

Don't Let the Prophetic Ruin the Prophetic

In episode 18 of my new series, *Questions With God*, I ask the question, "How do you know if it's God?" If you've been following along with all of these *Questions With God* articles (there will be 20 in all) you may have noticed a common theme working through all of them. I've been to over 40 countries around the world and have seen God do things that are impossible, incredible and head scratching. I've met a wide variety of people, young and old, and I've always tried to observe and process what was happening around and in front of me. And just as my love and admiration of God has grown over this wild decade, so has my understanding of people. And perhaps the biggest lesson I've learned is that the world is a very big place, and humanity is made up of an enormous tapestry of unique experiences, perspectives and personalities.

But obviously, most people view the world through their own lens, and everything is filtered as such. So when you begin to deal with aspects of faith and belief, which for many is the most important thing in their lives, it is only natural that different perspectives and experiences and prejudices will smash into one another and create a reaction or environment that is less than ideal. The true secret to dealing with others is to have grace and patience both for them and yourself as we all just work through this journey called life and faith together. We're all stumbling around a glass darkly, but so often we act as if we're the ones who, unlike everyone else, are actually seeing quite clearly, thank you very much.

I don't think anything quite puts our grace and patience to the test like the prophetic. I'll admit, before I started making *Finger of God* 10 years ago, I had very little experience with prophecy. When I entered this new world, it

felt like everyone around me knew secrets that I didn't, and I couldn't imagine what it must feel like to actually hear God speaking to you as He did with Moses (face to face, as a friend). And then I began to learn more about it, and I began to take small risks myself and I slowly began to differentiate between my own thoughts and the voice of God in my life. It was a slow process, but one I wouldn't trade for the world. But it's also not like I experienced this growth in a test tube. Doing what I do, I encounter a wide variety of Christians, and as such, I have been given a front row seat to some of the nuttier aspects of charismatic Christianity. And this nuttiness has tested me to no end.

What do you do when someone so confidently tells you that God gave them a word for you, but you realize after about 10 seconds that nothing could be further from the truth? What do you do when someone brings you a gift, telling you they did so because God told them it was your favorite, when in truth you don't like what they are offering you at all? What do you do when someone gives you a prophetic word that is, without question, wrong? At this point I've had literally hundreds of people tell me God told them I was supposed to make their movie. If that was true, I'd be making films until I was 200 years old!

I've gone through a few internal stages of reaction while dealing with errors in the prophetic. At first, I found it amusing. Many of these people were just over-enthusiastic, I'd tell myself, and they were obviously just a little loony. Then I move to dismissiveness. If someone contacted my company stating that they had a prophetic word for Darren, I'd simply ignore it. If I don't have to face the loons, maybe they wouldn't actually exist. And then, the worst phase would kick in, where I actually found myself becoming bitter towards the prophetic. I'd have a few trusted voices in my life that I'd pay attention to in this regard, and that would be it.

Along the way, I'd meet people who had become so embittered by

the prophetic that they'd thrown the whole thing out. Better to just focus on the Word and get back to principles and, you know, "normal" Christianity. But as much as I can relate to them, having tasted the true and having seen how it holds the power to truly change people's lives, I realize that there is no escaping the learning curve and the mistakes that will inevitably come with it.

There is no doubt in my mind anymore that I have the ability to hear God speak to me (shoot, I made two entire movies doing just that). But there is also no doubt in my mind that I am far from perfect at hearing Him, and I will make mistakes. Sometimes I hear what I want to hear. Sometimes I confuse my thoughts with His. But sometimes I hear Him clearly, and sometimes He leads me down paths I never would have taken and have received blessings I never would have received had I not endeavored to hear what He was saying to me. But that's my process; that's my journey. I think the current stage of my internal reaction to errors in the prophetic is to realize that everyone else is simply a lot like me. They're trying their best to see in this glass darkly, and instead of seeing something sinister or neurotic or writing them off as goofy loons, I can view them in the same way God views me. They're children who want to be obedient to their Father, even if they may have a little trouble hearing Him properly sometimes.