

A PROPHECY PRIMER

#1 – HOW TO READ THE BIBLE | DR. RANDY WHITE

THE BIBLE IS OUR ONLY SOURCE OF PROPHECIC INFORMATION

- Prophecy is not something that can be deduced, it must be revealed.
 - Prophecy is an “oracle” or “revelation” of information that is from another realm.
 - The word *prophet* is *one who speaks ahead*. The *-phetic* words all have to do with speech (prophetic, emphatic), while the *pro-* prefix means “in advance.”
 - The understanding of God’s revelation can only be understood through Scripture. See 1 Peter 1:20-21.
- What is the gift of prophecy?
 - Discerning the times and making predictions about the future from the trajectory of the times is valuable, but not prophetic.
 - Speaking a pertinent word to society is valuable, but not prophetic.
 - Teaching the Word of God in an accurate and timely manner is valuable (and rare), but not prophetic.
 - Some bad definitions:
 - “Many people misunderstand the gift of prophecy to be the ability to predict the future. While knowing something about the future may sometimes have been an aspect of the gift of prophecy, it was primarily a gift of proclamation (“forth-telling”), not prediction (“fore-telling”).” --from *Got Questions*
 - “A prophet’s **basic motivational drive is to apply the Word of God to a situation so that sin is exposed** and relationships are restored.” –from Institute for Basic Life Principles (emphasis theirs)
 - In the Bible, prophets (all of them) received new information directly from God and proclaimed that information to the nation of Israel. Agabus in Acts 11:28 is a prime example.
- Because prophecy is a revelation, the Bible is the only source of such revelation.
 - This series takes the position that the prophecy of 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 has come to pass.
 - This position is partly based on Revelation 22:19.

THE WAY YOU READ THE BIBLE AFFECTS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF PROPHECIC INFORMATION

- Read the Bible as a revelatory book.

- Almost every page is filled with a new revelation. Read it looking for that which is being revealed.
- Begin by understanding the basic physical revelations, then you will better understand the advanced spiritual revelations.
 - The one who tries to understand the prophecy of Genesis 3:15 without first understanding Genesis 1-3 will live in confusion.
 - See John 3:12.
 - The physical revelations are foundational to the spiritual revelations.
 - Childhood is a great time to learn the physical revelations...but no time is too late!
- Read the Bible as a literal book.
 - Unless there is compelling reason to take the Bible as figurative or allegorical, don’t do so.
 - When the Bible is speaking figuratively or allegorically, it provides its own interpretation.
 - There is no logical reason for the Bible (a revelatory book) to speak in code that it does not itself define.
- Read the Bible as a progressive book.
 - Most often, material that comes later in chronology is dependent on earlier material.
 - There are a few times when later material gives definition to earlier material.

READ PROPHECY AS A BIG-PICTURE EVENT

- Prophetic Scripture is full of exciting detail.
- None of the exciting detail in prophetic Scripture is meaningful in itself.
- The Bible is a book about the creation and the restoration of paradise. The better you understand the *storyline* of the Scriptures, the better you will understand the *details* of prophecy.

CAUTIONARY ADVICE FOR STUDENTS OF PROPHECY

- Spending time learning future (yet-unfulfilled) prophetic information can become addictive to some personalities. Make sure that you are a student of the “full counsel of God.”
- The learning of future (yet-unfulfilled) prophetic information can seem irrelevant to some personalities. The Bible is filled with such information, however, and this cannot be ignored.
- Avoid the temptation to make every current event somehow prophetic. You will be chasing a moving target.