

21 Contrasts Between Prophetic Edification and Manipulation

The Bible teaches us that true prophecy edifies the church and also exalts the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 12:3-7 and 14:3-4). However, where there are true prophetic gifts, there are also counterfeits and/or the wrong use of God-given gifts. For example, in the Scriptures we see that the prophet Balaam tried to use his gift for financial gain (Num. 22:21-39). We see in this narrative of Balaam, that even though his motives weren't godly, he still had a bona fide prophetic gift.

The bottom line is, all prophetic gifts have to be framed by the intent, the motives and ultimate purpose of the Word of God. As someone who has participated in prophetic ministry since the early 1980s, I've seen this gift used for both edification and manipulation.

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1. Prophetic edification benefits the church; manipulation benefits only the prophet (1 Cor. 14:4).
2. Prophetic edification exalts the Lord Jesus; manipulation exalts the one giving the prophetic word (1 Cor. 12:3).
3. Prophetic edification advances God's kingdom; manipulation advances the ministry of the prophet (Matt. 6:33).
4. Prophetic edification advances the vision of the church; manipulation advances the financial provision of the prophet (Num. 22, Rev. 2:14).
5. Prophetic edification points people to the vision of the church; manipulation draws people away from the church and toward the prophet (Acts 20:30).

6. Prophetic edification builds the spirit-man; manipulation entices unresolved issues in the emotions of the hearer (Eph. 5:18-19).

7. Prophetic edification builds discernment; manipulation takes advantage of naivete in the believer (Prov. 1:2-4).

8. Prophetic edification is motivated by God's agenda; manipulation is motivated by the prophet's agenda (1 Kings 22, Jer. 23).

9. Prophetic edification is accountable to spiritual authority; manipulation is accountable to no one (1).

10. Prophetic edification is built upon a correct handling of the Scriptures; manipulation is built upon a distortion of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16,17).

11. Prophetic edification gives us great faith in God; manipulation gives us great faith in the prophet (John 7:18).

12. Prophetic edification emanates from the counsel of the Lord; manipulation comes from the imagination of the prophet (Jer. 23).

14. Prophetic edification expresses the heart and mind of God; manipulation expresses the desires of the prophet (Jer. 7:24).

15. Prophetic edification speaks the truth in love; manipulation flatters for personal gain (2 Pet. 2:18).

16. Prophetic edification helps mature people in the church; manipulation eventually drives people out of the church (Acts 15:32).

17. Prophetic edification motivates people to seek the Lord; manipulation motivates people to seek the prophet (Isa. 55:6-7).

18. Prophetic edification implores people to confirm the

prophetic word; manipulation scares people into being led by their word (2 Cor. 13:1).

19. Prophetic edification encourages humility; manipulation encourages selfish ambition (Isa. 57:15, Phil. 2:1-12).

19. Prophetic edification seeks the honor of God alone; manipulation motivates many to glory in men (John 7:18).

20. Prophetic edification has an eternal effect; manipulation has a temporary effect (1 Pet. 1:25).

21. Prophetic edification builds up the hearer; manipulation takes advantage of the hearer (Eph. 4:29).

In conclusion, may the Lord continue to increase the accuracy, the influence and the conformity of prophetic people to the will of God.