

I. Biblical Overview:

Biblical guidelines are found in Ephesians 4, Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 – 14 , I and II Timothy and a variety of other places. Below are some of the key points from each section of scripture (all are from the New Living Translation):

- **Ephesians 4:12-13** - ¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.
- **Romans 12:6** - ⁶ In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you.
- **1 Corinthians 12:7** - ⁷ A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.
- **1 Corinthians 12:31** - ³¹ So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts.
- **1 Corinthians 13:2** - ² If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing.
- **1 Corinthians 14:1** - ¹ Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives—especially the ability to prophesy.
- **1 Corinthians 14:3** - ³ But one who prophesies strengthens others, encourages them, and comforts them.
- **1 Corinthians 14:39-40** - ³⁹ So, my dear brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and don't forbid speaking in tongues. ⁴⁰ But be sure that everything is done properly and in order.
- **1 Timothy 4:14** - ¹⁴ Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecy spoken over you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you.
- **2 Timothy 1:6-7** - ⁶ This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. ⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

II. Hearing God's Voice: Recognizing a Prophetic Word

God speaks to us in many ways. He is creative and uses a lot of variety. Once we sense that God is speaking, we seek to test the prophetic word according the Word of God with the help of Holy Spirit (1Thess. 5:20-21).

Three basic categories of hearing God:

1. **Seeing (Visions):** Still or motion pictures in your mind or heart.
2. **Hearing (Words):** Constant or spontaneous thoughts, words or phrases, that light up on your mind or heart.
3. **Feeling (Knowings):** Physical or spiritual sensings of knowledge about something in your body, mind, or heart.

III. Giving a Prophetic Word:

- A. **Be mindful!** Simply stated, a prophetic word should: build up (edify), stir up (exhort), or cheer up (comfort).
- B. **Be respectful!** Keep the right order, the Logos/written word of God above the Rhema/prophetic word.

BASIC BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES: AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROPHETIC

- C. **Be humble!** You could miss it – you are not God – you know in part and prophesy in part. Avoid teaching or adding anything to what you hear the Holy Spirit revealing. Let Holy Spirit give the interpretation. If you don't know what the picture means, share what you are seeing only.
- D. **Be loving!** You prophesy to strengthen others, not to show off your gift.
- E. **Be positive!** If you hear or see something that is negative or a rebuke, ask Holy Spirit what He wants to say. We encourage you to reframe anything negative and address it from a positive perspective (i.e. depression to joy; sin to grace) (Luke 9:46-48).
- F. **Be careful!** Don't control through prophecy. Avoid giving specific direction while learning. Let people hear God's voice for themselves for their most important life decisions.
- G. **Be attentive!** Awaken your spiritual senses, especially hearing, seeing and discerning.
- H. **Be confident!** Refuse the spirit of fear and claim the spirit of power, love and sound mind. God has given each of us spiritual gifts and we can all prophesy by faith. God wants to speak to the person. We can be confident that God will speak.

IV. Receiving a Prophetic Word:

- A. Be open to new vision, but listen to the Holy Spirit for confirmation of what has been expressed.
- B. Prophetic words should be consistent with the written Word of God. Test what you are receiving through God's Word and Heart.
- C. Remember the person ministering is not infallible. Allow flexibility – there may be other interpretations to what they see or hear.
- D. Embrace the words that your spirit agrees with. What you don't understand put aside for later. Ask God about what was said. You may understand an hour, a day or ten years later. If a word brings condemnation or depression, do not receive it.
- E. Show appreciation and honor to the prophetic person, but do not put them on a pedestal.
- F. Remember that getting a strong word about your future doesn't mean you are better than others or that you don't need to submit to others. Stay humble and serve others. God will bring you into your destiny if you have pure motives and you follow Him.

V. Stewarding a Prophetic Word:

- A. Words that speak vision and destiny should be embraced and cooperated with. God will not do it all for you. You must mix faith with action.
- B. Cherish the word as being from God. Thank Him for speaking into your life and ask Him what He wants you to do in order to bring the prophetic promise into manifestations.
- C. Sometimes you will receive an incomplete revelation. God often gives us one piece of the puzzle at a time so we remain dependant on Him and do things in His timing.
- D. Prophetic words should not control your life. They can confirm God's guidance. They may also open your heart to new possibilities that you haven't thought of yet.
- E. A good word is no guarantee that you will fulfill your calling and destiny. It is to give you hope and vision. You must work with God to fulfill it. God might not bring it to pass if you don't walk with Him in obedience.
- F. A positive word about your future or about your gifting and callings does not mean you don't have problems to overcome. You may still need to grow, but God wants you to know how much He will use you if you allow Him to work in your life.