

FIRST PRINCIPLES

A STUDY OF THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF CHRIST

LAYING ON OF HANDS

BOOK FIVE

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LAYING ON OF HANDS

Hebrews 6:1-2 *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of **laying on of hands**, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

This lesson is the beginning of a new series, which will endeavor to lay a foundation in the principles of laying on of hands (Hebrews 6:2). It is significant that this series follows the teaching on baptism in the Holy Spirit, since they are related in ministry (Acts 8:17, 19:6). In fact, much New Testament ministry is related to the laying on of hands. Blessings, identification, ministry, power, and authority flow through the hands of the believer who walks in obedience to the Lord. The ministry of the laying on of hands may be looked upon as an extension of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a sign of the apostolic authority of the Church bringing the kingdom of God into a world in need of deliverance from the works of Satan (Luke 11:20).

INTRODUCTION

To see the significance of hands and their use biblically, we need to apply the Law of First Mention. This law states that the first example of a truth in the Bible will set a pattern or a principle of interpretation for that word or concept throughout the Scriptures. With this in mind, let's look at the first instance of the use of hands in the Bible.

A LOOK AT "HANDS"

Genesis 2:7 *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*

Though the word "hands" is not used in this passage, it is implied when speaking of the forming of man. We know that God is Spirit (John 4:24), but the Bible uses human characteristics to describe Him (this is called anthropomorphism). This is so our limited minds can have a better understanding of the God we cannot see. When the Bible speaks of God's hands, it is speaking of His power and ability.

Exodus 15:6 *Your right hand, O LORD, has become glorious in power; Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the enemy in pieces.*

The second instance of the use of this word "formed" is in Genesis 2:18-19.

Genesis 2:18-19 *And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them....*

The Hebrew word for "form" is "yatsar," which means "to mold into a form, especially as a potter; to squeeze into shape; earthen, fashion, frame, make, potter, purpose."

The Lord spoke, made or created all of creation except for man and the animals, which the Bible says He “formed.” This “forming” which God did in the creation of man and the animal kingdom gives us an insight into God’s attitude toward man as well as the importance He places upon the use of the hands. “Forming” speaks of an intimate involvement, a personal contact and a very careful handling. The hand speaks of sensitivity and ability, as an extension of the mind and the thought process. Out of His divine mind, God formed His beloved man in all the intricate workings of the superb physical body with its varied systems of operation. Then He breathed into this formed body and it became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). From this original form, God then “built” Eve to be the helper that the animals could not be (Genesis 2:18-25). We see that God’s hands were an extension of His divine purpose concerning man from the very beginning.

Hands are an extension of the person and are the instrument of “doing” used in activity. Hands speak of power and ability. In the physical realm, hands are a gateway of input and output through which man expresses love, praise, creativity and sensitivity. Hands are used in work, play, giving and receiving. Hands are also clasped in friendship, greeting and covenant (unfortunately we have lost the significance of the sealing of one’s word through the handshake).

The hand is a gateway of input and output in the spiritual sense, just as it is in the physical. Laying on of hands, therefore, has a great significance to believers. We all need a greater understanding of this basic biblical doctrine.

A LOOK AT “LAYING ON”

Hebrews 6:1-2 tells us that laying on of hands is one of the six foundational principles of Christ. Without an understanding of this basic doctrine the Christian cannot successfully move on into deeper areas of maturity in the Word of God. We must have a clear understanding of these doctrines before we can receive the full benefit of them. If the Christian does not know the importance, the power and the actual impartation that takes place by the laying on of hands, he will not receive from God all that has been provided.

In the New Testament the Greek word for “laying” as used here is “epithesis,” which means, “to impose, add unto, lade, lay upon, put upon, set on.” Therefore, we understand it as the actual placing of the hands upon another person for a particular reason. God does nothing without a purpose. The laying on of hands is not an empty ceremony; something really happens when we lay our hands on others. God has chosen our hands to be the channels through which we bless others and operate in kingdom power. The purpose of laying on of hands is for impartation, identification, confirmation and blessing.

IMPARTATION

We have seen the importance that God places on the laying on of hands. This is because the one who lays hands on another is imparting something of spiritual significance to the one on whom his hands are laid. To impart means to give. This is why it is important to know who lays hands on us,

because they are imparting something spiritual to us.

Medical and scientific research has been studying and noting for years the effects and changes caused by laying on of hands. There is a natural function in man which responds to the impartation by the laying on of hands. Research done with children who have never been touched or handled shows markedly warped development which sometimes results in death. Human beings are designed to respond to touch. Even at its best, however, the impartation of the natural man cannot accomplish that which the Spirit of God accomplishes through the hands of a Spirit-filled believer.

Impartation by the laying on of hands was an important doctrinal requirement under the old covenant for the atonement of sin and was performed by the following people:

1. Those who offered sacrifices to atone for sin. Their sins were imparted to the sacrificial offering by the laying on of hands (Leviticus 1:4).
2. The High Priest for the iniquities of Israel on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16:21).
3. The Elders on behalf of all Israel to atone for unintentional sins (Leviticus 4:15).

Other accounts of the laying on of hands in the Old Testament show the transmission of spiritual power and authority. Some things, which were imparted by the laying on of hands, are:

1. Consecration - The Levitical priests laid hands on the sacrifice for their own consecration into the priesthood (Exodus 29:10) and for the consecration of Aaron and his sons into the priesthood (Numbers 8:12).
2. Blessing - When Jacob laid hands on Ephraim and Manasseh, he crossed his hands to lay the right hand, the stronger blessing, on Ephraim (Genesis 48:14).
3. Transferal of Authority and Wisdom - Moses laid hands on Joshua at the instruction of God to commission him for leadership (Numbers 27:23, Deuteronomy 34:9).
4. Spiritual Power - The Hebrew word for "anoint" is "mashach," meaning, "to rub with oil, to anoint, to consecrate, to paint." Examples of anointing with oil, which show a definite impartation of the power of the Spirit of God, are the anointing of Saul, David and Solomon as kings (1 Samuel 10:1, 1 Samuel 16:13, 1 Kings 1:39).

The laying on of hands was very important to the early church. The New Testament sets it forth as a distinct doctrine and gives us five different purposes for the laying on of hands.

THE PRACTICE OF LAYING ON OF HANDS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

LAYING ON OF HANDS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. To minister the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
2. To impart spiritual gifts.
3. To minister signs and wonders.
4. To minister healing.
5. To consecrate and commission for ministry.

Let us examine each of these separately as a practical guide to our Christian walk and church life today.

1. To minister the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

As we look to the New Testament for examples of the laying on of hands in ministering the baptism in the Holy Spirit, we find three accounts given in the book of Acts. First, the apostles Peter and John went to Samaria after receiving word about those who were converted because of Philip's preaching.

Acts 8:15, 17-18 ...*who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit...Then they **laid hands on them**, and they received the Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that through **laying on of the apostles' hands** the Holy Spirit was given....*

Second, Paul received the baptism in the Holy Spirit when Ananias laid hands on him.

Acts 19:17 *And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and **laying his hands on him** he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."*

Finally, Paul ministered the baptism in the Holy Spirit to the disciples of John through the laying on of hands.

Acts 19:6 *And when Paul **had laid hands on them**, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.*

Although laying on of hands to minister the baptism in the Holy Spirit is normal and scriptural, it is not the exclusive means of receiving, as evidenced by other examples. The common denominator in each example is receiving by faith the gift of Jesus the Baptizer (as discussed in Lesson 5 of the Doctrine of Baptisms).

2. To impart spiritual gifts.

There is something actually imparted by the laying on of hands; it is not merely an imitation of a scriptural example. Romans 1:11 makes it clear that spiritual gifts are imparted for the establishing of the Church. Gifts are given by hands. The Greek word for "gifts" in the following examples is "charisma," meaning "a divine gratuity or a spiritual endowment," and the root is "charis" meaning grace.

1 Timothy 4:14 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the **laying on of the hands** of the presbytery.*

2 Timothy 1:6 *Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the **laying on of my hands**.*

It is clear that prophecy, as well as the laying on of hands, was instrumental in the impartation of spiritual gifts. It is also clear from the Scriptures that these gifts were imparted through established leadership. So, gifts are endowed by God through the established authority in the Church for the establishing, building up and edification of the Church. We will cover this in detail in Lesson 6.

3. **To minister signs and wonders.**

We have scriptural evidence of God working signs and wonders through the ministration of the laying on of hands. The scriptural pattern is that signs and wonders are worked through the believer (Mark 16:16-18).

4. **To minister healing.**

As was mentioned earlier, there is a natural therapeutic benefit in laying hands upon the sick. The biblical ministry of healing through the laying on of hands takes place in a loving atmosphere where the person is set free from Satan's snare and released into wholeness and abundance. There is actually a supernatural impartation of the life of God, which brings either an instantaneous healing (miracle) or sets in motion the process of recovery. There are numerous examples of healing by the laying on of hands through the ministry of Jesus and the church.

Luke 4:40 *Now when the sun was setting, all those who had anyone sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and **He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.***

Acts 28:8 *...Paul went in to him and prayed, and **he laid his hands on him and healed him.***

Mark 16:18 *They will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; **they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.***

5. **To consecrate and commission for ministry.**

Another purpose of the laying on of hands is to ordain, commission and send forth ministry. Hands were laid on the men set aside as deacons in the early church (Acts 6:6). Not only were these men presented to God by the laying on of hands, but they were also acknowledged publicly and had imparted to them the authority and grace needed for their

position. The laying on of hands brought spiritual power and authority into the lives of Stephen and Philip (Acts 6:8, 8:26-40).

Though not mentioned directly, it is evident that laying on of hands accompanied acts of ordination, such as Timothy's:

1 Timothy 4:14 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the **laying on of the hands** of the presbytery.*

In the context of discussing the ordination of ministers, a warning is given concerning the identification aspect of laying on of hands:

1 Timothy 5:22 *Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins....*

This verse does not mean that we should be afraid to lay our hands on people when we pray for them. Rather, this warning is given because when we lay hands on someone to send them out into ministry, we are identifying ourselves with them. Therefore, we must be sure they will represent the Lord and the Church faithfully.

The laying on of hands is an integral part of the commissioning and sending forth of ministries.

Acts 13:2-3 *As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and **laid hands on them**, they sent them away.*

CONCLUSION

A study of God's word makes it clear that the doctrine of laying on of hands is extremely important to the purpose of God in the church. A clear understanding of this doctrine can ensure the candidate for laying on of hands a greater degree of reception through faith, for we are told in Romans 10:17 "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." As our faith is increased through the receiving of the Word, our receiving of the provision of God may be increased also.

We have seen that impartation and identification take place in the laying on of hands. Also, there is a blessing conferred from God upon the recipient and a public confirmation of God's call. The laying on of hands is vital to the life of the church and to the believer in the process of maturing.

RESPONSIVE READING

Question 1: What is the spiritual significance of hands?

When the Bible speaks of hands, it is speaking of power and ability.

Exodus 15:6 *Your right hand, O LORD, has become glorious in power; Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the enemy in pieces.*

Question 2: What are the New Testament purposes for the laying on of hands?

The New Testament purposes for the laying on of hands are:

a. To minister the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:6 *And when Paul **had laid hands on them**, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.*

b. To impart spiritual gifts.

1 Timothy 4:14 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the **laying on of the hands** of the presbytery.*

c. To minister signs and wonders.

Mark 16:17-18 *“And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; **they will lay hands on the sick**, and they will recover.”*

d. To minister healing.

Luke 4:40 *Now when the sun was setting, all those who had anyone sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and **He laid His hands on every one of them** and healed them.*

e. To consecrate and commission for ministry.

Acts 13:2-3 *As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then, having fasted and prayed, and **laid hands on them**, they sent them away.*

Question 3: Who has the authority to lay hands on the sick?

All believers have the authority to lay hands on the sick in Jesus’ name.

Mark 16:17-18 *“And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name...**they will lay hands on the sick**, and they will recover.”*

Psalm 103:1-3 *Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases.*

INTRODUCTION

The subject of healing is very controversial in many circles. Some people believe that divine healing belongs to another dispensation and is not for today. The opposite extreme teaches that medicine and doctors are of the devil. We realize that there are many questions concerning healing that are difficult to answer. In this lesson, we will concentrate on those things that are clearly defined in the Word of God.

God's original creation shows His desire for man to be free from sin, sickness and death. Death was introduced when man yielded to Satan's temptation to disobey God and function independently of his Creator.

GOD'S ORIGINAL CREATION

Genesis 2:17 tells us that God instructed man not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or the result would be certain death. As we know, Adam and Eve did not obey God, but chose to embark on a path different from God's original intention. This resulted in the power of death coming upon all mankind for the generations to come.

Romans 5:12 *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.*

Physical death and all that produces it are the direct result of sin. It is evident that the destructive results of sin were introduced into God's creation because we see the life span of man becoming shorter through the generations. (Compare the genealogies in Genesis Chapters 5 and 11.)

This world is not as God originally created it to be. Sin has corrupted the world and everything that dwells therein. All corruption, sickness, pain, disease and death can be directly traced back to sin. This is not to say that all sickness is a direct result of willful sin in a person's life. However, all sickness is a result of the fact that we live in a fallen world that has been corrupted by sin.

After the fall of man, God worked to restore man to Himself. As He revealed Himself to His people over a period of time, He disclosed aspects of His character, which gave them insight into His will for them. Throughout the Word, God revealed Himself through His covenant names, which describe His multifaceted character. The first time God revealed a covenant name to Israel was after He brought them out of Egypt. When God delivered them on the night of Passover there was not one sick or feeble person among them (Psalm 105:37). It was when the people were led by Moses to the bitter waters of Marah that God revealed His name to them as **Jehovah Rapha**, meaning "I am the Lord who heals you."

HEALING IN THE OLD COVENANT

Exodus 15:26 ... *"If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you."*

Clearly, God revealed His will concerning healing in the Old Testament by giving His name Jehovah Rapha and by the fact that He healed many people. Since healing occurred in the Old Testament and we now have a better covenant (Hebrews 8:6-7), then surely healing is for us today.

HEALING IS IN THE ATONEMENT

The atonement is the work of Christ on the cross, which restored man to God. Isaiah prophesied regarding the atonement several hundred years before Jesus physically walked upon this earth. He declared what was to be accomplished and provided through the sacrifice of Jesus, including healing. We see this fulfilled in the gospels when Jesus healed all who came to Him for healing.

Isaiah 53:4-5 *Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.*

Matthew 8:16-17 *When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses."*

The word "griefs" in Hebrew means "malady, anxiety, calamity, disease, grief, sickness." The word translated "sorrows" means "anguish, affliction, grief, pain or sorrow." It becomes clear that in addition to bearing our griefs and sorrows, Jesus literally carried our sicknesses, afflictions and pains. Jesus was not only wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and chastised for our peace, but **by His stripes we are healed**. Christ bore our sicknesses as well as our sins.

The atonement of Jesus provided for freedom from iniquity and sin, but it also provided for our peace and our physical and emotional healing. Isaiah 53:10 is an interesting verse, which states, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief." This means that Jesus literally bore our sickness, so that we might receive healing.

The provisions of the atonement are made much clearer in the New Testament because it places healing and salvation together in the same act.

1 Peter 2:24 *Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-by whose stripes you were healed.*

Further understanding of the word “saved” and “salvation” will be of help to us. The Greek word “sozo” means “to save, deliver, protect, heal, preserve, to make whole.” The Greek word for salvation is “soteria”, which means, “to rescue, make safe, deliver, make whole, keep in health.” Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words states that salvation includes deliverance from the bondage of sin and preservation or divine protection in the material or temporal (healing included) along with the eternal.

What then is God’s will concerning healing? God has provided in salvation healing for those who will believe and receive. This covers every aspect of our being and provided for the meeting of every need. Jesus bore our sin so that we should never have to bear it again. He also bore our sickness and pain so that we should not have to bear them either.

When we speak of laying on of hands, we naturally think of the ministry of Jesus who healed all who came to Him, most by the laying on of hands.

JESUS’ MINISTRY OF HEALING

Luke 4:40 *Now when the sun was setting, all those who had anyone sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.*

Healing was one of the main thrusts of Jesus’ ministry. There is no evidence that Jesus ever refused to heal anyone who desired to be healed. The Bible gives us numerous verses showing that Jesus healed all who were in large crowds (Luke 4:40, 6:19, 9:11). He knew people’s need for healing and His heart of compassion responded to them.

Jesus fully submitted to the Father in all He did. He said, “*He who has seen Me has seen the Father....*” (John 14:9). Whenever we need to know the Father’s will concerning anything, we can find it in His exact representation-Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:3). The fact that He healed all who came to Him reveals the Father’s will concerning healing. The scope and purpose of Jesus’ ministry is expressed distinctly in the following Scriptures:

Luke 4:18-19 *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

1 John 3:8 *...For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

Acts 10:38 *...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.*

Jesus was a demonstration of the gospel of the kingdom of God to the disciples. When He sent the seventy out two by two, He instructed them to “*heal the sick who are there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has*

come near to you” (Luke 10:9). Jesus did not separate healing from the kingdom of God because in heaven there is no sickness, disease or sin, only wholeness and health (Revelation 21:4). When Jesus declared His ministry in Luke 4:18, He was proclaiming *“Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”* (Matthew 6:10). His salvation includes wholeness, soundness and health in body, soul and spirit.

Acts 3:16 (NAS) *“And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.”*

Sickness is a result of the oppression and work of the devil, but Jesus came to destroy that work in all its manifestations. Healing therefore is the result of the great love that the Father has shown towards us. Since it was God’s will for Jesus to heal when He walked on the earth, then it is still His will now because *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever”* (Hebrews 13:8). Therefore, we can pray in faith for healing. If we are not healed, we should seek God concerning the cause of the sickness and what God may be trying to teach us through the situation. We should also ask God to do whatever would give Him the maximum glory.

THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH IN HEALING

When Jesus began His earthly ministry, He commissioned His twelve disciples to heal the sick (Matthew 10:1). A short time later the seventy were also sent out to preach the gospel and heal the sick (Luke 10:1-9). The very last command Jesus gave to the Church before His ascension was, *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”* (Mark 16:15). He promised that as they did this, signs and wonders would follow them (Mark 16:17-18). Included in these signs and wonders was the gift of healing through the laying on of hands.

The disciples preached the Word and God confirmed the Word with signs following. The book of Acts records many instances of miraculous healings. Peter’s shadow passing over people was even sufficient for some to receive healing (Acts 5:15). Paul gave out handkerchiefs, which resulted in special miracles such as healing and deliverance when they were touched (Acts 19:11-12). Healing is definitely a part of New Testament church life.

The Church has been called and commissioned by our Lord to preach the gospel and heal the sick. Individual believers are to lay hands on the sick and they will recover (Mark 16:18). James 5:14-15 instructs those in the church who are sick to *...call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up.*

POSSIBLE CAUSES OF SICKNESS

Sickness can come against the body through various means. We know God’s will concerning our health, but if we fail to fulfill His ways in our lives we can open doors for sickness through sin or ignorance. Sometimes

Sickness is the result of natural causes such as improper diet, lack of exercise, not enough rest, or improper dress. Man's pollution of the environment can also cause illness. Sometimes sickness is an attack of the enemy, which needs to be dealt with in warfare and resisted according to God's Word (Matthew 9:32-33, 12:22).

Doors to sickness can be opened through sin. Sin is disobeying God's Word. When we go against God's Word, we give place to the enemy in our lives. Sins of attitude (such as unforgiveness, resentment, criticism, judgmentalism, or a root of bitterness) fall into this category and are sometimes overlooked by the Christian. James 5:14-16 makes it clear that confessing sins and receiving forgiveness opens the way for healing through the prayer of faith.

It is of utmost importance for the one seeking healing to humbly submit himself to God asking Him to search the heart and reveal any possible open door. We must seek God for His direction concerning His means of healing that He should receive the glory due His name.

What about those who are not healed? Is something hindering their ability to receive healing? Since faith is essential for the receiving of healing, then unbelief is a major hindrance to healing. Simply stated, unbelief is deciding to believe the circumstances rather than God's Word (Numbers 13 and 14). It is to our advantage to seek to know what God has spoken and provided.

HINDRANCES TO HEALING

There are many hindrances to receiving faith for healing, but one of the most damaging is fear. This battle is fought in our thought life. Fiery darts (Ephesians 6:16) come in various way, but one of the primary ways is through thoughts placed in our mind. Satan may suggest or threaten sickness or pain, and this can produce fear. However, fear is not from God.

2 Timothy 1:7 *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

The believer's life should be lived according to the principles set forth in the Word of God, not according to the fiery onslaughts of the enemy. God exhorts us over and over throughout Scripture to "fear not." Fear prevents the child of God from operating in faith in God and the integrity of His Word. Romans 8:6 tells us that the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. This peace is an evidence of a sound mind (Philippians 4:6-7).

Another hindrance to healing is a lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). Some people have been taught that healing is not for today and not for them. They need their minds renewed according to the Word of God. A sound mind set on the Spirit and on the Word of God is stable, unwavering and determined to stand on the provision of the atonement of Jesus and His covenant with us. The renewing of the mind in the Word of God is what brings about this stable mind and abiding faith. When the mind is set on the Spirit, con-

stantly renewed and refreshed in the Word of God, then faith for healing arises to quench the fiery darts of the enemy (Ephesians 6:16).

The renewed mind will speak the Word of God rather than words of doubt and fear. When Jesus was tempted by the devil He always responded by saying, "*It is written...*" (Luke 4:1-13). To successfully combat the enemy in the battle of the mind, we must also speak forth the Word of God. However, when the mind is not renewed, there is no faith to combat the enemy. The mind becomes set on the flesh, the pain and the possible disastrous results, which enables the enemy to establish his strategy.

RECEIVING HEALING

When a believer is sick, he should first seek God for specific direction regarding the source of the sickness. Then he must be willing to do whatever God reveals, such as repenting of sin, being reconciled to someone else, renewing the mind in the Word or replacing doubt and unbelief with faith and trust in God. Healing is received when the believe accepts the provision of Jesus Christ by faith. Faith is absolute trust in God and in what He has spoken through His Word. Faith is looking to the integrity of the Word of God and believing that He will do what He said. It is choosing to believe God above, beyond and in spite of the circumstances. Faith is not denying the circumstances, but it is simply choosing to believe God has made a higher provision for His people.

The Word gives us a number of ways to receive healing, but faith is **always** the common denominator.

1. One provision for healing is through the laying on of hands by the elders of the church with the anointing of oil, the prayer of faith, and the forgiving of sin (James 5:14-18).
2. Healing can be received by faith in the Word through personal prayer as the believer seeks God's direction and provision (Matthew 7:7-11).
3. Healing can also be imparted to the believer as he worships, praises and communes with God. In His presence is protection and deliverance (Psalm 91, Psalm 32:7).
4. Healing can be imparted in special ways or through special God-led means such as was done through the ministry of Paul (Acts 19:11-12).
5. Those who partook of the lamb on the night of the passover in the land of Egypt received healing. Likewise, the believer can receive healing as he partakes of the Lord's Supper, because Jesus is our Passover Lamb (1Corinthians 11:23-34).
6. Healing can be received when believers gather together and pray in faith (Mark 16:18).
7. Healing can be received through spiritual warfare. As we know, Satan walks about seeking whom he may devour. Sickness weakens, debilitates and dif-

fuses the body's strength and full effectiveness. We are not to receive sickness from the enemy's hand, but we are to resist him (1 Peter 5:8-9).

8. Healing can be received through medical doctors (Matthew 9:12). We must keep in mind that God is the source of healing, but He can use the medical profession as an instrument endowed with healing knowledge and wisdom. The issue is not, "try God first, then turn to doctors." Rather, we are to seek God's guidance in each situation as to whether medical attention is His will.

All of God's provisions of healing become more accessible as the believer knows the Word of God (Proverbs 4:20-23). The Word becomes the very healing agent itself because...*faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God* (Romans 10:17). Therefore, it is worthwhile for the believer to become knowledgeable of God's provision for His children. We must study the Word and seek to learn how to walk and live in the fullness of that provision for the glory of God.

God's healing power can bring instantaneous recovery from sickness as a miracle (Mark 5:25-34). Healing can also come as a process over time (Mark 8:22-26, John 9:1-7). The Apostle Paul gave counsel on the proper attitude of a believer awaiting the full manifestation of promised healing:

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 *Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

RESPONSIVE READING

Question 1: What is God's will concerning healing?

- a. Healing was in God's plan for man from the beginning.

Exodus 15:26 ... *"If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you.*

- b. Healing is provided in the atonement of Jesus.

Isaiah 53:5 *But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.*

- c. The fact that Jesus healed reveals God's will to heal.

Luke 4:18-19 *"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the acceptable year of the LORD."*

John 14:9 *"...He who has seen Me has seen the Father..."*

- d. Healing is one of God's benefits.

Psalms 103:1-3 *Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases.*

Question 2: How should we respond to God's will concerning healing?

- a. We should lay hands on the sick expecting them to recover.

Mark 16:17-18 *"And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."*

- b. We should ask for prayer when we are sick.

James 5:14-15 *Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.*

HOMEWORK

1. What does the name “Jehovah Rapha” mean?
2. Complete the following: The _____ of Jesus provided for freedom from _____ and _____, but it also provided for our peace and our _____ and _____.
3. In what book, chapter and verse in the Bible is healing included in the great commission?
4. How is knowing the Word of God important in receiving healing?
5. Have you ever experienced the healing power of God in your life? Please share your experience.

THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

The gifts of the Spirit are the workings and manifestations of the Holy Spirit, which operate through the believer to extend Christ's work on earth. These gifts are released for the edifying, building up and strengthening of the body of Christ. Through these divine enablements the body of Christ functions with the same supernatural power and ability that Jesus had when He walked on earth. The gifts belong essentially to God and are a part of His overall character, but they are given to the Church by the Holy Spirit through whomever He wills (1 Corinthians 12:11). They are to be desired by the believer and can operate through a yielded and willing vessel. Through the baptism in the Holy Spirit we have become "God-gifted" or "God-graced" humans who are to proclaim that "the Kingdom has come" and Jesus is Lord and King, to the glory of the Father.

INTRODUCTION

Before we look at the individual gifts of the Holy Spirit, we need to understand the relationship between Jesus as He walked on earth and the Holy Spirit and His gifts. This will help us to grasp the function of the gifts in our own lives.

JESUS CHRIST AND THE GIFTS

Jesus Christ was totally God and totally human when He became a baby. The Son of God emptied Himself of His position and took on the form of a man (Philippians 2:5-8). He had both a divine nature and a human nature. He gave up none of His divine attributes, only laid aside His "equality with God," and took on human attributes. However, in order to be our example and to sympathize with us in all points, He chose to lay down His divine power and live by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is extremely important to understand, otherwise, we will not see the need for the gifts in our lives.

Jesus was baptized in the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:22), was ... *filled with the Holy Spirit...* (Luke 4:1) and ministered ... *in the power of the Spirit...* (Luke 4:14). Obviously, if Jesus received the fullness of the Spirit and ministered in the power of the Spirit, He did not use His own divine power. All that Jesus did was done in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. This is the way God desires us to function today. We must be like Jesus who ministered to all who came to Him by the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Although we generally think only of the Holy Spirit being associated with these gifts, we must understand that the complete Trinity is involved. The will of the Father is accomplished by the Holy Spirit through the believer that the lordship of Jesus might be demonstrated.

THE GIFTS IN OPERATION

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.*

THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

The word “gifts” is translated from the Greek word meaning “a divine gratuity, spiritual endowment, religious qualification, miraculous faculty.” From this we get our word “charismatic,” which means “grace gifted.” This word often refers to a person with certain natural qualities who is able to use them in an influential way. However, when the Bible speaks of “charisma,” it is speaking of grace gifts given to spread the gospel.

1 Corinthians 12 gives us instructions concerning the gifts of the Spirit. However, in verse 1 of 1 Corinthians 12, the word “gifts” is added to the original text. It actually reads, *Now concerning spirituals, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant.* These “spirituals” are manifestations of the living Spirit of God who dwells within the believer. Paul emphasizes that it is important for the body of Christ to become knowledgeable of these endowments of the Holy Spirit for the good of all. Additionally, he admonishes the believer that the gifts are to be eagerly sought after, not for self-glory, but for the edifying of the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:31 *But earnestly desire the best gifts...*

1 Corinthians 14:26, 40 *How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification...Let all things be done decently and in order.*

Many times one believer will be used to operate one gift more often than another gift, but God can lead any believer to operate any of the gifts as He wills and when He wills. This means any believer may be used at any time. However, the distributing of the gifts is generally proportioned throughout the body according to maturity, desire and personality.

It is evident as we study the giving and the operations of these gifts that God desires to manifest His personality and power not only to His children, the body of Christ, but also to a lost world. God has given supernatural gifts to aid in the expansion of the kingdom of God through the Church (Hebrews 2:3-4). It is, therefore, very important that Spirit-baptized believers ask to be used in these gifts. We must seek to understand and know how to operate in them scripturally for the exaltation of God through His amazing love and power. We must learn to function in the gifts of the Spirit in our daily lives as well as in church meetings.

1 Corinthians 12 gives instructions about the gifts of the Holy Spirit and about the body life of the assembly. Chapter 13 gives admonitions concerning the motives of the gifts within the body and Chapter 14 gives the working out of both within the body. *...Let all things be done for edification* (1 Corinthians 14:26). The proper and orderly function of the gifts within the body is for edification, exhortation, comfort and restoration.

God comes into our fellowship to manifest His supernatural life to each one of us in order to change us. He uses one to minister life to another spontaneously and we all rejoice together (1 Corinthians 12:25-26), giving

glory to Him. We really need each other in order for the body to be whole and complete, lacking nothing (Ephesians 4:16).

1 Corinthians 12:8-10 ...*for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.*

Before looking at the gifts individually, we must realize that they are all interrelated. We sometimes divide the nine gifts of the Spirit into three groups to aid understanding. The **revelation gifts** (word of wisdom, word of knowledge and discerning of spirits) impart knowledge. The **utterance or vocal gifts** (tongues, interpretation of tongues and prophecy) are spoken. The **power gifts** (faith, gifts of healing and working of miracles) are operated.

The Word of Wisdom

THE REVELATION GIFTS

Although the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge can work closely together, they are two very distinct manifestations. The word of wisdom is the supernatural ability to perceive a fragment of the wisdom of God when needed in a specific situation. Wisdom may be defined as the correct use of knowledge and facts. All wisdom is resident in God, and in order to extend His kingdom, He reveals a portion of that wisdom supernaturally through the believer. It is not the totality of God's wisdom which is revealed, only the portion which is needed at a specific time to meet a specific need.

Jesus operated in the word of wisdom many times. One example would be His answer to the Pharisees and Herodians who were attempting to trap Him with the question pertaining to paying taxes.

Matthew 22:21 ...*"Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."*

There is no new information or knowledge disclosed by His statement, only a word of wisdom which leaves them unable to dispute Him. The statement is sharp, to the point, cuts through all issues, and settles any question, argument or doubt. The word of wisdom, while offering no new knowledge, provides the needed answer, guidance and direction.

The Word of Knowledge

The word of knowledge is a gift of divine knowledge given for specific times of ministry. It is a portion of God's knowledge that was previously unknown to the individual. The new information given by the Holy Spirit through a believer is precisely the insight needed at that moment. It allows one to see a part of God's dealings or purpose and reveals how to go about the kingdom business. Generally, this gift brings wholeness and restora-

tion to the situation in which it is spoken. The word of knowledge very often is used in combination with the gift of healing, raising the level of faith and expectancy.

The word of knowledge in the ministry of Jesus is very pronounced. When the death of Lazarus was announced, Jesus spoke a word which contained insight that no one could have known.

John 11:4 *When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."*

The word of knowledge is given in circumstances where one needs a revelation of God's loving heart or a warning of impending danger. At other times it may disclose sin.

Acts 5:3 *But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?"*

The Discerning of Spirits

The discerning of spirits is the gift of the Holy Spirit which enables us to recognize the particular spirits behind different activities and manifestations. It is the defense gift in the body of Christ whereby the working of Satan can be distinguished from the operation of the Spirit of God. Satan can counterfeit God's word and works, but the spirit in them gives him away. He operates with *...all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception...* (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10). The Bible warns us that *"...false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders..."* (Mark 13:22). We need to be able to discern the source of miracles and not just accept them at face value.

Discerning of spirits also is given by the Holy Spirit to identify the spirit by which a man speaks or by which he is motivated. This is not to be confused with the human endowment of discernment nor with extrasensory perception. Discerning of spirits is a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit which reveals spiritual sources.

This gift is of tremendous importance in intercession and spiritual warfare, as well as in ministry. The spiritual bondage and manifestations of evil over people and geographical areas need to be brought to light in order to be dealt with. The Holy Spirit provides this discernment.

Luke 9:55 *But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of."*

Matthew 16:23 *But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

Acts 16:16, 18 *...a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us...But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.*

Speaking in Tongues

THE UTTERANCE OR SPEAKING GIFTS

Among the most controversial of the gifts is speaking in tongues. The gift of tongues is the manifestation of the Spirit through a language not previously known to the person who is speaking. The companion gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues are the only two gifts which are not found in operation in the Old Testament and which came specifically with the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

There are three major purposes for speaking in tongues: first, for personal edification (1 Corinthians 14:4); second, through interpretation, for edification of the Church (1 Corinthians 14:5); third, tongues are a sign for unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:22).

How does speaking in tongues build up and personally edify us? The first way in which tongues edified the believer is through direct communication with God (1 Corinthians 14:2). God has provided this way for us to commune with Him spirit to Spirit without the necessity of human understanding, although human understanding can be there as well (1 Corinthians 14:15). The key to understanding tongues is knowing that we speak to God. It is not meant to be used to speak to man, but it is a devotional tool through which man can speak to God. It is not gibberish or a mystery to God, for he understands all languages and tongues. It is a language of the Spirit. Most people have a real desire to be able to speak directly to God, to really know how to pray, and speaking in tongues is for that purpose.

On the Day of Pentecost the believers who received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of tongues did not preach the good news to those who were around them. It was Peter, who later stood up with the other apostles, who proclaimed the message which resulted in 3,000 converts. Those believers who received the baptism in the Holy Spirit were lifting up their voices unto God declaring the wondrous works of the Lord. The believers did not understand what they were saying, but those standing nearby from various regions heard and understood their native languages.

1 Corinthians 14:2, 4-5 *For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries...He who speaks in a tongue edified himself, but he who prophesies edified the church. I wish you all spoke with tongues....*

The second way that tongues edified us is that in the spirit we speak the "mysteries of God." While speaking in tongues, the Holy Spirit may give us new insights into the Scriptures. The value of speaking in tongues is not just in the language itself, but in the spiritual message that is expressed.

The third way tongues edifies us is through knowing that everything spoken in an unknown tongue has a purpose or significance (1 Corinthians 14:10). What is the point of a revelation if it does not reveal? What meaning is there to music if we cannot distinguish the tune? What is the point of conversation if we cannot understand one's language (1 Corinthians 14:6-11)? We need to understand that when we pray in an unknown tongue, we do not simply utter words into the air, but every word we speak is vital. If, while praying in tongues, we sense a real breakthrough in the spirit, then we are edified knowing that something was achieved.

The gift of tongues is for personal edification as well as for edification of the church. Just as speaking in tongues edified the individual believer, even so tongues when interpreted will edify all believers present. As the mysteries of God are revealed through interpretation to the church, all who hear will receive greater understanding.

The gift of tongues is also a sign for those who do not believe (1 Corinthians 14:22). It is through signs and wonders that the unbelieving will open themselves to the gospel. When they see the supernatural manifest before them, such as by knowing the translation as those who did on the Day of Pentecost, their hearts will be opened unto the Lord. Examples of this are found in Acts 2:1-11, 10:44-48 and 19:1-7.

The Interpretation of Tongues

Interpretation of tongues is the God-given ability to supernaturally interpret, in a known, understood language, a message spoken in tongues in a church meeting. Even though tongues and interpretation of tongues are separate gifts, they cannot properly function without each other. When the gift of tongues is manifest within a meeting, it should always be followed by the gift of the interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:27-28).

The gift of interpretation is not necessarily a word-for-word translation, but it provides the sense or meaning of the tongue spoken. This could explain why sometimes the message in tongues is much shorter than the interpretation or vice-versa, depending on who gives the interpretation. One way to illustrate this is with two people interpreting what they see in a picture. One could be brief and the other lengthy, but both interpretations would be valid.

Tongues are addressed to God, yet the interpretation is the heartbeat of that message to the Church. It can come forth as prophecy, a word of knowledge, a word of wisdom or another gift. It can be in the form of praise, prayer, or a response from the throne of God to His Church.

Prophecy

The gift of prophecy is the ability to speak forth a message from God to the church. Prophecy in the Old Testament had an emphasis on the foretelling of future events. Prophecy was based on what God knew, what God

decreed and what God foresaw. He simply chose to reveal the things He had foreseen or decreed to happen.

Clearly, the New Testament sees foretelling as an important function, but the use of the gift of prophecy is to build up or **edify**, to **exhort** and to **comfort** or console. The gift of prophecy must agree totally with the Bible or it is not of the Spirit of God. It is either a false spirit of prophecy or spoken from the mind of the person.

1 Corinthians 14:1, 3-5 *Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy...But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edified himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.*

Speaking in tongues is toward God: man to God (1 Corinthians 14:2). Speaking in tongues is our inner spirit speaking directly to God. Prophecy is just the opposite. It is from God to man. *But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men* (1 Corinthians 14:3).

1 Corinthians 14:29-33 *Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*

The congregation is free to flow in prophecy, but the words are to be judged according to accuracy, timing and method (1 Corinthians 14:29). There is never an excuse for a word of prophecy or any other verbal gift to come forth in an uncontrollable or compulsive manner. We are told in the Word that the prophet has control over his own spirit (1 Corinthians 14:32).

The Gift of Faith

THE POWER GIFTS

The gift of faith is the God-given ability to believe God for the impossible to be accomplished. This is not simply saving faith or faith to live by; it is a special kind of faith, that is, faith as a **gift**. Through the gift of faith, the Holy Spirit imparts a portion of God's own faith, directly and supernaturally, to the believer. This is faith on a divine level, as high above mere human faith as heaven is above the earth.

Many times this supernatural faith is expressed through a spoken word, as when Jesus cursed the fig tree and it withered (Mark 11: 20-23). Other times this faith is imparted in prayer for a situation, a nation or a person. An example of this is in James 5:16-18. Elijah, by his prayer of faith, stopped all rain for three and a half years and then caused rain to fall again.

Generally, the gift of faith works with the other power gifts: miracles and healing. In practice, the gift of faith often serves as a catalyst to bring the other two gifts into operation. For example, the gift of faith is necessary to raise the dead or to cast out evil spirits. We can help people who want to be delivered, whether we have the gift of faith or not, and we can deal with the devil in our own life on our own faith. However, we cannot just indiscriminately go around casting demons out of everyone we meet (Matthew 12:28). The Apostle Paul did not. In one instance, he waited many days until the Spirit gave the discernment of spirits, and then the gift of faith came to cast it out (Acts 16:18, Matthew 17:19-20).

The Gifts of Healing

God has given various means for His people to be healed and walk in the divine health provided through Jesus. These particular gifts are the only ones spoken of in the plural, indicating the multifaceted provision of God.

There are times after praying for healing for oneself, followed by body ministry prayer and laying on of hands by the elders, that a special gift from God is needed to receive healing. The Holy Spirit may then give someone the gift of faith to believe for healing and under the guidance of God they pray for you with the laying on of hands. The gift of healing is deposited to them by the Holy Spirit while they are praying, and with boldness and assurance they declare your healing. They have within them a knowing that you are healed and they speak that word to you. You sense also that God has healed you and rejoice with them. This is a gift of healing in operation.

Although the Holy Spirit distributes the gifts as He wills, He does use one person as an instrument for one type of healing while using another person in another way. For example, one believer may be used to pray for stomach problems. Another believer may be an instrument for healing of twisted limbs. Some are more comfortable praying for healing of the mind while others for the body. Outside the body of Christ, however, the gifts of healing are related to signs and wonders in demonstrating the Gospel of the kingdom of God. Together with the working of miracles they show forth the mighty power and love of God in meeting the needs of hurting mankind. One can describe the whole ministry of healing by the general expression “...healing all who are oppressed by the devil...” (Acts 10:38).

Acts 3:6-8 *Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you; In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and anklebones received strength. So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them-walking, leaping, and praising God.*

Working of Miracles

The gift of the working of miracles is the ability to perform works by the power of God that would otherwise be impossible. While sudden healing may be considered a miracle, the working of miracles is not limited to

healing (Matthew 14:25-33). While the gifts of healing are restorative, the working of miracles is more creative (Mark 6:41-44, 8:6-9, John 2:7-11).

God's kingdom on earth usually operates within the limitations of natural laws set by God Himself. It is only when they are standing as obstacles to the immediate will of God being done that miracle power is necessary to overrule the problem.

God has provided the gifts of the Spirit so that we will be effective ministers of the gospel. We are all called and commissioned to minister in the name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. Our part is to desire the gifts, pray to be used, and be available to God. As we do, we will flow in the gifts and move in supernatural power.

CONCLUSION

RESPONSIVE READING

Question 1: Who are the gifts of the Spirit for?

The gifts of the Spirit are for all believers.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to **each one** for the profit of all; for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to **each one** individually as He wills.*

1 Corinthians 14:26 *How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, **each of you** has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.*

Question 2: Should a believer desire to be used in the gifts of the Spirit?

Yes, the Bible teaches us to desire God's gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:31 *But earnestly desire the best gifts....*

Question 3: What are the purposes of the gift of prophecy?

Prophecy serves to edify, exhort and comfort.

1 Corinthians 14:3 *But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.*

Question 4: When people operate in the gifts of the Spirit, should they become "out of control"?

No, the Bible teaches that our spirits are subject to us.

1 Corinthians 14:32 *And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.*

The Bible also teaches us to do all things decently and in order.

1 Corinthians 14:40 *Let all things be done decently and in order.*

HOMEWORK

1. What does the word “charisma” mean?
2. What are the three different groups of the gifts of the Spirit?
3. What are the nine gifts of the Spirit? Briefly define these gifts according to this lesson’s definitions.
4. Has God used you personally in any of the gifts of the Spirit? If so, when and how? (Answer on back).

INTRODUCTION

There is much teaching today which helps Christians discover who they are in Christ and what God has called them to. Many people are trying to discover why they respond the way they do. There is a genuine hunger in everyone to know their purpose and place in the body of Christ. If a person does not know who he is or what God wants him to do, he misses an important part of the plan of God and lives an unfulfilled life.

Fortunately, the Bible does not leave these important questions unanswered, but provides specific answers. God did not leave us in the dark concerning our purpose in life or concerning the way He gifted us to minister.

Romans 12:4-8 *For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

This passage of scripture reveals some important truths concerning the body of Christ. It reveals that we are not all the same, but we each have an important function within the body. God has gifted each member with what they need to be able to minister effectively. These particular gifts are known as motivational gifts, because it is these gifts that motivate us to function in our calling.

There are three major categories of gifts in the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 12:4-7). Before we go into the motivational gifts, we need to see how all are distinguished. For our purposes, we will divide the gifts into the three categories of ministry gifts, motivational gifts, and manifestation gifts.

THE CATEGORIES OF GIFTS

Ministry Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:5 *There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.*

Ministry gifts provide opportunities for recognized Christian service through the church. These ministry gifts are confirmed by church leaders. Ministry gifts include pastors, teachers, church workers, assistants and administrators (1 Corinthians 12:28).

Church leaders ordained Timothy by the laying on of hands and sent him out to assist Paul. His service to Paul as a ministry gift. Twice, Paul reminded Timothy about the ministry gift which he had been given:

1 Timothy 4:14 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*

THE MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS

2 Timothy 1:6 *Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

Motivational Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:6 *And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.*

“Diversities of activities” is translated from the Greek word “energema.” Motivational gifts are the unique “energizings” of the Holy Spirit within a believer which give that believer the desire and the power to concentrate on a particular aspect of spiritual concern. They are given by the Holy Spirit in order to carry out the ministry/

Every Christian has one of the seven motivational gifts listed in Romans 12:6-8. Every Christian then views other Christians and circumstances through his or her motivational gift. Christians with the gift of leading look at things through the eyes of an administrator. Christians with the gift of teaching look at things through the eyes of a teacher. The same is true for those with the gift of prophecy, serving, exhortation, giving, and mercy.

Manifestation Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:7 *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.*

Manifestation gifts are supernatural results of the Holy Spirit’s work in our lives and in the lives of those to whom we minister.

As we develop and use our motivational gift through our given ministry, God causes supernatural results to occur. The Holy Spirit may give one person to whom we minister the gift of wisdom; another may receive the gift of discerning of spirits, and still another may be given the manifestation gift of faith (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS

1 Peter 4:10-11 (Amplified) places motivational gifts into two broad categories—speaking and serving. Peter writes, “*As each of you has received a gift (a particular spiritual talent, a gracious divine endowment), employ it for one another as [befits] good trustees of God’s many-sided grace-faithful stewards of the extremely diverse [powers and gifts granted to Christians by] unmerited favor. Whoever **speaks**, [let him do it as one who utters] oracles of God; whoever **renders service**, [let him do it] as with the strength which God furnishes abundantly; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, the Messiah...*”

Notice the following items:

1. Every believer has received a gift.
2. The gift is said to be singular, not plural

3. Some are **speaking** gifts. These include prophecy, teaching and exhortation. These might be termed the more “public” gifts.
4. Some are **servicing** gifts. These include serving, giving, ruling and showing mercy. These might be termed the more “private” gifts.
5. All gifts are to glorify God.
6. All gifts are to be used for others.
7. All gifts are to be done by the power God supplies.

Motivation is the thing that “moves” us. Motivations are the real factors behind our decisions and actions. They explain why we do things the way we do. Therefore, when a person knows his motivational gift, he can better understand himself.

**WHAT IS A
MOTIVATIONAL
GIFT?**

Having a primary motivational gift does not limit us from doing many things for the Lord, for we are actually commanded to do all seven of the things listed under the motivational gifts. However, most of us do one thing best. We are personally the most fulfilled and the most fruitful with others when we know our area and concentrate on it. This is the point Paul is making in Romans 12:3-8.

Note the following:

1. We are told to think clearly about our limitations, and emphasis is placed on our individuality (vs. 3-5).
2. We are to concentrate on one particular gift (vs. 6-8). “It is a wise man who stays within the sphere of service for which God has fitted him and does not invade some other field of service for which he is not fitted” (Wuest).

In the following section you will look at the strengths and the weaknesses of these individual gifts mentioned in Romans 12 and then for homework answer questions relating to the way you function. Please read this section with a teachable attitude and a desire to learn.

The Gift of Prophecy

**MOTIVATIONAL
GIFTS DESCRIBED**

The gift of prophecy is the ability to draw from the heart of God and to sense spiritual things. It is the motivation to reveal unrighteous actions by the presentation of scriptural truth.

Evidences of the gift of prophecy:

- a. The ability to discern the character and motivation of people.
- b. The willingness to experience brokenness and prompt it in others.
- c. The capacity to verify and hate evil.

- d. A dependence on scriptural truth to validate authority.
- e. A need for outward evidences to confirm effectiveness of ministry.
- f. A directness and persuasiveness in speaking.
- g. An inward weeping, a personal identification with sins-feels for sinner and God.
- h. An eagerness to have others point out their spiritual blind spots-does not want to have problems with sin.

Potential problems:

- a. Honesty may be interpreted as harshness.
- b. Interest in groups may be seen as disinterest in individuals.
- c. Efforts to gain results may be seen as using gimmicks or manipulation.
- d. Focus on right and wrong may be judged as intolerance of the partially good-can't see the little good or the right for the wrong.
- e. Public boldness and strict standards may hinder development of intimate personal relationships.
- f. Emphasis on decisions may be criticized as neglecting Christian growth or follow-up.
- g. Strong desire to convey truth may be interpreted as little interest in listening to another's point of view-most easily misunderstood by mercy motivation.

The Gift of Serving

The gift of serving is the motivation to demonstrate love by detecting and meeting practical needs; the ability to endure personal discomfort while meeting these needs.

Evidences of the gift of serving:

- a. a. The ability to recall specific like and dislikes of people.
- b. b. Alertness to detect and meet personal needs.
- c. c. The ability to meet needs as quickly as possible; the physical stamina to disregard weariness in meeting needs when others have dropped out.
- d. d. The willingness to use personal funds in order to avoid delay in serving.
- e. e. The desire to complete a job with evidence of extra service-goes the extra mile.
- f. f. Ability to sense sincere and insincere appreciation of service.
- g. g. Involvement in various projects; reluctance to say "no" to any project.
- h. h. Enjoys short-range goals, but is frustrated with long-range goals.
- i. i. Frustration when time-limits are attached to job-likes to do job properly and well.

Potential problems:

- a. Quickness to meet needs may be seen as pushiness; really wants to get the job done.
- b. Desire to avoid red tape may result in excluding others from the job, or denying others the change to say "yes" or "no" in helping job get done

- c. Disregard for personal needs may result in missing out on own family's needs; family things "you do it for everyone else-why not me?"
- d. Eagerness to serve may prompt suspicion of self-advancement motives.
- e. Reacts to others who don't detect personal needs; tendency to get angry with people who don't seem to be serving.
- f. Insistence on serving may seem to be a rejection of being served-doing the whole thing yourself without wanting any help from anyone.
- g. Desire to have sincere appreciation may result in being hurt; if overlooked, tends to go off somewhere else; a real need to have verbal appreciation for ministry.
- h. Quickness in meeting physical needs may interfere with meeting spiritual needs of others; God may be teaching someone a lesson by their need-most easily misunderstood by administrator.
- i. Meeting practical needs may be judged as disregard for spiritual things.
- j. Stamina may be interpreted as impatience with others helping-likely to be a driver.
- k. Success with short-range projects and goals may result in being put in long-range goal situations that frustrate gift and service; promotion is not always good for a server.
- l. Inability to say "no" to a need may result in server being side-tracked into unnecessary jobs.

The Gift of Teaching

The gift of teaching is the motivation to search out, validate and clarify truth; to engage in research and detailed study in order to validate truth and present it to others.

Evidences of the gift of teaching:

- a. The belief that the teaching gift is foundational to other gifts.
- b. An emphasis on the accuracy of words; right definition, pronunciation, derivation.
- c. A testing of knowledge of those that also teach-asking questions to check them out.
- d. A delight in research; desire to accumulate facts and knowledge.
- e. Desire to validate new information by established systems of truth.
- f. Presents truth in a systematic and orderly sequence.
- g. An avoidance of illustrations from non-biblical sources.
- h. A resistance of scriptural verses and illustrations given out of context.
- i. A great joy in researching, organizing and presenting truth.

Potential problems:

- a. Emphasis on accuracy of scriptural interpretation may lead to neglect of practical application; may be misinterpreted as no concern for changing the lives of hearers.
- b. Persons may be tagged as too dependant on books or other ministries; may not give adequate place to the revelation of the Holy Spirit.

- c. Using knowledge to test others may be interpreted as pride.
- d. Concern to impart details appear unnecessary to those listening, thus boring; a need to develop discrimination concerning what is really useful to people.
- e. The need to be objective in handling facts may appear to the audience as a lack of warmth and feeling in your presentation.
- f. Concern for full facts may result in such objective presentation that people don't feel you've said anything (people are moved by strong emphasis on one side of facts).
- g. Being more concerned about research than the response of the students.
- h. Concern for details may result in not communicating basic principles-most easily misunderstood by exhorter or server.

The Gift of Exhortation

The gift of exhortation is the motivation to stimulate the faith of others; to urge others to pursue a course of conduct; to encourage spiritual growth in others; to stir others to action.

Evidences of the gift of exhortation:

- a. a. A desire to prescribe specific steps of action to achieve a goal.
- b. b. Ability to see how tribulation can produce new levels of maturity.
- c. c. A dependence on visual acceptance when speaking to individuals and groups; must have eye contact or feels that no one is listening.
- d. d. A discovery of insights from human experience which can be validated or amplified from Scripture; life-illustrations very meaningful and precious to them.
- e. e. Enjoys ministering to those eager to follow steps of action.
- f. f. A grief when teaching is not accompanied by practical steps of action; if people don't follow instruction, they feel their counsel is wasted.
- g. g. A delight in personal conferences that result in new insights and change.
- h. h. In counseling, they prefer one-to-one situations to group situations.
- i. i. A tendency to avoid systems of thought that lack practical application.

Potential problems:

- a. a. Emphasis on steps of action may appear to over-simplify the problem.
- b. b. Urgency in giving practical steps of action may appear as overconfidence in them.
- c. c. The desire to win non-Christians through being a living example may appear to other as a lack of interest in personal evangelism.
- d. d. Use of scripture for practical application may appear to others as taken out of context.
- e. e. Emphasizing steps of action may seem to disregard the feelings of others.
- f. f. An exhorter raises anticipation rather than fulfilling it; he visualizes and holds forth what can be done rather than what is done; he may be accused of being visionary-most easily misunderstood by teacher.

The Gift of Giving

The gift of giving is the motivation to be a spirit-led steward of God's resources.

Evidences of the gift of giving:

- a. Ability to make wise investments and purchases.
- b. Desire to give quietly to effective projects and ministries while avoiding pressure of publicity; doesn't like or respond to public high-pressure challenges to give.
- c. Attempts to use his giving to motivate others to give ("you raise half, I'll raise the rest").
- d. Alertness to valid needs which he thinks others might overlook.
- e. An enjoyment in meeting needs without being pressured.
- f. A joy when his gift is acknowledged to be an answer to specific prayer.
- g. A dependency on spouse's counsel to confirm the amount to give (for example: "I thought \$10." "So did I." "OK, that's what we'll give.>").
- h. A concern that a gift be of high quality; that it costs something to give it.
- i. A desire to feel part of the work or ministry to which he gives.
- j. Ability to be frugal and save.

Potential problems:

- a. The need to deal with large sums of money may appear to be a focus on temporal values.
- b. Desire to increase the effectiveness of a ministry by giving may appear to be an attempt to control others.
- c. A lack of response to pressure appeals may also appear as a lack of generosity; the giver likes to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in his giving.
- d. Personal frugality by which he lives may appear as selfishness to friends and relatives whose desires are unmet.
- e. Ability to detect sincerity in appeals may seem to be an unconcern to other works or ministries, and a favoritism for only a few-most easily misunderstood by prophet, administrator or exhorter.

The Gift of Administration

The gift of administration is the motivation to coordinate the activities of others in order to achieve common goals; to preside over, lead; to distinguish major objectives and to help others visualize and accomplish them.

Evidences of the gift of administration:

- a. Ability to see the over-all picture and clarify long-range goals; has a broader frame of reference than others.
- b. Doesn't like to explain why things should be done.
- c. Likes to organize that for which he is responsible; wants to write things down, and get them done.
- d. Desires to complete tasks as quickly as possible.

1. Awareness of resources available and needed to complete a task.
2. An ability to know what can or cannot be delegated to others.
3. Won't be pushy; tendency to stand on sidelines until those in charge turn it over to him.
4. Tendency to assume responsibility if no structured leadership exists.
5. Willingness to endure reaction from workers in order to accomplish ultimate task; ability to put up with complaints and murmuring.
6. A sense of fulfillment in seeing all the pieces coming together, and enjoying the final, finished product or the completed task.
7. A desire for a new challenge when previous project is completed.

Potential problems:

- a. Ability to delegate responsibility may appear as avoiding work.
- b. Willingness to endure reaction may appear as callousness or unconcern.
- c. Neglect in explaining why task must be done may prompt workers to feel they are being misused-don't like ABC explanations; they love people to "just do it".
- d. Viewing of people as resources may appear as if projects are more important to him than people involved in the projects; tendency to use people must be watched.
- e. Desire to complete tasks swiftly may appear that projects are more important than the schedule or priorities of the workers involved, or as insensitivity to people.
- f. May appear as a dictator; must guard against being pushy with workers.
- g. May overlook character faults in those useful to accomplishing goals; must beware of temptation to use people with talent and not meet their spiritual needs or deal with their major character faults.
- h. Sometimes, when a wife has the gift of administration and the husband another gift, her gift may be interpreted as lack of submission. However, it is possible to administrate and still be under authority. Most easily misunderstood by server.

The Gift of Mercy

The gift of mercy is the motivation to identify with and comfort those who are in need; to feel empathy with others; to mentally and emotionally relate to their needs and give them aid.

Evidences of the gift of mercy:

- b. The ability to sense or feel an atmosphere of joy and distress in an individual or group; mental and emotional empathy.
- c. An attraction to, and understanding of, people in distress.
- d. A desire to remove hurts and bring healing to others.
- e. A greater concern for mental distress than physical distress.
- f. An avoidance of firmness, unless you see how it will benefit someone.
- g. A sensitivity to words and actions that would hurt other people.
- h. An ability to discern sincere motives in other people.

- i. Enjoyment and unity with those sensitive to the needs of others.
- j. Closing of spirit to those who are insincere or insensitive.

Potential problems:

- a. Avoidance of firmness may appear to be weakness (a husband with the gift of mercy may appear to his wife to be wishy-washy).
- b. Sensitivity to the spirit and feelings of others may cause some to feel he is guided by sentiment and emotion, not by facts and logic.
- c. Understanding those in distress may be misinterpreted by the opposite sex; empathy can create a temptation to sexual involvement.
- d. Sensitivity to others' feelings may appear to others as the taking up of others' offenses or the supporting of their problem.
- e. Temptation toward resentment for those who don't have this gift.
- f. May have a lack of firmness when needed, and a failure to really bring about change-most easily misunderstood by prophet.

It is exciting to know that God has plans and gifts for every believer. Discovering our motivational gifts is not an end in itself; it is only part of the process of fulfilling God's purpose in our lives. We pray that this lesson, along with its homework, will help you discover and accomplish God's plan for your life.

CONCLUSION

RESPONSIVE READING

Question 1: What are the three major categories of gifts mentioned in the Bible?

The three major categories of gifts are:

- a. Ministry gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:4-5 *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.*

- b. Motivational gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:6 *And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.*

- c. Manifestation gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:7 *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.*

Question 2: What are the motivational gifts?

Motivational gifts are gifts that motivate us to function in God's calling for our lives.

Romans 12:4-8 *For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

Question 3: Does every believer have a motivational gift?

Yes, every believer has received a gift through which they can glorify God and minister to others.

1 Peter 4:10-11 *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

HOMework DISCOVERING YOUR MOTIVATIONAL GIFT

NOTE: In each grouping of seven statements, circle the statement that **best** describes your attitude. Place a **check** by an additional statement in each grouping that next best describes your attitude.

I am motivated to:

1. 1. Reveal unrighteous motives or actions by presenting THE WORD, God's truth.
 2. 2. Demonstrate love by seeing other's needs are met as quickly as possible.
 3. 3. Search out, clarify and validate truth.
 4. 4. Search for ways to simulate faith in others.
 5. 5. Entrust personal assets to others for the furtherance of the ministry.
 6. 6. Coordinate the activities of others for the achievement of common goals.
 7. 7. Identify with and comfort those in distress.
-
1. 1. Be persuasive in speech.
 2. 2. Detect personal needs.
 3. 3. Engage in research and detailed study to validate truth.
 4. 4. Urge others to pursue a course of action or conduct.
 5. 5. Organize personal business in order to gain assets.
 6. 6. Preside, lead, stand before others.
 7. 7. Identify with those who are unfortunate and miserable.
-
1. 1. Bring to light things previously concealed.
 2. 2. Overlook personal discomforts to meet the needs of others.
 3. 3. Dig out little known facts and chronicle them.
 4. 4. See both sides of an issue with equal zeal.
 5. 5. Make quick decisions regarding the immediate needs of others.
 6. 6. Distinguish objectives and visualize long-range goals.
 7. 7. Emphasize mental and emotional relationships in helping those in need.
-
1. 1. Reveal the secrets of men's hearts causing them to fall down and worship God.
 2. 2. Have a genuine affection for other people.
 3. 3. Accumulate knowledge of man and index it for further study or presentation.
 4. 4. Enjoy personal counseling to encourage spiritual growth.
 5. 5. Give freely to other Christians.
 6. 6. Take over if no leadership exists.
 7. 7. Avoid confrontation unless a positive resolution is found.
-
1. 1. Possess a high regard for my reputation; a smudge on my reputation is a mark against righteousness.
 2. 2. Demonstrate true brotherly love.
 3. 3. Be diligent in the details of my work.
 4. 4. Use personal experiences to gain insights which can be validated and amplified in the scriptures.
 5. 5. Give gifts of high quality and lasting endurance.
 6. 6. Need loyalty and confidence from those under me or those whom I serve.
 7. 7. Instantly sense an atmosphere of joy or distress in individuals or groups.
-
1. 1. Only use scripture to support and undergird my authority.
 2. 2. Let others have the credit for my work.
 3. 3. Place heavy emphasis on accuracy.
 4. 4. Grieve when practical steps to a solution are not given.
 5. 5. Emphasize preciseness of figures.
 6. 6. Know what and what not to delegate to others.
 7. 7. Possess sensitivity to words and actions which will hurt other

THE MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS

1. 1. See outward evidence of change to show “real” inward conviction.
2. 2. Be unable to say “no” to people.
3. 3. Feel my gift is the basis for all other gifts.
4. 4. Want a visible acceptance from individuals or groups with whom I am working.
5. 5. Give at God’s promptings and not at appeals of man.
6. 6. Be paralyzed when position is usurped or when those in charge do not turn over responsibility to me.
7. 7. Measure acceptance by physical closeness and quality time together.

NOTE: In the next series of seven statements please **circle** the statement that best describes your negative attitude. Place a **check mark** by a statement in each of the series of seven that next best describes your negative attitude.

I tend to:

1. 1. Be proud of ability to speak with persuasiveness.
2. 2. Be proud of my good deeds.
3. 3. Boast of the knowledge I have accumulated.
4. 4. Boast of personal results.
5. 5. Be proud of my giving.
6. 6. Be proud of my power.
7. 7. Take pride in my ability to empathize.

1. 1. Be more dependent on ability to speak than on the power of the Holy Spirit to convict.
2. 2. Be pushy or premature in meeting needs of others before they even realize their need.
3. 3. Concentrate on details of information rather than the communication of basic life principles.
4. 4. Become discouraged with lack of progress.
5. 5. Measure spiritual success by material assets.
6. 6. Use people to meet my goals rather than meeting their personal needs.
7. 7. Resent others who are not sensitive to personal needs of others.

1. 1. See people as groups rather than individuals with personal needs.
2. 2. Become bitter when deeds are not recognized or appreciated.
3. 3. Be more concerned about the research than the response of the students.
4. 4. Motivate others for selfish gain.
5. 5. Overlook long-range goals in meeting immediate needs.
6. 6. Overlook major character flaws in those who are useful to reaching my goals.
7. 7. Fail to be firm when necessary.

1. 1. Judge someone rather than working to reconcile.
2. 2. Overemphasize practical needs to the neglect of the basic spiritual needs or what God may be doing in the life of the individual.
3. 3. Put down unlearned or poorly educated people.
4. 4. Spend too much time with those who are only seeking temporary relief.
5. 5. Be frugal with family and generous with others which causes my family to resent my giving.
6. 6. Show closeness and favor to those who are more loyal or those who are harder workers.
7. 7. Be guided by emotions rather than logic.

1. 1. Become distant and withdrawn from those who have failed and who encouraged others to do so also.
2. 2. Take on more than I can handle and thus eliminate others from ministry opportunities.
3. 3. Find a flaw in research which causes me to debunk the complete presentation.
4. 4. Generate enthusiasm which can prematurely heighten the expectations of others.
5. 5. Control people by the use of money.
6. 6. Become a king of leisure while workers carry the entire load of the projects.
7. 7. Be clouded by emotions, often sympathizing with those who are directly violating God’s laws.

THE MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS

1. 1. Focus on the negative in other people with an inability to see the positive without effort.
2. 2. Place heavy emphasis on ministry to the complete neglect of home and family.
3. 3. Abuse listeners with long lists of details and facts not necessary to the presentation.
4. 4. Create a personal dependency on myself rather than on God.
5. 5. Look down on those who cannot give as much or as often.
6. 6. View the long-range goal from my perspective; valid suggestions and complaints are often overlooked.
7. 7. Desire personal contact; often promoting affections from the opposite sex.

1. 1. Be tactless in expressing opinions to others.
2. 2. Suffer the “Epaphroditus Syndrome”-becoming sick from overwork in the ministry.
3. 3. Emphasize the accumulated knowledge of man opposed to the revealed knowledge of God.
4. 4. Trust visible results without discerning real change of heart.
5. 5. Be attracted to projects more than the daily lives of believers.
6. 6. View the whole goal in my mind which often causes improper explanation of what needs to be done.
7. 7. Emphasize immediate priorities, which may appear as disorganization.

NOTE: Please **circle** the one statement in each of the seven series that best describes how you are **misunderstood** by other people. Please place a **check mark** next to the statement which secondly best describes how you are **misunderstood** by others.

1. 1. Frankness may be viewed as harshness.
2. 2. Quickness in meeting needs may appear to be pushy.
3. 3. Use of knowledge in teaching others may appear to be pride of learning.
4. 4. Emphasis on steps of action may appear to oversimplify the problem.
5. 5. Need to deal with large sums of money may appear to be a focus on temporal values.
6. 6. Ability to delegate responsibility may appear as laziness in avoiding work.
7. 7. Avoidance of firmness may appear to be weakness and indecisiveness.

1. 1. Interest in groups often interpreted as disinterest in individuals.
2. 2. Eagerness in serving may prompt suspicion of self-advancement.
3. 3. Details shared from research may appear unnecessary to the listener.
4. 4. Urgency in giving steps of action may appear as having overconfidence.
5. 5. Desiring to increase the effectiveness of a ministry by my gift may appear as an attempt to control the work of a person.
6. 6. Willingness to endure reaction may appear as callousness.
7. 7. Sensitivity to the feelings of others may cause some to feel I am guided by emotions rather than logic.

1. 1. Effort to gain results viewed as using “gimmicks.”
2. 2. Insistence on serving may appear to be rejection of being served.
3. 3. Prolonged study may be viewed as dependence upon books rather than the Holy Spirit.
4. 4. Desire to win the lost through my example may appear to be a lack of interest in personal evangelism.
5. 5. Attempts to encourage others to give may appear as a lack of generosity and unnecessary pressure.
6. 6. Neglect in explaining why tasks must be done may prompt workers to feel they are being misused.
7. 7. Attraction to and understanding of those in distress may be misinterpreted by the opposite sex.

1. 1. Focus on right and wrong may be judged as intolerance of partial good.
2. 2. Meeting practical needs may be judged as lack of interest in spiritual matters.
3. 3. Insistence that my gift is fundamental to all others may appear to be pride and egotism.
4. 4. Use of scripture for practical applications may appear to take it out of context.
5. 5. Lack of response to pressure appeals may appear as a lack of generosity.
6. 6. Viewing people as resources may appear that projects are more important than people.
7. 7. Sensitivity to words and actions which causes hurts may appear to be taking up another’s offense.

1. 1. Public boldness and strict standards may be judged as self-centeredness and egotism.
2. 2. Inability to avoid other's needs may appear to be changing the original direction.
3. 3. Insistence upon scholarship may appear to be a criticism of other's teaching.
4. 4. Ability to see and identify with both sides of an issue may appear to be two-faced or double-minded.
5. 5. Insensitivity to non-direct appeals or hints may appear as indifference.
6. 6. Tending to direct in leadership vacuum may be interpreted to be taking over leadership.
7. 7. Expressing the need to please others may be considered manipulative.

1. 1. Dwelling on the faults and failures of others may be judged as a critical spirit.
2. 2. Often thought of as pushy in my perseverance to meet a particular need.
3. 3. Reaction to the uneducated and practical wisdom may appear to be self-righteousness.
4. 4. Confidence in steps of action that work may make family seem to be "just another project."
5. 5. Attempts to see their gifts wisely invested can cause others to feel they are being controlled.
6. 6. Enjoying loyalty of workers may appear to be favoritism.
7. 7. Emphasis on immediate priorities may appear as disorganization.

TALLYING THE RESULTS

LIST THE TOTAL NUMBER OF **CIRCLES** OF EACH NUMBER:

Circles of #1s _____ Circles of #4s _____
Circles of #2s _____ Circles of #5s _____
Circles of #3s _____ Circles of #6s _____
Circles of #7s _____

LIST THE TOTAL NUMBER OF **CHECKS** OF EACH NUMBER:

Checks of #1s _____ Checks of #4s _____
Checks of #2s _____ Checks of #5s _____
Checks of #3s _____ Checks of #6s _____
Checks of #7s _____

LIST THE TOTAL NUMBER OF BOTH:

Total Number of 1s _____ = prophecy
Total Number of 2s _____ = serving
Total Number of 3s _____ = teaching
Total Number of 4s _____ = exhorting
Total Number of 5s _____ = giving
Total Number of 6s _____ = administrative
Total Number of 7s _____ = mercy

The largest number of circles and checks will normally indicate what your motivational gift is. Do you see yourself as motivated in this area? Please explain.

INTRODUCTION

Thus far in our series on “The Laying on of Hands” we have seen that this foundational doctrine is very important to us as individuals. Through the laying on of hands believers may receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, healing and many other blessings. In this lesson we will see how the laying on of hands affects us as a body, the Church.

THE GIFTS OF JESUS

Ephesians 4:8, 11-15 *Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.”...And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head-Christ...*

From this passage we understand that when Jesus ascended to heaven, He gave gifts to men. The gifts which He gave were actually gifted believers who comprise what we call the “five-fold ministry.” There has been much teaching concerning the gifts of the Spirit, but very little emphasis has been placed on the gifts that Jesus gave to His Church. These five gifted ministries are the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher. We intend to examine each of these ministries and their relation to the laying on of hands. Also, we will look at the calling, preparation and ordination for ministry. First, let us see why Jesus gave these gifts to His Church.

Throughout history, God has used certain men to lead others. Many Old Testament leaders come to mind: Moses, Joshua, David, Nehemiah are but a few. God specifically chose and equipped these men to lead His people. Likewise, the New Testament tells of leaders like Peter, Paul and, of course, the greatest leader of men-Jesus Christ.

WHY THE FIVE-FOLD MINISTRIES WERE GIVEN

When Jesus was preparing His disciples for His departure, He told them that He would not leave them alone; rather, He promised to send the Holy Spirit to comfort and guide them (John 16:7-14). The Bible says that the anointing of the Holy Spirit will teach us all things and that we do not need anyone to teach us (1 John 2:27). Some well-intentioned believers have misconstrued this to mean that we should not listen to sermons, read books or receive any teaching from men. Others, such as the Abecedarians who lived during the Reformation, have gone so far as to refuse to learn to read and write. This is in direct contradiction to the many biblical commands to heed the instruction of God-appointed leadership (Acts 18:26, Colossians 3:16, 2 Timothy 2:24).

1 John 2:27 means that man may dispense information, but all true spiritual revelation requires the inspiration and illumination of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-16). The Lord must open our eyes for us to be able to understand the truth of His Word (Psalm 18:28, 119:18. Luke 24:45). Without the Holy Spirit, we would have no spiritual discernment. We could read the Bible 24 hours a day, but there would be no understanding until the Spirit of God opened our eyes. Likewise, no man can teach spiritual truth without the anointing of the Holy Spirit. However, we must not limit the Holy Spirit in the means He uses to teach us. He can teach us directly, through the Word, through nature, through other believers and even through donkeys if He so desires (Numbers 22:22-35).

We must be wary of anything that would cut us off from the body of Christ. The Church is not a place for “lone rangers.” Often, loners are people who have trouble submitting to authority. God, in His infinite wisdom, has purposed that there be leadership and spiritual authority in the Church. He could have purposed that we only dealt directly with Him and with no one else. However, He has chosen for us to come under the authority which he appoints. Certainly, we must hear from God directly and deal with Him as individuals, but we must also submit to the authorities He has established (1 Corinthians 16:16, Hebrews 13:17). It is only to the extent that we are under authority that we are able to exercise authority (Matthew 8:5-13).

The five-fold ministers are God-appointed authorities to who we must submit. Jesus gave these gifted ministers to the Church for specific reasons. We find these reasons in Ephesians 4:11-16:

1. To equip the saints to do the work of the ministry.
2. To edify the body of Christ.
3. To bring us into the unity of the faith.
4. To bring us into the knowledge of Jesus Christ.
5. To keep us from deception.
6. To bring us into the unity of the body.

First, the five-fold ministers were given to equip and perfect the saints. The idea of perfection in the New Testament is that of maturity and completion. God has promised to finish what He started in us (Philippians 1:6). One of the ways He does this is through these God-given ministers. They have the responsibility of watching over our souls and they will have to give account to God concerning this (Hebrews 13:17).

Each individual believer is gifted by God. The five-fold ministry equips believers by helping them discover, cultivate and release these gifts. This is done through teaching, prayer and the laying on of hands. God does not call every believer to do the exact same thing, but He calls men to specialize in certain areas (such as prophecy, evangelism or teaching). A minister is required to do only that work to which God called Him.

1 Corinthians 12:27-31 *Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.*

We are seeing that the traditional concept of a professional staff doing all the work of the ministry is not biblical. All believers are ministers called of God to show forth His light to a world in darkness (1 Peter 2:9). It is the duty of the five-fold ministers to equip us to do the work of the ministry.

The **second** purpose for the five-fold ministry is to edify the body of Christ. To edify means “to build up.” We are living stones that God desires to be built together into a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5). We are God’s building built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. This foundation is laid by the apostles and prophets of the five-fold ministry (1 Corinthians 3:9-11). The purpose of our edification is found in the following passage:

Ephesians 2:20-22 *Having been build on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.*

The five-fold ministry has a vital part in God’s eternal purpose of building a habitation for Himself which will show forth His glory forever. Hallelujah!

The **third** purpose of the five-fold ministry is to bring us into the unity of the faith. God wants no divisions in His Church (1 Corinthians 1:10, 12:25). True unity will not take place until the five-fold ministers fulfill their **fourth** purpose, which is to lead us to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. He is Truth (John 14:6) and we will not come into unity until we stop focusing on truths (doctrine) and begin focusing on **the Truth** (Jesus). When we let go of doctrines that do not really matter in eternity and look to Jesus, we will be built into a perfect man (Ephesians 4:13-16). God does not desire individuals only, but He desires that there be one man; one corporate body-the Church-fitly joined together with one head-Jesus (Ephesians 2:15-22).

The **fifth** reason that God gave the five-fold ministry was to keep the Church from deception. Spiritual immaturity causes believers to be “...carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4:14). We all know of unstable people who believe every new thing that comes along. They run around seeking something new to hear because “...they have itching ears...” and a lust to “...heap up for themselves teachers” (2 Timothy 4:3). In other words, they are looking for someone to teach them what they

want to hear. God desires for us to be stable with a sure foundation and He uses the five-fold ministers to mature and stabilize us.

The **sixth** purpose of the five-fold ministry is to lead us into the unity of the body. This is very similar to the unity of faith, however, the unity of the body will only come when every joint supplies its own part. In other words, God-given ministries should be instrumental in leading people to find their place in the body and begin functioning accordingly. There is one body with many members. If one member ceases to function, it hinders the whole body. The five-fold ministers motivate all members to serve so that we will have a unified, fully functioning body (1 Corinthians 12:20-27).

Now that we see God's purpose in giving the five-fold ministries, let us look at each one of the ministries separately.

APOSTLE

The word apostle means "one sent forth." An apostle is sent forth by God to minister with God-given authority. He is a pioneer who establishes church and lays foundational truth in people's lives (Ephesians 2:20). Apostles could be called "spiritual builders" (1 Corinthians 3:10). They have fatherly oversight of the body (1 Corinthians 4:15).

The ministry of apostle is the most neglected of the five-fold ministries in the Church today. There are many pastors, teachers and evangelists, a few prophets, but very few apostles. One reason for this is that apostles do not function freely within the structure of committees, elected leadership and denominational hierarchy. The ministry of the apostle is in need of restoration to the Church by the Holy Spirit.

Few people are familiar with the ministry of the apostle. In fact, most people think that the original twelve disciples are the only real apostles. These twelve, called "the apostles of the Lamb" (Revelation 21:14), were with Jesus during His earthly ministry and witnessed His resurrection. Although they hold a special place as the original apostles, the Bible mentions many other apostles including Matthias (Acts 1:26), Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:14), Titus (2 Corinthians 8:23), Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25), Silas and Timothy (1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2:6). Also Andronicus and Junia, listed in Romans 16:7, were possibly apostles. These verses show that there were apostles after the original twelve.

The first and foremost apostle is Jesus Christ (Hebrews 3:1). He was sent forth from heaven on a divine mission. Jesus chose the original apostles (Luke 6:12-16), trained them (Mark 3:14-15) and commissioned them (Matthew 28:19-20). The book of Acts shows how apostolic ministry functioned in the early church. As the apostles traveled, they saw a need for permanent leadership in the churches they established. So, they ordained men to be elders, pastors and overseers in each church (Acts 14:21-23, 20:17-28). This caused the expansion of the five-fold ministry, including apostles. The Bible does not teach that apostleship was to cease. Rather, the Word teaches that apostles are much needed in the body of Christ.

A prophet is one who speaks for God to man. He does not necessarily have to foretell the future, although that is a valid prophetic ministry. He does “forthtell” a word from God which brings revelation, direction or correction to the Church.

PROPHET

According to 1 Corinthians 14:3, prophecy is given to edify, exhort and comfort the Church. In other words, prophecy should build up, stir up and cheer up. Prophetic words that tear down the body and depress the people are not from God. Prophecy always serves to encourage and strengthen. Sometimes a hard message will come forth, such as a call to repentance, but it will always result in building, not destroying.

A good example of a New Testament prophet is Agabus (Acts 11:27-30). He prophesied that a great famine was coming throughout the world. He also foretold the imprisonment of the apostle Paul (Acts 21:10-14). Another New Testament prophet is John the Baptist (Luke 1:76). John was sent forth to speak as a prophet through the tender mercy of God (Luke 1:76-79). True prophecy will always be tempered with mercy.

The evangelist is a messenger who proclaims the good news. He brings the lost to salvation and equips believers to witness for Christ. Philip was a New Testament evangelist who preached the Word with signs following. He cast out demons and healed the sick. His preaching and the miracles which followed led to revival and great joy in Samaria (Acts 8:5-8).

EVANGELIST

In his second letter to Timothy, Paul sets forth the work of an evangelist. He is to preach the Word, be ready at all times, reprove, rebuke, exhort with patience, be watchful, and endure afflictions (2 Timothy 4:2-5).

The word pastor literally means “shepherd.” A pastor is the shepherd of a local church flock. He is responsible to teach, exhort, protect, correct, comfort, and discipline. He has authority to watch over the flock (Acts 20:28, Hebrews 13:17) and to be an example to the flock (1 Peter 5:2-3). As a good shepherd, the pastor leads the sheep to pasture and water. One of his main duties is to feed the flock (Jeremiah 3:15, 23:4). False shepherds feed themselves rather than their flocks (Ezekiel 34:1-6), but true shepherds are under Jesus, the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4) and they follow His example (Psalm 23).

PASTOR

A teacher is one who expounds and interprets the Word of God. He does not impart knowledge alone, but living truth which can be applied to the lives of people. Teachers build on the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets (1 Corinthians 3:10). All those who function in the five-fold ministry must be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2).

TEACHER

CALLING

One way of illustrating the five-fold ministry is through the five senses. The sense of sight corresponds to the ministry of the apostle. Apostles are visionaries who identify and raise up leaders to fulfill the vision. The sense of hearing is represented by prophets who must hear from God. The sense of smell relates to the pastoral gift of discernment. The sense of taste can be identified with the teacher who make partaking of God's truth pleasurable. The sense of touch relates to the ministry of evangelism because it involves the whole body.

Each of these gifted ministries has an important part within the body of Christ in regards to the laying on of hands. It is through the laying on of hands that many who became five-fold ministers had their gift imparted or recognized through those who were already five-fold ministers. We have seen how laying on of hands separates a person to the call of God. The laying on of hands will help the five-fold ministry continue as anointed leadership recognizes the calling of those God ordained for the ministry and separates them through the laying on of hands. Let us examine the calling, preparation and ordination of leadership.

God divinely calls those whom He has chosen for leadership. Out of His many disciples, Jesus chose only twelve to be apostles (Luke 6:13). At the beginning of the book of Romans, Paul said that he was also "...called to be an apostle" (Romans 1:1). This divine call is an absolute prerequisite for leadership. The five-fold ministry is not something that you just volunteer for. There are far too many who were not sent; they just went. These volunteers usually result in much more harm than good, both to the individual and the Church. An example of this can be seen in the life of Moses (Exodus 2). God had divinely saved him from death and was preparing him for leadership. However, Moses took matters into his own hands and ended up causing trouble for himself and all of Israel. God took 40 more years to fully prepare him for his call (Acts 7:22-30). Likewise, God desires us to be ready before we are called into leadership.

All believers are called to minister unto the Lord in prayer, worship and giving; to minister to the body in exhortation, comfort and love; and to minister to the world by witnessing of the saving grace of Jesus Christ. We all have enough to do without volunteering for leadership. When God truly calls us, we will have a definite "knowing" and so will the Church.

Acts 13:1-3 *Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and faster, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.*

When God calls someone to a work, He will reveal it to the church leadership. We do not have to continually ask to be sent out or try to work our way into a position. Where God guides, He provides! All we must do is obey Him, rest in Him and allow Him to open doors for leadership. In doing so, our gift will make room for us (Proverbs 18:16).

Those whom God divinely calls are also divinely equipped and prepared. God always prepares before He sends out and this takes time. Jesus called twelve men and then prepared them for the work of the ministry. Their only call was to follow Him (Matthew 4:19). A disciple is simply one who follows another's teaching. Many times the disciples just sat and listened to Jesus. Likewise, we must sit down before we can be sent out. We must learn before we can teach. We must be disciples before we can be apostles. We must follow before we can lead.

PREPARATION

Jesus prepared His disciples in three basic ways-by being with them, by being an example and by calling them to obedience. The disciples were called to "be with Him" (Mark 3:14) so that He might pour Himself into them. Can you imagine the education they received by living with Him for three years? They ate together, walked together, worked together and, by simply being together, the disciples were constantly being prepared.

The disciples were called to follow Jesus' example. The Lord did not just give a few commands to obey, but He lived His life for all to see. He is our supreme example (John 13:15). To learn to pray we must look to Jesus. To learn to witness we must look to Jesus. Not only is He our example; He also gives us the power to live as He did (Acts 1:8).

Lastly, the disciples were also called to obey Jesus. Obedience is a great teacher. In fact, without obedience it is impossible to learn from Jesus (John 7:17). The Lord continually prepares us as we continually obey Him.

One who is fully prepared for leadership will know God and himself. God often prepares us by revealing our weaknesses, as He did with Moses. We must learn to trust fully in Him, not in our own natural strengths. A leader will also have a thorough knowledge of God's Word. A list of qualifications for leadership is given in the following passages:

1 Timothy 3:1-7 *This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

Titus 1:7-9 *For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convict those who contradict.*

ORDINATION

When a person has been called and fully prepared by God, the Holy Spirit will lead the Church to ordain him into the ministry. He will have proved his faithfulness and ministry in his local church. The elders of the church will seek the Lord as to when to ordain him. They will not ordain a novice, or a new Christian (1 Timothy 5:22).

The Bible gives no technical terms to describe the way to be admitted to the ministry. Ordination involves appointing and “setting in” ministry by the laying on of hands and prayer. This publicly confirms God’s call and approves a ministry. The laying on of hands imparts the spiritual strength and gift to be a leader (1 Timothy 4:14, 2 Timothy 1:6).

OUR RESPONSE TO THE FIVE- FOLD MINISTRY

Now that we understand the five-fold ministry, what should our response be? First, we need to pray for these ministers (1 Timothy 2:1-2, Hebrews 13:18). Second, we must submit ourselves to their oversight (Hebrews 13:17). Submission is an attitude of yieldedness and love. Third, we must esteem and respect our leaders (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). Fourth, we should not gossip about leaders, but go directly to the source in the presence of witnesses to straighten gossip out (1 Timothy 5:19-20). We need to be loyal and faithful to the elders. Lastly, we must financially support the five-fold ministers (1 Corinthians 9:9-14). The laborer is worthy of his hire (1 Timothy 5:17-18).

The five-fold ministries were given by Jesus for the Church. We need every ministry that God has provided. One or two are not enough; we need all of the five-fold ministries. As God restores these ministries to the Church, we must recognize and correctly respond to them. God’s purposes will not be fulfilled outside of His divinely-appointed leadership.

RESPONSIVE READING

Question 1: What is the five-fold ministry?

The five-fold ministry is composed of gifted ministers given to the Church by Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.....*

Question 2: What are the purposes of the five-fold ministry?

The purposes of the five-fold ministry are to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry, to edify the body of Christ, to bring the body into unity, to teach about Jesus Christ and to keep from deception.

Ephesians 4:12-15 *...for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head-Christ...*

Question 3: Are all believers part of the five-fold ministry?

No, all believers are ministers, but not all are five-fold ministers.

1 Corinthians 12:27-31 *Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.*

Question 4: How should believers respond to the five-fold ministry?

a. Believers should pray for those in authority.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 *Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority....*

b. Believers should submit to those in authority.

Hebrews 13:17 *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account.*

c. Believers should respect and esteem those in authority.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 *And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.*

1. What is the definition of the five-fold ministry and its responsibility to the body of Christ?
2. God desires us to be stable with a _____ and He uses the _____ - _____ ministers to mature and stabilize us.
3. What is the most neglected office of the five-fold ministry in the Church today?
4. What three basic ways did Jesus prepare His disciples?
5. The laying on of hands will help the five-fold ministry continue as _____ recognizes the calling of those _____ for the ministry and separates them through the laying on of hands.
6. Have you ever had hands laid upon you for the impartation or recognition of a spiritual gift or calling? If so, what happened and how did it change your life?

Any significant study of the laying on of hands needs to include a section on presbytery. Even though it is a little known practice by most Christians today, those bodies of believers who practice the New Testament pattern of laying on of hands by the presbytery find it to be extremely rewarding. As the body of Christ attempts to walk in obedience to the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit, it is important to understand the truth concerning laying on of hands by the presbytery.

INTRODUCTION

The word presbytery comes from the Greek word “presbuterion” meaning “the body of elders, or order of elders.” It is translated “elders” in Luke 22:66 and Acts 22:5 and “presbytery” in 1 Timothy 4:14. All of these words indicate a plurality of eldership.

WHAT IS PRESBYTERY?

The Bible graphically reveals the procedure and purpose of the presbytery in the life of Timothy.

1 Timothy 4:14 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*

Paul had left Timothy at Ephesus to shepherd and teach the flock there. Before leaving him in such an important position, Paul wanted to be sure that he was adequately equipped to fulfill the ministry. It is evident from the Scripture that there was a particular time when the elders laid hands on Timothy. This could have occurred at the time of Timothy’s ordination when spiritual authority was also transmitted to him. Whatever the case, it is clear from this passage of Scripture that at least three things were accomplished at that time. First, there was the laying on of hands by the elders. Second, prophecy was uttered by one or more of the elders; and third, a gift was imparted to Timothy through the laying on of hands and prophecy.

We can establish a biblical definition of presbytery through our study of the Greek words for presbytery and the New Testament way that a presbytery operated. A presbytery is a group of two or more proven leaders anointed of God with prophetic gifts to confirm God’s will and impart spiritual gifts to certain individuals through the laying on of hands. This group should be called together by the elders whenever there is a need for individual prophetic guidance in the local body.

The time of presbytery is an event which should be treated with respect and a sense of expectation by the body. It is a time when God speaks to confirm ministry calls and to impart the gift necessary for the function of that ministry. In addition, there is a great encouragement and exhortation which strengthens the whole body. Ministry calls and gifts are confirmed to individuals, to the entire body and to the elders who are responsible for training and preparing these individuals. With this in mind, it is important for the entire local church as well as the candidates for presbytery to be prepared with prayer, fasting and a worshipful attitude.

WHO ARE THE PRESBYTERS?

The presbyters are recognized elders in the body who function in one of the five-fold ministries (Ephesians 4:11). They can be of the same local church, but for added confirmation and blessing, some should be elders of another local church to whom the candidates are unknown. The presbyters should be reputable, faithful, known for godly living, known and respected by the local leadership, mature, spiritual, doctrinally sound, and not influenced by money (1 Timothy 3:1-7). Also the presbyters must flow in the manifestation gift of prophecy.

THE FUNCTION OF THE PRESBYTERY

After considerable prayer by the local elders, certain individuals are set apart as candidates for presbytery. The presbyters will prophesy over these candidates, one at a time, as long as the Spirit leads. Since no single minister has all revelation, one presbyter would not usually have the entire prophetic word for a candidate. God's will is to have every word confirmed in the mouth of two or three witnesses (2 Corinthians 13:1). Prophecy should not be forced; rather it should flow. The ministry to the individual may include one or several types of prophecy: foretelling or speaking of something to come, confirmation, comfort, exhortation or correction.

THE CANDIDATE

Timothy was taken before the presbytery, hands were laid on him and God imparted a spiritual gift to him. God desires to accomplish the same thing today when His body obeys the scriptural pattern for presbytery. God's Word gives us patterns for doing things which are safeguards for the Church. Problems can result when these safeguards are not observed. Timothy's example reveals several truths which give us a biblical pattern concerning candidates for presbytery.

*Acts 16:1-2 Then he (Paul) came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain **disciple** was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was a Greek. He was **well spoken of by the brethren** who were at Lystra and Iconium.*

1 Corinthians 4:16-17 Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

Timothy was a disciple of Jesus who was planted in a local church body. He had been water baptized and baptized in the Holy Spirit. He had a good reputation among the brethren and was considered faithful by the leadership. These same qualities must be exhibited in the lives of those who are candidates for they laying on of hands by the presbytery.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CANDIDATE

The one to receive ministry should prepare himself through fasting and prayer, seeking God with an open and yielded heart. He should go into the presbytery service with a sense of anticipation, expecting God to speak and impart life.

The candidate for laying on of hands by the presbytery should have a scriptural respect for those leaders in the church who are in authority, seeking ministry from God with an attitude of humility. There should be no pride allowed over what may be spoken.

1 Peter 5:5 ...*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*

As with every move of God in an individual's life, prophecy must be received by faith. Since this is such an important aspect of all Christian life, it is necessary to examine this area in more detail.

1. The Birthing of Faith

A word spoken from God creates faith in the heart. When God speaks, either through prophecy or the Word, He gives the assurance that what He has spoken will come to pass. When God speaks to us we are immediately faced with a choice—either believe and receive or disbelieve and reject. Once the word is received, it builds faith in the heart. God wants to bring us into a place of strong, unwavering faith in His word and in His ability to fulfill those things He has spoken.

It is necessary that prophecy be received by faith. Faith is the basic law of the kingdom, for “...without faith it is impossible to please Him...” (Hebrews 11:6).

Hebrews 10:35-38 *Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: “For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.”*

Much of the time, God's prophetic words to us are conditional. This means that He expects an active participation on the part of the receiver. That participation is our faith in the integrity of the Word of God and the character of God. We must have the patience which sees us through all obstacles to the manifestation of God's word. We must be tenacious to the finish, no matter the length of time involved.

God is not pleased with unbelief, but He is pleased with a child who trusts Him and puts no time limits on the fulfilling of His word. God wants us to trust Him with childlike faith and praise Him for what He will do.

2. Obedience to the Word

It is the responsibility of the one receiving prophecy to be obedient to any condition which may have been placed on its fulfillment.

James 1:22, 25 *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves...But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty*

and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

An example of “a doer of the Word” is Abraham to whom God promised multitudes of descendents. While he waited for the fulfillment of God’s promise, Abraham continued to walk in obedience to the command that God had given him.

3. The Testing of the Word

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...*

A word given by God will be tested in the life of the receiver, who will have to do warfare concerning that word. This is a principle found throughout the Bible.

James 1:2-4 *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*

As previously mentioned, patience is a powerful force in the life of a believer. According to this passage in James, patience results in perfected work done in the believer’s life. The one who believes with strong patience is founded on solid rock and is unwavering.

1 Peter 1:6-7 *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

God desires to develop strong abiding faith in His people. However, Satan desires to thwart this by attempting to pull the believer from that place of abiding in Christ. Even as Jesus was tempted in the desert to move in His own power rather than according to God’s will and timing, the believer is tempted to take matters into his own hands.

Romans 5:3-5 *And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

There are many scriptural examples of God testing those He spoke to. David received a prophecy that said he would be king over Israel (1 Samuel 16:1-13). However, this word was tested for many years before God actually brought it to pass.

Joseph received a dream from God concerning his future as a ruler. He then went through years of crisis when it appeared that there was no possibility of the word coming to pass. During this time of slavery and imprisonment, "...the word of the LORD tested him" (Psalm 105:18).

There comes a time when it is totally impossible (from our standpoint) to see the fulfillment of the word which God has spoken to us. This word will test us and purge any impure motives from us. During this time, we must stand on God's word and character. As with Abraham, **obedience to the known will of God is essential**. He obeyed God concerning the sacrifice of his only son, believing that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead if necessary (Hebrews 11:17-19).

4. The Fulfillment of the Word

Hebrews 10:36 *...that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.*

In God's due time the fulfillment of the word will be manifest. This usually leads to a time of sweet rejoicing in the Lord. However, if one has trusted God throughout the time of waiting, he has known what the results would be all along, because he knows God is faithful. So, praise and thanksgiving are in order and due our Lord from the time of **first hearing the word**.

The greatness of God is exhibited when He speaks prophecy to us and imparts gifts to us. He is giving us a glimpse of His perfect will and desire for us. His grace sees beyond where we are now because of the finished work of Calvary. Even so, the believer is expected to fulfill his responsibility to see the fulfillment of the prophecy and to guard this treasure which God has given.

2 Timothy 1:14 (NIV) *Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.*

It is the responsibility of the recipient of God's gifts not only to guard the prophetic word, but to stir up and use the gifts imparted by God.

2 Timothy 1:6-7 *Therefore, I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

1 Timothy 4:14-16 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.*

BENEFITS OF PRESBYTERY

Presbytery is always a time of excitement and expectation concerning the things God will do and say. There are many results and benefits of presbytery. We include a partial list here.

1. Benefits for the Individual

- a. There will be a greater understanding of one's responsibility and function in the local body.
- b. Direction and purpose is given concerning specific ways to serve the Lord.
- c. The will of God is often confirmed in individual's lives.
- d. Each one is helped to find his place in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:18).
- e. The vision and direction given through prophetic revelation strengthen individual lives.
- f. There is an impartation of gifts and blessings to individual believers through the laying on of hands.

2. Benefits for the Local Church

- a. The spiritual level of the church is raised when the whole body seeks the Lord in prayer and fasting.
- b. The church as a whole will receive specific direction from the Lord.
- c. Faith will be imparted in the hearts of the members to see God's purposes fulfilled.

3. Benefits for Local Church Ministries

- a. Everyone receives a greater appreciation for the various giftings in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:22-23).
- b. Presbytery also involves a "setting in" of local church ministries.
- c. Further development of local church ministries is made possible.

RESPONSIVE READING**Question 1: What is presbytery?**

The presbytery is a group of proven leaders anointed of God with prophetic gifts to confirm God's will and impart spiritual gifts through the laying on of hands.

1 Timothy 4:14 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*

Question 2: How should believers respond to prophecy spoken over them?

a. Believers should respond to prophecy by believing that God will fulfill His word in His time.

Hebrews 10:35-38 *Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."*

b. Believers should respond to prophecy by obeying God's word.

James 1:22, 25 *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves...But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*

c. Believers should respond to prophecy by doing warfare during the time the word is tested.

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...*

d. Believers should respond to prophecy by stirring up the gifts which were imparted by the laying on of hands.

2 Timothy 1:6-7 *Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

1 Timothy 4:14-16 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.*

HOMEWORK

1. What is a presbytery?
2. Name three things which take place during the presbytery according to 1 Timothy 4:14.
3. What are the qualifications of the presbyters?
4. What qualities are found in the candidate selected for presbytery?
5. Name the three responsibilities of the candidate in preparing himself.
6. How should the whole church prepare for presbytery?
7. Give several examples of how the individual and the church benefit from presbytery.
8. Do you need direction and vision or a sense of “being placed” imparted to your life? Please explain.

A Study of the Elementary Principles of Christ

This series, based on Hebrews 6:1-2, is designed to lay a firm foundation in your life. It is necessary to be grounded in these basic principles in order to “go on to maturity.” It is our prayer that God will richly bless you through your study of FIRST PRINCIPLES.

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The Sure Foundation
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Restoration
Vision of the Local Church
Praise and Worship
Local Church Ministry

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Repentance
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The Father Heart of God
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The Abiding Faith
Living by Revelation
Developing Faith
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Book Four: Baptisms

The Doctrine of Baptisms
Baptism in the Body of Christ
Water Baptism
The Baptism of the Holy Spirit - Part I
The Baptism of the Holy Spirit - Part II
The Baptism in Fire

Book Five: Laying on of Hands

Laying on of Hands
Healing
The Gifts of the Spirit
The Motivational Gifts
The Five-Fold Ministry
Presbytery

Book Six: Resurrection Life

Resurrection Life
Body Life
Church Life
Overcoming Life
Family Life
Prayer Life

Book Seven: Eternal Judgement

The Eternal Perspective
The Eternal Kingdom
Eternal Judgement
The Eternal Word
Eternal Worship
Eternal Life