

VOLUME **3** THREE

THE OBJECTIVE *of* PROPHECY

RELEASE THE PROPHETIC POWER TO RESTORE



Graham Cooke

THE PROPHETIC EQUIPPING SERIES

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The Objective of Prophecy was formerly known as *Approaching the Heart of Prophecy*, MODULE THREE.



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Email: admin@brilliantperspectives.com

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DEDICATION

I have many friends around the world, people who are dedicated to the King and His kingdom. They have gone through much and emerged through it to be loving, gentle, kind, and humble with a joy that empowers them to live from delight.

They are seekers, warriors, dreamers, planners, architects of what church would look like *if* it practiced kingdom living.

They have paid a price for where they are but never talk about it. They narrate the story of what God did in them and who He became to them in the course of growing into great leaders and powerful ministries.

I am so proud to know you.

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

People who don't quit are the only ones who can leave a legacy worth following.

I am amazed at the quality of people whom God has put around my life—people who lived in the shadows where the poor people walk. Those who passed out of this world unremarked and unknown, save by the One who never forgets a labor of love.

People who fought and persisted for one small victory after another until something emerged out of the battlefield that resembled more a high tower of safety than a meeting place.

All those who took on the local giants of uncaring, ineffective government; the politics of care that waste fortunes; the inanity of religious voices that never stop speaking but who declare nothing.

We are all ever, only challenged by the goodness of the One who lives within us and is Himself magnificent, indomitable, and wonderfully cheerful.

Kudos to Him and to all who work alongside Him in hellish places.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| The Objective of Prophecy..... | 5 |
| The Difference Between Teaching and Prophecy | 8 |
| Humility Is the Key..... | 10 |
| The Nine Objectives Of Prophecy | 13 |
| Prophecy Restores People’s Dignity And Self-Respect | 13 |
| Prophecy Edifies, Encourages, and Comforts the Church..... | 15 |
| Prophecy Can Bring Correction and Warning..... | 23 |
| Prophecy Can Provide Direction and Enhance Vision | 26 |
| Prophecy Opens The Teaching Of The Word and Confirms Preaching..... | 30 |
| Prophecy Can Release The Church Into New Doctrine or Practices | 33 |
| Prophecy Provides Insight Into Counseling Situations..... | 35 |
| Prophecy Can Provide Evangelistic Breakthroughs | 36 |
| Prophecy Provides an Agenda for Prayer..... | 39 |
| Four Common Arguments Against Prophecy | 44 |
| Does the Bible Replace Spiritual Gifts?..... | 45 |
| Does Preoccupation With The Gifts Prevent Effective Evangelism?..... | 49 |
| Is The Fruit More Important Than The Gifts? | 53 |
| Are the Gifts of the Spirit Dangerous? | 55 |
| Truth: The Best Safeguard..... | 56 |
| Our Response..... | 58 |
| The Objective of Prophecy..... | 63 |
| Reflections, Exercises, and Assignments..... | 63 |

| | |
|--|----|
| What Constitutes Immaturity? | 65 |
| A Life Principle for Prophetic Ministry..... | 81 |
| A Prophecy: Discover Identity and Inheritance..... | 85 |
| Recommended Reading..... | 89 |
| About the Prophetic Equipping Series | 93 |
| About the Author | 95 |

INTRODUCTION

And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. (Joel 2:28–29)

THE WORLD CHANGED THE DAY the Holy Spirit fell on Jesus' remaining disciples in that famed upper room in Jerusalem. The Spirit of God, reserved in the Old Testament for a select few, had now been placed on anyone who sought and loved Christ. With that outpouring came the gifts of the Spirit. While once only a few could prophesy, suddenly everyone could.

I have been in the prophetic ministry since 1974. I began prophesying the year before. That's more than thirty years of sharing the love God has placed in my heart. Amazingly, I'm still learning—and I never want to stop. Every year, I understand something new about God and His ways. He never ceases to intrigue me.

More than a decade ago, my book *Developing Your Prophetic Gifting* was first published. It has been a greater success than I could have ever imagined. It has gone through many re-printings; several publishers have taken it up; it has been written in many, many languages; and it still is on the best-seller list; and yet the material I teach now is light years beyond that original manuscript. I have come a long way in the years since I wrote that first book. For one thing, I have taught countless prophetic schools during that time. As I work with students

and emerging prophetic voices, I have had my own gift shaped and honed. “As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend,” as it says in Proverbs 27:17. The people I have met have pushed me further into the things of the prophetic. They have challenged me to find fresh ways of equipping, explaining, and encouraging.

For several months, I have felt the Lord prompt me to rewrite *Developing Your Prophetic Gifting*, adding the material I have taught in my schools over the past ten years since it was published. This book is the first in a series of six that will more fully equip people longing to speak the words of God to those around them.

Following the unqualified success of the spirituality journals in the Being with God Series,¹ I have decided to develop this material into the same format.

Each book has assignments, exercises, and meditations that, if followed, will bring each individual into an experience of God within the context of the material.

Together, we will study the practical elements of hearing God, of moving in the Spirit, of knowing God’s nature, and of representing

**A SMALL MIND IS
INCOMPATIBLE
WITH A BIG HEART**

His heart to someone else. We will learn how to be grounded in the love, grace, and rhythm of God. It is my prayer that these books will give you something fresh about who God wants to be for you. As you read the principles and illustrations within, I pray that you will be excited and inspired to venture further into what God has for you.

Prophecy comes when we have a burden to encourage and bless the people around us. There is no magic formula to prophesying; it all depends on our love for God. When we love Him fully, that love should

¹ See www.brilliantbookhouse.com for more information.

spill over onto the people around us. Prophecy is simply encouraging, exhorting, and comforting people by tuning them in to what God has for them. In every church in the world, there are people who need that life-giving word from God. These aren't just the individuals who are obviously struggling; some appear to have everything together. But God knows what's really going on.

Everyone could benefit from a prophetic word, even those for whom everything is soaring. I love to prophesy over people who are doing really well. If we can target those people and increase their faith at a critical time, they can fly even higher in the things of the Spirit.

New Testament prophecy will be spoken through the context of the gospel of grace. Jesus has received the judgment of God for sin for all those who are living, to enable them to find repentance through the goodness and kindness of God.

Prophecy is now in the context of a family, a company of called-out people who are learning together to become the beloved of God: the bride of Christ. There is a new language in the Spirit to learn and the unity of the Spirit to maintain and enjoy, as a people together.

Of course there are necessary tensions in all good relationships and prophecy is not the way to resolve conflicts. Clearly we need wisdom for those situations.

I believe strongly that the more encouraging, exhorting, and comforting prophecy we have, the better our churches will be. Blessing and encouragement stir up anointing. The more of this kind of prophecy we can have in church, the less we will need intensive, time-consuming pastoral care. People will actually be touched by God and come into the things of the Spirit themselves. Individuals

**WHEN THE
CHURCH
RUNS OUT OF
ENCOURAGEMENT,
THE WORLD RUNS
INTO WICKEDNESS**

will realize that, yes, they are loved personally by God. That kind of revelation will stoke up their faith in ways a counseling session never could.

I know I need that kind of encouragement every day from the Holy Spirit. I can't remember the last time I asked Him to encourage me and He didn't. He may not speak it out immediately, but He always meets me at the point of my greatest need. That's just who the Holy Spirit is and what He loves to do.

This book can help you go further in the prophetic than you have ever hoped. After all, *"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him"* (1 Corinthians 2:9).

The Objective of Prophecy is not a quick read. I encourage you to take your time going through this book, reading slowly and with your heart, until you understand the themes and thoughts it contains.

Furthermore, don't neglect the exercises, case studies, and Bible readings included at the end of each volume—they are valuable practice tools that will take the lessons taught and put them into practice in your life.

Throughout this book, I have included several sidebar articles about some of my prophetic heroes. These are people who lived after the Bible was finished being written, heard the voice of God for themselves, and did marvelous exploits for the kingdom. I hope this will open your eyes to a few of the people who have gone before us.

I have also included some suggestions of resources that may help you further explore the themes contained in this book. I hope they prompt you to dig deeper into the things of the Spirit.

Blessings on your journey into the prophetic!

Graham

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RELEASING THE PROPHETIC POWER TO RESTORE

VOLUME THREE

The Objective of Prophecy

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS SEGMENT:

- Why prophecy is vital in a post-modern world.
- The difference between prophecy and teaching.
- Prophecy releases a personal impartation of the purposes of God.
- The importance of being and the grace of doing.
- Prophecy and humility are irrepressible companions.
- Prophecy restores dignity and self-respect.
- How to edify, comfort, and encourage.
- Releasing correction and warning properly.
- Provide direction and enhance personal vision.
- Complement teaching and confirm the revealed word.
- Release the church into new truth and practice.
- Prophecy provides insight in pastoral situations.
- Produce evangelistic breakthroughs.
- Provide a prayer agenda for individuals and groups.
- Know the difference between the supernatural and the spectacular.
- Understand institutionalized opposition to the prophetic.
- Develop two relationships with God as Abba and Father.
- Childlike trust in the bedrock of mature faith.

VOLUME **3** THREE

THE OBJECTIVE *of* PROPHECY

IMAGINE THE LIFE OF MOSES as he led a million Israelites through forty years in the wilderness. Life could not have been much fun for the man. First, he was openly envied by others for his close relationship with God. Second, he was blamed, despised, criticized, and ridiculed any time a problem cropped up along the way to the Promised Land. The people ran the man ragged. Bread from heaven wasn't enough; they wanted meat. Water from a rock wasn't enough; they wanted more. The law of God itself was resisted.

On top of all of that, Moses was forced to listen to the life issues and difficulties of more than a million people. In each of those cases, he felt compelled to pray and seek out the Lord for His judgment. Such a process would be exhausting for a pastor of a hundred-member church; one can only imagine the strain on Moses.

Fortunately, there were people who loved Moses and whom the prophet trusted. When his father-in-law, Jethro, watched Moses judge cases from dawn to dusk, he was appalled.

“What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?” he asked in Exodus 18:14.

“Because the people come to me to inquire of God,” Moses replied in verses 15 and 16. *“When they have a difficulty, they come to me, and I judge between one and another; and I make known the statutes of God and His laws.”*

Jethro, an outsider who had just arrived in the Israelite camp, saw a pattern in the constant stream of questions and answers that Moses endured, and proposed a plan. He told his son-in-law to record the problems and answers he had already faced so they could be used as a precedent for others to judge what was going on. With such material in hand, Moses could appoint deputies to deal with those complaints using the prophet’s own words and answers. Moses, meanwhile, could preside over new situations, listening and providing the word of the Lord. Thousands of years later, our court systems use the same principle of precedence as Jethro laid out.

Jethro’s wisdom probably saved Moses’ life, leadership, and sanity. The children of Israel learned to interact with and interpret the written, or revealed, Word of God, and the new word given by Moses through prophetic utterance. This pattern still exists today. The present-day Church has the revealed Word of God in Scripture, which allows us to understand and follow God’s ways. We can be grounded in the Bible and able to determine the heart and will of God for ourselves.

When we encounter situations that don’t appear to have a clear precedent or answer in Scripture, we may need to access the prophetic ministry. This gift will echo the Bible faithfully, drive us to the feet of

**THE KINGDOM
OF HEAVEN IS
PRESENT-FUTURE,
THEREFORE...**

Jesus, and never usurp our will or force us into unsound judgments or actions.

I teach my prophetic students to always keep one question at the forefront of their minds when they

are asked for a word: “Is this person’s need best served by an increased understanding of Scripture, or do they need a *now* word, aligned with Scripture, that will personalize God’s Word in a way that increases faith and confidence and releases them from hindrances and bondage?” When we discern that God’s answer for their need is obviously contained in Scripture, we should refer them to a teacher who has the gift to exposit that precedent to them.

The Bible clearly distinguishes between prophecy and teaching. It emphasizes that both prophetic and teaching gifts exist and that the two have separate functions with the common goal of growing people into spiritual maturity. “*He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*” the apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:11. Paul went even further in 1 Corinthians 12:27–31:

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts.

Both prophecy and teaching are needed in the Church. One does not have precedence over the other; it is not our preference or prejudice that determines which gift we should use, but rather the demands of the situation we find ourselves in. Prophecy and teaching have different goals, and both are vital if we are to understand God’s ways.

**...IT REQUIRES
A PROPHETIC
PEOPLE TO
ESTABLISH
ITS RULE**