

Your Season of Life-Shifting Moments and Words

There are many ways God leads us by His Holy Spirit, and one is through the gift of prophecy, in which the Spirit shows us something that will happen or gives us direction or a warning. Prophecy is among the most-misunderstood spiritual gifts but one of the most worthwhile. In the Old Testament the prophet represented God to the people and spoke on His behalf.. And they'd better not get it wrong because the penalty was death. False prophecy was and still is judged harshly by the Lord. In the New Testament, only the 12 apostles carried the same authority as the Old Testament prophets to speak the words of God.

Over the years, I've reported on many prophetic people and those who claim to be prophets. One of my significant honors in life was knowing Oral Roberts. As I was growing up, our family saw his ministry on television and always spoke of him in almost reverential tones. When we named the great evangelists of the day, they were Oral Roberts and Billy Graham, always in that order.

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I was invited to a leaders meeting in 1981 at Oral Roberts University when Oral Roberts was still president of that institution. He hosted a banquet on the top floor of what was then called the City of Faith. After the meal we stood beside our seats for a time of worship. Roberts moved around the room, laying hands on and praying for everyone as we worshipped.

I was nervous as he approached me, wondering what he might say. He laid hands on me and whispered in my ear, "Never doubt

the gift that's within you."

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That word has come to mind many times over the years, and I believe it was a prophetic word—as short as it was—to me. I was still in my 20s. Charisma magazine was beginning to be known nationally, but I was operating out of my league, as we were gaining a national audience and covering the Christian community.

I came from a family that believed small was better than big and preferred status quo over risk-taking. As a result, an inbred uncertainty shrouded almost every decision I made.

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