

# **2017 Prophetic Word: The Supernatural Key to Growing Your Relationship With God**

In this coming season, the Lord is going to mature us spiritually through an unconventional means—receiving and stewarding His promises. I sense that is the next dimension of spiritual formation.

We may be familiar with prayer, fasting, solitude, meditation, worship and other spiritual disciplines as common catalysts producing Christ-likeness in our lives. Could it be that God's promises actually have the supernatural ability to significantly shape us into the nature of the Promiser?

"... He has given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, so that through these things you might become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4b).

## **Lay Down an Incorrect Theology of Suffering**

For generations, religion has mistakenly assumed that God needs to send suffering to grow us into Christ-likeness. According to 1 John 3:8, the Son of God was revealed, not to afflict us with sickness and torment, but to "destroy the works of the devil." It is theologically irresponsible for us to claim God sends what Jesus destroyed in order to grow us spiritually.

Yes, the Lord redeems suffering. He redeems the most horrible, devastating seasons and circumstances—so much so that, often, the restorative hand of the Lord is mistaken for the caused hand of the Lord. In other words, God's presence is so strong and pronounced during our dark seasons that when we come to the other side, we assume He actually caused the suffering.

It's vital that we understand what comes from God and what comes from the devil. When we attribute demonic suffering to God, it will dramatically impact the way we interact with the Lord, how boldly we pray, what we believe for and how we position ourselves to receive His promises (or not).

### **Promises Attract Adversity, Persecution and Suffering**

With this in mind, it's important to understand the balance. Instead of attributing suffering to God, it's time for us to start attributing promises from Him. He sends the promise, and a certain measure of adversity comes with the territory.

Consider biblical examples who received "exceedingly great and precious promises." Did life come comfortably to them? Abraham faced a massive contradiction: God promised a son "from his own flesh" while he and his wife were way beyond childbearing years. Impossible. Joseph's dream of prominence and royalty was met by brothers who attempted to destroy him. Mary's promise to carry the Messiah in her womb surely came with ridicule and persecution—an unmarried woman carrying a child that was given to her by—the Holy Spirit?

### **Promises Come with Contradiction**

I encourage you to study the amazing promises entrusted to people throughout Scripture (and even in history) and examine the level of contradiction they experienced in their present circumstances.

Here's the point: Promises from God are met with contradiction in the natural realm. God is announcing a reality to you that will most likely appear very distant and disconnected from your present situation. God's promises are prophetic glimpses of the realities He wants to release into and through your life. The true evaluation of whether a promise comes from God or not is the Impossibility Test. Is it impossible for you to bring the promise to pass through your own ingenuity, wisdom, effort, talent, strength and ability? If so, congrats—you have

been given stewardship of a promise from heaven.

### 3 Supernatural Benefits of the Promises of God

Here are three ways the promises of God produce growth in you:

- **Promises call you to pull tomorrow into today.** Promises will always contradict your present circumstances because God wants you to collaborate with Him, through faith, to bring His promised reality into the present so His will can be done.
- **Promises teach you to prophesy.** Whether it's a prophetic word, a passage of Scripture the Holy Spirit is highlighting, or some expression of God speaking something to you, you have an assignment—when you receive a promise, you need to align your words with what God is saying. This is the essence of the prophetic: You saying what God is speaking.
- **Promises demand lifestyle adjustment and accommodation.** The reason there are so many unclaimed, un-released promises is because the transaction is a two-way street. We just want God to do everything and us do nothing. God, in His sovereignty and love, entrusts promises to us. That's His part. At the same time, we need to steward and carry the promises to fruition. It's not enough to get a prophetic word in a gathering; some people think that just because they "got a word," God is obligated to fulfill it. The word of the Lord places a demand on your life. Will you adjust everything—your habits, your thought processes, your relationships, your pursuits—according to the promise you received, or will you continue with "life as normal?" Normal will never be invaded by the supernatural as long as we are content to continue with status quo rather than accommodate the promises of God.

#### **What Is God Saying to You About His Promises?**

I believe the Holy Spirit is declaring two things right

now concerning promises:

- The Lord wants you to inherit new promises: position yourself, and live in expectation. He is not looking for perfect people; just yielded ones. Mary was surely not perfect—she was simply willing to say yes to an impossible promise.
- The Lord also wants to send the renewing wind of the Spirit to those of who you received promises in past seasons. “I am bringing resurrection life to past-season promises,” says the Lord. “There are promises that I gave you—and that you believed for a season—and then you experienced adversity and contradiction and the discouragements of life—and you said no to these promises, even though I never said no. Ask the Holy Spirit for a fresh visitation of His resurrection power, breathing life upon those past-season promises and reviving them.

### **Isn't All this Talk about Promises Selfish?**

I conclude with this, as I believe the Lord spoke this word to me very clearly:

*Encourage My people to contend for My promises. Promises stewarded well produce maturity; promises fulfilled produce breakthrough. Breakthroughs become testimonies that become promises for those you share testimony with. Your testimonies become promises for others, igniting their faith to contend for their own personal breakthroughs.*

*Why is your breakthrough important—yes, essential? Every breakthrough—healing, miracle, restoration, reversal, rendering of justice, answered prayer, bondage broken, deliverance—is actually a first-firsts foretaste of My ultimate agenda: the Earth being filled with the knowledge of My goodness and the manifestation of My glory. Your*

*breakthrough is really an in-breaking of the age to come in the here and now. {eo}*

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