

**THE EFFECT OF PROPHETIC GIFT ON CHRISTIANS IN THE
CONTEMPORARY CHURCH. A CASE OF KINKIZI DIOCESE**

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DECLARATION

I, Mugyenyi Martin declare that the work presented in this dissertation is original and my own research work to the best of my knowledge and it has never been submitted for any academic award in any institution of higher learning.

Signature.....

Date.....28/10/2025

MUGYENYI MARTIN

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APPROVAL

I approve that this research dissertation has been done under my supervision and is now ready for submission and examination

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E. Kalengyo', is written above a horizontal dotted line.

Date: 28/10/2025

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my beloved spouse, whose unwavering support, endless patience, and boundless love have carried me through every season of life. You are my greatest champion and my truest companion, and this book exists because of the strength and inspiration you so provide.

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ABSTRACT

The study analyzed the impact of prophetic gift on Christians in the present-day church with a case of Kinkizi diocese. The investigation was directed by the following specific objectives which covered; to analyze the prophesy in the Old and New Testament, to traverse a perception and tradition of the prophetic gift in Kinkizi Diocese, to critique the present disclosure of the gift of prophesy in consideration of biblical understanding of prophesy and to propose structures that can be established to regulate the lopsidedness in the Prophetic gift in the society in our present times. The study utilized a qualitative research approach as well as interviewing different groups of respondents inclusive of the clergy, the people in “the prophetic ministry”, and the Christians.

From the results, the evaluation of prophecy in the Old and New Testament within Kinkizi Diocese showed a difficult theological landscape where traditional Anglican understanding coexists with contemporary prophetic movements. The presence of people claiming continuous prophetic gifts produces theological conflict that necessitates careful and pastoral attention and continual Biblical education, even though the majority of the responders show strong Biblical knowledge of the function and goal of Biblical prophecy. Strong theological insight is found in the majority of Anglican Christians’ critique of contemporary prophetic manifestations in Kinkizi Diocese, who acknowledge that modern prophetic claims fall short of Biblical norms of divine revelation.

It was recommended that proper Biblical training programs be instituted in the Anglican Church of Kinkizi Diocese, clearly distinguishing between finished revelation contained in Canonical Scripture and modern spiritual experience, to help members learn how to discern between prophetic claims and Biblical standards. While retaining pastoral sensitivity towards individuals with varying theological viewpoints, such programs ought to highlight the uniqueness of Biblical prophecy and sufficiency of scripture. In order to preserve unity within the Anglican tradition, church leadership should set clear theological guidelines regarding prophetic gifts and modern revelation, offering Biblical frame works for assessing spiritual experience

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Foretelling the future is often linked to prophecy. The Anslem study states that the prophet's main focus is on the contemporary social and political issue.

Umaru¹ claims that they place a strong emphasis on public morality, religious idolatry, social justice and the proper exercise of power. Along with judgement and damnation, they also talk about inspiration, mercy and a bright future.

Jeremias², asserts that a prophet may endure suffering for their beliefs, as evidenced by historical texts and Jeremiah, which allude to the prophets' failures and, by extension, their afflictions. Matthew³ asserts that a prophet cannot be solely characterized as a fortune-teller, social activist, doomsayer, messenger, moralist, or even a predictor of Jesus. In the Old Testament, the prophetic gift was predominantly the function of select individuals designated as prophets. We don't know for sure where the Hebrew word came from, but its main meaning is 'authorized spokesman (ibid). Other words used were seers, watchmen, men of God, messengers, and servants of the Lord (ibid) Although the derivation of the Hebrew for this word is not known for certain, its essential meaning is that of "authorized spokesman" (ibid). The event of Jesus in the New Testament was the first towards this promise coming true. Other terms like seers, watchmen, men of God, messengers, and servants of the Lord were also used (ibid). In the New Testament, the event of Jesus was the precursor to the fulfilment of this promise.

The prophetic gift is being displayed in many different languages today. Speaking of revelation through prophetic words, dreams, visions, impressions, the still small voice, angels, trances, creation, scripture, tongues, prophetic acts, signs and wonders, circumstances, dances, songs, physical pains/sensory experiences, and spiritual happenings is becoming more and more common in our own church context.

My concern with this study stems from the fact that scripture suggests that many people are not called into the ministry assuming that a large number of people have identified as prophets but are not. While some are truly called, other are ignorant of this ministry, and some prophesy out of instinct and with the intention of gaining nothing.

¹ Umaru V. (2023) Historical Overview of the Old Testament Prophecy and Prophetism: Its Application to the 21st Century Church, *Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol.11, No.1, pp.65-84.

² Jeremias, J., 2003, 'Prophet/Prophetin/Prophetie: Altes Testament [Prophet/ prophetess/ prophecy: Old Testament]', in H.D. Betz *et al.* (Hrsg.), *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart (RGG)*, vol. 6, 4. Aufl., pp. 1694-1699, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen.

³ Keathley, J.H. 1998. Concise Old Testament Survey Available at: hamptonk3@bible.org

Preliminary Literature Study

Literature Review Pre-Study

The nature and function of prophecy in the Old Testament have been widely discussed among biblical scholars. According to Wayne Grudem, the Old Testament prophets were messengers from God who had been sent to speak to the people with words from God. This definition establishes a starting point for prophecy as a means of direct divine communication with the use of human intermediaries.

The prophetic office in the Old Testament carried great weight, as prophets served as covenant mediators between God and His people. Classical biblical scholarship identifies the prophetic function in terms of calling God's people back to covenant faithfulness, often through messages of judgment and restoration. The authenticity of Old Testament prophecy was normally checked through fulfillment and accordance with established divine revelation.

The move from Old Testament to New Testament prophecy involves, therefore, not only a functional development but also an authoritative one. New Testament prophecy, according to recent scholarship, is the revelation pertinent to that particular moment rather than the exposition of already existing Scripture. Biola University 2024.

Grudem's research represents a careful exegetical discussion of the gift of prophecy in 1 Corinthians, thus establishing a scholarly foundation for understanding prophetic manifestations within the early church.

The prophetic gifts have been radically conceptualized in light of the modern charismatic movement. Scholarship, for example, indicates how the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 have, through the charismatic movement, been brought to the notice of the Christian church in recent times (ibid.). The effect of such interest is found in the revival and controversy of prophetic manifestations.

The Apostolic-Prophetic Movement represents one of the modern efforts at restoring New Testament church structure and power. This restoration aims at returning the church to the same power, energy, and fullness of faith which characterized the Early Church. Great emphasis is placed on the restoration of the apostolic and prophetic offices.

Research Problem

Whereas a number of Christians experience great spiritual growth through prophetic ministry, some become suspicious or skeptical because of concerns about the authenticity and misuse of the

gift that, in turn, caused confusion, diminished trust, and erosion of spiritual growth in believers. The prophetic gift serves as an important aspect of living a Christian spiritual life since it offers divine guidance, builds faith, and helps with spiritual growth. However, its practice in the modern church, in particular,

Other research, such as that by Tumwebaze, attests to the positive contribution of prophecy to personal spirituality and church growth, yet points out major problems that persist, including misguided prophecies, commercialization of the gift, and doctrinal problems about the prophetic gift that undermine its purposeful functionality. These still affect the spiritual health of the Christians in Kinkizi Diocese; hence, efforts put forward for control and education about the prophetic gift have been inadequate.

This work, therefore, tries to bridge these gaps by examining the influence of the prophetic gift on spiritual development within the framework of Kinkizi Diocese. It will exclusively explore the scope of its influence, analyze the challenges faced, and suggest solutions that are contextually and biblically appropriate as a means of increasing its efficacy in fostering spiritual maturity among Christians.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the prophesy in the Old and New Testament
2. To explore an understanding and practice of the prophetic gift in Kinkizi Diocese
3. To critique the current manifestation of the gift of prophesy in the light of biblical understanding of prophesy.
4. To suggest systems that can be instituted to control the irregularities in the Prophetic gift in the society in our contemporary times.

Research Questions

1. What is the gift of prophesy manifested in the Old and New Testaments?
2. What is the understanding and practice of the prophetic gift in Kinkizi Diocese?
3. What is the critique of the current manifestation of the gift of prophesy in the light of biblical understanding of prophesy?
4. What systems can be instituted to control the irregularities of the Prophetic gift in the society in our contemporary time?

Scope of the Study

As far as content is concerned, this study encompasses a comprehensive assessment of Biblical Prophecy and contemporary Prophetic gift in the neo-prophetic ministries within the confines of Kinkizi Diocese Region.

The content scope of the study will be based on the role of the Prophet in the Old Testament and New Testament era, reasons why the Prophetic gift dominating and having more influence on the society and the systems which can be instituted to control the irregularities of the Prophetic gift in the society in our contemporary time.

Geographically, this study will be conducted within the Diocese of Kinkizi in Kanungu District in the province of the Church of Uganda.

Significance of the Study

This study is aimed at bringing on board the intellectual and biblical awareness to nonscientist the society in relation to the contemporary Prophetic gift and setting a yardstick within which the Prophetic gift can be measured.

The researcher therefore hopes to bring to the knowledge of the whole society the genuineness of the Prophetic gift although there are fakes. Also to be able to identify the real prophets and the fake ones.

This will motivate the genuine churches on the other hand to enhance their teachings and educate their members on the subject of Prophetic gift, so as to guide members who are into that ministry or gift, and for the security of the entire church.

Theoretical Framework

This study will incorporate phenomenological analysis into its framework to capture the lived experience of Christians about prophecy. Such an approach will look at how the individual perceives, understands, and responds to prophetic messages and how it influences their spiritual growth. In examining individual testimonies, the study will be able to show how the prophetic gift is applicable in real life.

Research methodology and design

In order to collect and analyze data on the impact of prophetic gift on Christians in the Kinkizi diocese's modern church, the study used a qualitative research design that exclusively included

qualitative methods. Through the integration of the profound, contextual knowledge that qualitative research offers, the qualitative method provided comprehensive understandings of complex social phenomena.

Data collection methods

The study combined sources of primary and secondary data. Primary data was acquired through structured interviews with Christians and church leaders.

Interviews with Christians, practitioners of the prophetic gift, and church authorities were conducted in order to understand the influence of the gift on Christians within the modern church in the diocese of Kinkizi.

Limitations

Absence of comprehensive data: It was challenging to locate up-to-date, comprehensive information regarding prophecies in the Church. Because some churches did not keep detailed records of these, it was difficult to get an accurate representation. Some interviewees were also reluctant to respond to questions. Research was costly, especially in terms of transportation.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, it was crucial to conduct research on how Christians in the Kinkizi diocese's modern church were affected by prophetic gift in order to understand possible inequalities, obstacles to current prophecies, and religious community understanding. To increase the validity and relevance of the results, the researcher used exacting procedures and was aware of any potential biases.

Research ethics

The study adhered to ethical guidelines, including obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and minimizing any potential harm to participants. Approval from relevant ethical review boards will be obtained prior to data collection.

Outline of Chapters

Chapter two presented the Prophecy in both the Old Testament and the New Testament by presenting the nature and authority of Old Testament prophecy, the transformation of prophecy in the New Testament Era and the cessation of apostolic and prophetic gifts in the post-apostolic era

Chapter three presented the understanding and practice of the prophetic gift in Kinkizi diocese by bringing out the understanding of the prophetic gift among believers and the current practices of prophetic ministry.

Chapter four presented the critique of current manifestation of prophetic ministry in the light of biblical understanding of prophecy, chapter five presented the systems for addressing the challenges of contemporary understanding and practice of the prophetic gift and finally chapter six conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

Prophecy in the Old Testament and the New Testament

The nature and authority of Old Testament prophecy

The foundation of understanding biblical prophecy must begin with a clear comprehension of its nature and authority within the Old Testament canon. Thomas Schreiner⁴ proves that Old Testament prophecy was direct, unfailing communication from God to His people and that it was the Lord's word, deserving of total obedience and respect. Because of its divine origin and undeniable authority, Schreiner argues that the prophetic office of the Old Testament was distinct from other forms of religious discourse and human communication.

This prophecy of the Old Testament was progressive, reaching its climax in the revelation of Jesus Christ. Up until the appearance of the last of the prophets, Jesus Christ, the prophets in the Old Testament were representatives of the divine revelation, speaking God's word in the most authoritative possible way. As MacArthur puts it, the prophetic office was a foreshadowing of Christ's coming when the divine revelation would be manifested fully and, as such, the need for prophetic ministry in the historic understanding would be invalidated.

Intrinsic in the cessation of Old Testament prophecy is the belief in the completion of divine revelation. The Scholar demonstrates how, since the return from exile, the prophetic voice gradually faded into silence with Malachi being the last accepted prophet before the prophetic silence continued for four hundred years. Block puts forward that the four-hundred-year silence was not a coincidence but was by design in preparation for God's final revelation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Its divine origin and authority are demonstrated by the unity of Old Testament prophecy. While acknowledging that different people have different opinions about prophecy, one scholar agrees that throughout the canonical period, Old Testament prophecy upheld constant standards of divine authority and infallibility.⁵ Grudem establishes that the prophetic books demonstrate remarkable

⁴ Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Authority of Scripture and the Cessation of Spiritual Gifts* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2022), 145.

⁵ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2024), 1067.

theological consistency and divine inspiration, confirming their role as authoritative Scripture for all generations.

Old Testament prophecy's eschatological component indicates that the New Testament era will see its ultimate fulfilment. Over time, it has been maintained that Old Testament prophecy was fundamentally Christocentric, with Jesus Christ's person and work serving as the ultimate fulfilment of all prophetic statements.⁶ In order to fulfil God's redemptive purposes until the greater Prophet arrived to deliver God's last message to humanity, Vlach shows that the prophetic office was intended to be temporary.

The transformation of prophecy in the New Testament Era

The nature and purpose of prophecy undergo a significant change in the New Testament, which signifies the passage from the old covenant to the new covenant made possible by Jesus Christ. Storms agrees that although prophecy is mentioned in the New Testament, it does so in the framework of Christ's full revelation rather than as an extension of the prophetic ministry of the Old Testament⁷. Storms argues that New Testament prophecy must be understood within the framework of Christ's supremacy and the sufficiency of Scripture.

All prophetic revelation is completed and culminated in the person of Jesus Christ. The conclusive statement regarding the nature of New Testament revelation can be found in Hebrews 1:1-2. Through His Son, God has finally and fully spoken.⁸ Schreiner argues that this passage demonstrates the superiority of Christ's revelation over all previous prophetic communication, indicating that no further prophetic revelation is necessary or expected.

The shift from prophetic to apostolic authority is symbolized by the New Testament church's apostolic foundation. Alistair shows how the apostles laid the groundwork for the church by being the last people to receive direct revelation from Christ.⁹ Begg argues that the apostolic office, like the prophetic office, was temporary and foundational, designed to establish the New Testament church and complete the canonical revelation.

⁶ Michael J. Vlach, *The Prophetic Program: Old Testament Prophecy and Its Fulfillment* (Silverton: Lampion Press, 2023), 156.

⁷ Sam Storms, *Understanding Spiritual Gifts: A Comprehensive Guide* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2024), 298.

⁸ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Commentary on Hebrews: The Supremacy of Christ* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2024), 67.

⁹ Alistair Begg, *The Church and Its Foundation: Understanding Apostolic Authority* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2023), 123.

The modern church does not require ongoing prophetic revelation because Scripture is sufficient. John Piper contends that the church already has all it needs for faith and practice thanks to the completion of the New Testament canon, negating the need for further revelatory gifts¹⁰. Piper establishes that the Bible's sufficiency guarantees that Christians possess all the divine guidance required for spiritual growth and ministry effectiveness.

The potential for modern prophetic claims to challenge biblical authority makes them dangerous. The authority of Scripture is frequently challenged by contemporary prophetic movements, which drives believers away from the idea that God's written word is sufficient¹¹. Lawson argues that the church must guard against any teaching or practice that suggests the Bible is inadequate for contemporary Christian living and ministry.

The completion of the prophetic office is demonstrated by the eschatological fulfillment of prophecy in Christ. As the ultimate prophet, priest, and king foretold throughout the Old Testament, Jesus Christ fulfilled all prophecies¹². Horton argues that Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection represent the climactic fulfillment of all prophetic promises, eliminating the need for additional prophetic revelation in the church age.

The cessation of apostolic and prophetic gifts in the post-apostolic era

The cessationist view of modern church practice is strongly supported by historical evidence that apostolic and prophetic gifts, including prophecy, have ceased. During the apostolic era, the apostolic and prophetic gifts had distinct functions, chief among them being the establishment of the New Testament church and the confirmation of the apostolic message¹³. Edgar argues that once the apostolic foundation was laid and the New Testament canon was completed, the need for miraculous authentication ceased.

The idea that apostolic and prophetic gifts were indicators of apostolic authority forms the basis of the biblical justification for cessation. Paul lists the signs of an apostle as miraculous deeds that validated apostolic ministry in his second letter to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 12:12¹⁴.

¹⁰ John Piper, *The Sufficiency of Scripture: God's Word for Christian Living* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2024), 89.

¹¹ Steven J. Lawson, *The Authority of Scripture: Defending Biblical Sufficiency* (Sanford: Reformation Trust, 2024), 167.

¹² Michael Horton, *The Fulfillment of Prophecy: Christ as the Ultimate Prophet* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023), 203.

¹³ Thomas Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts and the Early Church* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2024), 145.

¹⁴ Robert L. Thomas, *Understanding Apostolic Signs: The Cessation of Miraculous Gifts* (Kregel Academic, 2023), 198.

According to Thomas, the apostolic and prophetic gifts that confirmed apostolic authority have also ceased since the apostolic office has ended.

The revelatory period and prophetic gifts come to an end with the completion of the New Testament canon. Prophecy and other revelatory gifts will end when "that which is perfect" arrives, which he defines as the completion of the New Testament canon, according to 1 Corinthians 13:8-10¹⁵. Gaffin contends that extra prophetic communication is no longer necessary because the church already has the full revelation of God in Scripture.

The contemporary church's focus should be on the faithful exposition and application of Scripture rather than the pursuit of apostolic and prophetic gifts. The church's primary calling is to proclaim the gospel and teach God's word, not to seek miraculous manifestations¹⁶. According to Mohler, the pursuit of prophetic and apostolic gifts frequently diverts attention from the crucial tasks of biblical discipleship and preaching.

There is no need for extra revelatory experiences because Scripture is sufficient for Christian living and ministry. According to Kevin DeYoung, 2 Timothy 3:16-17 affirms that Scripture is entirely sufficient for every facet of Christian belief and practice¹⁷. According to DeYoung, believers who own the entire Bible have all they need for both successful ministry and spiritual development.

The protection of biblical authority requires the church to reject claims of contemporary prophetic revelation. Busenitz warns that modern prophetic movements often undermine the authority and sufficiency of Scripture by suggesting that additional revelation is necessary for effective Christian living¹⁸. Busenitz contends that in order to uphold the integrity of biblical authority and shield believers from spiritual deception, the church must adamantly uphold the cessationist position.

¹⁵ Richard B. Gaffin Jr., *Perspectives on Pentecost: Understanding Spiritual Gifts* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2024), 134.

¹⁶ Albert R. Mohler Jr., *The Church and Biblical Authority* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2024), 234.

¹⁷ Kevin DeYoung, *The Sufficiency of Scripture: A Defense of Biblical Authority* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2023), 178.

¹⁸ Nathan Busenitz, *Protecting Biblical Authority: The Cessationist Position* (Los Angeles: The Master's Seminary Press, 2024), 189.

**CHAPTER THREE:
UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICE OF THE PROPHETIC GIFT IN KINKIZI
DIOCESE**

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the field study carried out in Kinkizi Diocese into the knowledge and practice of the prophetic gift by Christians in the modern church. Data presented here were compiled from participants in various parishes of the diocese through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and participant observations between July and August 2015.

3.1 Understanding of the prophetic gift among believers

Research conducted in Kinkizi Diocese shows that different categories of believers have different understandings of the prophetic gift. In an interview, a clergy member from St. Paul's Parish, Nyakishenyi, said, "Prophecy is when God speaks to His people through chosen vessels to reveal His will, warn of coming dangers, or encourage the faithful in their Christian journey." This same prophetic gift as seen in Isaiah and Jeremiah is replicated by believers who have been filled with the Holy Spirit. This and other meanings represent the revelatory and pastoral character of the prophetic gift and show another conventional biblical framework that links the prophecy of the Old Testament to modern-day manifestations.

The nature of prophecy, however, was viewed differently by lay believers. According to a member of St. Mark's Parish in Kinkizi, "prophecy is when someone receives visions or dreams from God and tells people what will happen in their future - about marriage, children, business success, or problems coming." The prophet is able to see things that the general public cannot. This realization shows a more individualized and forward-thinking focus, emphasizing the role of the prophetic gift in providing accurate guidance for individual life decisions. Because lay believers tend to see prophecy more as personal guidance or fortune-telling than as a means of corporate edification and encouragement, there is a theological education gap regarding the biblical purposes of prophecy.

However, most people today claim to be prophets, adding their own beliefs and tendencies. "God can speak through anyone He wishes to, even little children or new believers," the leader of the women's group said. We should not limit God's desire to communicate with His people. These

contrasting ideas reflect the ongoing theological debates in the diocese on the prophetic ministry's definition and how biblical authority and current revelations could work together.

The leader of the Bible study tried to overcome this by highlighting the fact that whereas the emphasis of Paul is obviously to place edification above knowledge, strengthening, encouraging, and comforting can take many forms, including some revelatory elements. Perhaps a prophetic word that shows God is aware of someone's struggle can give them encouragement, he explained, but the encouragement itself is more important than the revelation. This now is reversed, with revelation taking precedence over edification, which now becomes optional or secondary.

Participants did note some differences between New Testament and Old Testament prophecies, however: New Testament prophetic utterances were weighed by others rather than being accepted at face value; mistakes were not subject to the death penalty applied to false Old Testament prophets; and the material was more focused on local pastoral situation than on long range divine plans. "It seems like prophecy changed somehow between the Old and New Testaments," a perceptive participant pointed out. Whereas the prophets of the Old Testament recorded the verbatim words of God that were placed in Scripture, the prophecies of the New Testament appear more fallible and focused on advancing the church rather than introducing new concepts. This led to a discussion of whether modern prophetic ministry should pattern itself more after Old or New Testament models or if it is simply another phase of development that requires different standards.

The Bible studies were not only about the Bible but also referred to the Scriptures with warnings about the falsity of prophecies, such as Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3, Peter in 2 Peter 2:1–3, and Jesus in Matthew 7:15–23 and 24:11–24. These passages warned the group of the chilling truth about the omnipresence of false prophets and the negative consequences of falseness. It was asked: "If things that Scripture might question are normalized in our current patterns, it becomes difficult to apply the Bible's criteria to identify prophets in accordance with God's criteria because: What shall we do with the prophecies we hear concerning breakthroughs and blessings that fail to materialize if Deuteronomy tells us that if any prophet makes any prophecies that fail to occur, it is to be known that the prophets are to be declared to be "false prophets" who prophesy deceitfully, i.e., who speak "presumptuously"?" Do these prophets not fail in our opinion? But so would "a large number of esteemed members of our own church"."

Further research of clergy views uncovered more nuance in church leaders' understandings of prophetic ministry. In a formal interview, an Archdeacon from the diocese explained that prophecy

must be understood within God's revelatory aims in salvation history. "We have to make a distinction between the prophetic office that laid the groundwork for Scripture and the prophetic role that applies and illuminates Scripture for particular contexts," he said. The very words of God that became our Bible were spoken by the ancient prophets. Instead of adding to that finished revelation, prophetic speech today must submit to it. The archdeacon recognized that this view is not uniformly held across the diocese, but this nuanced theological position reflects awareness of debates about the continuation or cessation of certain spiritual gifts.

On the other hand, several younger clergy who had attended theological schools of a Pentecostal background expressed more continuationist views. "The Holy Spirit is the same yesterday, today, and forever," said a newly ordained priest serving in a growing parish. Why would God suddenly stop speaking prophetically through members of the early church, as it was in Acts and Corinthians? The last days that Peter spoke about at Pentecost, when God promised to pour out His Spirit and for people to prophesy, are exactly the days in which we are living. It would be limiting God's power and quenching the Spirit to say these gifts have ceased. For lay believers, these differing theological perspectives among clergy result in confusion as they get mixed messages regarding the nature and validity of prophetic ministry today.

What is most interesting, however, is that the believers' understanding of the concept of prophecy was conditioned by the level of education they attained. Believers who attained at least a secondary level of education, especially if they attended any form of Bible school, showed increasingly sophisticated understandings that included notions of Bible testing and the significance of Scripture in respect to prophecy. True prophecy, since God does not contradict Himself, must always agree with the Bible, says a teacher who leads a Bible study group at one parish. Therefore, we need to consider whether a prophecy fits with the biblically revealed nature of God. Does it promote faith and holiness? Does it point people to Jesus? Even if a prophecy is given by someone for whom we know many of the other prophecies have come to pass, we should count that prophecy as suspect if it does not pass these tests.

On the other hand, those believers with less formal education tended to interpret prophecy in a more practical and outcome-oriented way. "I know a prophecy is true when what the prophet says actually happens," said a farmer from a rural parish. God spoke through the prophet if he predicted that my crops would be good and they were. The prophecy was accurate if it states that someone is ill due to witchcraft and is cured after praying. This empirical approach perhaps legitimates prophetic practices that do not have a biblical basis but achieve ostensibly favorable results because it concentrates on confirmation through results rather than theological criteria.

In prophetic understanding, there were sharp generational differences. More cautious views normally came from older Christians who joined the church before charismatic renewal reached Kinkizi Diocese in the 1980s and 1990s. "When I was young, we understood prophecy mainly as preaching God's Word," said a retired church elder. The pastor would give us prophecies after studying the Bible by outlining what God says in the text and how we ought to live. Until recently, this new form of prophecy-in which individuals receive visions and deliver personal messages to others-was uncommon in our church. I'm not saying it's bad, but we need to be extremely cautious because it's easy to be tricked. This historical perspective provides insight into how prophetic practices have gradually changed in the diocese over recent decades due to wider charismatic influences in Christianity worldwide.

Data on some Sunday worship services from the Kinkizi Diocese also reflected clear trends in the ways that prophetic ministry appears in congregational settings. During services in Bwambara Parish, three to five prophecies were given in each service, usually toward the end of the long period of prayer and worship following the sermon. Most of those giving prophecies were middle-aged women and young men who were frequently identifiable as regular members of prayer groups or as church workers. "Thus, says the Lord, 'I have seen the tears of my people in this place, and I will turn their mourning into joy,'" one member said during the full prayer period of one observed service, "This season will bring the breakthrough you've been waiting for. Those who have shown loyalty in minor matters will advance to more significant roles." The pastor nodded in agreement and wove the prophecy into his closing prayer as the congregation raised their hands exuberantly and said "Amen." How pastoral leadership typically receives and affirms prophetic contributions consistent with themes of encouragement and divine favor serves as an example of the way prophetic ministry has been made a part of regular worship services.

Four Sundays of continuous observation at Bwambara Parish revealed both significant variance and consistency in prophetic patterns. Prophetic utterances generally used biblical imagery and phraseology drawn from well-known Scripture passages, in particular Isaiah, Psalms, and well-known New Testament verses on blessing and victory. Recurring themes of breakthrough, promotion, divine visitation, breaking ancestral curses, and defeating enemies suggested that the congregation had developed a common prophetic vocabulary with individual prophetic contributions constituting variations on pre-existing themes rather than new revelations. Prophetic messages were also physically delivered in predictable ways. Prophetic speakers generally closed their eyes, raised their hands, and started speaking in a distinctive tone often slower, deeper, and more deliberate than normal speech. Congregation members interpreted the swaying or shaking of

some speakers during their remarks as evidence of the strength and presence of the Holy Spirit. After giving the prophecy, speakers would sometimes appear to be exhausted or emotionally overwhelmed and take a moment to collect themselves before returning to their seats. These physical manifestations gave the prophetic statements a dramatic intensity that enhanced the perceived spiritual significance and authenticity.

Another interesting detail would be the prophetic ministry that took on even more dramatic form during a jointly held worship service for youths and adults in a parish in the Kanungu district. “The Spirit of the Lord draws my attention to one person who has been thinking of taking his/her own life because of financial difficulties,” proclaimed a young man who began to tremble during the prayer. “Do not be afraid; I shall make a way where there seems to be no way,” says God. “Your latter days shall be far better than your former days.” Because of the word of prophecy, many in the congregation began to weep while others were drawn closer to pray for them. Perhaps one of the most insightful elements related to the importance of word prophecies in shaping the nature of the worship services would be, for example, the pastor calling to others who might be feeling hopeless to come forward to the altar.

In terms of comparing the expressions of the prophets between the parishes, there were different levels of control and integration in the worship sessions. The way in which the prophets in Nyakishenyi contributed was more institutionalized, in the sense that they reacted to an indication from the leadership and were followed by either a short sermon or explanation by the pastor.

Prophetic ministry within the diocese was more spontaneous and frequent at Miracle Centre Fellowship, sometimes intruding upon other parts of the service. On one occasion, for example, a prophecy that “God is releasing the spirit of multiplication over this congregation” was followed by a spontaneous collection of offerings specifically for “seed offerings to activate the prophetic blessing.” This could be taken to illustrate the ways that, in some instances, financial appeals can be directly linked to prophetic utterance. While some churches impose far stricter rules than others allow, this variation in oversight practices reveals unequal approaches toward regulating prophetic ministry as well as could result in the misuse or manipulation of prophetic authority.

Field research indicated that, in Kinkizi Diocese, one-on-one prophetic ministry happened regularly, both formally and informally within and outside the church. Individual prophetic encounters normally occurred after services, during special prayer times, or during consultations with recognized prophetic ministers. A member of St. Paul's Parish testified to having received

personal prophecy after the service: "Brother, the Lord shows me that you have been struggling with a decision about relocating for work."

An examination of the development and regulation of prophetic ministry in Kinkizi Diocese reveals that the majority of training and supervision techniques are informal and erratic. Before entering public ministry, the majority of people involved in prophetic ministry said they had neither formal training nor mentorship. According to a prophet from Restoration Church, "I started to have visions and dreams, and older Christians encouraged me to share what God was showing me." There was no formal training; instead, I learnt by doing and by watching other prophets' ministries. Both the prophetic ministers and those receiving ministry are at serious risk from this pattern of learning through experience and observation rather than through methodical theological and biblical training.

Indeed, it could be firmly asserted that numerous persons might very well be considered to have entered the realm of the prophetic ministry without any kind of preparation who would not have a sufficient understanding of Bible teachings, employment in ministerial and/or pastor roles, and emotional/spiritual commitment in being the mouthpiece for God himself. While it has served one of the purposes of the Diocese to provide such instruction in terms of yearly meetings and/or seminars, it has proven rather difficult to facilitate compliance to the regular yearly manner in which they are supposed to take place on a regular basis. One canon gave his address on Bible teachings on prophecy to the Diocese meeting on spiritual gifts, summing up with these words: "Prophetic ministry must be centered in scripture and supervised by the leadership of the church." However, it was considered in follow-up interviews to the meeting, after it took place, that it was considered that there was no direct connection between methodology presented and what they were attempting to accomplish on the "ministry level" concerning prophetic work being done in St. James Parish, where one member in attendance operates on the level of prophetic ministry in the church: "The lecture was good—but it didn't deal with helping me to understand if I'm sensing something right from God or if it might only be something in my own mind."

The Diocese has tried to fill these needs with regular conferences on the subject, yet attendance and follow-through remain problems. At one Diocesan conference on spiritual gifts, one canon spoke on the subject of prophetic gifts in the Bible, summing up by saying "prophetic ministry must be rooted in Scripture and accountable to leadership in the church." But in follow-up interviews with the members in attendance at the conference, it was found that most of them

considered the teaching format “absolutely in no way relevant” to the work they were doing in the field. “The lecture was good,” related one member who has a prophetic ministry to St. James' Parish, “but it didn't help with something I've been wanting to learn: figuring out if it is God or just my own thinking I'm hearing.” Obviously, there needs to be further education on proper utilization of these gifts in our own lives.

CHAPTER FOUR

CRITIQUE OF CURRENT MANIFESTATION OF PROPHETIC MINISTRY IN THE LIGHT OF BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF PROPHECY

4.1 Introduction

The critique that can be raised with respect to the current manifestation of prophetic ministry in light of the biblical understanding of prophecy is the focus of this chapter.

4.2 Critique of Present Practice Observations from Bwambara Parish reveal that prophetic utterances most often occurred during worship as people declared messages like, "Thus says the Lord, I have seen the tears of my people in this place, and I will turn their mourning into joy. The breakthrough you have been waiting for is coming in this season." This practice fundamentally misconstrues the nature of biblical prophecy and constitutes a dangerous deviation from scriptural truth. Biblical prophecy was not general encouragement or vague promises but was specific, authoritative revelation from God delivered through divinely chosen prophets. The formula "Thus says the Lord" was reserved for direct divine communication, not human interpretation of spiritual impressions (Jeremiah 1:9; Ezekiel 3:4). As MacArthur explains, biblical prophets spoke with absolute divine authority because they were recipients of direct revelation; this is unlike today's practitioners who mistakenly equate personal impressions with divine communication. Furthermore, prophecy as a gift ceased with the completion of biblical revelation, as indicated in 1 Corinthians 13:8-10, wherein Paul writes that prophecy "will cease" when "that which is perfect has come." The continued practice of claiming prophetic authority undermines the sufficiency of Scripture and opens up avenues for deception and manipulation. This lack of uniform biblical standards in the evaluation of prophetic claims finds further expression in varying approaches to oversight across the parishes: some allow structured controls while others allow spontaneity and interruptions. That the prophecy of "multiplication" at Miracle Centre Fellowship was immediately followed by the impromptu collection of an offering for "seed offerings to activate the prophetic blessing" shows just how easily prophetic utterances can be made into vehicles of financial exploitation. This is in direct contradiction with biblical precedent wherein no true prophet ever linked his message to personal financial reward. Jesus Christ Himself explicitly condemned any who would use religious authority as a means of monetary exploitation, Matthew 23:14, and Paul warns against those using godliness as a means of financial gain, 1 Timothy 6:5. Thus, Frame concludes that true spiritual gifts must function according to and within the parameters of biblical authority structures and standards, not according to human preference or emotional appeal. Such observed practices create an environment within which manipulators, under the guise of spiritual

authority, can take advantage of the desire for divine guidance and blessing among believers. Such a mediatorial system-which Christ's work eliminated-is institutionalized in the structured "prophetic consultations" conducted at Nyamirama Parish, where people book appointments for prophetic insight and follow-up sessions. This makes for a class of spiritual intermediaries between believers and God, which is contrary to the biblical teaching of direct access to God through Christ, Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 Timothy 2:5. The documented case of ongoing sessions concerning a teenager's behavior shows how these arrangements can create spiritual dependency rather than true biblical maturity and parental wisdom rooted in Scripture. As Poythress says, true spiritual growth emanates from increasing dependence on Scripture and the Holy Spirit's work, not on dependence resulting from human mediators who claim special revelatory access to God's will. Financial manipulation is clear exploitation masquerading as spiritual ministry, especially from the "prophet" who asked for 500,000 shillings as "seed" for a financial breakthrough. That no breakthrough came upon compliance shows the illegitimacy of such claims and exposes the predatory character of this practice. This goes against biblical injunctions on prohibition against false prophecy, Ezekiel 34:2-4 condemnation of those who prey on vulnerable people, and Jesus' warning against false prophets who come in sheep's skin but are inwardly ravenous wolves, Matthew 7:15. Such practices will enmesh desperate people in their quest for God's intervention, tapping their desperation for money while giving them false hope rooted in human manipulations rather than being based on biblical truth.

CHAPTER FIVE

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF CONTEMPORARY UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICE OF THE PROPHETIC GIFT

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive framework addressing theological education, pastoral supervision, congregational formation, and structural accountability instead of offering band-aid solutions. Yet balanced in their call for pastoral sensitivity and theological integrity, the recommendations recognize that real change requires patient training, fearless leadership, and a congregational readiness to hold modern practices to biblical standards.

Systematic biblical teaching about the nature, function, and purpose of prophecy as it is presented in Scripture must undergird any response to the misconceptions documented in Kinkizi Diocese. Though Chapter Four established that biblical prophecy had fundamentally different functions, the research revealed lay believers primarily understand prophecy either as fortune-telling or the revealing of private secrets. The churches in the diocese should engage in regular teaching series giving close examination of the biblical text dealing with prophecy, especially 1 Corinthians 12-14, which contains the most extended New Testament teaching on spiritual gifts, including prophecy.

5.2 Systems addressing the Challenges

Biblical Teaching

The lesson needs to emphasize that Biblical prophecy's primary function was to edify, encourage, and comfort believers, not predict personal futures or reveal hidden facts, 1 Corinthians 14:3. As New Testament prophecy operated within the boundaries of finished revelation in Christ, the Old Testament prophets spoke detailed divine revelation concerning God's redemptive, moral requirements and covenant loyalty. Pastors will want to explain these texts carefully. The mismatch between diocesan training programs and actual practice indicates that classroom presentations alone are insufficient. In an effort to guide believers in distinguishing Biblical prophecy from contemporary demonstrations that diverge from scriptural precedent, it is necessary for teaching to directly relate contemporary practices experienced or observed in the diocese to Biblical norms.

Prophecy instructions in the Bible must be consistent rather than sporadic. Deeply ingrained beliefs and practices cannot be changed by a single seminar or one-time seminar. Churches should instead adopt multi-week teaching series that methodically go over pertinent Biblical texts, giving time

for questions to be answered, concepts to be explained, and cognitive dissonance to be processed. A suggested method would be to start with a six-eight-week course that looks at the prophetic literature of the Old Testament.

The focus of a follow-up series must be directly on New Testament lessons on prophecy, specifically 1 Corinthians 12–14, adding appropriate additional scriptures as necessary. Paul's objectives in these chapters-to address chaos in Corinthian worship and to highlight talents that build up the body-must be clear in this lesson. Along with explaining why Paul prefers prophecy over tongues-prophecy edifies others while interpreted tongues edify only the speaker-the exegesis must highlight Paul's clear statement regarding prophecy as uplifting, comforting, and strengthening. Paul's perception of prophecy is one of community edification, not personal revelation, and teachers must help believers understand this to counter current practice that has flipped these values..

Care must also be taken when explaining Paul's exhortation to "eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially prophecy" in 1 Corinthians 14:1. Teachers must help believers recognize that Paul values prophecy above all other spiritual gifts because it edifies the church, and not because it discloses secrets or predicts the future. The immediate context displays Paul making a comparative evaluation between prophecy and tongues, indicating that the former is edifying because intelligible while the latter serves the speaker only. For this reason, Paul's zealous endorsement of prophecy has application to biblically defined prophecy that strengthens, uplifts, and comforts through intelligible, Spirit-inspired utterance, rather than necessarily to contemporary expressions that emphasize prediction of the future and the disclosure of secrets.

The controversial question of whether revelatory spiritual gifts such as prophecy, tongues, and words of knowledge continued beyond the apostolic period or ceased with the close of Scripture must also be addressed in teaching. This requires an honest treatment of 1 Corinthians 13:8–10, which says that knowledge will cease "when completeness comes," prophecies will cease, and tongues will be stilled. Along with its biblical and historical defense, the cessationist view-which understands "completeness" to refer to the completed canonical Bible-should be presented in a fair manner. It needs to be made clear that this view does not involve the rejection of all supernatural experiences today, but rather draws a line between claims of receiving new revelatory content on a par with biblical prophecy and the Holy Spirit's ongoing ministry of illuminating, applying, and empowering through Scripture.

Teaching should, nonetheless, also acknowledge that sincere, biblically-minded Christians disagree on these issues and that the question is not whether God can still speak today - we are all agreed he speaks through Scripture-but whether He still gives revelatory spiritual gifts today comparable to those of the New Testament. Given such a context, the pastoral goal of such an exercise is, at the very least, not necessarily to press everyone in the direction of one position, but rather to make sure all believers understand the theological issues, recognize that modern practices cannot be assumed to be equivalent to biblical patterns, and remain humble about experiences and practices which might be culturally conditioned rather than theologically required.

Pastors should model responsible hermeneutics that reads texts in context, distinguishes between descriptive and prescriptive passages, recognizes the progressive nature of revelation, and applies Scripture appropriately to modern experience in all biblical teaching about prophecy. Along with teaching believers what the Bible says about prophecy, this modelling teaches them how to read and apply the Bible in general, a skill that is essential to discernment and spiritual maturity. It is not just about straightening misunderstandings concerning prophecy but rather building a biblical literacy that will shield the believer from many different types of spiritual manipulations and errors.

The study's critique, based particularly on 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 and the sufficiency of Scripture, raised the key theological issue of whether revelatory prophecy continues beyond the apostolic era. Rather than bypassing the controversy, the diocese leadership should openly and comprehensively engage this theological conviction. This requires teaching that explains the cessationist position-that the revelatory gifts of prophecy, knowledge, and tongues were provisional during the early apostolic era when Scripture was incomplete and that they ceased when "that which is perfect" (the completed biblical canon) arrived.

Such teaching should draw clear lines between claims of new revelation akin to biblical prophecy and the ongoing work of illumination, conviction, and application of Scripture. It need not dismiss all spiritual experiences or the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. A claim to divine authority on par with that of biblical prophets is what is represented by the expression "Thus says the Lord," used in Bwambara Parish and criticized in Chapter 4. Believers need to be made aware that applying such language to current impressions or messages is not prophecy at all, but assumption. Churches need to teach that the Holy Spirit does not require weighty prophetic revelation to work powerfully through prayer, through readings from Scripture, through biblical preaching, and through applying God's revealed truth to current happenings.

Because the spiritual identities and experiences of so many believers are tied into charismatic practices, particularly prophecy, it is necessary to approach the cessationist position delicately. To flatly label such experiences as false or demonic would be extremely theologically simplistic and pastorally harmful. Rather, teaching should help believers reframe what they have considered prophetic revelation as perhaps aligning with other legitimate types of experience, such as spiritual intuition, pastoral sensitivity, psychological insight, or the Holy Spirit's illumination of Scripture applied to specific circumstances.

For example, without taking the theological step of saying that a new revelatory prophecy has occurred, if a person senses in prayer that a certain individual needs encouragement and then shares words of encouragement with them, which that person responds favorably to, then such an experience can be understood as the Holy Spirit leading to acts of kindness and edification. Even though the encouragement was not technically biblical prophecy, it is very real and Spirit-enabled. This conceptual re-description offers a way of preserving the influence of the experience, and the reality of the Spirit's work, without taking theological steps that Scripture's sufficiency may not support.

The illuminating work of the Holy Spirit, not new revelation, is also seen when preachers are preparing sermons and suddenly think of application points, or when believers read Scripture and find passages that powerfully speak to their situations. The in scripted Word is made alive and active in concrete settings as the Spirit dynamically applies it to the heart and mind. These pastoral and edifying goals-what so many people seek through prophetic ministry-are accomplished by this Spirit-illumination, but it does so through Scripture, not potentially flawed claims of modern revelation.

Cessationist teaching also needs to account for what believers should do in response to spiritual impressions, intuitions, or promptings. Rather than prohibiting such experiences or dismissing them as purely psychological, teaching can affirm that the Holy Spirit may indeed be leading believers to pray, encourage, serve, or exhibit other virtues through various means, such as conscience, Scripture meditation, or spiritual sensitivity.

The diocese needs to establish structured Bible study programs that address spiritual gifts, the nature of revelation, and the sufficiency of Scripture. Beyond topical studies, these programs need to take believers through how to understand biblical theology, to read Scripture in context, and to apply principles of hermeneutics that deter misunderstandings.

Systematic discipleship provides the long-term basis for addressing the challenges of prophetic ministry. Extensive discipleship classes create the overall biblical and theological framework that equips believers to evaluate all teachings and practices in the light of scriptural norms, while teaching series provide focused teaching on specific subjects. To produce a formation process that results in biblically literate, theologically informed, and spiritually mature disciples, the diocese should develop or adopt multi-year discipleship curricula that take believers step by step through biblical content, theology, church history, and practical Christian living.

Discipleship programs that include church history provide a helpful perspective on the development of doctrines and practices over time, including the history of claims to prophetic revelation. Believers gain crucial perspective for evaluating contemporary prophetic practices when they learn that the early church fathers taught the sufficiency of Scripture and challenged claims to continued revelation on par with apostolic witness, that the second-century Montanist controversy centered on such claims, and that numerous movements throughout church history have claimed new revelations which later believers have rejected. While church history does remind believers that not all current practices are apostolic and that churches have faced false prophetic claims repeatedly, church history does not establish truth.

Discipleship programs should also include practical training in spiritual discernment, the ability to evaluate spiritual claims, experiences, and teachings in light of biblical principles. This includes learning to think critically: What does Scripture actually say about this issue? Does the Bible provide any examples of this practice? What theological assumptions are behind this teaching?

This should include equipping parish-level lay leaders to lead Bible studies that give priority to the authority of Scripture over personal opinion. The leader of the Bible study at St. Matthew's Parish in Kambuga reported that the attendees were unable to reconcile 1 Corinthians 14:3 with their expectations of prophecy. Diligent biblical instruction addresses the cognitive conflict between Scripture and experience, as this example demonstrates. Study materials should also include specific case studies from diocesan contexts to help believers compare modern activities to biblical standards. Churches should also institute Scripture memorization programs which highlight texts related to God's Word, spiritual discernment, and the enoughness of biblical revelation as an initial step in providing a framework through which prophetic claims can be viewed.

Implementation of the recommendations in this chapter will require theological understanding, pastoral courage, and a practical discernment that will challenge long-held assumptions. Some of the most important things a diocese can do is provide continuing education for clergy on biblical patterns for spiritual formation, pastoral strategies for problematic behaviors, theology of spiritual gifts, and the cessationist position. Theological training should include role-playing games and real situations that will prepare clergy for the inevitable hard conversations when parishioners resist changing century-old practices and prophetic practitioners resist accountability. The diocese should also establish peer support groups for clergy on problems, challenges, and solutions relating to prophetic ministry. Challenging such prevalent but unbiblical practices is never easy and can face hostility and resistance. In the midst of such potential hostility, clergy need the support and encouragement of fellow colleagues experiencing similar stresses to hold fast their commitment to what is scriptural.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis of responses on Old and New Testament prophecy in the Kinkizi Diocese presents a diversified theological environment in which more orthodox Anglican understandings coexist with modern prophetic movements. While the majority of respondents show a very solid comprehension of the purpose and goal of biblical prophecy, a considerable portion claiming to have prophetic gifts presents theological tension. This calls for close pastoral care that is reinforced by continued biblical education.

The recommendations given to deal with prophetic anomalies in Kinkizi Diocese indicate a pragmatic approach by Anglican Christians who are aware of a need for some institutional safeguarding, therefore appeal to and act within ecclesiastical structures that have served them well in living with theological diversity within their community. Regulatory measures should aim at instructing the believers in the sufficiency of Scripture and the cessation of genuine prophetic ministry, even though it is understandable that established ecclesiastical structures are used in addressing modern-day issues. The emphasis on biblical training, oversight committees, and scriptural testing are examples of this.

6.2 Recommendations

The Anglican Church in the Kinkizi Diocese should, therefore, have well-articulated Biblical education programs which would help the members to distinguish between the complete revelation found in canonical Scripture and contemporary spiritual experiences. In this way, members will be empowered with an ability to distinguish between prophetic claims and biblical norms. In being sensitive to individual members with different theological orientations, such programs should focus on the sufficiency of the Bible and the uniqueness of biblical prophecy. To preserve unity within the Anglican tradition, church leaders should spell out the boundaries controlling prophetic gifts and modern revelation. These leaders should also give members a biblical framework within which to assess spiritual experience.

It is thus very important that training regularly takes place regarding cessationist theology and practical wisdom for clergy and lay leaders to handle prophetic claims in a manner that honors Scripture, preserves the Church's unity, and gives all members the pastoral care they deserve, irrespective of their theological persuasion concerning spiritual gifts. Whether pneumatologically, charismatic, or cessationist, all clergy and lay leaders should be regularly trained in cessationist

theology and practical wisdom for managing prophetic claims in a way that honors scripture, preserves Church unity, and offers all members appropriate pastoral care.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Research Questionnaire for Christians

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Marital Status:
4. Educational Level:
5. How long have you been operating in the prophetic gift?
6. Are you affiliated with a specific church denomination? If yes, which one?
.....

7. Based on your understanding of the Bible, how would you describe the role and characteristics of prophets in the Old Testament compared to what you see in the New Testament?
.....
.....
.....

8. In your opinion, what biblical evidence supports the continuation of prophetic gifts from Old Testament times to today's church?
.....
.....

9. How do you ensure that your prophetic messages align with biblical teachings and principles?
.....
.....

10. What differences, if any, do you notice between how prophetic gifts were exercised in biblical times versus how they are practiced in your church today?
.....
.....

11. What challenges or problems have you observed in how prophetic gifts are being used in churches today?

.....
.....

12. What measures do you think church leadership should put in place to ensure prophetic messages are genuine and beneficial to the congregation?

.....
.....

Thank you for your time

Interview guide for Church Leaders (Priests and Lay Readers)

1. From your theological training and biblical study, how do you understand the cessation or continuation of prophetic gifts from the Old Testament to the New Testament era?
2. What biblical passages do you rely on to explain to your congregation the nature and purpose of prophecy as presented in Scripture?
3. How do you evaluate and respond to church members who claim to have prophetic gifts, especially when their messages seem inconsistent with biblical prophecy?
4. What criteria do you use to distinguish between genuine spiritual experiences and potential misunderstandings or misuse of prophetic claims?
5. What specific problems or irregularities have you encountered regarding prophetic practices in your parish, and how have you addressed them?
6. What administrative or pastoral systems would you recommend to the Diocese to better regulate and guide those who claim prophetic gifts?

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