

4 Characteristics of Authentic Prophetic People

A river without banks is just runoff water. The *charismata*, Holy Spirit gifts, without character are a raft heading into swampy waters.

But when character is shaped in the image of Christ Jesus, then the presence, power and authority of the Holy Spirit have an effective course through which to be channeled.

4 Characteristics of Authentic Prophetic People

Here are four aspects of prophetic people who continuously pursue an intimate and godly walk with Christ:

1. **They are people of genuine faith.** Abraham was captivated by God with a vision and purpose. But Hebrews 11:8–10 indicates that he stepped out, “not knowing where he was going.” With that thought in mind, does he fit the image of a prophetic person of faith?

Abraham was looking for something—actually, for someone. Like all authentic prophetic pilgrims who came after him, he maintained his gaze upward. He kept looking for the city whose builder and architect was God.

With this set of lenses, you might see your circumstances differently and take courage. You can qualify to be an authentic prophetic person—a man or woman of genuine faith.

2. **They are pioneers taking on new territory.** Prophetic people are those who go before and open the way for others. They are called pioneers, forerunners or “breakers” in the Spirit. They pay the price, often as intercessors, plowing up fallow ground so that others can follow in their trail as sowers, planters, waterers and eventually reapers. Before there is a breakthrough,

there must always come a “breaker.”

Truly, they are pioneers. They love the task of plowing new territory, but they cannot wait till the next round of gifted laborers appears, relieving them of their temporary responsibilities. Fresh grace seems to appear as a glint in their eyes over a new assignment revealed. These prophetic pioneers are paying the price as groundbreakers.

Know this for sure—if you are going to be a prophetic person, sooner or later you will be used with a plow in your hand.

3. **They are messengers with a clear word.** Prophetic people carry a living word of not being conformed to this world, and they wield this message masterfully like a sharp, two-edged sword. Messengers carry a word with them. Their job is to be mouthpieces on behalf of another. Anna’s prophetic message, as recorded in Luke 2:38 (NASB 1977), was simple: she “continued to speak of [Jesus].” He is our message!

True messengers speak and live the message of the cross. Ultimately the cross must be our passion (1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2). We must preach Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead. That goes against the grain in a godless society. But there is no deeper life message than the simplicity and centrality of the cross.

The power of God rests not on the wisdom, articulation and education of men and women, but on the foolishness of the preaching of the cross. We are to be people with a message. Is it possible that you could qualify for such a simple yet profound task?

4. **They are members of a servant community.** The body of Christ is to be a people relationally knit together. They are members of a servant community. We are not called to be lone rangers. Nor are there supposed to be a few elite, awesome superstars in the church. We are

all called to walk in the anointing of a word of knowledge or wisdom, in His character and in His power. We are called to do it together.

When you study the armor of God in Ephesians, you will see that one area of your body is not protected: your hind side. Somebody else covers it for you.

If you are marching in an army, somebody is striding in front of you and someone behind you, watching your heels. In a sense, then, part of your armor is people who walk with you. That means *you* are part of the armor for someone else, too! That is what it means to be part of a servant community of believers.

Cultivating Character: Fruit That Is Grown

Have you ever noticed how many excruciating lessons there are to learn in character development? It's so good to remember that *God does not only want us to give a message; He wants us to become a living word*. Because the revelatory-gifted person is extra-sensitive, he or she must give the area of character development special attention.

Growing in the prophetic-hearing God's voice, receiving visions, knowing His heart and so on—is extremely simple. At times we overly complicate this scene. It is a relational issue. It is not hiding, but relating.

Here are some keys I have been learning over the past 45-plus years of ministry in cultivating God's presence in my life. These seven helpful points have been milestones along my own journey of cultivating intimacy and growing in character to carry the gift:

- Rest around the ark of God's presence.
- Love mercy.
- Pray in the Holy Spirit.

- Inquire of the Lord. Ask questions. Learn to hold a secret like a friend.
- Love the anointing.
- Risk! Yes, roll the dice.
- Prayer of genuine heart.

Lord Jesus, I desire to be a person of genuine faith—a pioneer taking new territory, declaring the word of the Lord with clarity, love and a servant’s heart. My heart wanders, and I want to go my own way. Help me to stay close to You and grow in strength of character. My goal is to grow in the fullness of the likeness Christ expressed in both godly character and resurrection power. I want to be like You, Jesus. You are beautiful. Amen and Amen! {eoa}

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