

Recovering the Prophetic

1. *God speaks*

Our focus in this session is on one of the essential 'weapons of our warfare' – the word of God (Eph 6:17), for with it we are able to exercise authority over the lies of the enemy and dismantle its power. The ability to hear God's voice is vital to the process of freedom. The activity of hearing God's voice is deeply anchored in the scriptures and profoundly dependent on the ministry of the Spirit.

- 'Man shall not live by bread alone...' (Matt 4:4)
- 'For God does surely speak – now one way...now another' (Job 33:14)

The Bible is packed with examples of God speaking.

- Heb 1:2 – He has spoken to us through His Son.
- 2 Tim 3: 16 'all scripture is God-breathed...' – he speaks
- John 10:4-5 and 27 – 'my sheep hear my voice'.
- 'His voice has gone out in all the earth' (Ps 19:4)

The enemy's plan is to make Christians think:

- They can't hear his voice.
- God is too busy, not interested in details...
- He Speaks once in a while.

If we believe these things, we won't come to him in faith or expectancy in the first place and so our experience will match our unbelief!!

God speaks to us, so developing a 'hearing heart' is vital for us. Many believers in charismatic churches focus on the 'speaking', but first must come a deep listening. We only speak what we hear.

Faith comes by hearing (Rom 10:17). There is a direct link between hearing God's voice and developing a deep faith. It's not waiting in silence for God to speak, it's actively listening for his voice in and through every-day things all the time.

2. *The Character of God and His manner of communicating*

1. God is not visible, so he won't communicate in person, face to face as we do with each other. Exodus 32:1-27 shows how Israel wanted an idol they could 'see'. But God objects.
2. God is Loving. We must remember that God is love. Everything he says and does, he does as an expression of his love. That should make us want to hear what God says in every situation, just like a lover wants to hear their beloved's voice as often as possible.
3. His activity is powerful (where necessary defying normal natural laws). When he speaks, it isn't just to convey information.
 - His word is creative (Gen 1:3);



- Jesus speaking healing with 'a word'.
 - Isaiah says His word comes from heaven and will not return empty but accomplishes what it was sent to do (Is 55:11).
4. His activity is always faithful and just. God shows that he is not capricious, he doesn't change. He acts in accordance with his nature. So once people understood that God is loving, we now know that he will always be loving in each and every circumstance.

3. ***The Purpose of God Speaking to us***

By speaking to his children, God:

- Draws us and Reconciles us to Himself
- Reveals His character
- Leads us to repentance
- Directs the actions of his people
- Warns them to escape from trouble
- Prepares them to meet difficulties
- Comforts and draws us deeper into intimacy with Him
- Reveals his priorities and plan in and for the world
- Calls forth faith, adoration and thanksgiving
- Equips us for service in His Kingdom
- Helps discern the gifts and call he has on our lives

4. ***How do we hear God's Voice?***

It is the activity of the Spirit that is present in and through all these ways. It is the spirit that guides our thoughts, our eyes, our ears to discern God's message.

'I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come'. (John 16:12-13)

- a. The 'still small voice' (See 1 Kings 19:11-13)
- b. Deep calls to deep – a 'resonance' (Psalm 42:7)
- c. Conviction – an enhanced sense of God's truth (people overwhelmed by compassion, or need of forgiveness etc)

-When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement (John 16:8).

-Sometimes like a sword to heart (Heb 4:14)

-Learning to listen to the movements of our own hearts

- d. Mental or visual impressions

The Holy Spirit has access to the inner recesses of our hearts and minds. As a result, He can communicate directly with our human spirits in a 'trans-rational' manner through holy 'impressions'. These often come, for example, through:

Thoughts; Words; Ideas; Pictures; Physical sensations; An inner voice; Prophetic speech; Tongues; Interpretation

Their meaning and significance indicates what God is saying clearly. We learn to recognise the spirit's voice like we would recognise voice of someone unseen.

e. Our will.

God often gives us the will to something that would be counter-intuitive. (Ps 37:4).

f. Through an 'inner check' – a 'red light'. Col 3:15 – let the peace of Christ 'rule' – ie be the arbiter/judge

g. Through an inner sense of peace - a 'green light'.

h. Enquiring of the Lord. Learning to ask the right questions

i. What do you want to accomplish today (in specific situations)?

ii. What strongholds are playing out in my life right now?

iii. Why am I angry?

iv. Why am I anxious?

v. What do you want me to do? What attitude should I have?

vi. How much money should I give Lord?

vii. Who should we invite to lunch Lord?

viii. What would really bless Anna...?

Many of the ways God speaks to us will depend on the individual. Often the Lord brings to mind an illustration, or a particular scripture. The impact of prophecy is not in its originality, but because it brings to bear God's timeless truths in a timely way for a specific purpose.

5. Testing Prophecy

The principle of Resonance

When a bell or instrument resonates at a certain frequency, other bells/ instruments with the same frequency resonate with it. Does this message or word correlate with other things the Lord may have said? Do others agree with it? Does it 'witness' in my spirit. 'Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...' (Col 3:15)

In line with Scripture

There are many things of God which are not in the scriptures, but scripture remains the benchmark by which we can test and weigh prophetic insight. 'Everything in the scriptures is true; not all that is true is in the scriptures'

The right understanding

a. Revelation – what's the Lord saying?

b. Interpretation – what does it mean?

c. Application – what is the Lord wanting us to do as a result?



6. Prophecy and Freedom

a. Freedom FROM and freedom FOR...

Salvation isn't just being set free FROM sin, bitterness, insignificance, pride, jealousy, unforgiveness etc. We are set free FOR a purpose. (see Exodus 8:1). By hearing the prophetic voice of the Spirit, I discern His unique will and purpose for my life and his priorities and the ways He intends for me to follow in every situation I face.

Through the prophetic Spirit, and by developing a listening heart, I am also able to discern the strongholds that are preventing me from moving forward into the purposes of God. I learn to welcome the conviction of the Spirit when I discern behaviours and strongholds because I know this is how freedom comes. It is the pathway to love, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

True freedom is my ability to discover and pursue God's purpose; to inhabit my promised land; to exercise God's divine weapons to pull down the strongholds that stand in my way. By walking this road to freedom, I am receiving my inheritance that Jesus died to win for me.

b. A lifestyle of Constantly Speaking the Truth to ourselves.

Following the example of Jesus (who, when tempted in the wilderness draws on the Word of God to defend Himself against the enemy) we also walk in freedom by having constantly on our lips the truth of God's intention for me in each and every situation I face.

I say that we must talk to ourselves instead of allowing 'ourselves' to talk to us! Do you realize what this means? I suggest the main trouble in this whole matter of spiritual depression in a sense is this, that we allow our self to talk to us instead of talking to ourself. Am I just trying to be deliberately paradoxical? Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself?

Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them, but they start talking to you, they bring back the problems of yesterday, etc. Somebody is talking. Who is talking to you to you? Your self is talking to you. Now the psalmists treatment was this: instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. 'Why are thou cast down, o my soul?' he asks. His soul has been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says: 'Self, listen for a moment, I will speak to youWhy art thou cast down? – what business have you to be disquieted?...And then you must go on to remind yourself of God, Who he is, and what God is and what God has done, and what God has pledged Himself to do. Then having done that, end on this great note: defy yourself, and defy other people, and defy the devil and the whole world, and say with this man: 'I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance.' Martyn Lloyd-Jones