

**GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)**  
**SCHOOL OF MINISTRY**  
**ARUSHA - TANZANIA**

**SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES**

**LESSON 2: GOVERNMENTAL & CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES**

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**Governmental & Congregational Ministries**

The Early Church was organised in such a way that all members of each congregation play an active role in the Church's life. Within her membership, the Early Church had a variety of people with different spiritual gifts that were profitable to the entire local body of believers.

**Every ministry or leadership has as its main purpose to edify or build up the Body of Christ (1Corinthians 14:12) so that they can grow up to be like Christ (Ephesians 4:13; Romans 8:29) and that they are equipped to bring others to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20).**

The two main areas of gift-function were those Christians who guided and laboured in the Word of God (Acts 6:4; Ephesians 4:11-16); and those who participated in the various congregational ministries of 1Corinthians 12:4-11 and Romans 12:3-8.

The generic terms used in the Bible to describe these leaders were Elder (Gk – *Presbuteros*), Bishop (Gk – *Episkopee*) and Deacon (Gk – *Diakonia*). Elders and Bishops exercise the Governmental ministries and provide spiritual oversight and care for the Church. The deacons provide support and assistance to the Governmental ministries and they are not necessarily addressed with a title such as deacons, etc. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ described himself as an elder (1Peter 5:1). The emphasis here is not on titles but functions and authority in the Church as ordained by the Lord.

*(Further Readings: Acts 15:2, 22 – 23; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18; Philippians 1:1; 1Timothy 3:1; James 5:14; 1Peter 2:25)*

The Congregational and Governmental ministries do have a difference in function and in authority, but have equal importance in regards to their necessity and significance in the Church. Governmental ministries are given divine authority to rule the Body of Christ through the offices invested on them. To function in these offices, one must receive a divine call from God and under His authority to carry out His purposes.

To function in a congregational ministry, a person must understand his position of responsibility and his limitations. Each part of the Body of Christ has to receive a call from God, but not necessarily to function in a governmental ministry.

**a) Congregational Ministries – *1Corinthians 12:4-11; Romans 12:3-8***

There are gifts given to believers to enable them provide service or ministry within the Body of Christ for its edification and growth, and include the gifts of the Spirit and other ministry gifts (*1Corinthians 12:7, 11*). These gifts are the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, the working of miracles, gifts of healing, prophesy, diverse kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues, discerning of spirits, teaching, exhorting, giving, hospitality, helps, serving, governing or administration, and showing mercy. There are 17 spiritual gifts or more, which every believer in Christ can have and exercise for the service of the Lord.

Many members of the Early Church operated in these different ministries of the Spirit, but they did not necessarily have names or titles. When it was necessary to create a position, the early Church chose out from among her members those who already manifested the wisdom, character and anointing of the Lord upon their lives. Selection of deacons in Acts 6:3 is one such example.

**b) Governmental Ministries – *Ephesians 4:11-16***

These are the five-fold ministries given to the Church and include Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher. To be effective, these ministries also depend on the gifts of the Holy Spirit as mentioned earlier. The gifts are God's anointing, ability and enablement to fulfil the functions of the office.

Governmental ministries oversee and develop or equip other ministries in the Body of Christ. They prepare the saints for their various ministries, but do not do all the ministering for the saints. In Ephesians 4:12, two main functions of these ministries are fully described as (i) to equip or prepare believers for the work of ministry and (ii) to edify, build up or uphold the Body of Christ (vs.16).

In the overall framework of Church leadership, the governmental ministries operate within the context of Church eldership. In the NT, Church government is entrusted to the eldership, which includes the five-fold governmental ministries. The eldership is a local church ruling body with a supportive role to God-appointed leaders such as apostles or bishops (*Acts 15:2, 22, 23; 16:4; Philippians 1:1*). Members of this body are often referred to as Elders.

**Discerning/ Recognising and Releasing ministries**

Governmental ministries have an important role to play to ensure that congregational ministries are developed in such a way that the Church grows and becomes spiritually healthy and at the same time functions effectively as it is called to be (*Acts 6:7*). They need to be able to have spiritual eyes that can discern those who are called to a particular work in the Body, whether in a Governmental function or

Congregational, and to be able to release them to that work. These imply that they have two other functions of discerning potential leaders and releasing them.

To release the numerous ministries that lie dormant in the Body of Christ, Church leadership must function with a spiritual discernment like Christ's. In discerning potential leaders, it is so easy to judge people by outward appearances rather than the heart.

There are many people God called into ministry, who would not have fitted into today's qualification for leadership (*1Corinthians 1:26-29; 1Samuel 16:7*). For example, the early apostles were mostly fishermen, untrained, uneducated and treated with contempt by the society (*Acts 4:13; Matthew 4:18-22*). Paul was a murderer and persecutor of the church (*Galatians 1:23; 1Timothy 1:12-16; 1Corinthians 15:9-10*). Timothy was a timid and frail man (*1Timothy 4:11-14; 5:21-23; 2Timothy 1:7-8*). King David was the youngest in the family (*1Samuel 16:11-13*). Moses was also the youngest in the family and a stammerer (*Exodus 4:10-12*). There are many other Biblical examples of leaders chosen by God, who would not otherwise have met the qualifications as set by fellow men today. One has to look past the natural deficiencies and see the spiritual potential that believers have in the Lord.

The process of recognising and releasing ministries in the Body of Christ takes time. The steps of this process are:

- Recognise the ability and potential in the person
- Focus on the positive areas in the person
- Challenge the person to fulfil their potential and develop their gifts
- Be willing to spend time with them
- Be willing to be frustrated with them, without giving up on them
- Encourage them through the times of mistakes
- Plant a vision in their heart of true shepherding
- Give them opportunities for development
- Put confidence in their ministry
- Pray their ministry into existence

### GIFTS AND MINISTRIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

GIFT/ MINISTRY	SCRIPTUR ES	DEFINITION	FUNCTION
Apostle	Eph. 4:11 1Cor. 12:28 Acts 2:43	One sent forth with orders; A delegate or ambassador; Bearer of a commission.	To establish churches; To ordain elders; To bring forth revelation of the Word; To train and discipline ministries; To be a spiritual father to others.
Prophet/ Prophetess	Eph. 4:11; 2:20 Acts 11:27- 30	Foreteller of God's Word and future events; Forth-teller of God's Word under inspiration of the	To function in the office of a prophet; To confirm direction of ministry; To travel with apostles in team

	Acts 13:1-4 Acts 21:10-11 Exodus 15:20 Luke 2:36	Spirit; Mouthpiece or spokesman for God; An interpreter of God's Word.	ministry confirming local churches.
Evangelist	Eph. 4:11 Acts 21:8 2Tim. 4:5	Preacher of the gospel (messenger of good news); Preacher having a harvesting ministry.	To train soul-winners; To win the lost through preaching and miracles; To work with apostolic teams in starting and establishing local churches.
Pastor/ Shepherd	Eph. 4:11 John 10:16 John 21:16 1Pet. 5:2-3	Herdsmen of God's people; An overseer of the Church; One who tends, guards, feeds and guides the flock of God.	To feed the flock; To counsel the flock; To lead the flock; To identify with the flock; To oversee a local flock.
Teacher	Eph. 4:11 1Cor. 12:28 1Tim. 3:2 2Tim. 2:2, 24	Instructor in God's Word; One who imparts systematic knowledge; A teacher of other teachers.	To establish truth and doctrine from God's Word; To teach others how to teach; To correct doctrine; To balance the prophet's inspirational ministry.
Prophecy	Rom. 12:6 1Cor. 12:10 1Cor. 13:2; 14:3	To occasionally foretell future events; To speak under the inspiration of God's Spirit; To inspire, confirm, and reinforce revealed truth.	To exhort, edify and comfort through inspirational speech; To encourage Christians through the anointing of the Spirit.
Ministry	Acts 6:1 Rom. 15:31 Rom. 12:7 2Cor. 4:1	One who attends as a servant; One who renders service, aid and relief to others	To serve in any capacity available; To show a willing spirit to meet needs at anytime; To minister to others' needs and desires.
Teaching	Rom. 12:7 2Tim. 2:2	One who instructs others; One who instills doctrine into another	To lay out material for the edification, exhortation and comfort of others; To instruct others in a supportive role to a true ministry.
Exhortation	Rom. 12:8 Acts 4:36 Acts 9:26-27 Acts 11:22-26 1Cor. 14:3 2Cor. 1:4, 6	One who consoles, encourages, strengthens others; One who comforts others on a personal level; One who encourages the Church with short words	To warm, console or admonish the believers; To cheer or comfort the Church in times of stress or need.

	Titus 1:9	of edification	
Giving	Rom. 1:11; 12:8 Eph. 4:28	One who liberally shares and imparts to others what he has to give; One who gives to others out of the abundance that God has given to him.	To meet others' needs through giving; To believe God for blessings so that others may receive them in turn; To give financially and sacrificially to meet the needs of the Church.
Ruling	Rom. 12:8 1Thess. 5:12 1Tim. 3:4, 5, 12	One who presides over various Church functions; One who leads by good example and service; One who organises, facilitates and administrates Church activities.	To protect or guard the flock with a leader's instinct; To be a support ministry to the elders of a local church; To organise and carry out activities and programmes.
Mercy	Rom. 12:8 Matt. 5:7 Matt. 6:2-4 James 3:17	One who feels the hurt of others; One who is loving and compassionate; One who shows sincere, gracious favour to others; One who is motivated to encourage and cheer	To minister to the sick, elderly, shut-in and needy; To show kindness and gentleness to the hurt; To anonymously give to meet needs.
Word of wisdom	1Cor. 12:8 Matt. 21:25 Matt. 22:21 John 8:7	One who receives supernatural revelation and wisdom from God for situations; One who is anointed by the Spirit to give specific counsel to others that meets their needs.	To perceive and communicate how the ways of God apply to a specific situation; To function and speak under a supernatural mantle of wisdom and prudence; To receive specific understanding from the Lord about the best way to handle a situation or problem.
Word of knowledge	1Cor. 12:8 1Cor. 5:3-5 Acts 5:3; 9:10; 8:23	One who receives from God supernatural facts and information which would be humanly impossible to know.	To speak forth by divine revelation the specific facts about a situation; To speak to others God's mind toward a specific situation; To reveal to individuals or groups their specific needs or provision by divine revelation.
Faith	1Cor. 12:9 Matt. 21:19	One who can believe God for the impossible; One who has the special gift of faith for what God has promised to do; an ability to see God's	To speak the word of faith with results; To receive from God supernatural power to believe Him for miracles.

		promises come to pass	
Healing	1Cor. 12:9, 28, 30 Acts 4:22-30	One who is used by God as the vessel through which He imparts healing to the physical body at times of His choosing	To be the instrument through which God brings a healing or cure; To lay one's hands on others and see them restored to health by the power of the Spirit, on a regular basis; To be the instrument through which God's power frequently heals a particular kind of sickness.
Miracles	1Cor. 12:28 1Cor. 4:19-20 2Tim. 1:7 Rom. 1:16	One who performs what is naturally impossible through the power of God; One who has been gifted with a ministry of power and deliverance	To perform the supernatural through the power of God; To do something not normally possible, to the glory of God.
Discerning of spirits	1Cor. 12:10 Acts 16:16-18	One who recognises what spirit (divine, evil or human) is causing a certain manifestation or activity.	To judge accurately what is of the Spirit of God and what is not; To have a gifted sensitive spirit that distinguishes between truth and error; To know the spiritual source behind something or someone.
Tongues	1Cor. 12:10 1Cor. 14:5, 6, 18, 21-23, 27-28, 39 Acts 2:4, 8-11 Acts 10:46 Acts 19:6	One who speaks forth a language he does not understand; One who speaks by the Spirit in a language that he has not previously learned.	To speak out a supernatural utterance which is interpreted by the same or different person in a public gathering for the edification of the Church; To speak forth a language not previously learned by formal education, yet is understandable to its hearers; To speak forth a heavenly language as a sign of the reception of the baptism of the Holy Spirit for one's personal edification; it's not the same as the gift of tongues.
Interpretation of tongues	1Cor. 12:30 1Cor. 14:6-14, 27-28 Acts 10:46	One who is given supernatural understanding to interpret the meaning of a message in tongues to the Church	To interpret the meaning of a message given by the gift of tongues in a congregation.
Governments	1Cor. 12:28 Rom. 12:8 1Tim. 5:17	One who steers, directs or pilots an activity in the Church or a local church.	To guide some of the affairs of the Church; To operate in the gift of

			administration.
Helps	1Cor. 12:28	One who gives relief and help; One who lightens the load of leaders by doing certain practical things for them	To help the local church in practical ways; To relieve some of the every day needs of the people in the Church; To relieve those who serve in the Word of some of their routine responsibilities.
Intercession	Rom. 8:26, 27, 34; 11:2 1Tim. 2:1 Isa. 59:16	One who confers with or entreats another person; One who gets to meet a person for conversation, consultation or supplication	To pray for others with a supernatural revelation of their needs; To bring the needs of the Church before the Lord with a special fervency and frequency; To have a deep prayer life and ministry which God uses as a speaking vessel to bring certain needs before Him.
Elder	Acts 11:30 Acts 14:23 1Tim. 4:14 1Tim. 5:17-19	One who is older, or a senior; One who has advanced and matured in life	To lead and rule the people of God; To shepherd the people of God.
Bishop/ Overseer	Acts 1:20 Phil. 1:1 1Tim. 3:1-8 Titus 1:7 1Pet. 2:25	One who watches over, curates or guards others.	To watch over the Church; To guard, protect and help the flock.
Deacon	Acts 6:1-6 Rom. 16:1 1Tim. 3:8, 12	One who serves guests food and drink at table	To serve others in practical ways; To do menial tasks in the Church; To usher, serve communion, or take the offering in a local church service.

There are many other gifts or ministries in the Church such as the ministry of a singer, musician, etc.