

[March 5th, 2017: Prophecy Class 5]

INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY

Proper interpretation of a prophetic communicate from the Lord Jesus, whether it is a verbal prophecy, or a dream or a vision, requires that the interpreter have a heart for the Lord, not great knowledge.

The old quote, "It is not what you know, but who you know", says it well. Of course the 'who' is the Lord Jesus Christ; and with necessity, you must know His voice well.

Just as with giving the interpretation of a prophecy spoken in tongues, foreknowledge is not necessary to interpret it, only the ability to hear God's voice and of course the willingness to obey His voice, is all that one needs.

John 7:17 says, "If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority."

Concealed...

Symbolic language conceals the truth from the proud and the rebellious.

Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children;" Mat.11:25

Sybolism...

The Lord does not give interpretations only by impartation as with a prophecy in tongues, but sometimes through the understanding of His written word, The Bible, or understanding the symbolism He sometimes uses.

Terminology used in some prophecies can involve symbols or numbers. Inanimate objects (whether modern or Biblical), historical settings, and chronological references may also come into play. Sometimes, the symbolism refers back to past relationships or experiences of the person or group that the prophecy is spoken to.

Prophecies that were already explained or fulfilled within the context of the Bible provide us a great starting place. You will find some in the Book of Daniel. The general text of the Scriptures can also provide you a list for your own prophetic dictionary.

For example, *bread*; in John 6:35, Jesus said, "I am the *bread* of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." Did you know that the name Bethlehem, in Hebrew (H1035), means *house of bread*? Bread represents life, hospitality, financial investment, and more.

Another example, *lamb*; John 1:29 reads, "The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the *Lamb* of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" That provides us a clue for

understanding Revelation 5:6a which says; "And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a *Lamb* standing," A lamb represents young, innocent, meek, sacrifice, a child, and more.

Greater Bible understanding

Having knowledge of Biblical symbology gives us greater understanding of Scriptures and prophecy.

Let us read Genesis 15:9; "And He said to him (Abram), Take me an heifer (young cow) of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

Heifer = freedom, leader; she goat = everyone; ram = strength, valor, prince; turtledove = the afflicted, lowly; pigeon = infant...

Understanding of the symbolism shows that everyone was included in the covenant that was being cut by the Father (smoking furnace) and the Son (burning lamp); women, babies, and men, bond or free, the lowly and the exalted. Genesis 15:17 says, "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces."

(Isa 31:9) "And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, said the LORD, whose fire *is* in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem."

(Isa.62:1) "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof goes forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp *that* burns."

(Ps.119:105) "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

(Joh 1:1) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

(John 8:12) "Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

More definitions for your dictionary...

Star = nation, king or prince

Shepherd = caring, nurturing, oversight, protector

Milk = young, immature (neg.)

Baby = innocence, new, a beginning, immature (neg.)

Fox = sin

Right hand = strength

Car = transportation, travel, speed, earth bound (instead of airplane)

Witchcraft = rebellion

Numbers are also part of the dictionary...

1 = unity, primacy, beginning

2 = obedience

3 = divine perfection, trinity

4 = creation

5 = grace

6 = man

7 = spiritual perfection

8 = new beginnings

12 = governmental perfection

Write it down...

Daniel 7:1 says, "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, *and* told the sum of the matters."

Sometimes the understanding comes over time, and sometimes with spiritual maturing on your part. Misplaced urgency to understand a prophecy can lead to error and sin.

A journal of your prophecies provides a way to accurately review what the Lord has said to you. You may acquire a greater understanding of a previous prophecy.

Previous prophecies are encouraging when you see how the Lord has fulfilled or is fulfilling His words to you.

Prepackaged interpretations...

If you are ask someone else to interpret a prophecy, dream, or vision that you have had, do not tell them your ideas first. You do not want the possibility of influencing the interpretation.

If someone asks you to interpret a prophecy, dream, or vision, do not let them tell you their ideas first. You also do not want to take the chance of being influenced.

It is the Holy Spirit's understanding that you want, not mine, not yours, nor the neighbor who gets it from The Church Of Dr Phil.

Prayerfully consider...

Prayer, meditation, and possibly even fasting may be necessary if the prophecy was not interpreted nor understood when it was given.

What feelings did you, or if it is someone else had the dream or vision, have while in the midst of the experience? What feelings did you have upon awakening?

Do you know that your dream definitely was from the Lord? You must rule out anxiety, fears, bad television, bad diet, and even medication as being the catalyst of your dream.

Most of the time negative events in a dream are warnings, not appointed events. Actually, I am not aware of a dream ever having been of an appointed event.

(Job 33:15-18) "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, while they slumber on their beds, then He opens the ears of men and terrifies them with warnings, that He may turn man aside from his intended deed and conceal pride from a man; he keeps back his soul from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword."

Tormenting dreams, hopelessness, condemnation, and a feeling that neither prayer nor repentance will help, are not from the Lord. These can be from sin, fears, and or a demonic presence. The Lord always presents a message with hope and redemption.

(Jer 29:11) "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you a future and hope."

I have been part of some cases where the children's nightmares were caused by watching the world's "harmless" child programs. The Lord gave me discernment for the situations, I told the parents what the Spirit revealed to me, they accepted and acted upon the revelation, the children no longer watch the program(s), and they had no more nightmares.

Prayer before sleeping is always a good idea; that the Spirit of the Lord will speak to you in your dreams as He wishes, and that He also uses your dreaming time to instruct you in His ways.

Summation for interpreting something prophetic...

"To find God's will, you must have no will of your own." Steve Wilber

FALSE PROPHETS

Is craziness proof that the person is a false prophet?

Please read these following passages...

Jeremiah 13:1-11; he took a linen belt and buried it...

Hosea 1:2; he married a prostitute...

Isaiah 20:3; he went naked and barefoot for three years...

Genesis 22:2-8; Abraham was going to sacrifice Isaac...

Ezekiel 4:9; Ezekiel laid on his side for 390 days...

Ezekiel 4:12; he baked his bread over human dung...

These men, whom we now know as true prophets, were considered by some in their own days as false. Just because a prophet has done some bizarre things, does not prove he is not of God. The Lord has had me do some bizarre prophetic things, but thankfully not on their scale! Just because it makes you uncomfortable, does not prove that it is not of God.

What is a false prophet?

All through my Christian life, believers would encourage me to change to a dynamic local church, or embrace a new national spiritual movement, or be open to new doctrinal clarity, or join the popular non-denominational denomination.

Their recommendations were based upon what they received through their natural senses; what they saw, what they experienced, what they heard, or how they felt. When the natural senses are not guided by the Holy Spirit, then the understanding is carnal (of the natural man, not Spiritually discerned). When you rely on your own understanding and not ask the Holy Spirit about what you are deciding, then you are in sin.

(1Jn 2:27) "But the anointing which you have received of him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in him."

This scripture says that if you are spirit-filled, then you have no need of relying on someone else's word of whether or not a teaching is from the Lord. And when you abide in Him, then you bring all things before Him for confirmation or nay.

Determining whether or not a prophet is *true* or *false* by your own natural senses alone is folly. Unless something obvious as "I am Jesus returned!" is declared and does not require the Holy Spirit's discernment to know that it is false, but bad prophets do not always make it so easily apparent.

The Greek word for false, used in the Scriptures, means *deceitful*. The person is knowingly portraying a lie. That makes it truly different from an immature prophet or a prophet that unintentionally misses the mark.

A false prophet has bad characteristics.

(Mat 7:15-16) "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?"

Some false prophets do not give equal respect to all individuals. He/she often has a haughty spirit. Self-glorification is also a very common trait. Their emphasis on their ministry is greater than a relationship with Christ, when they write or speak.

(2Co 11:13-15) "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds."

(Jer.23:21-27) "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

"Am I a God at hand, says the LORD, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? says the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the LORD.

"I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall *this* be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yes, *they are* prophets of the deceit of their own heart;

"Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.?"

False prophets often make false statements.

A false prophet may infer that he/she has the power to predict.

The prophetic gift itself does not in itself convey the power to predict. A prophet is one who speaks for another; not prediction.

Some teach that prophets themselves take the place of the Urim and Thummim, carried by the high priest. (The nature of the Urim and Thummim does not clarify. They seemed to give guidance in a yes or no manner.) This is more self-importance, self-glorification, and haughtiness.

It is often good, but not always necessary, to seek wise counsel. Some false prophets state that you must get your guidance for life through them. Instead, go directly to Christ Jesus first for your answers. Seeking the gift of prophecy first, or the prophet using it, is carnal reasoning.

The proper characteristics for a prophet...

(Gal 5:22-23) " But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

1Corinthians13 tells us that the gifts of the Spirit only work properly when applied with, and directed by, a heart of love.

(1Cor.13:1-2) “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have [the gift of] prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”

Heart attitude makes a difference to the Lord, not just accurate words.

When praying to God, a true prophet identifies himself with the ‘sinners’. He does not present himself before God as above or aloof from their sin. He has a heart for the people. He thinks of himself as “we” and not “them”.

Jealousy and ambition are not found in a good prophet of the Lord. James 3:13 tells us, “Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.”

Error or immaturity does not make one false...

Even Peter had to be rebuked for error (hypocrisy), but he was not considered false. He was struggling to blend what he had learned from walking with Jesus, with his culture’s Jewish traditions and prejudices.

(Gal 2:11) “But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.”

Just because you can prophecy doesn’t make you a prophet.

Error often occurs by confusing someone who prophesies a lot as someone who is a prophet.

There is a difference between someone who functions in prophecy, because they have the *gift of prophecy*, and someone who functions as a prophet, who has the *calling of a prophet* (prophetic office).

(Act 21:8-10) “On the next day we departed and came to Caesarea, and we entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. He had four unmarried daughters, who prophesied. While we were staying for many days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.”

The daughters had the gift of prophecy. Agabus had the gift of prophecy and the calling of a prophet; the office of a prophet.

Satan provides a service for those with itchy ears.

A modern American saying fits here, “*There would be no drug dealers if there was no demand for drugs.*”

Ear tickling (2Ti 4:2-4) “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables.”

You will not mature in the Lord if the only things you are willing to listen to are part of what you already believe.

Lying prophetic spirit, (1Kg.22) “There was a lying spirit in the mouth of about four-hundred prophets, telling King Ahab what he wanted to hear.”

Ahab had itchy ears. That means his desire to be acclaimed was more than his desire to truly know God’s will. Remember the quote from Brother Steve Wilber, “To find God’s will, you must have no will of your own.”

(1Ti 4:1-3) “ Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.”

A false prophet’s badge of honor...

The Messiah Complex is the belief, by the false prophet, that rejection is proof of being correct, “as was Jesus”. Rejection of his/her errors provides unending proof of God’s calling and confirmation, in the eyes of a false prophet and his/her followers.

Sometimes a believer can have an anti-social behavior, and then blame someone else for his failures.

It reminds me of Christians asking for prayer, because of ‘persecution’ at work, when the their trouble is fallout from their inappropriate workplace behavior.

Summation

It may take time and discernment to distinguish whether a bad prophet is either immature or a pretender (false).

Sometimes a prophecy is only half-anointed. There are a lot of people who are gifted at prophesying, but only get the prophecy partially correct. They give a prophecy that starts off with accuracy and anointing. Part way through the telling it goes flat and drones on. What happened? The prophet was mature enough to start prophesying, but not mature enough to know when the Spirit ended and his own thoughts about what he was prophesying began to be added. There is a temptation to add one’s own thoughts to what the Lord has been saying through you.

A good rule-of-thumb, *God is not wordy*. I have seen individuals held 'captive' by a prophet who just would not shut-up!

There is a difference between adding your own thoughts to the '*thus saith the Lord*' prophecy, and the clarifying of a prophecy that you have just given. There have been many times when the Lord instructed me to clarify, for the individual, what He just said through the prophecy. It was most often done when the receiver was spiritually immature or inexperienced with the gifts of the Spirit, and prophecy in particular.

[Claiming the role of an Old Testament prophet...](#)

[The role of the OT prophet...](#)

What is the difference between Old and New Testament prophets?

In the OT, the priests were the intermediaries between God and man. In the NT, Jesus is the only intermediary between God the Father and man. "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;" 1Tim.2:5

In the OT, the prophet was God's spokesman and was subservient to no one. In the NT, the prophet still speaks as God's spokesman, but must work in conjunction with apostles, evangelist, teachers, and pastors. He does not 'out rank' others. He does not 'out rank' others. In our day, the prophet no longer has exclusivity to prophecy.

(Heb.1:1-2) "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world."

[The last OT prophet...](#)

John the Baptist was the last OT prophet.

(Mat 11:11) Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

[From THE HOLY BIBLE commentary by Thomas Scott, 1832] "not one more holy, zealous, faithful, and humble; no one, who was employ in a more high and honourable service; not one who had been favoured with clearer views of evangelical truth; not one, who had been thus distinguished by being himself the subject of prophecy. And yet, 'the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he'. The least of the apostles, or New Testament prophets, who were called to establish the Messiah's kingdom, would be further enlightened in the knowledge of his person, obedience, atonement, and meditation; and he employed in a more distinguished service, and more abundantly endued with the Holy Spirit, than John had been; and would possess miraculous powers, which John did not."

The lowliest believer alive, after the ascension of Christ, has a greater type of relationship with Jesus than John could have had, because he was still of the Old Testament dispensation.

Is there a difference between a prophet and a seer?

What is the difference, if any, between a prophet and a seer? Some have accepted, in our time, that a seer is something 'bigger and better' than a prophet.

(1Sam.9:9) "Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he would say, 'Come, let us go to the *seer', for today's *prophet* used to be called a *seer*." {*H7200; *ra'ah*; to see literally or figuratively; descriptive a *prophet*}

It is not wrong to use the term *seer* instead of *prophet*, if substitution is all you are doing; but it is wrong to teach or to infer that a *seer* is something extra special. If you believe that a *seer* is a *prophet*, then use *prophet* for it is universally accepted, recognized, and understood. If you use the word *seer*, you may be viewed as one of those who doctrinally consider a *seer* as greater than a *prophet*.

(2Sa 24:11) "And when David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's *seer, saying..." {*H2374; *chozeh*; an ancient Hebrew word for a prophet; descriptive of a *prophet*, especially a prophet that has visions}

The Hebrew equivalent for the word *seer* (depicting a prophet) was infrequently used in the Old Testament, because of its waning use in the culture of the Hebrew people; it fell out of use and became replaced by the Hebrew word for prophet.

The New Testament does not have seers, just prophets. If they were unique and necessary, Jesus or Paul would have said something about them. The Old Testament spoke little of seers and a lot about priests, but in the New Testament there is neither.

Teachings that present seers as special prophets and that seers are among us today is usually just bad doctrine. From my experiences, those who promote seers for today are most often just brethren that are in error, not false-Christians. Though, I have encountered 'seers', false-prophets, who are self-glorifying, who have a haughty spirit, teaching that seers are exceptional. The purpose of their teachings is to create special attention for themselves.

Seers over prophets: just a big deal made over nothing.

Is a prophecy from a backsliding prophet negated?

Can a backsliding prophet give an accurate word?

Can a person who is in the process of becoming backslidden, apostate, give you an accurate word? I have seen many times when a person that was backsliding away from the Lord functioned accurately in the gift of prophecy or other spiritual gifts. I am speaking of someone who is falling away, not someone who has already left the Lord.

Balaam was tempted to prophesy for personal gain; in Numbers 22.

The proficiency in the gift of prophecy does not equate with the person's spiritual condition before the Lord; the gift may still function accurately. As a person continues toward a fully backslidden state, his ability to hear the Lord clearly or the Lord's willingness to use him decreases, but the gift remains.

The gifts of the Spirit are not earned, and so they cannot be un-earned. (Rom 11:29) "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." But when a person has left the Lord, he/she has stopped obeying the Lord. When a person refuses to obey the Lord, the Spirit stops speaking to him; thus the 'prophet' no longer hears the Spirit and now cannot give a real prophesy.

Cult or cultish indicators...

Here is a list of twelve basic errors of false religion. Some of these indicators can even be found in Christian organizations. Not each of these indicators will make an organization a cult, but show that it is cultish. Many of these also apply to someone who is a false prophet.

EXTRA-BIBLICAL REVELATION; the Bible plus something else is considered necessary. Examples:

Claims that modern prophecy supersedes the Bible...

In Catholicism, the Pope speaks *ex cathedra* and issues decrees, some of which are non-scriptural...

Christian denominations who teach that their traditions supersede the written Word...

Mormonism's believe that the Bible is not sufficient; you need the Book Of Mormon also...

The Muslims consider the Bible a holy book to be read, but you must follow the Koran...

False Basis For Salvation: having to do many works, or paying your way are very popular.

Uncertain Hope: you are never sure if you have payed enough, or prayed enough, or done enough penance, etcetera, to have appeased God. With some religious groups, you can do everything required of you, but still not find favor with the deity and have to die to find out your standing.

Presumptuous Messianic Leadership: or an Elijah complex.

Doctrinal Ambiguity: doctrinal confusion.

The Claim of Special Discoveries: Joseph Smith, of the Mormons, and his Golden Tablets.

Defective Christology: they have the person, the nature, or the role of Christ (Jesus) wrong.

Segmented Biblical Attention: they concentrate only on the sections of the Scriptures that bolster their views and emphases, or can be twisted to do so.

Enslaving Organizational Structure: working your way through multiple tiers of responsibility or leadership in order to be considered worthy.

Financial Exploitation: here is an example from a Christian television program, “God said that if you would take your credit card and plant a seed of \$50, that God will change your financial situation.” They were ‘prophesying’ a quid-pro-quo deal between you and God. God will improve your financial situation, if you will give their organization \$50. (They offered no guarantee.)

Denunciation Of Others: this refers to non-Biblical or false accusations of other individuals or organizations. There are many and much that needs to be denounced within the sweeping label of Christianity. Many in the Body Of Christ view all denunciation as non-Christ like. I prefer to follow Jesus’ example, when appropriate and fitting, “you serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?” (Mat.23:33).

And Isaiah 62:6 says, “I have set *watchmen* upon your walls, O Jerusalem, *which* shall never hold their peace day nor night: you that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence,” Watchmen: *to hedge, to guard, to protect*. What good would a watchman that keeps his mouth shut be!?

Syncretism: the union or attempted union of different religious beliefs. Many of our Christian holidays are fraught with non-Biblical elements. During the time of the Roman Empire, there were those who believed in incorporating pagan elements in order to make Christianity more palatable or friendly to the nonbeliever. This still happens today.

Do not prophesy out of order.

We are to prophesy in an orderly manner. 1Corinthians 14:29 tells us to, “Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said.”

(1Co 14:30-33) “If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. For God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”

What does it mean, “the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets”? Many have used this reason for their arresting control of a service to prophesy, “*The gift (or Spirit) made me do it.*” Who can argue with God’s will then? Would you, they challenge? But they have no excuse, for the person with the gift of prophecy has the control (“are subject”) whether they prophesy or not.

Glorification Of A Man...

Giving the wrong kind of attention...

Some Christians hold a greater esteem on certain gifts-of-the-Spirit than others; and prophecy in particular.

They presume that operating proficiently in a gift of the Spirit always equates to that person having greater holiness. Many also mistakenly equate frequent prophesying with proficiency (or skillfulness) in prophesying.

Would you give honor to Balaam's donkey? It did not prophesy frequently, but it had great accuracy!

Of course, a greater ability in prophecy can be the result of the individual's closeness to God. An improper amount of esteem and respect is not to be given to someone just because they function in any of the gifts-of-the-Spirit well.

(Psa 37:4) "Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart."

(Joh 5:44) "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?"

The sinful nature of a male, desires money, women, and power. The wrong type of respect and esteem feeds a man's sinful desires. A false prophet feeds his desires. People with carnal minds (non Spirit-lead reasoning) and immature Christians build-up these prophets. A prophet can gather influence (power), hyped-up and frequent meetings (money), and immature and non-discerning Christians (especially women) flock. How he handles it determines whether he is a mature prophet or a false prophet.

Man is God's only creature, that when you pat it on the back, its head swells up.

Colossians 2:18 says, "Let no one disqualify you, insisting on *asceticism and worship of angels (also translated *messenger*, or *pastor*), going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his ^sensuous mind,"

(Col 2:23) "These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and *asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh."

**Asceticism*: the doctrine that through renunciation of worldly pleasures, it is possible to achieve a higher intellectual state or spiritual condition. Through-out Church history, self-imposed asceticism has been held up as proof of an individual's *greater-than-thou* holiness.

^*Sensuous*: affecting the senses instead of the intellect; gratifying physically, sexually, attractive.

Remember this: you are to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and not the experience.

Humility is your shield.

The prophetic gift itself does not in itself convey the power to predict. A prophet is one who speaks for another; it is not predicting (foretelling the future). The prophet himself is not powerful, but some people give the prophet power over themselves.

If you prophecy, it is not for your own personal gain. All of the gifts of the Spirit, except for personal prayer in tongues, are for the sake, benefit, blessing of others through you.

A prophecy holds the same divine authority whether from a church leader, a prophet, an apostle, or a layman. A teacher, pastor, evangelist, prophet, and apostle are to be given respect for the responsibility that they have, not because they are better than anyone else or function in a gift of the Spirit better than anyone else.

(Mic 6:8) "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to humble yourself to walk with your God?"

You might be helping a prophet over the cliff.

It is not wrong to ask someone who is prophetically gifted to pray for you. If the Lord tells him/her something to tell you, that is acceptable.

Prophecy is not to be solicited. The Lord can speak prophetically through anyone who is Spirit-filled. Seeking out a prophet for a prophecy lends to believing that the Lord only speaks through Mr. Prophet! The prophet can start believing that he/she is unique in hearing the voice of God.

If the Lord wants to get a prophetic word to you, He can find someone, anywhere in the world, to deliver a prophecy to you. I myself have been used many times in this way.

It is part of the sinful nature to seek mediums and soothsayers and diviners. Now, going to a meeting where a prophet will be ministering, and hoping you receive a prophecy, is not wrong. But God wants you to seek to hear from Him directly, and knowing His voice clearly is necessary. Prophecy is to be a confirmation to what He has already spoken to you, not His first line of communication. It is also part of the sinful nature to desire someone else to hear from God for you; it is much easier.

Some "bad" examples...

After many years of ministry, Alexander Dowie, a remarkable powerful faith-healer/prophet, in 1901, announced before a great crowd at the Chicago Auditorium that he was the third incarnation of Elijah. Under great pressure from his followers, and of course his own sin, he was convinced that he was Elijah returned.

William Branham, also a faith-healer/prophet, had a very similar story. After many years of ministry, before he died in 1965, he also came to see himself, and supported by his followers, that he personified the second coming of Elijah.

So you see, prophets have to battle with temptations of their own (imagination of grandeur), without our feeding it.

Pleasing the people...

Prophets often fall into the trap of being pressured to use their gift. In a common format, the prophet preaches during a service and then continues on with prophesying over individuals. The *presumption* is, because the person is a prophet, then they have to prophesy after preaching. It is not wrong to hope for ministering in prophesy, for it is most likely to occur, but God may have a different plan that day.

Prophets and all five-fold ministers (Eph.4:11) can incorrectly believe that just because 'a door' to minister opens, then it is God's will to enter it. It certainly was not true for Balaam (Num.22). The Lord

told him “No!” I know, from my own experiences, that each and every time you need to ask the Lord; yes or no, or even later may be His reply. When you are still spiritually immature children (not knowing his voice clearly), the Lord opens doors to make a way for you. But He expects you to grow-up, not staying as children; you need to learn to know His voice. He will then tell you directly what to do and He will make a way for you where there was no way!

(1Co 3:1-3) “And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal, *even* as to babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto you were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are you able. For you are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal, and walk as men?”

(1Co 14:20) “Brethren, be not children in understanding: in evil things be as babes, but in understanding be men.”

(Eph 4:14) “That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”

(Heb 5:12-14) “For when for the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that uses milk *is* unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

Is It A False Prophecy?

What if the prophecy was not correct?

One argument used today against prophesying is, “There is false-prophecy and so we should not take the chance.” Well, there is also false-doctrine, but we do not prevent teaching and preaching in the church.

There is a difference between false (*deceitful*) and *error. [**sin*, as to *miss the mark*; trying to get it right, but making a mistake.]

But what about a prophecy in tongues that wasn’t interpreted? Sometimes a prophecy in tongues does not get interpreted because whoever the Lord wants to give the interpretation through is not cooperating. So the lack of an interpretation, in and of itself, is not proof that the tongues-prophecy was not from God.

One time at a prophetic conference, I received (prophesied over me) a series of prophecies. A small group was praying for me and each one of them had a small piece of a prophecy; like pieces of a puzzle, they combined to make one completed prophecy. Those prophesying over me each spoke-up in combining the pieces in the order they were sure was correct. They erred in their interpretation due to believing that the person who prophesies will always understand the meaning of the prophecy and its application.

They had these four visions: A] I was seen driving, B] there was money in my hands, C] an ocean beach, and D] I looked wearied. Their interpretation was that I was wearied and would be taking a vacation at the ocean. I would be driving to the beach and someone else would be paying for the vacation.

The facts were that I was wearied because of the vacation to the ocean that someone else paid for; and the drive did not cause the weariness, the people at the destination did. Do not presume that because you give a personal prophesy, that you will also know its application.

It could go bad...

When a prophet, or anyone who is prophesying, elicits (draws out) a response from the person they are speaking with, it is a temptation to sin on the part of the person being prophesied over. When the prophet is requiring you to acknowledge for everyone listening that he/she has prophesied truth, the person who has been prophesied over is now pressured to provide a positive confirming answer. The pressure is to not say anything that does not make the prophet look good; after all the leadership must think he is great!

Sometimes a prophecy that you have received needs to germinate for an hour, a day, or months. You need to meditate with the Lord. To be put on the spot in front of everyone, to virtually say how 'right-on' the prophet is, when you do not know that the prophecy was from the Lord Jesus, but you do know it was not anointed, is wrong.

Sometimes it can be right for the prophet to ask some questions, but questions for the purpose of making the prophet look good is sin.

I myself have been given prophecies that were in error and I was pressured to affirm that they were accurate. I did not. Most people believe that if you say that a prophecy was wrong, you are saying that the prophet is a false-prophet. They are already impressed with the prophet, and they are not with you!

Most often than not, the prophet is just immature and not false. The purpose of a prophet seeking affirmation is often for the stroking of his ego. But the crowd is not interested in what you might say. I avoid as much as I can being prophesied over by immature prophets for this reason.

You need to give affirmation of a prophecy when you receive it. It is a blessing for the person prophesying to know that he heard the voice of the Lord Jesus clearly. It also provides confirmation for others listening, when they also thought the prophecy was from the Lord.

Glorification of someone through prophecy...

Who is getting the glory?

Inordinate open or public praise of your brother or sister is not of the Lord. It grieves the Holy Spirit, for it is God who works in us, and He will not share His glory with another. In Isaiah 42:8, "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."

It is a stumbling-block (snare) to the one who is praised. Romans 12:3 tells a man, “not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly...”

Christ like persons are humble and desire not to be singled-out in public. They do not want any of God’s credit, and they find it embarrassing. It is not wrong to acknowledge or thank a person publicly for positive spiritual influence or help that they have been in your life, but there is a difference between recognition and exalting.

Paul said in 1Thessalonians 1:2, “We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.” He spoke in his letter of giving a corporate thanks to God in prayer, not individual public acclaim.

The false prophet glorifies others for his own profit.

Giving inordinate praise to brethren can turn to flattery in your own heart. Some people give praise to others publicly, because it makes themselves look good for extolling others. And doing it through prophesying does not make it any less sinful.

Galatians 1:10 states, “For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

Is the prophet trying to please the leadership, the elite, the donors, the congregation, or God? The more impressed the people, the larger the tips; oh I mean donations!

(Exo 32:22-23) And Aaron said, "Let not the anger of my lord burn hot. You know the people that they are set on evil. For they said to me, 'Make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'"

A true prophet’s goal is not to please the people, but to please the Lord Jesus. God’s prophet needs to only do what, when, and how as the Spirit directs.

Beware of these prophecies...

A] Do not arbitrarily ask the Lord about the possible *death of your children*. He is the giver and taker of life. Just knowing, for the sake of knowing, when and how your child will die is not your place to know.

B] Very frequently a new believer suddenly gets *a great opportunity* that will take him far away from his spiritual base; sending him to where he will not have the support. He has just recently been saved, and is just beginning to learn and grow; he has valuable fellowship and nurturing. Suddenly it comes, a fleshly opportunity that will take him away, often in the form of a great job offer. Sometimes it comes in the form of a false prophecy, giving direction or confirmation of this lie from Satan. Satan wants to separate the young Christian from his/her base of growth and spiritual protection.

C] Upon moving to Ohio, a single woman friend of mine found a church to attend. Everything was copasetic for the first three months. Then during a Sunday service, the pastor prophesied that she was

to marry the head elder, his single son. Not only was there no anointing on the prophecy, just the opposite (a bad spirit). There had been no existing relationship between the two, not even friendly banter or a cup of coffee. The pastor must have flipped the switch to spiritual insanity, because he continued to prophesy saying that “God is so in this place that people will be turning toward this church from where ever they are and pray, and their prayers will be answered.” Like Mecca!?

Marriage prophecies sometimes happen this way: a legitimate prophecy of the Lord is spoken over a young man. It is a word that he will become a “prophet of the Lord”. Not being mature enough to know that God needs to bring it to pass, he launches his ministry and prophecies over the prettiest young lady in the church that she is to marry him.

D] Be suspect of negative dreams and visions and prophecies about a person that you are not at peace with. Satan or even your own heart is capable of falseness.

E] Prophecies of *judicial judgement* are not yours to give. Sometimes the Lord will deliver a prophecy of warning to a person who is backsliding, but it will also have a message or redemption in it, not a settled judicial decree.

F] Also very popular are false prophecies about pregnancy. Yes, true prophecies can sometimes be given; I have delivered a few myself. Most women will eventually give birth, so the odds are in the favor of fulfillment. But the person who prophecies the things falsely, are rarely around when they never get fulfilled; and the heart devastation to a couple who have been trying for years they don’t answer for.

G] Another crowd pleaser that delivers the money into the offering plate is the prophecy of financial increase if you pledge \$1000; or the small-time operator says to put a \$100 in the plate now.

Corrective prophecy: the Rebuke.

(2Co 5:18-19) “And all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them; and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”

The motivation behind a corrective prophecy is the Lord’s love for, and desire to, reconcile the person to Himself. If you deliver a corrective prophecy, it should cost you, it should hurt. You should have the same motivation that the Lord himself has, and your heart should be saddened at the condition of your brothers falling state. Prophecy is not a rod of discipline. Paul says in 1Co 4:210, “What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love, and *in* the spirit of meekness?”

All that glitters is not gold.

When the rest of us can’t see it...

Have you ever been to a meeting where something like was declared, “I see angels in this auditorium!” or “I see gold dust and jewels upon each of you!”? Is God capable to make such manifestations? Sure,

but the Lord does not do these things so that only one person can see them, and you only have that person's word on it. It is always the same person or two, one confirming for the other. It is like Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormons, seeing angels and gold tablets that no one else ever saw. You have to take his word for it.

Remember that *The Claim Of Special Discoveries* is one of the *Cult or Cultish Indicators*.

Christians sometimes focus on angels and give them undue great attention and esteem. I have been in the presence of an angel on couple of occasions and you do not get goose-bumps, you get intimidated. Angles of the Lord are to be giving only the respect that you would give to any other servant of God.

(Gal 1:8) "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed."

(1Co 6:3) "Know you not that we shall judge angels?, how much more things that pertain to this life?"

So if only the prophet can see these great things because they are invisible, then they are not manifestations of God. Manifestations are works of Lord that are detectable by our natural senses. So if it is a manifestation of God, then all will be able to see it, feel it, hear it, taste it, or touch it.

What if everyone can see it? It still does not make it right.

(Exo 7:11-12) "Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts. For each man cast down his staff and they became serpents. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs."

(Exo 7:21-22) "And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts. So Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said."

(Exo 8:6-7) "So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. But the magicians did the same by their secret arts and made frogs come up on the land of Egypt."

You have just read three scripture references where servants of Satan duplicated the works of Jehovah. Just because a work has been performed, does not prove it was from the Holy Spirit.

In 1Samuel 28:7-20, King Saul visited the Witch Of Endor, a medium. Saul had her summon the dead prophet Samuel for him, and she was successful. She was a servant of Satan, not a servant of Jehovah. It was a powerful work, but not from the Holy Spirit.

When I was 13 years old, my best friend and I were using my Ouija board. It indicated that Al would die at 15 years old. Al was 15 years old and died soon after; and Ouija boards are also not of God.

As the saying goes, "All that glitters is not gold."

Paul was not impressed.

Read Acts 16:16-18, "And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour."

Many times Christian onlookers hear and see things that seem perfectly good, but sometimes it takes *knowing the voice of God* clearly to discern between good and evil.

Thank you for following along in these teaching notes on PROPHECY. Our next series of classes and notes will be KNOWING THE VOICE OF GOD CLEARLY.

Reverend Steward E Murphy (April 4th, 2017)