

1 Vital Prophetic Protocol We Should All Follow

I've seen some disturbing prophetic words on the Internet recently regarding specific dreams and visions over high-profile leaders in the body of Christ.

One of those words described a vision of two publicly named spiritual generals down on their knees repenting to one another, suggesting that another great awakening hinged on this act. A second prophecy suggested a different leader—again, publicly named—was fighting for his life because he did something illegal in the spirit that let the devil attack him.

Needless to say, I was disappointed to read these articles online and more disappointed that others picked up on them and parroted what they read, even adding their own interpretations and speculations. I reached out to some of the authors but the practice continues—and it grieves me.

It violates prophetic protocol to publish dreams, visions and other prophetic expressions about named ministry leaders—and especially when the utterance makes a public cry for repentance or offers a rebuke—without approaching the people you're writing about to get their blessing.

Yes, There Are Exceptions

Matthew 18 dictates we approach a brother who has sinned privately, but even words that don't deal with sin need to be hashed out with the person before you "go live" on the Internet. Such prophecies can have unintended consequences, even if they are true.

There could be times when the Lord would lead a prophet to bypass this process—and it could be impossible to reach the

person on which the prophecy centers—but I believe that prophet should then take the word to a prophetic counsel of elders that would pray over it and offer wise counsel on when and how best to release it, if it needs to be released at all. In other words, there needs to be accountability.

Sure, there are times when the Lord uses a prophet to issue a strong rebuke, but we cannot ignore the Matthew 18 principle. True prophetic utterances do not conflict with Scripture. As one of my prophetic mentors drilled into my head, “God does not speak with a forked tongue!” Again, such words need to be submitted to elder prophets before public release.

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Yes, I have read clear and valid prophetic words about politicians, celebrities and other public figures that bear witness with me and were appropriate in timing and spirit; but a seasoned prophet weighs prophetic utterances that could have a major impact on a person, people or nation before hitting “publish” on WordPress. And there’s a distinction between a celebrity or politician and a man or woman of God who is trying their best to do what God has called them to do.

Rightly Dividing the Word

After grieving over some of these issues, I wrote a post on my Facebook page addressing some of it. That post reads:

“Dear Prophets, Before you release a prophetic word consider the consequences and the ripple effect. Just because the Lord shows you something doesn’t mean you need to shout it from the rooftops. If you’re wrong, you could hurt a lot of people. Even if you are right, you could hurt a lot of people. Let’s filter our prophetic revelation through the lens of wisdom. Ask yourself, who will this help? Does it ultimately exalt Jesus? If the prophecy brings more attention to you than to God, something is wrong with the prophetic picture. Selah.”

You can see the comments on this post [here](#). Most people shouted a hearty “amen.” But it’s clear we need more training in this area because others pointed me to Ezekiel 33 about blood being on my hands if I don’t release the word and others pointed me to Matthew 10:27, “What I tell you in darkness, speak in the light. And what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.”

Certainly, these Scriptures are truth but they do not apply to the context of this issue. Ezekiel 33 concerns a watchman who is called to warn a people group, not issue prophetic dreams about leaders who are supposedly in strife. And Matthew 10 does not carry any prophetic connotation. Jesus was telling His disciples to preach the gospel without fear of what the religious leaders would do to them.

Consider the Consequences

Let’s consider the consequences of our prophetic utterances. Death and life are in the power of the tongue (see Prov. 18:21) and sincere prophets can curse God-fearing ministries, bring a lot of heartache to suffering families, and breed strife and division in the body unintentionally.

Cindy Jacobs once told me that the prophet needs more than the word of the Lord—they need the word of wisdom about when, if and how to release the word of the Lord. Many times, the Lord shows us things to drive us into the prayer closet or the war room. We also need to pray over the prophetic word so that it hits soil that can receive it.

Charles Spurgeon once said, “Even Christ’s own seed of the word, pure from His own hand, brings forth no fruit when it falls on unprepared hearts.”

Releasing shocking prophetic words without a council of prophetic elders who will sift, pray through and judge them almost always brings unintended harm to some who hear it. Wisdom—and Scripture—dictates we approach releasing strong

calls for repentance and rebukes with the Golden Rule found in Luke 6:31, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."