

PROPHESYING OUTLINES – CHURCH IN PLEASANT HILL

I. THE BENEFITS OF PRACTICING TO PROPHECY

A. To practice to prophesy brings in many benefits.

1. You have to treasure your speaking for the Lord, because the Lord treasures your speaking.
 - This is on the positive side. It is strange that the things the Lord treasures, we often despise. To consider our speaking as not that valuable, not that important, having little impact on the meeting and the saints, not mattering whether we speak or not, is to despise our speaking. This is to be at odds with the Lord's feeling.
2. You have to hate your silence.
 - This is on the negative side. We may hate to lose our temper or hate when we speak our mind and end up offending someone. But for some reason, we don't hate our silence. Perhaps there are many reasons that we do not speak for the Lord, but at least we need to go before the Lord and confess these two sins: Lord, forgive me for not treasuring speaking for You, and forgive me for not hating my silence. If you do this, the Lord will begin to have a way to operate in your inward being whereas He had no way before.

"But Moses said to him, Are you jealous for my sake? Oh that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put His Spirit upon them!" (Numbers 11:29) Recovery Version

"For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged." (1 Corinthians 14:31) Recovery Version

3. In Numbers 11:29 Moses desired that all the Lord's people would be prophets. Then in 1 Corinthians 14:31 Paul said that we all could prophesy one by one. Surely both Moses and Paul would like to see church meetings on earth in which everyone speaks for the Lord.
 - In both the Old Testament verse reference and the New Testament verse reference, the key word is "all." Both Moses and Paul were one with the Lord in their writing of these books. God has given every one of His people the capacity to speak for Him and speak Him forth. It would be good to pray read these verses not objectively, but subjectively. When you pray them, you should add, "Lord, I am one of Your people. You desire that I would prophesy. Lord, I stand on Your word that all can prophesy. That includes me! Lord, I am open to cooperate with You to learn how to prophesy!"
4. Today, however, in our present situation, the speaking may be exhausted in less than one hour. The elders then have to consider what to do. When two hundred people meet together and their speaking is exhausted in less than one hour, is this not a shame to the Lord? Therefore, we must endeavor to prophesy one by one.
 - Every one of us is endeavoring in some area in their daily life. May we all endeavor to practice to speak for and forth the Lord.

"Pursue love, and desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." (1 Corinthians 14:1) Recovery Version

B. Promoting the Believers' Interest in the Lord's Service

1. Practicing to prophesy promotes the believers' interest in the Lord's service (1 Cor. 14:1).
 - When we love the Lord, we spontaneously have a desire to serve the Lord. 1 Cor. 14:1 says, "Pursue love, and desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." Here Paul connects loving the Lord with prophesying, which is a service in and for His Body.
2. Sometimes the saints are forced to speak by being asked to speak, yet this does not stir up the interest of the believers as much as when someone volunteers to speak. When you volunteer to speak, you will be stirred up to speak more. If you speak in a meeting, that meeting, to you, is in the third heaven.

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- We need a spirit of volunteering. Nehemiah 2:5 says, *“If it please the king and if your servant has found favor before you, that you would send me to Judah.”* Isaiah 6:8 says, *“Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send? Who will go for Us? And I said, Here am I; send me.”* When we willingly volunteer to speak, the Lord is “sending us” to those we will speak to.
Surely with His sending is His presence and His supply. That will make your experience of the church meeting elevate into the Holy of Holies, which is both in the third heavens and also in your spirit.
- 3. If you do not speak in the meeting, and another brother or sister asks you about the meeting, you may say that the meeting was poor. The reason you say that the meeting was poor is because you did not speak. But if you had spoken in the meeting, you would say that the meeting was in the third heaven.
 - If in our experience, the church meeting seems poor, it is because you are not participating. All those who speak are “passing the ball to each other.” This makes the meeting full of enjoyment. Somewhere in the ministry it has been said that we are a heavenly team to bring forth Christ. We bring forth Christ by speaking Christ.
- 4. Furthermore, if you would just say "Amen" three times in a meeting, that meeting would also be in the third heaven to you. If you would say "Amen" three times, at the beginning, middle, and end of the meeting, you would be stirred up. But if you attend the meeting and sit without saying "Amen," you will say that the meeting was poor. This shows that the practice of speaking and prophesying promotes the believers' interest in the Lord's service. It stirs up your interest, and it also stirs up others' interest.
 - Can we not all say “Amen?” Yet when we say Amen, we should say it audibly, we should say it not as an outward form, but from the depth of our spirit. Your saying a strong Amen is the first step in learning how to speak for the Lord.

"Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love." (Ephesians 4:16) Recovery Version

C. Developing the Believers' Capacity in the Divine Life

1. Practicing to prophesy also develops (cultivates) the believers' capacity in the divine life (Eph. 4:16b). A boy may have many capacities by birth, but if he were restricted to lying on a bed, these capacities could not be cultivated. When we practice prophesying, our capacity in the divine life is cultivated, developed.
 - Our speaking for and forth the Lord is a practice. There is a saying that “practice makes perfect.” But we need to make a resolution before the Lord that we are willing to practice. The term practice also implies that there will be many mistakes. Do not fear that others will judge you for your mistakes. If you forget what you are saying or it doesn’t come out the way you wanted to, that is a learning experience. Where in our human life do we advance without practicing?
2. The first step in learning to prophesy is to be prepared. Each Lord's Day morning, all of the saints should come together to practice to prophesy. You have to consider what you will prophesy.
 - When you consider what to prophesy, do not overthink the matter. If you have no particular leading, just ask the Lord to supply you for whatever portion you prepare.
3. For each of the messages I have given in this series, I have prepared an **outline**. Sometimes I prepare the outline a week in advance. When I have some free time, I pick up the outline and read it. This is part of my preparation for speaking. Sometimes I read the outline for a message before going to bed, so that if I am awakened during the night and cannot get back to sleep, I can continue my preparation. As I am preparing to speak, I may discover that I

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need to use certain words, so I use a **dictionary** in order to find the proper usage of these words. All of this is my preparation for speaking. To labor to prophesy in this way is a real cultivation of our capacity in the divine life.

- This morning, we are not going into great detail on how to prepare a prophecy. However, a couple of key points that Brother Lee mentioned here are 1) preparing an outline (it doesn't have to be that complicated, a simple outline with a main point and subpoints will do); and 2) using a dictionary, or perhaps even a thesaurus, to both find and understand the proper words with which to communicate with in your speaking. You do have to set a little time aside, but the benefit of all saints prophesying is immense, and the Lord will bless your labor.
4. It is a tragedy that a number of Christians in the denominations do not even know how to pray. While I was in the Philippines in the 1950s, three brothers from among us went to a hospital to visit a sick person. This sick person had relatives who were in the denominations, and they were present when the three brothers arrived to visit. While visiting the sick person, the three brothers prayed for him in a prevailing way, full of freedom. After the brothers finished their prayer, the relatives from the denominations asked whether the brothers were preachers or pastors. The brothers replied that they were merchants. The relatives were surprised that merchants could pray so well, and they also admitted that they did not know how to pray. They said that if they needed prayer, they would call their pastor and ask him to pray. This is the poor situation of today's Christianity. The capacity of the regenerated saints has been suppressed. There is little development, or cultivation, of their capacity in the divine life.
- Saints, may we all seek the Lord and endeavor to cultivate the capacity to speak for the Lord, which He has given each one of us.

Source: The Practice of the Church Life according to the God-ordained Way, Chapter 5, Section 3