

Choose to Claim the Gifts of God in Ministry

Ministers Spiritual Life

3/28/09

Lesson #21

Scripture: Matthew 20:28 "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Introduction:

How many people like getting gifts? About 6-7 years ago I was working at the power plant and some little problem came up and I ended up working Christmas Eve night. I came home from work on Christmas morning around 5:00 a.m. and Colton meet me at the door and asked if I was ready to open presents. He was ready to receive his gifts.

On the other hand my grandfather was a bit different. He didn't care much for gift giving or receiving. Many times he would hang your gift up on the wall out in his shop and not touch it for 10 years if ever. He wasn't much on using gifts.

You know some folks are not very good givers....but on the other hand many Christians today are not very good gift receivers.

Transitional Statement:

Church, God measures out gifts to each of us according to His purposes. The truth, quite frankly put, is that there will be people who go to hell because we choose not to engage our gifts from God.

Lesson:

I. The Biblical Basis for ministry giftedness

A. The apostles taught early Christians to recognize their spiritual giftedness

1. Romans 12:6-8

6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

B. Gifts come from God according to His sovereign choice

C. Gifts come with responsibility

1. To exercise

2. To develop

D. Each gift is exercised according to its purpose and to the need that needs to be served.

1. Prophecy

a. While prophecy includes foretelling...the Greek word includes the idea of forth telling.

1) Simply the proclamation of God's word to others.

b. Inasmuch as we all have a bible we all have this ability

1) Jesus tells us to take his message to all the nations.
Matt 28:18-20

2) And 2 Cor 5:20 helps us to understand that we are Kingdom representatives.

2. Service

a. At the core of service is the very heart of Jesus.

1) Matthew 20:28 *"...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

2) He used the His foot washing example in John 13 to remind them of the importance of service.

b. Service takes a watchful eye and a sympathetic heart and a willingness to reach out and help others.

1) Many hearts have been touched and forever changed because they were selflessly served by some member of the Lord's church.

3. Teaching

a. Teaching opens doors of knowledge to the student

b. Teachers have a passion for studying God's word.

1) 2 Timothy 2:15 *"Be diligent (study KJV) to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."*

c. And a passion for sharing God's word with others.

4. Exhortation

- a. Exhortation includes teaching, but takes a step further to encourage a person to action.
- b. Here we might think of inertia. Inertia is a physics concept that basically represents the initial force that it takes to set an object into motion.

- 1) Exhortation might just be that initial nudge that gets somebody started down the path of righteousness.

5. Giving

- a. At the core of giving is the deep desire to help others.
- b. Giving comes from a sacrificial nature....which takes it's form from Jesus.
- c. The gift of giving necessitates an understanding of stewardship

- 1) A deep understanding that all we have belongs to God.

- 2) And a willingness to part with it.

6. Leading

- a. Leading is basically providing direction
- b. Leaders are really good compasses.
 - 1) They find their spiritual north from the scriptures
 - 2) But instead of helping guide folks by the stars, they point them to God's word.

- c. A real leader humbles himself.
 - 1) Understanding that God ways are so much higher than theirs.
 - 2) They admit when they are wrong.

- d. Spiritual leaders are people of prayer.

- e. They have a deep concern for God's overall plan

- f. And they love what God loves.

7. Mercy givers

- a. This is being drawn to help the suffering.

- b. Mercy givers put themselves in others shoes and feel their pain
- c. They are not judgmental
- d. A mercy giver recognizes hope in every situation.

E. Paul adds 3 gifts to this list in Eph 4:11

1. Apostle

- a. As the word indicates, is first, one who is sent on a mission with authority to act on behalf of another.
- b. Of course we are not talking about the miraculous powers or divine inspiration of the Apostles, but certainly we are a people on a mission from God.

2. Shepherd

- a. A shepherd is one who cares for, sustains and helps protect a flock.
- b. Here we see fostering and nurturing

3. Evangelist

- a. An evangelist is anyone who centers their life work on sharing Jesus with others.

II. An important first step in giftedness is attitude

A. Claiming an attitude from the sermon on the Mount

1. The beatitudes shaping us

B. Claiming Kingdom principles

1. Service Matthew 21:17-28

- a. Highest rank is service Matthew 23:11 ; Mark 9:35

2. Faith and goodness Matthew 25:21-23

3. Forgiveness Matthew 18:23-32

4. Not expecting better treatment than the Lord John 15:18-20

C. Using the apostolic instruction of

1. Philippians 2:3-7

3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

D. Centering in on 1 Corinthians 13

1. 1 Corinthians 13

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. 13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

III. Giftedness takes form in the discovery of a motivating passion

A. We need to identify our ministry passion

1. God equips each of us with desires within His kingdom
2. What area are you interested in serving?
 - a. What gifts has God given you in this area?
3. How can you get started?

IV. Giftedness blossoms upon discovery of ministry potential

- A. Identify the major areas of gift potentials
- B. Don't get bogged down in only one area of service...God has given you multiple talents.

Conclusion:

We need to let God work His will through us. First recognizing the gifts that He has given to us and then using them.