

# TEN CONSIDERATIONS FOR BETTER PROPHETIC ACCURACY

(From [wandaalger.me](http://wandaalger.me))

*So shall My word be that goes out from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:10-11)*

Due to a rising discouragement concerning unfulfilled prophetic words about the nation, and disillusionment with prophetic ministry in general, I would like to offer some suggestions. Let's become a prophetic people who rightly represent the testimony of Jesus, who is the spirit of prophecy.

## 1. DO NOT DESPISE PROPHETS OR PROPHECY

*Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21)*

Due to unmet expectations and disappointments, it is easy to resent a prophetic message that didn't come to pass the way we thought. But rather than throwing everything out and saying prophesy or prophets are no longer relevant, we must examine the word more carefully to see what is *good*. We can't allow impatience or presumption to lead the way in our prophetic perspectives. We must be diligent in mining out the treasures.

While some prophecies may be proven to be false, the majority that do not come to pass are simply due to human presumption. We cannot reject prophetic gifts simply because humans miss the mark. We are all being humbled in this journey and we can learn from our failings if we keep a right attitude. Let's purpose to grow in our ability to separate flesh from the Spirit, glean from our mistakes, and still honor the voice of the Lord.

## 2. DO NOT IDOLIZE PROPHETS OR PROPHECIES

On the other end of the spectrum is to place too much hope or confidence in one particular prophet or prophecy. This, too, is a danger. In times of crisis, we are desperate to know what is happening and why. But, God never intended for us to look to prophets for the answers when we've been given equal access to His heart. Remember, prophecies are primarily given for *perspective and prayer*, not *prediction*. Though God will sometimes reveal future events through His prophets, the majority of messages are calling us to repentance, deeper relationship with Him, and becoming sanctified and empowered change agents in our culture. Let's place prophets and their words in their proper place as we continue to grow in our own ability to hear God's voice.

## 3. BE AWARE OF LOYALTY THAT BLINDS

*For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human? What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. (1 Corinthians 3:4-7 ESV)*

We may all have our favorite minister or prophet, but we must guard our hearts from any extreme loyalty that dismisses possible error. Rather than creating camps within the fellowship based on some popularity list, we should value purity of heart and quality of character even more than the latest revelation or prophetic projection. In our attempt to defend the word of the Lord, let's not blindly accept a prophet's prediction and overlook a needed adjustment, simply because we like them.

#### **4. LISTEN FOR INSPIRED WORDS AND NOT SIMPLY REPACKAGED WORDS**

*For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21)*

A true prophetic word or insight will be marked by fresh revelation and insight because it comes firsthand from Holy Spirit. It will be something we've never heard before and stir our hearts and minds to greater faith in God. It will feel like a light bulb was turned on in a dark room and we finally see the light. This is what we should be looking and listening for when a prophetic word is spoken. There's a difference between speaking with strong personal conviction and under the inspiration and anointing of Holy Spirit. Though the first may be true and even commendable, a prophet must be careful to not simply "feed" the listener with repackaged words – no matter how powerful - but to receive firsthand updates that are fresh and inspired. It is appropriate and good to confirm previous words spoken, but never as a replacement for heaven-sent updates.

#### **5. FOCUS ON THE INITIAL REVELATION, NOT THE INTERPRETATION(S)**

*And the Lord answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. (Habakkuk 2:2)*

In a dream or vision, it is the original "raw data" that is important to record and share before adding any interpretation. Prophecies have been missed, not because of the initial revelation, but because of how they were interpreted. And though the one having the dream or vision is usually the one best suited to give an interpretation, the Holy Spirit may purposely withhold the interpretation so that others can contribute to its message. Thus, as prophetic messages are received, we must always be open to the possibility that we don't have the interpretation ourselves. This not only keeps us from presumption and pride in getting supernatural information, but matures us in receiving and processing corporate words together.

There is also a common tendency in dream interpretation to take things literally instead of symbolically. When seeing global disasters or earth-shaking events in our dreams, we must first consider the spiritual parallels before jumping to practical applications. Many times we are shown people, places, or things to be representative of something spiritual – not literal. Jesus purposely spoke in parables so the people would seek out the answers for themselves. His goal has never been to predict our future, but to deepen our communication with Him.

#### **6. LOOK FOR CONFIRMATION IN A VARIETY OF VOICES**

*Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. (1 Corinthians 14:29)*

Every prophet is unique in their call, their communication style, and their primary field of ministry. Though every message may be slightly different, it is the common threads of Spirit-inspired truths that will testify to the overall word of the Lord.

Prophets speak in part, and the only way to get the whole message is to listen to broader counsel from other reputable voices in the Body of Christ. God deliberately gives each prophetic voice only a piece of the puzzle, and not the whole. This is why prophets need to regularly confer together to make sure they are speaking "as one" to the Body of Christ and sending a unified message. Likewise, the people of God are responsible for weighing prophetic messages so that the fullness of God's word is revealed. Though there will always be some variations in the interpretations, it is the initial revelations of the Spirit that should be sought after and agreed upon.

## 7. RECOGNIZE THE VARIOUS GRACE AND CALL OF EACH PROPHET

*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations. (Jeremiah 1:5)*

Every fivefold prophet has a unique call, assignment, and field of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-15). While some are prophets to the nation, others are prophets to the Church, as well as any number of cultural spheres. In addition, every prophet will have different motivational gifts at work from Romans 12:6-8 (teaching, exhortation, mercy, prophecy, etc.). Where one prophet will have the grace to teach biblical doctrine, another may simply want to encourage others through personal prophecy. Some prophets speak mostly in parables and mysteries (usually seers) while others speak to governments because of their leadership gifts. Understanding these differences can help us draw out the “good” from their messages and apply them appropriately.

Though other fivefold ministers (teachers, evangelists, pastors, and apostles) may often prophesy, their unique grace is different than a prophet. A teaching evangelist can get impatient with a seer prophet due to a perceived lack of biblical framework. A mercy pastor can feel threatened by a governmental prophet because of the spiritual authority they carry. These are simply the realities of the unique gifts at work and we must strive to honor these differences without discrediting God’s servants.

## 8. RIGHTLY DEFINE A FALSE PROPHET

*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. (Matthew 7:15 ESV)*

True prophets should first be recognized by their purity of heart and fear of the Lord. It is their love for Christ and desire to draw all men to the Father that compels a true prophet to speak. Jesus defined a false prophet as one who pretends to care about the sheep, but inwardly wants to destroy them. This reflects their state of the heart even more than the words they speak.

In Numbers 22, Balaam spoke some true prophecies but sought reputation and money more than pleasing the Lord. It was his greed and compromise that made him a false prophet – not his biased prophecies. In the New Testament, Agabus wrongly applied a prophetic word about Paul going to Jerusalem (Acts 21:11-12). Yet his heart was for the Lord, and he was never labeled false because of his misdirected warning. Thus, the condition of the heart is God’s top priority for any legitimate prophet.

## 9. DEMONSTRATE PRACTICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

*Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. 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. (1 Corinthians 14:29-33)*

When operating in any spiritual gift, the first and most important place to receive feedback, encouragement, and adjustment is at home. True accountability, regardless of the level of ministry, starts in a local fellowship, by our own invitation. This is because we are accountable for our character and integrity even before any prophetic words we speak. Those we are in relationship with on a regular basis are the best suited to provide healthy perspective and context as we grow in prophetic ministry together. For those on a national level, personal relationships with other prophets are also a healthy sign of mutual accountability and

encouragement as they seek to speak with “one voice.”

In 1 Corinthians 14, we are also reminded that even under a strong prophetic anointing, a prophet is still “in control” of how supernatural information is communicated. Regardless of any conviction or spontaneous flow, a word should be shared in the fear of the Lord, inviting others to confirm and bear witness to the message and not simply declare “God said.”

## **10. PROPHETS AND APOSTLES MUST WORK TOGETHER**

*But you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (Ephesians 2:19b-22)*

Some believe that apostles and prophets are no longer relevant and that the gifts of the Spirit are no longer needed. This fallacy has handicapped the Church for decades and left us with little power and even less influence. Regardless of what these leaders are called within our current cultural context, the role and functions of apostles and prophets are desperately needed today. And God purposely put them together because of their visionary gifts and ability to build for the future.

Prophets were never meant to function apart from apostolic leadership and apostles were never meant to operate apart from prophetic revelation. These two gifts work together to build and establish healthy foundations for the long haul. Today’s prophets need stronger relationships with apostolic leaders and apostolic leaders need the supernatural blueprints from the prophets. It should start in our local fellowships and then multiply in our regions and beyond.

If we are to see the leadership void filled in our nation, it has to start in the Church. Prophetic gifts are not only relevant, but greatly needed if we are to get past the fog of deception in our land and see what heaven is doing. We may have some cleaning up to do in regard to our policies and practices, but the gift of prophecy is growing and stirring many to action. I pray we can continue to mature in our understanding of its purpose and pursue God’s voice in greater measure, both personally as well as corporately.

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