

Practice Guide for September 28st 2025

Prophetic Listening: Encouragement, Comfort, and God's Voice

Suggested Ice Breaker (5 minutes)

"My Name Is..."

Go around the group and ask each person to state their name with an adjective that both describes them and starts with the same letter as their name. Examples: Generous Grahame, Dynamic Dave, Joyful Jenna.

Optional: Write the names down and refer to each other by them for the rest of the evening.

Opening Lectio (10 minutes)

Begin with a moment of silence to center on God's presence.

Have someone read Joel 2:28–29 slowly while the group listens and reflects:

Then, after doing all those things, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on servants—men and women alike.

After another moment of silence, ask someone to pray, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your time.

Reflecting On Scripture (15 minutes)

Have someone read 1 Corinthians 14:1–5 out loud for the group.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What stands out to you about Paul's encouragement towards the gift of prophecy?
2. According to this passage, what is the primary purpose of prophecy in the church?
3. How might encouragement, comfort, and strengthening through prophecy shape our relationships and our community?

Community Practice (25 minutes)

Slowly read aloud the following quote:

"Prophecy does not mean 'to predict,' but rather to speak on behalf of another."

—Thomas Green

Take 3 minutes to pause, reflect, and journal a response to these questions:

1. Who might God be inviting me to encourage, comfort, or strengthen this week?
2. In what ways can I ask for the Spirit's help to 'follow the way of love' with someone who tends to stir up defensiveness or frustration in me?

After journaling, take a few minutes to share with two or three others.

Practical prayer activity:

Practice hearing God's voice for others as a group.

Remember the ABC(D) guide:

Affirming. Does it fulfil the criteria of 1 Cor. 14 of being strengthening, encouraging, comforting, edifying, and uplifting?

Biblical. Is it consistent with the broad teaching and witness of Scripture?

Christlike. Does it sound like the kind of thing Jesus would have said?

Do it in Love. Is it shared gently, humbly, and only in love?

How to practice together:

1. In groups of three or four people, spend 5–7 minutes listening to what God might want to say to each individual. As you pray, note any Bible verses, words, phrases, or pictures that come to mind and share them with the group. Use the ABC(D) guide as you listen and pray.
2. Once everyone's ready, take turns to share what you sensed God saying, whether for yourself or someone else. If a word resonates with someone, take time to pray for them.

For some people in the group, this way of listening to God might come naturally and feel easy. For others, it might feel harder or take longer. Don't rush the experience, and don't pressure anyone to share if they're not comfortable. The goal is to encourage and build one another up.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Gather together and close your time by praying this prayer from St. John Chrysostom's homily on 1 Corinthians:

*O Christ our God,
who has called us into one body,
make us to rejoice with those who rejoice,
to weep with those who weep,
to encourage the fainthearted,
to strengthen the weak,
to honor one another above ourselves.
Knit us together in love,
that we may build up Your Church
and show forth Your glory in the world.
Amen.*

Further Reading:

- *The Familiar Stranger* by Tyler Staton
- *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy* by Ernest Gentile