

A. The Spirit Speaks: Dreams

Revelatory Gifts: Alongside words of wisdom, knowledge, inner healing, and the Spirit illuminating Scripture and applying it to our lives... is DREAMS & VISIONS.

In the OT we learn of saints who received messages from God through dreams.

Joseph received two dreams concerning his future and his relationship to his family (Gen 37:5-11)

- In the first he had a dream of his brothers' sheaves bowing down before his sheaf.
- In the second dream, the sun, moon and eleven stars bowed down to Joseph.
- The brothers instantly understood the meaning of both dreams and became incensed at him.

Matthew 2:13-22 (ESV) ¹³ *an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."... But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to Israelhe was afraid to go and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee.*

Acts 2:17–18 (NIV) ¹⁷ " *'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.* ¹⁸ *Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.*

- I shared my Warning Dream in a previous message. E.g. Bears attacking out Cottage

Dreams are a legitimate way that the Spirit speaks to people today! And we should expect as much considering they are part of the PROMISE of the NEW COVENANT!

1 Corinthians 14 says prophecy is given for CONSOLATION – that is COMFORT in difficulty! It makes sense that the Spirit who is called our COMFORTER, uses gifts like prophecy and dreams to COMFORT people in their distress!

1 Corinthians 12:7–11 (ESV) ⁷ *To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.* ⁸ *For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ...* ¹¹ *All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.*

Romans 12:4–6 (ESV) ⁴ *For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function,* ⁵ *so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.* ⁶ **Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them:** if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;

One Body – Many Members – Every Member has the Spirit & Spiritual GIFTS – TOGETHER – we form the Body of Christ.

Many Muslims are seeing Jesus in their dreams and then making decisions to follow Him! (Miraculous Movements, Jerry Trousdale) We have heard stories from missionaries and people in our congregation!

This is a KEY way that many Muslims come to Christ. They see "Isa" Jesus in a dream and that leads to them connecting with a Christian who then begins the journey of discipling them.

Miracles are also a big part of this!

Spiritual Gifts are NECESSARY to accomplish God's purposes! I am so grateful He gives them! WE NEED THEM.

B. The Spirit Speaks: Visions ("Pictures")

Visions are similar to dreams, except that those receiving them are awake.

At Southland, we often ask the Lord for a “word, thought, picture” this is just language for what the Bible calls, “utterance of knowledge, utterance of wisdom, & visions.”

Sometimes those who receive them are in a trance like state, in many cases, it’s just a “picture” that pops into the mind with a strong impression.

- God appeared to Abraham in a vision and confirmed his promise to grant Abraham a son (Gen 15:1).
- Peter received a vision that transformed his attitude towards the Gentiles (Acts 10:9-17)
- Paul had two visions. In one case, he received a vision of a man calling him to Macedonia to help them (Acts 16:9); in the second, the Lord encouraged Paul in a vision because he was facing significant opposition in Corinth (Acts 18:9).
- **FOR NOTES:** Others who God spoke to through visions include: Jacob (Gen 46:2); Nathan (2 Sam 7:17); Iddo (2 Ch 9:29); prophets like Isaiah (Isa 1:1); Jeremiah (Jer 24:1); Ezekiel (Eze 1:1); Daniel (Dan 1:17); Amos (Am 1:1); Obadiah (Ob 1:1); Micah (Mic 1:1); Nahum (Na 1:1); and Ananias (Acts 9:10-16).

Joel was the one that said God’s Spirit would be poured out on all God’s people and they would prophecy, dream dreams and see visions!

At Southland, pictures (visions) are so commonplace today that though we treat them as significant revelations from God, we don’t make a big deal about them.

C. Practice: Listening to the Spirit’s Voice

Dreams & Visions: Don’t assume you have to share them. Default: PRAY

- **PRAY:** Pray, wait, test it (*testing framework*). In many cases, prayer is all you need to ‘do.’
- **Evaluate & Pray:** Do not share “No names, dates, births, deaths, direction, or correction.” Do the Community Test (*Wise leader/mentor who confirms*)
- **Evaluate & Share:** If it fits 1 Cor 14 Criteria: Upbuilding, encouraging, comforting, etc., say, “*This is what I sensed; does it make any sense to you?*”
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Ask, Listen, Test, Trust, Obey:

1. Ask the Spirit if there is a sin He wants you to confess?
2. Ask the Spirit if there is a person He wants you to encourage?
3. Ask the Spirit if there is a promise He has for you?
4. Ask the Spirit how He sees YOU? (identity in Christ)
5. Ask the Spirit for direction or wisdom in a situation you are facing.

Write down the thoughts that come to mind. Evaluate them using the TESTING FARMWORK: Scripture, Character, Community.

D. The Testing Framework: Scripture Test, Character Test, Community Test

- **Scripture Test:** Does it conform to or contradict Scripture? (*Do a topical/word search*)
- **Character & Tone Test:** Does it lead to self-centred living or sacrificial love for Jesus?
- **Community Test:** Do mature Christians get the same sense? (*“good to the Spirit and us”*)
- **RESPOND:** Hold fast to what is good! Reject what is bad.