

A Deadly Deception Emerging in the Prophetic Movement

The church needs prophets who can rightly discern the moving of the Lord—and the moving of the enemy. We need prophets who will stand in the gap and make up the hedge so the enemy cannot infiltrate.

Anyone with a sensitive spirit can pick up on the rising level of spiritual warfare in this hour. Just look at the attacks on major cities in our nation. Just look at the persecution of Christians. Just look at the number of church leaders who have fallen. Just look at how many churches are closing. Just look. Clearly, darkness is raging against the church.

Spiritual warfare is real, despite some who insist we don't have to fight because the devil is already defeated. Spiritual warfare is biblical, despite those who argue we should ignore the operations of the devil. Spiritual warfare is necessary because principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, spiritual hosts of wickedness (Eph. 6:12) and other forces are raging against all those who call Christ Lord.

Listen to Jennifer's podcast on the rising deception in prophetic ministry.

Why Are Prophets Arguing About Warfare?

As I share in my book, *The Making of a Prophet*, one of my apostolic mentors offered me six words of advice: Warfare goes along with prophetic ministry.

I understand why some denominations don't believe in spiritual warfare, even though I don't agree. But prophets who insist we should not put any focus on spirits like Jezebel, Python, Absalom or other demonic culprits that work to wreck lives, ministries, cities and nations puzzle me. After all, spiritual

warfare is part of the prophet's mantle.

Look at Elijah in the showdown at Mount Carmel (1 Kin. 18:17-39). He engaged in natural warfare to slay 850 false prophets who were propagating Jezebel's false religion. This is a mirror of the spiritual warfare we fight against wicked spirits today. Elijah also battled the spirit of death in his ministry—as did Jesus Himself—raising someone from the dead. Elisha battled the spirit of infirmity. I could go on and on. You can't separate a prophet from spiritual warfare realities.

Moreover, I believe it's dangerous for prophetic ministries to trumpet a message insisting that we should not sound the alarm about the enemy's plots and plans. Paul clearly warned us not to be ignorant of the devil's devices (2 Cor. 2:11). James instructs us to submit ourselves to God, resist the devil and he will flee (James 4:7). We can't resist a devil we don't discern—or one we ignore. Prophets are watchmen charged with sounding the alarm.

Peter warned us to, "Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the devil walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him firmly in the faith" (1 Pet. 5:8-9). The Amplified translation of verse 9 says to "withstand him; be firm in faith [against his onset—rooted, established, strong, immovable, and determined]." You can't withstand something you aren't willing to look at.

Is Hypergrace Infiltrating the Prophetic?

Claiming we only had to repent in the moment of salvation and never again is one of the prime markers of the hypergrace movement. Clearly, we need to ask for forgiveness of our daily sins to avoid hindering our fellowship with the Father. But could this doctrine of man that argues we should focus on Jesus and ignore the devil find its roots in hypergrace? I have to wonder.

Bishop J.C. Ryle, the first Anglican bishop in Liverpool,

England, was faced with the hypergrace message in the 1800s. He wrote, "We must fight. There are no promises in the Lord Jesus Christ's Epistles to the Seven Churches, except to those who 'overcome.' Where there is grace there will be conflict. The believer is a soldier. There is no holiness without a warfare. Saved souls will always be found to have fought a fight. It is a fight of absolute necessity. Let us not think in this war we can remain neutral and sit still ... We have no choice or option. We must either fight or be lost. It is a fight of universal necessity. ... The foe we have to do with keeps no holidays, never slumbers, and never sleeps. So long as we have breath in our bodies we must keep on our armour, and remember the enemy's ground. 'Even on the brink of Jordan," said a dying saint, 'I find Satan nibbling at my heels.' We must fight till we die."

Whatever the root of this anti-spiritual warfare sentiment in the prophetic movement, it's dangerous and those who adhere to it may wind up needless casualties of war in much the same way as are those who take on principalities and powers without the Lord's leading.

I'll end with this, a comment I posted to my Facebook page when I learned of the growing emphasis among some prophetic ministries to criticize those who sound the alarm about wicked spirits arising in various seasons:

"It so grieves me to see prophetic ministries gain popularity by attacking leaders who believe in the reality of spiritual warfare. By the mercies of God, I beseech you to stop letting the devil use you to tear down those presenting balanced truth clearly presented in the Word of God." {eoa}