

Foreword by Mike Bickle

PROPHETIC

releasing God's heart to your world

LIKE JESUS



JEFF EGGERS

ENDORSEMENTS

I have had the pleasure of serving with Jeff at the International House of Prayer for the past ten years. I met him one day serving on a prophecy team that he happened to be a part of. His Scripture-based, encouraging prophetic words over people quickly caught my attention, and as each person began to weep as he began to prophecy over them, this quickly confirmed the accuracy of his words. His book, *Prophetic Like Jesus*, is simply an overflow of his life. This is what Jeff does and this is how he lives. He not only listens and prophesies the tender voice of the Lord, but Jeff is a wonderful teacher inviting others into the same close journey of prophecy, learning to hear the Lord's voice, and understanding dreams. I have watched Jeff walk this out for many years. In his book, Jeff writes, "He created us as spiritual beings with the ability to hear His voice and see with His eyes." Then he begins to unwrap the simple ways the Lord speaks to everyone. I loved this book and believe that as you read *Prophetic Like Jesus* you will also begin to see the simple ways the Lord speaks and the simplicity of taking His voice to every place you go.

JULIE MEYER

Worship leader, IHOPKC

Jeff Eggers has ministered prophetically to my family, and after tasting the fruit of his ministry I heartily commend this book. In these pages Jeff opens the book of his own life and lets you read the gleanings of many years. This guide to prophetic ministry will open your understanding and help to activate your ministry gift.

BOB SORGE

Author, bobsorge.com

This is the best practicable book on hearing God's voice I have ever read. *Prophetic Like Jesus* is a biblically sound resource for those desiring to grow in the prophetic.

Rick and Lori Taylor
Divisional Directors of North America
International Association of Healing Rooms

Jeff Eggers draws from many years of his personal experience in operating in prophetic ministry and in equipping the body of Christ, young and old, to prophesy.

Jeff's understanding of the absolute importance of knowing the Word of God and ministering encouragement, exhortation and edification to weak people with the tender compassion of Jesus makes this book a valuable teaching resource to grow and to equip others in the prophetic ministry.

ED HACKETT
Prophetic Leadership Team
IHOPKC

When I first met Jeff Eggers in 1971, I was drawn to his passion for God and the Word. We had both come from some similar backgrounds and had been swept up in the Jesus Movement that turned tens of thousands of young people into radical believers of Jesus Christ.

In his book, *Prophetic Like Jesus*, Jeff Eggers has given us a balanced, comprehensive, well-written, and easy to understand approach to a very deep subject. Jeff's years of experience in prophetic ministry make him uniquely qualified. Thankfully, he details for us just how easily God moved him into this powerful and fruitful ministry life. It becomes very clear that this ministry life is just as available to anyone who will venture into the waters.

Like a guide, Jeff leads the reader into the personal thrill of learning to be used by God. Nothing in life could be more exciting.

Whether you are a new believer or a seasoned saint, you will glean outstanding insights for your own spiritual ministry life as you journey through the pages of *Prophetic Like Jesus*.

DENNIS BURKE
Dennis Burke Ministries

I have known Jeff for many years and believe in him. His book, *Prophetic Like Jesus*, teaches us how to develop kingdom hearing in everyday life. Every reformer who follows Christ strongly desires to hear God's voice. Jesus told us that His sheep hear His voice, and Paul tells us that we all can prophesy and build up the body of Christ. People often disqualify themselves because they need equipping in a practical, natural and Spirit-led way for all the arenas of life. Jeff's book is a practical guide to open our hearts to the wondrous journey of prophetic ministry. Jeff lays out progressive instructions that lead reformers into kingdom hearing with hope. Jeff carries the Father's heart, and his book is a must-read for us to become prophetic servants and kings.

BOB HARTLEY
President and Founder of Deeper Waters Ministry
Kansas City, Missouri
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PROPHETIC

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LIKE JESUS

JEFF EGGERS



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DEDICATION

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY WIFE, CINDI, WHO HAS BEEN MY partner in life and ministry for over 40 years. A more generous and caring person I have never known. Her patience, insight, and support for me as her husband in the ups and downs of our many years in life and ministry have been a constant source of strength, and I cannot imagine trying to do what I am called to do without her by my side.

I would also like to dedicate this book to the Prophetic Leadership Team at IHOP-KC, Ed Hackett and Graeme and Sabrina Walsh, for their many years of encouragement and insight into the gift of prophecy and prophetic ministry. It was a joy to work with you. Also, thanks goes out to my staff assistants, Brian, Amanda, Kelli, Liz, Tasha, and David, for your help in putting the foundational notes of this book to the test in all the internships you helped me teach and minister in. Bless you all. Lastly, a big thanks to Mike Bickle for providing such an awesome place for the seedbed of the prophetic to grow into maturity.

The phrase, “My servants the prophets,” is used nineteen times in the Bible. God chose men and women whose hearts were knit to His heart to impart His word to. Those who would serve Jesus’s Bride in the gift of prophecy must be servant-hearted in their administration of the gift. We are friends of the Bridegroom but also servants of the Bride.

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FOREWORD

JEFF EGGERS SERVED ON THE STAFF OF THE INTERNATIONAL House of Prayer of Kansas City for ten years. He served on the leadership team of our prophetic and healing ministries and also taught in our Bible school and internships as well as regularly ministering to many who visited the House of Prayer. He developed the content of this book in the trenches of day-to-day practical ministry. He addresses the basic principles of prophesying along with learning to hear and feel the Father's heart in the process. His ten years of experience in our prayer room as a worshiper and intercessor also come through in the encouraging and instructive treatment of the subject of cultivating a prophetic heart. The consistent practice of praying Scripture, gazing on the beauty of Jesus, and carrying the Father's heart for cities and nations is expressed as Jeff emphasizes the importance of encountering God's heart. This is foundational for walking in a mature prophetic ministry. The chapters on the Father's heart and the bridal paradigm invite those who prophesy to experience the wonder of a joyful God and the mystery of eternal partnership with Jesus in their journey of learning to serve the church with the gift of prophecy with humility.

Jeff's previous pastoral ministry and his traveling ministry and interaction with leaders have also contributed to his understanding

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of the integration of prophetic ministry into both the local church and the marketplace. You will find his practical experience in training and equipping to be helpful for you personally as well as for teaching and raising up those with prophetic gifts in your church or other arena of influence.

I believe this book will challenge, equip, and inspire you to not only prophesy, but to also see and love Jesus more, for Jesus's testimony is the spirit of prophesy (see Rev. 19:10).

MIKE BICKLE

Founder and Director of the International House of Prayer,
Kansas City, Missouri

PREFACE

AFTER SHARING THE SECRETS OF HIS HEART WITH A CO-WORKER, he was shocked. I prophetically spoke to him about his marriage and financial situation and what God had in store for him if he would respond. He asked me, “How did you know those things?” I simply explained to him that God loved him and gave me the revelation of his heart because He wanted to help him. He was in awe.

There is a real need today for the Church (that’s you and me) to learn how to make God relevant to our world. Many believers long for a more vibrant relationship with God but feel stuck somewhere between what they know of God’s promises and where those actual promises become reality. They are unaware that God longs for them not only to learn to hear Him, but to also encourage others through hearing and sharing Jesus’s encouraging words to them. Taking this a step further, God also wants us to share His whispers, His thoughts with those who don’t believe.

Most non-believers either consider the Church or religion to be a negative thing or irrelevant to their lives. Christians are often perceived as harsh and judgmental or as people who don’t have a clue as to what happens in the “real world.” We are marginalized, categorized, and very much ignored. The world doesn’t understand or care about our doctrines. The world isn’t looking

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for church or religion, but they are looking for life. The people you live with and work with and go to school with may have negative or inaccurate views about the Church, but they are still hungry for something that meets their needs and answers their deepest questions about life. They are looking for love that satisfies and power that brings change and hope.

What if you could be God's voice to that person who is hungry and searching? What if you could not only give them the reality of God's word, but could also reveal the presence of Jesus to them in a way that they know He is real? Paul said that the Kingdom of God is not a matter of words, but of power. I believe the Lord wants to raise up a people who not only know Jesus, but are also anointed to make Him known. We have been well fed for years, and now the Lord is challenging us to take what we know and release it into our world. It is a time for the gifts of the Spirit to move past the four walls of the Church and get into the marketplaces and homes and campuses of the unbelievers.

Part of that expression is the gift of prophecy. God wants us to learn to hear His voice so we can strengthen believers, but also so that we can make Christ real to those who don't know Him. When we share the secrets of another's heart through a prophetic word or a word of knowledge, it brings the God they think is distant or non-existent right into the middle of their lives. Jesus is suddenly relevant! When believers carry this life in them, people will come to church, and the Church will become relevant to a broken, dying world.

The Church should be the training ground where we learn to prophesy in a safe context, and where we can grow through the practice of the gift. But the Lord wants to speak to the broken and the lost as well. When we bring the reality of God's presence and gifts to the broken and hungry, Jesus suddenly becomes the most relevant person of the moment. Isaiah 61 becomes fulfilled in the divine exchange of the grace and love of the Father for the brokenness, pain, and emptiness of humankind.

Preface

*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all who mourn,
To console those who mourn in Zion,
To give them beauty for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning,
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.
(Isaiah 61:1-3)*

Introduction



GOD SPEAKS TODAY

GEOLOGY, BIOLOGY, OR PHILOSOPHY—I DON'T EXACTLY REMEMBER what class it was. They all blended together on warm afternoons at the local junior college I was attending. All I know is I was bored stiff and a little sleepy, so when the class ended I was out the door.

I recall I made my way down the hall where a candy machine immediately caught my attention. There was a Snickers bar calling my name. I walked over to the machine and pulled out my change. But before I deposited my money, I heard a gentle yet firm whisper in my head. It was clear enough for me to understand every word, yet soft enough to be dismissed if I had not paused to listen. “You really don’t need that candy bar,” it said.

What? Really? Who is this? Could it be God? I asked myself. *No way*, immediately I rejected the possibility. Yet I was pretty sure it wasn’t my own voice. After all, I am not one to talk myself out of a Snickers bar. Still, I couldn’t deny it. The whisper was clear.

What would I do? That was the question. How would I respond?

THE WHISPER

I was born again during the Jesus Movement in 1970. I was one of thousands of anti-establishment, countercultural American youth who received salvation. And as a young believer, I became part of a church that was highly involved in the charismatic renewal of the time. Many charismatic leaders and speakers came to our church, teaching from the Bible and sharing their experiences. I was always hungry for more of Jesus and was intrigued by some of their stories, especially ones where they had heard God speak directly to them.

Additionally, I was amazed by the signs that they said had appeared to confirm their calls to missions and other evangelistic ministry. Many of these signs involved God miraculously speaking at just the right moment. I even heard one ex-gangster tell how God actually changed the radio station in his car so he could hear the gospel and get saved. All these stories, and the little bit of teaching I had on the gift of prophecy, made me curious about whether or not God would speak to me.

During that boring lecture I mentioned earlier, I had allowed my mind to wander. I thought of all the many stories and testimonies of God speaking to various people, and I decided to ask God to speak to me. I didn't ask Him to speak to me about anything specifically. I just wanted to hear His voice for myself. I remember thinking, *Would His voice be loud and thunderous? Would it be that mysterious "still, small voice" Elijah heard in the cave? Or would an angel show up with a message for me? Would I have a dream?*

I didn't know how it might come to me, but I was sure from all the preachers I had heard that, when it did, something dramatic would happen in my life. The heavens would open, people would get saved, and I would have a great story to tell. So you can understand my consternation and surprise when God simply said, "You don't need that candy bar."

So what did I do when He said that to me? I did what any hungry young man would do. I ignored the voice, inserted my change, and went for the candy bar! *After all*, I reasoned, *God doesn't care about candy bars! Anyway, He would want to bless me, not deprive me of the creamy chocolate, caramel, and peanuts hiding beneath the wrapper. He would only want to talk to me about the "big, important stuff" of life, not my diet.* With that, I promptly dismissed the voice and deposited my change into the machine, eagerly anticipating the liberation of my Snickers bar from its prison.

Nothing happened. It didn't drop. I put in my money, but alas, the candy bar wasn't liberated. I smiled and walked away from the machine. "Very funny, God," I said aloud. I guess He does care about candy bars!

This wasn't what I had expected when I asked Him to speak to me. No thunderous voice from heaven, "Thou shalt not eat that Snickers bar!" No whirlwind or earthquake. Only a simple voice in my head talking to me like a real person. I had asked Him to speak to me, and when He did I ignored Him. But that was probably the best seventy-five cents I ever lost.

In looking back on that experience, there are three things I noted:

- God does indeed speak, often in very simple, non-earthshaking ways.
- God wants to talk to me about everything, even the small stuff.
- And, finally, God is no respecter of persons. I wasn't a preacher or evangelist or church leader. I was a college student who also worked as a janitor for the local school district, and He still wanted to talk to me!

PROPHETIC LIKE JESUS

So began my journey into the prophetic. Since that initial experience, I have personally seen—and observed through many others—the power, mystery, and encouragement of both giving and receiving prophetic words. I have seen the Church be encouraged and edified by those who have learned that God still speaks today. And why should that surprise us? He is, by His very nature, a revelatory God who knows and uses many languages and expressions that communicate His heart and Being. Many Bible writers attest to this.

King David expounded on creation's 24/7 worship service in Psalm 19:1-4, where:

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

God also spoke to the prophets through phrases, visions, impressions, dreams, words, and encounters.

Through the prophet Joel, for example, God promised that a time would come when He would pour out His Spirit on all flesh. One of the signs of this would be that sons and daughters would prophesy, old men would dream dreams, and young men would have visions (see Joel 2:28). The author of Hebrews tells us in chapter one that, in these last days, God has chosen to speak to us through His Son, Jesus. Revelation 19:10 tells us that His testimony is the Spirit of prophecy. The apostle Paul tells us in Colossians 1 that Jesus is the image of the invisible God, that all things have their being and are sustained by Him, and that all of life will find its culmination in Him. He is the head over the Church and God's final word in terms of divine revelation to humankind. There will

be no more messiahs, nor will there be any more inspired revelation that is equal to our Scriptures.

As Head over His Bride, Jesus still speaks to her through His Word. He promised the disciples that He would send them the Holy Spirit to live in them and teach them His ways. On the Day of Pentecost, the Father sent the promised Holy Spirit on a little fledgling prayer meeting in an upper room. Wind, fire, and tongues broke out as the disciples were overcome with the presence of the Holy Spirit in that room. In scene two, they were all in the street (with no explanation of how they got there), and many accused them of being drunk because of their odd speech and behavior. Peter stood up and preached, explaining that this was the fulfillment of Joel 2:28. From that point on, the Holy Spirit became available to dwell in all who called on the name of the Lord, not just a few select prophets.

According to the apostle Paul, when Jesus rose from the grave, He carried “captivity captive, and gave gifts to men” (Eph. 4:8). The Holy Spirit became the administrator of the gifts that Jesus gave to the Church, and one of the best gifts is prophecy, which brings me back to the title of this chapter.

Throughout the Word of God, we have evidence and support that He desires to speak to and through His people. The gift of prophecy mentioned in First Corinthians 12 is one of those ways.

THE GIFT

I remember a story about my friend who was ministering out of state. She stayed at the home of a woman who was a member of the church she was visiting. One evening, the woman listened to a tape of a prophetic word she had received at International House of Prayer-Kansas City (IHOP-KC) prophecy rooms. My friend recognized the voice on the tape, which happened to be mine, and mentioned to the lady that she knew me. The woman told her the

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word she received had been such strength to her in the season she was in that she listened to it often.

It is the kiss of God to encourage the hearts of His children through prophetic words. He wants us to know Him, hear His voice, and speak His words of strength and encouragement to His Bride.

I have been involved with hands-on teaching and training in prophetic ministry in one way or another for more than twenty-five years. It has been my joy to watch people's hearts come alive with the wonder and excitement of hearing God's voice for themselves. Furthermore, I have witnessed these people then speak prophetic words to others that encourage and strengthen them in practical ways in their journey. Many have found this simple place of prophetic ministry to be such an encouraging way to serve the Church. Such observations and experiences in my own journey are what led me to write this book. The same simple points that God taught me from the beginning are still true.

- He speaks to people, most often in non-earthshattering ways, but significant ways nonetheless.
- He is interested in talking to people about all the aspects of their lives, great and small.
- And He is no respecter of persons.

Yes, God speaks, as Joel stated, to the young and the old, to men and women in all states of life—educated or not, in the home, in the church, on the streets, or in the marketplace. I believe God wants you to know that He wants to speak to and through you! He wants to use you to “wash the feet of the saints” with timely words of encouragement.

THE GOAL

Understanding that God has given prophecy as a gift to build up His Church, my personal goal, then, is to equip you to prophesy—not once or twice, but rather throughout your journey—from a heart that grows deep in God and impacts folks over a lifetime of service. My emphasis will be on personal prophecy, though corporate prophecy may be addressed on occasion.

You can find more scholarly works in defense and explanation of the gift of prophecy for today, and you can find books that will give you a more comprehensive view of prophets and the prophetic movement. I love books like these, and I find them very helpful as a student of the prophetic. But my purpose was to write a book that encourages each and every believer to allow himself or herself to be used of God in prophecy.

If your desire is to understand, grow, and serve the body in prophesying and prophetic ministry, I think you will be blessed, challenged, and encouraged by what you find in the pages that follow. I generally take a “blue collar” approach to equipping, meaning that I take a direct, “roll up my sleeves and jump in” approach. So, together, we will jump head on into the main principles relating to personal prophecy, to both understand and practice them.

Whether you are new to the subject or have some experience in prophetic ministry, I believe this book will help you move forward in the development of the gift of prophecy. Whatever your religious background or denominational affiliation is, you can receive and minister in the gift of prophecy. I have done conferences and seminars with Roman Catholics, Protestants of different denominations, marketplace people, and church people and can say with some boldness that God really is no respecter of persons. We bring our open, hungry hearts, and God responds with mercy, grace, and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

To achieve my goal for this book, I want to build on four key areas:

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- God wants the entire Church to hear His voice and move in the gifts and callings He has placed within her.
- We all have a desire to be significant and make an impact in the earth, and the gift of prophecy is one way to walk out that desire.
- We need to develop a lifestyle that supports and yet goes beyond the gift of prophecy.
- Leaders need to equip the saints to minister in the prophetic.

THE PARADIGM

I desire for people to learn to hear and speak God's heart in a variety of arenas. Everyone gets to play in the Kingdom. God would that we all prophesy, so there are no lone superstars.

I want to break the paradigm that some have about *platform prophecy* being the norm as the main expression of prophetic ministry. I am not against platform prophecy (the practice of prophesying over people from the stage or platform in church- or conference-type settings). At times, I do this myself. But that is not the main arena that most people will prophesy in, nor does that expression of the prophetic make it any more powerful than it can be in the marketplace or on the school campus. If you have seen the prophetic expressed in that way and said, "I can't relate to that," or "I could never do that," don't worry. You don't have to. The late John Wimber coined the phrase, "naturally supernatural," meaning that God wants to release the gifts of the Spirit in simple, natural ways in both church and non-church settings.

Each of us desires to be or do something significant. We want to impact the lives of others. I have met so many believers whose whole concept of ministry is defined by what takes place within the four walls of their church. They want to have impact,

but they aren't preachers or singers or Sunday school teachers. Though they may be encouraged in church by the sermon, worship, or fellow believers, they don't see a place for the expression of their gifts or callings. This lack of expression stunts their potential and, in many cases, causes them to draw back from any type of practical ministry.

God created all of us for greatness and to impact the arenas of life He has placed us in. Learning to function and grow in the realm of the prophetic is one avenue where believers can find an expression of significance and impact within and without the four walls of their church.

While the process of functioning in the gift of prophecy can be exhilarating, exciting, and fulfilling, in itself it can't satisfy our deepest spiritual desires. The gift flows best from a heart that is growing deep in the garden of God's heart.

Finally, the Church is in need of leaders to equip the saints to minister in the prophetic. These need to be ready to address the challenges of prophetic ministry in churches and small groups.

THE APPROACH

So the journey begins! You will find this book is laid out in progressive sections. Section One is *The Quick Start Guide*. I have noticed that when I buy any new electronic item, there is usually a detailed owner's manual and a *quick start* guide. The quick start guide is designed to help you begin using the product immediately, while the detailed manual is to help you understand more intricate features of the device.

Section One is designed to equip you to prophesy starting today! The good thing about this quick start guide is that the basic principles that get you started also lay a foundation for going deeper and becoming more skillful in the gift as you continue to practice it.

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The second section provides a context for growing deep into God's heart. When we prophesy, we are representing the communication of God's heart to another person. Therefore, we want our perceptions of Him to be correct, and we want to learn to see how He sees and feel how He feels. As one of my prophetic friends has told me on a couple of occasions, "The Father is looking for friends to share His secrets with, not information brokers who are trying to establish prophetic platforms." In this section, the emphasis will be on understanding the Father's heart, who we are as the Bride, and how to deepen our intimacy with Him.

The thrust of Section Three goes to the heart of learning to prophesy from the perspective of a servant. Functioning in the gift of prophecy is very rewarding and can bring great joy, but at the end of the day, the gift isn't for me, it's for the body of Christ, and I must learn to release the gift as a servant to His Bride.

The last section gives practical instructions for leaders in both opening the door to the prophetic in their respective arenas and in training others to develop their gifts and prophesy.

On a final note, each chapter ends with a subsection titled, "Getting Plugged In." These simple questions and exercises will provoke your thinking and strengthen your prophetic gift.

Without any further ado, let's roll up our sleeves and get going with our *The Quick Start Guide!*

Section One

THE QUICK START GUIDE

MY JOURNEY INTO THE GIFT OF PROPHECY AND PROPHETIC MINISTRY has had many twists and turns. It has paralleled my journey into the heart of the Father in that, like my fellowship with Abba, prophetic ministry has deepened and become more personal through the years.

Two things about the prophetic continue to stand out to me. First is the simplicity of prophesying. Abba speaks to His children, and He delights in having them share His words with others. In terms of the act of prophesying, it is the result of simple family communication. Abba tells one child to go and bless another child by speaking words of specific affirmation and encouragement. The messenger can be a brand-new child who has just been born into the family, or an older mature child who has many more years of practice in understanding not only his Father's voice, but also his Father's heart. Either way, the gift of prophecy is simply received by sons and daughters who ask, listen, wait, hear, and respond.

The point of the quick start guide is to help define that process and make prophesying the joyful, simple task I believe it was meant to be. Quick start guides generally help you understand and enjoy a product sooner, leaving the more intricate details about that product in a lengthier owner's manual. So here, my hope is

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that you will gain the confidence in this section to begin your journey into the gift of prophecy which flows out of the Father's heart.

The second thing about the prophetic that continues to stand out to me is the *mystery* side of the prophetic. Though it is often simple, it always carries an *air* of wonder. I think it is important to understand this side so that the prophetic and prophesying never become casual or mundane to us, and also so that we don't confuse the simplicity of prophesying with the depth and wonder of the prophetic words we release.

The mystery lies in the depths of what the Father knows about the heart of one of His children. He gives another one of His children what seems to be such a simple message. That child only touches the tip of the iceberg in his understanding of what the word is designed to do and the power it will carry to the heart of the receiver. He simply repeats a phrase, relays an impression, shares a picture—things that to him are simple, unconnected puzzle pieces. But to the target they are aimed at, they are words of life. They supply a stake in the ground of hope. They tell another child that his Father hears and sees and knows where he is, that He is attentive to his prayers and has come alongside. Therein lies the mystery and the simplicity of the gift of prophecy. I never cease to be amazed at how words and impressions that seem so simple to me can completely undo the heart of another when he or she receives them.

The good thing about this quick start guide is that it also contains within it the foundations of the owner's manual. The basic principles of the operation of the gift don't change. It is not the understanding of the gift and the reception of divine information that leads to a deeper knowledge of moving in the prophetic. It is the deeper heart connection to the Father's heart that takes the gift into maturity and greater anointing. To demonstrate this, I go back to my earlier analogy of a new child and a more mature child. The new child is excited about hearing his Father's voice, but he hasn't

The Quick Start Guide

yet learned the nuances of the Father's heart. The more mature child, through practice, has gained a deeper understanding of the heart behind the voice. The principles remain constant, but the depth of fellowship and intimacy know no ceiling. So this quick start guide provides the opportunity for both the basic training and the advanced heart lessons. May you enjoy your simple and mysterious journey into growing in the prophetic.

Chapter One



GETTING STARTED

WHEN I ASKED GOD TO SPEAK TO ME, I EXPECTED AN EVENT. FIRE from heaven, an angelic choir, or something like that. I never would have thought the first words I would hear from God would have something to do with purchasing a candy bar. But that's exactly how it happened. Over the years, I have really come to appreciate the divine sense of humor. God was being like a Father responding to the request of his eight-year-old son for the gift of a power saw. He laughs a gentle laugh, smiles, and then gives him a small handsaw. His son can still attack a piece of wood, but he's not going to hurt anyone else in the process.

To be sure, I got what I wanted in part—an event. That's how I presented it to you—as a scene from a story. How gracious of the Father, however, to give me an event, as it were, that only underscored His desire to talk to me about the seemingly small, everyday stuff of life. I got His point loud and clear. No longer was I to look at God's speaking to me as an event or very rare occurrence; no, His speaking would become a normal part of my everyday relationship and communion with Him.

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The apostle Paul tells us in Romans 2:11 that God is not a respecter of persons. If He can speak to me about a chocolate bar, then He is able and willing to speak to you, too, about something in your life. If you have struggled with believing He's willing, even desirous, to speak to you, be encouraged. Pick up the Bible and look at the number of unlikely candidates He spoke to from Genesis to Revelation—people like you and I with faults and weaknesses.

He is no respecter of persons; He wants to talk to you about everything, but remember He typically speaks in very simple ways. Now, it's one thing to believe and know that God wants to speak to us personally each and every day. It's quite a different thing to believe He wants to say something to us that is actually to be shared with someone else—in other words, that God wants to use us prophetically to touch the lives of others.

The Lord indicated through Paul that all could prophesy. Paul described it as the gift to be most desired because it builds up the body of Christ (see 1 Cor. 14:1,3,39). That's why the prophetic gift is so great. Prophecy is God's love expressed through ordinary believers in ways that powerfully impact people's lives. It's not complicated, and it's not rocket science. If we can be still and listen for a moment, we can learn to hear and communicate the voice of the Lord to others. The basic foundations are simple enough, and once we understand them, we can spend a lifetime continuing to grow in the gift.

Typically, when I teach on being used of God in the prophetic, people are unsure about God speaking to them for someone else. They really question the Father using them in this way. "Am I prophetic?" is the basic question asked in a number of different ways. Many misconceptions arise because we tend to compare ourselves to the Old Testament (OT) prophets, or we compare ourselves with those today who seem to have had wild prophetic experiences. I love encountering God, and my experiences have their

place in my journey, but they do not make me prophetic or equip me to prophesy.

We can make the same mistake I did about how God speaks to us. We can view it as an event rather than a normal part of our everyday lives. We can imagine the event to be an “over the top” supernatural encounter. These experiences may happen to people once in a while, but they aren’t the daily norm.

My own journey in the prophetic began initially when I was praying for people. I would receive pictures, simple phrases, or impressions, and I would pray them without prophesying. Sometimes, I would get Bible verses. When I would finish praying for people, they would often ask me how I knew the things I shared with them because they accurately described where they were in their lives.

You may be more prophetic than you think you are, you just haven’t refined your “hearing” ability. God wants to touch people in the marketplaces, schools, and homes of our communities, and He is delighted to use us to do so. Though learning to prophesy is just the beginning, just the tip of the iceberg for becoming a prophetic servant, it is the place where we begin our journey. This chapter will deal with how God speaks and how we hear and process what He tells us. While addressing these two points, we will also begin to discuss how we deliver what He gives us in the most edifying way.

HOW GOD SPEAKS

God initiates the whole prophetic process by speaking something to us. Proverbs 20:12 tells us that God has created both the *hearing ear* and the *seeing eye*. He created us as spiritual beings with the ability to hear His voice and see with His eyes. This was Jesus’s model. He said that He did what He saw the Father do and said what He heard the Father say (see John 5:19; 12:49). In John 10:3-4, Jesus said that His sheep would know His voice. The world

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does its best to drown out that still small voice, but if we will dial down and train ourselves to watch and listen, we will learn to hear His voice. The following are ways in which we might hear or perceive prophetic words. It is by no means an exhaustive list, but it is a good place to begin.

Bible Verses

The single most powerful way God will speak to a believer is through His Word. When we eat of His Word, the Bread of Life, we are also storing up a *prophetic bakery* in our inner man out of which the Lord may draw *prophetic bread* to feed others. I have heard people say, “All I ever get for people is Bible verses.” That’s great—for this is a wonderful way to prophesy! It doesn’t get much better than the Living Word giving a *rhema*, a now word, to one of His children.

The Lord may speak a verse to you for someone else, or He may give you the verse with an accompanying encouragement. Often, I find out later that the verse I have given someone is their life verse or the very verse they have been recently reading or praying. Never minimize the power of Scripture to speak to people’s lives. I encourage believers to daily pray Scripture. In this way, they build themselves up in the knowledge of God while also storing up an arsenal the Holy Spirit can pull from at any time to minister to one of Abba’s children.

Sometimes, you may get a specific Bible reference. Be sure to look it up before giving it as a prophetic word to make sure it says what you think it says. Other times you may get a verse but you can’t remember the exact chapter and verse reference. Simply quote the verse as the encouraging word and tell them what book it is in if you know.

Pictures

The phrase, “A picture is worth a thousand words,” is very true in prophetic listening. God may speak to you about someone you

are to prophesy over by giving you pictures of places or activities through which you will learn to discern a message for that individual. If you are normally a visual processor, the picture may simply be the means God is using to communicate the message to you. It may have nothing to do with the person, but is God's way of getting your attention and defining the word He wants you to speak. Other times, the picture may really be for the person you are prophesying to.

A picture, therefore, may be literal or symbolic. This is where growing in interpretation is necessary. There will be more discussion on this subject later. For now, it is important just to understand this as one of the means by which God speaks.

A Word or Phrase

You may receive a single word such as *hurt*, *transition*, or *authority*. Or you may receive a phrase such as, *he/she is a singer, called to preach*, or *he's a faithful man*. We are to step out in faith, believing God to give words to fill in the gaps. If we don't receive anything else, we give what we receive. (For example, "I feel like God says you are a faithful man, and He loves that about you.")

Romans 12:6 encourages us to prophesy, if our gift is prophecy, and to do so "in proportion to our faith." As we step out, God will often give more. At the same time, we need to understand that it's not how long or how short a word is that gives it power and impact. Our job is to be obedient to say what God is telling us to say and no more. We're responsible for giving the word to the person as God is prompting us, leaving the outcome in God's hands.

On one occasion, I was praying for people during a ministry time at a church. I saw a particular man and heard the phrase, *tell him I know*. It seemed like such an insignificant word to me. I asked the Lord, "Tell him You know what? Give me more information."

He patiently encouraged me, "Just tell him I know."

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I put my hand on the man's shoulder and said to him, "I feel the Lord just says to tell you, 'I know.'" The man collapsed to the floor and began to weep as Abba graciously encouraged his heart about his situation.

Sometimes, all we need to know is that God knows, and it's enough. It's not the length of the word that makes it powerful. We simply learn to give what we receive.

External Circumstances

There are times God may speak to you through external circumstances. Perhaps a person's name, an item of their clothing, or some external activity that is happening around you or them may facilitate a prophetic impulse. I remember one specific time this happened to me.

As I recall, I was in a side room prophesying over a couple on our mission's base while there was construction work taking place in the room next to us. The noise of hammers and saws was very distracting, and I was going to get up to ask them to stop for a few moments until we were finished. Instead, the Lord told me to listen for a moment. As I listened to the sound of the saws, He told me the couple I was praying for was under construction. He was tearing out walls in their hearts to make more room for Him and His plans for them. After I shared this with them, they both confirmed it, telling me that even their physical home was being remodeled. In fact, they said a wall had been taken out in one of their main rooms to make more space.

Similarly, there have been times when the Lord has spoken to me about someone's name in connection with a Bible character of the same name. At other times, He has highlighted a piece of clothing or their shoes to give an aspect of revelation. I have learned to pay attention to my surroundings, and I would encourage you to do the same.

I must give a caution here with external circumstances. Be careful not to become dependent on this type of revelation. It can

be easy for some people to find something spiritual about every single circumstance and try to turn it into a prophetic word or spiritual signpost. We need to go beyond just seeing circumstances and learn to listen to God's heart. Over-dependency on outward circumstances and appearances can also lead prophetic people to fall into the trap of trying to *read* people according to outer appearance.

Let's remember the story of David in the Bible. When Samuel went to Jesse's house to anoint Israel's next king, his first impression was that it must be Eliab. Outwardly Eliab was a strong, good-looking young man. God quickly corrected Samuel, reminding him that the Lord doesn't judge by the outward appearance, but He looks at the heart (see 1 Sam. 16). It was the youngest and "least of these" sons, David, who ended up being the one God had chosen.

What we see on the outside may have nothing to do with what God wants to say to us or others. It's important to know that prophetic ministry has nothing to do with *reading* people. This is a soulish practice. *We do not read people.*

Impressions

An impression is like a *knowing* in your inner man. You feel like *you know that you know* something about the person you are ministering to, yet there's no practical reason for you knowing what you know.

For example, there have been times that I had impressions regarding the receiver's parents being missionaries or the person's spouse or child being ill while these individuals were not present at the ministry time. I didn't have a word, or a phrase, or a picture. I just knew because it was impressed on my spirit, so to speak.

An impression may be somewhat faint and undefined, or it may be very clear. If the impression isn't clear, speak to the Lord in your spirit and ask Him questions like, "I'm sensing something, Lord. What are You saying?" Or, "Give me clarity, Lord." We

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may receive clarity because accompanied with the impression is a picture that confirms or explains the impression, giving further understanding of what God may be saying. This is an impression in your *mind's eye*.

Often when I am traveling, I pray in advance for people or leaders I will be meeting. Prior to one such trip, I was praying for a number of leaders, asking God questions about them and making notes for each one while He was speaking to me. As I prayed for one of them, a woman, I had a strong impression about her daughters, and I didn't even know if she had daughters. I didn't have any distinct information, so I simply wrote *daughters* in the margin of my notes with a question mark next to it and continued down my list. When I finished, I went back to the question mark and began to ask God about these daughters. In the waiting, He gave me a few simple things about them.

After the first session with the group that weekend, one of the leaders came and asked me to pray for her daughters. I went down my list and found this was the one I had written *daughters* next to and was able to prophesy regarding God's heart for these daughters.

If we wait and ask about our impressions, the Lord will lead us. Learning to listen, wait, and obey over time helps develop and draw out with more clarity the impressions we receive.

Emotions

Feelings of joy, compassion, mercy, or grief can come into our hearts as we minister to someone. These can come as a release of the heart of God enabling you to feel what He feels about the person you are ministering to. The gist of the word of the Lord for them is the overflow of the feelings of His heart. This should be followed with an explanation of what you sense the Lord is saying through the expression.

Jeremiah was known as the *weeping prophet*, partly because he prophesied out of God's emotions over the people of Judah and

Jerusalem. This wasn't a manifestation of his own human sympathy and didn't have anything to do with his own emotional bent. In fact, he may have felt nothing prior to prophesying.

I have had times when I was actually feeling tired and dull when suddenly I was overwhelmed by God's compassion over the person I was speaking to and I began to weep. If God speaks to you in this manner, it's important to understand the message behind this expression. Otherwise, the person may be left confused and wondering what might be wrong with you.

Dreams/Visions

God may give you a dream or vision that may relate to you personally, have corporate ramifications, or give prophetic input for an individual prophetic ministry time. God may give you a dream that you are ministering or prophesying over someone. It can be vague, where you will pray for someone, or it can be specific like you are praying for someone named Mary. This is a tricky area and should be approached with much discernment. Factors to consider here have to do with whether or not the dream is literal or symbolic, what the timing of the dream is, and whether it is for you personally or for the body.

For me, most of my non-personal dreams are for intercession. When I have dreams about nations, they are often to give me revelation for prayer. Many of my dreams are either encouragements or warnings to pray for people, some whom I know and some I don't.

There are a number of good books on dream interpretation, so I will not go into detail on this subject. My only input is to help you understand that when it comes to methods of interpretation there is no *one size fits all*. Many people will favor a book or a method and force every dream they have or every dream they interpret for others into that method. We would do well to remember dreams are a language and God wants us to develop our own vocabularies with Him as He gives us insight into interpretation.

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The way He speaks to me will be different than the way He speaks to you. I grew up with dogs as pets, and all my life I have always had a dog. Maybe you, on the other hand, have had nothing but bad experiences with dogs all your life. The way I might interpret the presence of a dog in my dream could be completely different than the way you would see it. While there are good basic interpretive tools to help us grow, at the end of the day, the Lord hides a matter so we can search it out (see Prov. 25:2). Dreams are designed to bring us near His heart and to cause us to seek His face. The same is true of visions.

Visions can be brief pictures in our minds that combine images with impressions or full-on encounters where we feel like we are there. Like dreams, visions can be given to inspire us to pray. They can also be given to prepare us for something or someone we will be connected to in ministry. The purpose with both, in connection with prophetic ministry, is to bring strength, edification, and encouragement to the body of Christ.

One of the most difficult things in understanding dreams and visions as related to prophetic ministry is interpretation—whether they're to be taken literally or symbolically and whether their timing is for now or some day in the future. I have known people who got into trouble because they misread the timing of a dream and stepped into something too quickly.

I have been recording my dreams for twenty-five years, and I am often amazed to find that I may have just started walking into the fulfillment of something I dreamed about five years ago. This particular area of the prophetic, especially as it relates to a corporate people, really needs to be prayed through and shared with leaders before any major steps are taken or decisions made.

It's also good to understand that dreams and visions aren't signs of spiritual maturity. If we pursue dreams and/or visions because we think they will make us more spiritual, give us more recognition, or enhance our prophetic position, then we are missing the

point. The Father loves to give us gifts and blessings in the Holy Spirit, because He loves us. His desire is for us to take them and use them for the edification of His Bride.

These are just a few of the ways God may speak, and this list is in no way exhaustive. It's a good place to start, though. Anyone who is serious about growing in his or her prophetic gifting should pray about learning to listen and pay attention.

HOW WE HEAR GOD AND PROCESS HIS MESSAGE

Okay, so God speaks in a lot of different ways in the normal course of everyday life. But the question begs answering—"How can I know He is speaking to me?" Or better yet, "How do I hear Him?"

Some people don't think they can hear God speak to them. I have been told frequently by various individuals that they just don't hear God. They ask for words, but they don't get anything. There are two things I address in response to their experiences.

My first suggestion is to dial down and not try so hard. Instead of struggling to receive a gift and get a word, think of prophecy as an extension of your vertical prayer life with God. In your fellowship with God, He talks and you listen, and you talk and He listens. You don't have to struggle and strain to talk to Him and receive from Him. Speaking and listening are ever changing and growing parts of your fellowship and communion with God. Prophesying is an extension of that relationship. You are just adding a horizontal dimension to the process of prayer. A third participant is brought into the conversation with you and God. Think of it as a three-way conversation.

The second suggestion is to ask God specific questions. Some people don't hear from God because they ask in such a general way they wouldn't recognize the answer if it came to them. We can say, "Speak to me, God."

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He might answer, “Which of the hundred billion pieces of information that are constantly before Me would you like Me to tell you?”

There are times I receive immediate words or impressions for people, but often words come in response to *specific* questions. I have five children, and when it comes to them expressing their desires to me, there is nothing general about it. If one of them wants ten dollars for some kind of activity, they don’t come to me and say, “Dad, I am imagining an unspecified need for an undefined activity. Can you help me out?” Or if they would like me to help one of their friends with a ride to and from somewhere, they don’t say, “Dad, there is a teenager somewhere on the face of the earth who needs to be transported from point A to point B. What do you think?” In my house, it sounds more like, “Dad, can I have ten dollars for a movie?” Or, “Dad, can you give my friend a ride home?”

When I am ministering, I may receive the impression that I am to prophesy over someone before I know what it is I am supposed to say. So I begin to ask God some questions. “Who is this person to You, God? How do You want to encourage her today?” Having a few questions in the back of your mind to ask God about those you may end up ministering to is helpful.

A few years ago, I was ministering in Poland. One of the cool things about learning to prophesy from relationship is that ministry doesn’t depend on how you feel. I flew from Kansas City to Chicago to Amsterdam to Warsaw. I caught a couple hours rest in Warsaw and then took a three-hour train ride from Warsaw to Gliwice. Though my body was tired, my mind wouldn’t shut off. I was to speak on the prophetic to a group of Charismatic Catholics the following evening, so I grabbed my notebook to review my notes. There was an English-speaking Polish woman in her mid-thirties sitting next to me. As I pulled my notebook from my backpack, I heard that familiar whisper from Abba, “Prophecy.”

Feeling pretty tired and having no immediate impressions, I opened my notebook to some blank pages and began a conversation with God about this woman. I asked questions like, “What is her life’s dream? What is she good at? What does she think about how You see her?” As the Lord responded to my questions with impressions, pictures, and words, I made notes. Ten minutes and three pages later, I was ready to go, tired or not.

I introduced myself to her as a believer in Jesus who often gets impressions from Him for other people and told her He had given me some impressions for her. I asked her if she would like to know them. She had been watching me make all my notes and asked, “Is all that about me?” I told her that it was, that God really liked her and had a lot to say.

Over the next several minutes, I was able to share God’s heart and dream for her, accurately touching on several relevant areas of her life. She didn’t receive the Lord but was on the verge of tears a couple of times as God touched some tender areas in her heart. Her stop came up and as she was leaving she said, “I always thought God was way out there somewhere and that He didn’t really care about me or the details of my life. I didn’t know He cared about me and was so close.” On an evangelism scale of one to ten, that encounter moved her up several notches, opening her heart to the gospel—all because I asked God a few questions about her.

ASK SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Specific questions usually bring specific answers or results. When I am doing training seminars, I will often bring two or three people up to the front and give the rest of the attendees three questions to ask God about each of the ones I have brought forward. It’s fun to watch the people, many of whom have never prophesied before, receive specific answers to the questions they ask and then accurately prophesy.

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The following is a list of topics and correlating questions I typically ask God before or during a prophetic ministry time. You can use these or come up with some of your own.

What are their spiritual gifts?

We aren't asking just to know their gifts, but also the context in which gifts fit into their overall calling and the expression of Christ through them.

What are their motivational/service gifts?

(Note: some gifts overlap in multiple categories.) Again, as we ask about gifts, we are considering gifts in the scheme of their destiny.

Are there characteristics related to five-fold callings?

Not everyone is going to fit in here, but there are a couple of applications. They may not be called as an apostle, but the Lord may want to highlight some apostolic characteristics (church planting, for example) that they carry. Another thing to keep in mind here is that some apostolic characteristics may apply to the marketplace and don't have to find their expression within the walls of a church. A person might carry certain aspects of these gifts but not necessarily be vocationally called to the respective office. We need to practice listening skills in these areas and not speak out too soon, calling people out as apostles and prophets just because we sense a type of gifting that relates to the offices.

Ultimately, it's God who calls and sets apart individuals to any of the five-fold ministries. Our prophetic words can't create or open a door to these offices; they can only confirm them. We must exercise caution here. I believe we can do a disservice to a young person to call them out as a prophet or apostle ahead of God's timing. In essence, we paint a target on them for the enemy. If they aren't mature enough to handle it, pride can rise up to cause them to move out too quickly, and they may try to bypass the training ground God sets in place for those called to these offices. That

is one reason to identify the characteristics without necessarily applying the office. You can read Romans 12, First Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, and First 1 Peter 4 to gain further insight on the categories of spiritual gifts.

Is God highlighting a parallel biblical character?

Is there someone whom they be might be like in character, calling, or gifting?

What about their prophetic history?

Are there some past prophetic words, promises, or visitations that relate to what God wants to say now? What might He be adding to that, or expanding on, in relation to those past experiences?

Is God saying something in connection with their family line or inheritance?

Is there something in the family line that God wants to highlight, bless, or activate?

Ask God about their prayer journal/life scriptures.

What is the cry of their heart to the Lord? What have they written down? What scriptures has God been speaking to them through?

Is God speaking about their season of life?

What type of season are they facing? Are they in the desert? Coming out of the desert? Beginning a new season? In a time of healing and restoration, or soaring and taking ground? What is the Lord speaking to them in their current season?

Other Questions

- If Jesus was standing in front of them right now, what would He say to them?
- What is whispered about them before the throne of the Lord?

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- What is their reputation before heaven and men?
- How do they affect the different rooms they enter?
- What does the Lord say about how they bless Him?
- What does God want to say about their family (present or not)?

These are all ways to connect our hearts to God for an individual we are ministering to. God probably won't answer all the questions, but He will answer the ones that are on His heart for the person at the moment. Don't linger too long over any question. When I am praying over this list, I don't usually labor for more than a minute on each question, unless God begins to speak to me about it. This is a good way to grow in hearing His voice in specific ways. You can ask God to speak to you while you sit in church, in an office, at work, or anywhere really. Keep a pad handy, and write down what He tells you. Then ask the person if you can share your *God impressions* with them. Just be sure to deliver your words with kindness. This is a very safe way to begin prophesying because there is no pressure to come up with a word on the spot. You have already heard, now you are just delivering the message!

GETTING PLUGGED IN

1. Now that you have read this chapter, can you pinpoint times you actually heard God's voice without realizing it?
2. Review the different ways God speaks. Highlight the particular ways He speaks to you. Ask Him to increase both your hearing and understanding of those ways. Ask God to help you listen and hear in these new ways.

3. Choose an arena to practice listening and prophesying. This could be work, church, home group, family, or some other setting. The next time you are in that setting, ask the Lord to impress on you someone to prophesy over. Then choose a few questions to ask God about them. Write down the things you feel the Lord is saying to them, and when you have the opportunity, ask them if you can share your God impressions. If you want, you can tell them you are practicing listening to God, and you would like to practice on them, if it's okay. It's good to remember that *the heart of New Testament (NT) prophecy is strength, edification, and encouragement, so be extremely careful with specific directional words, and avoid judgmental words that point out faults, weaknesses, and sins*. Don't declare your word over them as if you are the sovereign mouthpiece of God, but rather submit your word in a spirit of gentleness so they can feel the freedom to discern and weigh it.

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ABOUT JEFF EGGERS

JEFF EGGERS WAS RADICALLY SAVED DURING THE JESUS MOVEMENT in 1970 and has over 40 years of ministry experience, including several years of pastoral ministry and leadership. From 2004 through 2014 he served as an “intercessory missionary” at the International House of Prayer in Kansas City, Missouri. In that capacity he also served on the prophetic leadership team, where he gave leadership to the prophecy and healing teams as well as taught and equipped in various internships and the IHOP Bible School. Intimacy and prayer, growing in the prophetic, healing and deliverance, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit are a few of the topics he taught regularly. He has also traveled widely, doing conferences and seminars in the states and abroad. Jeff is currently serving on the staff of the Blessed International Revival Center in Anaheim, California, where he oversees the House of Prayer-Orange County and continues to train and equip the saints. If you would be interested in having Jeff speak to your church or group, you may contact him at awordfromthewall@gmail.com.



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