

Doug Stringer: God is Calling a Prophetic People to Arise

Note: This article was adapted from a teaching by Doug Stringer from April, 2010)

We live in a time of shaking all over the world in both the natural and spiritual realms. But we, as people of God, do not need to fear. In the midst of the shakings, God wants His people to have perspective, peace and purpose. The first of these—perspective, or vision—is a message God has continued to put upon my heart. God made it real to me through a dream.

In the dream, I was a child in the middle of a large crowd. Noise and confusion were all around me, and because I was so small, I could not see what was happening. But then the Father lifted me up on His shoulders. He lifted me to a higher vantage point, where I could now see what was occurring all around me. I could now see from my Father's perspective.

This is the perspective God wants us to have. He wants to transform us into a people with vision—a people with prophetic insight for the days we live in, prophetic understanding of what He is doing around us and prophetic wisdom to know how to lead others to the unshakable foundation of Christ.

Perishing for Lack of Vision

Unfortunately, many in the body of Christ are without the heavenly perspective that is necessary to stand firm in these days. They are tossed around by what they see on the news or hear from their neighbors or colleagues. Many times, even what they hear from the pulpit is nothing more than the faulty foundations of men.

The Bible says without vision, or revelation, the people perish (Prov. 29:18). Psalm 74:9 says, "We do not see our

signs; there is no longer any prophet, nor is there any among us who knows how long.” These verses describe both an individual and national state where God’s people lack prophetic understanding or revelation. Lamentations 2:9 describes Jerusalem in this same state: “Her gates have sunk into the ground ... and her prophets find no vision from the LORD.” Hosea 4:6a says, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

Knowledge, wisdom, revelation, vision—God is trying to tell us that we will not survive without them. He has made these things available to us by His Spirit, but are we listening?

Discerning Present Conditions

In the verses above, God is speaking about His prophets who do not see, leaders who don’t understand the times and a people who do not hear His voice. Too many in the body of Christ are prophesying within the bless-me club while God is trying to show us the fire on the horizon, the stirring in the mulberry trees. Thus, we can be distracted from hearing His voice and blind to His perspective.

There is a desperate need for a people with prophetic insight who can both illuminate the Word of God and interpret the present times. Scripture speaks of leaders like these in 1 Chronicles 12:32a, “the sons of Issachar, those having understanding of times and what Israel should do.”

In *The Gift of Prophetic Insight*, A.W. Tozer wrote about religious leaders who lack understanding of present conditions:

Religious leaders who continue mechanically to expound the Scriptures without regard to the current religious situation are no better than the scribes and lawyers of Jesus’ day who faithfully parroted the Law without the remotest notion of what was going on around them spiritually. ... The prophets never made that mistake nor wasted their efforts in that

manner. They invariably spoke to the condition of the people of their times.

“Today we need prophetic preachers; not preachers of prophecy merely, but preachers with a gift of prophecy. ... We need the gift of discernment again in our pulpits. It is not ability to predict that we need, but the anointed eye, the power of spiritual penetration and interpretation, the ability to appraise the religious scene as viewed from God’s position, and to tell us what is actually going on.

God is looking for prophetic leaders who will meet with Him daily to gain His perspective and be guided by His Word. This prophetic people will receive revelation, insight, wisdom and vision from God that will enable them to lead others into an understanding of God’s truth and His will.

The Prophetic Promise for All God’s Children

It is not only to leaders that God desires to give prophetic vision. In Acts 2, Peter quotes Joel 2:28, “And afterwards, I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; then your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions.” To whom was this promise given? Acts 2:39 tells us, “The promise is to you, and to your children, and to all who are far away—as many as the Lord our God will call.”

Prophetic understanding and the indwelling of God’s Spirit are no longer for a choice few, as was the case in the Old Testament when only kings and prophets would receive the word of the Lord. God desires for *all* of His children to hear His voice and walk with prophetic insight and vision.

Chazon—Divine Communication

The Hebrew word for vision is *chazon*. This word is found most often in the Old Testament books of the prophets. As both Joel

2 and Acts 2 indicate, visions are one of the ways God communicates with His people. One of the other ways is, of course, through Scripture. God wants us to build on the solid foundation of His Word (Matt. 7:24-25), both written and revealed.

The heart of the Father is to lift us up to the rock that is higher than we are (Ps. 61:2) and give us divine perspective in the midst of a world full of confusion and chaos. He loves us so much, and He wants to lift us above the storms and carry us in His arms. He wants a people open and available for His divine communication—a people to whom He can reveal the truths of His Word and who will partner with Him to fulfill His purposes.

Are you open to God's voice? Are you available to spend time listening to Him? Are you walking in obedience to the things He has spoken? These are questions we must ask ourselves, to examine our lives and know if we are listening to the one who is speaking.

A Shaking Foundation

Matthew 7:26-27 (NASB) says, "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall." Beloved, this is the state of our nation. We have neglected the Word of God, we have ignored His principles and precepts, and as never before, our foundations are failing.

In April 2010, a Wisconsin judge ruled that the National Day of Prayer was unconstitutional. The National Day of Prayer is a tradition by which our nation's leaders (dating back to our first president, George Washington) could set aside a day to acknowledge God and seek His protection and providence for our land. Although there will be many appeals to the ruling and

the final outcome is unknown, this judge's ruling was one more event in a long line of efforts to remove God and His Word from our national traditions. The biblical principles this nation was founded on are being removed from our national identity. How, then, will we be able to stand against the storms?

Hebrews 12:26-29 tells us that God will shake the heavens and the earth in order to remove those things that can be shaken, so that only His unshakable kingdom can remain. Listen to this warning in verse 25 (NASB), "See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking, for if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven."

This Scripture indicates that it is a prophetic people, those that hear the voice of God and obey, who will be able to withstand the shaking. This is the people God wants us to be. Those who refuse Him will be shaken with the failing foundations of men. But those who build their foundations on the Word of God will stand firm upon the Rock.

Prophetic Wisdom

When we are tuned in to the voice of God, we will be able to walk with wisdom in the days ahead. The perspective and insight our Father gives us will enable us to understand the times we live in and apply the wisdom necessary to navigate our lives. As Matthew 7 tells us, it is the wise man who builds his house upon the rock.

Proverbs 4:5 (NASB) tells us, "Get Wisdom is to know how to apply God's truth to our everyday lives. When our economy is failing, God wants to give us practical wisdom for our finances. When our political system is shaking, God wants to give us wisdom to choose leaders committed to the right foundations. When confusion, uncertainty, and fear are all around us God wants to give us wisdom to live with peace and

purpose, so we can lead others to the foundation of Christ.

James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."

The promise of prophetic vision is for *all*. The provision of prophetic wisdom is for *all*. In these troubled times, don't get caught without God's vision. Don't get caught without wisdom.

Like the little child in my dream, let the Father lift you up upon His shoulders. Let Him give you His perspective and vision. Listen to His voice and build your foundation on His Word. And live a life of wisdom that will draw others to the unshakable foundation of Christ. {eo}

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