

Maintaining a Pure Prophetic Flow With Prayer

Are you building walls of religion or towers of prayer? Your answer could denote the difference between a woe-filled fate and a fulfilled destiny.

Prophets obsessed by the fear of man or unholy desires will not fulfill God's ultimate plan. We must be careful, then, not to prophesy according to the party line in order to establish and preserve popularity in ministry circuits. If we fall into this trap we find ourselves in danger of perverting the gift of God by building walls of religion.

True prophets are not always the most popular five-fold ministry gift on the block because they are bold enough to release a word of the Lord that deals with sin or that warns the local church of potentially unpleasant circumstances coming down the proverbial pike. In order to properly carry this mantle, genuine prophets must build towers of prayer.

False prophets build walls of religion that lead people astray with fabricated edification, misleading exhortation and counterfeit comfort. "These evil prophets deceive my people by saying, 'All is peaceful' when there is no peace at all! It's as if the people have built a flimsy wall, and these prophets are trying to reinforce it by covering it with whitewash! Tell these whitewashers that their wall will soon fall down" (Ezekiel 13:10-11, NLT).

Verily, verily, the whitewashed walls of religion are going to come tumbling down in a heap of self-righteous rubble and the false prophets are coming down right along with them. Let's not forget that Jesus pronounced woe on the Pharisaical hypocrites, calling them whitewashed tombs that look beautiful on the outside but are full of dead men's bones and everything

unclean (Matthew 23:27).

You can't whitewash sin, you can't whitewash religion and you certainly can't whitewash false prophecy. We must guard our hearts in order to maintain a pure prophetic flow and a life of prayer that will wash away the plans of the enemy instead of fortifying his deception by watering down the truth for the sake of acceptance.

True prophets may not always have the flare, charisma or appeal of their false twins, but who said they are supposed to? Jeremiah wasn't the most popular prophet in his time, nor was Ezekiel in his day. John the Baptist had his head served up on a silver platter for warning the people of the looming decision between everlasting life and eternal hellfire. But they were the unadulterated mouthpieces of God. And so it should be.

One of the key disparities between the true and the false prophet is prayer. The Bible says the foolish prophets discussed in the 13th chapter of Ezekiel did not stand in the gap or make up a hedge for the house of Israel so that it could endure the battle. These diviners did not intercede in prayer to protect God's people.

True prophets, by contrast, may not win any popularity contests in the local church, but they will sacrifice to make intercession. Instead of building walls of religion, they build towers of prayer: watchtowers in the spirit that allow them to see the assignments coming against the local church. They take that revelation and use it as spiritual mortar to make up a hedge in prayer.

You can't separate a prophet from prayer any more than you can separate an evangelist from preaching the gospel. The very first time you ever see the word "prophet" in the Bible, it is connected to prayer. In the book of Genesis when Abimelech took Abraham's wife, the Lord said, "Now restore the man's

wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live ..." (Genesis 20:7, NKJV). So while not every intercessor is a prophet, every prophet is an intercessor.

Consider the prophets of old. They were often called watchmen. Scripture reveals three types of prophetic sentinels whose mission is to stand guard, keep watch and report what they see. We find Old Testament prophets on the walls, walking in the streets of the city and in the countryside.

"I have set watchmen upon your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent" (Isaiah 62:6). Watchmen on the walls are positioned to see far distances in the spirit and discern whether friend or foe is approaching. The watchman gives word to those in authority so they can decide whether to sound an alarm of welcome or an alarm of war. In today's local church these watchmen help protect against enemy attacks. Every prophet is called to this post.

"'They surround Jerusalem like watchmen surrounding a field, for my people have rebelled against me,' says the Lord," (Jeremiah 4:17, NLT). This relates to the prophets in the harvest fields. Prophets have a clear role in evangelism as watchmen who protect gospel-preaching efforts against the destructive work of principalities and powers that keep the lost from hearing the truth. Prophets should be deployed on local church outreaches and international missions to watch, guard, pull down and destroy opposition to the Good News.

"The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city" (Song of Solomon 3:3; 5:7, NIV). In today's times, this watchman is assigned to stand guard over the Body of Christ to see emerging problems. This is a larger responsibility that carries with it a heavier prayer burden and greater implications for the Church at large.

The point is anyone who stands in the five-fold function of

prophet should keep their spiritual binoculars around their neck and watch. But not just watch—watch and pray always. Anyone carrying a prophetic mantle needs to closely examine the fruit of his or her ministry. If we have prophesied peace unto popularity, then we need to repent. We need to trade in our whitewash for some substantive mortar and start building towers of prayer that will bring genuine edification, authentic exhortation and legitimate comfort to God's people.

Let us not be foolish prophets who build our ministries on the sands of seduction for the sake of acceptance because Jehovah promises that rain will pour from the heavens, hailstones will come hurtling down and violent winds will burst forth against those whitewashed walls and expose them (Ezekiel 13:11-12).

Instead let us build our ministries on the Rock and prophesy the mind of Christ so that when the hurricanes of religion come against the local church and when Jezebel hurls her spiritual sleet at the sanctuary, and when the winds of witchcraft blow against the walls, the foundation of our ministries and our local churches will be fortified to stand and withstand in the day of battle.

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