

# Spiritual Ministries

Ministry Structure 405-7

Blending of ministry-gifts together builds a strong church to serve the community.

- The Holy Spirit moves through Christians in spiritual gifts ever since He came upon the Church (see Acts 1:8). God has predetermined the nature, allocations, and operation of all spiritual gifts (see 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 11).
- Networking of spiritual gifts in a local church is organising it according to the anointing, to create a spiritual environment for the Holy Spirit to move mightily (see Ephesians 2:19-22).

## 1. *Twelve ministry-gifts on the Church*

The Holy Spirit has given twelve ministry-gifts on the Church for us to establish them into effective ministries to benefit people.

**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 [1] miracles, then [2] gifts of healings, [3] helps, [4] administrations, [5] varieties of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:27-28 NKJV).**

- 'God has appointed these in the church' means these gifts are assigned to the 'Body of Christ' which consists of all the local churches. The twelve ministry-gifts are given to the Church, unlike the nine 'manifestation of the Spirit' which are given to 'each one' (see 1 Corinthians 12:7-11). All believers can minister with some or all of the nine spiritual gifts but not all are ministry-gifts.
- The twelve ministry-gifts are different from the fivefold-office gifts. 'After that' splits the gifts mentioned in this scripture into two different lists. The earlier list consists of 'apostles', 'prophets', and 'teachers', which are being referred to as the persons who carry these gifts. These three gifts are addressed as spiritual offices. In contrast, the gifts of the latter list are addressed as ministries and not as spiritual offices which have the vocational leadership of equipping believers to minister and of building up the Church (see Ephesians 4:11-12).
- 'Miracles', 'gifts of healings', 'helps', 'administrations', and 'varieties of tongues' are five of the twelve ministry-gifts of the Church.

**Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if [6] prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or [7] ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in [8] teaching; he who exhorts, in [9] exhortation; he who [10] gives, with liberality; he who [11] leads, with diligence; he who [12] shows mercy, with cheerfulness (Romans 12:6-8 NKJV).**

- God gave these 'gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us'. 'Us' in the context is referring to the Body of Christ (see Romans 12:5). 'Prophecy', 'ministry', 'teaching', 'exhortation', 'giving', 'leadership', and 'showing mercy' are seven of the twelve ministry-gifts, meant for all local churches.

God has specially allocated the twelve ministry-gifts to some believers.

**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? (1 Corinthians 12:29-30 NKJV).**

- All these rhetoric questions in Greek are to be answered with a 'no'. It means not all Christians are given the twelve ministry-gifts, unlike the 'manifestation of the Holy Spirit' is given to 'each one' (see 1 Corinthians 12:7).

## 2. *Develop these gifts into ministries*

Ministry-gifts should be developed into functional ministries.

**Eagerly pursue and seek to acquire [this] love [make it your aim, your great quest]; and earnestly desire and cultivate the spiritual endowments (gifts) (1 Corinthians 14:1a Amplified).**

- 'Earnestly desire and cultivate the spiritual endowments (gifts)' in the Amplified Version shows that we should ask God and expect Him to give us ministry-gifts. We should develop our ministry-gifts into functional ministries.

**Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them (Romans 12:6a NKJV).**

- 'Let us use them' means putting ministry-gifts into proper use. Gifts will become ministries when they are put into proper use.

Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel (1 Corinthians 14:12 NKJV).

- The purpose of ministry-gifts is for building up a church. Blending of the twelve ministry-gifts together builds a strong church to reach out to the community.

Ministry-gifts are developed into ministries through frequent use.

There are diversities of gifts [*charismaton*], but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries [*diakonon*], but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities [*energematon*], but it is the same God who works all in all (1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NKJV).

- 'Diversity of gifts' refers to the various gifts given by the Holy Spirit. When there is consistent manifestation of a certain gifts through your life means God has allocated them to your stewardship.
- 'Diversity of activities' refers to the various operations of gifts. For example: You can operate the gifts of healings on one person at a home or you can minister the same gift *en masse* in a public gathering. The latter requires more faith than the first situation. You put your gifts to effective use 'in proportion to your faith' (see Romans 12:6). You can operate a ministry-gift in greater scale when you have greater faith.
- 'Differences of ministries' means various kinds of establishment. The frequency and volume of 'activities' decide whether the operation of a gift has become a 'ministry'. There must be a considerable volume of operation of a ministry-gift before it can be regarded as an established ministry.

Obtain grace and increase faith for developing a gift into a ministry.

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith ... 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 (Romans 12:3, 6 NKJV).

- You cannot operate a 'gift' beyond the 'grace' and higher than the 'measure of faith' given to you.
- As you humbly submit yourself under the mighty hand of God, He will give you more grace and promote you to greater effectiveness (see 1 Peter 5:5-6).
- To increase the operation of a gift, you must first grow from faith to faith (see Romans 1:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:3). When you have proven your faithfulness, more will be given to you (see Luke 16:10).

### 3. *A three-range formation*

The twelve ministry-gifts are given for us to accomplish the Great Commission.

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8 NKJV).

- All gifts of the Holy Spirit, which includes the nine spiritual gifts, the five offices and the twelve ministry-gifts, are given for the purpose of extending the Church 'to the end of the earth'.

Some of these ministry-gifts are useful at the evangelistic frontier, some are good for equipping believers to minister, and some are for providing support to the frontier.

- 'Varieties of tongues', 'gifts of healings', 'miracles', and 'showing mercy' are four of these twelve ministry-gifts which are useful for ministering at the evangelistic frontier. These four gifts can be developed to become ministry of intercession, ministry of healing, ministry of miracle, and ministry of mercy.
- 'Teachings', 'exhortation', and 'prophecy' are three of the twelve gifts which are useful for equipping believers before releasing them to the warfare frontier for advancing God's kingdom and for refreshing them after they have served at the frontier. Believers with these gifts should be adequately trained to teach, exhort, and to prophesy.
- 'Ministry', 'helps', 'leading', 'administration', and 'giving' are useful for providing support to the believers who are released to the spiritual frontier. Members with these gifts should be trained to function as deacon (pastoral assistant), ministry assistant, ministry organiser, ministry administrator, and ministry financier to give supports to those who are ministering and equipping.