

Apostle Gideon Odoma



WHEN PROPHECY GOES DEEPER THAN THE GIFT

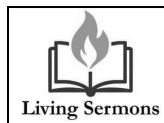
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When Prophecy Goes Deeper Than The Gift

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Publisher: LivingSermons.com

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Foreword

The prophetic ministry remains one of God's greatest gifts to His Church, yet it is also one of the areas where believers are most vulnerable to deception when biblical discernment is neglected. Throughout Scripture, God repeatedly calls His people to embrace spiritual gifts while carefully testing every spirit, weighing every prophetic utterance, and examining every minister by the standard of His Word.

The preacher carefully distinguishes between genuine prophetic ministry and its counterfeits, emphasizing that accuracy alone is never the final test of authenticity. Character, faithfulness to God's Word, submission to Christ, and the fruit of a transformed life remain indispensable biblical standards for evaluating spiritual ministry.

Perhaps the strongest appeal of this message is its call to personal growth. Rather than becoming consumed with exposing darkness, believers are challenged to pursue maturity, strengthen their private walk with God, and "wax strong in spirit" as John the Baptist did in the wilderness. While both wheat and tares continue to grow until God's appointed day of judgment, every servant of Christ bears the responsibility to keep growing in grace, truth, discernment, and spiritual stature.

As editors, our responsibility has been to preserve the preacher's voice while presenting this sermon in a clear, readable format for careful study. Minor grammatical corrections, punctuation, paragraphing, and formatting have been applied solely to improve readability without altering the substance, emphasis, or doctrinal intent of the original message.

— ***Wisdom Epsi***
Chief Editor, LivingSermons.com

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Publisher's Note

This book is a faithful transcript of a live sermon delivered by the preacher under the inspiration and unction of the Holy Spirit. Every effort has been made to preserve the preacher's exact words, tone, flow, and spiritual authority, while carefully proofreading and formatting the message into a clear and readable ebook format.

The message you are about to read was originally ministered in a live congregational setting. As such, it carries the weight, urgency, and atmosphere of that sacred gathering. Minor grammatical and structural adjustments have been made solely to enhance readability, without altering the substance, intent, or power of the original delivery.

Watch the live sermon from which this message was transcribed on YouTube, **at the *[Remnant Christian Network Official Channel](#)***

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It is our prayer that as you read, the same grace, conviction, clarity, and impartation present in the live service will minister to you afresh.

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A Spirit-led Publishing Stewardship

Main Message

Begins Here



Introduction

As we look at the subject of prophets and prophecies, it is generally assumed that people talk more about false prophets than they talk about false pastors.

Today, people even use the designation "*fake pastors*." I remember reading a comment on Facebook some years ago where someone described another person as "*a real fake prophet*." I paused and thought, "*A real fake prophet?*" It was quite striking.

The prophetic is usually the focus whenever people are trying to determine what is true or false, right or wrong. Yet I want you to understand that falsehood and truth run through the entire fabric of Christian leadership.

You can be a false prophet.

You can be a false apostle.

Those designations exist in Scripture. You can also be a false teacher.

In fact, one of the marks of the last days, according to the New Testament, is that there will be false teachers. I believe that one of the strategies Satan is employing in these days is to invest that stream with tremendous diabolical spiritual energy and resources.

Many times, people's attention is fixed on the prophetic because it is easier to evaluate. Someone can simply say, "That person gave a prophecy, and it did not come to pass. Therefore, he is not a prophet of God."

However, if someone teaches something that is aberrant or unorthodox, people often respond by saying:

"Let everyone preach what God gave them to preach."

Or,

"You are not the police of the Body of Christ."

Or,

"Your revelation is not all the revelation that exists. God gives different messages to different people."

As a result, false teachers often receive an easier pass in today's world than false prophets.

Even the prophets are trying very hard these days.

I once heard someone say that about seventy percent of his prophecies come to pass, and he argued that even in school, seventy percent earns an "A," so he was not doing badly.

There are all kinds of arguments like these.

The Test of a Prophet

Let us begin with **Deuteronomy 13:1–3 (KJV)**.

"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul."

This passage is quite self-explanatory.

Suppose someone arises among you as a prophet or a dreamer of dreams. He gives a sign or predicts an event. He says that something will happen tomorrow, or in the month of August, on the seventh day, and everyone will see it.

Then exactly as he declared, it comes to pass.

The Bible says that even after his prophetic utterance has been fulfilled, if that same person begins to say,

"Let us go after other gods, which ye have not known, and let us serve them,"

you must not listen to him.

The Lord your God is testing you to know whether you truly love Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Because we have a long journey ahead, I will only touch this briefly.

The simple point is this:

The mere fact that someone says something and it comes to pass does not mean we should give that person unquestioning loyalty.

It is possible for certain events to fit a prophetic narrative even though they were not sponsored by Heaven.

Lying Wonders

The New Testament speaks about **lying wonders**.

Let us look at **Mark 13:21–22 (KJV)**.

Jesus, speaking about the last days, gives us this warning:

"And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not: For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect."

Notice what Jesus says.

False Christs shall arise.

False prophets shall arise.

I speak to the Church.

When we understand that we are living in the last days, we should expect false messiahs among us and false prophets among us. Jesus did not say they *might* arise.

He said they **shall arise**. Therefore, any framework that has an open-door policy for everyone who simply calls himself a man of God is not being faithful to the warnings of Jesus.

Try the Spirits

In **1 John 4:1 (KJV)** the Bible says:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

Let me hear you say, **many**. The Bible says,

Many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Sometimes I ask people, "Can you even identify a few false prophets?"

If Scripture says there are **many**, yet you cannot recognize even a few, you may already be in trouble. There is a growing, unhealthy ecumenism that says, "They are speaking in the name of the Lord."

Others respond, "Maybe you are not a prophet, so you do not understand how the prophetic works."

And so everybody receives a pass. But the Bible does not say **a few** false prophets have gone out. It says **many**. Jesus also warned that these false prophets would show signs and wonders.

Wonders Can Have Another Source

In his epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul calls these manifestations **lying wonders**. They are indeed wonders. The issue is not whether something supernatural happened.

The issue is the source behind it. There are wonders. There are signs. But there are signs and wonders whose origin is the kingdom of darkness. Notice again what **1 John 4** says.

It begins by instructing us to examine **spirits**.

"Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God."

The object being tested is the spirit. However, spirits do not usually present themselves to us as spirits. On their journey from the invisible realm into the visible world, they find human vessels through whom they can express themselves.

Although they are spirits, they carry out their operations through willing human beings. Those human beings may even be clothed in the office of prophets. So when false spirits come into the world, they often arrive through prophets. They find willing vessels through whom they gain entrance into our midst.

It is therefore possible to encounter someone functioning as a prophet while actually giving expression to a false spirit.

The Bible Gives Us Tests

If time permits, I will show us the three tests the Bible gives for validating the authenticity of prophetic ministry.

The first is the **theological test**.

Even this passage in **1 John 4:2 (KJV)** teaches us this:

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."

This is a doctrinal test.

It is a theological test.

But it is not the only test found in Scripture.

There is also the test of ontology.

There is the test of doctrine.

There is the test of theology.

And Jesus Himself gives us another important test, which we shall examine shortly.

Accuracy Alone Is Not Enough

So the point so far is this:

Whether we are leaders or believers, as we administer the grace of God, we must understand that not everyone who appears accurate is truly accurate.

Someone may give a word, perform a sign, or declare a wonder that appears accurate or even comes to pass.

Yet that manifestation may become a tool of seduction.

That is spiritual language.

It is like someone trying to woo a wife away from her husband.

It is the act of dangling something attractive before you in order to steal your loyalty from the One to whom you truly belong.

The Bible teaches that God sometimes allows these situations as a test for His own people.

Will they love God more than signs and wonders?

Will they abandon discernment simply because something supernatural has happened?

Are you there?

I'm not sure you are here.

Hallelujah!

Three Sources of Prophetic Utterances

Now let us go to **Jeremiah 14:14 (KJV)**.

"Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart."

There are three important things to notice in this verse.

There are three possible sources of what may appear to be prophetic utterances, and all three are implied here.

The Lord says,

"The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not."

God should have been the One who sent them.

He should have been the source.

He should have been the spring from which their ministry flowed.

But in this case, Heaven gives a clear denial.

God says,

"I have not sent them."

The first and only legitimate source of prophecy is the Lord Himself.

God says in **Jeremiah 14:14 (KJV)**:

"I sent them not."

By that statement alone, we understand what the proper source ought to be. The Lord is supposed to be the source of prophetic ministry.

But the passage continues:

"Neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination..."

Notice the word **divination**. Divination belongs to the realm of the negative supernatural. It is the dark art of consulting spirits in order to obtain insight, information, or direction for human beings.

Divination and Necromancy

Divination is closely related to **necromancy**. Necromancy is the attempt to consult the spirits of the dead. Now, you should know enough from Scripture to understand that this is not actually communication with departed human beings.

When people die, they are not wandering through the spirit realm trying to communicate with necromancers on the earth. What actually happens is that familiar spirits masquerade as the spirits of the dead. It is through consultation with these familiar spirits that necromancy operates.

Both necromancy and divination are spiritual enterprises. A diviner is a human being who has become connected to demonic spirits—to evil spirits operating in the realm of the spirit. So God is saying here: "I did not send them." "I did not command them."

Yet what they are bringing is false vision and divination. In other words, the demonic—the negative supernatural—is involved. But that is still not the whole picture.

The verse continues:

"...and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart."

Here we discover three possible sources of what appears to be prophetic utterance. It can come from:

- God.
- Evil spirits.
- The human heart.

Not Every Wrong Prophecy Comes from Satan

I need to say this very carefully, and I need to say it very strongly. Sometimes, in the name of being prophetic, people bully others. You hear statements like:

"Are you saying God is lying?"

simply because someone did not receive or confirm a prophetic word.

No.

We are not saying God is lying. We are saying that what you said is not accurate. We are not accusing the Holy Spirit of lying. Neither are we automatically saying you are operating by the devil.

Why?

Because Scripture gives us at least **three possible sources**.

It can be God.

It can be Satan.

It can also be **you**.

You are not absent from the equation.

You are not a neutral observer.

The human heart can also become a source.

Samuel Was Wrong

Think about Samuel.

When he looked at Eliab, he said in his heart:

"Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him."

Do you think Satan was speaking through Samuel?

Certainly not.

In fact, Scripture indicates that Samuel said this within himself.

Eliab did not hear Samuel speak those words aloud.

If he had, the narrative would have reflected that.

Besides, the Bible tells us that God did not allow any of Samuel's spoken words to fall to the ground.

Had Samuel actually declared it publicly, God would have honored the covenant He had with His prophet.

Instead, while Samuel was reasoning within himself, the Lord corrected him.

God said:

"Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature... for the LORD seeth not as man seeth..."

(1 Samuel 16:7, KJV)

No one else heard that conversation.

It took place within the heart of the prophet.

The point is simple:

Samuel was not inspired by an evil spirit.

Yet he was still wrong.

Nathan Was Also Wrong

The same thing happened with Nathan. David expressed his desire to build a house for the Lord. Nathan immediately responded, "Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee."

It sounded right.

It was noble.

After all, what could be wrong with building a house for God?

But that very night, the Lord came to Nathan and corrected him.

In effect, God said:

"What you said sounds good, but I did not say it."

Sometimes, as Dr. Sola Fola-Alade once pointed out, prophecy can be influenced by **desire**.

Nathan knew David loved God. He knew David's intention was honorable. His conclusion seemed reasonable. Yet it was not God's word.

Good is not always right. The point I am making is about **sources**. Do you think Satan spoke through Nathan?

Of course not.

What appeared to be a prophetic utterance came from Nathan himself.

The Human Heart Must Be Considered

Whenever someone says something prophetically, we should not immediately conclude that there are only two possibilities:

Either God spoke.

Or the devil spoke.

There is another possibility. The person himself may have spoken. So when people make it appear that questioning the accuracy of a prophetic word is the same as accusing them of speaking by Satan, that is unnecessary.

It is spiritual intimidation.

It is a form of bullying.

Do not blackmail people that way. Do not introduce Satan into the conversation when no one has mentioned Satan. And do not remove yourself from the equation.

Scripture clearly leaves room for the human heart.

Jeremiah says:

"I have not sent them."

That excludes God.

Then he mentions **divination**.

That identifies the demonic.

Finally, he says:

"...the deceit of their heart."

That identifies the human source.

Guardrails for Prophetic Ministry

Because this is a prophetic conference, it is important that we establish healthy guardrails. Never use prophetic ministry to bully people. When a prophetic word is given, the immediate point of confirmation is the recipient.

The ultimate confirmation is reality itself.

Confidence Must Walk with Humility

Humility is not the opposite of confidence. A person can be confident and still be humble. You may sincerely know what you believe God has said. Suppose God wakes you up at **4:13 a.m.** and says,

"My son, Elizabeth is your wife. Go and take her unto thyself, and together you shall do mighty works for Me upon the earth."

No matter how vivid that encounter may be, you still require Elizabeth's confirmation.

Suppose you approach Elizabeth and she says, "No. God showed me Ebenezer."

She may even describe her own dream with the same confidence. Now understand something. One of you may be right. Both of you may be wrong. But both of you cannot be right.

It is entirely possible that neither revelation came from God. Human experiences can sometimes arise from many natural causes. The point is that both claims cannot simultaneously be true.

God Does Not Override Human Will

Suppose, for the sake of argument, that you are the one who genuinely heard from God. Even then, if Elizabeth refuses, you cannot force her to marry you.

Understand this carefully. Nothing about her decision takes God by surprise. God will not punish you for another person's disobedience. As long as you were willing to obey what you sincerely believed to be God's will, you can still move forward confidently in God's purposes. The matter required another person's agreement in order to become reality. If that person refuses, God remains just. Remember what the Bible says:

"The Lord is... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

(2 Peter 3:9, KJV)

Yet many people still perish. If God does not compel people into Heaven, why would He compel someone into marriage with you?

Is marriage more important than eternity?

People possess a will. They can know God's will and still choose not to obey it. Otherwise, the word **disobedience** would have no meaning. A person can indeed be disobedient.

Shepherds Must Never Manipulate

As leaders, when God gives prophetic insight, we must handle it with great care. Do not go into the world using prophetic instinct to dominate people.

Not in marriage.

Not in vocation.

Not in any area of life.

I have watched people enter marriages that, by the witness of the Holy Spirit, I knew were not God's best.

But once someone says, "The Lord told me," what are you going to do?

If you are a true shepherd, you do not blacklist them. Not even in your heart. You continue to love them. You refuse to manipulate them.

If you truly possess a shepherd's heart, you will almost wish that **you** were the one who misunderstood, because your deepest desire is for things to go well for them.

Even when you remain convinced that you heard correctly, you submit your perception to God and hope for the best. Because when difficulties eventually arise, they will still come back to you. Sometimes they may even say, "I wish I had listened to you."

When that happens, do not rub it in.

Hallelujah!

Never Weaponize the Prophetic

I remember my own experience. There was a time when God spoke to me concerning someone I wanted to marry.

The Lord made it clear:

"This is not it."

But I was convinced otherwise. Eventually, it became obvious that God was right. When everything fell apart and I went back to the man of God who had warned me, I expected him to say, "I told you."

Instead, he responded with compassion.

He asked, "Are you sure there is nothing that can be done?"

He was still looking for reconciliation. He was still hoping things could somehow be restored. He never tried to prove that he had been right. Do not miss the point.

Do not use your prophetic calling to bully people. Do not blacklist people because they did not follow your prophetic counsel.

If someone refuses your prophetic word and you place them in your black book, then—unless the Lord did not call me— **that is elementary witchcraft.**

Prophecy Must Never Become Control

When you become so desperate to be right that you are willing to see the destruction of a life for whom Jesus died, that is witchcraft. There are people who have hijacked churches—churches with established leadership—under the guise of being prophetic.

They have no official role.

They have no recognized leadership designation. Yet the moment the church gathers, they suddenly have a prophetic word. And that prophetic word always seeks to direct the affairs of the church.

Listen carefully.

A New Testament assembly is **not** led by prophecy.

No.

That is why the Bible says:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

(1 John 4:1, KJV)

Then we have another instruction in **1 Thessalonians 5:19–21 (KJV)**:

"Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

Notice the balance of Scripture. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecy. But neither should you accept everything without examination.

Prove all things.

Then hold fast only to that which is good.

Agabus Did Not Control Paul

Remember Agabus.

He gave Paul an accurate prophetic word.

He took Paul's belt, bound himself, and declared that the owner of the belt would be bound in Jerusalem and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles.

Was the prophecy accurate?

Yes.

Did it stop Paul from going to Jerusalem?

No.

Paul replied, in effect,

"Thank you for the information. But for your information, I am not only ready to be bound—I am also ready to die."

When the brethren continued pleading with him, Paul asked,

"Why are you weeping and breaking my heart?"

Eventually they stopped persuading him and simply said,

"The will of the Lord be done."

Agabus did not regard Paul as an enemy because Paul chose to proceed.

Why?

Because accurate prophetic insight does not automatically carry a corresponding command. The prophecy was:

"If you go to Jerusalem, this is what will happen."

The prophecy was **not**:

"Therefore, do not go."

There is a difference.

Know Where the Prophetic Word Ends

Whenever God gives you a prophetic word, be careful not to overstep your authority. Learn to distinguish between the word of the Lord and your personal application of that word. Those are not the same thing. You may receive a genuine revelation. Then you may conclude, "Therefore, this is what you should do."

That second part is your application. It is not necessarily God's command. Paul already knew suffering awaited him. He himself testified:

"...I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me."

(Acts 20:22-23, KJV)

So when someone came to tell Paul that suffering awaited him, it was not new information. The Lord had already prepared him. Therefore, if someone went beyond the prophetic revelation and insisted,

"Because of this, you must not go,"

they would have stepped beyond their boundary.

Give People Their God-Given Agency

When you faithfully bring God's word to people, allow them the dignity of responding before God. You are not a monitoring spirit. Neither are you God's enforcement officer over another person's life. If this principle is not carefully guarded, prophetic ministry can easily degenerate into witchcraft within a church system.

People begin using prophecy as a means of indirect rule. They are not the pastor. They are not members of the leadership team. Yet they always possess a prophetic word that supposedly determines what the church should do next.

They begin initiating projects. Launching programmes. Choosing conference speakers. Directing the affairs of the assembly. They gradually establish themselves as unauthorized lords over God's people. That is dangerous.

And remember what we have already seen from Scripture.

Not every inaccurate prophetic word comes from darkness.

Sometimes it is simply the deceit of the human heart.

That is my point.

Advice Is Not Authority

Develop a large enough heart that you can faithfully deliver God's word, give people the best counsel you know how to give, and still let them understand that the final decision before God is theirs.

If they choose differently—as Paul did—you do not love them less.

You do not value them less.

A Lesson the Lord Taught Me

Many years ago, over twenty years now, I was ministering in Warri. The night before one of the meetings, while praying, the Lord showed me several things. The next day, during the service, I began calling out the things God had revealed.

Then I mentioned one particular name. I knew what I had heard. I asked, "Is this person here?"

No response. I asked again. Nothing.

I even asked whether anyone knew someone by that name who fit the description.

Still nothing. Finally, I said, "Perhaps I did not hear well."

Some of you are too prophetic to ever say something like that. But that was exactly what I said.

I could not begin accusing the congregation of lying simply because my expectation was not immediately confirmed.

So we left the matter.

The Prophet's Personal Test

After the meeting, while I was in the pastor's office, a young man came in hurriedly.

He said, "Sir, it is my younger brother."

I asked, "Was he in church?"

He replied, "No. He travelled to Lagos yesterday morning."

Immediately the matter became clear. I explained to him what the Lord had shown me. The following day was the final session of the conference. Part of me wanted to stand before the congregation and explain that I had actually heard correctly the previous day.

I wanted to set the record straight. But on Sunday morning, before I left for church, the Lord spoke to me.

He asked,

"Is this about you, or is it about Me?"

I answered,

"It is about You."

The Lord said,

"If it is about Me, then leave it."

So I went to church.

I preached the message.

I completed the meeting.

I never referred to the incident again.

Sometimes those seemingly small moments become God's personal examination for His servants.

He is testing whether the prophet will become a law unto himself.

You may sincerely feel that people mishandled the word God gave through you.

You may want to defend your accuracy.

But God may ask,

"Is this about protecting My name—or protecting your ego?"

If it is really about Him, He is fully capable of defending His own name.

God Is Not Afraid of Temporary Defeat

History teaches us something remarkable. There have been moments when it appeared that God had lost. When the crowd was asked whom they wanted released, they chose **Barabbas** instead of Jesus.

A known criminal received more votes than the Son of God.

The One who healed them...

Fed them...

Taught them...

Was rejected.

They voted against Him.

Then they crucified Him.

For three days, Hell celebrated what appeared to be victory.

It looked as though evil had won.

But on the third day, the celebration ended.

The resurrection changed everything.

As I often joke, if I had been Jesus, I might have paid Pilate a visit in the middle of the night.

I would have knocked on his door at three o'clock in the morning and said,

"So... you thought you had Me?"

Your wife warned you to have nothing to do with Me.

Yet here I am.

Thankfully, Jesus is not like me.

Check the Source of Your Need for Validation

Sometimes you need to examine why you feel such pressure to prove that you were right. That pressure may have more to do with self than with Jesus. What did Jesus do after His resurrection?

He did **not** appear to Pilate.

He did **not** appear to Herod.

According to **Acts 10:39–41 (KJV)**:

"...Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God..."

Jesus deliberately appeared only to the witnesses God had chosen.

He was willing for Pilate and the other rulers to hear about the resurrection through the testimony of His apostles. He did not feel compelled to vindicate Himself personally.

Why?

Because a God who inhabits eternity is never under pressure.

Walk According to God's Clock

If you constantly feel pressure in the work of God, stop and examine where that pressure is coming from. In the final analysis, God's justice will prevail. Nothing hidden will remain hidden forever. Everything concealed will eventually be revealed. The difficulty is that many people are unwilling to walk according to God's timetable.

Instead, they try to force God to work according to theirs. You may genuinely be right. But if someone says, "No," you do not lord it over them.

Not even under the guise of prophecy. Do not dominate people with a prophetic word. Remember what we have established. There are three possible sources of what appears to be prophetic utterance.

It may come from God.

It may come from Satan.

Or it may come from **you**.

Accuracy Alone Does Not Validate a Prophet

Let us return to **Jeremiah 29:20–23 (KJV)**.

This passage is extremely important.

The Lord says:

"Hear ye therefore the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon..."

He goes on to mention **Ahab the son of Kolaiah** and **Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah**, two prophets who prophesied lies in His name.

God declared that He would deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

Then we come to **Jeremiah 29:23 (KJV)**:

"Because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and am a witness, saith the LORD."

I came to this passage because of the striking combination it presents.

It is a terrible combination.

A horrifying combination.

These men committed adultery with their neighbours' wives.

At the same time, they prophesied in God's name.

Think about that.

They combined adultery with prophecy.

God Looks Beyond Prophetic Accuracy

The landscape today is not very different. Whenever people discuss false prophets, the conversation almost always centres on whether their prophecies came to pass.

But look carefully at what God emphasizes here. God is deeply interested in **the life of the man**. Even if the man's words come to pass, there are still further tests to be applied. Those tests may still disqualify him.

Therefore, while prophetic accuracy is necessary, it is **not sufficient**. Accuracy alone is not proof that a prophet is genuine. We already saw that principle in **Deuteronomy 13**.

A prophetic word may come to pass. A sign may occur. A wonder may happen. Yet the person may use that very credibility to seduce people away from God. Therefore, fulfilled predictive prophecy, by itself, is not enough.

It is not sufficient.

What Follows the Prophecy?

Someone may say,

"But he prophesied, and it came to pass."

Yes.

Perhaps it did.

But suppose the next day he stands before the church and declares,

"I am your father."

"I am your father."

"I am your father."

Then he says,

"Fornication is not a sin."

Or,

"As your father, I give you permission."

"I authorize you."

Why do you think people came to him in the first place?

If that had been his opening message, would anyone have followed him?

No.

Something supernatural first gained their confidence.

Something remarkable convinced them that perhaps this man genuinely heard from God.

Only after winning their trust did he begin leading people away from the very God they had come seeking.

God says,

Do not listen to such a prophet.

In **Deuteronomy 18**, under the Old Covenant, such a prophet was to be judged severely.

The Human Heart

Now let us move to **Jeremiah 23:25–28 (KJV)**.

The Lord says:

"I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed..."

Then He continues:

"They are prophets of the deceit of their own heart."

Earlier, I explained that prophetic utterances may originate from three different sources:

- God.
- Satan.
- The human heart.

Now let me make an important distinction. The human heart can be **sincere but mistaken**.

It can also be **intentionally deceptive**.

Those are two different things.

Sincere but Mistaken

Samuel sincerely believed Eliab was God's choice.

When he said,

"Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him,"

I believe he was speaking out of experience. Samuel had anointed Saul, Israel's first king.

Saul was imposing.

Tall.

Handsome.

Commanding in appearance. The Bible tells us that Saul stood head and shoulders above everyone else. So when Samuel saw Eliab, who possessed a similar appearance, he naturally concluded, "This must be the Lord's anointed."

Samuel was sincere. But he was mistaken. Nathan was equally sincere when he told David, "Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee."

His counsel sounded reasonable.

Yet God corrected him that very night.

Again, sincerity was present.

Accuracy was not.

Sometimes prophetic mistakes arise because sincere people misunderstand what they perceive.

Intentionally Deceptive

There is another category. Sometimes people deliberately use prophetic language as a tool of manipulation. Imagine someone comes and says,

"Daddy, we have finished examinations, and I plan to travel home next Tuesday."

The response comes immediately:

"No."

"Not Tuesday."

"Thursday."

No revelation occurred.

Nothing was heard from Heaven.

It is simply manipulation.

These are tools of control.

The objective is to keep people dependent upon the supposed prophet for every decision.

That is intentional deception.

So whenever prophecy seems to arise from the human heart, it is not always innocent misunderstanding.

Sometimes it is calculated manipulation.

Speak God's Word Faithfully

Let us continue reading **Jeremiah 23:28–29 (KJV)**.

"The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD."

Then God continues:

"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

Notice the distinction God makes.

If someone merely has a dream, let him honestly present it as a dream.

But if someone possesses the word of the Lord, let him speak that word **faithfully**.

That is the issue.

It is not enough merely to have God's word.

You must faithfully communicate what He actually said.

God asks,

"What is the chaff to the wheat?"

Both exist together.

Yet they are not the same.

The difference eventually becomes obvious.

Then He tells us why.

His word is like fire.

His word is like a hammer that breaks rocks into pieces.

These are the characteristics of the genuine word of God.

A mere dream possesses its own characteristics.

God does not confuse the two.

Those who merely have dreams should present them honestly.

Those who possess His word must declare it faithfully.

This principle remains consistent throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

Those manufacturing prophecies...

Those consulting evil spirits...

Those inflating themselves...

Let them continue doing what they do.

But the one who truly possesses God's word must speak it faithfully.

Jesus' Warning About False Prophets

Now we come into the New Testament. In **Matthew 7:15–16 (KJV)** Jesus says:

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits..."

Notice the contrast. There is the **outward**. There is the **inward**. The outward is the clothing. The inward is the true nature. Jesus says false prophets come clothed like sheep. Outwardly they appear harmless.

Spiritually they appear authentic. Yet inwardly they are ravening wolves. If you cannot perceive beyond appearances, you will never recognize them. Remember what Jesus already warned us in **Mark 13**.

False christs and false prophets will arise.

They will perform signs.

They will perform wonders.

Their purpose is to seduce.

If it were possible, even the elect would be deceived.

Why False Prophets Resemble the Genuine

Suppose someone entered this gathering carrying obvious occult objects. Imagine they arrived with cowries, white garments, chalk, the skin of a python tied around their waist, ringing bells as they walked in. Would anyone here mistake such a person for a genuine prophet?

Of course not.

Deception only succeeds when imitation resembles the original. A false prophet must look as much like a true prophet as possible. Otherwise, deception is impossible.

That is exactly why Jesus warned us so seriously. The resemblance will be so convincing that, apart from God's mercy, even the elect could be deceived. That should teach us how closely counterfeit prophetic ministry can resemble the genuine.

It will ultimately require the mercy of God, the witness of the Holy Spirit, and biblical discernment to preserve believers from deception.

The first thing you are seeing here is that these false prophets, the Bible says, **come to you in sheep's clothing.**

The clothing simply refers to the exterior—the external, the visible. Outwardly, they look like sheep.

But **inwardly, they are ravening wolves.**

You know God says, *"I look not as man looks."* Men look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. If God does not give you access to **what is inward**, all you can see is the clothing.

Let me hear you say, **"Inwardly."**

If God does not give you access to what is happening inwardly, then all you will ever see is a sheep on the outside, while inwardly there is a wolf.

Imagine Jesus saying this long before smartphones, long before the internet, long before television screens. Even in those days, it was possible for people to present themselves as something they were not.

How much more today?

The issue is inwardly. That is where the real matter lies.

Clothing Is Not Proof

When you see someone giving scholarships to orphans, buying bags of rice for widows, and all of it appears on your television screen, let me hear you say:

"Clothing."

You cannot use those things alone to conclude that a prophet is from God.

That is outward appearance.

That is clothing.

You must look deeper than that.

That is where the **discerning of spirits** comes into the equation.

The **person** is more important than the **performance**.

These days I see people putting their reputation on the line to defend someone when everything they know about that individual is merely **the clothing**.

They say,

"Do you see all the things God is doing through this person?"

"Have you done half of what God has done through their ministry?"

But my question is:

What do you actually know about the person?

What do you know about who they are when the cameras are off?

Everything you see on YouTube and television is **what the producers want you to see.**

Are you there?

Even those watching online right now experience only what the media team chooses to present.

There have been prophetic moments in our meetings where we deliberately instructed the media team **not to show the faces** of the people receiving prophetic ministry. Those watching online never saw the recipients.

So how can they claim to have complete information about what happened?

They cannot.

Because what they are seeing is **the clothing.**

The Camera Shows Only the Frame

Whenever you prepare for a broadcast, the media team arranges the environment.

Objects are moved.

Angles are adjusted.

Anything that distracts from the intended image is removed from the camera frame.

Do you remember during the COVID era when people forgot their cameras were still on? Some were dressed in suits and ties above the waist, but when they stood up, everyone discovered they were wearing only boxer shorts.

The camera revealed only the clothing.

Yet I still see people on social media declaring,

"We stand with this prophet!"

Based on what?

Clothing.

Nothing more.

Personal Relationship With Jesus Requires Discernment

One of Christianity's greatest strengths can also become one of its greatest dangers.

We emphasize having a personal relationship with Jesus, and rightly so.

But sometimes, when spiritual leadership raises legitimate concerns, people respond,

"I have my own walk with God."

"That's your own opinion."

"I know God for myself."

Then they leave a healthy church environment and immerse themselves in polluted spiritual streams.

Eventually the problems return.

They come back asking for prayer.

"Sir, the issue left for two days, but now it has returned."

How will it not return when you continually expose yourself to wolves?

Then, when we attempt to warn you, you say,

"There is nothing wrong with what he preaches."

Really?

People who commit adultery—as Jeremiah described—while continuing to prophesy can still sound convincing outwardly.

Yet God judged both their message and their lives.

Spirits Are Communicated

Some people defend a minister by saying,

"Look at the number of lives he has touched."

"Look at the crowd."

"Look at the scholarships."

"Look at the charity work."

Some of you were stable in your Christian walk until you continually opened your spirit to voices you never tested.

Now you wonder why lust, confusion, and spiritual oppression seem to have settled over your life.

People do not merely communicate words.

They communicate spirits.

That is why 1 John 4 tells us,

"Try every spirit."

Notice it does not say,

"Try every speech."

It says,

"Try every spirit."

The first examination is not merely what is said.

It is **who the person is**.

That is a test of nature.

If a wolf wears sheep's clothing, you will never identify the wolf by examining the clothing.

You need spiritual eyes that can see **through the clothing** to the reality underneath.

Public Charity Is Not the Test

People say,

"Look at all the people he helps."

"Look at the scholarships."

"Look at the philanthropy."

But how do you know?

Because you watched it on television?

Because it appeared on social media?

Jesus taught,

"Let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing."

Yet today, someone cannot give fifty thousand naira without making sure a camera captures it. The camera focuses on the recipient.

Then on the cheque. Then back to the recipient. Then back to the cheque. Do you know what is happening?

Sometimes they are simply sewing thicker clothing around the wolf.

It is still clothing.

"By Their Fruits..."

Jesus then says,

"By their fruits you shall know them."

The problem today is that many people assume they already know what that fruit is.

But how are you actually going to assess a person's fruit?

Suppose someone says, *"My spiritual father has already gone to be with the Lord."*

"He still fathers me through his books and messages."

They conclude that no living man is qualified to speak into their lives.

Very well.

But let me tell you the first solution to this problem.

It is called **the discerning of spirits**.

The Witness of the Spirit

Over the years I have often said that discernment is not merely a doctrine; it is a spiritual reality.

I cannot claim to know every false prophet.

But in all my years, I cannot remember someone whom I genuinely discerned to be false who did not eventually prove to be false.

This conviction has been with me since I was a teenager.

I remember arguing with friends.

They would ask,

"What exactly are you looking for?"

"What evidence will ever satisfy you?"

I remember the very first time I saw the Nigerian prophet who later became internationally known.

It was around 1998.

I walked into my cousin's sitting room in Lokoja.

The television was on. The moment I saw the man's face, something inside me knew:

This is not of God. Years passed before I encountered him again.

When I did, I said, *"I have seen this man before."*

"He is a false prophet."

That was before his global popularity.

Clothing Can Divide Churches

Before that man's death, I travelled across different parts of Africa.

I saw churches divided.

Leadership teams split.

Pastors disagreed sharply over him.

Sometimes, after meetings, pastors would gather around me saying,

"Finally, someone from Nigeria can help us resolve this matter."

The first question was almost always,

"Is this prophet genuine or false?"

Interestingly, half the room hoped I would answer yes.

The other half hoped I would answer no.

Many of you have witnessed similar situations.

Entire church leaderships divided because of one personality.

Why?

Because many people were evaluating **the clothing**.

They would argue,

"The fact that he doesn't speak polished English doesn't mean God is not using him."

Fine.

But my question remains: **How do you know it is God?**

Is it miracles?

Jesus already warned us that false Christs and false prophets would perform **signs and wonders**.

Signs alone are not enough. Wonders alone are not enough. Even large crowds are not enough. Some people say, *"If they were false, would they influence so many people?"*

Or,

"You're only criticizing them because you're jealous."

Or,

"You're the one dividing the Body of Christ."

Keeping the Unity of the Spirit

I told them recently in Abuja that the Bible says we should **endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit**.

It does **not** tell us to create it. Unity must already exist before it can be preserved. If the unity of the Spirit is absent, there is nothing to keep. If I am a sheep and you are a wolf, your wearing sheep's clothing does not create unity between us.

Scripture says, **"Deep calleth unto deep."**

Jesus said they are wolves, but they come dressed in the clothing of sheep. And He tells us that it is **their fruit** by which they will ultimately be known.

Even in our day, discerning that fruit has become increasingly difficult. Do you know how easy it is for somebody to fake fruit?

If someone were holding an artificial plastic apple and it was filmed, you might have no way of knowing that it was fake. It can look so real that you cannot tell it is artificial, because there is a screen between you and the object.

I'm saying to you that almost everything you see through a screen may not qualify as fruit. In 2026, almost everything can be faked. The fruit of the Spirit begins with love, doesn't it? Somebody say, "Love!"

What is love?

Jesus said, **"If ye love me, keep my commandments."**

But beyond that, 1 Corinthians 13 says that it is possible for me to give my body to be burned and yet not have love. That passage has troubled me for decades. How can somebody do all these things and yet not have love?

Jesus said, **"By their fruits ye shall know them."**

So when you see someone donating large sums of money, when they come to church with stacks of cash on the table, giving to orphans and widows, you may say, "That is love."

But the Bible says you can even offer yourself to be burned and still not have love.

"Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

My question is this:

How can you bestow all your goods to feed the poor, even give your body to be burned, and yet not have love?

And love is only the first item in the fruit of the Spirit.

Jesus said, **"By their fruits ye shall know them."**

I'm saying that many times you are not close enough to see the fruit, because everything you know about that person comes through your smartphone.

Everything comes through a screen.

Someone may have fought bitterly with his wife that morning. They insulted each other before finally getting into the car. In fact, she may even need makeup to cover the visible effects of the abuse.

Then they get into the car because the show must go on.

They smile for the camera and perform their roles.

Meanwhile, you are out there saying, "What a godly family!"

Clothing.

Clothing.

You don't know what is behind the clothing.

Now let me bring this home.

Part of our responsibility as leaders is to lead God's people beside still waters.

Are you there?

Paul told the elders of the church at Ephesus in Acts chapter 20:

"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."

He said some would even arise from among them, drawing disciples after themselves.

As long as Paul was alive, he served as a restraining influence.

Sometimes he had to mention names openly.

"Beware of this person."

"Beware of that person."

He warned the elders that after his departure, people would creep into the church seeking to prey upon God's people.

So he charged them to take heed to themselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, to feed the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.

And I want to say this to the people of God generally:

If you trust your pastor enough to pastor you, then you should also give serious consideration to the outcome of his discernment.

By that I mean this:

Discernment is the discerning of spirits.

It is not the discerning of speech.

It is not the discerning of clothing.

It is not the discerning of activity.

It is not the discerning of numbers.

It is not the discerning of popularity.

It is the discerning of spirits.

In other words, it is the spirit behind the sheep's clothing that is being discerned.

And it takes spirit to discern spirit—not physical eyes.

You do not use physical eyes to discern spirits.

You do not use bank accounts to discern spirits.

You do not use the size of a church to discern spirits.

You do not even use miracles to discern spirits.

The other day they saw Jesus Himself performing miracles, and they said He was doing them by Beelzebub.

People have known for a very long time that God is not the only route by which signs and wonders can occur.

Therefore, signs and wonders alone cannot prove that someone is genuine.

You must still discern the spirit behind the signs and the wonders.

And you cannot discern that through anything your natural eyes can see.

Everything accessible to the five physical senses is helpless in that enterprise.

I believe that this is one reason leaders need regular times of reflection together, comparing notes.

It is very important.

Otherwise, unnecessary divisions may arise among us, creating cracks that the enemy can exploit.

If you are submitted to leadership, and your leaders say, "This is not a stream we approve of," then your submission carries responsibilities.

Part of those responsibilities is refusing to patronize that stream, even if you personally think differently.

Submission has implications.

It comes with privileges, but it also comes with responsibilities.

Are you there?

There are places I have been invited to minister where I first called Apostle and asked him about the invitation.

Sometimes he simply says, "Brother, I will not advise you to go."

I don't even need to know why.

I simply won't go.

It has happened more than once.

As you grow in ministry, this becomes increasingly important.

Sometimes you are entering territories you do not know well.

People invite you, but there are already trusted leaders in that region.

Run it by them first.

Don't assume you know enough simply because you just arrived.

Sometimes people send us messages:

"Sir, this minister is coming to our city. We saw his flyer with this other person."

Then they say,

"That other person is dangerous. Associating with him will undo years of work we have done here. People will assume we endorse him because they see both of you on the same platform."

The visiting minister simply wasn't aware.

But there were people already on the ground who could have warned him.

They would have said,

"That man is a sorcerer."

"We are here with him."

"We have dealt with him."

"What you see on television is clothing."

We are close enough to examine the texture.

We have access to the fruit.

We know the hidden realities.

Some of the things many of you expose yourselves to are affecting your spiritual lives without your realizing it.

The spirit of seduction.

Instability.

Even deep depression.

Sometimes you don't know where those influences are coming from.

They may be entering your soul through the sweet voice of a popular preacher whom you have placed on a pedestal.

Some of the people you proudly call "man of God" are serial adulterers. Some have children scattered across different countries. In some cases, even their wives have become part of the deception.

Some wives help arrange abortions for women involved with their husbands. There are hospitals on permanent arrangements in different cities. If someone becomes pregnant in Lagos, they fly her to Abuja. If she is in Abuja, they move her elsewhere.

Why?

Because the show must go on. What do you expect the wife to do?

She is already trapped inside the system. If everything becomes public, her own life and the lives of her children are affected.

So the show continues.

But what do you see?

Clothing.

Sheep's clothing.

Sometimes there are things your leaders cannot explain to you in detail. Especially those already in leadership, you understand something called body language.

Are you there?

Your spiritual father does not always need to sit you down and explain every detail. Sometimes body language says enough.

People will tell you,

"Don't inherit somebody else's battles."

No.

This is not about inheriting someone's battles. This is about standing on the side of truth. If something is poisonous and has already been identified as poisonous, pretending otherwise only pollutes the flock of God. We cannot pollute God's people simply because we want to remain in everyone's good books.

That brings me back to where I was going before time began to run out. When God said,

"The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully."

The same principle appears again in the New Testament. Jesus told the parable of the man who planted good seed in his field. An enemy came and planted tares among the wheat. When the servants discovered it, they asked, "Should we pull them up?"

Jesus said, "No."

Instead He said, "**Let both grow together.**"

Say it with me: "Grow together."

There is no doubt that the tares are growing.

My concern is this: Is the wheat also growing?

While evil grows stronger...

While deception becomes deeper...

While darkness increases...

Are the sons of light also growing?

Jesus said, "**Let both grow together.**"

Let them grow together. It was also said of John the Baptist: **"And the child grew."**

The child grew.

There was a priesthood standing in John's day that was about to be replaced. While that priesthood continued to thrive, the child was also thriving in the wilderness.

He grew.

He grew.

He remained in the wilderness until the day of his showing unto Israel. When that day finally came, he was no infant. He was no spiritual child.

By the time his day broke, it was obvious that he had grown in the hidden places of the wilderness. So he was able to stand and bring the word of the Lord to the nation.

Jesus said,

"Let both grow together."

I need you to see that this is the same principle God declared in the Old Testament.

"The one who has a dream, let him tell his dream."

"But he that has My word, let him speak My word faithfully."

Let them grow together.

Let them grow together.

It took time.

John the Baptist grew while temple worship continued uninterrupted.

The Pharisees continued.

The Sadducees continued.

The high priest continued.

At one point, there were even two high priests serving simultaneously.

But John kept growing.

The issue in that generation was not merely the existence of a priestly order that was about to pass away.

The issue was whether God's own servant had grown enough to represent Him faithfully in that generation.

The Master's verdict remains:

"Let both grow together."

The false and the true.

Let them grow together.

It is a terrible day when only evil is growing.

It is a terrible day when only false prophets are increasing.

And I'm not talking about public influence.

John did not grow publicly.

That is not the point.

The question is this:

In the crucible of your private dealings with God, is your personal life moving upward?

Are you growing?

Are you growing?

Because it cost God nothing to suddenly introduce John to the nation.

To people, it looked as though he came from nowhere.

But God's servants never come from nowhere.

Their appearance may seem sudden.

Their preparation never is.

The Bible says,

"And the child grew..."

He grew.

Luke 1 tells us:

"And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel."

While everybody else appeared to be moving ahead...

While other people became famous...

While religious activity filled the landscape...

The boy remained hidden in the wilderness.

But he was growing.

That is my point.

I am not talking about popularity.

I am talking about growth.

Are you growing?

Are you waxing strong in spirit?

Are you stirring up the gift of God that is within you?

Are you giving attendance to your altar?

Are you keeping your appointments with the Monarch of Zion?

Are you growing?

Because the Master is not going to suppress one side so the other can advance easily.

He said,

"Let both grow together."

We must grow our horns in these days.

Let them grow.

I need you to understand that this allowance applies equally to both the tares and the wheat.

He said,

"Let them grow."

You may not be able to stop the growth of evil.

You may have to stand shoulder to shoulder with it.

Shoulder to shoulder.

Shoulder to shoulder.

Shoulder to shoulder.

In the days of Moses, the magicians thought they could compete.

Moses performed a miracle.

They performed one.

He performed another.

They imitated it.

Let them grow together.

But there will be a day of harvest.

There will be a final separation.

In history, judgment came upon that old covenant system in A.D. 70.

The temple finally fell.

Yet the kingdom John came to announce continued advancing.

Likewise, a final judgment is still coming.

On that day, everything that is false will be silenced forever.

But until then, understand this:

The growth of evil does not prevent the growth of the righteous.

Nobody is the reason you are not growing.

Nobody.

Are you hearing me?

Nobody.

The groundwater is available to all of us.

Send your roots deeper.

Send your roots deeper.

The Scripture says,

"The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high."

Let them grow together.

You do not need a clerical collar to grow.

Are you there?

You do not need a title to grow.

You do not need a microphone to grow.

You do not need recognition to grow.

You do not need the attention of the world to grow.

That young man remained hidden in the wilderness, far from public attention.

Yet when the time came for the Messiah to be revealed, the word of God bypassed the city and came to John in the wilderness.

The word of God came to John.

Then John appeared.

Suddenly, it no longer mattered who the bishop was.

It no longer mattered who the primate was.

It no longer mattered who held religious office.

The grace upon his life created space for him.

He had grown.

God did not need to remove Annas and Caiaphas before John could fulfill his ministry.

Are you there?

God did not need to kill Annas and Caiaphas before John could have a ministry.

They continued their priesthood in the temple.

John continued his ministry by the Jordan.

While they kept bringing lambs, rams, and bulls for sacrifice, John kept declaring,

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The temple sacrifices continued.

Are you there?

Both systems existed side by side.

Today, the Lamb John proclaimed is still the center of God's redemptive plan.

The temple itself has long disappeared because judgment came in A.D. 70.

Until that judgment came, however, both systems continued.

John continued preaching.

The temple continued operating.

The difference was this:

One structure had already been marked by God for demolition.

People were still prospering within it, but Heaven had already written its verdict.

John came declaring,

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

He could not stop the old system.

So he simply continued proclaiming the truth.

Those who heard his voice followed him.

Others continued in the old path.

For a while, it even appeared as though the other side had won.

The religious establishment cried,

"Crucify Him!"

And they crucified Him.

But you have not heard the final verdict until you have heard from God.

When God spoke, He overturned everything.

Death could not hold Him captive.

Even in the grave,

Jesus is Lord.

Bow your heads.

Bow your heads.

Whether you are being ordained today or not,

let them grow together.

The contest will be fierce.

As the hymn says:

Stand up, stand up for Jesus;

The strife will not be long;

This day the noise of battle,

The next the victor's song.

To him that overcometh,

A crown of life shall be;

He with the King of glory

Shall reign eternally.

Let them grow.

May I not be a dwarf in this day of Jacob's trouble.

May I not remain spiritually stunted.

Oil may come upon my head today,

but let this never become a mere physical ceremony without spiritual reality.

Let them grow together.

Ordination is not a chieftaincy title.

It is not a badge of honor.

It is not an award for long service.

We do not ordain people simply because they have been around for fifteen years.

No.

There must be evidence of growth.

The fruit of growth.

The fruit of growth.

In the territory where God has planted me,

let there be a testimony of growth.

Let them grow together.

Evil men will grow worse and worse.

But good men must also grow—from good, to better, to stronger. Let them grow together. We may never stop wolves from being wolves, but we can grow into sufficient stature to prevent them from preying upon those whom God has entrusted to our care.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Let them grow together. Please, I want you to pray for thirty seconds.

We must return to the place of growth.

Let them grow.

Let them grow.

Ah!

Let them grow.

Elijah, one man, stood against four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal.

Let them grow—so that I may be able to hold the ground for Jesus in my generation.

That I may stand for Christ in the day of need.

That I may truly say, "I am an ambassador for Christ."

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ... we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

I have grown. Jesus can send me. I have grown. Like Titus, sent to Crete to set in order the things that were lacking and to ordain elders in every city—I have grown.

Let there be a testimony.

Let there be a history of steady progress in your walk with the Lord.

Thank You, Father.

Thank You, Father.

Thank You, Father.

Lord, we ask that beyond this gathering—both online and onsite—this word will reset our focus.

Reset our values.

Reset our priorities.

I pray for my brothers and sisters being ordained today,

that this word will become lifelong instruction for ministry,

and that at the appropriate seasons You will grant them wisdom for its application.

May we, as Your people,

not be feeble in these days of increasing darkness.

Lord,

may we not be feeble. May we not hide as Israel hid in the days when Goliath filled the valley with fear. Rather, in the hidden places—like David alone with the sheep—may we build long histories of growth. And when our appointed day comes, may it truly be said

that there is a man, there is a woman, standing on the Lord's side.

When that day comes, may there be no vacancy in my generation.

Help us, Lord Jesus.

In Jesus' mighty name, **Amen.**



About the Speaker

Apostle Gideon Odoma is an itinerant minister of the Gospel, Christian apologist, and seasoned leadership teacher with a passion for equipping believers to know Christ, understand the Scriptures, and stand firmly for biblical truth.

With years of experience serving within Christian ministry and religious institutions, he has demonstrated a strong commitment to leadership development, discipleship, and the advancement of God's Kingdom. His ministry is marked by a careful exposition of Scripture, a call to spiritual maturity, and an unwavering emphasis on sound doctrine.

Beyond his preaching ministry, Apostle Gideon Odoma has extensive experience in organizational leadership and nonprofit service. His professional competencies include leadership development, strategic planning, volunteer management, human resource management, and organizational administration—skills that have strengthened his effectiveness in building people and advancing ministry initiatives.

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