

Need a Word From God? Seek It the Right Way

I often meet people who tell me they need a word from God. I've seen Christians line up in front of prophets, hoping for a quick solution to their problems. I've also seen those same Christians stand in line a second time in front of the same prophets because they didn't like the word they received the first time! I call these people "prophecy chasers."

God wants to speak to His people, and I believe He has a fresh word for all of us at the right time. But there is a right way and a wrong way to seek God for prophetic direction. I'm concerned that we charismatics are guilty of abusing the gift of prophecy. Here are some guidelines that will help you:

Read God's Word regularly. Many Christians crave a "direct" word from God, yet they refuse to study the Bible. They may even consider reading Scripture religious or boring—yet they love the thrill of getting a prophetic word in a public meeting. Carnal Christians aren't willing to be disciplined students; they want prophetic words handed to them on a silver platter. You will never become a mature Christian if you don't learn to hear from God on your own through His Word. And if you don't read Scripture, you won't know the difference between a true prophecy and a fake one—because prophecy never contradicts the Bible.

Look to God for direction, not people. I seek God daily for direction. I don't chase prophets to tell me what to do or to show me my spiritual purpose. God can certainly use a prophet to speak to me—prophets are gifts to the church—but my focus is on God, not on the men or women He uses. If you ever start looking to a human being as your source of divine guidance, you are heading toward idolatry.

People who have the gift of prophecy must be careful they don't allow people to put them on pedestals. We are not mediums who read people's fortunes, and prophets should never allow themselves to be put in such a position.

Stop looking for the sensational. The apostle Paul said true prophecy is about three things: encouragement, comfort and exhortation (see 1 Cor. 14:3). True prophecy strengthens us, confirms God's promises and propels us into our divine destiny.

We've all heard of charismatic prophets who provide phone numbers or addresses in their prophetic words to confirm a message from God. It's true that God has the power to reveal such personal information, but in some such cases, the "prophets" were actually con artists who preyed on the gullible. Beware of prophets who use theatrics to bring a word to you. In all my years of ministry, the most solid prophets were humble men and women who never drew attention to themselves.

Don't hurry when seeking prophetic guidance. I've talked with Christians who were desperate for a word from God, but they informed me they were on a deadline. Sometimes they even seemed to be threatening God—as in, "If I don't hear from God by tomorrow, I quit!"

God moves according to His calendar, not yours. Don't throw a tantrum; mature disciples must learn to wait for God's word. Waiting will require you to adjust your timetable to God's. Don't let impatience derail you.

Sometimes God deliberately pushes the mute button. If His voice is not clear right now, it may be because He is leading you into a quiet wilderness season. You must learn to trust Him even when He's quiet. Wait on the Lord, and let your roots grow deep.

Make sure your heart is willing to obey. Many people are eager

to hear a word from God, especially if it tells them they will have a worldwide ministry or become independently wealthy. But prophecy is never sent to boost your ego. A true word from God cuts deep to the core; it requires surrender and demands holiness.

Henry Blackaby once wrote: "Our difficulty is not that we don't know God's will. Our discomfort comes from the fact that we do know His will, but we do not want to do it." It is pointless to ask for God's prophetic word if we are not fully yielded. Before you seek a word from God, lift your hands with an attitude of unconditional surrender and be willing to obey what He says.

J. Lee Grady was editor of Charisma for 11 years and now serves as contributing editor. He directs The Mordecai Project ([link](#)), an international ministry that protects women and girls from gender-based violence. His latest book is *Set My Heart on Fire* (Charisma House).

This article was excerpted from the March issue of Charisma magazine. If you don't subscribe to Charisma, [click here](#) to get every issue delivered to your mailbox. During this time of change, your subscription is a vote of confidence for the kind of Spirit-filled content we offer. In the same way you would support a ministry with a donation, subscribing is your way to support Charisma. Also, we encourage you to give gift subscriptions at [link](#), and share our articles on social media.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.