

Angry, Mean Prophets in the Hands of a Loving God

Not long ago, I was scanning through Facebook and stumbled on a prophetic word from a prophet. He appeared very angry and literally ripped God's people limb from limb, calling them all sorts of horrible names and telling them to repent or else. His other beef was with gentle, encouraging prophets, who in his mind were going to hell, and with the devil for not being tough enough. My heart broke when I read this was a word "from the Lord." I could instantly envision the God he said he quoted—one who was demanding, purposely cruel and relished punishing people with little provocation. I noticed some of this prophet's followers have adopted that same attitude and approach to prophetic ministry, speaking really harsh words of rebuke, leaving no room for grace, mercy or forgiveness and second chances.

Just to clarify, I believe that we should never misrepresent or water down the Full Gospel of God's Word. I believe sin is sin, and that we need to take God at His Word and never replace it with a man-made feel good message or easy street agenda. I will never apologize for my bold stance on marriage between one man and one woman, the right to life for the unborn, and other conservative values. Having said that I also believe that the most effective prophets are those with a gentle father or mother's heart that use loving correction to build up rather than tear down the church. Make no bones about it, I believe in rebuke and correction but only motivated by the Spirit of love not the flesh. There is a difference...

Sons of Thunder

In Luke, Chapter 9 tells us that Jesus was headed toward Jerusalem, where He didn't take the most direct route but instead went through Samaria. He sent several friends ahead to arrange for overnight accommodations, but the people who lived there refused to welcome Jesus. James and John were infuriated when they heard the news and bellowed, **"Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven and destroy them [even as Elijah did]?"** (Luke 9:54) I believe that verbal explosion is what earned James and John the nickname 'Sons of thunder'. These guys essentially asked permission to nuke that little Samaritan village! As we read on, Jesus gently rebukes them, explaining that His mission is to heal and transform rather than to assault or annihilate.

It's intriguing to read this incident as recorded in Luke 9 and then move on to Acts Chapter 8, where it says that after Jesus' ascension Christianity began to multiply like wildfire through the villages of Samaria. When that happened, the church in Jerusalem sent Peter and John to minister to the new believers there. Well, can you envision how John reacted—now that he was far more mature in his walk with Christ? You must wonder

how he responded upon arriving in that village full of new believers, in a place where, years earlier, his anger had made him want to wipe them out!

So How Do We Treat the Bride of Christ?

This brings me to the subject of prophets to the body of Christ. Should we not be careful how we speak to His bride? Prophets who verbally abuse His beloved misrepresent His heart, and end up putting on us a burden we are not able to carry—namely perfection and mere works instead of relationship, which is the point where true life begins. We all need the grace of God. Here is something else to think about. How would we feel if we heard someone clamor at our spouse with no mercy? How does God feel when we berate His Beautiful Bride or lost children?

God's Word has much to say about the way we speak to His precious little lambs, which includes the vulnerable, children and baby Christians. In Luke 15:4 it makes it clear that he left the 99 to go after the one. **"If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it?"** They are that special! He died for all of mankind, even the least of us.

I think we sometimes forget how it feels to be so down and out that we say as Paul did, **"we despair even of life."** (2 Cor. 1:8) This includes those who've made poor choices, faced unspeakable horrors, and endured unbelievable heartache and disappointment. They may curl up in a fetal position on the floor hoping to die, while some will try to take their own lives, just hoping against hope that someone will intervene and give them a reason to live, like the Good Samaritan offering a cup of cold water or a gentle touch to bandage their wounds. Such wounded ones don't care about how much you **know** until they know how much you **care**.

Proverbs 16:24: **Kind words are like honey—sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.** If spoken in the right spirit, even words of rebuke can be sweet like honey to someone who needs to hear truth. I especially love this about the Lord: When He rebukes me, it is covered by His love, and after it's over I feel lifted and encouraged to change rather than broken beyond hope. Aren't you glad that He doesn't condemn and blast you without mercy when He corrects you? He brings a conviction born of the Holy Spirit that lifts us higher, giving us hope to change and a fresh desire to repent. At this point we need to ask ourselves another question: Do the words we use to confront others with truth convict or condemn? We would be wise to pray as King David did: **Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!** Psalm 141:3

Rebuke

Yes, Jesus did rebuke others, but it was only aimed at those with rebellious and haughty spirits who hindered others from hearing and receiving the truth of salvation. He was all about loving the lost and setting them free, letting them feel His great compassion and saving grace. He was and still is a faithful friend. He took stones away from the hands of the angry mob. He touched lepers and healed them. He threw homecoming parties for prodigals. He promised thieves they would be with Him in paradise. His motives are revealed in the following four words: RESCUE, RESTORE, REVIVE, and RECOVERY.

As prophets, why would we want to mimic only His angry moments rather than living out His life-changing legacy of love, forgiveness and restoration?

Christian Maturity

Think back to a time when you faced a dark night, when you were lost and broken, and someone offered you a hug and a word of encouragement that kept you going until the sun came out. It might also help to remember that we're all at different levels of maturity, some with greater capacity to understand the Word than others. In the end, the goal is to live our lives to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, following His lead and obeying His commands, because we passionately love Him and can't imagine living any other way. If we lack wisdom or love, we have only to ask Him to fill us with those qualities so we can be His hands extended to those who need a hand up rather than a slap in the face.

If we could only remember that we are all still growing and learning, we would be far more patient with those who struggle. Remember too that Scripture says they will know us by our love. That, my dear friends, should be our motto—our bottom line.

Final Thoughts

True prophets don't give words to entertain itching ears, nor do they blast people because they can. I am so thankful that the Lord does not verbally abuse us without mercy. Some prophets go into ministry like a bull in china shop but a true prophet is not rude, but gentle and kind. They show wisdom and discernment, and we will know them by their love. It should be our goal to emulate the following verses:

Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. Philippians 4:5 (NLT)

Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Philippians 4:5 (NASB)

A genuine prophet is bold but not rude. They don't pollute the genuine Word of the Lord with a wrong spirit. They have a humble servant's attitude, modeling the heart of Jesus while always preferring others above themselves.

Proverbs 13:3 (NIV) tells us: **Those who guard their lips preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin.**

Isaiah 50:4 goes on to say: **The Lord God has given me the *tongue of the learned*, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.**

The **Revised Version** puts it this way: **The Lord God has given me the tongue of them that are taught, that I should know *how to sustain with a word* him that is weary.**

The secret of the ministry of Jesus was that the Father awakened Him every morning to give Him a download of supernatural truth and direction for that day. He told Him what to say, how to say it, as well as when and whom to speak to.

I write about these things at length in my new book *Tongue of the Learned—How to Flow in the Prophetic Anointing* coming spring of 2017.

The word **sustain** means: to support, hold, or bear up from below; bear the weight of, as a structure, to bear (a burden, charge, etc.).
to undergo, experience, or suffer (injury, loss, etc.); endure
without giving way or yielding, to keep (a person, the mind, the spirits, etc.) from giving way, as under trial or affliction.

Oh, what a ministry... We can be used in the ministry of sustaining! We can support and bear up a burdened soul. As they are nearing the end of their rope, we can come along and hold them up with a timely word directly from God. In the spirit, I see many that suffer loss, but God is raising up a remnant of believers who have the heart of The Father and who will use it to bring sustaining comfort to the downtrodden.

I pray regularly for the **“tongue of the learned”**, that my tongue would be taught what to say to the people that need to hear from Him. What a responsibility as we must communicate the heart of God in correction, rebuke, and edification. We should steward this responsibility in the fear of the Lord and not take it lightly.

The God of both mercy and judgment awaits each of us at the end of our journey. He always extends His hand in restoration to those who will repent and humble their hearts. Scripture tells us that there is a remnant of believers on Earth who possess the same tender mercy toward others, who are quick to love and forgive, ready to believe God's best and to mourn when judgment falls on the wicked. And lest we forget, if it weren't for His

unmerited grace and forgiveness, we too would be condemned. Because we will all stand before God and give an account of how we behaved in the flesh, we must bask in the manifest love of Christ, letting Him transform us so that we are full and running over with the fruit of the spirit, quick to sow mercy so that we may also reap mercy on judgment day.

I end this article with a question. How do we want to be remembered? I hope the Lord would say we tried to love His bride as much as He did, that we were true to the message He gave us and that others will say of us that we spoke the truth but we did so with a father's or mother's heart in a spirit of love. That we were not as a "clanging cymbal." (1 Cor. 13) That they knew us by our love.

The powerful words of Psalm 19:14 should be our goal: **Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock, and my redeemer.**

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