

I Believe in Visions

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Chapter 7

A Hospital Visitor

The sixth time the Lord appeared to me was in February 1959, while I was conducting a revival meeting in El Paso, Texas.

I slipped and fell on my right elbow, hurting my arm rather severely. At first I thought it was broken, and because this was about 9:30 at night, I went to the hospital to have a doctor look at it and set the bones, if necessary.

About a block from the hospital, the Lord spoke to me and told me my arm was not broken; I had a fracture and had knocked my elbow out of place. The Lord also said this was the devil's work, but He would make it turn out for His glory and my good. He also told me He would talk to me about it later and I should not fear or worry about anything.

At the hospital the doctor x-rayed my arm and confirmed what I already knew to be true. He explained that my elbow was knocked out of place and some chips were broken off the bone. This, he explained, was even worse than a broken arm, because the ligaments and muscles that hold the elbow in place would have to be put back in place. He said they would have to give me anesthetic to do this; otherwise, I would not be able to stand the pain.

Then, he said, I would have to be in the hospital for several days. After that I would have to wear a cast on my arm for at least four weeks, and then I would have to carry the arm in a sling for a while.

The next afternoon I was propped up in bed in my hospital room. I was fully dressed as I sat there, because I had been walking up and down the hospital corridors. I had sat in the lobby for a while before my dinner tray

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was brought to me. After I finished dinner, I was alone and feeling rather lonesome.

A White-Robed Visitor

Then I heard footsteps coming down the corridor toward my room. I looked toward the door to see who it was, because it was only 6:30 — too early for visitors. Someone dressed in white came through the door and at first I supposed it was a nurse.

As I looked closer, I saw it was Jesus! It seemed as if my hair stood on end. Cold chill bumps popped out all over my body, and I couldn't say a word.

Jesus approached my bed and sat down on a chair. He was robed in white and had some sort of sandals on. (When I had seen Him before, His feet had been bare.)

The Lord began His conversation with me by saying, "I told you in the automobile the other night as you approached the hospital that your arm was not broken, and you have since learned that this is true. I also told you I would talk to you about this later."

Someone might ask how the Lord told me this. While riding along in the car, I had heard the Lord speak so clearly that I had thought everyone else in the car had heard Him, too. In fact, I had asked, "Did you hear that?" But no one else had heard anything.

In the Old Testament we read the expression over and over, "... the word of the Lord came to me, saying...." (Jer. 2:1). Or, "...the word of the Lord came unto him, saying. ..." (1 Kings 17:2). This Word certainly wasn't audible, because if it had been an audible voice like a human voice, everyone present would have heard it, and

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the prophet would not have had to tell the people what the Lord said. But the Word wasn't audible — it came to the prophet's spirit from the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. (It is so real it just seems audible at the time.)

In my hospital room, the Lord reminded me of what He had told me in the car on the way to the hospital. "I told you that your arm was not broken, but that you had knocked your elbow out of place and had a slight fracture," He said. "I also told you this was the devil's work, but it would all work out to my glory and your good."

I replied, "Yes, Lord, and I haven't worried about it for a minute, because I know what You told me. In fact, I've been having a glorious time in the Lord. "

Perfect vs. Permissive Will

"You are to be commended for taking me at my Word, " Jesus continued. "Now I want to say this to you: This has happened to you not because it was my perfect will for you — because it is not my will at all; this has happened to you because you got out of my perfect will into my permissive will."

He reminded me of the Scripture, "And be not con-formed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). I once read a translation of this verse which read, "that you may prove what is that good, and permissive, and perfect will of God."

The Lord explained that He permits people to do things that aren't expressly His will. For example, He said, "It wasn't my will that Israel have a king, and I told them

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so. But they wanted to be like other nations." (They kept clamoring for a king, so God permitted them to have a king.)

"Some time ago when you preached to a convention of ministers, you stated that your ministry was that of a teacher and a prophet. You got into trouble because you reversed the order, putting your teaching ministry first and your prophetic ministry second. When you did that, you got out of my perfect will and into my permissive will, thus opening the door for the devil to attack you.

"You might ask why, if I knew you were going to fall and hurt your arm, I didn't prevent it. I could have, of course, but I didn't want to. And instead of being angry with Me for not preventing it, you should be glad I allowed it to happen. If I hadn't permitted Satan to do this to arrest your attention, you would not have lived past the age of 55, because you would have continued in my permissive will instead of my perfect will.

'This is the third time I have had to speak to you about this. For this reason, I am going to let you wear your arm in a cast and then in a sling for a little while. I will speed up the healing process, however, so you will not be disabled as long as the doctor has said would be necessary.'" Then Jesus told me the exact day I would get out of the cast.

He went on to say, "You have enjoyed divine health for 25 years. Even now you are not sick. But," He said, "you have been out of my perfect will for two years and have been walking only in my permissive will."

(Fifty years have now passed since I was healed as a teenager. The Lord has kept me from sickness and has given me divine health all these years. Hurting my arm was the only accident I have had in all that time.)

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Although I had been anointed by the Holy Spirit for the ministries of a prophet and a teacher, I had been putting my teaching ministry first because teaching is my natural preference. I also had seen a great need for Bible teaching, and, of course, pastors had encouraged my teaching ability. But the Lord told me in this vision that I was going to have to reverse it and put my prophet's ministry first.

I realized this accident was not caused by the Lord. He merely permitted it. John 10:10 says, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." The one who steals and destroys is the enemy. The Lord doesn't commission it, although He may permit it.

For example, God didn't cause Job's children to be killed or his flocks stolen. God didn't cause the thieves to rob him or the fire to burn his crops. God didn't smite his body with boils. The devil did it, but the Lord permitted him to do it.

In order to get my attention and to bring about my complete submission and obedience to His perfect will, God had allowed this calamity to come into my life. Jesus said to me, "It is my perfect will that men and women enjoy divine healing and divine health, but many are like you and are living only in my permissive will. For that reason, difficulties have been permitted to come their way.

"Others are weak in faith. Their faith is not strong enough to appropriate the healing that belongs to them. Some don't even know what belongs to them. Always pray for people who are sick and in the hospitals and are under care of doctors that I will speed up the healing process.

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because I will do that for you."

Thirteen days later I went back to the doctor to have my cast changed. When it was removed, the doctor looked at my arm in amazement and said, "I have never seen an arm heal so rapidly." Normally it would have taken four weeks for my arm to heal properly.

The doctor had told my wife that I would never be able to touch my shoulder with that arm; however, I can. The Lord told me as He sat there by my hospital bed that He would restore 99 percent of the use of that arm. He said He was going to leave that 1 percent disability to remind me not to disobey Him again, but to use the ministry He had given me. (My arm gives me only the slightest amount of trouble. No one can ever tell that anything is wrong, and most of the time I have no difficulty with it.)

Healing Promises to Israel

As the Lord continued to speak to me in the vision, He talked to me about the healing ministry, divine healing, and divine health. He reminded me of His promises to Israel concerning healing:

EXODUS 15:26

26 . . . If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.

DEUTERONOMY 7:15

15 And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness....

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EXODUS 23:26

26 . . . the number of thy days I will fulfil.

The Lord explained, "Israel was not born again; they were not the Church in the same sense you are. You have become children of God — actually the sons of God:

1 JOHN 3:1,2

1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God ...

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God....

JOHN 1:12

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

"The Israelites were not my sons; they were my servants," Jesus said. "And if it was not my will that my servants should be sick, certainly it is not my will that my sons should be sick. I have provided healing for them.

The Prophet's Ministry

"I am going to talk to you now about the prophet's ministry," Jesus said. "You have missed it and have been only in my permissive will because you have reversed the order, putting the teaching ministry first and the prophet's ministry second. Did you ever notice in my Word that everywhere ministry is mentioned, the prophet's ministry is mentioned first and the teaching ministry second?

EPHESIANS 4:8,11,12

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men ...

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11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, PROPHETS; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and TEACHERS;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, to the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

"These are the ministry gifts Paul said God gave to men. And He gave them for this purpose: 'For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ'*

"Notice the order. Apostles are mentioned first. There are some who say that there were only the 12 original apostles. However, there are 23 individuals in the New Testament who are called apostles. The Greek word for 'apostle,' apostolos, means 'a sent one.'

"Even Paul himself was not an apostle in the sense of being one of the original 12, for he was not with them from the beginning of my earthly ministry. Judas was one of the 12

original apostles, but after the betrayal, he went out and hanged himself and was replaced by Matthias. This made Matthias the thirteenth apostle.

" 'Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul. . . .' (Acts 14:14). Notice that according to this verse, Barnabas was just as much an apostle as Paul was, making them the fourteenth and fifteenth apostles.

"In Galatians we read that Paul said, 'Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles

*For a complete study of this subject, see Rev. Hagin's study guide. The Ministry Gifts.

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saw Inone, save James theLord's brother' (Gal. 1:17-19).

"Here Paul calls James an apostle, although he was not one of the original 12. James was sent to be the head of the Church of Jerusalem. Paul calls him an apostle because he was a 'sent one.' This makes James the sixteenth apostle mentioned in the Scriptures.

"In Romans Paul wrote, 'Salute Andronicus andJunia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me' (Rom. 16:7). Therefore, Andronicus and Junia were apostles seventeen and eighteen.

"Paul began his first epistle to the Thessalonians, 'Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians . . . ' Then writing in the second chapter, he refers to the three of them as the apostles of Christ (v. 6). This would make these [latter two] men apostles nineteen and twenty.

"In Second Corinthians 8:23, two unnamed brethren are called apostles, raising the number to 22.

"In Philippians Paul said, 'Yet I supposed it necessary

to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants' (Phil. 2:25). The Greek word used in this text for 'messenger' is the same one that is translated 'apostle' elsewhere. Therefore, this makes 23 apostles mentioned in the New Testament."

We can see from this that a person can be a 'sent one' or a messenger of the Church and can be correctly called an apostle of the Church. Smith Wigglesworth was called an apostle of faith. When Christ calls and sends someone, he is an apostle of Christ.

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The Place of the Missionary

There is no mention of missionaries among the ministry gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." In fact, the word "mis-sionary" is not found in the New Testament!

The ministry of a missionary is involved in the calling of an apostle. It is a ministry, but not necessarily an office. For example, if someone were called by the Holy Spirit to be a missionary to Africa, a missionary committee might send him out, but if he were really sent out by the Holy Spirit, he would be an apostle to the people of Africa.

As Jesus pointed out to me in the vision, neither Paul nor Barnabas was an apostle to begin with:

ACTS 13:1

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain PROPHETS AND TEACHERS; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

All five of these men were prophets and/or teachers. Saul and Barnabas are mentioned here, but they are called prophets and teachers, not apostles. We do know that Paul was a prophet and a teacher, and we are told that Bar-nabas was a teacher. Later they became apostles.

ACTS 13:2-4

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their

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hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost,
departed

In other words, Paul and Barnabas were "sent ones," or apostles. The next chapter in the Book of Acts tells us, "Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul.... " (Acts 14:14). Barnabas was called an apostle because he was a "sent one" or apostle to the Gentiles as much as Paul was.

The Lord discussed these things with me in the vision to show me that the apostle's and prophet's ministries are still for us today. In dealing with me about the prophet's ministry coming first, He pointed out that the prophet's ministry is listed before the teaching ministry in the Scriptures because Paul listed them in the order of their importance: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

Furthermore, in Acts 13:1, where it mentions the ministers who were praying at the Church in Antioch, it doesn't say "teachers and prophets"; it says "prophets and teachers," and goes on to list them.

As Jesus sat in the chair by my hospital bed, He pointed out the following Scripture to me:

1 CORINTHIANS 12:27-30

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in
particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles,
secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles,
then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of
tongues.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are
all workers of miracles?

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30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

He said, "Here again, Paul was talking about ministry gifts, not spiritual gifts. Notice, too, that the prophet's ministry is again listed before the teaching ministry. Every time these two gifts are mentioned, the prophet's ministry is mentioned first."

Jesus went on to talk to me about the ministry of the prophet, explaining that a prophet is one who has visions and revelations; things are revealed to him.

In the Old Testament, a prophet was called a "seer" because he saw and knew things supernaturally. By definition, a prophet is one who sees and knows things supernaturally because he has at least two of the revelation gifts plus the gift of prophecy operating in his life and ministry. This constitutes the office of a prophet.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:29,30

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30 If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

Notice that Paul is called a prophet and teacher in Acts 13:1. Paul said he was taught the Gospel by revelation of Jesus Christ. It came to Paul by revelation; man didn't teach it to him.

It should be noted that one does not begin in the ministry as a prophet. To stand in the office of a prophet, one is first of all a minister of the Gospel separated and called to the ministry with the calling of God upon his life. Second, he must have at least two of the revelation gifts

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as well as the gift of prophecy operating in his ministry.

The revelation gifts, Jesus pointed out to me, are the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the gift of discerning of spirits.

After I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the word of knowledge immediately began to operate in my life. When I am in the Spirit, the gift of discerning of spirits also is in operation.

Therefore the word of knowledge and the discerning of spirits plus prophecy are operating in my ministry when I am in the Spirit. This constitutes the office of a prophet.

Any layman occasionally may receive a word of knowledge. The spiritual gift of the word of knowledge is a supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of certain facts in the mind of God. God knows everything, but He doesn't reveal everything He knows; He just gives a person a "word" of knowledge. A word is a fragmentary part of a sentence. God gives an individual what He wants him to know at the time — just part of the knowledge He has — and it is given by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus pointed this out to me as He sat by my bedside and spoke to me. He said that any Spirit-filled person, whether prophet, minister, or layman, occasionally may have a word of knowledge as he needs it, but having a word of knowledge doesn't make that person a prophet.

The layman isn't called to minister, so he couldn't be called a prophet. The minister may be called as an evangelist or a pastor, but he couldn't be called a prophet either simply because he has an occasional word of knowledge to help someone. To constitute the prophet's office there has to be a continued manifestation of at least two of the revelation gifts plus prophecy.

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The Gifts Operated in the Old Testament

Jesus further pointed out to me that all of the gifts except tongues and interpretation of tongues were in operation in the Old Testament. "Tongues," He said, "are exclusive with this dispensation."

Old Testament prophets knew things supernaturally. One example of this is found in the fifth chapter of Second Kings. When Naaman, a captain in the army of the king of Syria, was healed of leprosy after dipping seven times in the River Jordan, as commanded by the Prophet Elisha, he offered Elisha much silver and gold. Elisha, however, refused to accept Naaman's money because he realized that Naaman was trying to "pay" for his healing, and it cannot be purchased; it is a gift from God.

Elisha had a servant named Gehazi, who went after Naaman, telling him that two young prophets had come to see Elisha, and although Elisha wouldn't take anything for himself, he had said it would be all right for Gehazi to take some talents of silver and gold and some changes of raiment for these young prophets. Naaman was so thrilled and thankful for his healing that he gave Gehazi twice as much as he had asked for.

Gehazi was lying, of course. He had made up the story about the prophets. He took Naaman's gifts and hid them for his own use. Then when he went into the presence of Elisha, and the prophet asked him where he'd been, Gehazi lied and said, "Nowhere."

Elisha replied, ". . .Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?" (2 Kings 5:26). Elisha knew the truth in his spirit. This had to be a supernatural revelation. It was the operation

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of the word of knowledge in the office of the prophet.

Many people think that if one has this ministry, he can automatically tell everything about everybody, but that's not so. We can't turn it on and off as we wish; the gift operates only as the Lord wills.

Gehazi was with the prophet all the time and knew that Elisha didn't know everything all the time. He probably thought he could get by with his deceit.

People often write me wanting me to tell them what is wrong with them. I can't push a button and start operating like a tape recorder! It is as the Spirit wills and as His anointing comes on me. A person has to be with me in a service when the gift is operating.

This is why I preach about the anointing. When I do, the faith of the congregation rises and the anointing comes on me to minister. If I could minister this way every night, I would. At times God has had me minister to every person in the crowd, giving me a message for each one. Where the Spirit is in manifestation, anything can happen. I can't make it happen, however, just because I want it to happen.

Words of Knowledge

Once while I was preaching in Kansas, a minister's wife asked me to pray for her. As she began to share her request with me, the Word of the Lord started coming to me and I asked her to wait a minute.

I said, "If you tell me your needs before I tell you what the Lord is showing me, you will think I am speaking from my own knowledge. But when God supernaturally shows me a person's need and gives instructions on how to solve

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the problem, that person knows it is supernatural."

The Lord showed me this woman in a vision. She was very depressed and discouraged. I told her, "I can see you lying in bed with a damp cloth on your head and the shades pulled down because your head hurts so much. Sometimes you remain like this for two or three weeks at a time."

She was amazed that I could know this. Then I gave her the message God gave me. The Lord showed me this woman had committed a sin shortly after she was saved, and ever since that time a deceiving devil had troubled her, repeatedly telling her she had committed the unpardonable sin.

She admitted to me that two years after she was saved she had told a lie, and the devil had tormented her ever since. She told me how a spirit of depression would come upon her for three weeks at a time and she would shut herself up in her room with a cool, damp cloth on her head to ease the pain.

I took authority over this deceiving spirit and com-manded him to leave her at once. When I saw her again I learned that she had not been troubled since I ministered to her.

In another city I prayed for a young man who was hav-ing epileptic seizures. He was old enough to serve in the Army, but he had been rejected because of the seizures. When he came into the healing line, I knew by the word of knowledge that I had to deal with a spirit, so I cast the spirit out in Jesus' Name.

Twelve months later I was back in that church for one service. As I walked through a side door to the platform, my eyes fell on this young man. The Word of the Lord came to me and brought me a word of knowledge, saying.

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"Last year when you were here, you cast that evil spirit out of his body. For twelve months he has not had an epileptic seizure. However, in the last two weeks he has had three seizures at night while sleeping, and he has been awakened by them.

"The reason for these seizures is because he went to bed fearful and went to sleep afraid."

The Lord then told me that before I preached I should call this young man to the platform and tell him what the Lord had just shown me. He said I should command the spirit to leave again. I also was to teach the young man how to resist fear and how to maintain his healing.

As I obeyed the Lord and called the young man to the front, telling him all that the Lord had shown me, he was amazed and he verified what I said.

I told him I was going to cast that spirit out of him, but when I was gone he would be on his own and he would have to resist the devil as we are told to do in James 4:7. Many years have passed since that time, and he has never had another epileptic seizure.

Manifested in his case was a combination of the gifts of the word of knowledge, discerning of spirits, prophecy, and a teaching ministry that taught him how to resist the devil and maintain what he had.

Have the Ministries Been Done Away With?

The Word of God tells us that He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and some teachers. Many will say, "Yes, but these ministries have been done away with now. The only ministries we have today are teachers, pastors, and evangelists. There are no

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apostles or prophets today."

But notice that Paul made no such distinction. He said that God called some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and some teachers for the work of the ministry and the edifying of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:11,12).

Have all the saints been perfected yet? Is there any work of the ministry going on today? Does the Body of Christ still need edifying? If so, all of these ministries and ministry gifts should be in operation. They haven't been done away with.

We need to find our place in God's plan and know what He has called us to do, for He will equip us by His Spirit to stand in the office to which He has called us. We can use the ministry gifts He has given us to minister according to His will, purpose, and plan.

As He sat by my bed, the Lord reminded me that the word of knowledge immediately began to be manifested in my life from the time I was baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in other tongues. The word of knowledge, He pointed out, is supernatural revelation (all the gifts of

the Spirit are supernatural). If one of them is supernatural, all of them are supernatural. If the word of knowledge is not a supernatural revelation, the gift of healing would not be supernatural.

Notice, too, that it isn't called "the gift of knowledge." It is "the word of knowledge." The spiritual gift of the word of knowledge is a supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit concerning people, places, or things in the present or in the past.

The word of wisdom, on the other hand, concerns knowledge of the future. The word of wisdom is a super-

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natural revelation concerning the plan and purpose of God.

When the word of knowledge began to operate in my life, I would know things supernaturally about people, places, and things. Sometimes when I was preaching, a cloud would appear and my eyes would be opened so I could see a vision. I might see as somebody in the congregation went to another town and committed a sin. In the vision I would see this person in the other town and I would see the sin that he had committed there.

Then I would tell him about it, but never publicly, because the Bible teaches that only hypocrites should be rebuked publicly. Usually these people are not hypocrites, even though they have sinned. They want to do right. They want to serve God. God shows us these things to help them and to show them how to overcome temptation. We need to realize that this kind of ministry is scriptural and is needed today.

Sometimes the word of knowledge also comes by an inward revelation, a prophecy, or the interpretation of a message in tongues.

Although a person may have a word of wisdom, a word of knowledge, or the discerning of spirits given to him occasionally, that does not make him a prophet.

We see in First Corinthians 14:3, "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to EDIFICATION, and EXHORTATION, and COMFORT" The simple gift of prophecy, therefore, is not given for revelation. Often the utterance a prophet gives will have revelation in it because the prophet has other gifts operating in his ministry, but the fact that one prophesies does not make him a prophet.

Many have thought that tongues, interpretation, and

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prophecy are only for public ministry, but there are more applications for these gifts than that. The simple gift of prophecy can be used as prayer in worship as well as in addressing the congregation or individuals.

In the Book of Psalms we see a number of psalms, songs, and prayers that were spoken in prophecy by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will help us in our prayer life with tongues, interpretation, and prophecy.

I use tongues and interpretation all the time in my prayer life. Many times I pray in tongues for an hour or so, and then I pray the interpretation in English. In this way, my mind is edified. If I prayed only in tongues, my spirit would be edified, but my mind would be unfruitful. First Corinthians 14:4 says, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself [or his spirit].... "

I have prayed as long as six hours a day in tongues and then prayed the interpretation in English. At other times I have used prophecy entirely.

None of this comes from my own mind. I pray in English by a supernatural utterance given by the Holy Spirit. It is a greater blessing to use prophecy in prayer. It lifts one higher than anything else, because prophecy carries greater inspiration than tongues.

Praying in this manner is not limited to ministers. All Spirit-filled Christians can do it. But as I have said, praying in tongues and interpretation or praying with prophecy would not in itself make the individual a prophet.

The Lord taught me all of these things as He sat beside my hospital bed that evening. I'm merely summing them up here in my own words. He also taught me about visions.

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Types of Visions

First there is what the Lord called a spiritual vision, in which a person has a vision in his spirit, or he sees something in his spirit. This lowest type of vision and the highest type of revelation are very similar.

An example of a spiritual vision is Paul's experience on the road to Damascus. Paul was headed for Damascus, determined to persecute the Christians, when suddenly a light brighter than the noonday sun shone around him, and Paul, then known as Saul, heard a

voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest...." (Acts 9:4,5).

When relating this experience, Paul said that when this happened, his eyes were blind and he could not see. Paul didn't see the Lord with his physical eyes; he saw in the spirit realm.

In this same ninth chapter of Acts we see how the Lord spoke to Ananias, who was a layman in the city of Damas-cus. The Lord told Ananias to go to the street called Straight and "enquire. . . for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. . ." (vv. 11,12).

"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (v. 17).

So we see that Jesus appeared to Saul, even though Saul's physical eyes were blinded. This was a spiritual

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vision. Saul saw Jesus with the eyes of his spirit. This is the first and lowest type of a vision. Jesus pointed out to me that the second highest type of vision is when one falls into a trance. We see an example of this type of vision when Paul went to Jerusalem the first time. He said in Acts 22, "And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; And saw him [Jesus] saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me" (vv. 17,18). Notice that Paul says he was in a trance.

When one falls into a trance, his physical senses are suspended for the moment. He is not aware of where he is or of anything that contacts the physical. He is not un-conscious — he is just more conscious of spiritual things than he is of physical things.

The tenth chapter of Acts relates the story of Peter's vision in which the Lord told him to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. Peter went up on a housetop to pray and there he "fell into a trance" (v. 10) and saw heaven opened. He was seeing into the spirit realm.

So we see from the Bible that both Peter and Paul fell into trances and saw into the spirit realm. A trance, then, is the second highest type of vision.

The third type of vision is actually the highest type. It is called an open vision. When this happens, one's physical senses are not suspended; his physical eyes are not closed. He possesses all of his physical capabilities, yet he still sees into the realm of the spirit.

This is the kind of vision I had when I saw Jesus walk into my hospital room. In an open vision I heard His

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footsteps. I saw Him enter my room just as plainly as any man I have ever seen in my life. I saw Him sit down beside my bed. I heard His voice as plainly as any man's voice I have ever heard in my life.

When the Lord dealt with me concerning my ministry and showed me about the revelation gifts that operate in my life, He spoke to me concerning prophets in the Old Testament who were called "seers" and knew and saw things supernaturally.

The Lord reminded me of the time when Saul as a young boy was out looking for some donkeys that had strayed (1 Samuel 9). When Saul inquired about them, someone suggested he go to the Prophet Samuel and ask him where to find his father's donkeys, because Samuel would know where they were. Saul did go to the prophet, and Samuel told him the donkeys had been found three days before, and now people were out looking for Saul. Samuel knew this supernaturally.

Samuel also asked Saul to wait, because he had a word of wisdom for him concerning God's plan for his life. Samuel then anointed Saul to be the first king of Israel.

Certainly Samuel didn't know the whereabouts of every stray donkey in Israel — there could have been many stray donkeys at that time — but God had a purpose in revealing this to him at that particular time, because it concerned Israel's future king.

One time I stopped to visit a minister at the site where he was building a new church. After he had shown me around, we said goodbye and got into our cars to leave. As I was getting into my car, the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying that I should tell this minister that he wasn't going to live much longer unless he corrected

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himself in three things: his diet, his finances, and his lack of love for the brethren.

I stepped out of my car to go and tell him this, but someone else walked up to his car just then and began to talk to him. I sat back down and began to reason with myself. I knew he probably wouldn't take this advice from me. He certainly didn't walk in love toward the brethren, and he probably would slap my face.

As I sat there talking myself out of it, this minister left the site without my telling him what the Lord had shown me. That was the last time I saw him. Three years later he died.

I read Scriptures everywhere about the ministry gifts. First Corinthians 12:28 says that God has set these ministries in the Church.

The fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians tells about the prophet speaking and also about tongues and interpretation:

1 CORINTHIANS 14:27-30

27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

W If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

Most Full Gospel or charismatic churches will permit tongues and interpretation in their services, but many shy away from the prophet's ministry. However, we have just seen all of these manifestations of the Spirit listed in the

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same chapter of the Bible. If one were omitted, the other should be, too.

When the Lord dealt with me concerning the prophet's ministry, He said that if a church wouldn't accept my ministry, I should go my way and shake the dust off my feet against them, so to speak. He told me time is short, and His work must be done quickly in these last days.

He said, quoting First Peter 4, ". . . judgment must begin at the house of God... And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (vv. 17,18).

He went on to say that if a church wouldn't accept the ministry of a prophet, they wouldn't accept His Word. He added that if a pastor wouldn't accept this message, judgment would come on him.

The Lord said that if He gave me a message or a revelation for a pastor, I should deliver it; and if He gave me a message for a church or an individual, I should deliver it.

Some do not believe that personal prophecy is scriptural. They do not believe that a prophet may have a message for an individual. This is what Luke has to say, however, in Acts 21:

ACTS 21:8-11

8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.

9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

10 And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus.

11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith

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the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

One phase of the prophet's ministry is that he speaks for God. In the Scripture quoted above, Agabus didn't tell Paul not to go to Jerusalem; he merely told him what would happen there, and it came to pass.

Through the gift of prophecy, we have the ability to help people and to prepare them for things that are ahead. Many times God has shown me things along this line that have blessed and helped individuals. We need this kind of manifestation of the Spirit today.

The Lord said to me, "If I give you a message for an individual, a church, or a pastor, and they don't accept it, you will not be responsible. They will be responsible. There will be ministers who won't accept it and who will fall dead in the pulpit."

I say this with reluctance, but this actually happened in one place where I preached. Two weeks from the day I closed the meeting, the pastor fell dead in the pulpit. When I left that church, I left crying.

I told the pastor in the next church where I went to hold a meeting, "That man will fall dead in the pulpit." And just a short time later he did. Why? Because he didn't accept the message God's Spirit gave me to give him.

Some people think we don't need a prophet's ministry in the New Testament Dispensation because we all have the Holy Spirit (we get a measure of the Spirit when we are born again).

The Lord pointed out to me that in Old Testament days, although the laity did not have the Holy Spirit, the

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Holy Spirit came upon priests, kings, and prophets to anoint them to stand in their respective offices. And even though the Holy Spirit came upon kings and priests, they still went to the prophets for guidance. If one has the Holy Spirit, that doesn't mean he has the revelation gifts in operation, as I pointed out before.

As the Lord continued to speak with me concerning the prophet's ministry, He reminded me that the day before my accident I had received a letter inviting me for a meeting at a large church. Although I had made no demands for salary, they had promised me a generous amount of money if I would come to their church. At that particular time, I needed the money very badly. I had decided to write to this pastor and tell him I would come to his church. (If we are not careful, sometimes we will do things for convenience's sake.) But every time I thought about it, I had a dead feeling in my spirit. Later I realized this was the Holy Spirit cautioning me not to go. It was a "stop sign" He had put there. The Lord didn't want me to go there because the pastor wouldn't have accepted my ministry. I would have been wasting time. As the Lord continued to speak with me, He said, "I am telling you not to go to that church."

The Lord then reminded me of an invitation I had received from a small church whose pastor had asked me to come if the Lord ever led me to. I had almost forgotten about his invitation, but at different times when I was praying, that invitation would come to my mind. When I thought about going to that church, I would have a good feeling, like a green light in my spirit, urging me to go. The Lord told me that was an inward witness. He said we are not led by a prophet's ministry; we are generally led

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by the Holy Spirit through an inward witness. And the inward witness is something every believer can have.

As the Lord sat thereby my bed, He said, "If you will learn to follow this inward witness, I will help you in all the affairs of your life. If my children will listen to me, I will make them wealthy. I am not opposed to their being rich; I am only opposed to their being covetous."

I have learned to follow that inward witness, and it has been a great blessing to me in every area of life.

One time I was praying with a pastor about a certain decision he needed to make. He hadn't told me exactly what he wanted prayer for, but as we were praying together, I began to speak out a psalm that was a message to him. It told him what he had been thinking and what he was waiting for. This message repeated word for word what he had just told his wife. He had a witness in his heart, but didn't know for certain if he should proceed. This message was the confirmation he needed. It lifted a great burden from him.

As Jesus finished His conversation with me that evening in my hospital room, He said, "Be faithful. Fulfill your ministry, for the time is short!"

Then He got up from the chair, walked around the foot of the bed to the door, opened it, and stepped outside. Leaving the door slightly ajar, He walked down the hall.

I heard His footsteps fade away down the corridor just as I had heard Him approaching nearly an hour and a half earlier.