

How to Minister a Word of Knowledge

When three Orlando, Florida, women recently set out for their favorite mall, they figured it would be just another shopping trip. And it was—until God invaded and changed their lives forever.

While the trio enjoyed lunch in the food court, two of them listened as their friend shared a dream she had the night before.

They were perplexed. Did the dream mean something? If it had a deeper meaning, what was it?

Nearby sat two Christians who were also talking about dreams. They turned to the three women. “Do any of you have a dream you want interpreted?” they asked.

The women looked at each other. One of them stammered, “Yes. In fact, we were just talking about it.”

As the woman described her dream, the Christians silently prayed for God’s wisdom and direction. When she finished, they offered her a spiritual interpretation of her dream as well as God’s encouragement. The woman was so touched that she gave her heart to Jesus, right there in the food court and in front of her friends.

Elsewhere in the mall that day, another group of Christians was walking and praying when they sensed the Holy Spirit pointing out a certain man. A thought arose in their spirits: *He’s struggling with loneliness.*

They approached him and struck up a conversation. Within minutes, the man invited Jesus Christ into his heart.

Elated, the group moved on and found a woman they felt the

Holy Spirit directing them toward. They interpreted a dream for her and then led her to the Lord.

A third group walking around the Orlando mall felt the sensation of electricity in their hands and interpreted it as a sign to pray for someone's healing. Upon seeing a woman with a withered hand and a limp, they approached her and were soon praying for her.

Suddenly, the woman's withered hand opened and her feet straightened! She was so excited that she accepted Jesus on the spot.

During that weekend in Orlando, 14 people came to know Jesus Christ, and several were healed. The Christians were members of our Dream Teams, individuals who have been trained by Streams Ministries International in dream interpretation and prophetic evangelism.

Last year, we sent a Dream Team to Salt Lake City for the Winter Olympics. In a Starbucks coffeehouse one night, two team members were chatting about dreams when they looked over at a group of about 30 people standing in line. "Does anyone have a dream they'd like to know more about?" one of them asked.

A news agency journalist joined them and recounted her dream. When the team gave her the interpretation, she fell back in her chair, looked at her boyfriend and said, "Wow! Did you hear that?"

Others had gathered and for the next several hours, the team interpreted dreams. In fact, during their stay in Salt Lake City, our team members interpreted more than 150 dreams.

Real-life experiences like these have led me to the conclusion that prophetic evangelism—a reliance on listening to the Lord while sharing the gospel—is one key to the next great move of God in the world. Prophetic evangelism is a great way to grow

the church and to introduce Jesus to your unsaved friends.

True Dreams Are From God

In the 1980s, my friend and pastor John Wimber, then leader of the Association of Vineyard Churches, coined the phrase “power evangelism.” He focused on the usefulness of signs and wonders, especially miraculous healings, as a way to lead people to Jesus.

Prophetic evangelism is the next step in my understanding of Wimber’s vision. During the last 20 years, tens of thousands have been saved through what he called power evangelism. I believe that trend will continue.

But I also know that dream interpretation, words of knowledge and prophetic words—prophetic evangelism, as I call it—will help even more people come to Jesus.

There is much scriptural foundation for this idea. God promised in Joel 2:28, “Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.” When we read the conclusion of that passage, we find that the result of prophesying, dreams, visions, signs and wonders is to bring a harvest into the kingdom.

Though many churches have embraced the idea of Christians prophesying, they have not been as accepting of biblical dream interpretation. That’s unfortunate. The Bible teaches us that God speaks to us in the night.

Elihu confirms this in Job 33:14-16: “For God may speak in one way, or in another, yet man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, while slumbering on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction.”

Jeremiah and Zechariah criticized “false” dreams, because they

knew the importance of “true” dreams from God (see Jer. 23:25; 27:9; Zech. 10:2).

Daniel 1:17 tells us, “Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.” The young prophet ends up prophesying to King Nebuchadnezzar concerning a dream he had.

The impact of the revelation was so powerful that the king exclaimed, “Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret” (Dan. 2:47).

Early church fathers and mothers readily accepted the validity of dreams as a way in which God speaks. First-century Jewish historian Philo said that dreams are a way God gave to mankind to learn about the spiritual world.

Tertullian of Carthage, who lived in the second century after Christ, said, “Almost the greater part of mankind derive their knowledge of God from dreams.” Jerome, the fourth-century theologian who translated the first Latin Bible, the Vulgate, was converted to Christianity by a dream from God.

God has never stopped speaking to men and women who want to hear His voice. In fact, dreams are such a powerful means of communication that the enemy has tried everything in his power to discredit and counterfeit them.

Why do New Age practitioners have so little trouble with the idea of dreams, and why do Christians—the ones who long to hear God’s voice—devalue it? God created this connection between His Spirit and our spirit for a reason.

Spirit Communication

Biblical dream interpretation comes as the result of a growing relationship with God. A hunger for Him translates into a hunger to hear and understand His voice.

True dreams from God generate a curiosity in us, a question

that we're desperate to answer. We long to hear His voice.

Every night, God whispers into the dreams of unsaved men and women. He seals the truth within their hearts. Some will search the world looking for the key to unlock that truth. Many today are drawn to the New Age movement, thinking the answer might be there. Others may go to dream interpreters who operate in the perversions of Freudian and Jungian dream analysis, and they will find no peace.

Christians who hear and understand the voice of God hold the key for these wanderers. Prophetic evangelism is about giving a human voice to the spiritual mysteries God has implanted in the lost.

During my years of study, I have discovered that God will give the interpretation to a dream in any of four different ways:

1. God will speak the interpretation to our spirit in the dream. We will awaken with the understanding of what the dream meant.

2. God instantly gives a dream's meaning. As with Daniel, the interpretation comes through an angelic messenger.

3. God gives the interpretation during the process of recording the dream. First Chronicles 28:19 says, "'All this,' said David, 'the Lord made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, all the works of these plans.'"

4. God gives us interpretations of dreams as we grow and mature in our understanding of His ways. Proverbs 25:2 says, "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter." God wants us to meditate on His mysteries. He places great value on our searching for the spiritual truths and insights that He conceals like buried treasure.

Often, we learn as much, if not more, in the discovery process

of interpreting a dream as we do in simply obtaining the dream's answer itself. The more we learn, the hungrier we become.

It's Him We Need

God will not remove our need for the Holy Spirit. It is through His wisdom that dreams are interpreted and that we commune with God.

Even though there are biblical guidelines for interpreting dreams, we need Him, not pat answers or fixed rules. We are truly dependent on Him to lead us into all truth. And to truly hear the Lord, we need His peace in our lives.

All revelation comes from the Holy Spirit, who searches the deep things of God. He chooses how He will give the revelation to us. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of peace, and when He comes, a residue of peace is left with us.

God uses metaphors and symbols in our dreams. He is a visual, creative entity, and He loves to wrap His wisdom in the mysteries of our language and culture. When we interpret a dream, we need to approach the metaphors in a dream from different points of view. Why did God choose to use this symbol? Why not another?

God is purposeful in everything He does. As you interpret more dreams, you will begin to see patterns in how God uses certain symbols in your dreams.

People Are Wanting Truth

When I am in a situation with non-Christians, I ask God to show me if they are open to His Spirit or not. If they tell me a dream, that's a good sign they are indeed open to spiritual things.

The moment you open your heart to the possibility that God speaks through dreams, you will discover that many people near

and dear to you have dreams and want an interpretation. As you begin to embrace the ways God speaks to you, He will speak to you even more.

I have interpreted more than 40,000 dreams in my life—from Christians and non-Christians. Not all were from God. Many were soul dreams, and some I've encountered were impossible to interpret.

I'm still learning every day about how God communicates this way and how dreams can be used prophetically to evangelize the lost. Compared to where God wants to take us in His Spirit, we're all little children. We have much to learn.

This is the hour for prophetic evangelism—for the light of God to shine on people who have waited for years for a resolution in their lives. This is a moment in history in which Christians can make a massive difference—one person and one dream at a time.

As Paul wrote, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9). We are standing on the threshold of a new spiritual awakening.

I believe God is getting ready to unleash a powerful wave of prophetic evangelism, larger than any of us have ever dreamed. And with it will come a harvest that is unprecedented in church history.

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