

WORKBOOK

School

OF THE

PROPHETS

Advanced Training for Prophetic Ministry

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A NEW WORLD

I wrote the book *School of the Prophets: Advanced Training for Prophetic Ministry* as a way of sharing what I have learned in 25 years of pastoring prophetic people. I will cover a lot of ground with you in the pages ahead, and we will also navigate what I refer to as some prophetic white water. If there is anything I have learned about the area of prophecy, it is that the adventure never ends. There is always more to learn. Mine is just one perspective, but I trust that you will find my insights and stories in this study helpful.

We will also talk about developing healthy prophetic communities, which is a vital necessity that is sometimes overlooked because of misunderstanding or misinformation. Prophets, prophetesses and especially those in leadership in this area must develop wholesome prophetic cultures that inspire prophetic people to be developed and deployed for the Kingdom. In fact, a solid, thriving prophetic community will help equip saints of every calling to carry the light of the Kingdom over all the earth. That is one of our major roles as prophets and prophetesses. Another major role is to bring the ministry of reconciliation to those in need as we dig for buried treasures in the dirt of broken people's lives. The lost and hurting need to see the love of the Father revealed to them through the powerful ministry of the prophetic.

Whether you hold the office of a prophet or prophetess or operate in a prophetic gift from time to time, I hope my voice of experience will encourage and exhort you in your life and ministry. I think this study will also be of value to you if the prophetic ministry is new or unfamiliar to you because you have not yet learned much about it or have not been involved with it before now. And although I focus on how the principles I present directly relate to the prophetic, many of my topics apply to other areas of ministry as well. For example, developing healthy Kingdom core values from which we live and minister is important for all of us as believers. Whatever your divine call, I pray that this study will help you play your part well in ushering in the Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

I will be the first to say that pastoring prophetic people can be a challenge at times; in the book I compare it to herding cats. But it is a job worth doing well. Prophets and prophetesses come with different personality profiles and come out of different prophetic streams, and they are often extraordinarily sensitive and are unaccustomed to having others speak into their lives. Many pastors are even hesitant about providing leadership to the prophetic contingent in their churches. Yet the prophetic people among us desperately need qualified leaders. Those in the office of a prophet or prophetess—which differs from operating in the gift—need input from the other fivefold ministers (apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers) to sharpen and nourish them.

May God give each of us wisdom as we move through this study into a new world of prophetic realities. May He grant us a new understanding of both the office and the gift, and may He help us understand our times and how we should act in them so that we have the most effect for His Kingdom. May we go forth in the power of His Spirit as He strategically places us all over the earth to dispel the darkness and bring hope to the hurting and healing to the nations.

TRAINING FOR THE PROPHETIC

How to Use This Curriculum

This workbook is divided into eight sessions that will take you deeper into the topics I explore in my book *School of the Prophets: Advanced Training for Prophetic Ministry*. Each session will take five days to go through, and each day lists different readings for you from Scripture and from the book. Each day also provides questions for you to answer that will help you think through what you are learning as you discover more about the role of prophets and prophetesses in our day and the ways in which we can develop healthy prophetic communities within our churches.

Move through the daily readings at a thoughtful pace, praying that the Holy Spirit will become your teacher and “guide you into all truth” (John 16:13). Approach the questions with an open heart and an open ear, listening for the Holy Spirit’s input and direction as you process the information and insights I provide about the prophetic ministry and its place in both the past and in the present day.

At the end of each session, there is also a life application that helps you take what you learned in that session and apply it to your life in a specific, concrete way. I believe that knowledge is valuable and that increasing our knowledge about spiritual things is important. I am a strong supporter of serious scholarship, and I helped found and currently oversee the Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry. But while educating ourselves about spiritual things is crucial, it can only take us so far, unless we take what we know and make application with it. To *know* something and to *do* something about it are two entirely different things. Application is an important part of any study—probably the most important part. I urge you to take concrete steps to apply what you are learning in this study by following through with each session’s life application. (If you are part of a *School of the Prophets* study group, make sure to implement the life applications before your group meetings so that you can discuss the results.)

Note that I did not put together the readings, questions and life applications in this workbook as a means of adding to your daily busywork. We all have enough busywork! I designed this workbook so that you can skip one day and come back the next if needed, or do two days at a time and still get through each session in about a week. Each day's readings and questions should take only twenty or thirty minutes of your time, and I think you will find that the results will be well worth it.

Keep in mind that as with any curriculum, you will get out of this study what you put into it. Stay faithful in doing the daily lessons, and stick with me from beginning to end. If you will do that, I believe the results will encourage and empower you, whether you hold the office of a prophet or prophetess, whether you move in a prophetic gift or whether you just want to learn more about this exciting area of ministry in the Church and in the world today. This study will give you a good understanding of the prophetic ministry and provide you with some advanced training in this area.

While you can use the *School of the Prophets* book and workbook at home to study these things on your own, you will also see that there is a video guide at the end of each workbook section. Those fill-in-the-blank guides are included because I have recorded a series of eight video segments that go along with these materials. In the video segments, which are geared for use in a small group setting, I have added a lot more depth and clarification to each section. You can purchase and view the videos yourself, which will greatly enhance what you gain from this study. They were designed, however, to promote fellowship with other believers as you walk through this study together and pray for and encourage each other. It is ideal to become part of a group that will use the *School of the Prophets* book, workbook and video segments as tools to inform and educate everyone in the group and to foster discussion about how each of you can apply what you are learning most effectively. I urge you to join a *School of the Prophets* study group if one is available at your church or somewhere nearby. If you cannot find such a group, you can host one. A *School of the Prophets Curriculum Kit* for group leaders is also available to help you do just that.



SESSION 1

DISCOVERING YOUR DIVINE CALL

I started proactively pastoring our prophetic people about 25 years ago . . . through the years I have learned to enjoy every prophetic stream and the variety of ways that God speaks to people in various epoch seasons, and through diverse cultural experiences and core values. I have come to understand that each of us views the Kingdom through a glass dimly, yet our collective perspectives are much more accurate because revelation is actually a community garden. It is cultivated, seeded, weeded and harvested by a prophetic community and not by an isolated island dweller. It is therefore imperative that prophets and prophetesses develop wholesome prophetic communities that inspire healthy young prophets and prophetic people to be discovered, developed and ultimately deployed into their divine destinies.

The challenge with leading a diverse group of prophetic people is that it is often like herding cats!

School of the Prophets, page 19

DAY 1

COLLECTIVE PERSPECTIVES

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully.

1 Corinthians 13:12

The river of revelation that flows from heaven to earth is mighty, and navigating its surging white waters is both adventurous and challenging. More than one prophetic stream feeds into this mighty river, each with a strong current of its own. The power of these streams increases exponentially when they join together, and the result is sometimes a wild ride.

Of course, my experience with God was a wild ride right from the start. Hearing His audible voice in response to my desperate prayer as a teen, seeing my mother instantly healed and finding myself in the Jesus People movement early on was all more than I bargained for, but He always gives us more than we can ask or imagine (see Ephesians 3:20). I tell you more about my salvation story in today's reading from *School of the Prophets*.

I also tell you more about the different streams of the prophetic that I have experienced since then, and I talk about the value and diversity of each. Bill Johnson, senior leader of my church, Bethel Church in Redding, California, has helped me with his balanced perspective on the prophetic ministry and his understanding of its various streams. "Eat the meat and spit out the bones" was his constant refrain to me as I began to work more and more in the area of pastoring our prophetic people.

When you work to develop a healthy prophetic community, as I am doing at Bethel, it really can feel as if you are herding cats—but it is a job worth doing. Whatever our prophetic background, each of us sees in a mirror

dimly. Joined together in community, however, our collective perspectives bring God's revelation into sharper focus for all of us.

As you read *School of the Prophets* and work through this curriculum, my hope is that it will sharpen your focus on the prophetic and give you new tools and insights to use as you take your own ride down the white waters of God's river of revelation.

- Today's Scripture reading: Ephesians 4:11–16
- Today's reading from *School of the Prophets*: pages 15–20

Questions to Consider _____

1. Which three of the prophetic streams—the Jesus People movement, the charismatic Catholics or the Pentecostals—have you had the most experience with? What strengths do you think that one lends to our overall prophetic culture?

2. What do you think Bill Johnson’s advice to “eat the meat and spit out the bones” means in relation to prophetic diversity? In what ways might it also relate to other areas of the Church?

3. How does having a collective perspective within a prophetic community strengthen it?

4. I mention in today’s book reading that pastors tend to be afraid of prophetically gifted people. Nonetheless, why do prophets and prophetesses need pastoral leadership and input from the other fivefold ministers? (See *School of the Prophets* page 20.)

DAY 2

TIME WILL TELL. . . .

Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.

1 Corinthians 2:9 NKJV

I thought hearing God speak audibly to me when I was a teenager was a shock—until the day in 1985 when Jesus walked into my bathroom while I was reading the Bible in the bathtub. And the things He told me on that visit were inconceivable—until the day when I started to see them come to pass in my life.

For a long time I kept quiet about the things the Lord told me, concerned on the one hand that some people would think I was crazy, and on the other hand that my practical wife would start looking for ways to get on with them. (Kathy is not one to sit around when there is something to be done.) After a while, I figured time would tell if the visitation was real or if I had imagined it. But I could not get away from what the Lord had said about that very thing before He walked out of the bathroom: *History will tell us if you believe Me!*

I had to start somewhere, even though I had no idea how to become what the Lord had told me I would be. How does a simple auto mechanic become a prophet to the nations and go before kings and queens? I decided the best thing I could do was study Scripture and everything else I could get my hands on about prophets and prophecy. (Maybe that same kind of decision

on your part is why you are reading these pages right now.) I soaked up the information like a sponge, and it lit in me a passion for the prophetic. The rest, as they say, is history.

- Today's Scripture reading: 1 Corinthians 2:6–16
- Today's reading from *School of the Prophets*: pages 21–26

Questions to Consider _____

1. Has the Lord ever told you something (not necessarily audibly or in a visitation) that seemed inconceivable to you? Was your reaction anything like mine? In what ways have you begun to see that word come to pass? If you are still waiting to see its fulfillment, what are you doing in the meantime to prepare for it?

2. Sometimes practical people like Kathy spend less time questioning words from the Lord and more time getting them done. Do you lean toward the practical or the analytical personality? How does this affect your response to the prophetic?

3. What do you do when your emotions are all over the map about something God has shown you, as mine were after God called me as a prophet to the nations? Where do you find stability in the middle of excitement and terror and concern and questioning?

4. Days turned into months and years as the vision I had seen grew in my heart and began to produce fruit. It was a process. We will spend more than one lesson in the days ahead talking about how it is a process to the palace, so to speak. Briefly describe a time when you had to have some patience as you walked through a spiritual process.
