

Equipped for Service

Part 5: How to Share the Gospel (part 3)

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Full Text (for reading on your own)

Why this teaching?

It is important to be fluent in the message of the gospel in order to fulfill the Great Commission. Rehearsing the message is key so that you have the scriptures on rapid recall, etc. That said, some leaders in the church told me that the bigger need is knowing “how to get started” in being able to share that message - learning how you get yourself into the scenario where you get to share that message.

Statistics bear that out. 75 percent of believers are confident they can share the gospel effectively, yet only 5 percent of believers have ever led anyone to the Lord. That’s what this training is about: how to get to the point of sharing the gospel.

For that reason, we have heard a number of testimonies about different ways Peter has been able to share the gospel. First, we heard about using Brad’s 5 questions to turn a conversation into a spiritual conversation. Secondly, we heard how Peter was able to share a personal testimony with a young man who was about to be a new father. That testimony about how Jesus impacts Peter’s ability to be a father provided an opportunity for Peter to share the gospel with him! Third, we heard about a young man Peter and Megan were able to intercept on Thanksgiving day and minister to him emotionally. Peter then made sure that he had peace with God and shared with him how to be born again. They prayed together in the DeWitt’s van.

Sharing with a gospel tract

Amber was driving through the drive through for a quick bite on a night where her family had an adjusted schedule. The man at the drive through window caught her eye because he didn’t seem to be smiling. Maybe it wasn’t that exactly, but for some reason the Lord seemed to be highlighting him to Amber. She thought “maybe I will just smile and be kind to him and it will perhaps brighten his day.” Right as she thought that another thought came to mind: all the gospel tracts in her glove compartment!

She was a little nervous to give him the tract because she didn’t know how long it would take to explain what it was and there were a number of people in line behind her. She thought “he’s going to think I’m a total wierdo or something.” She then realized “those fears are just distractions. It was

the Lord who brought it to mind to give him a gospel tract.” It now seemed that perhaps the man was now off to another task in the restaurant and she may not get to talk with him. She prayed “O Lord, you have to give me a chance to give this to Him. If it is Your will for me to give him one of these tracts, please send him back to the window.” Amber reached across to grab a tract out of her glovebox and he ends up being the one that comes back to give her food to her! Amber then gave him the tract saying “I feel like I am supposed to give you this. This is from my church. The website is on the back and I don’t know if you have a church where you attend but you are invited!” His face lit up and thanked her several times. Amen!

Purposefully giving a gospel tract, as Amber did is a wonderful way to share the gospel - especially when you don’t have much time with someone. Recently, Peter has had a chance to give tracts to a few homeless people. Peter said “I do always try to look for discernment in my heart in ministering to homeless people. Obviously some have drug addiction and things like that, and unless the Lord tells me, I don’t want to give them a chance to further feed their drug addiction. So, for me, it may be 1/10 homeless people that I see that I feel like I should stop and minister to them in some way. You never minister out of need; you minister out of lead. If you minister out of need you’ll get burnt out. If you minister out of lead, you’ll have His grace for it.”

Recently Peter saw a homeless young lady along an off-ramp. (Now, I know you are not supposed to let the right hand know what the left is doing, so you may think “why is Peter sharing all of this stuff” - it is to be instructive. Hearing details helps with seeing into thought process). He couldn’t get across the lanes to get to her right away so he went to the gas station to get a Cliff Bar. He made sure he had some cash. Peter decided he was going to give her three things: cash, food, and the gospel.

Peter also shared “Now, if I share the gospel with someone who needs money and I give them \$1, that’s lame and cheap. It doesn’t represent Heaven. You might think that is too strong to say, but Heaven doesn’t act like that. Jesus said “I don’t want you to be lukewarm” because He doesn’t want us to be a half-way representation of the kingdom. If you share the gospel with a waitress, I am not saying you have to leave a 50% tip, but please don’t leave a 12% tip! It’s important that we represent Heaven well! There is no lack in Heaven! That’s what’s at issue. There is no lack. If we say God’s a good God and here’s an 11% tip, it doesn’t compute! You’re not representing your Father. You are His ambassador to the world!”

Think about if an ambassador to the United States drove around China in a 1974 Yugo! Appearance matters. *“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”* (Phil. 4:19) 2 Corinthians 9:8 says *“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.”* As God’s grace abounds to you financially, He wants us to have all sufficiency - in ALL things - that we each may have an abundance

for every good work. We ought to have an abundance for every good work - all sufficiency in all things - so that we represent the kingdom well! This is a big deal! God's not a cheapskate.

So, back to the story about the homeless young lady. Peter got the Cliff Bar, and put a \$20 bill inside the gospel tract. Now the \$20 inside the tract is a congruent message. Peter was ready, and figured out how to position his car in pulling up to her so that he hopefully didn't block too much traffic. He prayed for protection over his tires as he pulled into the berm.

The young lady came over to Peter's passenger window and he introduced himself - which is what he normally does. "Hi my name is Peter." Why do Peter start with my name? Because it is polite. It puts them on a level playing field with him. It makes Peter vulnerable. Why? Because he is made in God's image just like them! Peter will usually will shake their hand as well - and then after he is done talking with them he uses hand-sanitizer ... but he shakes their hand if at all possible. Do you remember? Jesus touched the leper and then He spoke to the leper. The leper said "if you're willing" and Jesus put His hand on him. Do you realize what that said to the leper who had probably not been touched by anyone in years? Then Jesus said "I'm willing."

So, Peter introduced himself and probably shook her hand. She shared her name with him too. Peter then told her "I'm a believer; I'm a Christian." He almost always say it like that. He don't just say "I'm a Christian" because people have all sorts of ideas about that so Peter leads with "I'm a believer" but then some might not understand what that means. So, overall Peter says "I'm a believer; I'm a Christian" to make it clear what kingdom he represents. Peter is obviously not representing the kingdom of darkness, but he is also not representing the kingdom of the world. This is not a social justice moment; this is a kingdom moment.

Peter said "I'm a believer; I'm a Christian and I am going to give you 3 things today. A Cliff Bar ..." She was so excited about just the Cliff Bar. Peter then said "I also am going to give you \$20 - and the third thing is the most valuable of all - the message of the gospel. It is not worth \$20, it is pure gold." Peter often uses that phrase "this (the gospel message) is pure gold." Peter ended with "that message changed my life on March 15, 2005." She says "thank you SO much." Peter said "Absolutely. God bless you - great to meet you." Peter turned off his flashers, looked in his mirrors and went. 40 seconds. She might have prayed that night. At the very least she received the gospel message and corresponding finances and food.

Gospel tracts are a great way to share Jesus when you don't have much time with someone. For instance, you usually can't talk much with a cashier. So if you felt led, you could say "I have something I would like to give you to read about the Lord." Peter tells them what it's about so that they are clear. So, he will go out to his car and bring it back in to them. Usually before he gives it to them, Peter will say something like "will you promise me that you'll read it. It's OK if you don't want to take it, but if you are going to take it, will you promise me that you'll read it?" This way, if they

choose to take it, they will think about how they gave their word that they were going to read it. Hell will work against them reading the saving message in that tract, so it is important that they have made up in the ends hared of time that they are going to follow through with reading it.

Prophecy is for all believers

At the start of a ministry time for young people once, Peter asked the Lord if He had a word for anyone who was there. As worship went on, the Lord highlighted 3 young people to Peter with a word for each.

Now, please know what prophecy is: it is hearing what God is saying and sharing it with someone. That's all prophecy is. If you would like, we can complicate it, but there is no scriptural need to complicate it.

So, who can prophesy? All believers ... and donkeys! If a donkey could prophesy under an inferior covenant, just think what sort of animals could prophecy now! Just kidding - but you get the idea. John 10:27 says "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." As a believer, as a follower of Christ, you were made to hear the voice of God!

In Numbers 11:29, in looking forward to the New Covenant, Moses said "Oh, that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!" In fact, in writing to the Corinthian church with instruction about how to administer prophetic words during service, Paul instructed "For you can all prophecy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged." (1 Cor.14:31) So, who can prophecy within that church? All the believers can!

Acts 2:17-18 (which is a restating of a prophecy from Joel 2) sounds like what Moses cried out for in Numbers 11. It says "And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, Your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophecy." Note, can kids prophecy? Yes! Bill Johnson says "children do not have a junior Holy Spirit and no one is God's grandchild." Obviously a child will prophecy through the lens of a child-like understanding of the world, but they can fully hear the word of the Lord! In addition to our sons and daughters, our young and old men shall have visions and dreams. We are all servants of the Lord and the menservants and the maidservants - men and women - will all prophecy! The time for Joel's prophecy come into effect when Peter stood up in Acts 2 and declared "THIS is that!"

1 Corinthians 14:1 says "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophecy." The word for "desire" means to lust after - to earnestly desire! We are supposed to pursue love and yearn for spiritual gifts - but especially that you may prophecy!!! Who is that written to? To the prophets? No, to the believers in the Corinthian church!

Old Testament vs. New Testament Prophecy

Mark Crawford and Kris Vallotton have taught Peter much of what he knows about the prophetic. One helpful clarifying point they make is that OT prophecy is different than NT prophecy. In the OT, there was a “divine concentration” of the Holy Spirit on a few individuals (the prophets) who would *receive* the word of the Lord. So, others, would come to a prophet like Isaiah, Elijah, or Samuel and ask “what does the Lord say.” The prophet would then say “thus saith the Lord.”

What did they not have in the OT? They did not have the Holy Spirit indwelling them. Because of this, there was a concentration of the Holy Spirit on the prophet and everyone went to that one person to hear from God through them. This arrangement would have caused it to be very destructive for a prophet to tell others wrongly because no one else had the Holy Spirit in order to discern if what he or she (Deborah) was telling them was right or wrong. They received the word from the Lord. They did not need to perceive the word. (In Peter’s opinion, it was probably a pretty automatic thing for them - they almost may have needed to try to mess it up). So, because of this, the Lord said to stone false prophets. If they twisted God’s word of their own volition, they needed to be stoned.

So, what’s the difference? John the Baptist was the last purely OT prophet. (Jesus functioned as both an OT prophet and a NT prophet). Jesus is the greatest prophet that ever lived. In the OT, God’s people judged prophets. If the prophets messed up they were to be stoned. In the NT, we judge words. In the OT we judge prophets, in the NT we judge words.

If you are sharing a word with a brother or sister in Christ, we all have the Holy Spirit so we can co-discern what the Lord is saying. For instance, Peter could give a word to Kenton and it may not sit right with Kenton. Kenton may think “I don’t think that’s the Lord.” Now, is the Holy Spirit schizophrenic or did Peter maybe miss it with that word? There’s a lot of safety in the body of Christ because we co-discern what the Lord is saying! 1 Cor. 14:32 says that the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. In the new covenant, we try to share what God is saying as accurately as possible, but we don’t need to be perfect! In fact, 1 Cor. 13:9 makes it clear that until we are in Heaven we will prophesy in part “*For we know in part and we prophesy in part.*”

Gift of Prophecy vs. Office of the Prophet

It is clear in Ephesians 4 that there is a prophetic, governmental office in the body of Christ. The gift of prophecy (for all believers) is separate of the office of the prophet. All believers can prophecy but not all believers are prophets. To be a prophet is a calling. The big practical difference, is that a prophet can correct and direct because they are actually in the government of God.

Prophetic Ministry Example

Back to the story! At the start of a ministry time for young people once, Peter asked the Lord if He had a word for anyone who was there. As worship went on, the Lord highlighted 3 young people to

Peter with a word for each. One of the three people Peter had a word for came up to him for prayer. Peter realized this was a divine set-up!

Now, normally, when people walk up for prayer, Peter will say something like “hi, I’m Peter, what’s your name? ... how can I help you today? What can I pray for you about?” In other words, he does a quick informal interview to ascertain how to move forward in ministering to the person. In this case, Peter didn’t do any interviewing. Why? Because the Lord had already given him a word for this young lady! In other words, the Lord had already made it clear how to minister to her! If Peter had allowed for an interview, it could have been a distraction because the precious young lady may not have known what God wanted to do!

So, she came up to Peter and Peter introduced himself and she responded by introducing herself. Peter said “during worship I asked God if He had anything to say to specific people that were there. And do you know what? He shares something with me specifically for you (said with a smile but not quite yet an exclamation point).” She said “really?!” Peter said yes “specifically something for you!” (Now an exclamation point having seen that she was excited and not intimidated about this.) Peter asked “would you like for me to share what God was saying?” She says “yes!”

What Peter had had was a vision. Not an open vision (which you will have when the rest of the world seems to fade away and you see a new scene in front of you), this was just an impression in Peter’s mind’s eye. He had seen a vision of her walking into a grand formal ball on the arm of Jesus and Jesus is smiling - so glad that she is the one on His arm! So Peter said “I saw an image of Jesus walking into a grand ball and do you know who was on His arm?” She said “no.” I said “you. And He had the biggest smile on His face. I said He was so proud to be seen there with you.” She starts crying, Peter starts crying!

She asked Peter “how did you know that?” Peter said “I have known the Lord for multiple years and over time I have heard Him speak to me and I have shared those things with others and have gradually learned to know when it was Him who was talking with me. So, when He showed me that image about you, I knew it was Him who was talking to me.” Peter said “isn’t that beautiful!” She said “yes!” Peter said “did you know that Jesus was like that?”

She said “I had no idea.” Peter said “yes, that’s exactly how Jesus is!” Peter then gave her a second to process the reality of Jesus’ love. She thinks for a moment and says “wow.” Peter then asked her “would you like to know a Jesus who is like that?” Peter said “I could help you with that if you would like to know Jesus.” Peter said “great, it will just take me a few minutes to share what the Bible says about how we can know Jesus.”

Peter then went to a quick version of the 5 questions from Brad - to be able to get a sense of what her spiritual background was - so he could share what she needed to hear. So, Peter then shared

about Adam and Eve - their sin and spiritual death - and our sin and our spiritual death. Peter shared why Jesus needed to be born of a virgin, waited for a second and her jaw dropped “you’re kidding! That’s why!?” Peter said “yes, that’s why!” She says “that’s amazing!”

Peter continued to share the rest of the gospel - what it means to be born again and how you can be born again. He asked her “would you like to be born again?” She very affirmatively agreed! Peter led her in prayer and she received salvation in Jesus!

Why did she receive the Lord? Because of a prophetic word! The love in that word. The heart of God broke through and made way to share the gospel! Peter sent her home with a bible and a gospel tract for review.

How to think about prophecy

1 Corinthians 14:3 says “*He who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.*” According to this scripture, we see that NT prophecy speaks three things: Edification, exhortation, and comfort to men. Edify means to build up. The word of the Lord will build people up. It will help them go into their destiny. The word of the Lord exhorts. Exhort means to call near. The Greek there is “paraklesis” which is the same as one word used to describe the Holy Spirit! The word of the Lord draws us near to God! When I spoke to the young lady about the vision of her on the arm of Christ at the formal ball, did that draw her nearer to God or repel her from God? It drew her near!

From Lois: “Do you see what that ball was? It was the entrance to the kingdom!” In fact, the vision I had for that young lady was not just “hey Jesus loves you.” It was actually a prophetic foretelling of what was going to happen when she prayed a few minutes after hearing the vision! So amazing! By the way, notice what just happened when Lois just shared about the meaning of the ball: the prophetic word belongs to the Lord. Do you know what else belongs to the Lord? The interpretation belongs to the Lord! The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets - and who has that prophetic spirit? All of us! So what just happened is that Peter was sharing a story and the Holy Spirit is not just in him in the room - so Lois says “do you know what that ball is?! It’s the entrance to the kingdom!” The interpretation belongs to the Lord too.

There is the word that you get from the Lord. Then there is the interpretation of the word - and sometimes even an application that you will get for the person. So, what do you do? You get the word and give that to the person. IF the Lord gives you an interpretation, add that to it, but don’t add your own interpretation! IF the Lord gives you an application, add that to it, but don’t add your own application.

Joseph serves as a perfect example of this. Remember Joseph? Pharaoh has a dream, calls Joseph in and Joseph says “that means there is going to be a famine.” So, let’s parse this out. The dream was from God and given to Pharaoh. The interpretation of the dream was from God through Joseph.

Then Joseph, after sharing the interpretation, says “**Now therefore**, *let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that are coming, and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. Then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land may not perish during the famine.*” (Gen. 41:33-36)

So, what did Joseph just slip into there? Word of wisdom! There was the word - which was the dream. There was the interpretation - which was also from the Lord and from Joseph. Finally there was a word of wisdom (of application) - which also came from the Lord through Joseph.

Word of wisdom, word of knowledge, foretelling, and forth telling are 4 ways are all different aspects of the same thing: hearing from the Lord and sharing it with others. This is how the Lord will edify, exhort, and comfort! “Comfort” in 1 Cor. 14:3 means to “cheer up.” One time, Peter shared a word with another young lady. He knew the Lord was speaking through him prophetically so he encouraged her to turn on her phone to record what he was saying for future reference. At some point Peter apparently said “I see 3 C’s in a row in the context of creativity.” It turned out some time later that she remembered the word Peter gave, listened to it and realized that Peter had accurately described the logo of the company she was then working for. It was a comfort to her in that moment and a major encouragement. Isn’t it wonderful to know that God had seen her employment with that company clearly and ahead of time!

Not only is it important to remember the EEC (is it edifying? Does it exhort? Does it comfort?) standard for prophetic words, but it is also important to truly consider the covenant we are prophesying within! Remember that when the angels came to announce the birth of Christ they said “peace on earth and good will towards man!” We have a ministry of reconciliation - not counting their trespasses against them (2 Cor. 5:19-20) We do not have a ministry of imputing their trespasses against them! You don’t use the prophetic to point out people’s dirt; you use the prophetic to call out people’s gold.

Romans 4:17 says our Father “*gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.*” Remember He called Gideon a mighty man of valor. That’s not who Gideon was at the time. He was hiding in the winepress; he was a chump at the time - but not to God’s eyes. It doesn’t take being prophetic to know that someone’s got problems. It takes the Lord to know the divine solution!

Multiple years ago Peter went to a gas station and took a \$20 bill in to pre-pay for his gas. This was a small gas station and no-one was in line so Peter was probably in and out of the attendant station in 7 or 8 seconds. “20 on pump 5 please.” After Peter walked out of the attendant station and start pumping the gas he had this thought “that guy has a gift of relational reconciliation.” Now how many of us walk around throughout our days pointing out gifts of relational reconciliation?!? This

was a divine thought out of nowhere! So Peter poked his head back in the gas station and told the attendant what he had heard - that the man had a gift of relational reconciliation.

Peter can't remember exactly but he probably started by saying "this might be out of the blue" and ended with "does that make any sense to you?" Do you notice how humbly the humility in those phrases? Peter didn't come in and speak "thus saith the Lord" and use King James English. Don't use your King James English when you share God's heart with people (when you prophesy). Let your speech be normal! Be humble!

One time, Peter heard from the Lord something about "2 years and a girl!" So Peter realized Megan and him were going to have a baby and there was something about "2 years." So, when Megan was pregnant some time after that, it occurred to Peter (interpretation!) that the this baby was going to be born on Peter's 2nd birthday! So, Peter and Megan went to the first ultrasound and sure enough the due date is Peter's 2nd birthday! So, Peter started telling everyone "we are going to have a baby, it is going to be born on Peter's 2nd birthday, and it's going to be a girl." Now, they went to the next ultrasound and it turns out its a boy! Peter was humiliated! He had to eat crow on that so bad! He was even despondent at the ultrasound! They got in the car after the ultrasound and Megan said "what's wrong?" and Peter exclaimed "I was wrong!" Megan said "you just need to humble yourself." Peter thought "I think the circumstances are taking care of it already!" Peter had a 50/50 chance to get the sex of their baby right and he missed it! How prophetic was that!

Sure enough, fast forward 5 months and on Peter's 2nd birthday, at 1am, unsolicited, out comes Andrew! The 2 year part was totally of the Lord! Peter just missed it on the sex of the baby! That taught Peter a lot about humility in the prophetic. Don't say "just saith the Lord" unless you know "thus said the Lord!" Even so, Psalms 18:30 says "*the word of the Lord proves true.*" So, you don't need to say "thus saith the Lord" because the word of the Lord will prove true. So, as you are starting out in the prophetic, as a general rule, don't say "thus saith the Lord." As you mature in the prophetic there may be times where the Lord encourages you to be a bit more emphatic in how you share a really "solid" word with someone - one where you know that you know that you heard Him ... and for some reason He wants you to put His stamp on it a bit more firmly. But, error way on the side of humility. Otherwise you may need to eat crow like Peter!

So, Peter's at BP and tell the attendant that he thinks he heard that he has "a gift of relational reconciliation." The attendant then responds "this is so weird because I just got separated from my wife." Do you realize that Peter just walked back in by the lead of the Lord and told a man who just got separated from his wife that he has a gift of relational reconciliation. That's the heard to the Father! He calls things that aren't as though they are.

As we prophesy edification, exhortation, and comfort, we are prophesying out of the love of God - out of the heart of the Father. 1 Corinthians 13:2 says that if you have the gift of prophecy but have not love, you have nothing. What's the result? It is going to so bless people!

How to get started in the prophetic

Kris Vallotton tells a story that someone was going fishing for the first time. The older man who was taking him fishing was catching lots of fish but the novice was catching none. They traded spots in the boat. They traded poles. The same thing kept occurring - the older man caught many fish and the younger man caught nothing. Finally the novice fisherman realized he didn't know how to feel bites! We are all getting nibbles from the Holy Spirit all the time that we are not even realizing! God is speaking all the time. When we learn to recognize the nibbles and learn how to set the hook, the words that we used to miss will become words that we give to others.

Obviously you want to be in the Word because all prophecy should line up with scripture. That doesn't mean that you can only quote scripture in ministering prophetically. For instance, you can say "you have a gift of relational reconciliation." There's not necessarily a scripture that says that exactly, but it is sure scriptural.

You also want to be in prayer. Prayer is what connects you with His heart. You can give all the right word in all the wrong way and it won't be representing the Lord well. You have to represent Him in truth and in the spirit of how He operates and speaks.

Point 4 for getting started is to remember that Jesus (the only perfect prophet) said this: "*For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.*" (John 12:49, NASB) Peter spent years telling the Lord "God, your words, not mine." Over time Peter started wondering if some of the things he was saying were from the Lord or from his own heart. Then Peter realized that Psalms 37:4 had happened in many ways in his life "*Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.*" Peter started to realize that his heart had lined up with God's in many ways such that their hearts were becoming one and the same. If we delight ourselves in the Lord, His heart starts to become our heart!

Jesus only spoke what the Father had Him speak. So, if we are wanting to speak the Lord's words to people in a ministry context, we need to be careful that we are not in the habit in other areas of our life of speaking "not His words." For instance, cursing would work against the development of your prophetic gifting. So, purpose in your heart, to the best of your ability, to only say what God is saying in all areas of your life and then when God wants to speak He will be thinking "I can speak through her! I can speak through him! I can trust them to speak My words!"

Last piece is to start! When you start trying to set the hook, you will begin to know what it feels like and sounds like to hear the Lord! People are going to be so blessed by you sharing His words with them.

Text Summary (for reading as a group)

Scripture reading for title: *“Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.” Malachi 3:10*

It is important to be fluent in the message of the gospel in order to fulfill the Great Commission. But perhaps the bigger need is knowing how to get started in being able to share that message - learning how you get yourself into the scenario where you get to share that message.

For that reason, we have heard a number of testimonies about different ways Peter has been able to share the gospel. First, we heard about using Brad’s 5 questions to turn a conversation into a spiritual conversation. Secondly, we heard how Peter was able to share a personal testimony with a young man who was about to be a new father. Third, we heard about a young man Peter and Megan were able to intercept on Thanksgiving day and minister to emotionally. Peter then made sure that man had peace with God and shared how to be born again.

Recently, Amber was pulling through the drive-thru for a quick bite on an evening where her family had an adjusted schedule. The man at the drive-thru window caught her eye because he didn’t seem to be smiling. She thought “Maybe I will just smile and be kind to him and it will perhaps brighten his day.” Right as she thought that another thought came to mind: all the gospel tracts in her glove compartment!

She was a little nervous to give him the tract before she realized that those fears are just distractions. It was the Lord who brought it to mind to give him a gospel tract. Amber reached across to grab a tract out of her glovebox and he ended up being the one that came back to give her food to her! Amber then gave him the tract saying “I feel like I am supposed to give you this. This is from my church. The website is on the back and I don’t know if you have a church where you attend but you are invited!” His face lit up and thanked her several times. Amen!

Purposefully giving a gospel tract, as Amber did is a wonderful way to share the gospel - especially when you don’t have much time with someone. Recently, Peter saw a homeless young lady along an off-ramp. He couldn’t get across the lanes to get to her right away so he went to the gas station to get a Cliff Bar. He made sure he had some cash. Peter decided he was going to give her three things: cash, food, and the gospel. Peter shared his thought process: “If I share the gospel with someone who needs money and I give them \$1, that’s lame and cheap. It doesn’t represent Heaven.” So, Peter got the Cliff Bar, and put a \$20 bill inside the gospel tract. Peter was ready, and figured out how to position his car in pulling up to her so that he hopefully didn’t block too much traffic. He prayed for protection over his tires as he pulled into the berm.

The young lady came over to Peter's passenger window and he introduced himself — which is what he normally does. "Hi, my name is Peter." He also probably shook her hand. Both actions put them on a more level playing field and please the Father. She shared her name with him. Peter then told her "I'm a believer. I'm a Christian and I am going to give you 3 things today. A Cliff Bar ..." She was so excited about just the Cliff Bar. Peter then said "I also am going to give you \$20 - and the third thing is the most valuable of all - the message of the gospel. It is not worth \$20, it is pure gold." Peter often uses that phrase "this (the gospel message) is pure gold." Peter ended with "that message changed my life on March 15, 2005." She says "thank you SO much." Peter said "Absolutely. God bless you - great to meet you." Peter turned off his flashers, looked in his mirrors and went. Just 40 seconds. She might have prayed that night. At the very least she received the gospel message and corresponding finances and food.

Gospel tracts are a great way to share Jesus when you don't have much time with someone. For instance, you usually can't talk much with a cashier. So if you felt led, you could say "I have something I would like to give you to read about the Lord." Peter tells them what it's about so that they are clear. So, he will go out to his car and bring it back in to them. Usually before he gives it to them, Peter will say something like "will you promise me that you'll read it. It's OK if you don't want to take it, but if you are going to take it, will you promise me that you'll read it?" This way, if they choose to take it, they will think about how they gave their word that they were going to read it. Hell will work against them reading the saving message in that tract, so it is important that they have made up in the minds ahead of time that they are going to follow through with reading it.

Another powerful way to have the opportunity to share the gospel is to share a prophetic word to someone. Now, please know what prophecy is: it is hearing what God is saying and sharing it with someone. That's all prophecy is. If you would like, we can complicate it, but there is no scriptural need to complicate it.

So, who can prophesy? All believers can! John 10:27 says "*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*" As a believer, as a follower of Christ, you were made to hear the voice of God!

In Numbers 11:29, in looking forward to the New Covenant, Moses said "*Ob, that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!*" In fact, in writing to the Corinthian church with instruction about how to administer prophetic words during service, Paul instructed "*For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.*" (1 Cor. 14:31) So, who can prophesy within that church? All believers can!

Acts 2:17-18 (which is a restating of a prophecy from Joel 2) sounds like what Moses cried out for in Numbers 11. It says "*And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy.*"

So kids can prophesy, and in addition to our sons and daughters, our young and old men shall have visions and dreams. We are all servants of the Lord and the menservants and the maidservants - men and women - will all prophesy! Finally, 1 Corinthians 14:1 says *“Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but **especially that you may prophesy.**”* The word for “desire” means to lust after - to earnestly desire! We are supposed to pursue love and yearn for spiritual gifts - but especially that you may prophesy!!! Who is that written to? To the prophets? No, to the believers in the whole Corinthian church!

One helpful clarifying point they make is that OT prophecy is different than NT prophecy. In the OT we judge prophets, in the NT we judge words. There’s a lot of safety in the body of Christ because we co-discern what the Lord is saying! 1 Cor. 14:32 says that the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. In the new covenant, we try to share what God is saying as accurately as possible, but we don’t need to be perfect! In fact, 1 Cor. 13:9 makes it clear that until we are in Heaven we will prophesy in part *“For we know in part and we prophesy in part.”* (NOTE: when prophesying with unbelievers - who don’t yet have the Spirit - we should be particularly humble knowing that we have to discern more accurately for them).

It is clear in Ephesians 4 that there is a prophetic, governmental office in the body of Christ. The gift of prophecy (for all believers) is separate of the office of the prophet. All believers can prophecy but not all believers are prophets. To be a prophet is a calling. The big practical difference, is that a prophet can correct and direct because they are actually in the government of God.

Once, at the start of a ministry time for young people, Peter asked the Lord if He had a word for anyone who was there. As worship went on, the Lord highlighted three young people to Peter with a word for each. One of the three came up to him for prayer. Peter realized this was a divine set-up!

Normally, when people walk up for prayer, Peter will say something like “Hi, I’m Peter, what’s your name? ... How can I help you today?” In this case, Peter didn’t do any interviewing because the Lord had already given him a word for this young lady! So, she came up to him and Peter introduced himself and she responded by introducing herself. Peter said “During worship I asked God if He had anything to say to specific people that were here. And do you know what? He shared something with me specifically for you (said with a smile but not quite yet an exclamation point).” She said “Really?!?” Peter said yes “Specifically something for you!” (Now an exclamation point having seen that she was excited and not intimidated about this.) Peter asked “Would you like for me to share what God was saying?” She says “Yes!”

What Peter had was a vision. So Peter said “I saw an image of Jesus walking into a grand ball and do you know who was on His arm?” She said “No.” He said “You. And He had the biggest smile on His face. He was so proud to be seen there with you.” She started crying. Peter started crying!

She asked Peter “How did you know that?” Peter said “I have known the Lord for multiple years and over time I have heard Him speak to me and I have shared those things with others and have gradually learned to know when it was Him who was talking with me. So, when He showed me that image about you, I knew it was Him who was talking to me.” Peter said “Isn’t that beautiful!” She said “Yes!” Peter said “Did you know that Jesus was like that?”

She said “I had no idea.” Peter said “Yes, that’s exactly how Jesus is!” Peter then gave her a second to process the reality of Jesus’ love. She thought for a moment and said “Wow.” Peter then asked her “Would you like to know a Jesus who is like that? I could help you with that if you would like to know Jesus.” Peter said “Great, it will just take me a few minutes to share what the Bible says about how we can know Jesus.”

Peter then went to a quick version of the 5 questions from Brad (to be able to get a sense of what her spiritual background was) so he could share what she needed to hear. So, Peter then shared about Adam and Eve - their sin and spiritual death - and our sin and our spiritual death. Peter shared why Jesus needed to be born of a virgin, waited for a second and her jaw dropped “You’re kidding! That’s why!?” Peter said “Yes, that’s why!” She says “That’s amazing!”

Peter continued to share the rest of the gospel - what it means to be born again and how you can be born again. He asked her “Would you like to be born again?” She very affirmatively agreed! Peter led her in prayer and she received salvation in Jesus!

Why did she receive the Lord? Because of a prophetic word! The love in that word. The heart of God broke through and made way to share the gospel! Peter sent her home with a Bible and a gospel tract for review.

1 Corinthians 14:3 says “*He who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.*” According to this scripture, we see that NT prophecy speaks three things: Edification, exhortation, and comfort to men. Edify means to build up. The word of the Lord exhorts. Exhort means to call near. Comfort means to “cheer up!”

In hearing God, there is the word that you get from the Lord. Then there may be an interpretation of the word - and sometimes even an application that you will get for the person. So, what do you do? You get the word and give that to the person. IF the Lord gives you an interpretation, add that to it, but don’t add your own interpretation! IF the Lord gives you an application, add that to it, but don’t add your own application. Joseph serves as a perfect example of this. Pharaoh has a dream, calls Joseph in and Joseph says “that means there is going to be a famine.” Then Joseph received a word of wisdom about HOW to prepare for the famine! There was the word - which was the dream. There was the interpretation - which was also from the Lord and from Joseph. Finally there was a word of wisdom (of application) - which also came from the Lord through Joseph.

It is also important to truly consider the covenant we are prophesying within! We have a ministry of reconciliation - not counting other's trespasses against them (2 Cor. 5:19-20). We do not have a ministry of imputing their trespasses against them! You don't use the prophetic to point out people's dirt; you use the prophetic to call out people's gold.

Romans 4:17 says our Father "*gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.*" Remember He called Gideon a mighty man of valor. It doesn't take being prophetic to know that someone's got problems. It takes the Lord to know the divine solution! Multiple years ago Peter went to a gas station and took a \$20 bill in to pre-pay for his gas. After Peter walked out and start pumping the gas he had this thought "That guy has a gift of relational reconciliation." So Peter poked his head back in the gas station and told the attendant what he had heard - that the man had a gift of relational reconciliation. The attendant then responded "This is so weird because I just got separated from my wife." Do you realize that Peter just walked back in by the lead of the Lord and told a man who just got separated from his wife that he has a gift of relational reconciliation. That's the heart of the Father! He calls things that aren't as though they are!

Don't use your King James English when you share God's heart with people (when you prophesy). Let your speech be normal! Be humble! One time, Peter heard from the Lord something about "2 years and a girl!" Sure enough, fast forward 5 months and on little Peter's 2nd birthday, at 1am, unsolicited, out comes Andrew! The 2 year part was totally of the Lord! Peter just missed it on the sex of the baby! That taught Peter a lot about humility in the prophetic. Don't say "Thus saith the Lord" unless you know it's from the Lord! Even so, Psalms 18:30 says "*The word of the Lord proves true.*" So, you don't need to say "thus saith the Lord" because the word of the Lord will prove true. So, as you are starting out in the prophetic, as a general rule, don't say "thus saith the Lord." Be humble, otherwise you may need to eat crow like Peter!

So, how do you get started in the prophetic? Kris Vallotton tells a story about fishing that shows that when we learn to recognize the nibbles from the Holy Spirit and learn how to set the hook, the words that we used to miss will become words that we give to others.

Obviously you want to be in the Word because all prophecy should line up with scripture. You also want to be in prayer. Prayer is what connects you with His heart. You can give all the right words in all the wrong ways and it won't be representing the Lord well. You have to represent Him in truth and in the spirit of how He operates and speaks.

Also remember that Jesus (the only perfect prophet) said this: "*For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.*" (John 12:49, NASB) If we delight ourselves in the Lord, His heart starts to become our heart and His words become our words! The last piece is to start! When you start trying to set the hook, you will

begin to know what it feels like and sounds like to hear the Lord! People are going to be so blessed by you sharing His words with them.

Points to Ponder . . .

- What did you learn / what ideas came to mind as you heard Amber and Peter's stories about sharing the gospel with tracts?
- What were some ministry training takeaways from Peter's story about sharing that word with the young lady about being on Jesus' arm at the ball?
- What is prophecy?
- Which scriptures tell us about who can prophecy?
- What's the intended effect of NT prophecy?
- What does the gas station prophecy story tell us about the heart of the Father?

Activation . . .

- Break into groups of 5-6. Kiddos that can be attentive can participate too. Follow these steps:
 1. One person in your group of 5 or 6 volunteers to receive prophetic words first.
 2. Everyone else prepares to give him or her a simple word. Each ask yourself this question "If Jesus walked into our group right now, what would He share with this person?"
 3. Each share one by one your word. Someone starts. EVERYONE has to give something :) If you get stumped prophesy this phrase "I hear that God loves you" ... that counts!!!
 4. As time permits, switch who is receiving the words and again all give a word to that person.
 5. Celebrate! It's fun, isn't it!