

# Study Guide: Understanding the Prophetic

## Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

**Icebreaker Question:** Have you ever received a word of encouragement that came at just the right time? How did it impact you?

## Key Scripture References

- Genesis 1:1-3
- 1 Corinthians 14:1-6
- 2 Peter 1:20-21
- Isaiah 8:20

## Sermon Summary

This message lays the foundation for understanding the prophetic ministry in the church. Pastor emphasized that while prophecy can be powerful and life-giving, it can also cause hurt when misused. The prophetic should always edify, exhort, and comfort—never contradict God's Word. God's Spirit and His voice work together to bring light into darkness and order into chaos.

## Key Takeaways

1. **God's Spirit and Voice Work Together** - Just as in Genesis, God speaks into chaos to bring order and light
2. **The Purpose of Prophecy** - To reveal God's heart as a Father, not to harshly judge
3. **Three Functions of Prophecy:**
  - **Edification** - To build up (construction term)
  - **Exhortation** - To encourage and motivate (like a coach)
  - **Comfort** - To soothe and bring hope
4. **Prophecy Never Contradicts Scripture** - The Word of God is the foundation and authority
5. **Principle Before Preference** - We must base our understanding on God's principles, not personal preferences

## Discussion Questions

## Understanding the Prophetic

1. The pastor mentioned that many people have been "blessed, hurt, or cursed" by prophecy. What has been your experience with prophetic words? How has it shaped your view?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-6 together. Why do you think Paul emphasizes that prophecy should edify the church? What does healthy edification look like?
3. The sermon stated: "Just because you prophesy one time doesn't automatically make you a prophet." Why is this distinction important?

## The Three Functions

4. **Edification (Building Up):** The pastor shared a story about kicking down a door in anger. When have you been destructive instead of constructive in relationships? What helps you choose to build instead of tear down?
5. **Exhortation (Encouragement):** How is biblical exhortation different from "getting after someone"? Why is relationship important before correction?
6. **Comfort:** Who in your life needs comfort right now? How can you practically offer more than just sympathy this week?

## Practical Application

7. The pastor emphasized the importance of daily devotion and staying in God's Word. He said, "If I drift away from this word, I'm going to talk nonsense." How does staying in Scripture protect us from speaking our own agenda instead of God's heart?
8. Discuss this quote: "Principle has to come before preference." Can you think of an area where you've put preference before biblical principle? How can we guard against this?
9. The sermon mentioned that this generation "wants to hear from God—something tangible, something real." How can we as a small group create space to hear God's voice clearly?

## Personal Reflection Questions

*(Take 3-5 minutes of silence for individual reflection)*

- Am I more focused on building up or tearing down in my relationships?
- Do I have consistent time in God's Word to hear His voice?
- Is there someone I need to encourage, comfort, or build up this week?
- Am I open to receiving prophetic encouragement, or have past hurts closed me off?

## Practical Applications

**This Week's Challenge:**

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

1. **Edify Someone** - Intentionally speak words that build someone up. Look for the good and call it out.
2. **Exhort with Relationship** - If you need to correct or encourage someone toward obedience, first invest in relationship, then speak with love.
3. **Comfort the Weary** - Identify someone going through difficulty and offer more than sympathy—offer practical help and prayerful presence.
4. **Guard Your Words** - Before speaking into someone's life, ask: "Is this edifying, exhorting, or comforting? Does it align with Scripture?"

### Group Prayer Focus

- Pray for open hearts to hear God's voice clearly
- Ask God to heal any wounds from misused prophetic words
- Pray for wisdom to know when to speak and what to say
- Ask for the Holy Spirit to help the group become builders, not destroyers
- Pray for those who came forward during the service seeking a word from God

### Looking Ahead

Next week's message will continue this foundation on the prophetic, including:

- The office of the prophet vs. the gift of prophecy
- How to distinguish God's voice from our own or the enemy's
- A biblical example of a prophet who chose to hear people instead of God

**Homework:** Write down any questions you have about the prophetic to submit to church leadership before next week's teaching.

### Closing Thought

*"The prophetic anointing brings an electrifying, edifying effect not achievable with ordinary preaching and teaching."* - Ernest Gentile

May we be a word-and-spirit-based community that builds one another up in love and truth.