

Official or Functional Prophets?

By Michael Clark and George Davis

A prophet marches to a different drum. A true prophet is not concerned with his image, nor how well he is received. It is God who holds people accountable for receiving the messenger and the message. The prophet's single focus is on speaking and writing the message that God has given him to deliver.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines the word "official" as; "1. Of or relating to an office or a post of authority. 2. Authorized by a proper authority; authoritative. 3. Holding office or serving in a public capacity."

There is a great stir in some Christian circles regarding the supposed restoration of the "Office" of Prophet back to the church. (We use the word "office" in quotes because it is not found in the original text of the New Testament referring to ministry gifts.) This has resulted in forum after forum dedicated to the recovery of this office. There is teaching on the subject at gatherings and prophetic conferences throughout the world, which bring the would-be prophets out in droves. Many are sincere and seeking God's will in their lives, but there are many that are seeking recognition and approval by the so-called "official" or "recognized" prophets.

If you look at the prophets in the scriptures, you will realize that the ambition to be accepted or approved of by men is alien to the calling of a true prophet. Acceptance and approval by the authorities of their day abounded only for false prophets. The most vivid case is the court of Ahab and Jezebel. They had 850 false prophets and persecuted God's true prophets including Elijah.

There are many who seek their own glory in prophetic circles today, speaking words that satisfy itching ears. There seems to be a "good ol' boys' club" these prophets use to promote each other. Consider Jesus' words:

"If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. ...Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved." (John 5:31,34)

"He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him." (John 7:18)



A prophet marches to a different drum. A true prophet is not concerned with his image, nor how well he is received. It is God who holds people accountable for receiving the messenger and the message. The prophet's single focus is on speaking and writing the message that God has given him to deliver. God puts these men through whatever is necessary to harden them to the inevitable

opposition that they must face. God has one desire for them, that they speak His word to those in error and in trouble without changing a word of it. They must never alter His words in order to be received and accepted by the hearer. They must never use their gift for worldly and financial gain. Remember what happened to Gehazi?

Now regarding the idea of the "office" of prophet or the "official prophet." True prophets were not found lounging in king's courts. They did not hang out with the aristocracy. If they did end up before a king, they were usually either killed or imprisoned. Their ears were not scanning the crowds for cheers of approval, adjusting their delivery until they got it. No, their ears were directed toward heaven. They sought the approval of God, not man. These men were so regularly rejected that Jesus asked the Pharisees, "[What one of the prophets did your forefathers not kill?](#)" It seems that few living prophets were approved. Generally only dead prophets were acceptable and their tombs were decorated.

You cannot determine if a person is speaking the truth by whether the message is in line with the consensus of popular thought. Most often those who come speaking the truth are out of sync with what is currently held dear by the majority. This is true in the world and in many cases, it is true in today's Church. Be prepared to go cross-grain to many beliefs that are currently being taught in Christian circles if you want to be God's prophet. As Soren Kierkegaard observed in his book *Purity of Heart*:

For many fools do not make a wise man, and the crowd is doubtful recommendation for the cause. Yes, the larger the crowd, the more probable

that that which it praises is folly, and the more improbable that it is any truth, and the most improbable of all that it is any eternal truth.

There is a big difference between a functional prophet and an official prophet. Somewhere along the way from the early church until now we have been sold the bill of goods that only those that are approved by the ecclesiastical structures of men are "official." They are AAA approved, guaranteed to be predictable, manageable and unlikely to embarrass everyone or go against the power structures of men. How religious man hates the unpredictable and the unmanageable! Didn't Jesus say that those who move in the Spirit are like the wind? Now that is unpredictable and unmanageable by mere men.

We do believe that God is restoring the functional prophet back to His Church! On the other hand, the official pre-approved prophets who gather around the ecclesiarchs who rule over the Church are like so many soothsayers sitting in a king's court waiting to bring an affirming word to the status quo. May God restore to the earth those who, without concern for their own welfare, dare to call God's people to repentance and a right heart and speak to what is out of order in the Church today.

Yes, Father, restore this endangered species, the true prophet, back to the earth once again. Don't let the spirits of the Great False Prophet get the last word. Bring forth those who weep and mourn over the fallen state of your Church. Amen.