

Prophetic Vision: God's Children are Birthing New Mantles and Visions

Are you feeling a sudden and intense pressure in the spirit and don't know why? Are you wondering why it feels as though you have been placed in a pressure cooker of sorts? Are you feeling worn out and ready to give up, wondering if you heard rightly from God for this season? And if so, why does it seem as though everything is upside down?

If any of this relates to you, then be encouraged; you are not going crazy and you have not missed God. You have, in fact, gone into labor to birth a new gift that God has prepared for you, and you are not alone. Many people are in this time of birthing right now. I saw a vision of multitudes across the body of Christ who were heavily pregnant (I saw both men and women—as odd as that may sound). They were pregnant with new mantles, visions, strategies and destiny.

I then saw a picture of an ultrasound of these “babies” that they were carrying. Just as an ultrasound details a baby's bone structures and physical traits, I saw that these “supernatural” babies of the hour were filled with the DNA of heaven, with specific answers that individuals and the earth, alike, are in desperate need of.

Each “baby” had a unique fingerprint, a unique imprint of answers from God's heart for individuals, families and nations. I saw these heavily pregnant individuals being ushered by angels into supernatural delivery rooms. I saw that many of these people had reached their due dates, and some were well and truly overdue. Some were prepared for the birthing and intensely focused, while others felt confused and scared.

I then heard the Father's gentle and reassuring voice speaking to those who were in fear. He spoke the words of Joshua 1:9b: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

I felt the Holy Spirit impart some strategies for delivery to my own life for this season of birthing that I wanted to share with you.

1. Be strategic about who you allow to see you in labor. The Holy Spirit recently reminded me of my own physical labor with my second daughter, Sophie, and how there are some valuable lessons that can be applied spiritually from my experience (don't worry—I won't get graphic). From start to finish, my labor with her lasted three days. You read that right—three days. Looking back, I realize I played into some distractions that essentially caused my labor to last longer than it should have.

During my earliest contractions, I allowed people into my home thinking it would help with the process. How wrong I was. While I lay on my bed in agony, I had a steady stream of individuals—people who I thought would be of help—come through my home laughing and pointing at my distress whilst helping themselves to my fridge, rather than encouraging me through it. At the time, I thought they were just trying to help me get my mind off it, but looking back, I now know it was the worst possible thing for labor. It elevated my stress, prolonging the birth.

If you are in spiritual labor right now, and you can relate to the intensity of pressure in the spirit, you need to be very strategic and intentional about who you allow to come in close at this moment. Labor and birthing, even in the spirit, are both an intimate time and a vulnerable time.

If you have a crowd of people who have full access to your life, you are going to need to close the door to all but one

or two strategic cheerleaders at this moment. You cannot have people degrading you and laughing at you as you go through the contractions of birth. You need cheerleaders in the delivery room, not fear-mongers, mockers and distractors. There will even be those who may appear good, but want to ride on your delivery.

I'm not suggesting that you be critical about every person, but I am saying, be strategic. If you don't, you may end up with a prolonged and delayed delivery, just as I experienced. If you take these steps in creating boundaries, this will allow you to focus intently on the contractions and deliver what God has assigned to you, rather than face delay.

2. Breathe, breathe, breathe! Recently, I have heard a particular word on repeat in my spirit, and that word is "focus." The Holy Spirit is saying to you today, "Focus, focus, focus!" In a time of birthing, intense focus is required.

After two days, I was finally admitted to the hospital, but when I got there, the newly built hospital was understaffed and they were unable to admit me into a birthing suite. Instead, I was placed in a side corridor alongside other women who were birthing, just like me, with only curtain partitions to separate us. Just when I thought I could finally focus, I found I was more distracted than ever by the sounds of other women in labor filling the entire corridors. It was then that Nate gave me headphones with gentle worship playing so I could tune out the distractions I was hearing and focus intently on my breathing.

There is a reason you always hear people in movies coaching a woman through labor by saying, "Breathe, breathe, breathe." It's not just a saying; it is a direction of focus. No sooner had I begun focusing properly on my breathing, than my labor started to progress rapidly, and a door for a birthing suite was opened up to us. It was not long after this that I gave

birth—in the peaceful surroundings of a beautiful suite.

It's likely that you are surrounded by other people in labor right now. You've probably noticed that you are surrounded by the intensity of their problems, as others push through their own barriers and deliver the promises ordained for their own lives. But know this: *You cannot labor for them*. Again, you are going to need to “tune out” the noise and focus in on what the Holy Spirit is breathing over you right now.

What has He spoken? What are the promises God has declared over you for this season? Don't lose sight of them in this pivotal moment. You are going to need to rehearse them; breathe them in deeply and breathe them out; speak them, fix your eyes on them and declare them. You are about to give birth to what has been promised, but you *need* to *focus*. Focus is faith in action. This is what Hebrews 11:1 (AMPC) directs us to do:

“Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see *and* the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].”

Interestingly, a definition I found for the word “focus” says, “adapt to the prevailing level of light and become able to see clearly.” Isn't that amazing? Adapt your focus to what God is speaking—not to everything else that is surrounding and distracting you. Take your eyes off the problems and fix your eyes on the Light, and you will see clearly what is before you and *obtain* what has been divinely *guaranteed* to you. As you focus, you will deliver the baby quicker than expected.

3. Protect the promise! In the dream-like hours following Sophie's birth, we were visited—uninvited, I might add—by a very boisterous person (evidently, Nate and I had no idea about the concept of boundaries in those days). He came into our hospital room yelling, screaming and shouting, and picked

my toddler up in the air and was throwing her about in the room. I remember feeling as though I was about to pass out from the noise; following three days of delivery, it triggered me into a near panic attack.

Thankfully, my midwife happened to be in the room and immediately saw the pale look on my face and ordered him out of the room abruptly—so much so, he became offended. But she looked at Nate and me and said, “It’s fine for the family to come to see the baby, but Mum is just as important as the newborn. If you don’t protect this space, you’ll fall into depression.”

I didn’t listen. In the days and weeks following her birth, we had yet another steady stream of people visiting, and I felt the intense pressures to be “up and about” like normal: going to church on Sunday immediately following her birth, making coffees for all of our visitors, and giving the impression I was a “do it all” mother who was all put together. But in reality, I was crumbling inside.

I feel this lesson is imperative for those of you who are in labor and delivery of your promises right now. Just as Western cultures have depicted a narrative that modern mothers should be back on their feet in no time, there is also a subtle belief within the Western church that has a similar storyline: “The more you do, the better and the more effective you are for the kingdom.” Whereas I believe that the Holy Spirit is speaking, just like the midwife: *“Protect the promise. Protect your time!”*

You are important to God, and He doesn’t want you burning out in depression because you feel you need to rush into the assignment once it is birthed or say yes to every opportunity that comes your way. I believe that now, more than ever, we need to be intently focused on what we are specifically called to do; we need to be nursing the “assignment” and allowing recovery and time.

This is an era where the enemy is attempting to trap the body of Christ in immense amounts of distraction to prolong the births of mantles and assignments, and even to cause stillbirths of promise. However, if he doesn't succeed there, he will attempt to draw you into burnout. I believe God is protecting us in this season and preventing these things from happening, but we also need to be vigilant just as 1 Peter 5:8 states: "Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the devil walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

Notice that the enemy is "like" a lion, which gives us keen insight into his strategies. Many lions hunt their prey when the prey is giving birth. A time of birthing is a vulnerable time, so be vigilant to protect it. Breathe on the promises of God. Shut the door to all distractions, and protect the promise once it has been birthed.

Allow yourself time to adjust and for the promise to grow. Don't rush it. This is not a season to rush, for what you are about to birth will grow in the months and years to come into the weighty call and assignment upon your life. You are birthing destiny for the years to come.

Congratulations on the birthing of your promise! {eoa}

Christy Johnston was born and raised in Australia. After living the majority of her life plagued with insecurity and fear, she came to learn the power of her identity in Christ. She now lives with the mandate to breathe fresh hope and life into God's sons and daughters through her passion of writing, uncovering the truths of living in grace and freedom through our identity in Christ. Nate and Christy have two daughters, Charlotte and Sophie, and currently live on the Gold Coast in Australia.