

Guidelines for Personal Prophecy

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Personal Prophecy Is Scriptural

From Acts to Jude there are seven recorded instances of prophecy. There is much teaching on prophecy, but there are only seven references to actual occurrences of prophecy. Of those seven recorded instances, five are definitely personal prophecies: that is, prophecies which were specifically directed to one person (Acts 13:1-2, Acts 21:4, Acts 21:10-11, I Tim. 1:18, I Tim. 4:14). Only two were congregational prophecies, directed to all the hearers (Acts 21:9, Acts 19:6). From these statistics we may conclude that God places a premium on personal prophecy. Personal prophecy is needed in the church, and it is not to be abused.

Who Is Authorized By God To Administer Personal Prophecies?

Four out of the five recorded instances of personal prophecy were spoken by men of God who were recognized, ordained five-fold ministers of the Gospel. Only in one instance are "disciples" recorded as giving a personal prophecy, and that was delivered in the presence of ministers of the Gospel. From these scriptural precedents we may conclude two guidelines for personal prophecy.

Anointed, seasoned five-fold ministers of the Gospel (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers) should deliver most personal prophecy. Especially prophecy that includes correction, direction, or guidance.

A "disciple" should not deliver personal prophecy to another "disciple" unless a recognized ordained minister of the Gospel is present (I Cor 14:29-32). It is dangerous to go around giving out "words" to brothers and sisters, especially if these "prophecies" contain correction, direction, guidance, or impartation of gifts and callings. It is one thing to feel inspired to just speak a word of encouragement and comfort to a brother or sister, but it is altogether a different matter to speak "Thus saith the Lord..." to a person. It is unwise to give a "thus saith the Lord.." to a person without a recognized five-fold minister present to judge the word spoken and offer counsel (I Cor 14:24). Besides, there are no New Testament instructions to add "Thus saith the Lord..." to every inspired word. Don't presume (Psalm 19:13). Don't be foolish. Don't play around with the awesome term "Thus saith the Lord...".

Christians that go around giving out "words" all the time, or who regularly call on others to give them a "word" become Granola Christians - fruits, nuts, and flakes. They are playing around with holy things and are offering strange fire before the Lord (Lev 10).

I once knew an unstable brother in the Lord that felt he must call another Christian everyday on the telephone to get a "word." For five years, his entire life was based on these flaky "words", upon which he based all his decisions. Needless to say, he was a basket case when he came to me for help.

Superspiritual, spooky believers that are constantly forking out "words" or trying to squeeze "words" out of everyone are insecure and need to be taught that they can get their direction and correction from their own Bible. These kind of insecure Christians bring reproach on the Charismatic move, Spirit-filled churches, the reality of the prophetic, and the name of Jesus. These folk are not "prophetic" - They are "pathetic".

Other Guidelines

Don't try to "force" a prophecy you have received to come to pass. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord" (Zec 4:6).

Don't submit yourself to "THUS SAITH THE LORD" from any Tom, Dick or Harry. "Lay hands suddenly on no man." (I Tim 5:22).

If a personal prophecy you receive is unscriptural, throw it out! If you receive a prophecy which doesn't confirm how the Lord has been dealing with you personally, then set it on a shelf - don't do anything with it unless it makes sense later. If you receive a prophecy that confirms what God has been dealing with you, **STAND ON IT!** "Despise not prophesyings. Prove (weight, judge) all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thess 5:20,21).

Personal prophecy is not meant to "substitute" for your own prayer life, Bible reading, local church commitment, tithing, or holy lifestyle. As a matter of fact, fulfillment of personal prophecy in your life is conditional upon these things.