

I. Foundational Doctrine

- A. The Language of God's Heart - The first prophetic word was given by God in Genesis 3 with the promise of the seed of the woman who would crush the serpent's head. From that point on, prophecy fills the pages of our Bible. Most scholars place 30 to 35 percent of the Bible into the prophecy category with the bulk of those passages being God's communication to His people. Whether it be through dreams, visions, messengers, or songs, it is clear that one of the primary ways that God communicates to us is prophetic.
- B. Definition of Prophecy - **Prophecy at its most basic definition is “a message from God.” So, to prophesy is to convey on God's behalf.** Although foretelling is often associated with prophecy, revealing the future is not a necessary element of prophecy; however, since only God knows the future, any authoritative word about the future must be a prophecy. To prophesy is simply to speak prophecy. Prophecy is the noun, and prophesy is the verb.
- C. The Promised Outpouring - One of the consistent elements of prophecy is that it informs us of God's intentions and desire to bring about change so that we are walking in a greater measure of His will. One very consistent prophecy that was continually repeated was a promised outpouring of God's Spirit upon all His people. There would be a radical shift from just one or two people per generation who would walk in the gift of prophecy. The gift of prophecy would be given to all God's people as a primary sign of the new covenant. (Joel 2:28-29; Acts. 2:1-18; 1 Cor. 14:1-3, 23-31, 39)
- D. Biblical Guidelines - There have always been guidelines in place for the people of God to test the prophetic words given. God commands us to “test” prophetic words so that we can know whether or not they are actually from Him. These guidelines serve as boundaries to keep the church operating safely and in a healthy way as they seek to minister to one another prophetically.
 1. Complementary to the Word - All true prophetic words will line up with and be supported by scripture. (Deut. 13:1-3)
 2. Seeking Confirmation - There are three primary ways that we are to seek confirmation as to the genuineness of a prophetic word.
 - a. Confirmation of the Spirit; Confirmation from the Body;
Confirmation of the Circumstances

3. Edification, Exhortation, and Comfort - True prophetic words should build up or strengthen you (Edify), urge you to pursue God and His righteousness (exhort), and bring peace, love, and rest to your mind, will, and emotions (comfort). (1 Cor. 14:3)
4. Accountability - Anyone who offers a prophetic utterance is to be held accountable by the church for what they say. This is put in place by the Lord to help both the giver and receiver grow in maturity, in love, and gifting.
5. Fruits of the Spirit - Jesus commands us to look for the fruits of the Spirit in the lives of those who are prophesying to see whether or not they are submitted to Him in their hearts. The faithful fruits of love in one's life cannot be faked; they are given to us over and over as the undeniable evidence of God's miraculous activity and work in one's life.
6. Friendship not Power - Jesus tells us that He loves to reveal His heart to His friends. Keep friendship and relationship with Jesus at the center of your pursuit and ministry in the spiritual gifts, especially prophecy. This heart posture keeps us humble, thankful, gentle, and unoffended. Seeking power, impact, and relevance through the gifts always leads to the unhealthy ministry of the gifts.

E. Freedom and Safety - Biblically, a healthy prophetic environment will have a culture of well-established and understood guidelines or boundaries through which the body can learn, grow, and feel freedom and safety when ministering in the gifts of the Spirit.

II. Ministering in the Prophetic

A. Progression of Prophetic Ministry

1. Ask - Ask the Holy Spirit what He would like to say to an individual or in their life. Ask Him to give you His heart and how you can bring love and encouragement to others.
2. Revelation - The Holy Spirit gives revelation through various means such as dreams, visions, bible verses, impressions, etc. for others.

3. Interpretation - Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what the revelation means. This is a big part of the testing process. This can be done individually or with others. The interpretation process can take some time, so be patient and enjoy the relational process with God. Always ask the Holy Spirit to give you a scriptural basis for the interpretation.
4. Application - Ask the Holy Spirit if or how you're supposed to apply the revelation and interpretation to the individual or group. There are many times in which the Holy Spirit gives you things simply to intercede for in private. Sometimes you do not have a clear application but you're just supposed to offer the revelation and interpretation that you believe He gave you.
5. Delivery - Since all prophetic words should be tested and held accountable, you want to start your delivery with humility and offer freedom and safety to the individual or group.
 - a. Say something like, "I feel like I have a prophetic word," or, "I feel like the Lord showed me something." Avoid saying, "God told me or spoke to me," or, "Thus Saith The Lord."
 - b. Offer them the freedom to test or take the word to the Lord. Ask if that resonates with the group or individual and let yourself and them know that it's okay if it doesn't.
 - c. Ask if you can pray for the individual. Ask if you can lay your hands on them. Seek to minister to the individual publicly with others praying with you or them.
 - d. Leave the results to the Lord. You're just the vessel or messenger. You are not responsible for how people respond or what they choose to do or say concerning the prophetic word you feel you have. Remember, mature love operates without expectation.