

## **E books: The disciplined life of the prophet. Prophet Jim Smith**

### **Poor discipline!**

I was teaching a course on prophecy in one country, when a member of the course got up and said “Prophet Jim. It’s all very well for you to say that we must wait on God for our message, and then spend time in prayer and reflection before we speak. But sometimes I just can’t hold a word in, and I have to share it, whatever the circumstances. What have you to say to me?” “Just two words” I replied. “Poor discipline!”

The more I have travelled, taught and exercised my prophetic calling, the more I have been appalled at the poor discipline exercised by many that claim to have a prophetic voice. My overwhelming feeling is that most who speak prophetically exercise a “wild west” discipline - “shoot first, and ask questions afterwards.” But this just won’t do. Not only is it poor practice for those with a prophetic voice, it is a very bad example to the body, who then begin to do the same in other fields of service. Prophecy is discipline - and in this book I am not writing of the discipline of hearing and testing. I have spoken extensively of that elsewhere. Here I want to challenge those who are involved in prophecy to take a firm hold on the disciplines of their calling. This is tough! We all want to avoid the discipline, and move straight to the action. But such an attitude is childish, and will achieve little of lasting value in the service of God. Athletes train hard for a crown which fades. We should at least follow their example, as we wrestle for unfading glory.

### **The discipline of a close walk with God.**

The prophetic ministry falls into these areas:-

To share the heart of God.

To hear from God. To test what is heard.

To speak for God.

To be in the watchtower, waiting for God’s command.

To be prepared to be ridiculed, abused, ignored, rejected, ejected, silenced, or killed.

To fulfil this, those in the prophetic ministry must have *the discipline of a very close walk with God*. This will enable him to be obedient, willing to act, to listen, to speak or to be silent. To go where he is sent, to speak what he is given, and to accept the judgement of the Church. This close walk is a gift of God by His Holy Spirit. The pressure of staying within this call is great, and it is easily weakened. When people ignore us, fail to understand us, or make us feel small or worthless, the temptation is to give up, and to become like everyone else. Then we are not laughed at anymore, and we can be comfortable. But we have lost our most precious gift - our closeness to God.

*Guard this gift carefully. Ask yourself “How does the enemy try to take this gift from me? Study the Bible, and make sure that you are regularly reading the lives and teachings of the prophets. Most importantly, read the story of the passion of Jesus often. ( Mark chapters 14-16) This will give the courage to carry on.*

### **The discipline of obedience.**

Obedience is a key part of the Christian experience. Jesus was “obedient even to death” and in this he was crowning the examples which went before him:-

**Isaiah’s** commission was born in a discipline of obedience - “Who will go for us...here am I send me.” (Isaiah 6:8)

**Esther** took the risk of obedience - “And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14)

**Mary** followed the same path - “I am the Lord’s servant. May it be to me as you have said.” (Luke 1: 38)

Obedience is one of the essential disciplines of a prophet’s life.

It enables him to come and go at God’s command.

It enables him to speak what he has received without adding or taking away.

It enables him to be part of the disciplined life of the body.

It enables him to face hardship and persecution, knowing he is following Jesus, who was “obedient unto death.”

But it is a rare discipline. It runs against our human selfish nature – self will, self importance, wilfulness, the certainty that we know best. This leads only to the destruction of our calling. Study the life of King Saul for a clear example of this. (1 Samuel.)

**HOW can we maintain an obedient attitude?**

Read John chapter 13: verses 1 to 5

Read Philippians 2: verses 6 to 8

*Let these verses regularly examine your life. Ask yourself “Am I willing to wash the feet of others, even though they oppose me?” “Do I have a humble spirit, like that in Jesus?” A famous English evangelist used to pray every day before his meetings “Keep me small Lord.” Learn to pray this every day.*

**Discipline of study.**

A very famous English Evangelist once said:- “No fool should ever enter the pulpit.” What he meant was that those of us who speak publicly should do all we can to improve our knowledge and understanding. It’s not enough to say, “God will do it!” God expects us to study and learn, however difficult it may be for us, and however limited our resources. In psalm 119, the writer says many times and in many different ways “Write your law on my heart...” This should be the aim of our study - to enable God to write more and more in our hearts and lives. The discipline of study must involve studying God’s word, God’s ways and workings, God’s heart, God’s plans and desires, and God’s men.

<b>Word</b>	Have a regular plan of reading.
<b>Ways</b>	Study God’s working in your own life, and the lives of others.
<b>Heart</b>	Through prayer, intercession, meditation & waiting in presence of God.
<b>Plans</b>	Meditate on God’s workings in the world.
<b>Desires</b>	Listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.
<b>Men</b>	Study of Bible, and of men of God of past.

This discipline is slow, very long, and shows little fruit quickly. But if we follow it over the years, God will mature us into the likeness of Jesus, and humble us, enabling us to be God’s men.

## **Discipline of worship**

Worship is the closest we can get to heaven here on earth. In worship, we enter the heavenly places, join with the whole company of heaven, and are open to both seeing God, and hearing from him. So it is essential that those with prophetic ministries should be able to worship, both on their own, and with the company of God's people. Many of God's people never enter worship. They enjoy praise, but never get beyond it. Worse, they mistake praise - which is an essential part of our Christian experience - with worship. But if we never get beyond praise, we never enter the heavenly places, and if we never do that, how can we hope to hear from God in any depth.

Worship is:-

<b>Awe</b>	Isaiah 6:3 "Holy, holy, holy..."
<b>Majesty</b>	Mark 9:2 "He was transfigured before..."
<b>Glory</b>	2 Chron 7:2 "The glory of the Lord filled the Temple.."
<b>Power</b>	1 Samuel 7:10 "The Lord thundered.."
<b>Fulfilment</b>	Rev 22: 1-5 "They will reign forever..."
<b>Silence</b>	1 Kings 19:12 "A gentle whisper.."

### **A prophet should:-**

Be in a worshipping family of God's people.  
Expect to hear and receive from God while he is in the gathering.  
Expect to open the channels for other people during worship.  
Test the worship for purity/for vitality/Spirit's power.  
Pray in the worship, so that it reflects the presence of God.  
Protect the worship.  
Encourage the worship.

### ***For the discipline of worship:***

***Study the Bible passages given above, and meditate on them.***  
***Learn how to reach into heaven through worship.***  
***Learn to recognise the voice of God in worship.***