

Hearing God's Voice for Others
Welcome to Harvest Community Church
Series: Knowing God's Voice
Text: 1 Corinthians 14:1

When you are someone who walks by the Spirit and lives in the Spirit there will be times that God will speak to you with a **word** or a message for someone else. There are times that God will impress upon your heart something that you know you did not come up with yourself, and you will have a feeling or an urgency or a sense that you need to convey that to a certain person. Sometimes it will be a message of encouragement, sometimes correction and it may even be word of direction. (Many of us have story after story we can tell.)

If you are a believer, God wants to speak to you. Sometimes it will be for you and sometimes it will be for others. When you open your heart, God will help you walk in this truth. This experience of hearing God's voice for others is called **prophecy**. There are several spiritual gifts that fall under this category. **1 Corinthians 12:4-11**

The nine gifts of the spirit can be broken down into three groups of three.

- Gifts of **Revelation** (Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Discerning of Spirits.)
- Gifts of **Power** (Gifts of Healing, Working of Miracles, Gifts of Faith)
- Gifts of **Utterance** (Gift of Prophecy, Gift of Tongues, Gift of Interpretation of Tongues.)

For the Purpose of this study will look at the Gifts of Revelation and the Utterance Gifts

Gifts of Revelation

The Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge often work hand in hand but have **separate** applications.

These gifts are known as a 'Word' in the Greek that is the word '**Logos**' which is a spoken word or utterance. They are the revelation of God's heart in situations that is meant to be committed to others through word or action. **1 Corinthians 2:6-16**

Word of Wisdom:

A supernatural utterance and revelation at a given moment through the Holy Spirit disclosing the mind, purpose and **will** of God. This is declaring his will and plans concerning **people**, places, communities and nations.

This gift deals with the **present** and future.

- The Word of Wisdom is different from the wisdom God imparts into the life of the believer through His written Word (Bible) and as a person matures. **James 1:5, James 3:13-17**
- The Word of Wisdom is an important part of the **anointing** (that special unction of the Holy Spirit that enables a person who is ministering). **1 Corinthians 2:1-5**
- The Word of Wisdom may show us how to correctly apply God's **written word** to our life at a specific moment.

- The Word of Wisdom is divine insight to problem solving.
- It helps in our witnessing. **Colossians 4:5-6**

Word of Knowledge:

A supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of certain facts in the mind of God.

Information pertaining to a person or event given for a specific purpose.

This deals with the past and present.

It is man knowing things that he could only know through divine revelation.

The Word of Knowledge is revealed in several ways:

1. The Knowledge of God is God revealing Himself with deeper clarity to the believer for better understanding and to communicate His knowledge to others.
Matthew 16:15-17, Romans 11:33
2. It can reveal facts that minister to a person's need.
3. It can reveal the motives or condition of a person's heart, even groups of people. **Acts 5:3**
4. A deeper understanding of the ways and acts of God. **1 Corinthians 14:6-7**
5. The ability to understand and communicate God's moral wisdom for right living.
Colossians 2:2-3

Discerning of Spirits: two parts

A) Supernatural power to detect the realm of the spirits and their activities.

B) The power of spiritual insight and revelation of the plans and purposes of the enemy and his forces.

Four types of spirits: the Divine, the angelic, the satanic or demonic and the human.
2 Kings 6:17

The Gift of the Discerning of Spirits is not the gift of discernment. Discernment is a result of wisdom - as a person fears the Lord, is obedient to His voice and matures in God's Word, they become wise. **Proverbs 13:20, Proverbs 9:10 Proverbs 2:3-11**

Discernment will govern how we respond to what we know.

The Gift of Discerning of Spirits is used to combat deceptions.

1 Timothy 4:1, 2 Peter 2:1-3, 1 John 4:1-6

This gift is used to deliver the afflicted, oppressed, tormented and possessed. **Mark 16:17**

Two ways to discern spirits:

- A) Natural observation **Mark 1:21-28, Luke 8:26-39, Matthew 17:15-18**
- B) Supernaturally discerning

The Utterance Gifts

- The Gift of Prophecy
- Different kinds of tongues
- Interpretation of Tongues.

* Remember - God gives us gifts we can use.

When we minister, we need creative information to help solve problems and touch lives.

The Gifts of the Spirit are practical not mystical and not playthings.

The word Prophecy literally means to speak forth.

Prophecy – An inspired message from God in one’s own language. A divine disclosure on behalf of the Spirit. A greater insight of the Spirit that brings storytelling, instruction, encouragement and comfort.

Prophecy is given for the edification / building up of the church. **1 Corinthians 14:5**

God speaks to us primarily through His written word.

The Bible is our infallible guide.

All Prophecy is to be judged, no one gets a pass on this.

1 Corinthians 14:29, 1 Thessalonians 5:21

Five areas Prophecy is to be judged by:

1. Content - Is it true? Is it helpful? Is it edifying?
2. Alignment with God’s written Word.
3. Maturity of the one being used - attitude, submitted to authority
1Thessalonians 5:12, 1 Corinthians 14:37 The Bible tells us to know those who labor among us.
4. Relevancy to the meeting. Does it flow? **1 Corinthians 14:33,40**
Not to be used to preach another message. Does it compliment what God is already doing?
5. Does it draw attention to God or to the person using the gift?

There have been abuses of this gift and mistakes made. That is why God warns us not to allow the enemy to disrupt one of God’s powerful tools.

1 Thessalonians 5:19-20, 1 Corinthians 14:39 We should never quench the Holy Spirit.

Several ways we quench the fire of the Holy Spirit:

- An apathetic response or a disruptive, exaggerated response to the use of gifts and not to God.
- When we allow the excitement of crowds to dull our ears to hearing the fundamental truths of the Holy Spirit’s counsel.
- When we look to the visitation of the Spirit to shore up weaknesses in the local church rather than correct problems.

- When we allow an attitude of pride or showmanship to distort the simplicity of God's workings.
- When we allow breakdown of authority and unity through prayerlessness or functioning outside of individual boundaries and giftings.
- When we look to "professionals" instead of releasing ministries that God has placed in the body. Remember, there is order in public meetings. Revival isn't about meetings, it's about ministry.
- When we lose the focus that worship is for God and not a means of stimulating desired responses from people.
- When we allow busyness and excitement to keep us from prayer and intercession.
- When we see the gifts as an end and not as a tool of ministry.
- When we use God's enablement to build ourselves up and not the Body of Christ.

There are standards by which those who minister must follow.

1 Corinthians 14:26-28, 1 Corinthians 14:32 Although the gifts are supernatural, we have control over when, how and with what attitude and demeanor we deliver them.

The Gift of Prophecy is often confused with predicting the future and guidance. The Gift of Prophecy is not to be confused with the office of a prophet. The functions, giftings and responsibilities are very different.

The Satanic counterfeit to the Gift of Prophecy and the Word of Knowledge is fortune telling.

The Gift of Prophecy has three main purposes:

- To edify the church. Literally BUILD UP, encourage and bless.
- To exhort - this means a calling near; can mean move from sin and draw near to God, involves correction, not a harsh judgmental rebuke.
- To comfort - consolation in trials, assurance of His mercy and grace. Word of His forgiveness.

All the gifts are to be ministered with humility, grace, faith. **Romans 12:3-8**

Gifts of Tongues and the Gift of Interpretation are equal to prophecy.

1 Corinthians 14:5

Gift of Tongues - The ability to give a message from God in a language not understood by the hearers – except that it is interpreted.

Gift of Interpretation - The supernatural ability to show forth, by the Spirit, the meaning of an utterance of tongues in a language understood by the hearers.

- Tongues are a sign for unbelievers. **1 Corinthians 14:20-25**
- Tongues must be interpreted. **1 Corinthians 14:6-19**
- There are guidelines that help direct the use of these gifts
1 Corinthians 14:26-33, 39-40

Sometimes Christians get concerned when they hear the word prophecy or spiritual gifts because there have been abuses in the concept in times past. Many people have given a so called “word” from the Lord and what they said was discouraging, disruptive and even **weird**. You know that what was said was not from God. Recently we have had many so called “prophets” who gave a prediction that did not come to pass.

In the truest sense of the word, prophets in the Old Testament foretold the future. God required that **100%** of everything that a prophet spoke needed to come to pass. If it didn't, even if the prophet had a really high average, then the prophet was put to death as a false prophet. Absolutely everything a prophet predicted needed to happen, or else he was killed.

Deuteronomy 18:20-22 The Bible repeatedly warns against false prophets. It is a good thing for us to keep up our guard when we hear a “thus says the Lord”. We need to be **discerning** when people say they have a word for us. These people often look good and sound good and speak well and can be quite engaging, but if what they are saying is not in line with God's Word then we need to beware of them. **Matthew 7:15, 2 Corinthians 11:13-14**

In a general sense, prophecy is not giving a prediction of the future it is an **encouraging** or instructive word from the Lord. A person who is a prophet is someone who speaks and **teaches** the word of God. In many ways every pastor and teacher who preaches and teaches from the Bible is a prophet.

The Hebrew word for prophet in the Old Testament is ‘nabi’; it means one who **announces**. Abraham was called a prophet. **Genesis 20:7**

The Greek word for prophet in the New Testament is ‘prophetes’; it means “God's **spokesman**” or someone who speaks God's message for a particular situation. Jesus is perceived to be a prophet by the woman at the well. **John 4:19**

Some people believe that the gift of prophecy has ended in our days but that is not supported by scripture. Today's prophets are to speak the words of the Lord to instruct, encourage, rebuke, and convict. When a prophet speaks in church, their words are to be **evaluated** because they are not on the same level as inspired scripture. **1 Corinthians 14:29**
Anytime you hear someone who has prophesied say “do not judge me” you can be sure that there is something not correct about their approach.

Some scholars believe that the gift of prophecy is the same as the gift of teaching and preaching because those two gifts accomplish the same task- helping others to hear from God. Preaching, teaching and prophecy are very similar, but they have different applications. A person who operates in the gift of prophecy can be either a man or **woman**.
Acts 21:8-9

Three Biblical distinctions that apply to us concerning prophecy:

1) **All** Christians can hear God for the edification of others.

All Christians can prophecy, yet not every Christians has the gift of prophecy. God does not give every spiritual gift to every believer. All spiritual gifts are a tool. Not all are great with tools but all of us have occasion to use them as needed.

Not everyone has the gift of Administration. All of us know Christians who are not proficient at organization, supervision or spiritual management. You can **learn** some of this but there are clearly people gifted with this.

God is not **silent** so because we walk with Him and talk with Him, He will speak to us to help guide, reassure and encourage others.

- 2) Prophecy is never **manipulative**. Prophecy is never about getting others to do what we want them to do. We are never to say “Thus says the Lord” when we are only giving our **opinions**. **Jeremiah 23:25-32**

~ Robert Morris – It is clear that if we say any old thing that pops into our mind and then add “that’s what God says about the matter”, then God says that is not right, and He warns us not to do it.

The Bible is clear that we are not to use or take the name of the Lord in **vain**. **Exodus 20:7** Using the name of the Lord in vain is not simply the use of God’s name as a curse word. The word vain deals with vanity. Or how something makes us look. A person who is vain is self-focused to the point of being selfish. To take the name of the Lord in vain is to use it for selfish reasons. To identify as a Christian yet not live as one or submit to the Lordship of Christ is a self-serving act that has no **power** because it is not true. The same is true when we use the words God said to make us look good when in fact God not only did not say, He may have said nothing at all.

One thing that should always be factored into what someone tells you is the idea of **confirmation**. If someone has a word from the Lord for you, He will confirm it in your own spirit. Maybe not right away. He won’t leave you out of the matter. God is our friend, and a true friend would never tell something important about your life without also telling you. **1 Corinthians 14:32-33**

- 3) Prophecy is **encouraging**. God is concerned about our motives and our attitude when we share with people. Prophecy **builds** people up. **1 Corinthians 14:3** Even when prophecy brings a word of correction and humbles a person, God promises to lift them up. A true word of prophetic correction will cause people to willingly bow a knee and not forcefully shred them.

The word encourage comes from the root word courage with the prefix “en” which means – “to put in”. To encourage means to put courage into people. Don’t put fear into people. That is really pretty simple. In the Bible one of the leaders whose name was Joses, had such a **grace** - filled way with people that they gave him the nickname Barnabas which translates ‘son of encouragement’. **Acts 4:36**

When two prophets, Judas and Silas, came to Antioch, they did not point out all that they were doing wrong. They came and **strengthened** and exhorted the family of God there. **Acts 15:30-32**

Remember that life is already hard and a word from the Lord can change **everything**. The Gifts of the Spirit are for the edification of individuals and entire congregations. We must be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit and willing to trust and obey. As we do, God will do mighty things.