

vineyardusa[®]

EMPOWERED | WEEK 3: PROPHECY

BIG IDEA: The best way to hear from God is to pray for other people!

INTRO:

- **Most of us want to believe that there is more to life.**

- In fact, a recent [Barna Study \(graphic linked above\)](#) says that the great majority of people, regardless of their generation, believe that a higher power exists and want to grow spiritually.

- **Most of us want to be able to hear from God.**

- So, what does it actually look like to hear from God? Some of us think we've never heard from God because we don't know what to listen for or recognize as His voice.

- **God speaks to all kinds of people in all different ways.**

- We want to hear him with a big booming voice or a trumpet sound. But that's not what the Bible tells us. The Bible tells us that He speaks to us in different ways.

Listen to my words: "When there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, reveal myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams. But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD. | Numbers 12:6-8 (NIV)

- We have to learn how he speaks to us individually. And the way we learn how he speaks to us personally is by praying for other people. That is where you fine-tune your reception and ability to hear!
- And then, as we begin to discern and decipher *how* God is speaking to us, we are able to hear from him so that he can lead us in the right direction.

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. | 1 Corinthians 14:1-4

- “Anyone who prophesies speaks to *people*...anyone who prophesies edifies the church.”
- Simple definition of [Prophecy: Hearing from God and speaking for God](#).
 - Prophecy is a gift, and it is a gift for you to give away to *people*. For their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort.
 - Most of the time that God speaks to prophets, He’s not speaking to them for them...He’s speaking to them for *us*.
 - Ex: Ananias prophesying to Paul

Not only should we eagerly desire the gift of prophecy, but we should also expect it.

And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. | Joel 2:28-29

- In the Vineyard, we don’t typically give people the label “Prophet” because we believe that God speaks to everyone.
- We will never achieve a point in our relationship with God where we no longer need other people. The more you grow in Christ, the more you need one another. The way the Kingdom of God works is in relationships with each other.
 - 80% of the time you hear from God, it will be from somebody else.
 - The hopeful future of the church and a picture of the Kingdom of God is when we don’t stand on our own two feet, but we are held up by our brothers and sisters.

We can also eagerly expect to receive words of prophecy from others!

- In a culture where prophecy is freely given to others and received by others, there will also be an atmosphere of strength, encouragement, and peace!
 - This type of prophecy, or word of knowledge, will bring much more encouragement and strength than a prophecy that foretells the future.
- Here in the Vineyard, there is one rule we try to follow: our prophetic words are strengthening, encouraging, and comforting.

When you start to hear a word that is not strengthening, encouraging, and comforting, there are 3 possibilities:

1. **Maybe you are wrong.** (Like we say in the Vineyard, “Maybe it was just the pizza you ate last night.”)

Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said.
| 1 Corinthians 14:29 (NIV)

- We don’t need to punish those who “get it wrong.” Instead, Paul instructs us to weigh prophecy carefully.
- If we get it wrong, we put it away and learn from it.

2. **Maybe you need to pray.**

- Sometimes, God reveals something to us because he wants us to pray and intercede for that person rather than sharing it with them.

3. **Maybe you didn’t listen long enough.**

- Don’t just ask God to fix it; stay there a little longer and see what God ultimately wants to say.
- If God gives you a diagnosis, He usually wants to give you a prognosis too.

PRAY: Holy Spirit, Come! We eagerly desire the gift of hearing from You. EMPOWER US to hear your voice! We expect that you will speak, and as you do, we will listen and respond.

