

The Gift of Prophecy and Words of Knowledge PART I

“Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives--especially the ability to prophesy.” (1 Cor. 14:1 NLT)

Prayer.

“Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives--especially the ability to prophesy.” (1 Cor. 14:1 NLT)

- Have you ever desired earnestly for anything in your life? I have?
- Since I was 14 I have desired earnestly to have the body of a Greek god. And because of this I've been on every diet known to man. I've studied, researched health and nutrition for answers on how to get to my goal.
- **My prayer today** is that God would help us to see the BENEFITS of the gift of prophesy in order to stir our hearts to earnestly desire the gift.
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- **God wants us to earnestly desire this gift.** And I think there are many more of us that he wants to give it to, and some of us who already have it and don't even know, or maybe we know, but we are too afraid to use it — God wants to wake that up in us.
- I'd like to frame our this topic of prophesy with three words: WHAT, WHY, and HOW. And each one is equally as important.



- When I was in 4th grade...
- Such is the case with the gifts of the Spirit. We must know the “What” - **WHAT** is the NT gift of prophecy? And what is it NOT?
- The **WHY?** What is the purpose and reason that God give the gift of prophecy?
- And the **HOW** - how do we go about prophesying? With what heart? Motivation? Goal? And what are the guidelines and parameters that we stay within when prophesying?
- And you might know **what** it is, and **how** to do it, but if you have missed the purpose of **WHY** God gave it in the first place, then the one prophesying AND the one receiving will not benefit in the way God that intended.
- And this is where many of the issues start to arise...

WHAT? (a definition and overview of the gift of prophecy)

- The gift of **prophecy** is the human reporting of divine revelation — speaking forth, in merely human words, something that God has spontaneously brought to mind. **(Wayne Grudem)**
 - A **specific word** from God, to a **specific person or people**, at a **specific time**, for a **specific purpose**.
- A **word of knowledge** is God transmitting to you His specific knowledge about something or someone that you would otherwise have no ability or means to know outside of the revelation of God.
 - *story*
 - Words of knowledge have a way of opening up a persons heart and stirring faith for what is to come.
- **Sometimes** when we think “prophecy” we think that it always has to do with a revelation of the **FUTURE**. And that is certainly the case often, but not always. Again a prophecy is simply a **specific word** from God to a **specific person or people** at a **specific time**, for a **specific purpose**.
- **A prophetic word can be a revelation about the present, past, or future.**
- **Past:**
 - [Shawn Bolz...](#)
- **Present:**
 - “A few Sundays ago during the second set of worship, I felt the Spirit lead me across the room to someone that I didn’t know, to share what was impressed on my heart for them. I stepped out in faith and went and whispered in there ear what I believed God was saying (I think my whispering freaked them out a bit, lol, but I told them anyways): ‘The Lord has been with you the last handful of painful months during the full tearing down and rebuilding of your foundation. He is walking with you, carrying you, guiding you, He will not forsake you, and He will complete His work and bring you to greater capacity for the Kingdom.’ I didn’t wait around to see how they would respond. I just gave the word and then left, but a few weeks later, this person heard my voice from across the room and asked if it was me that prayed for them (as their eyes were closed and it was dark so they could see me that day). I replied, ‘Yes’, and they shared that was the most powerful prophetic time that has ever occurred in their life and it was 100% spot on to what has been going on for the last six months. This prophetic insight and word brought hope and a connection to God for this person, and it built their faith and mine, as I stepped out in obedience and they received a full tangible touch from the Lord. He gets the glory and we get the blessings...win win.” **(A brother and intercessor from RVTA)**

- **God was addressing something currently happening in the present, and sharing his heart on the matter.**

- **Future:**
- “We struggled with infertility and miscarriage for five years before becoming pregnant with our first child. When I was about two months pregnant, the Lord told me that I was carrying a fighter. I said, ‘Lord, do you mean like a boxer?’ He said, ‘No, like a mighty warrior.’ Then, when I was about six months pregnant the Lord told my husband that our child would ‘have to fight just to get here.’ This prophetic word informed how we needed to pray for our son, and his delivery. At thirty five weeks I was put on bedrest as our baby wasn't growing well. A week later, I was having an emergency c-section as our son was breeched, the cord wrapped twice around his neck, very low amniotic fluid, notching in the cord and other issues. He was born at 3lbs 6oz, but by the grace of God, and even though he was in the NICU for 21 days, he was so strong and never needed supplemental oxygen. God speaking to us prophetically beforehand assured us that God knew exactly what would happen and that every step of the process was covered by his sovereign hand of love. Five years later our Josiah Kane is strong and healthy.” **(A sister and intercessor from RVTA)**

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- God had spoken to them prophetically about what was coming in the **future** in order to **warn** them, lead them in how to **pray**, and to **comfort** them the truth that He saw what was coming and that He would be with them through it.

- **A prophecy could come in the form of:**
 - Encouragement
 - Warning
 - Rebuke or Correction
 - Insight
 - But always from a place of, and with the goal of **love**.

- **A prophecy can be revealed from God through:**
 - **A previously recorded word from God (scripture)**
 - **A NOT previously recorded word from God (not scripture)**
 - The Gift of Prophecy works in tandem with scripture and comes under the authority of, and is submitted to, scripture.
 - **Dreams and Visions**
 - “After this I will pour out my Spirit on all humanity; then your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will have dreams, and your young men will see visions.” **(Joel 2:28 CSB)**
 - **A sense or impression**

The NT gift of prophecy is different from the OT office of prophet

Old Testament office of prophet:

- In the OT, God would select someone who had a very special nature and destiny that was rare to his generation, and would put His leadership on him and speak to only him, or a few, for that generation.
- OT prophets spoke the very words of God, and as such had absolute authority in what they said — to disobey an OT prophet's words was to disobey God.
- As such, they had tremendous responsibility. When they were wrong, they were held accountable with their lives.
- Their words became Scripture (eg. NT Apostles; see: 1 Thess. 2:13; 4:8, 15; 2 Thess. 3:6)

New Testament gift of prophecy:

- We now have the completed Bible, and it holds absolute authority for what God speaks.
- To disobey Scripture is to disobey God
- Since we have completed Scripture, the NT gift of prophecy is not the reporting of the very words of God.
- Rather, it is reporting in human words, something from the heart of God that he has brought to mind or heart.

WHY? (the purpose of the gift of prophesy)

- Strengthening, encouraging, and comforting others (1 Cor. 14:3).
 - Convicting non-believers (1 Cor. 14:24-25).
 - Instructing (1 Cor. 14:31)
 - Directing and guiding (Acts 13:2)
 - Predicting (Acts 27:10)
- But the most profound **and important** part of what Paul says about the gifts is found at the onset of the chapter, (we read it earlier). **1 Cor. 14:1:**
- **“Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives--especially the ability to prophesy.” (1 Cor. 14:1 NLT)**
 - Paul is cluing us into something profound. LOVE. Love is at the heart of all of this. And love is ALWAYS relational. Love always has an object. You could receive a prophecy and just speak it to a congregation without any accountability of relationship, but love MUST have an object. You can't just love the air.
 - And if we are not careful, we can emaciate the **purpose** of the gift, and disconnect them from the love nature and relationship aspect of God.
 - See, the gifts of the Spirit are only mentioned a few times in the NT, and even then they are not ALL talked about every time. It's almost like they're a secondary issue.

- But WHAT IS talked about ALL THE TIME, is relationship — our identity as sons and daughters of God. What **is talked about** is who we are and how we are to RELATE to God and to one another. It's about relationship.
- And so while, on the surface there is the purpose of prophecy being a one dimensional version of strengthening, encouraging, comforting, convicting, teaching, directing, and predicting, but what is behind all this — and what makes prophecy have dimension is **relationship**.
- The gift of prophecy should be practiced in, through, and for the purpose of loving relationship with God and one another.
- **This is what prophecy has the power to do in the body of Christ, and was INTENDED TO do.**
- Prophecy is not just God wanting to share His information with us, but His heart with us.
- Prophecy can open our eyes to see something about God or ourselves, that only God had previously ever seen or known.
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- **1 Cor 2.:** “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human mind has conceived the things God has prepared for those who love him. **But these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.** The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.
- **And this is the beauty of the trinity.**
- The Holy Spirit through His gifts brings us smack dab into the middle of the this trinitarian love that Father Son and Spirit dwell in and He begins to reveal to us the heart of the Father and the Son, as everything he speaks and does working in symphony with the Father and the Son.
- **Oh how God is wanting to give us more and more of himself.**
- God is wanting to prophesy through many in this room — most likely many more than are actually prophesying. God wants to reveal his heart through you to your co-workers — to that guy on that one job — to that relative, even to that stranger.
- How crazy would it be for someone we love to understand that God loves them, not because we convinced them with great apologetic arguments, which can have a time and a place, but because he showed up IN POWER through you prophesying into their life.
- That's the kind of stuff that God wants to do. So, PURSUE LOVE. Chase after it. Let it be your motivator. Let it be your inspiration. AND eagerly desire and Ask the Holy Spirit to move though you to prophesy into people's lives that they might encounter the saving power of Jesus and the life-changing love of the Father.