

Confidence in the Prophetic Gift



Teacher's Guide

Materials

whiteboard, chalkboard, or flipchart; markers or chalk; three sheets of writing paper; pens or pencils; a red and a green circle, each made from cardboard

Surveying the Source

Ps. 41:9; Isa. 53:4–6; Matt. 23:27–32; John 5:39; Acts 10:9–16, 44–48; 17:11.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Understand that the Bible provides a test to determine if a prophetic message is the truth.
- ▶ Define the key elements that distin-

guish a true prophecy from a false one.

- ▶ Examine the gospel in relation to the spirit of prophecy.

Preparing to Lead

Judah's victory over the Moabites and their armies is a clear indication of what can happen when we trust God and His prophets. The Bible records a series of visions revealed to Zechariah. In these visions, an angel of the Lord told him, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerub-

babel: "You will not succeed by your own strength or power, but by my Spirit," ' ' (Zech. 4:6, NCV).

Likewise, when we have faith in God and His messengers, we will receive strength and power to succeed in all He asks us to do.

Getting Started

A. Divide the class into three groups, giving all members in each group a copy of the activity on page 43. After the groups have worked on the activity for about 10 minutes, have them reconvene and share their answers in each case to the question, "What can we learn from this story?"

B. Arrange ahead of class for two volunteers to give a short play on false versus true prophets. One volunteer prophet meets the test of a true prophet according

to 1 John 4:1–3, while the other does not. After both prophets have presented their message, have the rest of the class decide which prophet followed the guidelines in 1 John 4:1–3 and which did not. The one who did receives the green cardboard circle, while the other receives the red cardboard circle.

Then have a class member read Isaiah 8:20. Discuss how this verse can help us to better understand the role of prophecy in our lives.

Delving Into the Word

A. Divide the class into three groups, and give each group a sheet of writing paper. Assign to each group one of the following sets of names and texts: (1) David/Nathan—2 Samuel 11, 12; (2)

Rehoboam/elders who had served his father, Solomon, and the young men who had grown up with him—2 Chronicles 10; (3) Asa/Azariah—2 Chronicles 14, 15. The first name in each group is the

name of a king of either Israel or Judah. The second name is the name of a prophet or group of people who delivered a message from God to that king.

Instruct each group to read their text and to record the circumstances between the prophet and the king that led to the success or failure of his mission. After each group has completed their assignment, bring all the groups back together and have each one share their findings.

Ask: •“What does each of these instances teach us about the role of God’s prophets in the salvation of individuals?”
•“Based on the experiences of these kings and the role of prophetic messages, how should we view the role of Ellen G. White’s visions and messages?”

B. *Say:* “The Bible is full of success and failures regarding prophetic mes-

sages. But our lesson this week also focuses on the pivotal point of the spirit of prophecy—Christ Himself, the very object of prophecy.”

Then, divide the class into small groups. Have each group dramatize Isaiah 52:13 and 53:12. After each group has performed, discuss how these texts highlight the servanthood of Christ.

Say: “Many misunderstood the prophecies about the servant role of Christ at His first advent. This led them to think that His church should be quite different from what He meant it to be.” *Ask:* “Is there anything about Jesus and His role that you might not understand? For example, are there areas in which we believe the church should have political or economic dominion, when God actually desires servanthood instead?”

Discussing the Ideas

1. How can we know if we are or aren’t dealing with true prophets and their prophecies?

2. How would you explain the relationship between the gospel and the spirit of prophecy?

3. With so many strange teachings and explanations about prophecy in our world today, what can we do to help new church members become more solidly grounded in not only Bible prophecy and the principles behind it, but in the spirit of prophecy that we have in the writings

of Ellen G. White?

4. Who are the present agents of God’s prophetic messages, and why?

5. As much as God gives us reasons for our faith, there is always room for doubt. How can we live in a way that feeds faith and confidence in the prophetic message?

6. How has Jesus fulfilled the prophetic promises, so that we can now stand forgiven before God regardless of our sinful past? How should salvation by faith in Christ transform our lives?

Closing the Activity

Stress that prophetic messages should be rated according to their consistency with Scripture. Emphasize that ignoring what the Bible says when new prophetic pronouncements are made deprives the Bible of its purpose and accuracy. *Say:* “As we learned today, the Bible is full of people who obeyed prophetic messages

and who thus succeeded in their mission. However, the Bible also relates stories of people who did not obey such messages and who, therefore, did not succeed.”

Close with prayer that your class members and yourself will, through God’s help, yield your lives to the power of His prophetic word.

Tony Oreso, Nairobi, Kenya, East Africa

Text	Event	People Involved	What We Can Learn
2 Chron. 6:10–16			
2 Chron. 12:1–16			
2 Chron. 16:7–10			
2 Chronicles 18			
2 Chron. 19:1–3			
John 13:18, 19			