

Aired 3/28/2021 – [Watch on YouTube](#) (high-speed available)

Additional background:

(Excerpted from *How self-proclaimed ‘prophets’ from a growing Christian movement provided religious motivation for the Jan. 6 events at the US Capitol* by Brad Christerson, a professor of sociology and scholar of religion at Biola University (a private Christian university).)

*Charismatic Christianity, similar to Pentecostal Christianity, emphasizes the “gifts of the Holy Spirit,” which include healing, exorcism, speaking in spiritual languages, and **prophecy – defined as hearing direct words from God that reveal his plans for the future and directions for his people to follow.** Some particularly gifted “prophets” are seen as being able to predict world events and get directions from God regarding entire nations.*

Before the 2016 election a group of INC “prophets” proclaimed Trump to be God’s chosen candidate, similar to King Cyrus in the Bible, whom God used to restore the nation of Israel. After their prophesies of Trump’s winning the election came true, these “prophets” became enormously popular in INC Christianity.

INC beliefs are different from those of most traditional Christian groups, including those affiliated with official Pentecostal denominations. INC promotes a form of Christian nationalism the primary goal of which is not to build congregations or to convert individuals, but to bring heaven or God’s intended perfect society to Earth by placing “kingdom-minded people” in powerful positions at the top of all sectors of society, the so-called “seven mountains of culture” comprising government, business, family, religion, media, education and arts/entertainment.

One INC leader we interviewed in 2015 explained, “If Christians permeate each mountain and rise to the top of all seven mountains ... society would have biblical morality, people would live in harmony, there would be peace and not war, there would be no poverty.” They see Trump as fulfilling God’s plan to place “kingdom-minded” leaders in top government positions, including Cabinet members and Supreme Court appointments.

For discussion:

1. In her discussion of today’s prophets, Chris stated:

So, who exactly are these prophets? Some are church leaders with followers among Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians, while some others are independent evangelists who do not lead churches or other institutions. They operate primarily online and through appearances at conferences, or as guest speakers in churches. It’s my belief that some of the charismatic prophets actually do experience authentic revelations, while for many others it is a case of wishful thinking.

~ Do you believe there are prophets among us today who receive direct messages from God? How do we know if their messages are truly divinely inspired; who can we turn to for guidance, who can we trust?

~ Do you think guidelines and requirements for prophecy accountability should be established, and how would this be done? How can we discern what is true prophecy and what is false?

2. Joan Chittister says true prophecy, as evidenced by the Biblical prophets of old – prophets like Isaiah, Moses, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, just to name a few – is revelational or inspirational, or both. Prophecy, in addition to counseling against corrupt practices, should build up, reassure, and console. True prophecy encourages compassion and mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation; liberates from addiction; provides direction and focus for different areas of people’s lives and ministry; and assists with inner and physical healing. Indeed, prophecy has the capacity to speak to all areas of human life and experience. It is about examining the present in the light of the future; seeing what is obstructing the fullness of life and staring down the opposition.

Many Charismatic Christian prophecies envision Christian nationalism as the primary goal of a society built on biblical morality, a world in which God’s intended perfect society places “kingdom-minded people” in powerful positions at the top of all sectors of society.

~ What is your definition of prophecy?

~ Do you believe either of these types of prophecies are relevant today?

~ Do you think prophets are (or should be) motivated by political interests?

3. As we look around, we can find more and more activist groups and organizations willing to address the needs of the oppressed. Chris calls these activists the prophets of today, and that whether they claim a spiritual motive or not, they work to bring humanity back to God’s directive to be stewards of the earth and protectors of the defenseless; they follow Jesus’s teaching and the major principle of most faith traditions and cultures, to treat others as we want to be treated.

~ Do you agree?

4. Sister Joan suggests that “while prophets may take the lead in confronting the complacency of an obstructionist world, to be spiritually mature we must each be about something greater than ourselves, to own the implications in the Christian life.”

~ Do you agree that the prophetic tradition has been handed on to each of us; that we are called to find the courage to take a specific, uncompromising stand for justice, to do something to change our world as well as talk about what needs to be changed.

~ How does your faith enable you to answer the call?