

# **GateCity Church**

## **For The City: Stewarding Prophetic Destiny**

**Hazen Stevens - Sunday, February 4, 2024**

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### I. Introduction

- A. In the following two sessions, I am going to share some of my journey, and some prophetic experiences that have formed Hannah and my sense of calling to plant a GateCity Church location in Atlanta. Many of these words and experiences though personal to us, could also apply to many of you and the wider Church in our city. Further, as I share these prophetic words, I want to use this as an opportunity to disciple our congregation in healthy stewardship of the prophetic ministry.
- B. Today we will start with the principles of ‘Stewarding Prophetic Destiny’, and next week move on to some of the dynamic things that God has spoken. I believe the Holy Spirit wants to speak to individuals today through what I am going to relate and call us into simple obedience in our formation journey and radical sacrifice for the sake of the calling we share.
- C. Overview
  - 1. Principle 1: **God has a larger prophetic story for us to participate in.** God has prophetic dreams over individuals, families, cities, and nations. If we ask Him, he will reveal to us both from the word and through the prophetic ministry his intentions so we can agree in prayer and action. God has a larger prophetic story that He longs for His people to participate in. This story always jives with the Bible.
  - 2. Principle 2: **We each have smaller personal journeys of life and spiritual formation we must faithfully walk out.** This smaller story is informed by the imperatives of scripture and walked out through intimate fellowship with God as He conforms us to the image of Christ.
  - 3. Principle 3: **We are meant to attend to our spiritual and life formation so we can contribute healthily to fulfilling our part in the larger prophetic story.** From the place of appropriate attention to our spiritual and life formation into the image of Christ, we then ‘join for the sake of others’ in fulfilling our part in the larger prophetic vision.

### II. Prophetic Destiny

- A. Principle 1: **God has a larger prophetic story for us to participate in.** God has prophetic dreams over individuals, families, cities, and nations. If we ask Him, he will reveal to us both from the word and through the prophetic ministry

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1. Amos 3:7 Surely the Sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.
2. Genesis 18:17 Then the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?"
3. Acts 11:27 **27** During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. **28** One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) **29** The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea. **30** This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.
4. Acts 16:6 Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in [a]Asia. **7** After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the [b]Spirit did not permit them. **8** So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. **9** And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." **10** Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.
5. **Revelation 22:6** The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God who inspires the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place."
6. John 15:15 **15** I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. **Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.**

### III. The Formed Life

- A. Principle 2: **We each have smaller personal journeys of life and spiritual formation we must faithfully walk out.** This smaller story is informed by the

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### B. Spiritual Formation

1. Galatians 4:19 My little children, for whom **I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you,**
2. Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind,** that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
3. Romans 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined **to be conformed to the image of His Son,** that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

### C. Life Formation

1. 1 Timothy 5:8 But **if anyone does not provide for his own,** and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
2. 1 Thess 4:9 But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; **10** and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; **11 that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, 12 that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing.**
3. **Acts 20:33** I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. **34 [¶]Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. 35** I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

## IV. The Formed Life-Fulfilling Prophetic Destiny

- A. Principle 3: **We are meant to attend to our spiritual and life formation so we can contribute healthily to fulfilling our part in the larger prophetic story.** From the place of appropriate attention to our spiritual and life formation into

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the image of Christ, we then 'join for the sake of others' in fulfilling our part in the larger prophetic vision.

1. 1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, **according to the prophecies previously made** concerning you, that by them you may **wage the good warfare**
  2. 1 These 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit. **20 Do not despise prophecies.** **21** Test all things; hold fast to what is good. **22** Abstain from every form of evil.
- B. In summary: There is a larger prophetic God story, we can only play our part in as we attend to our formation into the image of Christ. However, there are two main ruts that I observe that create an unhealthy extreme in either direction.
1. Rut 1: Caught mostly in the larger story. Unformed people on mission can cause lots of harm and live in a world of delusions of grandeur, inflating their significance to the neglect of Christ-likeness in our day-to-day lives. Don't neglect the life that brings Jesus honor through attending to our families, work responsibilities, and the faithful steady growth of the character of Christ. What are your secret place practices? How are you loving and serving your family at the expense of yourself.
  2. Often people caught in this rut, fear the reality that the Christian life is about smaller, more difficult, and more secret realities than they thought. We can become spiritual workaholics for a prophetic vision, avoiding the deep work of addressing places of brokenness, laziness, fear or neglect, for the sake of fulfilling a higher 'spiritual purpose'. However, the Bible teaches there is no greater spiritual purpose than representing Jesus well in your home.
  3. Rut 2: Caught in the smaller story. People who are so preoccupied with their spiritual or life formation that they become self-centered, consumeristic, and overly focused on what can better improve their own smaller stories. They only pay attention to ways their needs are being met by the spiritual family they are a part of. People in this position often build barriers to considering the sacrifices and discomfort needed to see larger Kingdom works done. They fear what fulfilling a God-sized vision may cost them at a personal level. There are whole church environments that gather, nurture, and protect this way of thinking because it can create an appearance of 'success' through improving people's lives.
  4. Both these ruts reveal the dangers of an increasingly narcissistic society, where the Christian community must relearn how to lay our lives down to

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both be shaped daily into the image of Christ and suffer death to our preferences for greater kingdom purposes.

5. **Acts 20:34** [i]Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. **35** I have shown you in every way, by **laboring like this, that you must support the weak**. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "
  6. Acts 19:11 **11** Now **God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, 12** so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them
  7. Acts 20:**22** And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, **23** except **that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24** But **none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself**, so that I may finish my [d]race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, **to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.**
- V. Preview: Next week I will share more of the prophetic story...