

Elder Training Series

Session 15 - The Spiritual Gifts of 'Preaching', 'Evangelist (Evangelism)', 'Leadership' (NIV based)

(Repeating) NOTES: - - Perhaps it would be prudent for you to mark or highlight the items in this document that you suspect you need to study further, or accept, or correct, or develop, or work on, or improve in your life.

- - It is important to note that Scriptures do very little to describe, expound, or explain what some of these individual gifts are and how they are manifested in believers' lives.
 - - Consequently, many of the following descriptions of these spiritual gifts are based on a combination of biblically-based logic and reasoning, defining of original Greek words, relating Biblical statements, experiential evidence and observations, Holy Spirit-guided insights, and the supporting opinions of several well-respected authors.
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PREACHING:

- - 'Preaching' is not listed in the key verses that list the spiritual gifts, and yet it is cited in numerous places in the New Testament.
- - Therefore, a reasonable conclusion is that 'preaching' is an aspect of the spiritual 'gift of teaching', albeit perhaps being distinct in its form.
- - The Greek word, that is frequently used in the New Testament, means "to preach, to proclaim, to herald publicly", "to announce publicly; to publish; to teach; to urge reception of". (Strong's #2784; Zodhiates #2784 p.862)
- - From this Greek word definition and from the context of its usages in the New Testament, 'preaching' is distinguished from 'teaching' in that 'preaching' typically involves being conducted in public, in front of an audience that is substantially comprised of unbelievers, whereas 'teaching' is typically conducted in more private environments and is intentionally formulated for believers.
- - Also, 'preaching' usually involves the preacher delivering an uninterrupted verbal discourse or sermon, with the audience listening and not verbally interacting with the preacher during his delivery of the discourse.
- - Because of this kind of audience dynamics, the necessity arises that the verbal discourse or sermon needs to hold the interest of the audience throughout the entire time of its delivery.
- - Thereby, the sermon needs to contain and skillfully utilize some artistry - an artistic influence or flavor that is added to the presentation of the informational contents of the sermon in order to facilitate holding the attention and interest of that kind of audience.
- - This artistic performance quality is very difficult to master or even imitate, except when it is included in the spiritual gifting by the Holy Spirit.
- - A believer, that has this artistic preaching abilities within his Holy Spirit-given and Holy Spirit-empowered 'gift of teaching', can easily and naturally formulate, refine, specialize, polish, and customize his sermons to successfully and effectively attract and hold the attention and interest of both the unbelievers and the believers in his audience.
- - In a church service setting, this preacher furthermore always includes content that specifically pertains to and addresses the believing persons in the audience and likewise content specifically for the unbelieving persons in the audience.

- - Wherein the appropriate conduct of a teacher likewise applies to a preacher, it seems prudent to mention that in their desire to preach the Word with zeal, preachers should not yell at or get angry at the audience, because "**man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires**". (James 1:20)
 - - Both 'teaching' and 'preaching' are loving endeavors of gentle persuasion - not angry tirades. (2 Timothy 2:24-26)
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EVANGELIST (EVANGELISM):

"It was he who gave... some to be evangelists, ..." - Ephesians 4:11

- - Evangelism is the activity of bringing, announcing, and communicating to unbelievers the good news of the gospel - of how God has arranged a way for the salvation of sinners, by means of the atoning sacrificial death, burial, and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:1-5)
- - Essential ingredients of evangelism include: 1. the declaration of the gospel events; 2. the describing of God's promise and means by which He offers and provides forgiveness of sins and eternal life; and 3. the presenting of an invitation for the listener to personally place his/her faith in Jesus Christ - that Jesus suffered and died on the cross to pay the penalty for the listener's own sins and that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day.
- - Because God has designed the gospel message to effect a response of repentance and faith in the life of a nonbeliever, an integral, necessary, and crucial aspect of evangelism is to persuade or win over unbelievers to put their trust in Christ.
- - This persuasion seeks to bring about a change of mind by the influence of reason or moral considerations and to provide the necessary understanding for unbelievers to make an informed decision.
- - Thus, the persuasion of evangelism must include clarity, integrity, gentleness, and sensitivity in granting every listening unbeliever the right to decide for himself/herself. (1 Peter 3:15-16)
- - Evangelism does not incorporate being forceful, contentious, quarrelsome, demanding, pressuring, or overbearing.
- - The spiritual 'gift of evangelism' is the Holy Spirit-given special ability to present the gospel in a way that is particularly plain, easily understandable, and relevant to unbelievers and helping them to take the step of placing their faith in Christ, for salvation from the eternal punishment for their own sins.
- - This believer is: discerning in listening and taking note of the concerns that are important to the listeners; patient in allowing the teaching of God's Word to sink into their hearts; and yielding to the Holy Spirit's control to ensure that what is being communicated in the gospel presentation by the believer is according to God's will, and in His way, and in His timing.
- - In order to conduct himself/herself in this manner, therefore, a believer with the spiritual 'gift of evangelism' is prepared, available, and committed to living a life of integrity that is consistent and honoring to both the gospel message and the Lord who gave it.

- - Obviously, using the spiritual 'gift of evangelism' is not passive in nature but rather is an active effort to put oneself in situations where one can take the initiative to share the gospel and the faith.

- - Commonly within the spiritual 'gift of evangelism' is a Holy Spirit-given internal compelling drive to seek out unbelievers and speak up - share the gospel message with them, regardless of the danger or one's fears. (1 Corinthians 9:16; cf. Acts 18:9-10)

- - Nevertheless, though, evangelism is not reserved only for those few spiritually-gifted believers, because all believers are instructed to go and share the good news of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19; 2 Timothy 4:5)

- - However, the exercising of the spiritual 'gift of evangelism' does require some training - to ensure that the evangelism is conducted properly, the gospel is presented correctly and sufficiently, and the listener is treated appropriately and respectfully.

- - God has specific criteria that must be accomplished in the heart of the unbeliever in order for God to grant that person eternal life - the goal of the gospel and evangelism.

- - If any of those mandatory criteria is not accomplished, then in actuality God has not yet granted that person eternal life, even though that person has apparently listened to the gospel and has apparently responded agreeably to the invitation, but yet thereby incorrectly believes that he/she has now been given eternal life.

- - This is called 'a false sense of salvation', and it can occur easily if the presentation of the gospel with invitation is defective or deficient in a way that God does not allow to result in the granting of salvation to the unbeliever. (Galatians 1:6-8,11)

- - A good document for this training to do evangelism is available on the "Counseling" page of this website www.BelieverAssist.com, entitled "Session 02 - Presenting The Gospel".

- - Churches and ministries are significantly deficient if they do not have an element within them that is actively and frequently engaging in presenting the gospel with an invitation to receive Christ, which God has designed and designated all of His churches and ministries to be doing. (Colossians 1:6)

- - God intends that evangelism is to be conducted on all levels: personally by true believers of the church or ministry; corporately within the preaching, teaching, programs, and events of the church or ministry; locally in the community; nationally in the country; and internationally within other countries. (Colossians 1:6-7; Acts 5:42 - in private and in public)

- - Therefore, minimally, small churches or ministries should have at least one person who is encouraged, supported, and requested to do evangelism throughout the programs and events of the church or ministry. Medium-size churches or ministries should minimally have a group of persons who fulfill these evangelism functions. And large churches or ministries should minimally have an entire ministry or department that is devoted to fulfilling these evangelism functions.

- - Even if the pastor(s), elders, and leaders in the church or ministry are not inclined to do evangelism, the church or ministry nevertheless should have an endorsed element which or who is actively doing evangelism as suggested herein. (e.g. Romans 15:15-16)

- - On a note from experience: The most resistant and difficult place to do evangelism is in the church, but the most fruitful place to do evangelism is in the church.

- - On another note from experience: When speaking an evangelistic presentation in which the listening unbeliever is responding agreeably and receives Christ for salvation, in those few moments it is very exhilarating to realize and watch the eternal destination

of that person change before your very eyes, with God using yourself as His spokesman - as He changes that person's destiny of heading towards horrific torture eternally to now instead heading towards indescribable joy eternally. What a great honor and privilege it is for God to involve yourself as He gives this unbeliever in front of you such a priceless gift!

LEADERSHIP:

"...if it is leadership, let him govern diligently;..." - Romans 12:8

- - The word "**leadership**" means "to lead, to have charge of, to oversee, to rule", "to stand before, or to take the lead". (MacArthur 123; Hillman 91; Strong's #4291 in Romans 12:8)
- - By definition then, a leader is "one who is set over others, or who in rank presides over or rules over others". (Gangel 18; Hillman 91)
- - A leader exhibits skills similar to a ship captain who "charts the course, knows the destination, and keeps the ship on course". (MacArthur 123)
- - The leader, who has this spiritual gift, acts not as a dictator but as a coach in ministry and exerts leading influence that has a distinct spiritual nature to it. (Hillman 90-91; Luke 22:25-26)

-- The general steps of leading in a spiritual manner are:

- - - - determining the direction that God wants the church or ministry to go;
- - - - determining how God wants the church or ministry to proceed in that direction;
- - - - preparing other people and/or groups of people in the church or ministry to be willing, cooperative, equipped, and ready to go in that direction;
- - - - acquiring all of the necessary resources to enable the church or ministry to go in that direction;
- - - - determining God's timing on when He wants the church or ministry to proceed in that direction;
- - - - then acting in accordance to God's timing in initiating the moving in that direction;
- - - - determining and implementing any adjustments that need to be made to facilitate the moving in that direction;
- - - - in every step of this whole process, repeatedly consulting with other leaders in the church or ministry, especially in regard to determining what God wants;
- - - - and furthermore throughout this whole process, monitoring, evaluating, and making any necessary corrections to ensure that everything being done is in accordance with God's will, God's way, God's timing, and God's purposes.
- - Obviously, properly leading a church or ministry in this spiritual manner requires abundant and continuing prayer by this leader - to ensure everything is done in a manner that God approves of and even delights in.

- - A believer with the spiritual 'gift of leadership' is hard-working, organized, decisive, determined, self-disciplined, efficient, prayerful, guarded, courageous, kind, considerate, attentive, caring, patient, insightful, wise, optimistic, ever hopeful, discerning, analytical, humble, resourceful, knowledgeable, faithful, morally upright, honest, and accountable. (Sanders 52,53,57,58,62)

- - This believer has the Holy Spirit-empowering to preside over or rule over or "lead" other persons in a church or ministry in a "**diligent**" manner - remaining focused, with

"earnestness, eagerness, diligence, and zeal", to proceed with persistence in accomplishing all that God desires for the church or ministry that this believer is exerting leadership in. (Romans 12:8; Strong's #4710; *AHD* - 'diligence', 'despatch')

- - This leader does not feel threatened when someone else comes along and is obviously more gifted than this leader.
 - - If this leader gets replaced by a more-gifted leader, then this leader is thrilled that God has upgraded the quality of leadership in the church or ministry that this leader had been exerting leadership in.
 - - And this leader is genuinely grateful that God has allowed himself/herself to fill in as a leader until God brought in that more-gifted leader - who will do an even better and more effective job at accomplishing all that God desires for that church or ministry.
 - - Thereby, this leader genuinely does not seek glory for himself/herself and he/she is not bothered that the better ministry functioning of the more-gifted leader makes him/her look less-gifted and/or less effective.
 - - This leader genuinely delights when other leaders excel more than he/she does at doing ministry in accordance with God's will - even if it means that this leader is out of a ministry job or employment.
 - - Essentially, this leader lives and leads by the motto "I will do this ministry work to the best that God empowers me, until He brings along someone to replace me who does it better!".
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(Repeating) APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

- - Do any of these 3 spiritual gifts jump out at you, inciting in you a reaction of "I think I have this spiritual gift."? If so, think about, meditate on, and pray about whether there are any improvements or adjustments you can make to maximize appropriateness, effectiveness, and productivity of your engaging in each of these 3 spiritual gifts that you think you might have.
- - Do you know of any other believers in your church or ministry from which you see evidence that they might have one or more of these 3 spiritual gifts? If so, do you think God would want you to speak up to each of those persons, and express your opinion and cite specific examples to them that you see evidence that they may have one (or more) of these 3 spiritual gifts?
- - How about your spouse, or children, or parents, or relatives, or friends who are true believers? In this same above manner, can you speak to them about your observations that seem to indicate that they may have one (or more) of these 3 spiritual gifts?
- - And when you encounter one of these people you are talking to who seems to agree that your evaluation of them may be correct, you could offer to go through the description from this document with them, pertaining to the spiritual gift(s) that they seem to agree they may have.
- As may be evident, the big hurdle to overcome here is for each true believer to correctly ascertain (as soon as possible) which spiritual gift(s) he (or she) has.
- - - - Upon that realization, then they can forthrightly look for and pursue opportunities to exercise that (or those) spiritual gift(s).

- - - Thereby, you will have significantly helped each of those true believers to get on the path to becoming a fruit-bearing disciple, doing ministry work that God has gifted and is empowering them to do.

- - - Do these actions sound like some things that you could or should do now, as an actual or a potential future elder, overseer, pastor, or ministry leader?

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