

Frontier Ministries

Ministry Structure 405-8

'Varieties of tongues', 'gifts of healings', 'miracles', and 'showing mercy' are useful to evangelism at the spiritual frontier. These gifts can be developed to become ministry of intercession, ministry of healing, ministry of miracle, and ministry of mercy for a local church to reach out to its community.

1. *Ministry of intercession*

Some are given 'varieties of tongues' to be developed into intercessory use.

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. ... Do all speak with tongues? (1 Corinthians 12:28, 30b NKJV).

- The rhetorical question 'Do all speak in tongues?' in Greek must be answered with 'no'. It means 'varieties of tongues' in this scripture is a ministry-gift given to some believers, unlike 'different kinds of tongues' in the nine manifestations of the Holy Spirit which is given to all (see 1 Corinthians 12:10).

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints (Ephesians 6:18 NKJV).

- 'Supplication in the Spirit' means fervent prayers for people or for situations. 'Praying always with all prayer' means Spirit-led intercession is done in 'praying with the understanding' and also 'praying with the spirit' (see also 1 Corinthians 14:15).

'Varieties of tongues' have different roles in the ministry of intercession.

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life (Jude 20-21 NKJV).

- 'Praying in the Holy Spirit' is praying in tongues (see 1 Corinthians 14:14), which can edify or strengthen your inner man (see 1 Corinthians 14:4). Praying in the Spirit builds up also your 'faith' and 'keeps you in the love of God' (see Jude 20-21). Intercession confronts forces of darkness in the spiritual realm. You need to energise your inner man, build up your faith and devote your heart to love God before you begin. You also need to re-energise your spirit after intercession.
- By praying in tongues, you speak mysteries which are the deepest adorations from the heart to God to 'magnify Him' (see 1 Corinthians 14:2; Acts 10:46a) or by singing in tongues which is a melody from the Spirit (see Ephesians 5:19; 1 Corinthians 14:15) you can build up the spiritual atmosphere for God's kingly presence to manifest. Spirit-led intercession draws the kingly presence of God to rule over places, people, and situations to transform them.
- The interpretation of a message comes in tongues can edify or build up a local church or a group of intercessors (see 1 Corinthians 14:5b). 'Let there be two or at the most three, each in turn' release a tongue-message, and 'let one interpret' into your language (see 1 Corinthians 14:27). The person who has the tongue-message can interpret it himself (see 1 Corinthians 14:13). Interpretation of tongues done in group-intercession gives prophetic direction.
- Spirit-led intercession lays pressure on territorial demons to defeat their control over places and people. It opens up doors for the gospel (see Colossians 4:2-4). Spirit-led intercession builds believers, like Epaphras 'always labouring fervently' in spiritual childbirth for his spiritual sons and daughters to 'stand perfect and complete in all the will of God' (see Colossians 4:12).

2. *Ministry of healing*

Some have 'the gifts of healings' to be developed into a healing ministry.

And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings ... Do all have gifts of healings? (1 Corinthians 12:28, 30 NKJV).

- The rhetorical question 'Do all have gifts of healings?' in Greek deserves a 'no' answer. 'The gifts of healings' here is a ministry-gift. The authority to lay hands on the sick is given to all born again and spirit-baptized Christians, just as it is mentioned in the Great Commission (see Mark 16:17-18). The 'gifts of healings', one of the nine manifestations of the Holy Spirit is meant for all Spirit-baptised Christians to minister healing to the sick (see 1 Corinthians 12:7, 9). People can 'call for the elders (or pastors) of a church' to 'anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord' and to 'pray' fervently for them to be healed (see James 5:14-16). But some are given a ministry-gift of healings.

A ministry of healing is a door opener of the gospel.

- Believers with the ministry-gift for healings can come together to form healing teams. A church can send its healing teams to visit homes and hospitals in the community, like Christ went to places to minister healings and salvation. Healing teams can also serve cell groups and a church in Healing & Miracle Service.

3. *Ministry of miracles*

Some Christians have the gift of miracles to be 'workers of miracles'.

And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles [*dunamis*]. ... Are all workers of miracles (1 Corinthians 12:28a, 29d NKJV).

- 'Miracles', in verse 28 is the same as 'workers of miracles' in verse 29.
- It is different from the 'working of miracles' which is a 'manifestation of the Holy Spirit' given to all believers (see 1 Corinthians 12:7, 10).
- The rhetoric question 'Are all workers of miracles?' indicates that some believers are called to be 'workers of miracles', having the ministry of miracles. Stephen, one of the seven appointed to serve in the first church at Jerusalem, 'did great wonders and signs' (see Acts 6:8). Philip, another one of the seven, also had the ministry of miracles (see Acts 8:6).

Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds (2 Corinthians 12:12 NKJV).

- Ministry of miracles is a sign of an apostle. Peter had miracles following his apostolic ministry (see Acts 3:6-8). God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul (see Acts 19:11). Not all people who have the ministry of miracles have also an apostolic calling.

A gift or a ministry of miracles is a powerful door opener of the gospel.

- An outstanding miracle can open up large numbers of people to the gospel (see Acts 19:11).
- People with the ministry of miracles should visit the sick at homes and hospitals to preach the gospel and meet their needs that require miracles. They should also stand by for all cell groups when their service is needed.

4. *Ministry of mercy*

This gift of 'showing mercy' is for a mercy-ministry.

He who shows mercy, with cheerfulness (Romans 12:8c NKJV).

- 'Showing mercy' in this scripture is a ministry-gift rather than a Christian virtue or a form of good work. All Christians should practise good works or charitable deeds but some have the empowering from God to show mercy in extraordinary ways. The good works done by Dorcas at Joppa was more than just her ability to help the needy. The whole community was deeply touched by her charitable deeds to the widows whose husbands were martyred for their faith in Christ. She had the ministry-gift of showing mercy (see Acts 9:36, 39).
- 'Cheerfulness' is the characteristic of having the ministry-gift of mercy. A person with this gift has the sensitivity to notice needs, able to understand the feelings of those who suffer, and has the grace of God to meet their needs cheerfully. Operation of this gift involves much sacrifice and perseverance.
- A person with this gift may not be personally wealthy, but has the grace to raise finances even if the amount is enormously large. He likely also has the wisdom to campaign widely for support. Paul had this grace of raising financial support for people or churches in difficult time (see 2 Corinthians 9:1-5).

A gift or a ministry of 'showing mercy' is an opener for the gospel.

- A need met with love opens up the heart for the gospel. The ministry of mercy should be used as an opener for the gospel, not just to meet needs. A church can show the love of God to the community with this ministry and present the gospel for them to start living in His love, restoration, and provision.
- A ministry of mercy can grow very large and becomes a welfare institution of a church.