

DIVINE ORDER TEACHINGS
#24

THE PROPHET MINISTRY
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A Faithful Apostolic Teacher of the Word

THE PROPHET MINISTRY

I would like to share with You what the Lord has made real to me concerning the Prophet's Ministry, and its function in the Body of Christ in this hour. Of all the ministries, the Prophet Ministry seems to be the most controversial and least understood, and seems to leave the greatest question in people's minds as to just what we can look for as this ministry comes to its full function in the Body of Christ and fulfills its purpose in this hour.

We know there is some stir and controversy already in our midst concerning this, and we do not want you to misconstrue what we are ministering as being designed to come against any particular segment of the move of God, or any person specifically, but this is just a sharing with you what the Lord has made real to me. You have the witness of the Holy Ghost in yourself, you need that no man teach you, but there is the confirmation ministry that does come forth from the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. I tell you that even when an evangelist goes forth to minister to those who have not heard the gospel, they cannot be an effectual ministry unto any people that are not at that moment being dealt with by the Holy Ghost.

It's the Holy Spirit who is going to cause anyone to respond to the Word of God, be it an evangelistic word or a teaching word. It's still the work of the Holy Spirit in the individual that will cause them to hear and hearken to that word. If there is no work of the Holy Spirit, then the word will fall on unfruitful ground-the devil will be right there to snatch it up before it ever has a chance to register in the minds of the hearers.

We know that God has prepared a people in this hour that are going to manifest as His people and He is going to manifest over them as their God. He is calling them out for this very purpose.

There is one way that it is known that you belong to God, and that is when God speaks, you hear. It's a characteristic

of any body that it responds to its head, and we know that this is the characteristic of the Body of Christ if indeed we are members in particular, then we will be responding to the head.

When I first began this inquiry into the Prophet Ministry to understand more clearly myself what I really felt was truth concerning it, I went back and looked up the definition of prophet. I found out that it simply means, "One who speaks by the Spirit of God," one who is the mouthpiece of God. Anyone speaking under the anointing is - classified as a prophet. Therefore, we find that all of God's anointed people down through the Biblical history of the Old Testament are recorded as prophets. For instance, I was surprised to find that God Himself called Abraham His prophet. Abraham is not one that we consider to be among the prophets. Other men like David, who was the king of Israel, were also referred to as prophets.

I believe this is one of the things that has served to confuse us somewhat about the Prophet Ministry. We have seen many people referred to as prophets that we don't generally think of as functioning like Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or some of the other prophets, Even when we go back in the Old Testament, we find that God Himself makes a distinction between prophets and prophets,

In Numbers 12:1-6: "And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it. (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam. Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And he said, "Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you. I the Lord will

make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.” Miriam and Aaron had spoken against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman he had married.

This is the case even in this hour. God has brought forth a Prophet Ministry in our midst, and is certainly not something which we have done. We find that everywhere we go and the Lord has used us to help establish a body, it seems to be the natural thing that people begin to have visions and dream dreams. It isn't a result of teaching people how to do this, or that they ought to do this, but it just spontaneously starts happening – the people have visions and they begin to dream dreams. The Lord said that if there be a prophet in your midst, this is the way He will speak to that prophet. I believe this is the function of the prophet in the Body today, the same as it was then. You can discern if God is using you in a Prophet Ministry by whether or not He is speaking to you by vision and by dream.

In Numbers 12: 7-8 “My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold, wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?”

I see the Lord saying that when He chooses a man to be a leader of the people, functioning let's say in the Apostolic Ministry, that He is not going to be speaking to that ministry by vision and by dreams, but He is going to speak to him apparently. That is, a vision or a dream needs to be interpreted. It is always apparent what God is saying by a vision and a dream. You need one who is just as anointed to interpret it as you were to receive it. A prophet, generally speaking, is going to receive a word from God that needs to be interpreted.

But we find that with God's leadership, when He singles out individuals to be the Apostolic Ministry, the one who is going to lead His people out. He's going to be speaking to that ministry face to face, and He's going to speak to him

mouth to mouth, that is apparently not in dark speeches, in dreams and in visions.

In Numbers 12:9, "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed."

It seems that way back here, there is a rift between the Apostle Ministry, and the Prophet Ministry. These two seem to be in contention a little bit, and we find jealousy apparently working, because the prophet feels that he is just as anointed as the one that God has anointed to have the oversight and leadership over God's people.

I know there are many people today who are concerned about following a man, but I find that God has always used a man . It's wrong to follow a man, that's true; but it's just as wrong not to follow the man that God has anointed to be the leader. It behooves all of us to recognize where the anointing of God is. We are not surely following a man, but we are following the man that God has anointed to be the leader of His people. We know that as soon as that anointing lifts from one, it falls on another. God does not leave His people without leadership. Until God Himself lifts the anointing off of one and puts it on another, best we keep our hands off, because God is going to defend His own men, and we see Him doing that right here in Numbers.

The foundation God is building on is the apostles and the prophets, with Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. Now we see the difference between the two ways that God is going to speak to the foundation ministries.

We notice that Aaron and Miriam were referred to as prophets and we find that Moses, however, was distinguished differently from them in the way that God would speak to him because of his position.

Deut. 18:1 3,14 reads: "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do."

Now this was of course a prophecy coming forth out of Moses as he was standing before the people. He was saying

that the people who occupied the lands which they were going to inherit and possess, differed from them in that they hearkened unto those who were observers of times. We are not to be observers of times or of seasons, because we are not being regulated by times and seasons. In this particular move of God, we are not to be affected by times and seasons, but we are to be instant in season or out of season. In other words we are like an evergreen tree-there's not a time when we are supposed to shed our leaves and not bear fruit, but we are supposed to be ever living before God. There is no need for us to be hot today, and cold tomorrow, but praise God, He is moving in us in a mighty way and we are now to be instant in season and out of season.

Deut. 18:15 reads: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."

When I read that in the Old Testament just recently as I was searching this out, it suddenly just leaped off the page to me the difference between the Old Testament prophet and the New Testament prophet. God was laying it out right here. The basic difference is, in the Old Testament period of time, the people were to hearken to the prophet, but did not! That is a vast difference from how it was to be in the New Testament time. In the New Testament time it was prophesied that a people would hearken to the prophet that God would raise up.

Turn to Acts 13 and we will find what the reactions of the people were to the Old Testament prophet. Also notice the reference to rulers vs. servants-In Old Testament time the leadership is referred to as rulers, but in the New Testament all the leadership of God is referred to as servants. There is a vast difference. Contrast Rom. 1 :1 where Paul refers to himself as a servant with Acts 13:27: "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him."

The response that was kindled when a prophet spoke in the Old Testament church was wrath and indignation. Their response was to stone the prophets and to kill the Son. As I recognized what took place there, it helped me to understand something which the Lord has been dealing with us on-line upon line and precept upon precept-we are slow sometimes to see the truth, and that is that the Old Testament people, Old Testament Israel, the Jews, whom we have heard all our Christian lifetime were the chosen people of God, and which has been ministered to us that these are the people of God, we find out are not the chosen people, they are the rejected people.

They were the ones that were broken off, that the chosen might be grafted in, and they, were broken off because of unbelief. They, not being the chosen people, of course could not hear His voice. The characteristic of the chosen people is that they hear His voice. That's why Moses would prophesy and say that God is going to raise up out of the midst of the brethren one like unto me, and unto him ye shall hearken, because there was coming that change in the response in the people of God where they would be able to know His voice and respond. This is a very important difference because it's the key to the difference in function between the Old Testament prophet and the New Testament prophet. Since the people of the Old Testament were those that were sitting in darkness waiting for the light to come, when Christ spoke through the prophets (for it says it was the Spirit of Christ that was upon them by which they spoke) they could not comprehend or understand the things being spoken for it did not pertain unto them, - it tells us in 1 Peter 1 : 1 2. And so, not being able to recognize it as the voice of God, they stoned the prophets.

Yet the prophets being the voice of God unto them, were a judgment upon them, for we are judged by every word that God speaks, and as to how we receive it. We know that wisdom is justified of all of her children, and they did not respond to the prophets and justify God, but instead

justified themselves and killed the prophets. These are the basic differences between the Old testament period of time and this New Testament period of time, where God has poured out His Spirit upon us and we now have the Holy Spirit in us and therefore are able to hear what the prophets speak. We find that the New Testament order is let the prophet speak, two or three, and let the others judge (I Cor. 14:29) Why? Because they are able to judge. When one stands up to minister now, you are the judge. In the Old Testament period of time when one stood up to speak the word of God, they (those who spoke) were the judge, for they were speaking the word which judged the people. But now when one speaks, since the people have the Holy Spirit residing in them (I Cor. 2:1 5), it is the people (those who are spiritual), who are now the judge. We find that the people are able to judge the ministry as to whether it is God or not--if you are His sheep! If you are not a sheep you still can't hear His voice and you'll misjudge it every time. But His sheep-Jesus said "my sheep hear my voice" (John 10: 3), and we Find today that when there is a ministry that is under the anointing of God, speaking by the Spirit of God to a people who are also anointed of God, there is no problem. The prophet speaks, and the people say "Amen." That is the way it's to function now.

Deut 18:16 reads: "According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not."

You will hear His voice, see the fire, and die in obedience or you will not hear His voice. This is the cost, of course, of hearkening to God's voice. Even back there they recognized that if they heard His voice it was going to cost them it would be their death. It's a matter of which kind of death you will die. You will die as a result of not hearing His voice, unbelief and disobedience, or you will go on and die as a result of belief and obedience, because as you walk in obedience to God, where is it going to lead you but to the

cross? We find that when Jesus came forth to do the will of God, He had a divine appointment, and I don't know if you've ever considered what God had to maneuver to get Jesus to the cross on time. This was something that was appointed unto Him before the foundation of the world, and all the right people had to be born in the right sequence in order for the genealogy to stack up, because He had to end up being born of a virgin made under the law and at the right season, and get there at Passover. He had to be old enough to fulfill His ministry, and have all those people born in perfect sequence from Adam right on down the line so that He ended up being the son of Mary by birth and Joseph by marriage, so that he would be both the royal heir, and the legal heir to the throne of David, and still make it to the cross on time. Have you ever considered that? I can see how God, looking through the corridors of time had everything figured out right to the last second, and that is how much our destiny is in the hands of God. He says the very hairs of your head are numbered, a sparrow cannot fall to the ground but that He's aware of it altogether. We see the predestination of God by His foreknowledge, arranging things to work out according to His word, and we find Him fulfilling His word.

Reading again Duet 18:16, it says "according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God"-He says 'don't worry, I won't let you hear it any more'—"neither let me see this great fire anymore." You know, there is a different people around now. That's not the message today. The message coming from the pulpit today is not "Don't let us hear the word of God anymore and we don't want to see anymore of this fire." But the message today is "God speak, your servant listeneth. God don't spare the fire we need to be purified." They were afraid of dying, but God, by putting His perfect love in us, has cast out all fear.

It's thrilling to realize that we're serving Him now because we love Him. I know that when we first came to

Him that was not true. We came to get something for self, but now we're ready to give ourselves, and that takes a work of love in the heart. He is doing the same thing in all of us. We all came because we were out to get something for self, but now that is no longer what we are after—now we are ready to deliver ourselves into his hands. We have become convinced that the sufferings of Christ are greater riches than the pleasures of Egypt, and now we have our eye toward the inheritance.

We see God telling His people back there in the desert under the leadership of Moses, “Don’t worry, you won’t hear my voice anymore, and neither will you see my fire anymore.”

Duet 18: 17-18 reads, “And the Lord said unto me, they have well spoken that which they spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.”

We know that this prophet that Moses is speaking of was certainly pointing to the Lord Jesus.

Deu 18:19 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him. 20 But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. 21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? 22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

We see that God lays down a test by which we can test a prophet and determine whether or not that’s really a prophet of the Lord, because God has warned us that there be many false prophets that are gone out into the world and we know that there are many false people that can stand up under an

anointing and prophesy. But is it the word of the Lord? How can we tell? He says, "You can tell by whether or not it comes to pass. If it doesn't come to pass, you can know that it is not the Lord speaking and you need not be afraid of that prophet."

Yet He has something more to say about this in Deut. 13:1-5: "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saving, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let Us serve them;" (When a false prophet comes forth, he won't say it quite like that, but in effect that's what he'll be doing.) "Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.

We see that God says on one hand you can identify a true prophet by whether or not what he speaks comes to pass. On the other hand, He says that is not the only test, for there will come a prophet in your midst that will speak a thing, and it will come to pass even as they have spoken it, but that's just to try and test you. The prophet moving that way will use that demonstration of power to convince you he is genuine, "follow me." But God says "you shall not hearken unto that prophet, you shall hearken unto my voice," for there will come prophets that will be able to work miracles so great, that if possible they would be able to deceive the elect. But there is one thing that keeps it from being

possible, if you realize what the truth is, that is, that you have the witness in yourself as to whether it is the voice of God or not. If you disregard the witness in yourself and are taken by the miracle, by the fact that a prophet speaks and something happens according to what he says, there will be the check of the Holy Ghost in you, but you'll disregard it and say: "well, I've got to admit it happened just as they say, I guess what I'm feeling must be wrong" - what you're feeling is right. You'd better not go against the witness that is in yourself, for that is the voice of God unto you, and the Lord your God is proving you.

This is what I also appreciate about this ministry. This is why I could give myself to this move of God, for I have repeatedly heard from this pulpit, from this ministry "don't you do a thing just because I preach it, you wait for the witness of God in you. Don't try to walk in my revelation, you wait till you have your own revelation." This is what God is saying to us. He says that everything must be established by two or three witnesses before it's reality and before it's truth, and one of those witnesses must be in you!

I have run into many cases, in the body of people who tell me "I've done it because I respected the ministry but there was no witness in me." I have answered them: "Even if it was the right thing, it's wrong now, because you didn't wait on the witness of God in yourself. It's a mistake for us to move in obedience to any word that's given. It's not that we should be rebellious, but we are just not able to move in faith until we've heard, for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Not the word of God in somebody else, but the word of God in you.

I have heard brother Sam say on many occasions, "I don't hold it against you if you don't say amen to the message. I can understand if you don't follow on when you cannot say amen to the message, but I cannot understand it if you say amen to the message, and you don't follow on." That is my conviction. If it witnesses, so that we can say amen, then that's the word of God to us, and we need to obey it. If we

don't have a witness, you are under no obligation to obey it. God is not requiring the same thing of all people, but when He has spoken, and it has borne witness in us, He is requiring that of us.

We find that we can't say because a prophet prophesied something and it came to pass, that's a true prophet. It's true when a prophet prophesies, if he's the prophet of God it will come to pass, but that is not the acid test for me and you. The acid test for me and you is, how does it witness in your spirit, and until you've got the witness in your spirit, then it's not the word of God to you yet. That doesn't mean it won't be later, but it means you must wait upon the Lord for that witness in yourself. This is the basic difference between the prophet ministry today, and any other ministry today: apostle, evangelist, pastor, or teacher. We find in Old Testament times that God spoke to His people by the law and by the prophets, but both of those were external voices. They were voices that came from earth and not from heaven, and we find that as long as that was true, the people could not hearken to that voice, for there was no spirit in them to recognize the truth of it. They were in darkness, they could not respond; as a matter of fact, they weren't even supposed to be able to respond, they were not the chosen People of God, they were not the promised seed, they were only Ishmael and Hagar; the ones that were to be cast out, the bondwoman and her son. It was not the freewoman, it was not the child of promise, and therefore they could not hear the voice of the shepherd.

We know that the prophets even prophesied (Is 6:9, 10; Rom 11: 7-10) concerning them that their ears would be stopped up, their eyes would be blinded, lest they should hear with their ears, see with their eyes, believe with their hearts, convert and be healed. It was God's plan for that to happen, therefore they being a shadow of things to come, and not the very image of it, could not fulfill what God has called us to fulfill.

Luke 16:14-16 reads: "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

There is a difference between the law and the prophets and the kingdom of God. With the law and the prophets they could only see the land, but with the kingdom of God they can enter into it. With the law and the prophets, it was a shadow of the things to come, but now the thing is come, the kingdom of God is at hand, and now every man must press into it. There is a difference between taking it violently and pressing into it: it says the violent take it by force, but the non-violent are going to inherit it. There is a difference also, in taking the kingdom and in inheriting the kingdom. God is taking the violence out of us—we are no longer going to get this kingdom by sword, we are going to get in by inheritance. We are not going to have to violently wrench it out of somebody's hands, God is going to freely give us all things, and the way we are going to inherit it is to be found in Him, without spot, without wrinkle, having proven ourselves to be God's children, by justifying God instead of ourselves. When God says something, we say "yes sir, that's the way it is." Why? Because we can hear His voice, and we can understand what He is saying for it's for this purpose that He has come in us, to give us an understanding that we might know Him that is true. (I John 5:20) God is now resident in us by the Holy Spirit whose stated function is to lead us into all truth, for it's by knowing the truth that we shall be made free.

There is a freedom in this ministry. There is a freedom in Christ. Jesus talks about those who are servants (Matt. 17:24-27) and those who are free. We find that those who are servants have to pay tribute, but those who are free don't

have to pay tribute. God doesn't want us to be slaves. He wants us to be citizens, and though we have to start out as a servant, it's only in a role, it's not in actuality. We are not really servants, we are sons, but even though we are sons we don't differ anything from a servant until we have grown up under the tutors and governors that God has appointed. The tutors and governors back in the time of the Old Testament were the law and the prophets, but today it's the Holy Ghost. Back then they were waiting for the kingdom of God to come, but now it has come. The kingdom of God is come. It's not the kingdom of God that's coming upon all the world that we've been praying for, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," that aspect of the kingdom hasn't come, but the aspect of the kingdom that has come is, that which does not come with visible display, but consists of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. That's the kingdom that every man now must press into. As we get into that kingdom of God first, we must find that all other things will then be added unto us.

I can tell you right quick whether you're in that kingdom or not, and so can you tell me right quick whether you're in the kingdom of God or not. What's the condition on the inside? Is it peace, is it joy, and is it righteousness? Without righteousness there is no peace, and without peace there is no joy. I want you to know that God has told us in this hour that the commandments that He commands us by the Holy Ghost are quite different than those commandments in the Old Testament. Paul, referring to those commandments that the children of Israel were given in the Old Testament said that ye know that that was a yoke that none of us could bear, that thing was too heavy and grievous, we couldn't bear that yoke. (Acts 15:10) But the commandment of God in this hour, the New Testament declares to us are not grievous, and that His yoke is light, and that we can cast all of our care upon Him, because He cares for us exceedingly. (I Peter 5:7)

John 1: 17-23 reads: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen

God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."

I believe that John the Baptist was the fulfillment of what Malachi spoke of, saying that a prophet would come to prepare the way of the Lord. This is what John was saying, "I am that one that Elias talked about, that would come preaching, 'make straight the way of the Lord, for the kingdom of God is at hand.' " We find that that is not the end of the query concerning the prophet. Look in John 6 after Jesus had done the miracle of multiplying the fishes and the loaves and the brethren had witnessed that.

John 6:14 reads: "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

I see now that we don't need to look for another prophet. For a long time, I really felt that we were yet to see the prophet ministry fulfilled that is spoken of by Malachi, but it's just recently that I realized that that prophet ministry was really fulfilled by John the Baptist, and this is what Jesus Himself said concerning John: He said that he was that prophet that was to come, Elias that was to come, if You can receive it. In other words he was that Elias ministry, the last to be heard from as a prophet before "that" prophet would show up. For the prophets and the law were until John, and that was the end of the prophets as a separate function from the kingdom of God. Now everything that functions is going to be in the kingdom of God realm - in other words, in

Christ, for Christ is the kingdom of God, which consists of not just Jesus alone but Jesus, the Head, Plus all the members in particular. (I Cor. 12:12)

When Jesus was on this earth, and He was casting out devils, He said He did it by the finger of God. (Luke 11:20) He said, "If I cast out Beelzebub by the finger of God, then is the kingdom of God come unto you." We find that the kingdom of God was likened unto a grain of mustard seed, one individual tiny seed, Jesus, that was going to be planted in the ground that would spring up into a great tree having many branches. That is exactly what has happened. The Lord went into the ground and died, and the branches are coming forth, the tree with the branches, the many sons.

There is no longer a place for a prophet ministry that's outside of the five-fold ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. This is the Christ-ministry. It's a one-man ministry. It's the Lord Jesus Himself functioning in five different capacities. It's the same spirit working severally in every man as He wills, and it's no longer a ministry that is coming to be the judge of God's people, but it's coming to join God's people together. It's not a ministry that is going to function separate and apart from the Body, but it's to function as a vital part of the Body, and it will be that which is effectually working in harmony with all the rest of the ministry to bring about a perfect union of every member with the Lord, and consequently with one another.

Therefore, any ministry that would come in this hour and want to exalt itself to a position of judging God's people but would not submit itself unto the judgment of God's people, is a false ministry. In other words, the validity of my ministry must be verified in you, and of course as I move in my ministry, I will confirm you in the Lord. This is what the ministry is to be in this hour, a confirmation ministry.

We can read about this in Acts 15:32 "And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them." Also, look at Philemon,

verses 5 and 6: "Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saint; That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus." This is the function in this hour as we're moving in the right way in our relationship one with another: we aren't going to be finding fault, we're going to be finding Christ.

You don't have to go around telling people what their faults are. Somebody asked me in a question and answer session recently, "What's the difference between washing somebody's feet and finding fault?" and I told them it was the difference between pointing at the dirt and washing it off. If we are moving in the Spirit in this hour, we don't just find the dirt, we wash it off. We'll be used of God to effectually minister to the Body, not just to discover the problems, but to have ready in hand the solution. You find that the Lord said "I want you to go and learn what this means, I would have mercy and not judgment; I would have mercy and not sacrifice." (Matt. 9: 13, Hosea 6:6. Js. 2:1 3) God is not out, in this hour, to put people under condemnation, but He is out to lift them up from all condemnation and confirm every good thing which is in them in Christ Jesus. that they might be built up unto the fullness of the stature of Christ.

The law is a ministration of condemnation, but the Spirit is a ministration of life. Those that would move in the letter of the word would move in this hour in a spirit that would want to bring God's people under their judgment as though they were the instrument by which God was going to purify His body. I want you to understand clearly that that is a wrong spirit. The only way we're going to be purified and become a part of this body is by being a living sacrifice. The Bible clearly teaches in the law that ye shall not cause the children to pass through the fire-that's strictly for God to do. There is no ministry in this hour that is going to cause you, as the father and mother ministry over you, to walk through the fire. If you go through the fire, you're going to go through there in obedience to what God is speaking to you, otherwise

you'll get burned up going through instead of just purified. It'll be a sacrifice to Molech, and not an offering unto the Lord. There is a spirit moving today in not just prophet ministry, but in all the ministries, that wants to rise up in a position. It's the same spirit we read about in Isaiah that says: "I will ascend unto the mount of the congregation and sit above the stars of God."

I was recently shown an article in a book by Barnhouse on the warfare of the saints, and he made a statement that the moment somebody else in the universe besides God says "I will," there's rebellion. That's something to think about. Let me say it again: the moment that there's someone that rises up and says "I will," there's rebellion in the kingdom. We find that this is what the devil said repeatedly. Satan, Lucifer, as the covering angel, (he's still the covering angel over this world), rose up and said "I will." But the moment you take

that position, you're in rebellion against God, for it's "Not my will, but Thine be done." God is already working everything according to the counsel and purpose of His own will, and the moment that we find we have a will that is different than His, we are a rebellious one in His kingdom. Wisdom is justified by all of her children.

You will identify yourself in His will, and in His purpose, if you're His child, and there's no rebellion in the family of God. We know that this is what the Lord has come to do, to put down all rebellion and to usher in the kingdom of God on earth.

We are getting a greater and greater appreciation of what it means when God says in John 8:32: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." It keeps us from being deceived into following false prophets that would lead us astray out of the way. It is a characteristic of the devil that he never attacks the motive, nor does he attack the end that you desire, but he attacks the way you achieve the objective; the way you go about realizing your desire. I have never, for instance, had someone come to me and say, "You know, the devil's been talking to me, and he's been trying to

convince me that hell is a better place than heaven." He doesn't do that. He never tries to convince you that hell is better than heaven-he just says, "Let me show you how to get to heaven, I know an easier way than the way God wants you to go. I can show you how to get there all on your own; you don't need the guide." But the Lord said, "He who tries to climb up some other way is a thief, and a robber. If you think you can get there without going to the cross, you're wrong.

There's only one way into the kingdom-death and resurrection, and there's only one way to be in the resurrection, and that's to die the right kind of death. It must be the death that's a result of hearing His voice, and I tell you in this hour God has placed His Spirit in us so that the judgment is in our hands. He says, "Ye shall know the truth." Truth about what? About ourselves. You know we're looking for the great revelation: the great revelation, (the revelation that's going to make you free,) is when you come to the realization of the truth concerning yourself, when I come to the truth concerning myself. When we see things as they really are, and no longer as we suppose them to be, we are delivered from all the realms of deception and right into light and reality. That is what will make us free, because until we come out of that darkness and that obscurity where we only see shadows and not realities, we can misidentify and we can be deceived. But when that light shines that reveals all the hidden things of dishonesty and brings them to light and you can see them as they are, you don't need anybody to judge you, you now can judge yourself and the Lord has said it is better that you do that, than that you force Him to judge you. Since it's better that you do it, He has equipped you to do it, and now we must do it.

Concerning whether we should look for somebody else to come or not, we find John the Baptist has some questions about this. Luke 7:19 reads: "And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" In other words, is

there yet some more ministry to come before Christ, is there yet some more' ministry to come, before that prophet, or are you the one that the Bible has been speaking about, saying when you come, the people are going to hearken unto you? Are you the one that the Scriptures have been speaking concerning that we should look to come, the Messiah or "that" prophet?

In verses 20 through 22 we read: "When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see –and of course we can see the spiritual depth of this word tonight. We were blind, but Jesus is causing us to see. The lame walk-there are still a lot of us limping around, but we're beginning to walk. The lepers are cleansed-that's sin in the body, cleansed by the blood of Jesus. The deaf hear-up until this time, they were all deaf, they couldn't hear, but suddenly now they can hear. The dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached, and we know that's to the poor in spirit.

Verse 23 reads: "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." Jesus had made it plain to John the Baptist's disciples that there was no need to look for another, that all the works were being done and that this was He of whom it was prophesied that a prophet shall come, one shall be raised up from amongst the brethren like unto me, and unto Him ye shall hearken.

Heb. 1: 1, 2 reads: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;"

In times past the fathers were spoken unto by the prophets, but in this hour we are being spoken unto by the Son, no longer prophets. There is the prophet ministry within the Son, but you see there is this essential difference-it isn't an external voice alone, it's now an external voice plus an internal witness.

I John 5:9 reads: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son."

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. I want to contrast that tonight, the two witnesses. There's the witness of men, and there's the witness of God. I think there's going to be a two-witness company. They are going to have both witnesses: the witnesses of men, and the witness of God.

The witness of man is external, but the witness of God is internal. When Peter was asked by Jesus, "Who do men say that I am?" he named out a whole list of prophets, he said, "Some say you're John the Baptist come from the dead." He said, "Well, Peter, who do you say I am?" He said, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." Jesus said "Blessed are you Peter, for flesh and blood men have not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. Upon this Rock I'm going to build my church." What rock? The rock that'll stand the test, the foundation that cannot be moved, the witness in yourself! If the only witness you have is the, testimony of men, when that flood comes it can raise questions in your mind about the validity of the witness and the accuracy of what you've heard. But if you have been spoken to by God, there's no doubt in your mind about what's coming. If there's doubt in your heart tonight, it is because you haven't heard from God. When you've heard from God and some of the rest of us have heard from God, there's not going to be any more doubt in your mind, for that's the rock,

that's the bedrock upon which God is building His church. It tells us in I John 5: 10: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." When we don't believe God, God makes us a liar. In other words, we'll never bear a true testimony and a true witness until we believe God, but the moment we believe God, He puts the witness in us. In that we now have the witness in ourselves, we can now become a true witness before the people, but without believing there's no way to be a true witness before the people. You'll not only be a true witness before the people, but you'll have a true witness in yourself, and that's the thing that establishes you and confirms them.

Verses 11 and 12 read: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Life and light are synonymous, and if you don't have the life neither do you have the light, and it's light that doth make manifest.

If you don't have that light, then of course there's no way you can judge accurately either the things that are in yourself, or the things that are in someone else. This is a mistake we see made so often: people abiding in darkness trying to judge things by the so-called "light" that is in them. Instead of having light in themselves, they have darkness, and how great is that darkness. What a foolish thing it is to judge prematurely. God is judge, let Him be judge. We find that Jesus even committed Himself unto Him who judgeth righteously. God has not called us to judge His servants. He has called us to judge ourselves, and He hasn't called any of His servants to judge you either.

He has sent His Holy Spirit to be the light in you, by which you judge yourself, and your judgment is now in your own hands.

Heb. 12:25, 26 reads: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." I see that Old Testament Israel was the earth, and you're the heaven. They were the natural branches and you're the spiritual. They were that which is beneath, and you're that which is above. Testament Israel was the natural man who cannot know the things of God, but you're not Old Testament Israel, you're New Testament Israel. You're not the natural man, you're the spiritual man in this hour, for God has put His Spirit in you, and now He's commanded us to walk in the Spirit. As spiritual ones, we have ascended above the earthly realm we're now in the heavens. We have joint seating in the heavenlies with Christ Jesus, and are walking in the heavenlies with Jesus as we walk in the Spirit.

We are no longer walking in the earthly realms and planes, we are walking in the heavenly, while we're on earth. Our feet are on earth but our "Head" is in heaven. We have a heavenly-minded Head, and the things of this earth are no longer appealing to us, for those that are earthly minded, carnally minded; are in death. It says that the natural man with that carnal mind, cannot know or receive the things of God. (Old Testament Israel proved it) but he who is spiritual judgeth all things. But he himself is judged of no man. (I Cor. 2:15) Why? Because God has not appointed any man to judge you; He's sent the Holy Spirit that you might judge yourself, that you be not condemned with the world. It's time for us to be under the judgment of God, seeing we are the house of God, and this is where judgment all those hidden things that were in our heart which was desperately wicked and deceitful, and we were not able to know it. But in this hour we're able to know it, and we're able to call it for what it is.

We are not only able to know it, we are able to recognize the shepherd's voice as He speaks to us, thereby confirming the fact that we are indeed His sheep. There's one more aspect of this I'd like to share with you. It seems the Bible has quite a bit of testimony to give to confirm to us that there's not any other ministry we can look for except the ministry of Christ. This is essential. What I want to get across to you is that there's only one ministry, it's the ministry of Christ. It has a five-fold function in the form of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, but it's all one ministry: it all has one purpose, one object, one end - the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry. We find the ministry is working together in harmony with the rest of the Body, and this is an hour when God is not dividing His Body but He's bringing it together. There is a time for scattering of stones, and there is a time for gathering and it's pretty obvious that God is gathering them. He's gathering them from the four comers of the world, and bringing them together in their own land, sprinkling clear water upon them that they might be cleansed from all their pollutions and filth, that they might be perfectly joined together. I see it as the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy over the valley of dry bones. There wasn't one trace of flesh, brother they were stripped right down to the bare bleached bones. After God had gotten rid of all the flesh, he said, "Ezekiel, can these bones live?" Ezekiel being a very wise servant of God said, "Lord, thou knowest." He wasn't presumptuous. The Lord said, prophesy, start speaking the word, and those bones, being the sheep, heard the voice and they began to respond. What was their response when they started coming together? Bone was joined to bone. That's exactly what's happening in this hour. The prophecy is going forth, God is speaking through His prophets today and the prophet today is just like he was in that day-everybody that speaks by inspiration is a prophet, yet there is a difference between that type of a prophet and the prophet ministry. Still, anyone speaking under the anointing, in the Bible is

classified as a prophet, the mouthpiece of God, and the prophets are prophesying today through the ministry, and the bones are coming together and being joined perfectly.

After they were joined together, then the bands and the ligaments began to tie them together and we know that represents the love of God which binds us together. As soon as that's over with, the flesh is going to come again upon the Body. In Job the Lord promises that your flesh shall be like a babe's, it's going to be renewed, and this body is going to have flesh and bone. When it comes together, God causes it to stand upon its feet and the Spirit of life comes into it. Surely we are in that hour. It's not fully formed yet, but the prophecy is going forth and the Body is coming together. It's being joined perfectly together by the love of God. We find that those are the cords that cannot be broken. It said, "Bind the sacrifice to the altar with cords," and there's only one cord that will keep us there until the fire has done its work, and that's the cords of love.

We are all in love with our God, and we see that He's not out to destroy us, even though that's what it looks like, but He's out to recreate us, to bring us forth in the life of God Himself, where we need no tutors, no governors, no covering, because we have the right kind of life: incorruptible and immortal.

The devil wants to give you life too, temporary life, but God alone can give us eternal life. Right now you have to enter into death in order to have eternal life. The devil says you can enter into life now and death later, but God says it's better you enter into death now, and life later. Don't postpone your death, you might miss your life. Don't wait too long to obey God, and if you obey Him, if you hear His voice, ye shall surely die, but then if you don't hear His voice, or if you hear it and don't obey it, ye shall also surely die. One is death unto life, the other is death unto death.

Matthew 17:4 reads: "Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for

Moses, and one for Elias." Let's keep all the ministry working: the law, the prophets, and Christ, let's make room for all of them. But the law and the prophets were only to be until Christ, for when He comes, He is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, they pass away, and there is no more law, and no more prophets. God wanted to clear this up.

Verse 5 reads: "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Where are you going to hear Him?

II Cor. 13:5 reads: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" This is the test in this hour. He that hath the Son hath life, He that hath not the Son hath not life, and we're not going to have three tabernacles. We're only going to have one tabernacle. There's not going to be a tabernacle for the law, Moses, and there's not going to be a tabernacle for the prophet, Elias, just the Son, Jesus Christ. The Father's not speaking to us anymore through any other ministry, it's just the Son.

Matthew 17:5 reads: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The voice from heaven, the inner witness, that's the one that we're to hearken to.

In Verses 6-8, "And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." They had become single eyed, that their whole Body might be full of light.

Verse 9 reads: "And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." 'Mere was no need to tell anyone of that experience until they could hear it, and they wouldn't be able to hear it until the Son was risen, ascended back to the Father and sent the

Holy Ghost, so that they would have the truth resident within themselves.

We find Peter speaking later of this experience in 11 Pet. 1: 16-18: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." They had the witness in themselves.

Verse 19 reads: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:" In this hour we have a more sure word of prophecy, because when we speak the witness is in us. When they spoke before, the people couldn't be really sure whether it was the voice of God or not, even if it came to pass it could still be a trick, God could just be testing you, but in this hour we've got a more sure word of prophecy, for we have the witness in ourselves. What excuse have we now? The prophet speaks, the message comes, and the Holy Ghost is manifesting all over the place. The witness is here that this is the truth, and you have that witness in yourself. Now it's a question of will you obey His voice?

I Peter 3:17, 18 reads: "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

This being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit is the formula. This is what God has called us to, to be made conformable unto His death, that's being put to death in the flesh, but we've been quickened by the Spirit. John 12:35 reads: "Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the

light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." You're no longer in darkness, you have fight. Jesus has warned us this light's going to be taken from us. Darkness is coming upon the world and He says you'd better walk while you have the light.

There's coming a time when it's going to be too late. The good man of the house is going to rise and shut the door, and is going to shut some virgins outside, but those that are ready are going to go in with Him. Just in a little while now, the sound of the millstone will not be heard any more in the streets, neither will the voice of the bridegroom be heard any more in the streets. Darkness will settle, gross darkness, and unless we've walked and worked while we've had the light, we will not be ready to be shut in with Him at that time.

He says, "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light." Trust that inner witness of Christ in You, "that ye may be the children of light." John 12:36 reads: "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them." That's characteristic of God. He tells Adam and Eve what to do in the garden and then He takes off, and then He comes back to examine every man according to his works. He tells you what to do, He gives you all the provision and he says, "I'll see you later. Don't forget, walk while you've got the light. I'll be back."

Job 23:1-7 reads: Then Job answered and said, Even today is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me. Will He plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him: so should I be delivered

for ever from my judge.” If we dispute Him, if we argue with God we are delivered forever from our judge. This is what happened to the people in the Old Testament, they said. "We don't want to hear His voice, we don't want to do what God says, we don't want to be judged by Him," but then you're delivered forever from Your judge. He is the only one who can show you the truth about yourself and to correct you concerning those things that are in your life that separate you from Him.

Verses 8 to 10 read: "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." He tells us what to do, and He hides Himself from us, but we are never hid from Him. His eye beholds, and His eyelids do not close, they don't even blink for a moment, but he is beholding continuously what we are doing. He commands us what to do, He gives us the means by which to do it, and then He hides Himself to observe the way we take. I thank God that He is putting a true ministry before the Body, and I have such confidence in you, and the witness of Christ in you, that I don't believe that you can be deceived by any ministry, lest there's something in you that's open to that deception: for I know the witness of Christ in you is true.

1 John 5:20-21 reads: "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us all understanding." Where has the Son of God come? Well, we've found out He's come in us, and we know that He has come in us to give us an understanding that we may know Him that is true, "and we are in Him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God," this is the witness,

this is the true life. This is that truth which ye shall know, that shall make you free.

Free from bondage to any man, free from bondage to your own self will. God must deliver us from this self life, that we may follow after Him that is true, and He says, "This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

We've got to follow this true witness. We find that out in the desert when Moses went up the mount to get the word from God, and he was gone for 40 days, the children of Israel told Aaron: "Rise up and make us gods to go before us because of this Moses, we don't know what's happening to him." Aaron said, "Okay, if you want me to make gods for you, you've got to break off the earrings that are on your ears, you've got to stop listening to that inner voice. Just break those earrings off and give them to me."

It says that he received them at their hand. It's something which you must give up, and then you can go into idolatrous worship. True worship is not a figment of your imagination. It's not following a man, it's being led of the Spirit, and yet don't think when you're led of the Spirit, that there won't be an anointed man before you. You'll make just as big a mistake thinking you're going to get there on your own map and your own little compass. If you're moving in the right Spirit you'll recognize that we are all members one of another. We come to be perfectly joined together in the same body, in the same Spirit, to worship the same God and to be under the same ministry.

There is one body, one Spirit, one God and Father of us all. Any ministry today that would want to come into our midst, get us to take off our earrings, disregard inner witness, recognize their voice as being the voice of God, thinking they are in a position to judge you, let me tell you, you are in a position to judge them, and you'd better judge them by the witness that's in yourself. Amen.

