

# Excerpts from *Through Eyes of Love*

by Shawn Bolz

## PROPHECY IS GOD'S LOVE RELEASED

I believe that hearing from God and using the gifts associated with that, those which the apostle Paul explained, is the fastest way to reveal the love nature of God to others. And He wants to give those tools to all of us. Those gifts are called the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the word of prophecy, all of which fall in the category of prophetic ministry. A simpler way to say it is hearing God's voice for the world around us.

Revelation 19:10 says, "It is the Spirit of prophecy who bears testimony to Jesus." The testimony of what God's love does on the earth defines the spirit of prophecy. Prophecy is not separate from love. First Corinthians 14:4 tells us that prophecy is for edification, which means building up. In its truest, purest form, prophecy is God's love released in a way that edifies people, moving them into being who He wants them to be. It is seeing others with God's lens of truth and faith and hope, and giving them an invitation into that reality God already sees for them.

If you want to bring a prophetic encounter to the world around you, you'll need to have an encounter with the God of love first. You'll need to have deep, ongoing encounters of intimacy and connection with Him. It will have to be rooted in personally knowing God and His love, or, as 1 Corinthians tells us, it will come to nothing. God doesn't just give us information. He shares His heart and His nature with us.

For a season in my life, there were times the only prophetic word God would give me for people was that He loved them. But surprisingly, many people were deeply touched by this. They experienced the love in the word, and it went from a head knowledge to a heart knowledge, and it had power to transform them. "God loves you" is really what every single prophetic word is about, and it is powerful by itself.

But without love, even if the prophetic word is correct, even if you get words of knowledge about a person's name, place of birth, and everything about him or her, if you do not see love when you look at the person, you really do not see anything true at all. The word may feel exciting, but it will not bring transformation. Everything that has to do with the kingdom of heaven becomes available through a relationship with the God of love.

One of my favorite things about prophecy is that it connects you directly to the heart of God and the heart of people. When I experience it, I feel instantly connected to people, and it's so rewarding to feel their value. I feel as if I'm part of their journey, part of their story. Prophecy makes you feel as if you're in some of people's best moments, because these are the moments when God is revealing His loving nature in the most physical way. All of a sudden I will find myself standing in a monumental, defining moment, when a person grasps their true identity and God's love for them, and there's nothing like it. It's such a beautiful experience that you get addicted to the love of God in those moments.

## SPEAKING GOD'S WORDS OF LOVE

... a word of knowledge is God's perspective about something that is current or past, something that is happening or has happened. It's information that makes people feel connected to the fact that God knows them, that they're known by heaven, that they're important. The word of knowledge isn't just information; it's knowledge that connects us to God's perceptions and inner thoughts.

You can have intuition or even spiritually discerned information, but that's not a word of knowledge. I can discern or even just psychologically read some things about you, such as, "You're artistic and creative." That just helps me to ask God about your life. But that's not necessarily a word of knowledge.

A word of knowledge is when it's God speaking, and He's helping a person understand that he or she was intimately thought of for millions of years before the present moment. It's God communicating to that person, "I know your name. I know where you live. I know the season you've been in, and I've been there every step of the way. I love you."

Words of knowledge can be so important because they can help strengthen people's faith that they are known by God. Ultimately, what people want to know is that they are known. We want to understand others and for them to understand us, and when that happens it creates connection. So when God does that for somebody through words of knowledge, it helps them set their faith on the truth that God is good. Then when you prophesy or give more revelation to that person, his or her heart is already completely open and able to receive it. I love that.

The same thing happens with words of knowledge in healing. If you say something like, "Somebody here has a left knee injury from a car accident" (and it's a word of knowledge that's accurate for somebody), then that person who has that injury will have full faith that he or she will be healed, even if that person didn't believe it when he or she walked into the room. All of a sudden that person thinks, Oh my gosh, God knows my injury. He saw it happen, and He loves me enough to heal me. It helps prepare someone to believe that God can heal his or her heart or other parts of his or her life. And this shows us the purpose of words of knowledge.

Words of knowledge require practice and can feel like a guessing game until you get them right. But when you do get them right, it is beautiful. They help people know that God knows who they are and what they need. When people see God communicate about them to someone else in an accurate and personal way, they are healed from loneliness and from the belief that God doesn't care. Their faith increases when they see God as a personal God, not a God somewhere far away. But the only way to grow as one who gives words of knowledge is literally to take a risk a thousand times. Over the course of a thousand times, you'll figure out what's real, and you'll figure out how to reproduce that fruit over and over and over.

You're going to make lots of mistakes along the way. I've made lots and lots of mistakes! Nothing that can put me in prison (praise Jesus!), but still things that made me feel like an oddball. And that's hard. Sometimes we do not want to take a risk unless we know the reward. When Jesus is your reward, however, love will cover every risk you take. And if you get to know Him through your practice, you'll be rewarded really well.

## PROPHECY SHOULD FEEL LIKE LOVE

Whatever revelatory gift is involved, remember this: The voice of God sounds like a friend. The voice of God sounds like a wise counselor. The voice of God sounds like someone who others, especially strangers, would want to hear from. A message from God sounds like something so good or so important that you can't help but give it away to a stranger.

Every time we engage in the prophetic, it is a direct communication from God's heart, which can transform and reset a person's entire foundation. That's such a huge responsibility, but it is also so profound. The Holy Spirit goes in the deepest parts of God's heart, and then He relates those thoughts to our hearts and minds. God says, "I don't see as you do. You need to learn to see as I see. I look at people and I'm happy to be with them." (Consider the prodigal son.)

John 3:17 says, "God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." Jesus came to put the world right again. That is what He did with His life, and that is what the prophetic ministry does. It's not here to convict the world of sin or tell people what they've done wrong; the Holy Spirit does that individually for us. People don't need two Holy Spirits or for someone to try to be the Holy Spirit to them. They need someone to be Jesus to them.

Jesus came for everyone in the world, including those who have sinned "the worst." There's incredibly good news for them: Jesus loves them! God wants to use us to help them understand that love, and being close to His heart will drive us to do that.