, he walks on water in Matthew 14:22-33.

5. The resurrection

Let us not forget the supernatural event of the resurrection! Jesus spends forty days with his disciples and some interesting things happen: for example, he is able to suddenly appear to his disciples (John 20:19; John 21:1). Sometimes they don’t even recognise him at first!

Other New Testament examples

Hebrews 1:7 says that God “makes his angels winds, and his ministers a *flame of fire*.” It’s interesting to note that both wind and *tongues of fire* manifested on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) when

the Church received the Holy Spirit. It would not be out of place to say that there must have been angelic hosts there. Then “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:4.) Afterwards, marvelous things happened, including mass evangelism!

The believers were ‘filled with the Spirit’ and ‘continued to speak the word of God with boldness’ in Acts 4:31. Peter falls into “a trance” and God gives him a vision that opens the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10:9-11). When Peter brings this gospel to Cornelius and his household, the Spirit falls on them all! (Acts 10:44 - there must have been a visible manifestation of some sort.) Peter also has an angelic encounter in Acts 12:7. Philip is given instruction from an angel in Acts 8:26, and the Spirit directs him to speak to someone specific and share the Gospel (Acts 8:29). Philip is even “carried away” (teleported, it seems) by the Spirit supernaturally afterwards! (Acts 8:39.)

Paul’s conversion to the Gospel is after a supernatural encounter (Acts 9:3-10). He sees a bright light and hears Jesus speak to him. Meanwhile, Ananias is given a vision to pray for Paul so that his temporary blindness may be removed. Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit after Ananias prayed for him (Acts 9:17).

Paul lived in a revelatory (seeing and hearing realm). Not only was the supernatural a part of his life from day one of being born again (Acts 9:3-19) but he was also "caught up into the third heaven" (2 Corinthians 12:2) and "caught up into Paradise" (2 Corinthians 12:3-4) where He heard “inexplicable things” that were not “lawful” for him to utter. He didn't allow his lack of understanding to prevent

his experiences. All that's come to earth has come from heaven, but not all in heaven has come to earth. There is more! (2 Corinthians 12:2-4.) He also did not boast about his encounters and in 2 Corinthians simply says, "I know a man," showing humility.

Paul also said, "I speak in tongues more than all of you," when speaking to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 14:8). Yet he knew when to speak so the people could understand him. He wrote that God reveals the secret things by His Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10) and that we have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). We are always moving from a carnal mindset to a heavenly one.

John received a vision and prophecy that became the book of Revelation. In Revelation 1:10 -- 11, 4:1 we see John "heard" and "saw", giving us an idea on how prophecy works.

Old Testament examples

In the Old Testament we also pick up patterns and models.

Adam

In Genesis 2:16, God commanded man. Here's what we see in this portion of scripture:

- Adam met with God daily
- He was given a clear mandate by God
- He operated with heavenly intellect

- He operated with God's authority
- There was no sickness in the garden.
- Eve was to be a helper to what Adam was already called to.
- He had authority over the animals and earth.

Prophecy entails us meeting with God, hearing his commandments, operating with the “mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16), operating in the authority of Jesus (Ephesians 2:6) and exercising this authority. In other words, we can also see a clear link between miraculous healing and prophecy - we hear from God who he wants to heal and we respond in his authority, which we operate in.

Noah

- God speaks to Noah. (Genesis 6:13, Genesis 9:1). God reaffirms His covenant that He first gave to Adam.
- Noah has encounters with God
- Noah was given a task never done before - inventor, architect, zookeeper, ship builder.
- Noah was a preacher with God's message

Prophecy includes having encounters with God, being given a task (sometimes it might be unusual) and preaching God’s message.

Abraham

- God speaks to Abram (Genesis 12:1, 13:14-17). God speaks by a vision (Genesis 15:1). God appears to Abram (Genesis 17:1, 18:1).
- God says to him, "Go to the land I direct you."
- Abraham intercedes for Lot. Angels meet with Lot. (Genesis 19:1.)
- Abraham lies to Abimelech - God appears to Abimelech in a dream. (Genesis 20:3.)
- Abraham sends Hagar away and God opens Hagar's eyes (Genesis 21:19).

We should expect such supernatural encounters. Prophecy means we go to wherever God directs us. We intercede for others. But what's more, here we see God supernaturally appearing to people in dreams and revealing himself to people that previously didn't know him. We should expect such supernatural occurrences in our Christian walk, corporately and personally.

Many others

God appears to Isaac in Genesis 26:24. Jacob has a dream of angels ascending and descending (Genesis 28:12). Jonathan fights with the Philistines and wins after receiving revelation from the Lord (1 Samuel 14:1). Elisha prays and God opens his servant's eyes to see into the heavenly realm and see an army of angels (2 Kings 6:16,17). Even after death there is power in Elisha's bones,

resurrecting a dead man (2 Kings 13:21)! God speaks vividly to Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:11) asking: "What do you see?"

Prophecy changes us. This is because the Spirit changes us. In 1 Samuel 10:6 it says, "The Spirit of the Lord will come powerfully upon you, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person." What we also see in 1 Samuel 3:1-21 is that we have to learn to hear the voice of God. It doesn't always come naturally. But we can learn how to do it. Prophecy is a learned action.

Manifestations are pointers

Our inheritance is a "double portion" of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 61:1-7). In other words, God gives his people the Spirit without measure. (John 3:34.) The Holy Spirit and supernatural encounters and prophecy and manifestations go hand-in-hand. History is full of people who have had supernatural encounters in the Spirit and have lived in the power of the Spirit. These examples are just a few from the scriptures that show us to expect supernatural encounters and have a broader vision of what prophecy is and how it functions. Since we see it in the Bible we should expect this - and we should expect it in our own lives, and the life of our churches, too. We needn't be scared of supernatural encounters, and we shouldn't seek them exclusively, but we should expect them.

Manifestations are like bowling arrows. They are just pointers, not our final destination. On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2)

manifestations occurred and peoples' behavior was altered. They appeared drunk! It was for *empowerment* not personal gratification, even though they probably did feel gratification. And what was the result: many became believers in Christ. When the Holy Spirit comes you "will have power and be my witnesses", says Jesus in Acts 1:8.

Chapter Five:

DEVELOPING A PROPHETIC CULTURE

A prophetic culture is hearing and doing what God says which impacts people from generation to generation.

There are **three levels to the prophetic**.

The Faith Level

- Everyone can operate on this level. This is about edifying, building up, and encouraging others. “For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged.” (1 Corinthians 14:31.)
- New Testament prophecy is redemptive, not corrective.
- It is also God using the thoughts, words or actions of the speaker to communicate and it is not the *literal* words of God. “For we know in part and we prophesy in part.” (1 Corinthians 13:9.) We will always prophesy in part until Jesus comes again. We do not elevate prophecy to the same level of scripture, but use scripture to discern prophecy.

The Gift Level

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”

- The Holy Spirit gives gifts as he wills. These are for encouraging, comforting and strengthening the church. This is a little more than just the faith level - it is a gift given specifically from the Holy Spirit at any given time.
- Sometimes one gift will be our primary gift which we operate in most of the time, yet we can operate in them all as the Holy Spirit directs. There will be contexts in which God will give you a gift to use that you've perhaps never operated in before (or have operated in very few times before). The manifestation of the Spirit happens when the Spirit decides that a particular manifestation will produce good fruit at a particular time and

place. This is all empowered by the same Spirit.

- If you have a word from the Lord on a Sunday morning, make sure it's *for the church* before sharing it! It may actually be for you, or it may be for someone specific - in which case, share it with them directly.

The Office Level

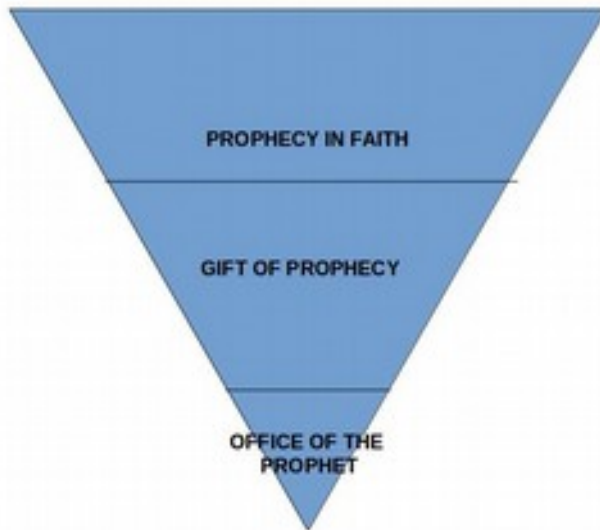
This is a function given by Jesus for a person to operate in for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry. One could call it a 'calling' more than just a gift -- something akin to your life's ministry or work.

Ephesians 4:11-13

"So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his 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."

No amount of prayer and fasting will make you into a Prophet. This is an office which Jesus calls you to.

If we had to put this into a diagram it would look like this diagram on the following page:



The reason why this triangle is upside down is to show that everyone can operate in the faith level. The office is put at the bottom because less people have that specific function, and the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Ephesians 2:20).

Abraham was considered a prophet (see Genesis 20:1-7). What made Abraham a prophet? He heard God and he obeyed God. He made a lot of mistakes and sometimes didn't trust God as he should have, yet he was still a prophet because he took instructions. Can you take instructions? Yes, you probably can. In the same way every one of us can hear God and do what he wants

us to do. It isn't about how old or mature we are in the Lord, God wants to use all his people.

When God spoke to the Israelites at Sinai they were terrified (Exodus 19; Hebrews 12:21) and they wanted Moses to speak to God and God to speak to them through Moses. People are the same today. They want someone else to tell them what God is saying and telling them to do. But every one is a priest and part of God's holy nation set apart unto him (1 Peter 2:9). A priest communicates with God and takes the request of man to God and tells man what God is saying to them. We can all walk in this - it is not the responsibility of those primarily gifted in prophecy or those who are in the office of the prophet. Those in the office are given to the church to equip all in the church so that the body comes to maturity; they are not given to the church so that each person in the church has to rely on them for direction and knowledge on what God is saying!

Knowing where you fit in the prophetic

The enemy has told us many lies which prevent us from walking in all that God has for us to do. Until you understand where you fit in the prophetic you're going to be unsure of what to do. Here are five keys to help you:

1) Where do you find yourself living in the scriptures?

When you think of the prophetic, do you think of the Old Testament or the New Testament? If you look at how we often operate in the Church today, we have an Old Testament mindset.

For example, we treat prophetic people like Old Testament priests, being the only people who can speak to God and hear for us. In the Old Testament there was also a concentration of the prophetic into one person at a specific time, and we often treat prophetic people like that today - so when you need to make a big decision on your job your first reaction is to phone your leaders before listening to God for yourself. But we are to couple what we hear from God and the good counsel from leaders.

If we consistently rely on others to hear from God it is not a directional issue but a relational one. We all have the ability to hear from the Lord. When Jesus died the curtain was torn in the temple (Matthew 27:51) signifying that we can all enter the Holy of Holies, not just select priests. Many people don't want to learn how to hear the voice of God for themselves. They rather just want a prophetic word. Prophetic words, however, are to confirm what God is *already* saying to you. They are not your first port of call.

We have the same approach to healing and the other gifts. We ask for others to come pray for the sick and heal them when God has placed us where we're at to do that work.

2) Stop comparing

We so often compare what God is doing with and in us to others -- and often we compare *up!* In other words, we will look to people God has called to the office of the Prophet and compare ourselves with them. We will say, "But I don't do that," or, "I can't do that," and therefore conclude that we are not prophetic or called to be prophetic.

But God has given us all the Holy Spirit. One person might flow in one gift more than you, but so what? The Holy Spirit determines and apportions as he sees fit. God has placed certain people in offices in a very specific way, but otherwise, wherever we find ourselves, we are to operate in the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12) right there and then. When we make this shift we become participators, not spectators.

3) Your gift-mix

In line with this, we need to understanding our individual gift-mix. What is your primary gift? Teacher, pastor, evangelist? Your primary gift may not be the prophetic, but that doesn't mean you don't operate in the prophetic. Rather, the prophetic adds an element of power to your primary gift. For example, preaching prophetically can come with the added element of words of knowledge, discernment, praying for healing, and so on. Or perhaps you are called to business - the prophetic can help you with strategy and giving your vocation an added element of God's power, for the sake of the Kingdom. Operate in what God has made you and what he has called you to be.

4) Knowing the difference between gifts, calling and anointing

Your gift is what you do. It's an ability given to you by God. It's given to you by grace. **But your gift is not who you are - your calling is who you are.**

So who are you? You are a child of God and that will never change. You are saved by his grace and have been reconciled to him. You are loved, always. His love and affirmation will never change. These

are the things we hold onto - not our gift.

If we make our gift our identity we are going to wobble, badly. There will be times when you are flowing smoothly in the prophetic and are being highly accurate with words from the Lord, and then, suddenly, you're put into a valley (see chapter eleven) and you are confused about your identity. This is because we've only seen our significance in accordance with what we operate in. The world will encourage us to attach our identity to what we do, but this is a lie from hell. Your gift will ebb and flow. Rest in your calling, in who you are in Christ, not your gifts. When you are struggling with your gifts it makes no difference to who you are.

Anointing is about our proximity to God. Sometimes we get so involved with ministry and after a long time we get tired and realise that we're not hearing from God or being refreshed. Your calling and your gift hasn't changed -- what's changed is how much you're living in God's presence. Proximity to God and his presence is what equals anointing.

5) Fear

Fear has to do with pride. You're scared that things are going to turn out badly or you're going to sit with egg on your face, or you're going to have to be corrected, or someone is never going to love Jesus because you prayed for them and nothing happened. If you are wanting to see more happen in the supernatural you are going to have to deal with pride and fear. These will keep you from moving in God's promises.

Fear and pride won't go away and stay away, either. Just when you

think you've dealt with them you will find them in some other situation. Fear is "False Evidence that Appears Real". It's more important to be obedient than right, however. You can make the biggest mess and God will fix it. He is more interested in your heart and obedience. Your primary goal must be to be obedient.

Colossians 1 tells us that God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in Jesus. Ephesians 3:19 says we can be filled with the fullness of God. But what precedes that? Ephesians 3:17 -- that we would be rooted and established in love. Perfect love casts out fear. (1 John 4:18.) If we love him, we will keep his commandments. (John 14:23.)

Chapter Six:

YOU CAN ALL SEE

"Having eyes, do you not see?" (Mark 8:18)

Many verses in the Bible state that all Christians can and should have their spiritual eyes and ears open and functioning. We often pass over clear references to spiritual sight because we have been told that seeing in the spirit is not our gift. Here is a quick overview of seven sections of scripture that speak of how *every* believer should and can have their spiritual eyes operational.

1. Hebrews 5:12-14:

"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (NKJV)

This shows that a sign of all mature Christians is that they will be active in using discernment. It is time to grow and use our discernment, seeing the differences between good and evil. This is so that we can be open about God doing anything in our midst

while also not just accepting absolutely everything as from the Lord.

2. Ephesians 1:15-18:

"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (NKJV).

If Paul believed that only a few Christians could see in the Spirit, then why would he be wasting his time praying for all the Ephesian believers to have the eyes of their understanding enlightened? Obviously Paul believed that all of them could have their spiritual eyes opened.

3. 2 Kings 6:15-17:

"And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do? So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the Lord opened

the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha" (NKJV).

Elisha didn't pray, "If it is my servant's gifting, open his eyes." No, Elisha knew that God wanted to open the eyes of his servant, as God always wants to open the eyes of His servants. There is no question that God has given us all spiritual eyes that would have worked perfectly before the Fall - why shouldn't they work in every believer?

4. Revelation 3:17-18:

"Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and **anoint your eyes with salve, that you may see.**"

God has provided an anointing that can open the spiritual eyes of every believer. God has not excluded even one person by limiting His gifts to only a few. This anointing of Revelation 3 is available to all, as is the clothing and gold that He has provided.

5. Luke 4:18:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim

freedom to the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed..."

This verse is rarely thought of as referring to spiritual sight, but let's look a little closer. Jesus said that He was anointed to preach good news to the poor, which is a spiritual activity. He was anointed to proclaim freedom to the prisoners and to release the oppressed. Jesus was not literally opening jail cells to set captives free. Instead, He healed and freed hearts and delivered others of demonic oppression. This leads to the conclusion that Jesus was not only healing the physically blind, which he did, but *also* the spiritually blind. He still does both today.

6. Matthew 7:1-5:

"Do not judge or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Clearly Jesus is using exaggeration (hyperbole) to make a point, and is not talking about the physical eye. He is speaking of how we see the world through the eyes of our heart, and how at times we get a speck or a log that hinders our seeing. This is also speaking of how hypocrisy operates.

7. 1 John 2:9-11

"Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes."

When a Christian hates another believer, does that Christian go physically blind? Of course not! This is speaking of how hate blinds spiritual eyes. We must operate out of love. Hate hinders, obscures and destroys Christ-like seeing. Jesus loved all: the unlovely, tax collectors, thieves, prostitutes, drunks, gluttons, sinners, those not understanding. All!

God's desire is for every person to operate in spiritual sight. There is so much more available to us, and we must remain open to finding new truth in the Word. The Old Testament prophets operated with God's sight; Jesus operated with God's sight; the disciples operated with God's sight; and God wants us to operate with His sight. See 2 Kings 6:13-17; Daniel 10:4-7, 8-11; Numbers 22:21-27, 28-33; John 5:19, 8:28; Revelation 1:9-18, 4:1.

Basic checkpoints for prophecy

- New Testament prophecy encourages, comforts and builds up.
- It is redemptive, not corrective. A simple word of encouragement might be a life-saving statement at the right time. We know that God wants to establish his kingdom through us and partner with us. How does his kingdom look? It is not divisive or harsh.
- God is always talking over everyone. God loves all people exactly the same and if he desperately wants to talk to us, he wants to talk to everyone. So if we align with God's heart we can move in the gift easily.

These three words can serve as a simple way to process information from the spirit realm:

1. God shows you something. (Revelation)
2. You ask God what the revelation means. (Interpretation)
3. You ask the Lord what you should do with the information just received. (Application).

REVELATION: Ask the Lord to show you a picture in your imagination.

INTERPRETATION: Ask the Lord what the picture means.

APPLICATION: Ask the Lord what you should do in response.

Or, these four checkpoints for prophecy help:

1. It has to be the words of God.

2. It has to have God's ways. This is hugely important and here we need maturity. We might have the words, but we need to know how to administer them, otherwise we might discourage instead of encourage. Jonah in the Old Testament was a prophet with one simple message. He ran away with that message because he knew that God's heart was to save, not to condemn, and he wanted to see the people of Ninevah condemned. There's a way in God's means that always brings about redemption. Often God shows us something that's difficult for us to understand and redeem. We must then remember he always wants to redeem, and so find the best way to deliver the message.

3. It has to have the address of God. Who is God talking to? We might have the words and the way but we've no idea who God wants to speak to! An individual? A couple? A whole church?

4. It has to have the timing of God. The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets (1 Corinthians 14:32). Prophecy isn't something that occurs where we have no control! That's possession, not prophecy! So we don't jump in the middle of a sermon!

God does use our five senses. We might see something, smell something, hear something, etc. Every time we do this it's not easy. We always have to step out in faith and that never changes. The difficult part is to start, and then from there it's easy. Dialogue with God; don't rush. All of us are at different levels and seasons, but you have to speak to God and step out.

How do we prepare to hear God?

James 4:7 says, "Submit yourself to God. Resist the devil and he will flee."

1. Submit yourself to God. Reaffirm His Lordship, lay your ideas and thoughts at His feet.
2. Resist the devil. Tell him to go in Jesus name. Tell him that he can not bring his thoughts or ideas to your mind or effect you in any way.
3. Expect God to speak to you. 1 Corinthians 2:16 says, "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." Usually the first thought that comes to your mind is God speaking. Whether by thought, impression, picture, scripture, pain.
4. Believe God is speaking to you. Know God wants to speak to you.
5. Wait on God, enquiring of Him.
6. Operate in faith - step over your fear and speak out. Be bold! God

always honours faith over character - He uses imperfect people.

7. Expect God's results. Pertaining to healing - "if God reveals, He heals!" Healing is like a river with many tributaries. (We will cover this in the following chapter.)
8. Operate from position and not from petition - you are a son or daughter of Christ. We are his ambassadors and representatives on earth. You operate from the finished work of Christ where Christ made a public spectacle of principalities and powers. (Colossians 2:15.) The enemy will always challenge your identity and authority.

How do we practice?

1. In an atmosphere of love (1 Corinthians 13:1).
2. Under spiritual authority (Hebrews 13:17). Get involved in your local church! Be under the authority of its leaders!
3. Beyond our comfort zones.
4. "Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them! So that your progress will be evident to all." (1 Timothy 4:14-15.)
 - Prophecy when you wake up.

- Prophecy throughout your day.
- Practice words of knowledge.
- Team up with another person.
- Expect words of knowledge for healing.
- Prophecy as a group.
- Prophetically intercede in prayer.

"The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you in power, you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person." (1 Samuel 9:19-23; 10:5-6.)

ACTIVATION:

I want communication from Heaven in my life. I ask you that you would open the unseen realm to me. Lord, please remove all fear from my heart--- fear of the unseen and fear of spiritual encounters. Lord, I want to receive all of your spiritual blessings that you have provided for me. I make myself available to your many forms of communication.

Chapter Seven:

PROPHETS IN THE CHURCH

We are all prophetic and can use the prophetic in whatever we do, or whatever our primary gift is -- for example, we can preach prophetically; or use the prophetic in children's ministry; or use it in leading the music team; and so on. We all have our own gift-mix. But it would be good to explore the office of the Prophet and come to grips with the role and calling of the Prophet, so you can understand if this is where God is calling you; or, if you're a church leader, you're able to see who the Prophets in your church are.

Sometimes when we speak to people and pray we are speaking from earth to heaven. But Ephesians 2 says we are seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. We should be speaking from heaven down to earth! Whenever you have a word or preach or use the prophetic in whatever you do, you should remember that you are hearing what God is saying and bringing it down to earth. In essence we know this but how do we do that? Revelation 19:10 says, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." God has given us the gift of prophecy to testify about Jesus to the world. This testimony is that he alone is Lord, and that is the heart of prophecy. Jesus must be central when we speak, prophesy, serve prophetically etc.

So Jesus is the central theme in the Prophet's life. The Prophet is actively, ongoingly, testifying about Jesus to the world. But there

are different ways in which the Prophet does this compared to others who move in the gift but have a different call.

To understand these ways better, let's first compare Old Testament Prophets and New Testament Prophets.

Old Testament Prophets:

1. They were the exclusive voice of God. Hebrews 1:1,2 says, "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets."

2. They were called by God to be his anointed spokespersons. As Jeremiah says, "Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, 'Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.'" (Jeremiah 1:9.) Note that there were women and men called to this.

3. They prophesied as the Spirit came on them or as the word came to them. This is frequently seen throughout the Old Testament narrative.

4. Their ministry and prophecies were often severe, judgemental warnings. Doom and gloom.

5. They were judged on the accuracy of their prediction. If it didn't come about they would be stoned. (Deuteronomy 13.)

New Testament Prophets:

1. They are not the exclusive voice of God but part of the five-fold ministry listed in Ephesians 4. God now does not only speak through a Prophet but speaks through all of us. Even children!

2. They are called by God and given as a gift to the church. Ephesians 4:8 speaks of this. He gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets etc. Those in the five-fold ministry are a gift sent by God to a church.

3. They prophesy from an anointing that God has placed on them.

1 John 2:20, 27

“But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge... But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie--just as it has taught you, abide in him.”

If you use the gift of prophecy you will find that there are times you can easily give out a prophecy (a verbal one) and other times you struggle. But someone called to the office of the Prophet will find that they can always move in this. They can lay hands on a person and a prophetic word will come or word of knowledge etc. They have a constancy with it.

4. They generally and mostly minister through the grace gift of prophecy, given to them to give to the church, which always

points to Jesus. (Romans 12:6.) In other words, you see them doing this more than anything else.

5. Their words are judged, or should be judged, and their fruit should be judged. “Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said.” (1 Corinthians 14:29.) “Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.” (Matthew 7:20.) What is the track-record of a Prophet? Where have they come from? These are the things we ought to look at.

Prophecy has always been an indispensable tool used by God in the scriptures. Therefore it is a tool God still uses today and we should let him use it! If you’re a leader in a local church, how is prophecy going in your church?

Today’s Prophets:

Now that we’ve looked at the New Testament Prophet we can begin to understand how a Prophet functions in our time and context today.

1. They reveal the mind of Christ -- God’s Will for individuals or churches. Prophets come into a church and give prophetic words to individuals and that church which give direction or highlight things the prophet sees. To speak into the life of a church is a huge privilege but also a huge responsibility!

(Elders and lead elders: when a prophetic word comes, what are you doing with it? It’s got to be tested and weighed, but you must pray over it and trust God and move into the new thing He is

saying for your church.)

2. They share revelation and the application of God's Word.

They are able to apply, even very practically, God's words. Pastors do this, of course, but Prophets can amplify certain things in a different way to them.

3. They give confirmation. Individuals or churches may be working through something and sense God wants to take them in a certain direction. Prophets often come in and, without knowing all of that, confirm what God has been saying.

4. They challenge us to repent, to reform, and to restore. This isn't doom and gloom. Repentance is something we all have to do again and again. We sometimes do go a degree off from where God wants us to be -- as churches or individuals. Often Prophets also come in and help restore a church that may have just gone through a cataclysmic event.

5. Prophets interpret the prior word of God. I.e. What God has said. A church or an individual can get stuck in something God has said in the past and the Prophet can come and interpret that word and help to get them into the next thing God has. The Prophet interprets the 'now' word of God and gives the new word to the people.¹

1 By 'new' word we do not mean something that is an addition or is in conflict with scripture! A thousand times no! We mean a temporal word from God that is for a time and place and context, for the purposes of direction, encouragement, discipline etc. This is a personal word for a person or corporate body that is not prescriptive for every believer in every place and time, unlike the scriptures.

Elders and lead elders can make use of this. If a Prophet has come into your church and they've given you a word and you're implementing it in your church but are uncertain on some of its aspects, get hold of the Prophet and ask them what they think God was saying. God will often give a Prophet a wider interpretation and clarification. Elders are to work with prophets: this is what they do!

Amos 3:7

“For the Lord God does nothing
without revealing his secret
to his servants the prophets.”

So Prophets arise! We want to hear God's plans for the future! What's on his heart for us? For cities? For nations? God has invested in you amazing gifts, so listen to him, and he'll share with us what he wants to do.

Pastors / Elders: how can you recognise a Prophet in your church?

What follows are *observations*. These may or may not be true. They are simply certain things that have been observed more often than not:

1. Usually they have been called as a child (like Samuel was). Some know this from very young, others only realise this in

hindsight.

2. They are very sensitive to God's voice. Yes, they grow into this (as we all do) but from the beginning they are more sensitive than most.

3. They are quick to discern spirits. This can come very naturally. They can move into a room or a church and quickly sense that something is wrong, and God will speak to them about it.

4. They are usually not very social or extroverted. They don't mind being on their own and just spending time with the Lord. Elijah, for example, seems to be a bit of a loner. But don't make that an excuse! If you are like this, it's good to spend time with the Lord, but it's also good not to be alone all the time! Force yourself to spend time with people as well!

5. They don't like the limelight. They are reluctant leaders at times. There is great joy in administering the gift in churches, even from the front, but that is very different to enjoying the limelight!

6. They love to worship and pray. Anna the prophetess in the temple was just worshipping God and praying. They love to be alone with God and just communing with him.

7. They are very direct people. Sometimes we can be offended by Prophets! But look at your own heart if you're offended because very often you're offended because it was true!

8. Visions, dreams and words come easily to them. You can have a Prophet who is primarily a dreamer or one who primarily sees visions, but these three generally come more easily to Prophets

and more consistently.

9. They go through tough experiences. Jeremiah is a great example of this. This can be in body, soul, spirit; materially; mind, will and emotions. God takes them through the roughs to test and train them. This training is about attuning them to his ways and thoughts, so they live in those and can distinguish between them and their own.

10. The word of knowledge and word of wisdom come easily. Plus a Prophet's ministry is usually accompanied by the gift of faith (we see this often in the Bible -- prophets moving in faith in extraordinary ways), by healings and miracles.

This isn't a checklist. In fact, none of this might relate to you. These are simply observations that seem to come up more than usual. Speak to God and find out from him what he is saying. Ask others and find out what they see. Work with your leaders! Rest in the fact that maybe God has called you to use the gift of prophecy in your church and those around you, but may have not called you to the office of the Prophet. Don't be in a rush, let God work with you and through you and in you and he will reveal when the time is right.

Discerning the ministry of a Prophet:

These points are mostly for church leaders, in an effort to help them see, nurture and encourage a Prophet in their church. However, those who feel God is calling them to be a Prophet should also take note of them:

1. Leaders, notice those who are prophesying. When they begin to prophesy you find that they may be hesitant but they are also very accurate. Encourage them. As they gain confidence and start to prophesy more frequently and become more accurate, you will know that God is using them. Is it a prophetic gift that is sharp, or a Prophet that God is growing? You must ask this question and watch and see what God is doing and encourage them and sharpen them.

2. When they're incorrect in their prophecy, and you or a leader speaks to them (as should happen) how do they react? Is it an attitude of, "Don't touch me, I'm the anointed prophet of God"? Do they leave? "You don't deserve me," they say? This is important as we must test their fruit and character.

(There is such security in leadership that dissects our prophetic words and prays over them and tell us if it needs to be sharpened, or if it wasn't quite right, or was flat out wrong. Don't take umbrage -- be humble! You will never grow in your gift or your calling if you are not willing to let God use others he has called to sharpen you! It's incredibly sad and even mind-boggling that people find it offensive that leaders would love them enough to notice their gift and calling and help them sharpen it.)

3. Take note of whether or not they like to hog the floor. In other words, when they give a prophetic word, do they ramble and beat around the bush and expand it in several unnecessary directions? This is a character flaw that you will need to deal with.

4. How is their submission to leadership? Are they willing to

submit? This is key in the life of any Prophet. To submit to local church leadership is a clear Biblical instruction. Pastors / elders of a local church are the people God has given the local church to shepherd and they are leading it, not dictating to it.

5. Are they committed to the local church? So often we can get a prophetic person who comes in and is quite visible and moves in the prophetic, but what authority do they have to speak to a local church when they aren't even committed to their own?

6. As they grow are others recognising the gift? Are they flowing in a gift that's more than just prophetic words?

7. Leaders: If you see a person like this emerging, identity them, unlock them, and release them. Mentor them. If you can't mentor them, then get a prophet or someone like that to mentor them. Prophets are indispensable and the prophetic is indispensable to the local church.

Weighing up an itinerant Prophet

Many times prophets come into our city and church and they prophesy words of judgement and despair, or confuse our people, leaving a mess behind them. How could we have avoided this?

1. Find out about them. Sometimes we'll hear of a great prophet and invite them in simply because of hearsay. Don't assume their character is where it should be just because they are seen as a 'great' Prophet.

2. Who recognises and endorses their ministry? Is there

someone that can vouch for them, who is working with them through any character issues?

3. What fruit is there in their ministry? Is it lasting fruit? Or do they come in and, when we look back, we see no lasting fruit of their ministry? Or no lasting positive fruit?

4. Is their ministry exalting Jesus? All prophetic ministry must exalt the King.

5. What local church are they connected to? According to the Word we must be connected into a local body. Can the leader of that church endorse them and their ministry?

6. If they are connected to a local body, does their leader know where they are? The lead elder and elders of their church are responsible for the Prophet who comes from their church. If they don't know where they are that's not right, they're not accountable.

7. Record the prophecies. If they don't want prophecies recorded there is a problem. We must record them for accountability. This isn't always easy when words are not spoken over the mic when given to individuals. But if a Prophet prophesies from the front it needs to be recorded so we can weigh it up.

(If someone prophesies over you, write it down. Read over these words -- pray over them, thank God for them, mull over them. This is also good for accountability and openness. A Prophet may say something to you as an individual and you might interpret it totally differently, and meanwhile they weren't saying that at all.

Through listening to it again you can find the essence of it.)

8. Ask who you can contact if you need to talk about something that has occurred. Again, if they're not in a local church, who are you going to contact?

Chapter Eight:

FAITH AND HEALING

Romans 12:3

“For by the grace given to me I say to every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”

As mentioned previously, the prophetic is often accompanied by signs, wonders, miracles and healings. We don't find a specific verse in the Bible that says that signs and wonders **must** follow a Prophet (there is only one that refers to the mark of an Apostle -- see 2 Corinthians 12:12) but we can see this pattern frequently occur in the scriptures (and we often see it happen today). We see this in the life of Jesus most of all.

Faith is the element for all of these, including prophecy, to be exercised. Faith essentially converts the gift into action.

Healing is like a river with many tributaries. Jesus healed and heals in so many diverse ways. Let's not be prescriptive and get locked into one way. We can't pray for a person once and see healing and then pray that same prayer every time. The wind blows where it wills. (John 3:8.)

Some examples of where or how or when healing took place in the

New Testament includes:

- Calling for the elders - James 5:14-15 ..."anoint with oil and the prayer of faith will raise them up...". We need to get back to this pattern, where elders lay hands on the sick.
- These signs will follow those who believe. They will lay hands on sick people and they will recover. (Mark 16:17.)
- At Salvation - the Greek word for 'salvation' is *SOZO*, which means complete healing to body, soul and spirit.
- Gifts of the Spirit. Working of Miracles, Words of Knowledge, Gift of Faith (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12).
- Jesus even used spit at one time (John 9:6).
- Most of us don't step out to heal because we are fearful that we will be embarrassed by God. God will never embarrass us. God will use us if we dare to believe him.

Faith manifests through three ways in scripture:

1. Through the instigator's faith -- in our case, the Prophet or one operating in the prophetic gift. In Luke 13:10-13 Jesus heals a disabled woman by his own initiative. In Mark 5 he casts out demons from a man without anyone asking him to. In Luke 7:11-17 he raises a widow's dead son because he had compassion on them. In Acts 3 a man lame from birth is healed when he didn't ask for it -

Peter simply healed him. In none of these instances did the others ask for the healing or have faith for it.

2. Through the recipients faith. In Matthew 9:29 Jesus says to two blind men who were asking for healing, "According to your faith be it done to you." In Luke 8 the woman with the issue of blood is healed by simply touching Jesus' cloak. He never knew about it until he felt that power had gone out of him (Luke 8:46). He says, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

3. Collective faith. Note how Jesus heals the paralysed man let down through the roof after seeing "their" faith (Luke 5:20) -- referring to the faith of the man's friends. It doesn't even say the paralysed man had faith! But conversely, there were times when Jesus couldn't heal or do many miracles because of a collective *lack* of faith. In his hometown he "could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them" (Mark 6:5) because they had taken offense at him. In fact, Jesus was "amazed at their lack of faith." (Verse 6.) Note how Jesus led a blind man out of town before healing him (Mark 8:22) and how he put a crowd outside a house because they were laughing at him and he then healed a little girl of twelve years old (Mark 12:21-43).

NOTE: Faith needs to be exercised, but remember, there is no formula to healing.

So how do we grow in faith?

1. Faith can be increased by a lifestyle of consistent discipline of reading the Bible. The Bible tells us the truth of who we are

and who God is. It tells us how Jesus sets free and still sets free today!

Romans 10:17

“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

“Hearing” means to “understand to the point of action or obedience”. It does not just mean listening!

2. Prayer and fasting. This has to do with relationship, not food. These connect us back to the heart of the Father, where we trust him to sustain our body and do what he has called us to do. Even Jesus fasted before ministry. (Luke 4:1,2.) This is not about twisting God’s arm or cojoling him. This brings us into a place of trust and need. We can get professional with ministry, and this reminds us not to be like that.

3. By doing what edifies you, such as praying in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:4) or worshipping with believers.

Chapter Nine:

FACILITATING THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH

How do you facilitate the gifts of the Spirit in a local church? God used a donkey to speak in the Bible, but only once. He really wants to use his sons and daughters. There is a lot of misconception and even abuse on this topic. Here are seven points that are imperative:

1. Remember that the gifts are decided by the Holy Spirit

These gifts can be desired by the church; and should be; but they are decided and given by the Holy Spirit.

In the same way that Galatians 3 tells us that we begin with the Spirit, so we should continue with the Spirit. The day you got saved God "happened" to you. What makes you a Christian is what happened to you. Likewise, God continues to "happen" to us from time to time - we must continue in this.

God has an intense and personal interest in His body, the church, and is directly involved in her affairs.

2. The gifts must be believed and received by us

We need to embrace that the gifts are to be used and released *for the benefit of the church* more than for the individual. There needs to be a maturing of our character and lives here so that we can understand the gift is for the benefit of the whole church.

Faith pleases God and releases the gifts.

We need to treasure and honour the gifts, always encouraging their use. Space needs to be made in various settings for the gifts of the Spirit to flow and operate.

The gifts are a literal and practical prophetic picture of the presence of the unseen Kingdom of God.

3. We need to understand the role of the gifts for the church

We need to look at the purposes of the gifts, as described/prescribed in the texts themselves - in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12

The gifts are given to edify, build up and encourage **the church**.

The gifts release spiritual power and God's manifest presence. We must give the Spirit a bigger leading role in our meetings.

The gifts are not an optional extra, but are **imperative** - being

continually used (like being continually filled with the Spirit, or like not stealing).

4. Maturing in the gifts

Mark 10:43-45

“But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Practice makes perfect. This requires a massive humility and willingness and submissiveness. This is about love and servanthood. The attitude of the user of the gift is laid out in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12.

Be wise in who practices what gift in what context. People are sensitive to spiritual abuse, manipulation and pride.

Be able to take correction, instruction and rejection.

It's about feeding the lambs, not giving the speaker the space they want.

Learn from those who have gone before. Have regular enough equipping by Ephesians 4 gifts. Churches and regions can come together to facilitate these times.

5. Facilitating the gifts at Sunday meetings

Unity of the Spirit. God doesn't tell us to go east and west at the same time. Sundays must have order and direction.

There needs to be good public / microphone presence and skill, along with continuity by whoever leads the meeting.

It's preferable for people to worship without too many breaks in the flow of worship. It interrupts the band and all of their practice and intentions for the meeting and songs. It's often better to allow all the words that are coming to be gathered together and then released at the same time.

When should we receive and release prophetic words? Find the rhythm of the Spirit. Where's the band taking the worship? Is God trying to say something? We're often constantly wanting to do something instead of just simply surrendering to the worship of God.

Not every word has to come through the front. It can be either a blessing or a distraction to the people trying to worship and experience God. It's most encouraging when people leave their seats and just go to others with promptings from the Lord! How much more effective when someone is personally recognized by God!

6. Facilitating the gifts in the life of the church

Sunday isn't the only experience of the gifts. There are opportunities among friends, in growth groups, prayer meetings, fellowship times, and in evangelism!

There are prophetic "drip-feeds" by the Holy Spirit into the fabric of the church - usually through words submitted/shared with the elders. This is a most helpful facilitation of the gifts.

There are seasons for certain gifts.

The relationship between Ephesians 4 gifts and the local church, particularly through the elders and deacons, still needs to be explored in much greater depth. Those gifts are often still far too itinerant.

7. The role and authority of Ephesians 4 gifts

The Ephesians 4 gifts / offices that 'lead and equip' the church are responsible for reading the seasons of a local church through the input of the gifts given to that church.

The aim of the ministries mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 is to equip all of God's people for service and bring them to maturity and unity. "To prepare" (*pros ton katartismos*) means "to put right." In surgery *katartismos* is applied to the setting of a broken bone. In the New Testament the verb *katartizo* is used for the mending of

nets (Matthew 4:21) and the restoration of who / what has lapsed (Galatians 6:1). It may, however, also signify the realisation of purpose and the completion of what is already good (1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 3:10).

The ultimate end in view is the attainment of completeness in Christ. Such a realisation of unity will arise from an increasing knowledge of Christ as the Son of God in corporate as well as personal experience.

In this way the church comes of age. It reaches maturity. The phrase is literally "into a perfect, full-grown man" (*eis andra teleion*). The singular is employed because the church as a whole is seen as "one new man" in Christ (Ephesians 2:15). Individualism is a mark of immaturity. This perfection or completeness as a people is proportionate to the fullness of Christ himself.

Practical things we can do to create a prophetic culture

- Have a desire for the prophetic.
- Desire to hear from God. It's God's desire for us all to hear. We were made to communicate with God.
- Ask for the prophetic. It is God's desire that we all operate in the prophetic!
- Create an environment for the prophetic. Personally and corporately.

- Prepare yourself for the prophetic. Intimacy is so important. Worship! Find ways that help you get into the presence of God.
- Believe you are prophetic.
- Operate in the prophetic.
- Move in faith. Everything in the Kingdom operates out of faith.
- Expect prophetic results - divine appointments, salvations, healings, supernatural encounters, etc.

Chapter Ten:

PRIORITIES OF A PROPHETIC PEOPLE

Prophetic people have eleven priorities. Let's examine what these are.

1. Future

In Isaiah 39:1-8 the prophet tells the king, Hezekiah, that Judah would one day be taken away by Babylon. Hezekiah responds by calling the word 'good' for he thought, "There will be peace and security in my days."

Hezekiah was not thinking of the future and the generations to come. For us, this is no time to settle. We must keep pressing forward into all that God has for us. We are not a defensive people but an offensive people. Decisions we make will have eternal ramifications for generations to come. Our dreams are still growing. Don't let the details kill the dream. God is ever faithful! Don't doubt in the dark what God reveals to you in the light. Don't restrict God to old ways or patterns. What does God want for us now? In our desires?

Remember, sheep give birth to sheep. In all we do, if leaders don't evangelise, don't expect the people to. Evangelism is a key to your future -- there are future generations that God wants to see come

into his kingdom. Jesus said, "Go into all the world" (Mark 16:5) and "I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

2. Focus

Prophetic people have a single focus, which is Jesus. Matthew 13 shows us our treasure - Jesus. We must fix our thoughts on Jesus (Hebrews 3:2) and our eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:2).

This focus will allow us to have a vision for the future. In Genesis 18:19 we see how God has a focus on the next generation. There is another generation to follow us and we must build with intentionality. We must keep the main thing the main thing. Generally the first generation are trailblazers, then the second generation become more teacher-orientated, and the third generation becomes more pastoral. But there are still new frontiers, new areas, new territories! Leaders breed leaders, so bring everyone through to usefulness. We focus on Jesus and then do what he is doing - bringing everyone through.

3. Flexible

It's good to live holding things loosely. Remember they are just *things*. Be open to complete trust in Him.

Ephesians 1:9-10 (NASB)

"He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an

administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.”

God will give us a suitable administration to do what he wants us to do. The wind blows wherever it pleases (John 3:8). You don't see it but you feel its effects! You “hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” Go where the Spirit is going, do what the Spirit is doing. You will be amazed to see all that God does!

4. Firm in Scripture

Prophetic people abide in the Word. Nothing but the word! (Psalm 119:9-16, Psalm 19:14, Psalm 1). Meditate on God's Word and you will prosper and be successful. The Spirit and the Word will line up! It is not 50/50 but 100/100! There are more than 7000 promises in God's word. He gives us all we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3-11) and reveals Himself by His Word (1 Samuel 3:21). Just keep growing!

5. Friends

This is a key to our future. We must have good relationships. We must deal with offenses. We can't live with a suspicious mind. Live without issues with anybody. No second-hand offenses! Set your life compass daily. Choose to forgive. Choose to believe the best of everybody. Jesus was a friend of sinners. How you live will

determine how the people live around you.

6. Family

Don't neglect your own family, especially your spouse. Meet their needs. Love your wife as Christ loved the church; wives respect your husbands. (Ephesians 5:22-33.)

“ For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:24.) Adam was doing his work and God then gave him a helpmate. This is about unity and intimacy, and consistency.

Children are to be an added blessing. Keep your children in a proper place. Teach the next generation! Family is a blessing, not a burden!

7. Finances

Don't hold back financially. Stay open-handed. Keep giving! Continue to be generous! Leaders lead by example! Remember, the “Lord will provide” (Genesis 22:12-14.) Abraham did not withhold his son. Whatever God asks us to give, "The Lord Will Provide"! The Lord knows what we have need of before we ask.

In Genesis 26 Isaac planted crops in the land even while it was under severe famine, and in the same year God blessed him one hundred fold, because **God** blessed him. “For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O Lord, You surround him with favor as with a

shield." (Psalm 5:12.) You can't deliberately violate the laws of God and expect blessing.

8. Fruitful

God wants us to remain in the vine because that is where we will be fruitful. Cultivate times with Him beyond your daily devotions. Be in His presence through your worship. As he declared to Adam, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). We must abide in the vine, Jesus (John 15) for apart from him we can do nothing!

9. Freedom

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom! (2 Corinthians 3:17.) Freedom in worship! Freedom in life! Freedom in all we do! We do what we do not because we have to, but because we want to! We operate out of love for God and live in His presence!

As leaders we must keep God's people free! But if you aren't free, neither will your people be free. God has entrusted you to be free and bring freedom.

10. Faith

We are a faith-filled community. When Jesus returns, will he find any faith on the earth? (Luke.18:8.) We live by faith! We walk by faith! We are justified by faith! We are sanctified by faith! We operate the gifts by faith! God has called us to be entirely

dependent on Him. Our faith is in Christ and the finished work of the cross. "That which is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23.)

Faith breeds faith! God is unchangeable! He is dependable! Dare to believe Him! If you expect Him to do more, so will the people. There is also corporate faith - we believe together in our local churches, in our partnerships in translocal ministry. Faith produces a result!

11. First

Leaders go first. Don't expect your people to do something you aren't doing. We need to be first in all that goes on in our churches. Western shepherds drive the sheep, but middle-eastern shepherds lead their sheep! As Paul said, "Follow me as I follow Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1.) As we go first, the people will follow our example.

Chapter Eleven:

PROPHESYING IN THE VALLEY

Prophets have an extensive and intense training. Why? They carry the 'prior', 'now' and 'new' word from God. God often takes them through many, many years of suffering. But don't let that put you off. In times of suffering God is testing and training and forming our hearts and characters to conform to his. It's a wonderful thing to be in the training of God within your suffering. **God does not test us where we're at but according to the potential of the mantle we carry.**

Psalm 105:16-22

When he summoned a famine on the land

and broke all supply of bread,

he had sent a man ahead of them,

Joseph, who was sold as a slave.

His feet were hurt with fetters;

his neck was put in a collar of iron;

until what he had said came to pass,

the word of the Lord tested him.

The king sent and released him;
the ruler of the peoples set him free;
he made him lord of his house
and ruler of all his possessions,
to bind his princes at his pleasure
and to teach his elders wisdom.

To be 'tested' or 'proved' means to be refined, purged, and have impurities removed -- the way a goldsmith refines gold. It's in testing that our moral character is strengthened.

As we develop in the gift of prophecy we will enjoy times of "mountain-top" experiences where we are flowing well in the gift, are being very accurate, and there appears to be an ease. But there are also times that we experience 'valleys'. These are low times when we're not seeing fruit and things can get very confusing and we are undergoing suffering.

Ezekiel 37: 1 - 6

"The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

I said, "Sovereign Lord, you alone know."

“Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.”

What do we do in these times?

1. Remember God’s affirmation

God’s hands are always on our shoulders with him saying, “Well done.” It’s good to remember this when we prophesy as well. When we prophesy to people, the love of the father must flow through us; from the throne room of God to us and then through to the person. Jesus laid hands on people and virtue flowed out of his body, and when we prophesy over people and lay hands, virtue is flowing out of us from Jesus into that person.

2. Realise that you’re there for a purpose

Don’t short-circuit God’s dealing in your life. It’s foolishness. Go through the valley with God. God led Ezekiel into the valley. Here in the valley God is with us and we follow him right through every bit of that valley. He knows what he is doing and will not lead you astray or into what will harm you.

3. Rest in Him

Be still and don’t be discouraged. When God strengthens he restores. Fires are natural things -- after a fire there’s always prolific

growth. It's necessary for us to sometimes go into another valley because God wants another layer of growth in our lives, bigger and more fruitful. God prunes us so that we may bear more fruit. (John 15:1.)

4. Restructure your time

What's taking up your time? The Israelites were led by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. When we wake up we must ask, "Where is the cloud moving?" Where is God leading you today? But we usually reach for our iPad or phone or something like that.

5. Rejoice in the situation

Not *for* the situation, but *in* it. God is worthy of all our praise. Whatever he is doing we rejoice in him, rejoice in his dealings. Our redeemer lives! He has a purpose for you and he lives in you. It's God's pruning time in this valley. During pruning the vine-dresser's hands are closer to the vine than at any other time. His hand is on you during this time.

6) See God's invitation (vs 2, 3 above)

Ezekiel walked with God among the dry bones. God will lead you through these dark areas and sometimes you don't quite know which way you're going. But he is in front of you and you need to follow him. Ezekiel talked with God and so should we. God is trying to get our attention in this valley, alert our senses to see. Ezekiel only saw dry bones. But can these bones live? God may ask some things of us in the valley which we don't understand; he may ask

us to do certain things. We've got to listen and do. Be alert to see what God is doing and saying. He will lead you out of the valley, so listen to him.

Do you think you're not hearing the voice of God in this valley? Just keep in a position of waiting upon him. Be expectant in this valley. God might speak through dreams and visions at night. Be alert because some everyday thing might even be God's key. Be awakened in your senses even in this dark valley.

7) Note God's instruction (vs 4)

God tells Ezekiel to speak to the dry bones. This could be anything: our marriage, our finances, our calling, our dreams etc. Prophecy the word of God into those dry areas; it is powerful, energetic and active and alive (Hebrews 4:12). As you prophesy a word from the Word of God something supernatural happens. David did this - see how he tells his soul to wake up and rejoice in Psalm 42 and 43.

We've been given his authority. (Matthew 28:18.) When we live a prophetic life we are to decree and declare things, say and command things. We've got God's authority to do that if those things are from God. In the valley, remember God's affirmation and his authority!

God will do it. See verse 5 and 6 above. He says he will do it and you will know he is the Lord. Once again we will prophesy freely and accurately, and there will be abundant fruit for the glory of the King. Even if you're in the valley, you can still bear fruit.

Prophets are rigorously trained because they carry weighty

messages from God. Most of us can actually prophesy. But if you feel God has called you into the office of a Prophet, know that you will be rigorously tested. It's a responsibility, but what a glorious thing to know we're in God's will. Once again, God does not test us where we are at, but according to the potential of the mantle we carry. God is shaping and molding you for the purpose of his glory, so that you can be a light to the world.

Chapter Twelve:

RECEIVING FROM GOD

Receiving from God is a learned action. Most of us get a little awkward when we receive a gift from someone if we don't have something to give back. We mix up blessing and reward: blessing is receiving in an unmerited, unsolicited way. Reward is working hard with an expectation of being paid. But God loved us first (1 John 4:19) - he showered his love with the hope that he would reap back from his people.

This has to do with developing an expectation and desire that God does want to *really* bless *you*. God says he will do it and that you will be a blessing (Genesis 12:1). We have to learn how to receive the blessing so we can be a blessing to those around us, and impact them. We are carrying God's presence and DNA, all the power of the living God (Ephesians 1:19). God wants to assist us to change our perceptions and those around us. For us to be a blessing we must live and believe in blessing and that God actually wants to bless us, personally.

If our outflow is greater than our income then our upkeep will be our downfall. If we bless others and never take in blessing, we're going to run out of blessing for others.

Here are things we should do to receive from God. It's not about works, it's just about how we position ourselves to receive from

God. God never makes anything complicated or difficult for his people, he makes it easy. He wants to bless us!

1) Understand and know that God is good

In Exodus 33:18,19 God reveals his goodness when asked to show his glory. In Acts 10:38 it speaks about how Jesus went around *doing good*. We should be doing the same good that he did. Goodness should follow us. God is not angry with us - Isaiah 54:9,10 quotes God saying, "So now I have sworn again - not to be angry with you and never to rebuke you again." God is a good God. Not an angry God. His love for you is unshakeable.

2) Understand your identity

The Father has lavished his love on us (John 15:15). We are sons and daughters of the most high God! This is your identity! Not your gift, not your skills, not your output. God loves you because he loves you! Nothing will separate you from his love!

3) Expect a blessing

We must expect it. Psalm 5:12 -- "Surely, LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favour as with a shield." (NIV.) And we are the righteousness of God! (2 Corinthians 5:21.) God's favour is around us, but we must believe the truth of this. As soon as we line up and agree with the enemy, then he has access.

God's favour lasts a lifetime (Psalm 30:5). Don't let the enemy tell you otherwise! Have you ever said to the Lord, "Lord, you can bless me now." He can do this at any time. Sometimes we need to stop our prayers and whatever else we do and just turn on our receivers to receive. Christians are the hardest people to get to receive.

4) Expect an inheritance

Ephesians 1:11-14 (ESV)

"11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the **guarantee** of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory."

The Lord will never forsake his inheritance." (Psalm 94:14.) Why do we allow the enemy to hoodwink us and believe God has forsaken us? Jesus said he would never leave us as orphans (John 14:18). When the Holy Spirit comes he will never leave you nor forsake you.

5) Enter his gates with thanksgiving (Psalm 95:2; Psalm 100:4)

We have a heart of gratitude. We don't take anything for granted. Come into his presence with singing. (Psalm 100:2.) Do you know that God is also singing over you? (Zephaniah 3:17). What kind of song is God singing over you? He sings good things about you. So he wants us to come before him with joyful songs. All we have comes from him.

6) Pray in the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:2; 14:4; Romans 8:27)

God is no respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11.) Why would he want one person to be able to edify themselves with tongues but others not? Why would he want one to pray the will of God but not others? We don't have to go to a special place to enjoy God's presence and even be 'drunk' on his Spirit.

7) Cultivate your relationship with the Father (Ezekiel 39:29; Isaiah 61:2)

There is only one day of his vengeance, but a whole eternity of his favour.

8) Learn to abide in his presence

Psalm 16:11: "You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."

Chapter Thirteen:

THE LANGUAGE OF GOD

John 8:47

"He who belongs to God hears what God says."

Do you know how God speaks? Do you know the language of God? In Deuteronomy 5:22-28 the people didn't want to hear from God directly but opted to rather hear from him through Moses. Psalm 81:7-16 laments how God's people didn't want to hear. But God has called us, his people, a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation. (Exodus 19:5-6.) We can all hear. Indeed, we all *must* hear!

"Blessed are those that listen to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorways. For those who find me find life and receive favour from the Lord." (Proverbs 8:34-35)

Learning God's language is a learned action. 1 Samuel 3:7 shows us how Samuel had to come to know God's voice. It didn't happen instantly and it required both practical hands-on experience and God revealing himself through the Word (1 Samuel 3:19-21).

The “How Much More” principle

Matthew 7:7-11

“7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? 11 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”

Therefore, let us ask God to teach us his language! Let us come to know his words and love them!

How does God speak?

In the scriptures we find many examples of how God speaks. These are given so that we can learn the language of God.

- An audible voice. Some examples are the Father to Jesus in Luke 3:21-23, and with Saul in Acts 9:3.
- God's “still, small voice” - 1 Kings 19:11-13.
- God will guide and counsel us with His eye upon us. Psalm 32:8. He is the God who sees us. (Genesis 16:13.)
- Angels. Some examples are Philip (Acts 8:26), Peter (Acts

12:6,7) and Balaam (Numbers 22:32).

- Trances. (Acts 10:9-11) What are trances? Trances are a moment when you completely lose consciousness of your physical surroundings because you are overcome by the Spirit of God. It seems you lose your logic and are overcome with what God is presenting to you as if it was always real. They are **not** spooky or esoteric. But we do see them in scripture.
- A vision. (Numbers 12:6, 1.) The vision might be internal (Daniel 4:5, 2) or external (2 Kings 6:17, Acts 12:9).
- Dreams. (Deuteronomy 13:1.) An example also includes Abimelech (Genesis 20:1-7).
- A visitation. Visitations are life-altering and many times it is implied that the one receiving the visitation may die. (Daniel 8:15, Isaiah 6:1-8.)
- Translations and transportations. See Acts 8:39 (Phillip is supernaturally transported) and 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 (Paul speaks of being caught up to heaven).
- Creation. (Romans 1:20.)
- Scripture. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Daniel 9:2; Acts 2:16.)
- Tongues and the interpretation of tongues. (1 Corinthians 12:8-10.)
- Prophecy from someone else. (1 Corinthians 12:8-10.)

- Impressions. Impressions are the inward witness of the Holy Spirit concerning something. It can be a sense of evil or something positive. This is a kind of discernment. (1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Acts 5:3.)
- Prophetic acts. (Acts 21:11.)
- Signs and wonders. (Judges 6:17-21, 7:9-15.)
- Mind reading. Jesus displayed this quality. (Luke 11:17.)
- Circumstances. (Revelation 3:8.)
- Dance. (Jeremiah 31:13.)
- Prophetic songs. (Colossians 3:16.)
- Physical Sensations - we feel the pain of others. (Many people in prophetic ministry attest to this.)
- Spiritual happenings. For example, Aaron's rod in Exodus 7:8-13.
- People. This is when a spoken word jumps out at you. It can come through a song, a word spoken to you in the night, and many other ways. (1 Samuel 3:16-18.)
- Smell. The sweet fragrance of God can speak to us. (2 Corinthians 2:14-16.)
- Animals. For example, Balaam's donkey. (Numbers 22:21-31.)

Revelation 19:10 tells us, "For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy." In Hebrews, 'testimony' means 'do it again'. The reason we share testimonies is to create the atmosphere for God to do it again. What comes with it is God's covenant to repeat the action again. All the promises of God are Yes and Amen! (1 Corinthians 1:20.) God declares a thing and we say that is for me, and our actions say amen, or "so be it". Genesis 1,2 shows us that God imagines a thing and declares it, and it is so!

"You will also declare a thing and it will be established for you."
(Job 22:28 NKJV.)

"You will begin to prophecy and you will be changed into a different person." (I Samuel 10:6.)

Chapter Fourteen:

IMPARTATION

Romans 1:11

“For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you.”

Impartation is an often misunderstood topic. In the original Greek, the word means ‘to give over’ or ‘share’. It’s about transferring or passing something on. It relates to the idea of ‘anointing’ which in the Old Testament was done with oil. ‘Anointing’ literally means ‘a smearing’.

Throughout the scriptures oil represents the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 25.) In the Old Testament when a prophet or a priest poured / smeared their anointing oil over someone, that person received the measure of oil that the prophet / priest had. In other words, they ‘transferred’ their anointing oil to that person. In the New Testament we have an anointing from God -- “the anointing that you received from him abides in you” (1 John 2:27) and this anointing can be transferred by the laying on of hands.

The laying on of hands is a foundational doctrine

It may come as a surprise to some, but Impartation, or the laying on of hands, is one of the *foundational* doctrines of the Christian faith listed in **Hebrews 6:1,2** --

“Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith towards God, 2 and of instruction about washings, **the laying on of hands**, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.”

Yet it is so often neglected or even ignored. Paul longed to see the Romans so that he could ‘impart... some spiritual gift’ so that they could be ‘established’ (Romans 1:11).

Examples of Impartation in the Bible

Deuteronomy 34:9 ESV

“And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the Lord had commanded Moses.”

Numbers 11:24-25 ESV

“So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord. And he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them round the tent. Then the Lord came down in the

cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it.”

2 Kings 2:9 ESV

When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said, “Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me.”

Acts 3:6 ESV

But Peter said, “I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!”

1 Timothy 4:14,15 ESV

Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.”

2 Timothy 1:6

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”

This last scripture is very interesting -- Timothy received a spiritual gift directly through the laying on of hands.

The intention is what is important

It would be good to highlight the fact that this doesn't mean that

every time you touch someone, or someone touches you, that something is transferred between you. This would be like saying that if an Old Testament priest or prophet accidentally spilled oil on someone who was not to be king, that person would automatically become king! No, the *intention* behind the anointing act was imperative.

Impartation is not a superstitious doctrine. It's not that we need to worry about who we shake hands with or who we bump into in a crowd. Many quote 1 Timothy 5:22 to validate a more superstitious view of this doctrine, where it says "*Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others, keep yourself pure.*" But this scripture is speaking of ordaining leaders -- we should not be hasty to ordain leaders. If they don't have the right character we might end up sharing in their sins! It is not speaking of the laying on of hands to impart a spiritual gift or the like.

We *intentionally* give what we have by the direction of the Holy Spirit. Without the right intention, nothing is going to happen.

You only get what you can handle and can only impart what you have

God only imparts to you what you can handle, in line with his will for your life. Many think that if they go around and get famous Christian leaders to lay hands on them they will receive all of that leader's anointing. This is not true. It's up to the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, you cannot impart anything more than what you

have. Peter said "What I do have, I give to you" (Acts 3:6). Many pray for a 'double anointing' from others (taken from 2 Kings 2:10) but no one can give double of whatever they have because they don't have it! It's up to God to give a 'double' anointing. An Old Testament priest or prophet could not anoint a person with any more oil than they had! In the 2 Kings 2 narrative between Elisha and Elijah, the latter told Elisha that when he asked for a double portion he had asked for a 'difficult thing'. He added that it was up to God -- "If you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours. Otherwise not." (2 Kings 2:10.)

You can pray for others or even prophesy over them to receive what you don't have, but don't claim that you can impart something you don't have. Listen to the Lord!

You do have a responsibility when you receive

In Luke 8:4-15 Jesus speaks of how a farmer sows seed for salvation and the seed falls on different kinds of ground. When we receive an Impartation through the laying on of hands, it's still a seed that we need to nurture and allow to grow. We can stop this growth by the cares of the world or neglecting it. Impartation is not a way in which we can be lazy!

This is why Paul told Timothy to "fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands." (2 Timothy 1:6.) Spend time in the Lord. (John 7:38,39.) Practice the gift. Jesus grows what's been planted in us (2 Corinthians 4:4) so abide in

him.

Receiving more through the laying on of hands

If you would like to receive a greater impartation, be hungry for more of God. God knows how to give good gifts to his children. (Matthew 7:11.)

Many times those who are tired, burned out, or desperate for a breakthrough are good soil. Their hearts are ready to receive from God as they have come to the place where they realise that they need him and his strength and can't do it on their own. In nature, pressure from the ground cracks open a seed. Sometimes we need pressure for growth to happen!

But those who are not hungry for God and don't foster their relationship with the Holy Spirit, and those who walk in unbelief and live as they please, are those who become hard, rocky soil. And the seed then does not grow.

So be hungry!

Chapter Fifteen:

THE GLORY OF GOD

Psalm 8

- 1 O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
- 2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants,
you have established strength because of your foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.
- 3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
- 4 what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?
- 5 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honour.
- 6 You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,

7 all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
8 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.
9 O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

God crowned us with glory and honour (verse 5 above). But "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23.) When Jesus revealed his glory his disciples put their faith in him (John 2:11). This is what the glory of God does! With Moses, then, let us say, "Lord, show me your glory." (Exodus 33:18.) And then God made His goodness pass before him and his name and his mercy and his compassion (verse 19).

God wants us to operate from the Glory Realm. After all, he taught us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". (Matthew 6:10.) Heaven is a place where the Glory of God is always manifested. Like in Exodus 33:19 above, the Glory Realm is where we see:

- God's goodness
- God's name
- God's mercy

- God's compassion

And this leads to faith. As Christians, we have the promise of Ezekiel 39:29 that God will no longer hide his face from us but will pour out his Spirit on us! "God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and Power and he went around doing good and healing all under the power of the devil, and God was with him." (Acts 10:38.) This is our call!

The glory of God was so strong in 2 Chronicles 5:14 that the "priest could not stand to minister because the Glory of God was there"! In 1 Kings 8:5 it talks about the fact that the Israelites were sacrificing so much sheep and cattle that it couldn't be recorded or counted - but it wasn't about the number, it was about the presence of the Lord. God's presence came so strongly that the priest couldn't stand to minister! (1 Kings 8:10-11.)

In the Old Testament the priest had a bell and pomegranate tied on the bottom of his robe. He would enter into the "Holy of Holies" and if the bell rang everyone would know he was still alive in the presence of God. We are a Kingdom of Priests (Exodus 19:5-6)! It is possible for us to operate constantly abiding in his presence. The pomegranate on the priest's robes points to perpetual fruitfulness that God wants us to operate in -- fruit that just grows!

God's presence and our fruitfulness go hand in hand. The priests also wore linen garments which did not cause sweat (see Ezekiel 44:18). Sweat shows work and effort, but God wants us to operate in the power of the Spirit from the position of being in Christ, not from our own efforts and work!

Colossians 1:19

“For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,”

Colossians 2:9-10

“For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, 10 and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.”

Ephesians 1:19-20

“...and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power towards us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places.”

Ephesians 3:16-20

“That according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith--that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us...”

God wants to do more than we ask, think or imagine, but it's according to the power that is at work within us. That power is the

same power that God used when He raised Jesus from the dead. "The glory you have given me, I have given them" says Jesus in John 17:22!. "For the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you" (1 Peter 4:14b). Don't you know you are a temple of the Holy Spirit? (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19). Where does the glory of the Lord dwell? "Lord, I love the house where you live, the place where your glory dwells" (Proverbs 26:8). It dwells in his temple! In Christ you are now a carrier of God's glory!

You are God's house, a carrier of God's Glory

1 Corinthians 10:31

"Whatever you do, do it for the Glory of God!"

2 Corinthians 1:20-22

"For no matter how many promises God has made, they are YES in Christ. And through Him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the Glory of God. Now it is God who makes us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."

So often we don't realise or recognise that God's Glory is on us and that we are carriers of His Presence. Wherever we go we carry God's DNA and can release God's Glory. We are called to abide and operate in His presence. We are called to be fruitful. We are called to operate in the power of the Spirit from position not effort.

So as you step into the prophetic and grow in this marvelous, wonderful, practical and useful gift from God, rest in Jesus, the

author and finisher of your faith. (Hebrews 12:2.)

Prayer

Father release us into your presence, to live and abide there and to know who we are in Christ. Let us be fruitful as you desire -- not from human effort, but operating from our position under the power of the Holy Spirit which you gave us to assist us to succeed. Amen!

Chapter Sixteen:

FINAL THOUGHTS ON THE NEW TESTAMENT GIFT OF PROPHECY

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For some final thoughts, here is a short thesis and definition of prophecy, as well as suggestions on how to practice it.

Theses

- It is still valid and useful for the church today. This is the clear implication of 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 and Acts 2:17-18.
- It is a Spirit-prompted, Spirit-sustained, utterance that is rooted in a true revelation (1 Corinthians 14:30), but is fallible because the prophet's perception of the revelation, and thinking about the revelation, and report of the revelation are all fallible. It is thus similar to the gift of teaching which is Spirit-prompted, Spirit sustained, rooted in an infallible revelation (the Bible), and yet is fallible but very useful to the church.
- It does not have an authority that is on a par with Scripture, for Scripture is verbally inspired, not just Spirit-

prompted and Spirit-sustained. The very words of the biblical writers are the words of God (1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16). This is not true of the words that come from the “gift of prophecy.”

- The New Testament gift of prophecy is a “third category” of prophetic utterance between the categories of 1) verbally inspired, intrinsically authoritative, infallible speech spoken by the likes of Moses, Jesus and the apostles; and 2) the speech of false prophets spoken presumptuously, without inspiration and liable to condemnation (Deuteronomy 18:20). Those two categories (absolutely infallible vs. false) do not exhaust all the biblical teaching on prophecy.

Definition

Prophecy in this “third category” (the New Testament gift of prophecy) is a regulated (1 Corinthians 14:32) message or report in human words (1 Corinthians 14:3,29; Acts 21:4,11) usually made to the gathered believers (1 Corinthians 14:4) based on a spontaneous, personal revelation from the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:30; Luke 7:39; 22:64; John 4:19) for the purpose of edification, encouragement, consolation, conviction or guidance (1 Corinthians 14:3, 24-25; Acts 21:4; 16:6-10) but not necessarily free from a mixture of human error, and thus needing assessment (1 Thessalonians 5:19-20; 1 Corinthians 14:29) on the basis of the apostolic (Biblical) teaching (1 Corinthians 14:36-38; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3) and mature spiritual wisdom (Colossians 1:9).

Practical Suggestions

- Recognise God's complete sovereignty in giving gifts freely to whomever he wills (1 Corinthians 12:11; Hebrews 2:4).
- Recognise that not all will become prophets (1 Corinthians 12:29).
- Desire earnestly this gift (1 Corinthians 14:1,5,39). Pray for it (1 Corinthians 14:13).
- Be grateful for the gifts you do have; use them to the full; rejoice that others are different from you; and avoid all jealousy (1 Corinthians 12:14-29).
- Make love your aim in all things; realize that love is the greatest miracle and the surest sign of God's blessing; grow more and more toward solid, stable biblical maturity (1 Corinthians 14:1,12,26,37; 2:14).
- Muster the courage to speak out what you believe (with more or less confidence) may be given to you from the Lord in gatherings designed for this less-structured expression (1 Corinthians 14:26).
- Have humble expectations that the prophecy will not be taken as a word of Scripture but as a Spirit-prompted human word to be weighed by Scripture, and by mature spiritual wisdom. For a prophecy to be accepted as valid it should find an echo in the

hearts of spiritually mature people. It should be confirmed by biblically saturated insight. And it should find a resonance in the hearts and minds of those who have the mind of Christ and are ruled by his peace. (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21; Colossians 1:9; 3:15; Ephesians 5:15-17; Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 1:9-10).