

Hearing God: Power of the Prophetic – Week 6

Test it First

*1 Jn 4:1 TLB “Don’t always believe everything you hear just because someone says it’s a message from God. **Test it first** to see if it really is...”*

Why is it important to hear God’s voice?

1. Hearing God helps you know and love God better.

Every healthy relationship requires heart to heart communication.

John 10:14 NIV “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me”

2. Hearing God’s voice keeps you on the right path.

*John 10:4b-5 NIV “... they follow him because **they know his voice**. 5 They **won’t follow a stranger**; they will run from him because they don’t know his voice.”*

3. Hearing God is necessary to know what He wants you be and to do.

- a. Hearing God takes practice. I hope to ignite in you a desire to seek, hear and know God’s voice.
- b. It takes desire that leads to prayer and discernment.

7 Ways to Test a Prophetic Word

*1 Jn 4:1 TLB “Don’t always believe everything you hear just because someone says it’s a message from God. **Test it first** to see if it really is...”*

1) Does it bring me into conflict with the Bible?

Luke 21:33 “Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will never pass away”

- a) God will never violate anything written in his book.
 - i) God will NEVER tell you to ignore or disobey anything in this book.
 - ii) If He said it in the past, He’s going to say it in the future.
- b) Example:
 - i) If the Bible says to pay your taxes, God isn’t going to give you an impression... “the government wastes too much money...”
 - (1) Jesus and Ceasar...

c) BUILD YOUR LIFE ON THIS BOOK

- i) You shouldn't have to pray about going to church... it's in the book, just do it.
- ii) You shouldn't have to pray about tithing... just do it.
- iii) You shouldn't have to pray about telling the truth.... just do it.

2 Timothy 3:16,17 NIV All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2) Does it make me more like Christ?

****Note:** your obedience to the Word supersedes every kind of personal prophecy. Next, ask yourself, If I act on this prophetic word will it help me be more like Jesus:

1 John 2:5,6 NIV But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

a) **Christlikeness** - This is the goal of the Holy Spirit...

*Colossians 2:2b-4 GWT 3 God has hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ. 4 I say this so **that no one will mislead you with arguments that merely sound good.***

Seven Christlike Filters (The Bible calls it Wisdom from Heaven.)

James 3:17 NIV 17 "the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere."

- i) **PURE** – the word literally means to share in the character of God... Christlikeness.
- ii) **PEACE-LOVING** – this is not inner peace but peace that is opposed to strife. Ask yourself ,will this word produce peace or conflict?
- iii) **CONSIDERATE** – this is the opposite of self-seeking. What would this idea do to other people? Some people have the attitude: God told me to do this, and they just bowl over everybody... doesn't matter who gets hurt! God told them to do it! (I can give you so many examples of people breaking commitments because "god told me")
- iv) **SUBMISSIVE** – here I would like to mention one of the major problems of "God told me"...
- (1) When we think we have heard a prophetic word we need to remember that we are not infallible, we could be hearing wrong. SO IT NEEDS TO BE TESTED. One way to test it is to get wisdom from mature leaders in your life. This is a great filter.
 - (a) Don't just go to people who will tell you what you want to hear.
- (2) I have seen people go shipwreck because they won't submit their "Word" to not only the Bible but real people of authority... Parents, pastors, other church leaders...
- (3) Pastor Ron, God told me to get married to Suzy or to move to South Dakota and start a church. Will you pray with me about it? How submissive are you to my leadership?
- (4) Heb. 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority... they watch for your souls
- v) **FULL OF MERCY** – we should never use prophecy to be harsh with people. Or allow a so-called prophetic word given to you to cause you to feel beat up, condemned or torn down.

(1) Purpose of prophecy is for upbuilding, encouragement and comfort.

vi) **IMPARTIAL** – this simply means to be free of prejudice.

(1) JESUS WAS SO IMPARTIAL IT ALIENATED THE JEWISH LEADERS. They could not believe he ate with gentiles, samaritans, tax collectors and sinners. He even cared for and ministered to outcast women.

*Galatians 3:26-28 NIV For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, **27** for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. **28** There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

vii) **SINCERE** – sincerity is a great filter when testing a prophetic word. Am I lying to myself because I want this to be so badly.

3) Does my church family confirm it?

- a) Understand this: when you become a believer you not only get a new relationship with God, you get family... the church... you become a family member.
- b) The biggest reason people mess up their lives is they want to live their life without any accountability to anybody else, without any support, without any confirmation, or any guidance.

THAT IS NOT WISDOM FROM ABOVE

In 40 years of ministry, I can tell you story after story of going from church to church, person to person, pastor to pastor looking for someone who would agree with what they thought God was telling you.

c) San Antonio vs Murfreesboro

- i) I remember when I wanted to move and take a church in San Antonio. I felt a stirring in my Spirit to be a lead Pastor and I knew I was ready.

I was offered the pastorate of what was my home church when I was in Bible College. I met with my pastor and he said, I don't think that is a good move for you at this time...

- (1) He's holding me back!
- (2) He's not living my life!
- (3) Has he prayed about this?

d) Listen, if you can't find a mature Christian to agree with your decision DROP IT!

4) Is it consistent with my design?

Eph 2:10 "we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

- a) God has created and designed us for a purpose! We have certain giftings and personality traits that perfectly fit His will for our lives!
 - i) You are not an accident. There is a purpose for you in this life and it fits you.
- b) Example: Rick Warren says, a chair is designed a certain way and it reveals its purpose.... You were designed a certain way and often times it reveals your purpose.

- i) You may be good with words
- ii) You may be good with animals
- iii) You may be good with mechanical things or computers
- iv) You may be good with Money!

5) Does it concern my responsibility?

- a) If it is not your responsibility, ask yourself why would God talk to me about them?

In Jn. 21 Jesus is talking to Peter about how he is going to suffer and die for the Kingdom... Peter asked him, what about that guy, John... Jesus tells him that is not your business Peter... I will do what I want with him.

- b) Be very careful about giving people a personal word from God...

Very seldom does God tell me to tell others what they should do and even then I am careful... I will tell them "I think" this is what God is saying, please pray about it for yourself.

God told me your secret sin? He did why?

God told me to tell you to invest your money here?

God told me you are going to marry me?

- c) Guidelines to follow when God speaks to you on behalf of someone else:

- i) God will use you to confirm what He's already said to them.

- ii) God will often speak to you so you can help them without them even knowing. This way your ego does not get involved.

- iii) Trust God to speak to that person first!

- iv) If God does talk to you about something outside of your responsibility, it is probably for the purpose of intercession.

6) Is it convicting rather than condemning?

- a) Conviction is from God, condemnation is not! Conviction points the way to change while condemnation just makes you feel bad.
- b) The Voice of God always gives you hope for a future through repentance.
- c) The voice of the devil makes you feel worthless and hopeless

7) Do I sense God's peace in this prophetic word?

1 Cor. 14:33 "For God is not a God of confusion but of peace"

- a) If you are confused, pressured, overwhelmed and driven to make a hasty decision, it is not God speaking to you!
- b) There is not a single example in the Bible of God dealing with His people this way!

c) Phil 4:6,7 "the peace of God guards our hearts and minds"

- i) The Holy Spirit produces a calm peaceful spirit!

- ii) Again, the exception to this is intercession! Sometimes God will allow you to see or hear things that need warfare prayer!

The secret to hearing God clearly is for the purpose of getting to know Him better.