

#11 Wisdom and Balance in Ministering in Impressions

Everything we do as Christians must be in accord with God's Holy Word. The ministry that we carry out in the Name of Jesus must be supportable by Holy Scripture. A prophetic word given must, therefore, be Scripturally grounded. We cannot minister simply from our own feelings. For example, I might have feelings of fondness for a person and want to tell them that God is pleased with them. But if they are walking in rebellion and I encourage them to stay on their current path, I would be ministering from my feelings not from the Lord. It is therefore crucial that when we are ministering prophetically in impressions, we must be securely grounded in Holy Scripture.

Feelings and emotions can be unreliable vehicles for prophetic inspiration. However, God created us as emotive beings, and often times He chooses to speak through people whose primary prophetic inspiration has to do with the discerning of impressions. What God is communicating to them through their feelings can be a channel of His prophetic voice. Occasionally, there are those who try to minister in this manner who are emotionally unstable. It is the duty of the ordained ministers to offer correction for those individuals. Indeed, from time to time there will be incorrect words uttered, even by the emotionally sound members of the congregation. All of this is simply part of the learning curve in prophetic ministry. We are all human. We will all make mistakes.

But, the more secure we are in our identity as believers, as sons and daughters of God, the less likely we are to stray into incorrect emotive words. As we become better versed in the Word, and as we learn to filter what we are sensing and feeling through the Word of God, the more stable, reliable, and trustworthy we become in this area of our personal prophetic gifting. It is a matter of learning "how" God speaks to His people. The more we know about His means of communication with us the better able we are to discern when He is prompting us with feelings and emotions.

Growing in our personal understanding of how God communicates with us helps us begin to see fruit from this type of prophetic insight. And as we grow in this knowledge, we will become more confident ministering prophetically in impressions. It is a process of receiving and growing in the gift of discernment. Psalm 119:130 says, "The unfolding of thy words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple." When we begin to learn how God speaks to us ("the unfolding of thy words"), then He begins to impart understanding to us ("the simple"). The learning is in the doing. It is okay to try and fail. It is in the doing--the trying to hear--that we begin to understand the "how" of prophesying.

There are as many feelings and emotions as there are people on the planet. But there is only One God, and One Word. If we earnestly seek the Lord and spend time daily in His Word, He will unfold His Word to us and we will learn and understand better His ways. The Psalmist prays, "Make me to know thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me." (25:4-5a) This is where we begin, seeking wisdom and discernment of God's voice. We want to be cautious in handling the Word of Truth. St. Paul tells Timothy, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15) This is the heart of wisdom.

When we become confident, through practice of the gift, and are more secure in the knowledge of the Word, then there will be balance in our ministry. Do not be afraid to step out in faith that our loving Father will teach us His paths, that we may know His ways. Then He can lead us in His truth and teach us. Ministering in impressions is an important part of prophetic ministry. And it is an effective means of conveying God's word to His people if done in wisdom and balance.