

Contending to Operate in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Part 1

INTRODUCTION

I. The nature of the Church. There are three key phrases I have used for many years to describe the way the Church is set forth in the New Testament: Prophetic, servant, community. Almost everything that is said in the New Testament about the Church will fit in one of those three categories.

As I said earlier today, there are one or two things you have to jam in there, but almost everything in the New Testament describes the Church in one of these three ways: prophetic, servant, community.

There's a synergism in the midst of these three dynamics; meaning so many people want the Church to function as a community, but the Church cannot be a community unless it moves in the prophetic. The Church cannot move in the prophetic unless its commitment is to be a community. We cannot function as a community unless we're servants, and we cannot function as servants unless we are committed to community.

These three dynamics, which speak of a ton of different ideas under each one of them, not only describe the Church in the New Testament, but they have to operate together in order for the Church to function in the way that the Word of God describes.

THE PROPHETIC DIMENSION OF COMMUNITY

The reason I'm saying that is because I want to talk about the prophetic dimension right here.

A lot of folks are really focused on the community dimension, all over the body of Christ in America. I have been in ministry now for thirty years, and one thing I have heard a thousand times, from the east coast to the west coast, is the disappointment that God's people have with the people functioning as a community.

There are a lot of ideals in people's minds as to how the Church should connect, and how it should flow together, and how the family should be. One of the reasons there is so much frustration and dissatisfaction with the community dimension of the Church is because we have approached the community in ways that are non-biblical.

It is impossible for the Church to function as a community unless its members are committed to a servant spirit. What is most common is that people want the Church to be a close-knit family so that they can have fun together and go and have some good times. There's nothing wrong with having fun and having some good times, but that is not the basis for which the Church functions as community.

Its basis is that the people, the individuals, are committed to a servant spirit. When people are committed to this, the family emerges out of it equally true to that.

That's not my real point; I won't go on about that, I just wanted to mention that in passing to give a context to what I'm sharing this evening.

THE ESSENCE OF TRUE COMMUNITY

Not only does the Church have to function in servant-hood to be this close-knit family. Again, everyone wants the close-knit family; the servant-hood thing is a little “eww!” “Why not just get a bunch of cool people and all hang out together and have fun?”

Well, I’m not going to go there. I was going to talk about how few cool people there are to go around, whatever *cool* means. If there are a thousand people, there are only about fifty that are considered cool, so what are the other 950 of us supposed to do with community?

I mean, honestly, I’m not saying it exactly right, but it’s more than having fun with a bunch of cool people. That’s not the essence of how community works. It wasn’t built that way. It’s the fruit of people committed in a really personal and serious way to having a servant spirit.

FUNCTIONING IN THE PROPHETIC ANOINTING AS A CHURCH

Equally, the community dimension will only operate as the Church functions in the prophetic anointing. Much of the Church today in our nation isn’t interested in operating in the prophetic spirit. Therefore, they are, by default, condemned to not experience community as a Church.

I’m talking about the whole Body of Christ. The vast majority of the church in our nation isn’t interested in the prophetic spirit. Even the charismatic and Pentecostal churches, which have in their doctrine and statement of faith that they’re interested in it, the vast majority of them are not operating in it in any way whatsoever. That is one of the greatest reasons for the frustration and inability to move in the community spirit.

When I talk about the word *prophetic*, I’m talking about it in a general sense. You could talk about it specifically in the sense of prophetic ministry, but I’m talking about it in a little more general sense of operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit—being a people who actually experience and function in the gifts of the Holy Spirit on a regular basis.

That is as critical to being a community as operating in a spirit of servanthood.

Again, most places that you go in the kingdom of God, people want community, but they don’t want the other two dimensions. I want to say that community is a pipe dream; it’s a fantasy; it’s a frustration, apart from these other two dimensions functioning on a regular basis.

A SUMMONS TO PUBLIC REPENTANCE

The Lord corrected me really strongly in the last month or maybe two months. I have been really stirred with this for maybe two months, maybe three in the recent days about the lack of the operation of the Spirit in my life and in the life of IHOP–KC.

He has so much more for us, but He wants us to repent. He has called me into a season of repentance. I have been repenting privately, and I’ve told this to a few people here and there. I want to repent publicly, and I want to call you into repentance. The Lord has so much more that He wants to give us, even pre-revival.

We all have a theology that when revival breaks out, the prophetic (I’m using it in the general sense), the gifts of the Spirit, the power of God, will be abundant all over. That is true! When revival breaks out, there will be a

significant amount of power demonstration going on, and we're going to see revival in this city, and we're going to see it in cities all over the earth. Not just in America, all over the earth.

Revival is already happening in several cities across the earth right now. I'm talking about how, in a pre-revival state, like we're in now, there is significantly more of the Holy Spirit's power that we could operate in. On a scale of one to ten, as a family, we are operating probably at a one.

That's really high compared to most places. It really is! We have a lot more than most places, but we have almost none of it. That's the trouble. My point isn't to be negative about other places; my point is to put in front of us the dilemma that this is really an absent reality in the Church in our nation.

In charismatic and Pentecostal churches who claim it, almost none of it is existing; there's a little here and a little there in various ministries. So maybe we're operating at about a one. When revival breaks out, we will be at a seven, eight, nine, ten; I mean, the lame will walk, the blind will see, miracles will happen, angels will appear, the choirs will be heard as they sound forth.

Beloved, we can operate in a three or a four even before the revival. The Lord has to double and triple the amount of Holy Spirit activity we could have in the state of affairs we are in right now, if we would have a paradigm for it, and if we would understand that it's God's will, and if we would repent of our contentment to not flow in this spirit today, but to wait for the great revival in a few years.

That attitude is an attitude that will keep us in near-powerlessness, where we aren't fully powerless, but nearly powerless.

“THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT IS... FOR THE PROFIT OF ALL”

It says in 1 Corinthians 12, here on the PowerPoint, “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all” (1 Cor. 12:7).

Then it goes on and describes nine gifts of the Spirit. These gifts of the Spirit are manifestations of power; they're not personality traits or temperaments. I have heard people say, “Well, the ‘word of wisdom’ is the people who have wisdom.” That's not what that is talking about. The gift of the Spirit called “the word of wisdom” means a phrase or a fragment of wisdom. A word of wisdom is only a short phrase that the Holy Spirit supernaturally drops into our spirit, and if we give expression to that phrase, if we actually say it, then the Holy Spirit will move in and release power after it is spoken.

If we don't say the phrase when it's given to us, if we don't act on it, the power doesn't move. It must be acted out. That is how this thing operates by faith.

WORDS OF WISDOM, WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE

A “word of knowledge” is the same thing: It's a fragment of knowledge, a little bit of information. When we were praying for Emily, I had the phrase “October” touch my spirit. Now, this won't work this way with everyone, but the way I do it—I'll just be really personal about this; I do this privately—the phrase “October” touched me and then I said, “October,” and I felt the Spirit rest on my face in a tangible way.

As they were praying, I said, “October,” and it came again. That’s just a little way that me and the Lord do that. Then I said, “OK, I don’t have a clue about what that is, but I’m going to say ‘October,’ because I know the Spirit bore witness in a way that He and I communicate.”

Not everyone works that way with everyone; everyone does it differently. I get phrases, then I say them back to the Lord, and then I can feel the Spirit’s presence resting on me in a distinct way, not in a really heavy way, but clearly distinctly. It lifts, then I say it again, and it comes back.

I usually say it two or three times, and then I’m ready to go. Maybe someone says, “That’s cheating; if you get that, then it’s not by faith.” Many times the Lord will give phrases, but He won’t give that kind of confirmation. So don’t say, “That’s not how I want to do it!” That’s just how it operates. It doesn’t always operate that way with me. I know when I get a phrase, and I say it, and the Lord’s presence comes a time or two, it bolsters my faith. I’ve asked Him to help me in this. I used to do this a whole lot in the years past. I get busy, I get leading, I get teaching, and I get going.

I’ve drawn back on the active openness, this aggressiveness to receive fragments of information. When you get too busy to be open to go after those, to wait on them, to receive them, that’s number one: You get too busy, you get out of focus, and then the Lord doesn’t give you those phrases. He doesn’t give them and you won’t speak them on a microphone, because you speak them in all kinds of settings.

Most of the time we’ll operate in these gifts of the Holy Spirit in private settings, in one on one and one on three, four or five people in a prayer line, at a friend’s house, in our car, and we can just speak those phrases.

MANIFESTING THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Anyway, there are nine gifts of the Holy Spirit that are described here. It says here at the end of 1 Corinthians 12:11, “One and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”

Here is what I want you to get clear: every single one of you who’s in this room who’s a born-again believer, every ten-year old—you don’t have to be an adult—God has called every single one of you to function in supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

Every single one of you—that’s what it says in verse 11.

Let’s go back to 1 Corinthians 12:7. It says, “The manifestation of the Spirit is to each one.” That means every one of you. Here’s the dilemma: There are thousands of people in the room; about 980 don’t actively ask the Lord to release the gifts of the Holy Spirit in their lives in the present tense.

Most people, I’m guessing 95 percent of IHOP–KC, believe in the gifts of the Spirit; we all believe they’re coming in revival. I’m guessing 95 percent of the people at IHOP–KC, and I’m one of them, and I’ve just repented in the last month or two, 95 percent of us never ask the Lord for the gifts of the Spirit.

“Today, this afternoon, right now, I’m going to my friend’s house. Lord, I want to operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit has given them to every single individual.”

Beloved, that is one of the main reasons why it doesn't work in your life: simply because you don't take the time to ask Him for these little phrases.

Now, another reason it doesn't operate is because of the way we measure the gifts of the Spirit.

REJOICING IN SMALL DEMONSTRATIONS OF POWER

I'm going back to the scale of one to ten, but in a very different application of it here. Most of us think of the miracles and the healings as the dramatic ones, and that's true. We only think of eight-, nine-, and ten-level demonstrations of power. However, the one, two, and three are also demonstrations of power. Though they are a very small measure, they are still the power of God.

Often, in a person's healing, or their freedom or their liberty, they may be prayed for hundreds of times, and little by little the Lord touches them, and it all contributes to the ultimate deliverance of that person's life, and it's like peeling an onion. You peel off a little bit, and you've got such a thin layer, it seems like you're not even getting anywhere. You stay with it, and little by little a little bit comes off.

In some ways, you could use that analogy with the gifts of the Spirit. It may be just a little, thin layer, like an onion skin, the thinnest amount, but it's still a demonstration of God's power.

Because it's so small, you think, "Ah, who wants to bother with that." The Lord says, "That is exactly the problem: You don't want to bother with it, and it really is the power of God. It's not the dramatic yet, but it is My power." It's not the devil, and it's not the operation of the flesh; it really is the power of God, just in a very, very small measure.

So people have two basic attitudes I have mentioned. I'll just say them again. Number one: They don't ask the Lord for the ability to move in it. Then, when they do express it and ask Him, the measure of power is so little that they despise the measure of it. They either don't ask the Lord to use them, or when He does it's so little that it annoys them, and they say, "I don't want to bother with this."

THE LIFE STORY OF JOHN WIMBER

The third reason why people don't do this is because it takes an element of risk. With an element of risk it might not go right. We might not see the results, and that is risky.

Maybe some of you who are younger don't know his ministry, but John Wimber was one of the prominent leaders in the Body of Christ in the Western world. He had large conferences all around America and Europe, with five and ten thousand people, mostly leaders. He would go to a nation like Germany and seven thousand pastors would come. He would teach for four days on the power of God. He went to England and would have five, ten, fifteen thousand come for four-day conferences to teach leaders how to move in the power of God, because the power of God was operating in his life.

John Wimber went home to be with the Lord some years ago, and he launched the Vineyard movement. Some of you have heard of the Vineyard movement; there are churches all around. The Vineyard movement was launched under a healing anointing.

He was a professional musician who played with the Righteous Brothers way back in the sixties or early seventies, actually. As a professional musician and a business man, the Lord told him to go into ministry, because He wanted to use him in healing.

He didn't know anything. He grew up as a total heathen; he had no church background at all. He didn't understand any of the Christian jargon, or anything about it. But the Lord said, "I want you to pray for the sick." He didn't know anyone who had ever prayed for the sick.

Now, get this, he was a very excellent communicator and leader and pastor, and he had a few-thousand member church there in Anaheim, California. The Lord said to preach on healing; he didn't know anything about healing, so he started preaching on it, and he preached on it for one year straight.

YEARS OF PRAYER FOR THE MINISTRY OF HEALING

John Wimber said, "I preached on healing for one year: I'm talking fifty weeks in a row, zero healings. Not only had I never seen a healing, I had never seen anyone who prayed for the sick, but I was told to pray for healing." He said, "I didn't have a clue what I was doing." He told this story over and over: "I prayed for thousands of people, and the only thing I could testify for sure, the only thing I ever saw changed is that on a number of occasions they became more sick after I prayed for them. That is the only thing I can verify was changed."

Thousands of times, fifty sermons, every single meeting, and he said there wasn't one healing, though there were a number of regressions—negative! He said, "Many didn't get worse, but some did. On two or three occasions when I prayed for the sick, I ended up getting their sickness. That happened a number of times. I prayed for them and I got sick. I was ready to throw up my hands and quit, and then the Lord began to break in."

Here is my point: He had this measure of faithfulness, and then the Lord began to do these amazing things. The Lord began to open blind eyes and paralyzed limbs and significant, unusual operations of the Spirit began to take place. All over the world, there was a lot of attention that came to him, and he went all over and trained people.

THE WAY YOU SPELL 'FAITH'

By a gracious act of God, the Lord set it up to where he invited me to travel with him for three years. I went to all of these major cities with him across the earth from 1989 to 1991. I became very close friends with him. All of our meals were shared together, and we probably went on trips to one or two conferences a month, most months of the year, for right at three years.

I went all around the world and I got to be right there watching this happen, and I was trained in this environment to pray for the sick. We saw lots of things happen.

One of the things John Wimber said was, "The way you speak faith is R-I-S-K. If you don't want to risk, you will never be used in healing in any consistent way." He said, "If I have learned anything, don't at all pay attention to feelings. I never pay attention to feelings. When I pray, I will pray for a thousand. If you pray for a thousand and only ten get healed, ten out of a thousand is way better than zero out of zero." He used to say that all the time.

He would go to these nations and talk to their leaders and say, “Ten healings out of a thousand is better than zero. That’s still ten!” He said, “The problem with the Body of Christ is that they don’t ask the question. They don’t make themselves available; they don’t ask the question.”

ASKING, WELCOMING, AND HONORING THE HOLY SPIRIT’S PRESENCE

III. The people don’t want to ask, welcome, and invite the presence of the Holy Spirit. We must welcome, we must invite, and we must honor the Spirit’s presence. We must ask Him for His leadership when we gather; we can’t just assume it, but we actually have to risk it.

If we ask the Lord, if we welcome Him consciously, and I don’t just mean publicly—publicly is good, but that’s not exactly what I mean—I mean the people who are leading the meeting are consciously connecting themselves with the presence of the Spirit.

They are saying, “Holy Spirit, we recognize Your presence, and we consciously invite Your leadership.” In other words, “Begin to give us impressions, words of knowledge” —in other words, “words of wisdom.”

All these nine gifts of the Spirit flow out of prophesying. At the end of the day, prophesying generally means moving in the Spirit, receiving these impressions and expressing them, and then the Lord releasing power.

That’s how all the gifts of the Spirit operate. First, we receive these impressions.

ASKING FOR THE LORD’S DIRECTION

It says here in paragraph A, “We must be intentional about the Spirit’s leading when we gather.” Here’s how we do it; it’s so simple: We do this simply by asking the question, “Lord, what are You doing? What are You saying?” That is how we do it. As simple as this is, this is so simple, but almost no one does it.

This is one of Wimber’s biggest points, that he made over and over and over. We asked the Lord to give us prophetic impressions, even one phrase, and these impressions serve as a little hint that the Lord gives us, if we will take the risk, step out, and give an expression to that impression.

First, we take time to ask for it, then we take the risk of expressing it. Then we are grateful instead of despising how small the manifestation is. We actually honor the Lord for it. I don’t mean we call it something it isn’t, but we’re grateful instead of mad.

BEING FAITHFUL IN THAT WHICH IS LITTLE

“I don’t want to bother with this because it’s so little! It’s like a little layer of an onion; it’s not enough for me, Lord. When You are ready to release great power, here I am. I’m Your man, I’m your woman, I am ready at your calling.”

The Lord’s answer is, “I want you to be faithful in little, and I want you to be grateful, and I want you to see the move of the Spirit in the little, in the headache that almost leaves.” It doesn’t leave entirely, but it’s a little better. That’s not the devil doing that, and that’s not human ability! The power of God really does heal in stages, all the time. Many healings are done incrementally. Just a little healing, a little bit of oppression is lifted off—not all the oppression, but a little.

That's not the devil who lifted off demonic oppression! It's not human strength that lifted off demonic oppression! It's the power of God; it's just a little measure of it.

“If that's a little measure of it, I don't want to bother with it.”

The Lord says, “Therein is the problem, right there. You want Me to heal the sick on Your terms, big and powerful and dramatic or not at all. My method of the kingdom is that I give more to those who are faithful with small things.”

THE SPIRIT'S PRESENCE IN JESUS, THE ONE WHO WENT FORTH

John preached on this verse so many times; any person who's been associated with the Vineyard when John was leading it, they heard it before he went home to be with the Lord some years ago. “Then Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do’” (Jn. 5:19).

This is Jesus. Jesus is fully God. When He was on the earth, He was not operating in power because He was God. He laid aside His right to function as God. That is the stunning reality of Jesus' humanity. He had all of God, He was fully God. He's the One who acted in Genesis 1 and created the heavens and the earth.

The Father said, “Here is the deal: If You become human, number one, You have to be human forever. You cannot ever change Your mind. A million years later, You cannot say, ‘I'm tired of the human thing, can I take off the garments of humanity and only be God? I don't want to be limited to the confines of the human body; I want to cast this thing off.’”

When Jesus appears, He appears in a human body, and the Spirit releases His power. The relationship between God the Father and the Son in the Trinity is the Spirit's presence in the One who goes forth.

Jesus will have fingers and hands and human skin forever and forever. As I said the other night, that's really a step down. When Jesus was on the earth, the way it worked was this: The Father said, “Son, if You are going to be human on the earth, You have to live by faith and the activity of the Spirit.” So Jesus did not use His power as God; He relied on the Holy Spirit to come upon Him.

THE SPIRIT'S LIMITATIONS ON JESUS

When the Spirit did not come upon Him, He couldn't heal the sick. If He decided, “I'm tired of waiting on the Spirit, I'm God already, I don't need the Holy Spirit to come upon Me,” it didn't work that way. Jesus was actually like you and me: He had to wait on the Spirit to come, and for the Father's timing and the Father's will. He had all these restraints in His humanity that were completely foreign to Him. He accepted having to walk in these.

Beloved, Jesus walks in humanity forever. It's an amazing, amazing reality that Jesus is human.

So Jesus was on the earth doing great miracles, but whenever the Spirit was on Him or spoke to Him, He could do miracles. But if the Father wasn't doing it, He couldn't do them. The only way He could die for us is if He lived in the limitations of His humanity. He had to live out the human thing fully. When Jesus healed the sick, He had to wait. He said, “I have to see what the Father is doing.”

THE CAPTAIN OF OUR FAITH

What that boils down to in our context is this: We ask the Lord, “What are You doing? What are You saying?” The Lord gives us impressions, and beloved, Jesus was not limited to impressions. He had open experiences where the Father spoke to Him, and, in His communion with the Father, there are dimensions of it that we don’t know anything about, but I assure you this: Jesus did move many times by impressions as a human.

He is the Captain of our faith, and He modeled what it meant to live by faith. Could you imagine being fully God, and being limited in Your healing ministry to impressions, and You spoke them, and then the Spirit moved in power? It’s a very, very different way than what He was used to, this thing of being human.

This is really amazing. Jesus set the model of how we operate in the Spirit. We come into a gathering, and beloved, it isn’t just a large gathering like this. It’s in fellowship with Your friends, it’s an E-12 group, it’s in the coffee shop. It’s in the classroom at FSM or in the internship or at the cafeteria; it’s at home with your friends when you go back home. It’s at the mall, it’s at the ball game, it’s at the soccer game with your children, some of you who have young children.

We ask the Lord, “What are You saying? What are You doing?”

You make yourself available by that question. Consciously you make yourself available.

Jesus moved in the power of God, and that was one of the bases by which He did it. He had to ask the Father and wait for the Father to give Him hints. Some of the times they were just open displays. The Lord spoke to Him audibly from heaven, but He operated by faith, even in His ministry.

Jesus was the picture of how we live before the Father. God gave Him as a demonstration of how we live before the Father.

THE SMALL, FORWARD DRIFT OF A BOAT ON THE WATER

So this was the verse that John Wimber used the most. He said, “When I get up on the platform, I do the same thing I do when I’m in my hotel room. I ask the Lord, ‘What are You doing?’ He said, ‘I would ask that question a thousand times a day: ‘What are You doing, Lord, what are You doing? Let me see! Let something catch my eye! Let an impression come.’”

John would be in the restaurant, eating and talking. He wouldn’t be vocal about it, but he would be asking, “Lord, what are You doing? Is there anything happening in this restaurant that You want me participating in?”

The analogy that I like to use is the analogy of a little sailboat out on a lake on a calm day. You get the sailboat out there and apparently the wind isn’t blowing at all.

“Well, I guess it’s going to be a pretty quiet day...”

You put the sail up and the sail catches an ever-so-subtle breeze coming across the lake on a calm day. The boat moves a little. You think, “I could hardly feel that; it’s almost indiscernible, it’s so calm,” but you put the sail up and it catches a little.

When we ask this question, we put our sail up, so to speak. The idea is that we raise the sail so we can catch, so we can be aware of the little gusts of wind, which I'll liken in this analogy to the little impressions, the little whisper of God touching our spirit.

There's the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 19, when the Lord moved in all these powerful ways. At the very end of the experience, the Lord spoke to Elijah in a whisper, in a gentle, soft whisper. The whisper of God in our soul, which I call receiving impressions, that little prophetic whisper, is what we're asking for.

When we ask the question, "What are You doing?" we are putting our sail up, and that little gust of wind, that little piece of information, touches our spirit. Then we risk it and act on it. Because it only moves the sailboat about a foot or two, we don't despise it, but we're grateful because it's the true power of God.

When God watches us, when we are faithful in the days of small beginnings, when we're faithful with little things, then the way of His kingdom is that He increases them.

Again, a lot of folks say, "Lord, I tell You what; You speak audibly. Just interrupt me and speak audibly. Tell me I'm going to heal the sick today, and I'll go and do it as a big demonstration!" Anybody will sign up for healing ministry on those terms; the problem is, those aren't God's terms. His terms are such that it produces a dependency and humility in the vessels that grows progressively in the anointing of the Spirit.

THE LIFE OF JOHN G. LAKE

"Oh, I don't want this progressive-growth thing! I just want the big one!"

Now, there are big-one experiences. John G. Lake talks about them. He had one of the most powerful healing ministries in all history. He died in 1935 after incredible healing miracles. When he went to South Africa, they documented 100,000 major miracles in five years—100,000!

John G. Lake had many enemies who wanted to call him fake, but when they came to test him, they could not deny the power of God. He healed many of the lame and blind, and raised the dead on a number of occasions. We've got his books in our bookstore, and I would really recommend you reading them. I've read them over and over for years and years.

John G. Lake was really faithful in the days of small beginnings, and I like that, but my real inspiration for that has been John Wimber. John G. Lake has inspired me to believe for the big incomings of God. Those incomings of God, when the power of the Spirit comes on us, are real, and those are a part of God's plan for the lives of a number of you in this room.

THE WHISPER OF GOD WHICH IS THE GRACE OF PROPHECY

However, between now and then, and even between those big downloads of God where great things happen, in the wake of those there's the operating in the whisper of God, and that's all we have, even when the big anointing comes. We still operate by the whisper of God in our soul. A lot of us do it most of the time.

Jesus operated not only in that, but He did operate by faith in the whisper of God. Faith doesn't mean nothing is happening at all; faith means we have actually received the whisper of God, we have actually received the

impression and we are expressing it. We have faith that God is speaking through the whisper of God. I'll use that phrase: It is that whisper of God which is the grace of prophecy.

It is the grace of prophecy, and that is what we need to ask for, is that we would be activated in the grace of prophecy. The Lord's answer is, "I will gladly do it if you will ask the question and put your sail up, if you will express it, and if you won't despise that it's so little, that the sailboat may only move a couple of feet. If you don't despise that, yes, you can begin to operate in the power of God that really is the supernatural power of God.

THE CULMINATION OF SMALL BREAKTHROUGHS

We had, what, fifty people up here a few minutes ago. I assure you that the power of God touched a number of them, but in a very small way, in a way that undoubtedly a number of them say, "I've had this happen many times and I still have not seen the breakthrough."

I tell you, those things really add up; they really matter to God, and they really matter in time to the full deliverance of the person.

THE FOLLY OF HAVING BETTER THINGS TO DO

I am, and probably many of you are as well, naturally too proud to bother with the boat only moving a foot. "If the boat's going to gust forward in power, I'm in! If it's going to move a foot, no, tap me on the shoulder when You're ready for the real stuff."

Most people are too proud to humble themselves to yoke with the Lord on the little things. "It's too bothersome, I've got other things to do! I have entertainment and recreation and money to make and places to go. I don't want to bother with that. I have other things to do."

That is what we're repenting for: We're repenting that we don't put our sails up as a lifestyle. We don't ask the question. Even pre-revival, we should still ask the question.

WHAT WOULD HE DO IF WE GAVE HIM MORE ROOM?

Let's go to B here. Ask the Lord what He would do if we gave Him room.

Paragraph B. Ask the Lord, "What would You do, Lord, if we gave You room?"

I was doing that tonight. I said, "Lord, if we gave You full room" —now, to give the Lord room doesn't mean, agree that God can heal. Everyone in this room believes that God can heal. There's not a problem that He heals, and that He wants to heal, and that He will in revival. Everyone is clear on that.

DIALING DOWN TO HEAR THE WHISPERS OF THE SPIRIT

Giving Him more room means that we will take time. To take time, we have to dial down. That was one of the things that John Wimber said over and over and over. He talked in those days not about the Pentecostal denomination; I want to honor the Pentecostal denomination. I'm using the word *Pentecostal* in a very different way now. I'm not talking about a particular denomination or a particular church.

There's a Pentecostal culture in the Body of Christ, that if we get into a frenzy, then we're in the Spirit. John Wimber was exactly opposite of that. He said, "No, go the other way. Dial down, don't dial up."

When you get up in that frenzied mode, you cannot discern the whispers that are touching your spirit. Bring the whole thing down, quiet your soul, and catch the whispers of God. Receive them—I don't mean *catch* like you're catching them. Discern them when they come.

In a dialed-up mode, in a frenzied, static mode, it's very difficult to discern the whispers. I see people in the prayer line and they're saying, "In the name of Jesus!" etc. I say, "Hey, just a little softer; just wait; say, 'Lord, Lord, release Your power,' and then be asking the question all the time, 'Lord, what are You doing?'"

"Just wait. Do less talking, way less talking in healing." The Pentecostal model has taught us that louder and more talking is better, and that is the guaranteed way not to receive the whisper. The whisper may come, but you won't discern it because the person is so dialed up.

This was one of John's biggest points. He said, "We have to dial the whole thing down. We have to be in a mode of listening—way less speaking and way more listening."

THE SPIRIT OF RELIGIOUS PERFORMANCE

John would lead ministry time with thousands of people, and I would watch him. Again, I was traveling with him for three years, and it seemed like he would go on forever.

He would wait on the Lord. Again, all these people were excited to see the power of God because of his reputation. He said, "I am not yielding to performance; I am not going to yield to their expectation. That is what performance is."

Performance is when you get a reputation that you're powerful or good or awesome or something, and then when you get in front of people, you have to produce that because of the expectation. Beloved, that is religious performance.

I have done it many times. I don't have that good of a reputation, but I've wanted to "wow!" people, and that is performance. That will get you into so much anxiety, and normally you don't get into heavy performance until you get into a little bit of reputation.

TEMPTATIONS TO PERFORMANCE IN MINISTRY

That's one of the big setbacks that young people don't understand who have never been in ministry. They don't know about that dilemma, but when a little success happens, then the expectation is there, and then the performance wears out the people who are always trying to come up with what is equal to their reputation. That will absolutely wear you out.

John said, "I'm not doing that; I'm not going there." He said, "If nothing happens, I absolutely owe no one anything. I owe them no answers. I only wait. If I get an impression, I say it. If I don't get an impression, I go back to my hotel room. The pay is the same." He said, "I have done the will of God."

When young people began to say “yes” to the healing ministry, they were all anxious to do what John was doing. Of course, they didn’t know about the year where nothing happened, and even the second year where very little happened. He went two really hard, long years of just believing for it.

Anyway, he would get people convinced that this was the way of the kingdom, and they would do it. They would begin to get under pressure right away to be the next John Wimber, and John said, “Don’t do that.” He said, “I’m not committed at all to being powerful at my next meeting. I am only committed to being open and available. I’m not going to yield to trying to service my reputation.”

That is why he had so much peace in it. It was awesome to watch: He would stand there, and some ministry times were different from others, but he would say, “Lord, what are You doing? Let’s just wait on the Lord.”

One minute is OK; one minute, no one minds. Two minutes, most of the people who are new with it are embarrassed for John. They’re thinking, “Oh my gosh, nothing is happening.”

I got to know John well enough to know that he didn’t care at all. He was just sitting there saying, “Here I am, Lord; I’m ready and I’m listening. I’m available.” He would look around the room being available.

Three minutes would go by and people were saying, “Oh, poor John, he’s failing.” He would say, “I’m not failing; I have only been told to wait on impressions, and, if I get one, to say it out loud. That is all I have ever been told to do. If I say it out loud and nothing happens, that is God’s problem. If I wait and don’t get anything, that is God’s problem. If He gives me an impression and I don’t see a manifestation of power, that is still God’s problem. I’ve done well today.”

I saw him wait five, ten minutes. The room was quiet. People were starting to say, “Let’s just fake a healing! Let’s get something going in here to get the poor guy off the hook!” John wasn’t on the hook. I saw him do it a lot of times. I would say, “I do not have that much nerve!”

I told him that once, and he said, “No, you don’t have enough humility.” He said, “You don’t have the humility to sustain looking bad for that long. You don’t have that much humility.”

THE NECESSITY OF HUMILITY

John never thought of himself as humble. He said, “No, it’s not about nerve, it’s about humility.” He said, “I really don’t mind looking bad, because I was a total loser before God saved me. Everything else is plus! Where I was, this is all plus! If I look bad, that’s OK. I’m already so far ahead in the game from what I deserve, that I don’t even mind looking bad.”

I want to say that again: When I said, “I don’t have the nerves to do that,” he said, “No, you don’t have the humility, because you’re so managing your reputation when you’re waiting and nothing is happening. It’s all about your reputation being maintained. If you disconnect from that, then it doesn’t matter.”

POSTURING OURSELVES TO RECEIVE IMPRESSIONS

I thought, “Wow! I think he is on to something here.” So he began to teach us about this, about waiting on the Lord. We want to ask Him; we want to make room for Him. We make room for Him by asking specifically,

“Lord, what are You doing?” We put the sails up and position ourselves by that question. We posture ourselves to receive the impression.

That’s what I mean by “we put the sail up”: We posture ourselves. Beloved, if we don’t ask that question, and about 95 percent of us in this room don’t ask this question—I’m not saying that as a rebuke, I’m really not. I want IHOP–KC to enter into our inheritance; I want you to enter into your inheritance as an individual.

A MOMENT OF PERSONAL, PUBLIC REPENTANCE

I’m not saying that to rebuke you; I’m saying that to say there is another way to do it. I’m telling you that for some time, for way too long, I don’t even want to figure out how long because I would be too embarrassed by it, I used to ask this question all the time, throughout the day. For some long season I haven’t asked this question. I know better, because I’ve asked the question and operated in the Spirit for a good season, and then quit doing it and repented. Then I got started up again for a season or two, and then quit doing it.

I’ve been in about four or five cycles of this. I have no excuse for being out of sync at this stage of my life. I stand before you and say, “I have been out of sync again.” This is my fourth or fifth cycle. Lord, will I ever sustain this until I meet You face to face? *Sustained* means bringing up this question on a regular basis; that’s what I mean by sustaining it.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WILL OF GOD

We pray the prayer here in B, “Fill us with the knowledge of Your will.” Do you know, part of the knowledge of God’s will is about where you’re supposed to be go and what you’re supposed to do and what city, and whom you’re going to marry, and what ministry you’ll have? The will of God is related to that; it’s directional.

But the knowledge of His will isn’t only directional. The knowledge of His will is also situational in terms of the ministry that God wants to do in that situation. “Fill me with the knowledge of Your will” isn’t just “who, what, when, and where?” down the road. “Fill me with the knowledge of Your will” is the same question as, “Lord, what are You doing, right now, today? Fill me with the knowledge of what You’re doing right now; give me a fragment of it.”

THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION

When we pray the favorite IHOP–KC prayer—I’ve got to read it, I forgot how it goes—“Give me the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,” we’re not only asking for revelation for the beauty of Jesus, though we are. We’re not only asking for revelation about what we’re supposed to do, and where to go, and what to do, though we are. We’re also asking for the revelation of His heart right now, right now in the meeting we’re in.

“Fill me with the spirit of wisdom and revelation.” That’s not just a directional prayer, that’s a ministry prayer in a present-tense situation. We have more prayers stored up to receive the knowledge of these little prophetic whispers.

IHOP–KC is an optimum place; we sit and pray this all day long. We’re doing it, but we’re praying it mostly about the great break-in when we’re going to be at a level seven, eight, nine, or ten. The Lord says, “I would also answer it at the level one, two, three, and four if you want it.” The Lord will give it to us.

Paragraph C. Watchfulness. The simple act of asking this question questions the necessary spiritual environment that opens the gates of our heart. Let me use this analogy: The simple act of asking it creates the environment that opens the gates of our heart to receive these prophetic whispers, which is really the grace of prophecy.

It may be a word of knowledge, a word of wisdom. We can define the nine gifts of the Spirit in different ways, and that's good to do, and we need to do that, but at the end of the day they all usually flow there. There's always the exception of the one outstanding miracle where it just suddenly happens.

Most of these gifts of the Spirit begin by a prophetic impression, every one of them. There is a phrase that enters our heart, we speak the phrase, and when we speak the phrase, things happen in the Spirit. We don't always see it in the natural. Sometimes we see it dramatically, and sometimes it's a very small, incremental step forward, but it's an action of God. We're all grateful for it, and we don't despise.

DESPISING THE DAY OF SMALL BEGINNINGS

I want to encourage us not to despise. There is a despising of the smallness of God's activity. I'm not picking on anyone, but I'm talking about fifteen worship leaders right now. Most of our worship leaders, most of them, not all of them, and probably even most of our preachers—the point of this is that nearly all of us do this—when I go up to them and ask them at the end of one of their worship sets how it was, the standard cool IHOP–KC answer is, “It was terrible and it was horrible.”

That's the cool IHOP–KC answer. I want to say this to you: That answer grieves the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit says, “So that's your answer to what I was doing with you. If it's not big and stunning, it's terrible? That's the answer?”

I've asked at least fifteen worship leaders over the last year, “How was your set?” Almost always they say, “It was miserable.” I guess the logic is, if they say it was good, then I would say, “Good?! You're so out of touch! Do you think that was good? You're so completely out of touch, I rebuke you!” That's what they're thinking; they're not going to go there. If you go back to the briefing after a worship set and say, ‘That was good!’ I'll say, “You're so out of touch, you must be the one guy in the room out of touch!”

So the cool answer is that it was horrible. We're actually making a statement about the way that God runs His kingdom, not just how bad we are. We're trying to make a statement about how bad we are, but we're actually making a statement that if God doesn't move on a greater level, I refuse to acknowledge His goodness in my midst.

The Lord says, “Oh, is that true? You're an ‘either I do it on your terms, or we don't do it at all’ type of guy, right?”

“Well, Lord, no...”

DON'T DESPISE THE LITTLENESS OF GOD

Zechariah 4:10—I'll give that verse to you. The prophet Zechariah told Zerubbabel, “Do not despise the day of small beginnings” (paraphrased). Don't despise the littleness of God.

John Wimber wouldn't despise the zero healings. "Again, not only did they not get healed, I got sick!" He always made this joke, he said it a thousand times—"I refuse to pray for the pregnant women!" They laughed every time. He said that joke a thousand times. That's where I got some of my corn; I'm blaming it on him now.

To John, it wasn't about him, and if nothing happened, it wasn't about him. His part was to take his hand out of his pocket, put it on them, and wait for a while. If he did his job, it was about the Lord then.

HUMILITY, NOT INSINCERITY

I want to encourage us to have a completely different paradigm of seeing smallness, not as terrible and horrible, but as, "Hey, I'm a grateful servant!" What's actually better is never to measure it, not to measure the Spirit in a worship set, a prayer meeting, a preaching time, a prayer time. Don't measure it.

Somebody says, "How was the meeting?" If you want to say, "Good!" if you want to be positive because you're honoring the Lord when you say, "Good!" if you're going to be negative, it's better not to say it. I assure you, more times than not, you will grieve the Holy Spirit in your attempt to be humble.

The attempt is to be humble, for sure, but at the end of the day it's not humility, it's insincerity that is speaking. It's truly not humility. The only way I know this is that I've done it a thousand times. I didn't read it in a book! I know that it's my insecurity speaking, not my humility speaking.

"I want to be the first one to say I'm bad, I don't want anyone else to say I'm bad first!"

The Lord is saying, "No, no! I don't want you to do that! Don't measure it."

We pray for the people. So how did it go? The real answer is, unless you saw things obviously that excited you, and you want to give the testimony of the Lord's hand, if you didn't, the answer isn't that it was bad, the answer is, "I did my part, I was faithful, I showed up with an open heart and did my part and I am a grateful servant."

"I did my part" is really the answer. I've preached so many sermons that have been boring and oppressed. I mean hundreds of them! When I meet a young preacher in our midst, they say, "Oh, it was so oppressed!"

I say, "You have no idea how many sermons I've suffered through of my own. You have no idea."

They say, "Not really."

I say, "Oh, I don't even want to tell you how many sermons I just wanted to go home and cry." That's not my personality, but I swore never to preach at least a hundred times after sermons in my early days of preaching, and every now and then in recent days.

THE ORCHESTRATION OF DULL TIMES

Do you know what the real answer is? Don't measure it. I prepared, I lived right before God, I said, "Hey, the pay is the same from heaven," I did my part. Just so you know, preachers, worship leaders, prophesiers, which is everyone, I want to promise you one thing: The Lord has actually orchestrated, and is going to make sure you have dull times, strategically, for sure.

It will create gratitude, desperation, and humility in you. I don't care how good it is, one, two, three four, you will have some dull ones after some good ones, because it is God's gift to create desperation, humility, and gratitude in your spirit.

Don't despise those; that is the kiss of a God who cares about your long-term greatness.

"I'm quitting! It was bad."

I say, "Yeah, I know what it means to be humbled, too. I hate being humbled under the humility of the Lord."

I know about oppressed, un-anointed labors after four or five or six or ten, ones that had a little life on it and then a total dud, a double-dead one. Not only was the room bored, they were saying, "Please let us out of this room, end that sermon, I beg thee!" That is what I mean by double dead; I've had plenty of those.

So I look to that and I say, "Lord, how is this? I'm walking with you right now, this, that and the other thing."

The Lord says, "No, it's not about that you're not walking right with Me, or that you're not prepared." He says, "It's because I love you. If you have nothing but a lively string of experiences in the Spirit you will get confused after ten or twenty years of that. You will get confused and start thinking it's a whole lot more about you than it is about Me.

"Mike, you are not different than everyone else. It will confuse you if that is all you ever get from Me. I love You. I am going to give you some blessings, but I'm doing it, really, because of the people I want to touch. But I'm going to allow some oppressed ones, and it will create a desperation; it will create a lowliness and a humility and gratitude in you because of the other ones.

"It will really balance you."

When people tell me how bad it is, I just throw that away; it's so much traffic—so much goobily-gah. I say, "We did our part; we showed up and did it. Either the Lord moved or He didn't move; I can't make it any different. I'm grateful to You, Lord, because I know You care about me, and that You're going to allow some negative ones to hit at different times."

"WATCH AND BE SOBER"

I'm going to come to an end here. This watchfulness, this simple act of asking the question, creates the necessary spiritual environment. It opens the gates of our hearts to receive prophetic impressions. Being watchful includes asking the question and being attentive. "Lord, what are You doing?"

In 1 Peter, Peter said, "Be serious and be watchful" (1 Pet. 5:8, paraphrased). Being watchful means we're praying, but we're praying with an anointed observation.

PRAYING WITH ATTENTIVE, ANOINTED OBSERVATION

When the Scripture says, "Watch, therefore..." or, "Jesus said, 'Watch!'" it does mean prayer, but it means more than prayer. It means prayer with anointed observation, meaning an attentive observation. It means paying attention to the impressions while you're praying; that is watchfulness. We are watching the signs of the times;

we are living with a spirit of prayer. We're observing with anointed understanding of what is happening across the world as we see the signs of the times.

We're praying, but we're also looking outwardly, as well, to the signs. So watching is more than prayer; prayer is the key to watching, but prayer is also watching. There's a prayer dimension to watching and there's a watching dimension to prayer; they go together.

Paul said the same thing: "Praying always, but being watchful" (Eph. 6:18, paraphrased). In other words, dial down and receive the whisper of God, the impressions of the Spirit. Watch while you're praying; pay attention while you're praying.

"YOU HAVE NOT BECAUSE YOU ASK NOT"

Paragraph D. We don't have prophetic direction simply because we don't ask for it. James said, "You have not because you ask not" (Js. 4:2, AKJV).

We have to ask, paragraph E; we must specifically ask. I'm writing this to our worship leaders now, but more than that, prayer leaders and everything. We have eighty-four prayer meetings a week, and beloved, God will give us whispers in most of those prayer meetings.

I don't want to create an atmosphere to where we're now under pressure to make something happen. Don't go to performance; don't be the deliverer. "I'm going to deliver this dead prayer meeting—watch this! Something to get the ball rolling." Don't deliver, just be watchful. If the impression comes, then you have it, but don't perform.

Don't go the other direction and become hyper and frenzied: "I've got to, and God said, and none of my prayer meetings have anything good in them!" We get all fired up and out of sorts; that's the total way you're not going to understand these impressions. Go the opposite direction.

PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE FOR PRACTICAL, PROPHETIC PRAYER

Here's what I'm asking the worship leaders, the prayer leaders, the singers, and the musicians to do: the people who play, the drummer, who is that? Ask five or ten times in preparation before you lead a worship meeting. If you're going to lead the two o'clock prayer meeting, a Worship with the Word, or devotional prayer, ask the Lord at ten in the morning. Ask five or ten times a couple of hours before.

Say, "Lord, what are You doing? Lord, I want specifically to say what You're doing; what would You do in the meeting?" It's ten o'clock, and then it's eleven. Say, "Lord, tell me." Pause, dial down. "Tell me what You're doing in that meeting."

You ask it three, four, five, ten times, not a specific number, just a handful of times. Then in the briefings, take a few moments, get the whole group quiet, and ask, because it's not just the worship leader and the prayer leader; the singers pick up on it, but really, so does the drummer and the electric-guitar player.

What God is doing can be expressed in music, not just in words. "Lord, what are You doing? What are You doing?" Then, once the briefing is over, we go on the platform and ask at least five or ten teams in the two-hour prayer set.

We're singing in the Spirit, the worship leader is saying, and all of the singers are quietly saying, "Lord, what are You doing? What are You saying? What are You saying here? What are You doing?"

We dial down and I tell you, impressions will begin to come to us. The people in the room are doing the same. That doesn't mean that you come to the microphone and speak it on the microphone. A little of it is spoken on the microphone, and the Lord may be saying, "I want to heal some people," and when they call for healing, you're already ready for it in the healing time.

You're already geared up because you've been asking, "What are You doing in this meeting here related to me? Here I am sitting in row eight; I'm Your servant, the Spirit is on me, I can move in the Holy Spirit. What are You doing?"

Not just the people on the platform, but everyone is asking that question.

When it's time for ministry time, a whole lot more happens because there are those little whispers, and out of a thousand people, maybe a hundred of them will have a whisper that touches them. Probably another couple of hundred could have had it if they would have dialed down and asked for it a few times.

Fasting and prayer does not earn us anything, but it makes us far more sensitive to the whispers. When I fast and pray, I understand the impressions far more, not because I have earned them, but because my spirit picks them up.

The whispers are always coming to us. Fasting and prayer sensitizes us to it.

A GREATER SENSE OF DIRECTION IN PROPHECY

Well, I am going to ask you to repent, and here is what I am asking you to join me in repenting for: You've been content with praying for revival and a great breakout in the future, and not demanding it, and I mean that in the right sense.

"Lord, I want to prophesy."

I skipped a few verses. One of the verses in 1 Corinthians 14 in the handout says, "You can all prophesy" (1 Cor. 14:31). Everyone can prophesy, everyone can get these impressions.

Here's what I want you to do: You're going to wake up tomorrow—some of you stay up all night, and I get confused as to how to say that with the Fire in the Night here—and you're going to say, "I want to prophesy today at least three or four times. I want to prophesy." That doesn't mean you'll speak it on a microphone; that doesn't mean you'll announce it to a meeting. It may be you'll whisper it in the cafeteria; you may just whisper it across the table.

AN EXHORTATION TO AVOID OVER-SAYING "THUS SAYS THE LORD"

Beloved, don't overdo "Thus says the Lord." Don't say, "God told me," and "Thus says the Lord." I still have the policy, but I've had this for twenty years. I gave our leadership team a limitation of two "Thus says the Lords" a year. You only get two a year. You can trade them, save them up. If you don't use them this year, you can have four next year.

One guy traded them. He said, “I didn’t use them this year; I’ll give you mine.” I was in a mess because I had another “Thus says the Lord.” I said, “I need someone’s ‘Thus says the Lord.’” So we traded and he gave it to me.

The reason I made this policy twenty years ago is because people way over-say “Thus says the Lord.” I assure you, if it’s the Lord, you don’t even have to say, “Thus says the Lord.” It’s okay to say, “Thus says the Lord,” it’s biblical, but if that’s your number-one way of getting people’s attention, they will pay attention the first ten or twenty times, and then they’ll never pay attention after that.

They only listen to one or two of those a year if you say, “God told me this, God told me that...” If you just speak the wisdom of it, they’ll say to you, “Well, that was from the Lord.” They’ll tell you that God said it. It’s OK to say, “God told me,” but you want to use that really sparingly, not three or four times a month, and not three or four times a week, and definitely not three or four times a day. You want to use it way less than that.

Say what the Lord puts on you. You at the intern cafeteria, you don’t have to say, “The Lord told me when I was praying for you the other day...” Look at the guy and say, “Hey, I’m going to pray that God does this,” and say the phrase, and the guy says, “Hey, that phrase means something to me.” You can say to yourself, “I was thinking it probably would.”

What I don’t want to do by calling us to this attentiveness is, I don’t want to create—and again, I’m using this word in a different sense than the denomination itself—I don’t want to create a Pentecostal culture of everyone going around saying, “God told me!” and they’re all yelling prophecies. I want a culture where we move in the spirit, and it’s supernaturally natural.

It has far more credibility at the end of the day. I’m not looking for having way more things said on microphones at meetings. We can have two or three of those said in a meeting; the Bible says at most, two or three.

A FINAL WORD ON ASKING FOR DIRECTION

If you’ve got a thousand people, the goal isn’t to get five hundred of them giving a prophecy at a public meeting; the goal is to get everyone prophesying two or three times a day in the coming and going without ever saying it’s prophesy. I’m talking about in recreation, at prayer meetings, at E12 groups, in classrooms, driving back and forth in the bus in between the ministry center and here.

“Lord, what are You saying? What are You doing?” Get together with a few of your friends to go out to dinner. Going to a movie, you’re going to say, “Lord, what are You speaking?” You’re whispering it under your breath.

I tell you, you will get so many more impressions. Maybe not in the first couple of weeks, because you’ll be distracted by, “Am I getting it? I must be bad...” We get so distracted by ourselves in it at first; you’ve got to take care of that. Maybe it’ll take a few weeks to get rid of all the traffic that’s in us.

“I’m not getting it, I knew I wouldn’t! This isn’t working, and everyone is going to be anointed but me!” OK, stop all of that and just dial down. Give yourself a month to detox from all that extra traffic. Those impressions will begin to come to you, I promise.

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT

If we grieve the Spirit with our words, and if we grieve the Spirit with our attitudes and impressions, we discern them way less. I've found over the years, when I'm really conscious about this, I become really aware of how much I grieve the Spirit with my words.

When I'm really asking the question a lot during the day, my speech automatically gets way in the Spirit because I don't want to say something and start quenching the flow of impressions. We quench the Spirit more by our words than by anything.

Maybe some will overdo it, and for the first eight days they'll walk around saying, "I'm going to get this right! I'm not going to say a word if it's the Spirit." Give them eight or ten days, and they'll dial down about it and be normal.

Being normal doesn't mean you have to be stoic. "I won't quench the Spirit and I'm going to frown and do nothing! I'll be so in tune." No! That's not what we're after! At the same time, most of the quenching of the Spirit that stops the impressions is our speech. It really is. Some of the things I say before meetings, in briefings, and before prayer meetings are the very things killing the flow of the Spirit in the prayer meeting.

It's not that the Spirit won't move; it's that our spirit gets quenched and we can't sense the impressions. It's not that the Spirit is mad, it's that we're not connecting with Him.

I could go on and on; let's just end with that. Let's stand.



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