

Supplying Ministries

Ministry Structure 405-9

'Teachings', 'exhortation', and 'prophecy' are ministry-gifts useful for equipping and strengthening Christians who are winning souls at the spiritual frontier.

- Frequent practice of these gifts produces teaching ministry, exhortation or godly counsel, and prophetic ministry.

1. *Ministry of teaching*

Some Christians are given this ministry-gift to impart the Word of God.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: ... He who teaches, in teaching (Romans 12:6a, 7b 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, the Church (see Romans 12:5). 'Teaching' here in this scripture is one of the twelve ministry-gifts for the Church, which can be developed into a teaching ministry.
- This ministry-gift of teaching is different from a 'teacher' of the fivefold offices which has the two leadership roles of equipping the believers to minister and of building up the Church (see Ephesians 4:11-12). Another difference is that a teacher with the fivefold calling must teach the Word as his lifetime vocation. The ministry-gift for teaching does not have a vocational commitment. Apollos was a teacher. Aquila and Priscilla were not, though they could improve Apollos' knowledge on 'the way of God' (see Acts 18:24-26).

This ministry-gift of teaching is different from the ability to teach the Word.

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2 NKJV).

- All spiritual leaders must be able to teach but not all leaders have the ministry-gift of teaching. The ability to teach is acquired through training and practice (see also 2 Timothy 2:24-25).
For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God (Hebrews 5:12a NKJV).
- All mature Christians should be able to teach though not all mature believers will have a teaching gift.

A teaching gift is a spiritual enabling for teaching the Word of God.

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 (1 Corinthians 14:26 NKJV).

- In this scripture, 'teaching' is listed together with some other spiritual gifts given spontaneously as the Holy Spirit manifests among the believers. A teaching gift is an enabling of the Holy Spirit for a person to have spiritual understanding into the Word and the anointing to impart the teaching with the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Confirming the gift of teaching is certainly more difficult than recognising other gifts. Two outstanding characteristics are the spiritual insight into the Word and the power of renewing the mind. Those who have the gift to teach must also be trained in the Word, doctrines, and spiritual things.
- Since teaching is imparting the Word from a person's practice, observe his walk with God over some time before giving him an opportunity to teach.

2. *Ministry of exhortation*

Some have a ministry-gift of giving godly counsel, which can be developed into a ministry of exhortation.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: ... He who exhorts, in exhortation (Romans 12:6a, 8a NKJV).

- *Parakalon* translated as 'exhorts' primarily means 'to admonish or urge a person to pursue some course of conduct'. It is always used in the prospective sense, looking to the future. Exhortation is a ministry-gift that has the power of the Holy Spirit to lift people up from where they should not be to move on to where God wants them to be. This ministry-gift has the anointing for restoring people from brokenness (see Luke 4:18). It can give greater results than clinical counselling.

- The apostles renamed Josias as Barnabas which means 'son of encouragement' (*parakleusos*, means 'exhorter'). His gift of exhortation was so effectively used that he became known as 'the exhorter'. He brought Paul to be accepted by the church in Jerusalem (see Acts 9:27) and helped him into the teaching ministry in Antioch (see Acts 11:24-26).
Strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22 NKJV).
- Exhortation done with this gift stirs up the faith of people to rise up from their problems and to put their trust on God.
Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables (2 Timothy 4:2-4 NKJV).
- Exhortation is associated with preaching. Preaching the Word with exhortation will lift people up to higher perspectives to manage their lives and ministries for a better future.
Give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine (1 Timothy 4:13b NKJV).
- Exhortation is as important as doctrine.
- People with the gift of exhortation can provide counseling for members who need special pastoral referral and for people in the community.

3. *Ministry of prophecy*

Some Christians have this ministry-gift of prophecy which can be developed into a prophetic ministry.

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 12:6 NKJV).

- 'Prophecy' here in this scripture is a ministry-gift which can be developed into a ministry of prophecy. Philip's four daughters have the ministry of prophecy (see Acts 21:9).
- This ministry-gift of prophecy is not the same with one of the nine gifts of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, which has the same name (see 1 Corinthians 12:7, 10). Prophecy is one of the three spiritual gifts (prophecy, gifts of healings, and varieties of tongues) most commonly experienced among believers. All Spirit-baptised Christians can desire to prophesy (see 1 Corinthians 14:1). Paul encouraged all the believers to practise prophesying (see 1 Corinthians 14:31). Though all can move with prophecy, only some are given the ministry-gift of prophecy.
- A believer who has the ministry-gift of prophecy (a prophesying-believer or a prophet) is not to be mistaken as a prophet of the fivefold office. Prophets have the authority to coach believers to operate under the anointing and to build the global move of God (see Ephesians 4:12). Prophets are also foundation builders, called to advance the move of God with prophecy (see Ephesians 2:20).
- A prophesying-believer should prophesy 'in proportion to his faith'. This ministry-gift of prophecy increases in proportion to 'the measure of faith' which God has imparted to you (see Romans 12:3). As you grow from faith to faith, this gift will manifest frequently and the prophetic utterance will be of significance.

Prophesiers minister edification, exhortation, and comfort.

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

- 'Edification' in Greek *oikodomeo* literally means 'to build up'. Prophecy causes a supernatural building up in a person's life for him to grow spiritually stronger.
- 'Exhortation' in Greek *parakaleo* is 'to summon to one's side' which means to speak sternly to a person's heart to cause him to look ahead. When a direction and correction is from the Holy Spirit, no matter how stern it is, it doesn't tear down; it builds up.
- The Greek word for comfort is *paramuthia* which means to 'speak closely to a person'. It is giving consolation or comforting. Unlike 'exhortation' that causes a person to look ahead, 'comfort' helps him to look introspectively and be assured of God's forgiveness and acceptance.