

Gifts  
OF THE  
Spirit

**SMALL GROUP  
STUDY**

# GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

## INTRODUCTION



We are currently in a year of encounter as we, as a church and as individuals, are making a renewed effort to draw near to the heart of God, going deeper in relationship with Jesus and each other and seeking to respond faithfully to what He says so we can fulfil our vision of **'Reaching Ryedale for Jesus'**.

As part of this year-long journey, at the beginning of October we started our second major teaching series of the year, for our Sunday morning gatherings entitled **'The Gifts of the Spirit'** based around the Scripture found in 1 Corinthians 12 .

The truth is, in order to have any chance of fulfilling the vision of 'Reaching Ryedale for Jesus', in order to see people come to faith, it will require from us much more than the skills and capabilities that we naturally have, it will need something more substantial - supernatural even.

The good news is that God has a variety of special gifts, that He wants to bestow on us from prophecy, to wisdom, to speaking in tongues, discernment, words of knowledge, faith, apostleship, administration, acts of service and teaching; to name a few!

The gifts aren't given to be used for our own agendas, but rather in order that we might build up the church, bring glory to God and to effectively reach out to our communities and point them to Jesus. 1 Corinthians 12 verse 7 says: ***"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good."***

No follower of Jesus is excluded from receiving these gifts from the Holy Spirit, however what gifts we receive will depend on how the Holy Spirit wants to apportion them. 1 Corinthians 12 verse 11 says it like this: ***"All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He distributes them to each one, just as He determines"***.

I look forward to you joining me on this journey.

Best Wishes

Pastor Steve

# GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

## SESSION 1 - PROPHECY



As a follower of Jesus you are firstly called to relationship with Him, to fresh encounters, to hear His voice and to be shaped to be more like Him. Secondly your mandate as a believer is to encourage and build up the church, to be a witness to our world, to share the good news of the gospel and to make God's name known to the people of Ryedale.

The good news is, we don't have to do this on our own. In fact, the Holy Spirit gives us everything we need in order to be successful by giving us heavenly resources known as the '**Gifts of the Spirit**'. These gifts are given to every believer as the Holy Spirit chooses and it is our responsibility to make sure we cultivate, use and grow these areas of gifting.

Tonight, in the first of our four sessions on the Gifts of the Spirit, we are going to be looking at one of the more well known gifts - PROPHECY.

### OPENING QUESTIONS

- How would you define prophecy?
- Do you believe that the gift of prophecy is still valid today? Why do you feel this way?
- What would you say are the main purposes of prophecy?

### **READ: 1 CORINTHIANS 14 v 1 - 3 & 24 - 25**

Over the years there have been many debates amongst theologians as to whether the Gifts of the Spirit is for today's church or whether it stopped with the early church. As an Elim church we still, very much believe in the Gifts of the Spirit and the importance they should play in the life of every believer and in the life of the church in order for it to function properly.

Prayer and reading the Bible, along with the **gift of prophecy**, are some of the main ways that God uses to direct His church (the body of Christ) and individuals through this adventure called faith.

In simple terms, I believe the best way to define prophesy is this ... bringing God's insight into a person's circumstance or corporate gathering that brings clarity and direction about a current situation, perhaps a deeper understanding about a decision that needs to be made, an insight into a person's character. Or, at times, sharing a message of events that will happen in the future.

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## SESSION 1 - PROPHECY



Encounter  
2025

The true purpose of prophecy is found in our reading from 1 Corinthians 14 v 3 & 23: ***“But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort ... But if any unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all.”***

- 1) To Strengthen - There are times when we all need an arm around the shoulder and a word from God that strengthens and builds us up or to keep us going in tough times or at times when we need to step out of our comfort zones and take a leap of faith.
- 2) To Encourage - The second purpose of a prophetic word is to encourage, to inspire and move us forward in our walk with God, understanding that there are even greater things to come than we have currently experienced.
- 3) To Bring Comfort - God understands more than most that life is not always easy, in fact Jesus says: ‘in this life we will have trouble’. A prophetic word should bring comfort and hope, to help a person to understand they are not on their own.
- 4) To Bring Conviction - The final purpose of prophecy is related more to those who are unbelievers. A prophetic word can bring conviction to the way a person is living their lives and can bring them to a place of genuine repentance before God.

### **READ: 2 PETER 1 v 21**

Since the beginning, God’s heart has always been for humanity. God created us so that we could share in the world He created and to have relationship with Him - and that in itself would be enough! Yet, He loves us so much that that He wants to use us as His vessels to play a pivotal role in His story. God doesn't need to use us, He has never needed us (after all, He is the all powerful, all knowing God of the universe), but the key is He wants to.

The gift of prophecy shows us that God wants to let us in on His plans. He doesn’t keep us in suspense, He doesn’t let us walk through life aimlessly, but He has a plan that at strategic moments, He reveals messages to different people which in turn He may ask us to share with the church or individuals in order to encourage, to strengthen and to bring comfort.

We should never underestimate the power that a prophetic word can have in the life of a believer - depending on what you say, it can either bring life or cause hurt. Therefore, we should always think twice before sharing!

As our reading says from 2 Peter 1 v 21 - ***“No prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”***

# GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

## SESSION 1 - PROPHECY



Prophecy should never be about the person who gives the message but it should always be about what God is trying to convey. There is no room for personal pride, opinions, agendas, getting your own back or passing off your own words as God's. We should never lie or embellish or abuse our power or position - prophecy should **ONLY** be about sharing God's words.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- In what ways will God share a prophetic message that He wants you to convey?
- What would you say are the most important things you need to consider when you share a prophetic word with someone?
- How should we go about testing whether a prophecy is from God or man? Whether it is right or wrong?

### ***READ: 1 THESSALONIANS 5 v 20 - 22***

Receiving a prophetic word and then being in a place to share it can only come out of our times of encounter with Jesus. How can we expect to hear God's voice if we don't spend time with Him? The simple truth is, we can't. Putting time aside and saying something along the lines of 'God, here I am - please speak to me' is a great place to start.

God can speak a prophetic message to us in many different ways; from a picture with a meaning, to a verse of scripture, to a word or phrase that pops into our head. But how do we know that it's from God and not just us eating too much cheese?!!

Often we will sense a quickening in our spirit or the thought just won't go away and keeps nagging at you until you speak. Other useful indicators are: does it fall in line with scripture and is it positive and uplifting? Also, doing a final double check with God before you speak is really useful.

If you are still concerned about whether it's a message from God, it would be wise practise to speak to Pastor Steve or one of the Leadership Team. This happens anyway in a public church meet setting, but if it's a message for an individual, it may be an added support to share with a mature Christian to hear what they think before sharing your message.

# GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Encounter  
2025

## SESSION 1 - PROPHECY

When you are ready to speak the prophetic message that God has given, we must remember it's not just about what we say but also about how we say it. We should always show respect, love and care in our speech and even in our body language. For many, receiving a prophetic word is a nervous moment - especially if they don't regularly receive them or give a word of prophecy themselves. Ephesians 4 v 2 says: **"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."** Finally ask them if it makes sense and offer to pray.

When it comes to receiving prophetic words, it's important that we understand that just because someone has shared it, it doesn't mean 'it's from God'. The Bible is very clear about what we should do with prophetic words; firstly and most importantly, it needs to be weighed up in the light of scripture - if a word is not biblically sound it should be dismissed. Our reading from 1 Thessalonians 5 v 20 - 22 says: **"Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast to what is good. Abstain from every form of evil."**

If it is biblically sound, the second thing we need to ask is - does it resonate with me, do I feel at peace, challenged or inspired? Have I received anything else along similar lines. Thirdly, you may find it useful to seek wise counsel from a mature Christian to get their perspective.

Finally, once we sense the message is from God for us, write the prophecy down so you can keep referring back to it. Ask God if there are any steps you need to take; be prepared to wait patiently (most prophesies are not instantaneous) and lastly - look out for it coming to pass (it may be different from what you expect!)

***Prophecy is not a gift just for the early believers, but for us as followers of Jesus in 2025. Prophecy is not something we should be scared of but something we should embrace. When treated with the proper care and respect, it plays a crucial role in the life of a healthy church and will prove invaluable to a believer in fulfilling God's plan for their lives.***

\*\* FINISH YOUR EVENING BY PRAYING TOGETHER \*\*

### **Additional Reading**

**Joel 2 verses 28 - 29**

**1 John 4 verses 1 - 3**

**Acts 21 verses 10 - 11**

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## NOTES



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