

What Can Happen When a Prophet Ministers Outside Their Calling

I have mentioned that there are seer prophets and other kinds of prophets. In the Old Testament, there are three Hebrew words translated into our English word “prophet” or “seer”: *nabi*, *ro’eh* and *hozeh*. *Nabi* is generally the most-used word for a prophet. It means “to bubble forth, as from a fountain”; hence, “to utter.”

We read examples of *nabi* prophets: “And God sent prophets to return them to the Lord. These warned the people” (2 Chron. 24:19b), and “The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: Stand in the gate of the house of the Lord and proclaim there this word” (Jer. 7:1).

In the time of Samuel another word, *ro’eh*, meaning “seer,” began to be used and occurs seven times in reference to Samuel. We read, “(Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he said, “Come, and let us go to the seer.” For he that is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer)” (1 Sam. 9:9). A seer typically receives prophetic revelation in dreams and visions and can also distinguish the messages of God embedded within creation. And then another word, *hozeh*, also means “seer” (2 Sam. 24:11), which is a synonym of *ro’eh* but a rarer Hebrew term that means “to see in a vision.” In 1 Chronicles 29:29, all these three words are used: Samuel the seer (*ro’eh*), Nathan the prophet (*nabi*) and Gad the seer (*hozeh*).

These three functions have carried over into the New Testament as well. The diversity of New Testament prophets is mostly centered on the prophet’s *metron* as well as how they primarily receive God’s voice. A *metron* is a Greek word that means

“measure” or “limited portion.”

The apostle Paul wrote, “But we will not boast beyond measure, but within the boundaries which God has appointed us, which reach even you” (2 Cor. 10:13). Frank Damazio, author and former senior pastor of City Bible Church in Portland, Oregon, wrote this: “In 2 Corinthians 10:12-18, Paul exposes the faulty way that ministries evaluate themselves by using the measuring rod of others. Evaluating themselves by themselves is acting unwisely, and in fact, is harmful. Paul’s key ministry concept that he personally lived by is that he knew his ‘measure,’ his ‘rule.’ Ministry identity, style and motives all rest on the understanding of the ministry *metron*—the sphere God has drawn for you.”

My husband, Ron, and I are perfectly paired in this regard. He’s an apostle, and not a prophet, but all fivefold ministers host a *metron* as determined by Jesus Christ. Ron’s sphere is distinctly regional and includes our city and all of the surrounding cities. Mine is more global, given that I was called as a prophet to the nations.

Ron is not overtly interested in reaching nations, but carries an obvious authority for church leadership within the regional community. I’m not overtly interested in regional outreach, but I strategically target nations with the message that I carry. Our different *metrons* are complementary to each other’s and highly effectual as long as we as individuals remain within our ministry spheres.

Prophets are given their designated sphere of authority by Jesus, something He will communicate, confirm and clarify. They are most effective within that sphere and need to be mindful to not try to operate outside of it.

“Most contemporary prophets believe that their *metron* stretches as far as their airplane tickets,” wrote one prophet and author. “At times, this may be true for national/global

prophets, but for local prophets it's dangerous to go where you haven't been called. Any attempt to minister in an area that you haven't been graced or equipped for can subject you to the attack of territorial spirits in that region."

My experience is that you are never totally immune to such attacks, but there is a marked grace to overcome when you've stayed within your sphere. Different spheres include local prophets who are called to build the church locally, or are assigned to just one church. Some prophets are called to build one of the "seven mountains of society," which are religion, family, education, government, media, arts and entertainment, and business.

Other prophets are assigned to a nation or a cluster of nations. Remember that one sphere is not better than the other. Jesus is the one who calls you, and you are only responsible to Him and not to peer pressure and the mandates of others that appear popular. {eo}

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