The Gift of Prophecy

A present gift of Agape Church

Introduction

The gift of prophecy has long occupied a complex place in the life of the Church. Scripture presents prophecy as a genuine work of the Holy Spirit, yet history demonstrates that it also can of the most frequently misunderstood, misused, and abused gifts in the Church's life. Some have treated it as a mystical shortcut to knowledge; others have dismissed it as a relic of a bygone era. When combined with biblical authority, personal wisdom, and personal integrity, it can confuse consciences, manipulate decisions, divide communities, and distort the voice of God.

At Agape Church, we are cessationists. We affirm that God still speaks and that the Holy Spirit ever-speaks guides, warns, and encourages His people today. At the same time, we are deeply committed to the authority, sufficiency, and clarity of Scripture. We therefore reject any understanding of prophecy that elevates human impressions to the level of divine revelation, bypasses discernment, or places spiritual pressure on others.

This note is not a rejection of the Spirit, or of God's expressions, but a rejection of things in Scripture for the place, clarity, and edification of the Church.

Prophecy in the Old Testament: Authoritative and Costly

The Old Testament presents prophecy as people uniquely called by God to speak on His behalf. They were not self-appointed leaders or spiritual enthusiasts, but covenant messengers. When they spoke, they spoke with authority, and their words were to be noted and taken seriously (Deut. 18:18-22).

Yet even in this covenantal framework, tension remained. Prophets were not offering impartial opinions, nor were they self-appointed spiritual voices. They were the mouthpieces of God, and even their messages were addressed to kings, priests, and institutions, calling the people to repentance, warning of judgment, and announcing God's redemptive purposes. To speak as a prophet was to accept the very words of Yahweh. Because of this, the prophetic office was marked by real cost: rejection, suffering, and, in many cases, martyrdom. The Old Testament does not treat prophecy as a casual or low-stakes gift. Prophets were God's mouthpieces, and history shows that they were bringing fresh revelation to the people of God. Simply put, Old Testament prophecy carried divine authority and, in many cases, irreversible consequences, and trouble.

Alongside these **prophetic individuals**, we also see something a little less defined yet nevertheless open to the Holy Spirit: the **prophetic community**.

For example, in 1 Samuel 10:5-6, God instructs a company of prophets' prophesying together with musical instruments. So, God's Spirit is described as falling on a group of people who are not individual prophets. Later, during the ministries of Elijah and Elisha, we read about the "sons of the prophets" in places like Bethel, Jericho, and Gilgal (2 Kings 2:3, 5, 7), with Elisha from time to time, as well, called to be their father. Scripture shows that these gathered communities, that they had some form of leadership, and that they were associated with prophetic activity.

But beyond this, Scripture is surprisingly quiet. We are not told how these communities were structured, what their teaching included, or whether there was ever formal process of, or "life coaches" for, prophetic development. We are not told that they could produce prophets in any systematic or repeatable way, nor are we given any indication that belonging to one of these groups automatically conferred a recognized prophetic authority. In other words, while these communities are real, they are also largely ordinary, and the biblical record does **not** present them as institutions that generate prophets.

What we find in the Old Testament, then, is a pattern of God speaking through a divinely appointed messenger, and the Talmud, particularly Sanhedrin 11a, describes the prophetic office as the prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, "the Holy Spirit departed from Israel," marking the end of the prophetic office in the authoritative sense. This tradition (any contrarian writer Jakkam prophesies) is held to specific instances of divine revelation and is not a universal statement about the end of all prophecy.

Relevance to the "sons of the prophets" and prophetic communities, however, is not a sign that develops there into formal schools. In passages like 1 Samuel 19:18-24 and 2 Kings 4:38-41, **these groups are generally understood as disciples or attendants of recognized prophets.** The emphasis is on proximity to prophetic ministry, not on the production of prophets. Even the famous "valley of dry bones" passage in Ezekiel 37 is part of a Word of the Lord. The prophet is not a mass-production machine, but a messenger who speaks God's revelation to a specific situation, and the prophetic community is not a factory.

Scripture also consistently warns against false prophecy, not as a universal possibility or as a sign of authentic spirituality. Multiple prophets may speak, and no single prophetic voice carries unquestioned authority.

Prophecy is to be tested, weighed, and, in the case of false prophets, rejected. The Spirit speaks consistently, grounded authority in the scripture. Word and the gospel, not in isolated phenomena or by lone agents continuously.

Scripture presents prophecy as a real, powerful, and sometimes costly gift, but it also presents it as a gift that is fundamentally ordinary. Multiple prophets may speak, and no single prophetic voice carries unquestioned authority.

Prophecy is to be tested, weighed, and, in the case of false prophets, rejected. The Spirit speaks consistently, grounded authority in the scripture Word and the gospel, not in isolated phenomena or by lone agents continuously.

Prophecy does not function as a formal office in the Old Testament. Prophets were God's mouthpieces, grounded in the authority of the scripture Word and the gospel, not in institutional structures. **Prophecy does not function as a new revelation, nor does it, or, we determine that needs alongside Scripture.**

This distinction is critical. New Testament prophecy is real, valuable, and encouraged, yet it is partial, fallible, and always accountable.

Prophecy in the Book of Acts

The book of Acts presents prophecy as active today in the early Church, yet never as a replacement for apostolic teaching or Scripture.

Examples include:

Acts 11:27–28

In Hananias, they interpreted the outpouring of the Spirit through God's prophecy, declaring that a coming famine would affect the entire Mediterranean world. This prophecy was fulfilled in Claudius' reign (AD 41–54), and the Church responded with generosity and preparation, not unquestioning submission to it.

Acts 21:10–11

Agabus prophesied a coming famine. Notably, the prophecy leads to wise, practical action rather than fear or panic. The church responds with generosity and preparation, not unquestioning submission to it.

Acts 13:1–3

Prophets and teachers in Antioch ministers together. The Spirit speaks within a context of worship, fasting, and communal discernment, not through lone prophets. Spirit-acting independently.

Acts 19:6

John and Silas, described as prophets, encourage and strengthen the brethren with many words. The emphasis is pastoral and strengthening, not authoritative.

Acts 4:29–31

Against opposition, warning, fear of coming suffering, the prayer is boldness. Importantly, the prophetic voice will happen, not what Jesus asked for. The Spirit interprets the prayer wrong and proceeds to will. Bad not to go on prayers, or even prophecy, but to pray for boldness. This can provide the capacity of the Lord not to pray, but to pray for him, just as we to pray. The prophetic voice is cautious, but liberal, to bring forward new witness, alternative lens, correct the prayer, encourage courage, and offer an encouraging, not coercive, The Spirit speaks through prophecy, but not prophetic spokesman.

These accounts demonstrate that prophecy is active in Scripture and encouraging, yet never intended to substitute, decree or unquestionable command.

Prophecy in the Pauline Epistles

Key passages include:

Romans 12:6

Prophecy is listed among the gifts and to be exercised "in proportion to our faith," implying limitation, humility, and dependence.

1 Corinthians 12:1–11, 28–30

Prophecy is one gift among many given for the common good. Paul explicitly denies that all believers possess the gift.

1 Corinthians 14:1–5

Prophecy is praised and encouraged, yet it remains a gift that must be tested and is characterized by limitation, standing in contrast to the fullness that will come at Christ's return.

1 Corinthians 14:29–33

Prophets speak one at a time, in turn, and their prophecy is subject to the spirit of the prophets. Prophecy is not ecstatic or uncontrolled.

1 Corinthians 14:37–38

Paul concludes by stating that his own prophecy, because it holds up the church through edification, encouragement, and consolation. The value of prophecy is measured by its fruit, not by its intensity or impressiveness.

1 Corinthians 13:9–12

Prophecy, tongues, and knowledge are all partial. Prophecy will cease when the perfect comes. Until then, prophecy and gifts are given for the sake of the spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 14:26

Relevance accumulation is to speak the Spirit or despite prophecies, yet are equally commanded to test everything and hold fast what is good. The balance is deliberate. Prophecy is neither dismissed nor unquestioned by its nature.

Summary of New Testament Teaching on Prophecy

Taken together, the New Testament presents prophecy as genuinely gift of the Holy Spirit, given to some believers but not to all, and intended for the encouragement, strengthening, and edification of the church. Unlike Old Testament prophecy, it does not function as a mediated revelation or authoritative decree. Its purpose is pastoral and relational, supporting worship, and communal discernment. It operates under the authority of Scripture and remains subordinate to it, speaking only what Scripture has already made fully accessible. Prophecy is fallible, limited, and dependent on interpretation and testing. This tentativeness is a feature, not a flaw, and it is what keeps prophecy from being governed, normatively, formally and centrally discussed, which is a gift of grace but never elevated above the written Word of God.

The Early Church on Prophecy: Affirmed yet Governed

The early Church both affirmed and practiced the prophetic gift while surrounding institutional discussion and restraint. Early Christians recognized prophecy as a genuine gift, but also recognized that it could be misunderstood or abused, leading, much of Christianity, memory, or orthodoxy, and perhaps more importantly, could be blind, or, worse, be used to manipulate people. Because of this, the early Church did not treat prophecy as an unquestioned authority, but as a gift that required testing, order, and accountability.

The Didache on Testing Prophets: Care in Charity and Limited

One of the earliest non-canonical Christian documents that helped centre and governs the growing church, the Didache, provides practical guidance on how to test Christian spiritual gifts, including prophecy. The Didache instructs the existence of traveling prophets but warns congregations not to receive every claim immediately. This will be to allow the church of every prophet, prophecy to be well assessed. Notably, prophets who demonstrated moral, relational, and doctrinal integrity were to be treated as genuine, but, or spoke in ways that contradicted sound teaching or showed signs of instability, were to be set aside. The document also emphasizes that no prophet should be tested or judged by their personal conduct alone, but by the consistency of their teaching and character. The Didache shows an emphasis on discernment and relational trust. **Their sincerity alone was insufficient protection against deception.** Prophetic claims must be tested by Holy Scripture, and conduct.

Testing claims of prophecy:

> *Now concerning the apostles and the prophets, let them do according to the ordinance of the gospel. Let every apostle that comes to you be received as the Lord. But he shall not remain one day, or if there be need, also another day; but if he remains three days, he is a false prophet.*
>
> Didache 11:1–2

Prophets depending resources or overstaying:

> *Let every apostle who comes to you be received as the Lord. But he shall not remain one day, or if there be need, also another day; but if he remains three days, he is a false prophet.*
>
> Didache 11:4–6

Proof of the spirit and the testing, he is a false prophet:

> *Not every one who speaks in the Spirit is a prophet, but only if he has the ways of the Lord. From his ways, therefore, the false prophet and the true prophet will be known.*
>
> Didache 11:8

Prophets demanding resources or overstaying:

> *Every prophet who orders a meal in the Spirit, he shall not eat of it, lest he be a false prophet.*
>
> Didache 11:12

Prophets speak without integrity:

> *Every prophet who teaches the truth, if he does not do what he teaches, is a false prophet.*
>
> Didache 11:10

The concern is not theology alone, but moral integrity and submission to the gospel way of life.

The Early Church Fathers Until 400: Cautious Affirmation

Church fathers until, or between, of years affirm the presence of prophetic gifts long after the death of the apostles. Irenaeus (Against Heresies 2.32.4) writes:

> *"In like manner do we also hear many brethren in the Church who possess prophetic gifts, and who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of men, and declare the mysteries of God."*

The Montanist movement of the second century was decisive in shaping the Church's understanding of prophecy. Montanists **emphasized ecstatic utterance, direct revelation, and a heightened spiritual authority, often presenting prophecy speech as immediate and binding.** While Montanists claimed their goal was to have the Holy Spirit restore prophecy to its proper place, the movement's emphasis on ecstatic speech and a heightened spiritual authority found within the circulated forms of the original prophecy. Which would later become the Epistles found in the New Testament.

The broader Church rejected Montanism not because it denied the Spirit's work, but because it subordinated Scripture and the apostolic tradition to ongoing revelation. Tertullian, one of the Church's most prominent early writers, "in a state of ecstasy of trance," claiming divine authority while seemingly bypassing discernment and order. The Church's response was not to deny prophecy, but to place it back under Scripture, apostolic teaching, and communal oversight. Lack of accountability, and prophetic claims that contradicted established teaching. The Church concluded that ungoverned prophecy, even when sincerely attributed to the Spirit, produced instability rather than edification. Accepted that given the necessity, considered it necessary to place prophecy under the authority of Scripture and the apostolic tradition, that decision was not initially unanimous.

By the third and fourth centuries, writers such as Origen and Augustine reflected a Church that understood prophecy primarily as a gift associated with the Church's formative period. Origen acknowledged that prophecy and miracles appeared more prominent during the gospel's initial expansion, but maintained that the normal expectation was to concern not the fact that the prophetic gift was being lost, but that it was being rarer, less prominent, less pervasive. Augustine later also emphasized that prophecy was rarely, therefore, but not prophetic manifestations or signs ceased, the Church's beginning, remain rarer than at starting, rarer, the Christian doctrine. Importantly, neither the Church Fathers nor the Church as a whole treated the rarity of prophecy as a sufficient reason to abandon it. **Prophecy was not to be feared, governance under God, and conformity to Scripture, and by the frequency of prophetic speech.**

The Reformers and Prophecy

The Protestant Reformers inherited centuries of spiritual unease and mixed in claims of direct revelation. With the rise of the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, Radical revolutionary movements frequently appealed to "prophetic authority" for their teaching or ongoing revelation, often leading to chaos and social disorder. Claims of new prophecy revelation were being used to contradict the apostolic revelation, spiritual authority, and, perhaps, direct revelation without biblical grounding.

The Reformers were not dismissing what they have had been accused direct revelation. They had watched it plot and, in many cases, had been forced to, or, perhaps, voluntarily, participated in it. Rather, they were responding to a specific historical context of Catholic claims, direct revelation apostolic authority which the leaders invoked God's will from or Spiritualists movements across the continent kept circulating when they called the "Word" direct Scripture, and, in some cases, rejecting some of classic. Notes of the church, the Reformers disposed of the Holy Spirit. It made them skeptical of anyone who claimed the Spirit's authority while contradicting themselves from the apostolic Word. Their conviction was simple: the Spirit never contradicts Scripture, and anyone who claims to be the apostolic Word.

As a result, the Reformers emphasized the sufficiency of Scripture and the ordinary means of grace. Preaching became the primary prophetic act, not in the sense of foretelling, but in faithfully proclaiming God's sealed Word.

Sacraments, and prayer, Scripture, and the Church's ministry were seen as the ordinary means of spiritual growth, directed from Scripture. This was not disbelief in the Spirit's activity, but a deliberate, but, personal concern that supernatural claims could not and prerogative discipline.

While many Reformers issued limited cessationist conclusions, their deeper instinct appeared to be protective rather than skeptical. Scripture alone was sufficient. Anything else, or, seems from compelling, must is suit.

Mainstream Christianity and the Modern Use of Prophecy

Following the Reformation, most Protestant traditions maintained the same cautious posture toward prophecy. They held to deep commitment to the authority of Scripture and concern over spiritual excess, but several generations, prophecy had been largely predegested in mainstream church life, yet it was still discussed as a hope, place, however, and, within the church.

However, beginning in the nineteenth century, a gradual but significant shift happened as revivalist movements began to emphasize spiritual experience and external manifestations of divine activity.

The Holiness Movement and Early Pentecostalism

The Holiness Movement of the nineteenth century, Emerging primarily within Methodism and later influencing denominations of Pentecostalism, the movement sought to deepen the Christian life through holiness, beyond conversion, more sanctify a second work of grace often referred to as entire sanctification. As spiritual hunger formed in centers of **identifiable post-conversion experiences**, the question became how one can know when this deeper work of God has occurred.

While early Holiness teachers did not require prophecy or tongues, the movement created a climate of heightened sensitivity, which people looked for **observable evidence** of spiritual progress. Once spiritual intensity was associated with identifiable manifestations, it was only a short step from expectation to sign, from sanctification to proof of divine empowerment.

Early Pentecostals Conveyed Prophecy Becomes Expected

Charles Parham (1902–1903)

On the basis of the Holiness movement, a doctrine theological shift occurred in 1901 when Charles Parham taught that speaking in tongues was the initial physical evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit. This doctrine introduced a new prototype, a specific **spiritual experience should be verified by an observable manifestation.**

Parham wrote:

> *"The baptism of the Holy Spirit is evidenced by the speaking in other tongues."*
>
> Charles Fox Parham, The Apostolic Faith

While Parham focused primarily on tongues, the logic clearly applied to prophecy as well. Once spiritual experiences required an outward sign, prophecy was positioned to become one more such proof.

The Azusa Street Revival (1906–1909)

William J. Seymour (1870–1922)

The Azusa Street Revival brought Parham's theology into global prominence. Prophetic utterances, ecstatic speech, and spontaneous revelations became common features of worship. Seymour emphasized openness to whatever the Spirit might do in the moment.

In the episodic Azusa Revival (1906), leaders described meetings where:

> *"The Lord gave messages in unknown tongues, interpretations, prophecies, and revelations in the tongue."*
>
> Frank Bartleman, How Pentecost Came to Los Angeles

As one spectator put it, these meetings "followed expectations rather than prescribed order." What is certainly clear though, is that many participants were sincere and devoted followers of Jesus. Yet over time, a shift was about movement prioritized spiritual gifts **from the prophecy of church life to the center of spiritual life.**

Mid-Pentecostals Contemporary Prophecy Normalized

The Charismatic Renewal and the Jesus Movement (1960s–1970s)

The Charismatic Renewal expanded rapidly during the 1960s and 1970s, carrying what were usually termed as Pentecostal assumptions into established Protestant and Catholic churches. While many within the movement emphasized relational discernment and pastoral oversight, prophecy became increasingly encouraged as a normal expression of the Christian life. Small, informal prophecies were often distinguished, extended with a broader cultural moment that appeared to have prophecy as one thought of and practice. Prophecy, in fact, in the context of Christian activity, seen in the 60s and 70s, been lost and is a commonly, and establishments, such, Christian life. Prophecy was often treated as a relational gift, exercised within small groups and prayer communities, and, in fact, both the Charismatic Renewal and the Jesus movement of the 1960s.

Elements of American religion shapes that the commercialized environment of the 1960s limited deep reception toward institutions, hierarchy, and traditional authority. Where large institutions of young people influenced by the Charismatic Renewal and the Jesus movement, prophecy was frequently encouraged as a sign of vitality, and, in fact, both the Charismatic Renewal and the Jesus movement of the 1960s. Prophecy was often treated as a relational gift, exercised within small groups and prayer communities, and, in fact, both the Charismatic Renewal and the Jesus movement of the 1960s.

Twenty-First Century: Confidence Replaces Discernment

Modern Revivalism

Contemporary charismatic settings, prophecy no longer merely welcomed but assumed as a normal and expected feature of spiritual life. Prophecy, the pastoral concern, prophecy, but, in fact, in the 60s, Prophecy, the pastoral concern, quite customarily and celebrated prophecy, impressions is continued discernment, modern prophecy critics, or, perhaps, and, of, confidence, prophecy, but, in fact, in the 60s, Prophecy, the pastoral concern, **prophecy, but, in fact, in the 60s, Prophecy, the pastoral concern.**

Language reflects this shift. Statements such as "God told me" have become commonplace, even though Scripture consistently avoids testing, weighing, and restraint. Were once offered as tentative impressions are now presented as spiritually certain or divine decisions, having little room for discernment, disagreement, or correction.

In some contexts, prophecy has come to function as more than encouragement. It is used to provide direction for major life decisions, to offer guidance in leadership roles, and to confirm spiritual authority. Over time, this can unintentionally create hierarchies within the church, where those associated with prophetic expressions are perceived as spiritually attuned or spiritually advanced.

This progression helps explain much of the confusion surrounding prophecy today. The issue is not whether God can speak, but whether the conditions of discernment are formally, socially, and spiritually in place. Without clarity, Where prophecy is elevated beyond Scripture and communal discernment, clarity diminishes, accountability weakens, and spiritual pressure increases, often leaving individuals, communities, and even the Church's prophetic witness damaged.

In contrast to this "hyper-charismatic," modern, cessationist, or **non-Pentecostal** Christians, are, biblically grounded continuationists cessationists. Scripture and many others like, but, affirm the ongoing gift of prophecy while firmly grounding it in the authority of God's revelation, which is Scripture. Prophecy, in this view, is real and valuable, but it is also inherently fallible, always subject to testing, and never allowed to direct the lives of others with divine authority. Scripture remains the final, sufficient, and normative revelation, prophecy exists to encourage, edify, and comfort, not replace, evaluate, correct, or discipline.

Alongside the rise of modern revivalism, another trajectory emerged within twentieth and twenty-first century Christianity: the consolidation of mainstream cessationism. **For many churches and theologians, the excesses and abuses associated with prophetic movements led not merely to caution, but to a decisive restriction of prophetic expectation altogether.**

Mainstream cessationism is best understood as a protective reaction. Faced with failed prophecies, spiritual manipulation, and claims of ongoing revelation that undermined Scripture, many churches concluded that affirming the cessation of prophecy was the safest way to preserve doctrinal clarity and protect congregations. This instinct mirrors earlier church responses to Montanism and the Reformers' opposition to ungoverned spiritual enthusiasm.

At its best, cessationism rightly emphasizes the sufficiency of Scripture, the danger of elevating experience above doctrine, and the pastoral responsibility to guard believers from false authority. Because of this, many cessationist churches have cultivated strong biblical literacy and theological stability.

At the same time, cessationism carries limitations. By denying the ongoing operation of prophecy, there is a real struggle to account for New Testament commands to eagerly desire, test, and weigh prophecy without confining those instructions to the past. In practice, careful discernment for this group has given way to functional denial of spiritual promptings altogether.

As a result, the modern Church often finds itself polarized between two reactions to the same problem: revivalist excess on one side and restrictive cessationism on the other. **Legacy Church seeks to chart a more biblical path, affirming the gift without absolutizing it, and governing its use with humility, discernment, and submission to Scripture.**

VI

The Position of Legacy Church

Legacy Church affirms the gift of prophecy as a genuine work of the Holy Spirit that operates today. We do not despise prophecy, nor do we forbid its expression. Scripture commands us to earnestly desire spiritual gifts, especially prophecy, and we take that command seriously. In this, we stand squarely within the New Testament witness, which affirms prophecy as a gift given for the edification of the Church when exercised in love, order, and submission to the Word of God.

At the same time, we affirm that prophecy today is fundamentally different from Old Testament canonical prophecy. As witnessed through Scripture and throughout church history, modern prophetic impressions do not carry the infallible, covenantal authority of the prophets whose words became Scripture. Prophecy today is not authoritative, not binding, and not revelatory in the sense of adding to or definitively interpreting Scripture. To treat it otherwise risks repeating errors the Church has already confronted and rejected.

In articulating this posture, we intentionally seek to avoid the mistakes of both extremes. We do not wish to fall into the error of the Montanists, who elevated ecstatic prophetic speech beyond apostolic oversight and subordinated Scripture to experience. Nor do we wish to repeat the excesses of modern revivalism, in which prophetic impressions are often assumed to be authoritative and function as direction-giving revelation. Instead, our heart is to embody the same spirit of discernment practiced by the early Church, which affirmed prophecy while carefully testing it, regulating it, and refusing to make it central to Christian identity or maturity.

Prophecy, when present, should strengthen faith, encourage obedience, and direct believers back to Christ and His Word, never away from them. Following the New Testament pattern, prophetic impressions must be offered humbly, received cautiously, and weighed carefully within the community of faith. This posture honors the Spirit without quenching Him and protects the Church from confusion, pressure, and spiritual harm.

In this way, Legacy Church seeks to be faithfully continuationist without being reactionary, Spirit-open without being experience-driven, and pastorally responsible in how prophecy is understood and practiced.

VII

What We Affirm

At Legacy Church, we affirm the following convictions:

- God does indeed prompt, guide, warn, encourage, and strengthen His people by the Holy Spirit.
- Prophecy is a genuine spiritual gift that is in operation today and should be earnestly desired according to the Scripture.
- Prophecy exists for the edification, encouragement, and consolation of the Church
- Prophecy is always subordinate to Scripture and must align with it, not merely avoid contradiction with it
- Prophecy must be tested, weighed, and discerned within the community of faith
- Scripture, wisdom, prayer, and godly counsel must be used in all decision-making, not solely prophecy

VIII

What We Reject

Legacy Church explicitly rejects:

- Any prophetic claim that carries binding authority
- "God says" language that presents human impressions as divine decree
- Prophecy used to make decisions for others or control outcomes
- Prophecy that bypasses discernment, accountability, or pastoral oversight
- Pressure to give or receive prophetic words
- The elevation of prophecy as a marker of maturity or spiritual authority
- Any use of prophecy that produces fear, manipulation, division, or confusion

IX

Guardrails and Governance of Prophecy at Legacy Church

At Legacy Church, governance exists not to suppress the Spirit, but to honor Him and to serve His people.

In Sunday Gatherings

Prophetic words are not a regular public feature of our services. Our gatherings prioritize intelligible worship and teaching rooted in Scripture. We ask that any prophetic impressions should be submitted privately to an Elder rather than shared publicly for the congregation to hear. This can be done in person, or through the email addresses listed on our website. This is done to protect the flock from those that would use prophecy for their own gain.

In Small Groups and Personal Ministry

In more intimate settings, we encourage you to be courageous. If you feel the Lord is prompting you to encourage someone, go for it. But do it with humility. Use language that reflects that you are fallible. Instead of saying "Thus saith the Lord," try saying "I feel like the Lord might be putting this on my heart for you." Always ask permission before sharing, and always leave room for the other person to say "That doesn't really resonate with me."

Pastoral Oversight

If prophecy ever becomes a source of pressure or division, the Elders will step in. This isn't about being heavy-handed. It is about shepherding. Our job is to make sure the environment stays safe and that the Word of God remains the final authority in every person's life.

Conclusion

The gift of prophecy is not the goal of the Christian life. Scripture consistently points us toward love, holiness, and faithfulness as the true marks of maturity. When prophecy serves those ends, it is a blessing. When it eclipses them, it becomes a distraction.

Legacy Church seeks to be a Spirit-empowered, Biblically-grounded church. We honor the Spirit by submitting to the Word, pursuing humility over certainty, and valuing love above all gifts.

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