

## More Ministry Gifts

**A. God's gifts are just that: gifts. It is by His grace that we are who we are, and it is by His grace through faith that He gives us that we labor in these ministries.**

*But by the grace of God I am what I am,  
and His grace toward me was not in vain;  
but I labored more abundantly than they all,  
yet not I,  
but the grace of God which was with me.  
1 Corinthians 15:10<sup>1</sup>*

- *The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teacher are to equip the SAINTS for the work of the ministry. The gifts we will discuss in this lesson, I am therefore calling work of the ministry gifts.*

**B. What is “the work of the ministry” mentioned in Ephesians 4? The following helps us see this a little clearer.**

**Acts 6:1-8**

*Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. <sup>2</sup> Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; <sup>4</sup> but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” <sup>5</sup> And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, <sup>6</sup> whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. <sup>7</sup> Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith. <sup>8</sup> And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.*

- **The first thing that stands out to us is that the work of the ministry included taking care of the practical needs of widowed<sup>2</sup> believers.**

**James 1:27**

*Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble.*

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all scripture is taken from the New American Standard Bible NASB, Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

<sup>2</sup> The church did not care for all widows, only those who had no one else to care for them. 1 Timothy 5:3,4,8,16: Honor widows who are really widows. <sup>4</sup> But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God...<sup>8</sup> But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever... <sup>16</sup> If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.

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- ***The then twelve apostles, now confronted with thousands of believers realized they scarcely had time to do what God had called them to do which is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry and build up the body of Christ through:***
  - *Prayer (for the saints, for the lost)*
  - *Ministry of the Word (preaching the gospel both to the lost and the saved)*
- ***The whole multitude agreed with the apostles.***
- ***Seven were assigned to do the work of this ministry through the laying on of hands and prayer.***
- ***Setting the apostles free to do what God had called them to do, and setting the seven free to serve the people resulted in the gospel being spread.***
- ***THESE ARE NOT LESSER GIFTS nor do they mean that those who are not apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers will not be used by God in workings of the Holy Spirit and preaching.***
  - *Notice that Stephen, who would be the first martyr of the church, who was one of these seven men chosen, was used by God to do great wonders and signs among the people. Notice also as the narrative continues that we see him as a powerful preacher of God's word.*

**C. Paul seems to distinguish between ministry gifts and workings of the Holy Spirit.****1 Corinthians 12:4-6**

- ***<sup>4</sup> There are diversities of gifts (charisma), but the same Spirit.***
  - *This is likely referring to all gifts of a spiritual nature, both of service and workings.*
- ***<sup>5</sup> There are differences of ministries (diakonia), but the same Lord.***
  - ***These are gifts of service that minister to the body of Christ generally divided into two groups<sup>3</sup>.***
    - *Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor-Teacher*
    - *Serving, Exhortation, Giving, Leading, Helps, Showing Mercy, Administrations*
- ***<sup>6</sup> And there are diversities of activities (energema), but it is the same God who works all in all.***
  - *These are also called “manifestations of the Spirit” and refer to the gifts discussed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 which we will cover in Part 3.*

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<sup>3</sup> These two groups seem to have a large degree of interrelatedness. Barnabus, for example, was an apostle, and yet known for his gift of encouragement. However, someone might have a ministry of encouragement and not be an apostle.

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**D. Although there are different types of gifts, they all work together to bless the body of Christ (believers).**

- **Romans 12:3-8**

*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<sup>4</sup>. <sup>4</sup> For as we have many members in one body, **but all the members do not have the same function**, <sup>5</sup> so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. <sup>6</sup> 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; <sup>7</sup> or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; <sup>8</sup> he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

- **All members of the body of Christ have different gifts according to the grace given each one, which we are to USE.**

- **1 Corinthians 12:27-31**

*Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. <sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup> But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.*

**E. It is important to note that there is a difference between natural abilities and supernatural gifts.** Even non-believers have some of these inclinations as part of their personality. So, of course, even believers have natural tendencies in their personalities and others have been trained in professions which require similar skills. However, God has seen fit to SUPERnaturally gift some with SUPERnatural abilities to labor in these ministries. Sometimes these gifts seem the complete opposite of a believer's natural abilities. While psychological profiling might help us discover our natural abilities, it is God who graces believers with supernatural abilities.

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<sup>4</sup> This scripture is often used to point out that each person has a measure of faith, and of course, each believer does. However, the true context of this verse is that each one of us has the faith we need to operate in the gifts that God has given each one.

## Work of the Ministry Gifts

1. **Ministry diakonia<sup>5</sup>**; attendance (as a servant, etc.); figuratively (eleemosynary<sup>6</sup>) aid, (official) service (especially of the Christian teacher, or technically of the diaconate): - (ad-) minister (-ing, -tration, -try), office, relief, service (-ing).

**Acts 20:24**

*But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry (diakonia) which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.*

**1 Corinthians 16:15**

*I urge you, brethren—you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry (diakonia) of the saints.*

- a. **To ministering**—Basically the same word; in other words, if you are given the gift to minister, then minister.

- b. **Notice that ministry is primarily directed to the saints.**

- i. It is not uncommon for a church to have significant outreach to the unsaved poor but neglect the needs of the saints. This is backward.

**Galatians 6:10**

*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

2. **Exhortation: paraklēsis; imploration, hortation<sup>7</sup>, solace: - comfort, consolation, exhortation, intreaty.**

**Acts 15:31-32**

*So when they (Paul and Barnabas) were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter (to the Greeks telling them they weren't under the law).<sup>31</sup> When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement (paraklesis).<sup>32</sup> Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted (parakaleō) and strengthened the brethren with many words.*

<sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all Greek definitions are from the Strong's Concordance.

<sup>6</sup> Eleemosynary: philanthropic, benevolent, charitable (English definitions in this study were taken from either Webster's online dictionary or Dictionary.com.)

<sup>7</sup> Hortation: encouraging

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3. **Giving:** metadidōmi; to give over, that is, share: - give, impart.

- a. **With liberality:** haplotēs; singleness, that is, (subjectively) sincerity (without dissimulation<sup>8</sup> or self seeking), or (objectively) generosity (copious bestowal): - bountifulness, liberal (-ity), simplicity, singleness.

**Acts 9:36**

*At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did.*

**1 Thessalonians 2:8**

*So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart (give-metadidōmi) to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.*

4. **Leading:** proistēmi; to stand before, that is, (in rank) to preside, or (by implication) to practice: - maintain, be over, rule.

**1 Thessalonians 5:12**

*And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you<sup>9</sup> (proistēmi) in the Lord and admonish you,<sup>13</sup> and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.*

**1 Timothy 5:17**

*Let the elders who rule (proistēmi) well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.*

- a. **If someone is called to be over (oversee) others, then do so with diligence:** spoudē; “speed”, that is, (by implication) dispatch, eagerness, earnestness: - business, (earnest) care (-fulness), diligence forwardness, haste.

**Just a thought:** A natural born leader would not need to be encouraged to lead with diligence. Yet perhaps someone who is not naturally a leader, yet called supernaturally to lead, would need to be encouraged to use this gift. History is replete with natural born leaders who were deceivers.

<sup>8</sup> Dissimulate: to disguise or conceal under a false appearance

<sup>9</sup> Likely referring to overseers (pastors)

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5. **Showing Mercy:** *eleeō*; *to compassionate (by word or deed, specifically by divine grace): - have compassion (pity on), have (obtain, receive, show) mercy (on).*

a. **With cheerfulness:** *hilarotēs*; *alacrity*<sup>10</sup>: - *cheerfulness*

b. **Mercy and Grace are cousins.** Grace means unmerited favor. Mercy means unmerited pardon.

*Titus 3:3-7*

*For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. <sup>4</sup> But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, <sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

*Hebrews 4:16*

*Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

c. **Of course, all believers should show mercy with cheerfulness, but there are those who seem especially graced with this ability. They are not quick to be punitive, but seek to restore those overtaken in faults.**

*Galatians 6:1a*

*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness*

6. **Helps:** *antilepsis*; *relief*: - *help.*

a. **Relief** is alleviation, ease, or deliverance through the removal of pain, distress, oppression, etc.

b. **Help** is *to give or provide what is necessary to accomplish a task or satisfy a need; contribute strength or means to; render assistance to; cooperate effectively with; aid; assist; to save; rescue; succor; to make easier or less difficult; contribute to; facilitate.*

c. **A person with the ministry of helps not only can see the need but supernaturally knows how to best meet the need. In the natural we might call this person a problem solver.**

d. **This gift is often relegated by religious leaders to people who are only good for common tasks such as washing dishes or cleaning bathrooms. However, this gift extends far beyond being a worker bee. This person is enabled by God to come alongside someone with a problem or some situation which is problematic and know how to solve it.**

<sup>10</sup> *Alacrity: cheerful readiness, promptness, or willingness, liveliness, briskness*

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- e. A person with helps can take in the information and supernaturally come up with a solution (even when it seems like others, equally knowledgeable aren't sure what to do).

*Acts 15:13-19*

*And after they had become silent<sup>11</sup>, James answered, saying, "Men and brethren, listen to me: <sup>14</sup> Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. <sup>15</sup> And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written:*

*<sup>16</sup> ' After this I will return*

*And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down;*

*I will rebuild its ruins,*

*And I will set it up;*

*<sup>17</sup> So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD,*

*Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name,*

*Says the LORD who does all these things.'*

*<sup>18</sup> "Known to God from eternity are all His works. <sup>19</sup> **Therefore I judge that** we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, <sup>20</sup> but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." <sup>22</sup> Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.*

**7. Administrations:** *kubernēsis; From kubernaō (of Latin origin, to steer);*

*pilotage, that is, (figuratively) directorship (in the church): - government.*

- a. Many today reject the idea of certain individuals directing within the church, and yet, here we have someone who is gifted by God to steer the ministry.

i. This is a supernatural ability with supernatural direction.

ii. This person supernaturally knows how to organize and direct the ministries within the church.

Usually the above gifts are somewhat isolated from their context in Paul's letters, but of course, the context is imperative in understanding their import. Let's look a little closer at the context using the Amplified Bible<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> *The Jews did not know what to do about whether or not the Greeks should be circumcised and keep the Law. There were different opinions and testimonies. James hears it all and knows what to do next. Everyone agrees. Perhaps this was a gift of helps in action...or a word of wisdom.*

<sup>12</sup> *Amplified Bible (AMP) Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation*

**8. Putting the Gifts in Context****Romans 12<sup>13</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>I appeal to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.

*The “therefore” is referring to all that Paul has declared to be true about the believers in the previous chapters: that they are righteous, dead to sin, alive to God, cannot be accused, cannot be condemned, and cannot be separated from God’s love. These facts free us up to present ourselves to God for service.*

<sup>2</sup>Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].

*We often ask, “What is the will of God?” In context we will see it is to serve each other. We see also here that although we are already righteous, there is a process of transformation to which we are to submit ourselves in preparation. Part of this process includes hearing the teachings of the equipping ministries which can help bring about this transformation.*

<sup>3</sup>For by the grace (unmerited favor of God) given to me I warn everyone among you not to estimate and think of himself more highly than he ought [not to have an exaggerated opinion of his own importance], but to rate his ability with sober judgment, each according to the degree of faith apportioned by God to him.

*Paul is going to be discussing gifts. This comment is in preparation for what he will say. Whatever gift we have is by his grace. We can therefore not think of ourselves higher than another due to our calling since it is a gift (we did not earn).*

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<sup>13</sup> Inset italicized writing is SGF commentary.

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<sup>4</sup>For as in one physical body we have many parts (organs, members) and all of these parts do not have the same function or use, <sup>5</sup>So we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ (the Messiah) and individually we are parts one of another [mutually dependent on one another].

*Paul illustrates his teaching using the human body which is comprised of different parts and functions. The circulatory system pumps the blood throughout the body, but the lungs bring in air to supply the blood with oxygen. Our bones, nerves, skin, and body parts all work together in magnificence to make one body. Paul is telling them that they need each other and that no one person is more important than another no is any person less.*

<sup>6</sup>Having gifts (faculties, talents, qualities) that differ according to the grace given us, let us use them:

*This is evidence that these were not mere natural tendencies as someone who is naturally one way or another will naturally behave in that capacity. Paul is ENCOURAGING them to use the gifts they have be given, which implies that one's natural tendencies might be completely different than one's spiritual gifts and thus need to be encouraged.*

[He whose gift is] prophecy, [let him prophesy] according to the proportion of his faith;<sup>7</sup>[He whose gift is] practical service, let him give himself to serving; he who teaches, to his teaching; <sup>8</sup>He who exhorts (encourages), to his exhortation; he who contributes, let him do it in simplicity and liberality; he who gives aid and superintends, with zeal and singleness of mind; he who does acts of mercy, with genuine cheerfulness and joyful eagerness.

*The following verses give insight into how these gifts will look, each of us walking in love toward one another, loving each other as brothers, showing honor to each other, serving the Lord (each other) zealously, rejoicing in hope, steadfast in suffering, constantly in prayer, giving to each other's needs, being hospitable to each other, blessing even those who mistreat us, rejoicing in the joys of others, weeping with them when they mourn, willing to serve humbly, not repaying evil for evil, living in peace as much as it depends on us, not taking revenge, doing good even those who behave as our enemies. While these are truly gifts of the Spirit, we are instructed to DO them. This clearly shows that we are willing participants. How much more wonderful would "church" be with everyone doing what God has called each one to do in this manner.*

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<sup>9</sup>[Let your] love be sincere (a real thing); hate what is evil [loathe all ungodliness, turn in horror from wickedness], but hold fast to that which is good. <sup>10</sup>Love one another with brotherly affection [as members of one family], giving precedence and showing honor to one another. <sup>11</sup>Never lag in zeal and in earnest endeavor; be aglow and burning with the Spirit, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and exult in hope; be steadfast and patient in suffering and tribulation; be constant in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Contribute to the needs of God's people [sharing in the necessities of the saints]; pursue the practice of hospitality. <sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you [who are cruel in their attitude toward you]; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice [sharing others' joy], and weep with those who weep [sharing others' grief]. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty (snobbish, high-minded, exclusive), but readily adjust yourself to [people, things] and give yourselves to humble tasks. Never overestimate yourself or be wise in your own conceits. <sup>17</sup>Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is honest and proper and noble [aiming to be above reproach] in the sight of everyone. <sup>18</sup>If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for [God's] wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay (requite), says the Lord. <sup>20</sup>But if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head. <sup>21</sup>Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome (master) evil with good.

***Matthew 25:31-40***

***“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ 37 “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 And the King will answer and say to them,***

***“Assuredly, I say to you,  
inasmuch as you did it  
to one of the least of these My brethren,  
you did it to Me.”***