

Prophetic Presbytery



491) What is prophecy?

- A. Prophecy is speaking on behalf of God. The prophet hears from God and delivers it as God directs him. The prophet most often speaks the word from God, but sometimes God calls on him to dramatize it.
- B. Prophecy includes both "forth telling" and "foretelling" the word of God.
 - 1. "Forth telling" is speaking forth what God has spoken. It is delivering the message from God.
 - a. In the most general sense, preaching is a form of "forth telling" the word of God.
 - b. Preaching and prophecy are not identical. The writers of the New Testament used different Greek words to distinguish between "preaching" and "prophecy."
 - 2. "Foretelling" adds to prophecy the idea of predicting future events.
- C. Prophecy is speaking a message from God that was not previously known to the prophet, but revealed by God which may include predictions of future events.

"That night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying: [5] "Go and tell my servant David, This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in?"
2SAM 7:4-5 NIV

"Before David got up the next morning, the word of the LORD had come to Gad the prophet, David's seer: [12] "Go and tell David, This is what the LORD says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you."
2SAM 24:11-12 NIV

"Elisha said, "Hear the word of the LORD. This is what the LORD says: About this time tomorrow, a seah of flour will sell for a shekel and two seahs of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria."
2KINGS 7:1 NIV

"This is what the LORD said to me: "Go and buy a linen belt and put it around your waist, but do not let it touch water." [2] So I bought a belt, as the LORD directed, and put it

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around my waist. [3] Then the word of the LORD came to me a second time: [4] "Take the belt you bought and are wearing around your waist, and go now to Perath and hide it there in a crevice in the rocks." [5] So I went and hid it at Perath, as the LORD told me. [6] Many days later the LORD said to me, "Go now to Perath and get the belt I told you to hide there." [7] So I went to Perath and dug up the belt and took it from the place where I had hidden it, but now it was ruined and completely useless. [8] Then the word of the LORD came to me: [9] "This is what the LORD says: 'In the same way I will ruin the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem.'"

JER 13:1-9

492) What are the characteristics of prophecy?

A. Prophecy imparts to the one who hears the word.

"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life."

JOHN 6:63 NIV

"And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe."

1THESS 2:13 NIV

"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

HEB 4:12 NIV

B. The word of God is creative. When the prophetic word is received, it can produce what was previously not in existence.

"And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light."

GEN 1:3 NIV

"Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you."

1TIM 4:14 NIV

C. Prophecy is conditional.

1. Prophecy always requires a response. If God speaks a word, but we do not receive it or we respond improperly to it, it will fail to come to pass and it will not be the fault of the prophet.
2. If the word is one of warning, correction, or judgement, God will respond to a repentant heart.
 - a. Jonah prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed in 40 days. In response to the word of God, the people of Nineveh repented. God canceled the city's destruction.
 - b. Jonah was not a false prophet. The people met God's unspoken condition of repentance and He relented.

"On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: 'Forty more days and

Nineveh will be overturned." [5] The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. [6] When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. ... Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." [10] When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened."

JONAH 3:4-6, 9-10 NIV

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."

PSA 51:17 NIV

"If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, [8] and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. [9] And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, [10] and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it."

JER 18:7-10 NIV

493) What must happen before a prophetic word can be spoken?

- A. One who prophesies must first hear from God.

"The word of the LORD came to me, saying,"

JER 1:4 NIV

"the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, by the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians. There the hand of the LORD was upon him."

EZE 1:3 NIV

"For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

2PETER 1:21 NIV

- B. False prophets claim to speak on behalf of God, but God has not spoken to them. They either deliver self serving "words" from their own imaginations or they hear a demonic spirit and deliver that word as if it came from God.

"Then the LORD said to me, 'The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I have not sent them or appointed them or spoken to them. They are prophesying to you false visions, divinations, idolatries and the delusions of their own minds.'"

JER 14:14 NIV

"I did not send these prophets, yet they have run with their message; I did not speak to them, yet they have prophesied."

JER 23:21 NIV

494) How do we hear from God?

- A. By the audible voice of God. This is when we hear the voice of God in the same manner we would hear the voice of any man.

"And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'"

MATT 3:17 NIV

"He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' [5] 'Who are you, Lord?' Saul asked. 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' he replied. [6] 'Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.'"

ACTS 9:4-6 NIV

B. By the inaudible voice of God. God can speak to our spirit man in a number of different ways.

1. With words.

- a. This is when we hear the voice of God with our spiritual, rather than our natural, ears. God speaks directly to our hearts.
- b. God may also speak a single word to our heart such as, "rejected," to indicate what problem the person is dealing with.

"Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit."

MARK 13:11 NIV

2. Through visual images.

- a. God will often "speak" by showing us a visual image to illustrate and clarify His message.

"This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb, with a plumb line in his hand. [8] And the LORD asked me, 'What do you see, Amos?' 'A plumb line,' I replied. Then the Lord said, 'Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.'"

AMOS 7:7-8 NIV

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple."

ISA 6:1 NIV

"After Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah and the officials, the craftsmen and the artisans of Judah were carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the LORD showed me two baskets of figs placed in front of the temple of the LORD. [2] One basket had very good figs, like those that ripen early; the other basket had very poor figs, so bad they could not be eaten. [3] Then the LORD asked me, 'What do you see, Jeremiah?' 'Figs,' I answered. 'The good ones are very good, but the poor ones are so bad they cannot be eaten.'"

JER 24:1-3 NIV

3. Through impressions.

- a. You could feel the emotion of a person, such as fear, or temporarily experience their pain.

"I hear a cry as of a woman in labor, a groan as of one bearing her first child - the cry of the Daughter of Zion gasping for breath, stretching out her hands and saying, "Alas! I am fainting; my life is given over to murderers."

JER 4:31 NIV

C. Dreams

1. Dreams take place when we are asleep.

D. Visions

1. Visions can take place when we are awake or in a trance-like or semi-conscious state.

"he said, "Listen to my words: "When a prophet of the LORD is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams. [7] But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. [8] With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"

NUM 12:6-8 NIV

"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams."

ACTS 2:17 NIV

495) What are the different levels of prophetic utterance?

A. The Spirit of prophecy

1. This is when the Holy Spirit descends upon a person and they prophesy. They are not a prophet nor do they have the gift of prophecy. The strong prophetic presence of the Holy Spirit enables them to prophesy.
2. One characteristic of this level is that such people prophesy infrequently.

"At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

REV 19:10 NIV

"Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again. [26] However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the Tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp. [27] A young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." [28] Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses' aide since youth, spoke up and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them!" [29] But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD'S people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" [30] Then Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp."

NUM 11:25-30 NIV

"Word came to Saul: "David is in Naioth at Ramah"; [20] so he sent men to capture him.

But when they saw a group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men and they also prophesied. [21] Saul was told about it, and he sent more men, and they prophesied too. Saul sent men a third time, and they also prophesied. [22] Finally, he himself left for Ramah and went to the great cistern at Secu. And he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" "Over in Naioth at Ramah," they said. [23] So Saul went to Naioth at Ramah. But the Spirit of God came even upon him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth. [24] He stripped off his robes and also prophesied in Samuel's presence. He lay that way all that day and night. This is why people say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

1SAM 19:20-24 NIV

B. The gift of prophecy.

1. This is a gift of the Holy Spirit that is resident within the person.
2. A person with the gift of prophecy can prophesy on a more regular basis. The level they reach is equal to the faith they exercise.

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith."

ROM 12:6 NIV

"to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues."

1COR 12:10 NIV

C. The office of a prophet.

1. This person not only has a strong gift of prophecy working in his life, he also holds the governmental office of Prophet.
2. God calls men into this office. Just because a person flows in prophecy does not mean God has called them into the office of a prophet.

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,"

EPH 4:11 NIV

"Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?"

1COR 12:29 NIV

3. Along with gift of prophecy, God grants a prophet authority. That authority is a heavy responsibility and must not be abused.
4. The predictive element of prophecy is most often exercised by one who holds the office of prophet.

"If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account. [20] But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, must be put to death."

DEU 18:19-20 NIV

"During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. [28] One of

them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)"

ACT 11:27-28 NIV

496) To whom is prophecy directed?

- A. Nations or peoples.
 - 1. Throughout the Bible, God has spoken both blessing and cursing to many different nations.
- B. Churches
 - 1. Prophets give direction for the local church. Through the prophet, God might commend, correct or redirect a local body.
 - 2. Prophecy directed to a senior pastor is often to the church he leads and not to the man himself. He receives the word as the representative of the local body.
- C. Individuals
 - 1. When an individual receives a word from God, it is called a personal prophecy.

497) What are the seven purposes of prophecy?

- A. God uses prophecy for:
 - 1. Edification
 - 2. Exhortation
 - 3. Comfort
 - 4. Direction
 - 5. Impartation
 - 6. Confirmation
 - 7. Correction and judgement
- B. The first three purposes, edification, exhortation, and comfort, will be found in any form of prophecy.
- C. These last four purposes, direction, impartation, confirmation, and correction, should flow only from the prophetic office or the local church eldership. Each of these aspects of prophetic influence can have such a profound effect on a person's life that it requires the wisdom and maturity that accompanies the five-fold offices.

498) What is edification?

- A. "Edify" means to "build up." Prophecy is designed to build up and strengthen God's servants, not tear them down.

"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort."
1COR 14:3 KJV

"But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort."

1COR 14:3 NIV

499) What is exhortation?

- A. "Exhort" means "to admonish, to appeal to" someone. Exhortation is a mix of encouragement and warning to perform in an excellent manner.

"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort."
1COR 14:3 KJV

"But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort."

1COR 14:3 NIV

500) What is comfort?

- A. The Holy Spirit was sent as our comforter and the prophetic word can also assume that role.

"But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort."

1COR 14:3 NIV

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; [17] Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [18] I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

JOHN 14:16-18 KJV

501) What is direction?

- A. Prophecy can give direction to a person's life. It is important that such direction be confirmed by God before it is pursued.

"In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. [2] While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." [3] So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off."

ACT 13:3 NIV

502) What is impartation?

- A. The prophet can impart gifts from his anointing and by his Holy Spirit authority, into the life of another.

"Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you."

1TIM 4:14 NIV

503) What is confirmation?

- A. God uses prophecy to confirm and establish His word that He has already revealed to us through study, experience or other means.

"I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. [5] For in him you have been enriched in every way - in all your speaking and in all your knowledge - [6] because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. [7] Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed."

1COR 1:4-7 NIV

504) What is correction and judgement?

- A. The prophet can bring correction and, at times judgement, but it is always done in a redeeming and not condemning way. God's purpose in chastising us is to bring us back to Himself.

"Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. [4] When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, [5] hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord."

1COR 5:3-5 NIV

1. Although this was not spoken as a prophecy, but written in a letter, Paul is acting out of his governmental office of apostle and prophet.

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,"

ROM 8:1 NIV

505) What is required of all prophecy?

- A. All prophecy is to be judged. Because prophets are men, there is always the possibility that there could be the mixture of the true word of God and their own opinions. Proper judgement will weed out the opinion of man.

"Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said."

1COR 14:29 NIV

"do not treat prophecies with contempt. [21] Test everything. Hold on to the good."

1THESS 5:20-21 NIV

506) Who judges the prophecy?

- A. Local church leadership and other prophets are responsible to judge prophecy. A pastor is given charge of the local church and knows the heart of his people. His concern is to protect those under his care. Other prophets can discern the spirit of the word, thereby knowing whether or not it came from the heart of God.

"Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said."

1COR 14:29 NIV

507) What is the criteria prophecy must meet?

- A. A true prophecy will never violate the word of God.

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"But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! [9] As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!"

GAL 1:8-9 NIV

B. A true prophecy will be confirmed within your spirit.

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

ROM 8:16 NIV

C. God will confirm true prophecy by some additional means. The confirmation might come through a scripture, circumstances or another person, but God will always confirm His word.

"This will be my third visit to you. Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."

2COR 13:1 NIV

508) What should our response be to a personal prophetic word?

A. We should receive the prophecy with faith.

1. Faith is essential to receive anything from God.

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."

HEB 11:6 NIV

2. There is a three step progression for a prophetic word to be fulfilled:

a. Receiving the word.

(1) This is usually accompanied by excitement and joy and perhaps apprehension.

b. The testing of the word.

(1) The great test is time. Things don't happen on schedule and you are tempted to get discouraged.

(2) Sometime events take place that are the exact opposite of the promised outcome.

c. The fulfillment of the word.

(1) This only comes after a season of testing.

B. We should receive the word with humility.

1. Our preconceived notions can sidetrack the word of God to our life if we are not careful.

"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

JAMES 4:10 NIV

C. Patience

1. Since God used time to test the word, we have to be careful not to give up before God is done.

"But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently."

ROM 8:25 NIV

"because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance."

JAMES 1:3 NIV

D. Submission

1. You should submit yourself to your local church leadership while you wait for the fulfillment of your word.
 - a. Don't run off and get ahead of God. Follow the counsel of your leadership.

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you."

HEB 13:17 NIV

509) What is a Presbytery?

- A. The word "presbyter" means "elder." It is a reference to mature local church leadership as well as the five-fold ministries.

"Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust."

ACTS 14:23 NIV

"The apostles and elders met to consider this question."

ACTS 15:6 NIV

"The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching."

1TIM 5:17 NIV

- B. The word Presbytery is a gathering of the Elders.

"Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you."

1TIM 4:14 NIV

510) What is a prophetic Presbytery?

- A. It is a gathering of the elders for the purpose of giving prophetic direction to the church and its people.
- B. During a Presbytery, each individual kneels before God and the elders and receive personal prophecy. Each presbyter, in turn, prophesies over those chosen by the local leadership.

"Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you."

1TIM 4:14 NIV

511) What should the makeup of the presbyters be?

- A. There should be at least two or more presbyters. All must be able to flow in the gift of prophecy, but they need not all hold the office of prophet.
- B. There should be at least one apostle and one prophet among the presbyters.
 - 1. The apostle brings authority and governmental insight. The prophet brings a depth to the prophetic word.
- C. It's best if the senior presbyters come from outside the local church body. This helps to bring a freedom to speaking the prophetic word.
 - 1. If you know a person too well, it is harder to separate what you know in the natural from what God is telling you in the Spirit.

512) Who can be a candidate for prophetic Presbytery?

- A. Time will not allow every person in a congregation to be ministered to. Therefore, the local leadership should prayerfully choose the candidates for ministry.
- B. Everyone who is to receive ministry should be saved, water baptized, and Spirit baptized. They should have a stable, mature relationship with the Lord. First priority should be given to those who are involved in some aspect of ministry in the local church or a candidate for such a position. Those who are seeking direction or confirmation of their calling in God should be next in line.
- C. Husbands and wives should come together whenever possible.

"Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure."

1TIM 5:22 NIV

513) How should the candidate prepare for prophetic Presbytery?

- A. You should prepare your heart for this ministry through prayer and fasting. Prayer and fasting will open your spirit to receive God's word to you.
- B. You should activate expectant faith as you call upon God for the guidance you desire in your life and ministry.
- C. You should avoid any preconceived ideas of what God should say to you, so that you won't miss what He will say to you.
- D. While you await your turn, you should maintain an attitude of praise, worship, and expectant faith.

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."

HEB 11:6 NIV

Name: _____ Group Leaders: _____

Date: _____

Homework for Chapter 33

Please answer the following questions from the textbook in full sentences and return to your Group Leaders next week.

1) What is prophecy?

2) Name two ways we can hear from God.

3) What are the different levels of prophetic utterance?

4) Name three purposes of prophecy.

5) Who judges prophecy and by what standard?

6) What is a prophetic Presbytery?
