

Chuck Pierce: Is Prophecy for Today?

In the days of the apostles, the writer of Acts quoted the prophet Joel as saying:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams” (Acts 2:17, NJKV).

But do the “last days” mentioned in this verse refer to our times? In *The Spiritual Warfare Handbook*, a compendium by Rebecca Wagner Sytsema and me that contains the wonderful book *When God Speaks*, we have a great section on understanding prophecy that is helpful in understanding its role in the Church today:

Most Christians in the United States grew up in churches that did not embrace the idea of God speaking to us today. We were taught cessationism, which means that the power gifts of healing, tongues, interpretation of tongues, miracles and the like all ceased to function in the first century. One of the gifts that supposedly stopped functioning was prophecy. What that basically means is that God said all He had to say by A.D. 95 and has been silent ever since.

Those who hold to this line of thinking believe that prophecy passed away when the Scriptures were completed. They base their belief on 1 Corinthians 13:8–9, which says that prophecy, tongues and knowledge will pass away. However, in the following chapter of 1 Corinthians, Paul encourages us to desire prophecy (see 14:1). He did not say that these gifts would be replaced by any others or that they would pass away before the Second Coming of Christ.

In fact, in Ephesians 4 Paul writes: “And He Himself gave some

to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, *to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*" (vv. 11–13, NKJV, emphasis added).

In this passage, we see that these gifts have been given until we come to unity and we reach the stature of the fullness of Christ. At no time in the history of the church have we achieved these things. Therefore, based on Paul's own words, these gifts, including prophecy, are still in operation today.

How Can We Know the Will of God?

The Bible makes it very clear that God has a purpose and a plan for our lives. Any biblical scholar will agree that this did not end in the first century. But if we have a God who doesn't speak to us, it will be hard to discern what that plan is. Many of us have read books or heard messages on knowing the will of God, which are filled with good principles to follow. Yet, the fact remains that the Bible only gives one real principle to follow in trying to determine God's will for our lives. In the Bible, when someone wanted to know the will of God, they asked Him—and He told them!

God does speak to His people. But if we are so entrenched in a mindset that says God does not speak today, we will write it off as our imagination. The truth is that the prophetic is not an optional extra in the Christian life or in the church. Amos 3:7 goes so far as to say, "Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets."

In late 2019 the Lord had to find someone with whom He could discuss the year 2020. He had to say that this Passover season and the days, months and decade beyond were crucial in His earth. Why did He decide to use me? I can't answer that—only

the Lord can. My responsibility is simply to obey and try to bring forth the things He is sharing as accurately as I can.

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul reminded the Gentiles that they once worshiped mute idols. What a foolish thing to worship something that cannot communicate! Our God, however, is not like the mute idols. Our God constantly pours out new revelation and is continually speaking to His people. He is a God who loves us enough to want to share communication with us. God speaks, and we prophesy what He says!

So, what is prophecy? The definition of prophecy is simple. Prophecy is speaking the mind and heart of God as revealed by the Holy Spirit. Prophecy is the outflow of the heart and the very nature of God. Revelation 19:10 says that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Jesus cares about His church and, therefore, has things He wants to communicate to His church.

Those communications come by way of the Holy Spirit. That is prophecy. It is what Jesus is saying to His church. The testimony of Jesus, which is prophecy, is not just a corporate promise. Jesus says that His sheep know His voice (see John 10:4). If you are one of His sheep, you have the capability, the capacity and the privilege of hearing the voice of your Shepherd, which comes through the Holy Spirit.

In the middle of a crisis, prophesy. This can come in the form of comfort, encouragement, exhortation or direction. Never forget that there is a redemptive purpose in your life and surroundings that the Lord is unlocking. Prophesy that ultimate redemptive purpose. {eo}

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