

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

**SUBJECT: SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

**LESSON 2: THE MINISTRY GIFTS**

**COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG**

**2.0 - Ministry Gifts (*Ephesians 4:7-16*)**

In every gift, two parties are involved: (1) the giver and (2) the receiver.

In this case we recognise that Christ is the giver of Ministry gifts (*Ephesians 4:7-11*)

He gave them to individuals in the body for the good of the whole body.

As the giver of gifts and as the Head of the Body, His purpose is that the body grows up in every way to Him (*Ephesians 4:15*)

Everything which reaches the body comes from the Head. This includes both the gifts of ministry and the nourishment of the body.

Under Christ's control the whole body is nourished and held together by its joints and ligaments, and it grows as God wants it to grow - (*Colossians 2:19*)

Our natural head serves three general functions:

- (a) It knows the needs of the body
- (b) It sees to it that the needs of the body are met
- (c) It controls the body

The same functions apply to Christ in relation to the gifts of ministry.

1. Christ knows the needs of the Body. He alone can decide what members of His Body can minister to those needs. The members may help one another, but they cannot give spiritual gifts.

No other part of our body knows the needs of the physical body as the head and we can therefore not take it upon ourselves to select certain members to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor, or teachers.

2. Christ sees to it that the Body's needs are met.

If our bodies need more milk because our bones break too easily, the head will know and ensure that the need is met.

3. Christ controls the Body just as our heads control our body. It gives direction to each part of the body.

Every part of the body takes directions from the head to minister to the body's needs.

Likewise, Christ, after He has given gifts to His body, gives direction for their use.

## **2.1 - Apostles**

The gift of ministry known as the apostle is one of the most important offices in the body.

The gift is listed first, perhaps because it has to do with founding and overseeing (*1Corinthians 12:28*).

Apostle means 'to send away' or 'to send forth'.

It points to the work of a missionary, which is a special kind of work. However, not all missionaries are apostles.

An apostle therefore is one who is sent forth by the Lord to carry the gospel into new places, extending the work of the Church and opening fields to the gospel.

His work is to lay the foundation for a new part of the Body. It also includes the task of building up the Body and overseeing the Body.

We have to understand that it is the Lord that chooses an individual and gives the person the calling and the special ability to be an apostle - (e.g. Paul - *Acts 22:14-15*; the twelve Apostles - *Luke 6:12-16*). No-one can take it upon themselves to do so.

There are two kinds of apostles:

(a) The twelve apostles of Christ including the replacement to Judas Iscariot (*Acts 1:21-26*)

(b) Others with this gift of ministry given for the whole period of building the Church

The 12 apostles occupy a special place in the Body of Christ, which cannot be repeated. They had a part in the founding of the church in the world. The city walls of the New Jerusalem will be built on the 12 foundation stones, on which will be written the names of these 12 apostles (*Revelations 21:14*).

Some people therefore claim that there is no need of apostles after the twelve, but apostles will always be necessary in the building process of the Church.

Some claim to be apostles when they are not (*Revelations 2:2; 2Corinthians 11:12-14*). Some are appointed by men and may not necessarily be apostles at all.

Those who are true apostles may not even know. They may never think of themselves in that way.

## **2.2 - Prophets**

The gift of ministry known as prophet has two main functions.

- (1) Foretelling, which means “to tell about an event before it takes place”
- (2) Forth-telling, which means “to tell forth, to speak out”.

Foretelling means the same as predicting events. The Old Testament prophets often foretold or predict events before they came to pass. They also gave the meaning of the message from God to the people.

Forth-telling involves speaking out as one is breathed upon by the Holy Spirit. This is inspiration.

Old Testament Prophets are somewhat different from the New Testament prophets.

1. The Old Testament prophets’ words were not usually found in the word of God already given. Only occasionally does he quote from a written record.

The New Testament prophet, however, most often brings challenge and encouragement based on truths already received (*Acts 15:32*).

2. The Old Testament prophet’s ministry was mostly that of prediction, foretelling the future. Their ministry is often tested by the accuracy of their predictions (*Deuteronomy 18:22; Jeremiah 28:9*). There are few examples of New Testament prophets who foretold the future, for example, Agabus (*Acts 11:27-30; 21:10-11*).

A prophet has a unique gift with insight into future events.

He has a divinely focused special message to the church or to the world.

A prophet speaks by inspiration as he is being breathed upon by the Holy Spirit (*2Peter 1:19-21*).

## **2.3 - Evangelists**

(a) The evangelist’s chief function is understood from the meaning of the word evangelist.

- Evangelist means “one who announces good tidings”.
- The good tidings or news is the gospel (*1Corinthians 15:1-4*)

(b) The other function of the evangelist is to prepare God's people for the work of Christian service (*Ephesians 4:12*)

- Every believer is to be taught to spread the gospel and it is the responsibility of the evangelist to ensure that this is so (*Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:20*)

Evangelists have a special gift of preaching or witnessing in a way that brings unbelievers into the experience of salvation.

The gift of evangelist operates for the establishment of new works while pastors and teachers follow up to organise and sustain.

Essentially, the gift of evangelist operates to establish converts and to gather them spiritually and literally into the body of Christ.

There were people chosen by the apostles and the church to become deacons or stewards but two of them later became evangelists, that is, Stephen and Philip (*Acts 6:2-10; 21:8*).

Those chosen by Christ to be evangelists are chosen for several reasons which include faithfulness, being full of the Holy Spirit, full of wisdom, full of faith, and full of power (*Acts 6:3,8*)

God sometimes may call a young person to be evangelist before that person or anyone else knows he has the necessary qualities, e.g. Samuel and Jeremiah's call to be prophets - (*1Samuel 3; Jeremiah 1:4-10*)

The believer who receives the gift is one whom God knows is qualified, or whom God will qualify, for the task.

We can learn more about the function of an evangelist through the lives of Stephen and Philip in the following passages - Philip (*Acts 8:5-6, 8, 12, 26-40*); Stephen (*Acts 6:8, 10, 15; 7:2-53, 60*)

Gifts of healing or working of miracles are often present in an evangelists' ministry because this attracts people to the hearing of the gospel (*Acts 5:12-14*)

Like every other gift, the gift of evangelism needs to be fully developed if it is to reach its full usefulness.

## **2.4 Pastor - Teacher**

It is commonly accepted that the gifts of Pastor and Teacher apply to one ministry. We will therefore study these gifts as one ministry.

The word 'Pastor - Teacher' means pastor with a teaching ministry.

Of the gift of ministry, the Pastor - Teacher is most common. There are more Pastor-Teachers than Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists. The reason is that there is a need for more of them in the Body because they are able to meet many needs of the Body.

The word 'Pastor' comes from a root meaning to 'protect', from which we get the word 'shepherd'

It implies the function of a shepherd/leader to nurture, teach, and care for the spiritual needs of the Body.

Several whole books of the New Testament are especially for Pastors and these are called the Pastoral Epistles. The list includes the two epistles of Timothy and epistle to Titus.

The qualities of a Pastor-Teacher are faithfulness, wisdom, faith, fullness of the Holy Spirit, and power. He should also have the quality of loving and caring for people. This is why they are often referred to as shepherds (*Acts 20:28-29; 1Peter 5:2-4*)

The giver of this gift Himself is the Chief Shepherd of the sheep. Pastor-Teachers must also have the same loving and caring qualities as the Chief Shepherd.

#### The Role of the Pastor-Teacher

1. He delivers from ignorance. Ignorance is the greatest hindrance to faith.
  - The teacher imparts knowledge to take away the ignorance, which hinders faith in the Body.
2. He delivers from self-centredness.
  - He does this by leading members of the Body into a Christ-centred life.
3. He, as the Shepherd, loves his sheep and is willing to lay down his life for them (*John 10:11-15*)
  - A Pastor-Teacher is able to do little for his flock until he first loves them.
  - Love is the basis for the fruitful function of all spiritual gifts.
4. As a shepherd, he feeds the flock (*John 21:15-16; 1Peter 5:2*).
  - The food must be the kind that both the lambs and sheep can eat.
  - The milk of God's word must be for the lambs, that is, the new believers (*1Peter 2:2; Hebrews 5:13*).
  - Solid food should be for the sheep or the mature believers (*1Corinthians 3:1-2; Hebrews 5:14*)
  - He is to teach and exhort believers with all patience (*1Timothy 6:12; 4:11; 2Timothy 2:2, 24*).
6. As a shepherd, he is to be a leader of his flock (*John 10:4*)

- He is to be an example to his flock (*1Peter 5:3; 1Timothy 4:12*)
- A good leader goes ahead of those who follow, and becomes their example.

7. The shepherd protects his flock (*John 10:11-12; Acts 20:28-29*)

- The best protection a Pastor-Teacher can give to his flock is a solid understanding of God's word

8. The Shepherd aims at reproduction (*John 10:16; 2Timothy 4:5*)

- He wants his sheep to produce more sheep.
- Much of what he does is governed by that purpose.
- When the Pastor-Teacher functions as an evangelist, two things happen:-
  - (a) He brings new members into the Body of Christ.
  - (b) He, by his example, also teaches his flock how to bring new members into the flock.

16). - The purpose of reproduction is the building of Christ's body (*Ephesians 4:13-16*).

(a) They labour to bring the body of believers to unity of the faith, that is, by making them believe the same things as revealed in the Bible. This can only be achieved through oneness of the Spirit (*Psalms 133:1*)

(b) They labour to bring believers to the knowledge of Christ. This is not knowledge about Christ but knowing Him personally and intimately (*Ephesians 4:13; Philippians 3:10*).

(c) They labour to bring them to maturity or to perfection. Their reference point is the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (*Ephesians 4:13*)

- A healthy, mature body reproduces itself.
- When believers are matured, new members will be added to the Body.
- The highest purpose of God is to have many sons bearing the image of His Son in Glory (*Romans 8:28-30*).