

Bible Studies

How to receive a prophecy.

It is great that God still speaks to people today. It is great that sometimes He speaks through other people using the gift of prophecy. It is a pity it so frequently creates grief for the pastor!

Wrong prophecy or misinterpreted prophecy has been the cause much damage and poses a real danger to the church. **So when a Prophecy is given:**

1 Make sure you listen carefully.

- Make sure you do not hear what you want to hear instead of what is actually said.
- Make sure you hear the bad bits and the conditions as well as the blessing bits.
- It is a very good idea to make a note of the prophecy.
- If you are not sure about something that has been said ask.

What happens if God speaks and you are not paying attention?

What attitude does it show before God if we are not listening?

Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. 1 Thessalonians 5v19-20

- Watch out that you don't get carried away with a romantic notion just because it appeals to you.
- Realise that the first interpretation is not always the true application. You must seek God to understand what the prophecy means.

The First thing to ask is, Is this for me?

A prophecy may be given in a worship service. It may have a general application, something that applies to the Church as a whole. Or it may have an application that is specific to an individual.

Does it have to be only one individual or could it be several?

How are you going to Know if it is for you?

- Does your spirit witness to what was said?
What I mean by this is did something inside you jump (or drop)?
did you suddenly feel convicted?
Are you desperately trying to find reasons why it can't be for you?
All of these things suggest that you should pay attention.

Should you try to force every word that is given to be for you?

2 Test what has been said.

Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5v21-22

- Does it agree with Scripture
- Is it in line with your life direction.
- Is the person reliable?

Would you accept a prophecy from a total stranger?

Just because a person is reliable should you automatically accept the word?

How you judge these kind of prophecies.

God is telling you to leave your wife/husband.

You need to be witnessing about your faith.

It's time to deal with sin in your life.

You need to move house.

You need to persevere in the hard situation your in.

3 Look for conformation

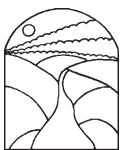
- How does this word fit in with other things that have been spoken to you?

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- Compare other prophecies and see if there is a common theme.
"Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." 2 Corinthians 13:1

What does this verse mean?

- Ask your Pastor or someone who is mature in spiritual things for their opinion. Find out what they think.
- 8 Do not ask everyone you can think of until someone says what you want to hear!

4 Think very carefully about the implications.

Often we acknowledge that a word is for us but then we stop. We are happy with ourselves and feel really good that we correctly discerned prophecy. But we have in reality only just started. Something will need to change because of the prophecy. At least you may have to change the way you view yourself or God.

What Good is a prophecy telling you that God loves you if in your mind you continue to think of God as distant and uncaring?

Very often there will be practical things that have to change in your life.

- What conditions were there in the prophecy?
- What must you do to fulfil them?

Key Question: what has got to change in my life as a result of this prophecy?

6 Claim your promise

If the word spoken is for you then accept it. Pray for it's fulfilment. Watch for it's fulfilment. Don't doubt, live in faith. Take it into your life.

7 Remember.

Prophecies is very rarely given for today only. Most of the them will have ongoing effects for years. You must hold on to them. Write them down somewhere accessible.

8 Be very careful of directive prophecy

Directive prophecy is when some one comes to you and says "*God says you need to quit your Job and live by faith*" or "*God says stop taking your medicine because God will heal you*". People mean well but the results can be disastrous.

- Directive prophecy is very dangerous.
- The general rule is reject it.
- The exception is when it confirms something God has already said.

On very rare occasions directive prophecy will come first and be confirmed latter. God knows you. Unless there is an overwhelming reason, He will speak directly to you. Never act until it is confirmed. Even then err on the side of caution. Do not act unless you are absolutely sure. Get wise counsel.

Should we do everything that others tell us is from the Lord?

The classic story Read 1 kings 13v1-3, 7-9, 14-24

Acting on the Prophecy.

Sometimes all you have to do is start doing what you were told. If God said be more bold, then you need to start being more bold, not waiting for God to pour out a Spirit of Boldness upon you.

- Ask God what the next step is for you to take.

Other things require us to be patient to wait for God to bring them about. Abraham was a good example. God gave him a promise. His wife figured out the best way to do it. Abraham did what he was told. His wife got angry and Ishmael the counterfeit got born.

If God gives you a promise will it irrevocably be fulfilled?

I believe that God is calling you to be a pastor

What do you do now?