

Ministering Gifts

1 Peter 4; Acts 6; Mark 11
East Berlin Community Church
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Introduction

- Our “Service-oriented” economy
- “Only so much one person can do!”

Ministering Gifts

A. General Observations—1 Peter 4

- 1 Peter 4:10-11-- *“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong he glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”*
1. In a general way, every gift is a ministry gift.—v. 10
 2. Ministry Gifts are to be exercised in God’s strength—v. 11
 3. Ministry Gifts are to be exercised for God’s glory and praise.

B. Specific: What are the “Ministering Gifts”?

1. The Gift of Service or Ministry

- Romans 12:6-7a-- *“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophesy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering...”*
- a. Definition: *“The God-given ability to identify unmet needs in the church and to meet those needs through the use of the individual’s resources.”*
 - b. Illustration – Acts 6:1-8
 - 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. 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. 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. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ 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, whom they set before the apostles; and when they prayed, they laid their hands on them. Then the word of God spread and the number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.”*
 - 1) Very ticklish situation—possible “church splitter”
 - 2) Apostles could not do the work and maintain their priorities.
 - Acts 6:2b-4-- *“It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 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. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word”*
 - 3) Solution was to choose men with the gift of service.
 - 4) Results: Unity and Church growth
 - c. Amplification: The Office of Deacon
 - 1) Definition of a “deacon”—“one who serves”
 - 2) Job Description: Elders’ helpers
 - 3) Includes both men and women

- d. Evaluative Statements: The Gift of Service or Ministry
 - 1) I seem to concentrate on practical things that need to be done rather than on why they should be done.
 - 2) I find great joy in doing things that need to be done no matter how small or trivial the task might be.
 - 3) When I hear of a specific job that needs to be done, I am anxious to get involved.
 - 4) I would rather be involved in a church project than talk to people about their problems and needs.
 - 5) I can usually see projects or tasks that need to be done in the church.

2. The Gift of Faith—1 Corinthians 12:9; 13:2

- 1 Corinthians 13:2-- *"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."*
- a. Definition: *"The God-given ability to see something which God wants done and to sustain unwavering confidence that God will do it regardless of seemingly insurmountable obstacles."*
 - b. Jesus' teaching on "Mountain Moving" Faith—Mark 11:20-24
 - Mark 11:20-- *"Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.'"*
 - Mark 11:12-14-- *"Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When he came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. In response, Jesus said to it, 'Let no one eat from you ever again.' And his disciples heard it."*
 - Mark 11:22-24-- *"So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.'"*
 - 1) Our faith is to be placed in God—v. 22
 - 2) Our God can do the impossible in response to our prayers of faith. – vv. 23-24
 - James 1:6-7-- *"But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord!"*
 - c. The Gift of Faith and the ministry of Intercessory Prayer
 - d. Evaluative Statements: The Gift of Faith
 - 1) When others say something can't be done, I feel the burden to trust God for it.
 - 2) I am able to trust God in very difficult situations.
 - 3) I feel compelled to encourage people to trust God when I see them discouraged or defeated.
 - 4) I have seen God do mighty things in my life that others said were impossible, but I believed God could do them.
 - 5) I have discovered an effective prayer ministry.

3. The Gift of Spiritual Discernment—1 Corinthians 12:10

- a. Definition: *"The God-given ability to distinguish between truth and error, and between right and wrong in order to protect the body of truth and then to properly apply God's truth individually and corporately."*
- b. Examples of the Gift of Discernment in action
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 14:29—"weighing carefully" what is taught
 - 1 Corinthians 14:29-- *"Let two or three prophets speak, and let the other judge"*
 - 2) Hebrews 5:13-14—discerning "right and wrong"
 - Hebrews 5:13-14-- *"For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."*
- c. Practical Usefulness of the Gift
 - 1) Protects the truth of what we believe—1 John 4:1
 - 1 John 4:1-3-- *"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God; Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is not already in the world."*

2) Discern and apply truth in resolving interpersonal conflicts.

- 1 Corinthians 6:5-- *"Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge (our word "discern") between his brethren?"*

d. Evaluative Statements: Gift of Spiritual Discernment

- 1) Others have told me that I have a sense for what is right or wrong in a situation.
- 2) I seem to understand people and their motivations which prove to be correct.
- 3) I constantly evaluate whether something said is right or wrong, truth or error.
- 4) I feel a special responsibility to protect the truth of God's Word by exposing that which is wrong or sinful.
- 5) I see things other people do not see—and are proven to be correct in my evaluations.