

Weeding Out False Prophetic Words That Seek to Distract You

It had been five years since I graduated from high school, and I was living what I call the good life. I was working as an administrator for a fairly large church in the Central Texas area and was also a full-time musician for my local church. I thought I was doing everything God wanted me to do. However, one morning as I was preparing to head to the office, a voice invaded the restroom of my home, and all I heard was, "Huston-Tillotson University." I was alarmed by the sound of the voice because I was home alone. After peeping around the corner and searching a few rooms, I realized that it was the voice of the Lord that spoke to me. Boy, was I in denial about what I heard. I didn't have any intentions on pursuing a college degree. God was obviously speaking to the wrong person.

About three days later, after leaving the church office, I made a quick stop to Wal-Mart to pick up a few things before heading home. I had brushed off my encounter with the Lord. Although it was interesting to have heard His audible voice for the first time, I was not going to college. After selecting a few items in the store, I headed towards the checkout lines. I was 10 feet away from the cashier when a gentleman stopped me and asked me if he could tell me what the Lord was speaking to him concerning me. Of course, I raised an eyebrow and maybe rolled my eyes, but I let him speak. "Yes, the Lord says go to school. I see where you are gifted in music, but the Lord says to pursue business, and you will do extremely well."

I was tempted to throw the ketchup that was in my hand at him and run straightway to my car. I was dumbfounded by the word

but impressed at God's way of getting my attention in regard to His purposes for my life. Several days later, I submitted my application to the university online and was immediately accepted. I was nervous but extremely excited about this next chapter.

The university was only an hour away from my hometown, so I would make frequent trips home. One weekend, I was at a church service with a family member who was the head pastor of a small ministry. Before the service ended, she called on certain people in the congregation to come forward for prayer and prophecy. She eventually motioned for me, and oh, was I thrilled to be one of the chosen ones. I was confident that God was going to give me an amazing word concerning my future. Midway through the prayer, she began to give directives as they related to my education. At the time, I was in my junior year of college and on track for graduation.

This family member began to release some very disturbing words about how the Lord wanted me to leave the school was attending and move back to my hometown to attend a community college. I politely whispered in her ear, "I'm sorry, that is not the word of the Lord." After all, God had given me clear instructions years before. Surely He wouldn't just have me waste three years of my life only to move back home. When I finished my remark, she politely whispered back, "I think that was a witch talking to me." She eventually blamed the error of her so-called prophecy on one of the members in the congregation. I was very disturbed and left the premises of the church immediately after the benediction.

I've heard it said many times that three of the most manipulating words used in the church are: "The Lord said." Prophecy is one of the most powerful gifts given by God to man for edification, exhortation and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3). However, prophecy can become extremely dangerous when it is man-initiated and not heaven-activated. Although this vocal gift is expressed through the mouth of a man or woman,

all utterances should come from one source, the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1:21).

There is a story in 1 Kings 13 about a young prophet whom the Lord instructed to go to Bethel and cry out against Israel's sin. Upon completion of this assignment, the prophet was told to immediately return to Judah, but from a different way than he came (1 Kin. 13:17). An older prophet in Bethel sought out the young prophet and proclaimed that an angel of the Lord had given him a different command and that the younger prophet was to go to the older prophet's home and dine with him. But the older prophet was lying (1). The young prophet hearkened to the word of the older prophet and didn't make it back to Judah alive because of his disobedience (1 Kin. 13:24).

Friends, when God instructs you to do something, be wise and follow through. Don't allow false prophetic voices to cause you to forfeit your destiny. It is better to obey God than man (Acts 5:29). Because I decided to ignore the false word and stick with what I knew was God, I ended up graduating with honors (magna cum laude) and ranking No. 2 in the business administration degree program.

Deon Howard *is a young man who is extremely passionate about the plans and purposes of God. You can follow Deon as he follows Christ on Facebook. Deon's Periscope handle is @KingzKid.*