

Stop Trying to Unwrap Holy Spirit's Prophetic Gifts by Yourself

Genesis 50:20 in the Message Bible says, "Don't you see, you planned evil against me but God used those same plans for my good, as you see all around you ... life for many people!"

God used Joseph's hateful brothers, Potiphar's wife's false accusations and an unfair prison sentence to unwrap his dream. Then there was King Saul's spirit of jealousy and rage, which was used to unwrap David's crown for kingship. Also God used Judas' betrayal to unwrap Jesus' destiny to be King of kings and Lord of lords! Who is God using in your life to unwrap your destiny?

I sense many of God's people are frustrated by not being able to unwrap their spiritual gifts and callings. I am discovering that it takes all kinds of people around us to unwrap the gift that God has placed inside of us. Can a gift unwrap itself? Neither can we. When it comes to unwrapping your spiritual gifts, you don't get to open them. God uses other people to do that, for your gift is not for you—it's for others!

How God Unwrapped the Prophetic Gift in My Life

Many years ago in our church as I led worship, I would experience God's powerful anointing. I loved leading worship and the church seemed to love it too. Let me caution you. When you fall in love with your gift and others begin to fall in love with it—be careful. That's when God usually brings people into your life to unwrap you from that gift that you got wrapped up in.

Shortly thereafter, a new elder came on the scene and was given the privilege and authority to call on people to lead

worship. I noticed something—he wasn't calling on me. So I began to pray for him. As I prayed for him, nothing happened. I had to sit in the congregation and die in my seat as I longed to be up in the pulpit leading worship. Every time I would look at him up front, I felt a knife going in me. During this time, I would actually get physically sick going to church.

Finally, the Lord walked me through Matthew 5:23-24, "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift."

It took me many months to walk through forgiving this elder and asking God to bless him and then being able to bless him myself by taking him out to lunch. I then realized why God says to feed your enemies. When we do, Jesus pulls a chair up to that same table and knocks the walls down between you and the person you don't like. He causes you to have communion as you eat together!

Shortly after this, we were totally reconciled as though he had never hurt me. Right after we were reconciled, I will never forget the very next Sunday morning in our church. During worship, a Spirit of prophecy came upon me for the first time, and I gave a powerful prophetic word that went outside the walls of our church to other places.

After the service was over, God spoke to me. He said, "Bill, it wasn't that elder that moved you out of the pulpit from leading worship. I used that brother to move you, for you loved leading worship so much, you wouldn't have stepped down on your own. I used him to move you, for I had a better gift to give you, and you wouldn't have been able to receive this prophetic gift in the pulpit since you were all wrapped up in leading worship!"

Getting Past the 'Wrapping Paper' to Find the True Gift in Others

Many times in my life, I have not been able to get to know certain people because I didn't like how they were "wrapped!" They were so different than me, and how they ministered seemed to be a bit crazy. I have noticed something late in life—God seems to anoint people whom I wouldn't. And I am learning that just maybe they are doing something right after all. It's time we get past the wrapping paper and find the true gift in each other. Lately, God is bringing people back into my life so I can help unwrap their gift and help bring it forth to bless even my own life.

A Christmas Story

There was a father who had a little daughter who was wrapping his Christmas gift with the most expensive wrapping paper in the house. He didn't say anything to her because he loved her. On Christmas morning, the father began to open his gift from his daughter, and as he unwrapped the gift and opened the lid of that little box, he found nothing in it. He was so upset, he lost it and blew up at his little girl.

He said, "Honey, you used the most expensive wrapping paper we had to wrap my gift and there is nothing in the box!"

The little girl responded and said, "Daddy, that box isn't empty, I blew kisses in it for you. I blew kisses in it for you, daddy!"

Not long after, the little girl was killed in an accident. When the father was so depressed, he would open up the lid of that little box and reach inside and pull out an imaginary kiss.

Listen carefully—there is always something in the box! God has made every person on Earth in His image, and even when we think someone has no value or has no gift, there is always

something precious in every person. Many times we just don't see it.

We also need to get past one another's gifts and get to know each other. Our gifts can actually hide us and hinder people from getting to know us. I believe many of the most gifted in the body of Christ are the loneliest. It's lonely at the top. They can't help feeling that people are after their gifts instead of loving them for who they are. I believe God is taking us from paper to people. I believe the greatest gift we can have on Earth is a friend.

Perhaps our greatest call is being a friend of God, a friend to sinners and a friend to others. God wants us to be known for who we are, not for what we do. I sense the more I am around people and just love them for who they are, their gifts begin to be activated, and so are mine!

Let's think outside the box this Christmas! {eoa}

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