

## Prophecy Pt. 4: When God Speaks

PROPHECY is receiving revelation from God about how He sees someone in order to bring life value hope encouragement about who God has called them to be.

God uses prophecy through ALL of us to reveal to unbelievers He is real.

Revelation: the act of revealing divine truth.

The simple goal of divine revelation:

To SEE what God sees, to HEAR what God hears, to SOEAK what God speaks so we can all LOVE the way GOD LOVES.

Revelation is given to us so that we can carry a piece of God's heart from eternity into the world.

The walk we have is to live in accordance to the revelation we receive. Are you receiving fresh revelation even in the midst of the mysteries we can't understand?

We all face situations daily where we must be able to see ourselves the way God sees us. And sometimes we need others to remind us of that.

### **How can we position ourselves to receive fresh revelation:**

1- revelation is the fruit of intimacy. REST in Christ. RECEIVE from Christ. RESPOND to Christ EVERYDAY.

2- Truth is established by the Word of God and not my experience.

3- heaven is accessible through dimensions of understanding.

4- the Word of God needs to be embodied by willing vessels.

5- the Word of God is already settled in Heaven. Time is simply the opportunity for us to manifest it.

What are the ways God is already speaking to you?

If you've been a follower of Jesus for 5 minutes God is ALREADY speaking to you!

Sometimes we've been hearing from the Lord for years and just not connected the dots - that a certain insight that came a specific way - was the way God speaks to us.

Lets take a few minutes to briefly touch on some of the ways the Bible outlines that God speaks to us.

2 of the most common ways we read about in scripture are God speaking through

DREAMS & VISIONS.

**Acts 2:16-18**

But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,  
That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;  
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
Your young men shall see visions,  
Your old men shall dream dreams.  
And on My menservants and on My maidservants  
I will pour out My Spirit in those days;  
And they shall prophesy.

There are 2 types of visions:

1 - Vision of the Mind

The Lord projects images or pictures on to the screen of our minds.

This method of communication has also been called "sanctified imagination"

Imagination that is under the influence of the holy spirit.

Not imagination that is PRETENDING. Like when we were children.

But imagination as a resource, a source of substance that is creativity - that submitted to and under the influence of the holy spirit is a very real way God speaks to many of us.

For instance right now, if i were to say to you - close you eyes and think of a tiger. You would see a tiger i your minds eye.

The Holy Spirit uses your mind as a black board to draw pictures or project images onto your minds eye.

Once I was praying for a girl in our youth ministry in Ionia. She came up to me for prayer and as soon as our eyes connected all I could see in my minds eye was a blinding white. Just that color. As I was praying for her I finally said, "Laura, as soon as you came up to me all I've been able to see in my minds eye is the color white. I don't know what that means but I feel like i need to share it with you." She smiled big and said, "I know exactly what it means. Thank you!".....

The second type of vision is an OPEN VISION:

This is a vision you see with your natural eyes.

John the Baptist had an open vision upon baptizing Jesus...

John 1:29-32

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'... Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One."

I've never personally had an open vision but people close to me have.

People whose connection to the Holy Spirit is one I trust and see the fruit of.

Their prophetic visions have made pathways for me to continue to move forward - provided comfort that only the holy Spirit could bring. Things they saw and shared with me were only things the Holy Spirit would have known meant anything to me.

#### DREAMS:

God speaks to us through dreams all the time. the scripture is FILLED with God dreams.

I have numerous friends in my life that God speaks to in dreams.

God speaks to me in dreams often as well.

There are at least 2 types of dreams..

We will call the first

### VIRTUAL REALITY DREAMS

This is a dream that occurs while we are asleep and then remains in our minds after waking.

King Neb. had this kind of dream in Daniel and Pharoah had this kind of dream that Joseph ended up interpreting about 7 years of feasts and then 7 years of famine.

I've had numerous dreams of this type. And I can -with a clear conscious say - indeed God speaks to us in our sleeping dreams.

The second type of dreams can be called

### REALITY DREAMS

This is a real experience we have while sleeping that we remember after waking.

The spirit world never sleeps. Therefore our Spirits can interact with

the Spirit world while our soul sleeps.

In Genesis 20 God speaks to Abimelech where it states that "God came to Abimelech in a dream..." In a reality dream it doesn't say he dreamt of God. It says he had a real encounter with God and he remembered it upon awakening.

Gen 20:

But God came to Abimelech in a dream one night and said to him, "You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman."

We see this type of dream again with Joseph in the NT in Matt 2:13

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt.."

There is more to learn about understanding how God uses dreams to speak to us. We're providing opportunity for you all to learn even more about the prophetic by offering an 8 week study. But I'll share more of that with you towards the end.

There are still many other ways God speaks to us.

## DREAMS & VISIONS

### STILL SMALL VOICE

At times the Lord speaks to us in a still small voice from within our spirits.

It's not booming. It's not audible.

It can be heard as a passing thought, a sudden impression, or an internal "sense" of something the God is saying.

The Bible talks about this in 1 Kings 19:11-13

The prophet Elijah is on the run and God speaks to him and says...

And the word of the Lord came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

He replied, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in



the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

This is an ex from the OT. In Romans 8:16 we see in the NT the same thought about a still small voice....

"The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are God's children."

This isn't audible - something we hear with our ears - but something the Holy Spirit "bears witness" with our human spirits.

In this instance he is bearing witness and confirming that we are children of God.

Another way God speaks to us is through

CREATION:

God speaks to us through creation in many many ways.

One way is that Creation tells us about who God is.

The mountains speak to His strength.

The rivers of His provision.

The flowers of His beauty.

Romans 1:20

Psalms 19:1-2

Story of Bekah asking me if I had to choose one - which would I choose,

the mountains, the ocean or the sky....

I said sky. She asked why? I said,

"The sky is everywhere I go. If I'm in the mountains or out to sea or somewhere in between I can see the sky. It's always there. That never changes - but the sky changes everyday. It's beautiful and terrifying and awe inspiring and vast but also everywhere."

She stared at me blankely and asked, "Has someone already asked you this before?"

I said "No?..."

She replied - that question is supposed to reflect your view of God. I've never heard that reply before.

As a teen I became aware of a story called the power of one- about a young orphaned white south african during the apartheid of s africa.

It's truly an inspiring story. In the story he's soul searching and reflects on a time his mentor and he were on one of their many nature walks through the vastness of s africa. His mentor said, "PK - every answer you need in life can be found in nature." Many years later PK was faced with a decision to be a part of a grass root movement to push back against the horrors of the racist apartheid. He went to back to nature to reflect - to find his answer. He didn't know how his involvement would change anything. He was an orphan. No family. No power. No prestige. But he had a back door of opportunity that started with an Africa legend. PK found himself at the bottom of a waterfall. As he watched the thousands and thousands of gallons of water fall from the river above to the river below he thought - "Every waterfall begin with just one drop." PK knew then what he needed to know. He maybe one unknown & an unnamed man. But if he joined forces with this movement to free s africa with so many others - they could together create great change.

NATURE TELLS of God. Nature is a powerful description of who He is. It is all around us. It is the voice that whether we live in the city or the country or at sea - we cannot escape its resonating sounds of who our God is.

And in knowing God we interpret what He is saying with more clarity and understanding.

Another way God speaks to us is through

THE SCRIPTURES

The Lord can speak to us in our daily Bible reading.

He can highlight a verse or a story that speaks directly to our situation.

God gives us new revelation or insight into the scriptures - which He will do -

This is why it's vital for us to have that daily RECEIVE time with the Lord. In having a basic knowledge of the Bible and its context we know how everything fits properly in place.

What God speaks to us in scripture will not violate or disagree with His revealed nature and character.

**\*SEND THE HORNET\***

## SIGNS & WONDERS

Many times God will perform signs and wonders as a way to communicate His love or direction.

(Gideon and the 3 fleeces....

Elijah & the prophets of Baal

The parting of the Red Sea

The manna and the ravens

Leading the israelites by cloud in the day and a pillar of fire at night

Raising Lazarus from the dead)

God is still in the business of signs and wonders.

They're all around you. Are you watching for them? Are you recognizing the miracles all around you?!

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH THE ARTS

Dance.

Song.

Word.

Picture.

Theatre.

ART.

We can all most likely tell of a time that God ministered to us or spoke

to us through someone else's expression of art.

story of the dancers at the healing rooms in Bethel.

God is always speaking to us.

He is always prophesying to us and testifying to us of Himself, His ability and our position - place of belonging in Him.

In recognizing the way he communicates with YOU we have the opportunity to partner with Him in what He is saying to others through prophecy.

That leads us to the next part of this message - Practicing Prophecy.

Knowing about prophecy is cool.

receiving prophecy is encouraging. empowering. Reassuring.

it feels good! It can be the wind beneath our wings to get us through a season.

But giving prophecy.

Being the vessel which God blows His wind from to be the "wind beneath their wings" - that is an especially rewarding service.

There's nothing like WALKING humbly in the gifts of the Spirit.

At Covenant Church we don't want to just be hearers of the Word!

Like we say often - this is a participatory community of believers here!

How do we have a culture of prophesy if we do not practice prophesy?

We cant.

We have to sign on to the belief that God is good.

That He is a good father.

We gotta fix our eyes on honor.

We must Walk in audacious faith that's based out of a personal revelation of our identity in Christ.

And then open our mouths and say what we are hearing from that place of intimacy!

Practicing the Gifts of the Spirit should take place in an atmosphere of love and culture of spiritual authority.

This body of believers is a safe atmosphere of love.

The spiritual authority set in this house is one structured out of saints who are wise, tested, and proven in the Lord.

Men and women who have steel in their resolve to pursue God and to make Him known to all.

They are ones who have a reputation of walking in unconditional love without compromising the Truth of God's Word.

Spiritual authority is really a whole 'nother topic but for the time being in being submitted to the spiritual authority of this house it look like Submitting words of the Lord to Matt as the lead pastor. But in a walking this out and learning it phase - there are plenty of leaders around us who can help us learn. Our prayer partners & board members are great examples of men and women who walk in the prophetic everyday.

Take advantage and MAKE opportunities for yourself to learn from them.....

\*barb & jerry.....

Who is in your sphere of service here at church where you serve that you can learn from and invite into your process of growing in this gift of the prophetic?

We gotta try this thing on for size. We gotta use this muscle and work it out if we're going to have a culture of prophecy.

We have to reach beyond our comfort zone. The Bible says in

1 timothy 4:14-15

"Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress."

We've got to put this gift in the FIRE.

2 tim 1:6 reminds us

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."

Whenever we step out in faith we must step OVER fear.

There is no other way for our gifts to be forged outside of the fire of RISK! Without such opportunities our gifts are weak and not



mature or tempered.

So how do we strengthen this gift?

I'm gonna give you 4 things and then next week Matt is going to lead us into a practicum where we practice this thing together.

But we want you all to take time to really consider how you hear from the Lord in your own life as we are building this culture in this body of believers.

#### 4 Ways to Practice the Prophetic:

1. Pay attention to how God is communicating to you. Take note of it. Journal the experience - whether it was through images - dreams - visions- or something else. Catch onto the way he speaks to you so you can start to recognize it as such. Share what you're learning about this part of your connection with the Lord with another person who can understand where you're coming from.

2. Prophecy your day!

When you wake up in the morning ask the Lord for information about something that will happen during your day. Write it down as clearly as you understand it. At the end of your day check and see if the even you prophesied to yourself happened. See how well you understood the specific details of the events.

3. Practice words of knowledge.

Go to a restaurant or a public place and pray for the person providing you service. Ask the Lord for words of knowledge for the person. When you're starting out at this it's better to do it when you're NOT in their presence. Write down the words of knowledge. Later interview them so to speak about the words of knowledge you received.

for ex..... you feel the Lord showed you they had 3 children... ask them another time if they have any kids and how many.

In learning to walk in the prophetic we aren't all at a place where we are ready to minister as much as we are growing this gift. As your ability to hear the voice of the holy spirit improves you will begin to step out in boldness.

4. Team up with another person! Pray for one another asking the Lord for words of knowledge for one another. Take turns sharing what you felt the Lord was saying. Let them be honest about the word you gave. Grow from that.

