

"Prophetic Ministries in the World Today ... Who truly represent the Voice of God?"



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There are many self-proclaiming ministries in the world today. You just have to look through Facebook or Google to see an endless list of 'Prophet' or 'Prophetess' this, 'Apostle' that, 'Evangelist' so and so - etc... etc etc. There is nothing wrong with these ministry offices themselves ... Jesus Christ gave them to the Church for the equipping of the saints to do the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11) ... not to be used as titles for the purpose of self-adoration and self-promotion.

That exemplifies that very same corruption and Pharisaical religiosity that Jesus challenged the priesthood about in the gospels, climaxing with the face to face confrontation and exposure of evil recorded in Matthew 23 ... which incidentally immediately precedes the great end times chapter in the gospels ... Matthew 24.

I believe that ministry is about function - not title. Proverbs 18:16 says that "a man's gifting makes way for him, and leads him into the presence of kings". What this means is ... do the work of the ministry (as Paul said to Timothy) and as you function in that capacity others with spiritual authority over you will recognise you and endorse you and those whom you minister to will accept you for who you are - not what your badge, or Facebook profile, or Bible College qualification says you are. As Jesus said "by their fruit shall they be known" ... FUNCTION and FRUITFULNESS!

In regard to the 'five-fold ministry', throughout the New Testament the requirement is for all saints (born again Christian believers - not somebody long since dead approved by a dusty old committee somewhere in Rome) to function in ministry. For example, for us to be 'ambassadors on behalf of Christ' (2 Corinthians 5:20) not self-appointed apostles. Paul desired that we would all prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:1) not be self-appointed or title bearing prophets. As I said above, Paul urged Timothy to 'do the work of an evangelist' (2 Timothy 4:5) ... not be an evangelist. We are all required to disciple the nations and to teach (Great Commission Matthew 28:19-20) ... not proclaim ourselves to be teachers, and that we are to 'care one for another' (1 Corinthians 12:25) not promote ourselves as pastors or holders of any other title (legitimate as they may be).

That is not to say we should be dishonouring to one another and disrespectful to those who have spiritual authority over us, or to our ministry peers. It is not to belittle the five-fold ministry offices themselves. Where function is established and proven, and other criteria has been met, then title is appropriate. Think of ministry rank within a military context. It is to achieve a certain goal and purpose far greater than our own self-importance and ego. There should be no misuse and abuse of title and authority. There needs to be accountability, and a sense of true selflessness and personal sacrifice ... as the centurion said in Luke 7:8 "For I also am a man set under authority, having soldiers under me" ...having authority but being under authority.

I wish to change tack here, and express my personal opinion with less focus on those who presume the ministry office but have limited ministry impact, and more on the types of ministry, particularly the prophetic, that have varying to significant ministry impact - but range in expression from the counterfeit - demonic and the false through those words that are hopeful, exhortive, and edifying, but are not based in The Word, and are not of the Holy Spirit, to those with a high degree of supernatural experience emphasis, and those that are emphatically of God - anchored and indexed to The Word, proven and confirmed, doctrinally sound, established in 'word of knowledge' revelation, and presented by vessels 'worthy unto honour' - by that I mean by men and women of God who have characters of unblemished integrity.

In commenting in this capacity, I am reluctant to mention names of any ministry in a judgemental or condemning capacity. There are those who have been active in this way in recent times who have wrought considerable damage to the church in my opinion, and I don't believe public slugging of ministries is honouring to God or His Church. "Judge not - least you be judged ... condemn not - least you be condemned" (Luke 6:37)

Rather, I would focus on the positive, and suggest you judge and respond to all prophetic expression by determining whether it complies with or violates the following check points:

1. Does it violate Scripture?

Any prophetic word that violates or contradicts scripture IS NOT OF GOD. Psalm 138:2, interpreted, reveals that The Word of God is esteemed and elevated even above His Name. That is not to say any prophetic expression has to be sourced in the Letter of the Word, but it must be sourced in the Spirit of the Word - be consistent with it, aligned and harmonious with it. Also refer to Col. 3:16 and 2 Tim 3:16-17

2. Is it uplifting and life giving?

Any prophetic word that is of God, is required to edify, exhort and comfort (1 Corinthians 14:3). The word that kills, steals and destroys (John 10:10) is not of God but of Satan. What do I mean by 'steal kill and destroy' within a prophetic context? Simply this prophetic words can and often do wound or kill one's spirit, steal vision and purpose, and destroy hope and faith. Jesus came so that we might have life, and life more abundant.

3. Is it confirmed out of the mouths of several witnesses?

Do other spiritual leaders (those with experience with prophetic words and those grounded in the Scriptures) confirm the word? Wait for confirmations. "Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge" (1 Cor. 14:29) "By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." (2 Cor. 13:1)

4. Is it honouring to God and His bride - the Church?

As it says in 1 Corinthians 14:39-40 ... "Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner." This aspect of respect needs to extend beyond the local congregation and encompass the Church Universal. Within the church at large there are diversities of doctrines, cultures, values, visions and expressions. I Corinthians 9:22 declares for us to be all things to all people so that by all means some might be saved. Differences of views may seem wrong in our eyes - but may not be wrong in God's eyes ... for He surely takes a far more expansive view on His creation than we possibly could, with our narrow little

outlook, and therefore there is the need to maintain true humility and be slow to criticize or negatively react. It deeply saddens me when ministries and church groups are attacked publicly - irrespective of whether there may or may not be justifiable grounds or reasons. Such public attacks are divisive, fragmenting, undermining and embarrassing as far as the Kingdom of God is concerned. They draw negative reaction and affect the credibility of the Church. Revelation 12:9-10 exposes the evil of both the deceiver and accuser ... and, as John 8:7 says ... let him who is without sin cast the first stone.

I am reminded of the verbal attack on the office of the prophet in 2 Kings 2:23 ... where Elisha was mocked for his appearance of being bald ... even by little children ... and the wrath of the reaction? ... DEADLY! Ten verses in Scripture (KJV) declare that our God is a Jealous God. What is meant by this? envy? ... no! This is the protective love of a husband who will destroy any serious threat to his wife, - or a father to his children - irrespective of whether they might be in the wrong.

One's preparedness to even give his own life for the one he loves epitomizes the love that Father God had for us that He would even sacrifice His only begotten Son - so that we would not have to perish - but have everlasting life!. This is the protective love of the Bridegroom returning for a bride who is yet to - but surely will - attain unblemished, spotless, wrinkleless perfection for His return.

5. Does the messenger have a vested interest?

The deliverer of the prophetic message should not have any vested interest in the message. Conflicts of interest undermine the integrity of God's word, and open people to demonic control and manipulation. This abuse is especially common regarding matchmaking and young people looking for a life partner ... or worse something with more sinister motives in the area of sex ... "God has spoken to me and said it is His love we will experience if we spend the night together !!!!"

Beware of any prophet or ministry promising God's blessing, favour or breakthrough if you sow into his ministry ... the spiritual principle may be sound - but the voice has a vested and conflicting interest.

6. Is the messenger a 'clean vessel'?

The finest vintage wine can be served in a dirty glass - and is rejected. Let the vessel be worthy of the message. As it says in 2 Timothy 2:21 "Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work."

God wishes to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. The vessels who will be used to achieve this are us His children. May we be worthy!

7. Do you feel at peace in your heart with the message?

The Holy Spirit will confirm to your spirit of the things of God ... at the end of the day ... if it doesn't seem right ... it may not be. Don't reject it out of hand though ... it may be for a season yet to come, and will align with future confirmations. Rom. 8:16 "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." Always bring any doubts or confusions before your pastoral oversight.

Finally ... don't despise or renounce the prophetic and the supernatural. Apply principles that will ensure safety and blessing. Believe in Angels - but don't worship them. Feel and experience the anointing and the presence of the Holy Spirit - but don't allow feelings to shape and determine important decisions and actions - it's through our feelings and emotions that we can be deceived and seduced. Accept that the Holy Spirit operates in a supernatural way - sovereignly or manifested through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12 and 14) and that gold can pop out of fishes mouths, donkeys can talk, oceans can part, people can walk on water, water can come out of a rock, food can appear on the ground, burning bushes can talk, people can be raised from the dead, and people can be 'beamed' from one country to another, angels can appear and talk to people, and people can be consumed with fire from heaven.

We have been created as supernatural beings, and to resist or cower from the supernatural is to hold in contempt the very nature of God who created us in His supernatural image ... Body, Soul and Spirit.

Any supernatural manifestation is evidence of the spiritual realm. Remember Satan can only counterfeit the creation of God. Look at any manifestation - not as a subject of worship - but as an indication that there is an omnipotent spiritual power that is Creator God's alone - place your trust in that and worship Him alone. Court magicians may come and go - Joseph, Daniel, Moses and others had their share of experiences with them. When the snakes appeared on the ground before Moses in the courtroom of Pharaoh ... what was the response of Moses? ... it was to confront the counterfeit with the true - and reveal the supernatural power of the True God.

Remember Romans 1:20-25 ... "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities --his eternal supernatural power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools, and instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sensuality for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the creation (Works of God or supernatural manifestations) instead of the Creator God himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen."