

**VICTORIOUS LIFE CHURCH BIBLE STUDY SERIES: DISCOVERING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS- UNLEASHING YOUR POTENTIAL IN THE SPIRIT. PASTOR WILLIAM A. LEE, II**

**MINISTRY GIFTS: Part Four**

In this session we will turn our attention to the third category of Spiritual Gifts called Ministry Gifts

**Apostles**

**Prophets**

**Evangelist**

**Pastor/ Teacher**

**Ephesians 4:11-12**

**11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**

A closer examination of the larger context of these verses (verses 7-16) will bring us to the following conclusion:

A. Ministry Gifts, like all other gifts, are the result of Grace

**Ephesians 4:7**

**But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.**

B. Ministry Gifts are presents/gifts (domata) given to the church by the exalted Lord

**Ephesians 4:8-9**

**This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people." 9 (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions.)**

C. By the use of personal terms (e.g. apostles, prophets etc..) Pauls identifies these gifts as gifts of persons.

**Ephesians 4:11**

**So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,**

D. These people gifts are servants to the church

**Ephesians 4:12-15.....to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**

**Ephesians 4:14-16**

**Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.**

## **I. DEFINING MINISTRY GIFTS**

### **The Five-Fold Ministry**

#### **A. APOSTLES**

##### **1. Apostles of Christ**

- a. The Apostles of Christ were men chosen by Christ and who saw Christ after His resurrection.
- b. The Apostles, along with the prophets, formed the foundation of the church

**Ephesians 2:19-20**

**19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.**

- c. There is no Biblical or historical evidence for a belief in an Apostolic Succession of the Apostles of Christ

##### **2. Apostles of the Church**

- a. An Apostle is one with special abilities of Spiritual Leadership who establishes and supervises local churches
- b. The Apostles appointed Elders in local churches and guarded the spiritual and moral foundation of the church

### **Acts 14:21-23**

**21 They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, 22 strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said. 23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders[a] for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.**

### **1 Corinthians 11:28-31**

**28 Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. 29 For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. 30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. 31 But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. 32**

### **I Corinthians 11:32-34**

**Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world.<sup>33</sup> So then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together. 34 Anyone who is hungry should eat something at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions.**

## **B. PROPHETS**

1. A prophet or prophetess is one who speaks forth as a divinely inspired oracle.
2. Prophets were itinerant proclaimers of divine truth whose main focus was the spiritual life of God's people.
3. Gifts of Revelation seem to accompany their ministry
4. The message of prophets is usually one of revival, repentance and restoration of righteousness.

## **C. EVANGELIST**

1. An evangelist (euaggalistes) is one who proclaims the gospel of salvation to the unconverted
2. The primary focus of the evangelist is the world
3. Gifts of power seemed to accompany their ministry

## Evangelist/ Witness Two Diagnostic Questions

1. If you were to die today do you believe you'd go to heaven?

2. If you were to die today and you stood before God and He asked you, why should I let you into my heaven, what would you say?

### D. PASTOR/ TEACHER

1. The pastor/ Teacher (poimen-didaskollos) one who serves as a spiritual shepherd
2. A pastor/Teacher is one who has been gifted to assume long-term responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of believers
3. New Testament synonyms for pastor/teachers are elder (presbuteros) and bishop or overseer (episkopos)
4. The primary focus of the pastor/teacher is the local church

In a survey of 1500 pastors they have found that pastors are in a dangerous occupation! We are in perhaps the single most stressful and frustrating working profession, more than medical doctors, lawyers or politicians.

\*We found that over 70% of pastors are so stressed out and burned out that they regularly consider leaving the ministry.

\* Thirty-five to forty percent of pastors actually do leave the ministry, most after only five years because of burnout, conflict in their church, or from a moral failure.

- 90% of pastors stated they are frequently fatigued, and worn out on a weekly and even daily basis (did not say *burned out*).
- 89% of pastors consider leaving the ministry at one time. 57% said they would leave if they had a better place to go—including secular work.
- 77% of pastors we surveyed felt they did not have a good marriage!
- 72% of the pastors we surveyed stated that they only studied the Bible when they were preparing for sermons or lessons. This left only 28% who read the Bible for devotions and personal study.
- 38% of pastors said they were divorced or currently in a divorce process.
- 30% said they had either been in an ongoing affair or a one-time sexual encounter with a parishioner.
- 26% felt they were adequately fed spirituality. (**This is Key**).

- Fifteen hundred pastors leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout, or contention in their churches.
- Fifty percent of pastors' marriages will end in divorce.
- Eighty percent of pastors feel unqualified and discouraged in their role as pastor.
- Seventy percent of pastors constantly fight depression.
- Most statistics say that 60% to 80% of those who enter the ministry will not still be in it 10 years later, and only a fraction will stay in it as a lifetime career.
- Many pastors—over 90 percent—start off right with a true call and the enthusiasm and the endurance of faith to make it, but something happens to derail their train of passion and love for the call.

## COVID AFFECTS

- \* Roughly three in 10 pastors (29%) report having given serious consideration to quitting in the past year.
- \* Another quarter (25%) say they lack confidence that they will be financially secure when they retire.

David Kinnaman, president of Barna, said the past year has been a “crucible” for pastors. Churches have become fragmented by political and social divides. They have also become frayed, as “people’s connectedness to local congregations is waning. Last summer, the council surveyed clergy and found about a quarter said they were considering retiring or leaving the pastorate due to the stresses of ministry during COVID.

## II. EXAMPLES OF MNISTRY GIFTS

### New Testament and Contemporary

#### A. Apostles

##### 1. New Testament Examples: a. Twelve Apostle:

#### **Mark 3:13-19 New International Version (NIV)**

**13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. 14 He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons. 16 These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), 17 James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder”), 18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. Barnabas Andronicu and Junia-**

#### **Romans 16:7 New International Version (NIV)**

**Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was**

### **a. Epaphroditus-**

**Philippians 2:25 New International Version (NIV)**

**25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs.**

**Contemporary Examples of Apostles:** Those with a founding and supervisory role over local churches

### **B. Prophets: New Testament Examples**

#### **1. Agabus and Others-**

**Acts 11:27-28 New International Version (NIV)**

**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.)**

**2. Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius Manean, Saul- Acts 13:1 New International Version (NIV)**  
**13 1 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.**

#### **2. Judas and Silas-**

**Acts 15:32 New International Version (NIV)**

**32 Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers.**

#### **3. Philip's Daughter-**

**Acts 21:9 New International Version (NIV)** Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. **9 He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.**

**Contemporary Examples: Revivalist, spokesmen for righteousness. The Scattered Ones:**  
**Acts 8:4** Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.

#### **4. Philip:**

**Acts 21:8** Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven.

**Contemporary Examples:** Missionaries, evangelist, soul-winners

5. Elders;

**Acts 14:23 New International Version (NIV)**

**23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.**

**Acts 15:23 New International Version (NIV)**

**23 With them they sent the following letter: The apostles and elders, your brothers, To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings.**

**Acts 20:17, 1 Timothy 3:1, Titus 1:5, 5:17, James 4:14-15, 1 Peter 5:1-4**

**Contemporary Examples:** Man and women who shepherd a group of believers

### **III. THE PURPOSE OF MINISTRY GIFTS**

A. In the Ministry Gifts, God has given to the church a gift of servants (diakonoi). These servants are to equip the saints for the work of the Ministry

1. Ministry of the task of God's people (loos)
2. Each believer is a priest and the mission of the Royal Priesthood is to bless the nations of the world.
3. The program of the Kingdom of God has been given to the logs and it is the task of the servants to support them
4. An interesting sign in front of the church:

**Ministers: All members assistant to the ministers: Pastor**

God's present to the church is the servant-leaders whose task it is to equip the saints for ministry. The grace gifts are the divine enablements to fulfill their priestly function.

B. Developing and Using Your Gift

1. Important Attitudes to Nurture
  - a. Loving gratitude to God

- b. Respect for other's gifts
- c. Appreciation of your own gift
- d. Desire to serve God

## 2. Important Actions to Pursue

- a. A life of Devotion
- b. Involvement in Ministry
- c. Be aware of the weaknesses of your Gift

## 3. Using Your Gift

- a. The Emphasis of the Scriptures is on Ministry through gifts, not merely the discovery of gifts.**
- b. Consider the possibilities of meaningful ministry through your gifts.**
- c. Do not neglect opportunities simply because they do not seem complimentary to your giftedness.**