

UNDERSTANDING THE TOOLS for TEAM EVANGELISM

To prepare ourselves for the task, we must not only understand the task and the method, but we must also understand the tools we are to use to do the task. Spiritual gifts are the tools given to us by God to carry out the Great Commission.

Every Christian has at least one God-given spiritual gift to use in ministering to others through the local church. (*"But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that, "1Cor. 7:7*) Understanding your giftedness is the easiest way to understand yourself and God's calling on your life. In **Team Evangelism**, each member plays an important role by using his own gift, thus allowing him to be himself. Therefore, knowing your spiritual gift becomes crucial if you are to fulfil your place on the team in carrying out the Great Commission.

Spiritual gifts are the tools for doing the work of the ministry. What is a tool? If God gives you a hammer, what does He want you to do? Dig holes, saw boards, lay cement blocks? No. Obviously, ***If He gives you a hammer, He wants you to drive nails. Determine what tool God has given you – what your dominant spiritual gift is – then you can determine your place on His team.*** You will then know where God wants you to serve. When you use the gift God has given you, you will receive maximum fulfilment with a minimum of frustration. You will work in harmony with other team members as they also use their God- given gifts.

Explanation of Gifts

Since the procedure of the Great Commission requires bringing an individual from a superficial awareness of God to become a mature Christian, a variety of gifts and a team effort is necessary. There are nine basic church-growth gifts that apply. A brief explanation of these gifts follows.

Evangelist – have the Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by leading people beyond their own natural sphere of influence to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. These aggressive soul winners seek the lost.

Prophets – have the Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by proclaiming God’s truth. These hell-fire-brimstone preachers point out sin.

Teachers – have the Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by making clear the truth of the Word of God with accuracy and simplicity. These scholars expound the doctrines and teachings of the Bible.

Exhorters – have the Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by motivating others to action, by urging them to pursue a course of conduct. These “how-to” teachers give the application of God’s Word.

Pastor/shepherds – have the Spirit given capacity and desire to serve God by overseeing training, and caring for the needs of a group of Christian. These leaders who feed their flocks and coach their teams are pastors.

Mercy-Showers - have the Spirit given capacity and desire to serve God by identifying with and comforting those who are in distress. These comforters understand and uplift their fellow Christians.

Servers – have the Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by rendering practical help in both physical and spiritual matters. These helping hands meet the practical needs of their fellow Christians and the church.

Givers - have the Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by giving their material resources, far beyond the tithe, to further the work of God. These financial aides meet the financial needs of their fellow Christians and church ministries.

Administrators – have the Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by organizing, administering, promoting, and leading the various affairs of the church. These take-chargers lead the church, its task groups (committees), and its ministries.

Spiritual gifts represent the individual members of the body of Christ. There is a direct correlation between the various spiritual gifts within the church and the needs a church must meet in an individual’s life to bring him or her to Christian maturity.

THE TEAM VERSUS THE LOST

1. Salvation

2. The Evangelists

Man's first need is (1) **Salvation**. Romans 3:23 says, "*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*". Who are the team members who meet this need in his life? (2) **Evangelists**. This is not to say that evangelists are the only people in a church to lead others to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. But if you were to take a poll, you would see that evangelists are the ones who will probably reach 80 to 90 percent of them. (However, Team Evangelism can change that.) Evangelists are aggressive and confrontational salespeople for Christ.

What is meant by confrontational evangelists (*called soul winners by some*)? They are the type of people who always try to motivate others to reach out to lost people. But again, I need to stress that they are not the only people who can lead a person to Christ, but we must accept the fact that gifted evangelists are responsible for most of the decisions, whether or not they are the ones who really influence the people for Christ.

3. Awareness of sin

4. The Prophets

Man needs to be (3) **made aware of sin**. Members who meet this need in his life are (4) **Prophets**. They are people who can see what's wrong in other people's lives. They can see what's wrong in a church, although their ability to see everything that is right is limited. Their ministry is to point out sin. Prophets do what we think of as "*real preaching*" – getting excited, stepping on toes, and preaching for conviction, really stirring our conscience.

5. Doctrine

6. The Teachers

Man needs to (5) **know the principles for right living**, in other words, **what is right**. People who meet this need in his life are (6) **teachers**. **Didasko** is the Greek word which means to teach: To communicate knowledge, to relay facts, or to make known.

7. To Know How

8. The Exhorters

Man needs to (7) ***know “how”***. Christians who meet that need are (8) ***exhorters***. They spend much time teaching people how to do things. They also motivate people, challenging them to get more done.

9. Shepherding

10. The Pastor/Shepherds

Man needs (9) ***to be cared for***. Through Scripture, people are referred to as sheep. We are the sheep and Christ is the Shepherd. (10) ***Pastor/Shepherds***. Pastor/Shepherds have the need to lead and to care for. They use the shepherd for the people around them. They protect and shelter their flocks.

11. Comforting

12. The Mercy-Showers

Every person faces a time when he or she needs to be (11) ***comforted***. Who meets that need? (12) ***Mercy-Showers***. They are soft spoken, but outgoing people who seem to always know what to say when we hurt. Mercy-showers help others face disease, death, loneliness, and other crises through their support and reminders that God is a loving God. They are also the first ones to send notes of congratulations and stand ready to celebrate the joys God gives as well.

13. A Helping Hand

14. The SERVERS

Sometimes Christian need (13) a helping hand. A Church building needs people who are willing to take care of the maintenance, spruce the ground and so on. (14) Servers receive great satisfaction doing physical labor. It's a gift that God has given to many people in all churches. Servers are not kings but king makers.

15. Financial Aid

16. The GIVERS

Always existing is the need for (15) financial aid. Finances are needed to support the ministries and the missions in the church. (16) Givers meet financial needs and are very mission minded. These people enjoy giving to others who face financial burdens. We should never belittle people who have this gift.

17. Leadership

18. The ADMINISTRATORS

The average church member needs (17) leadership. In order to reach goal, 84% of the people in a church need a total program planned for them with constant supervision. If the program is laid out, 14% of them have the ability to meet that goal with little supervision. Man needs leadership because only 2% of the people have the ability to create a dream and carry it through to completion by themselves. (18) Administrators are the leaders.

19. Fellowship

20 the ENTIRE BODY

Man needs (19) fellowship. Who meets this need? The entire body. Polls have shown that most people who start attending a certain church do so for the fellowship they enjoy.

21. to Serve His Fellow Man

Man needs to serve his fellow man. God placed this need in the hearts of all men. People wrap their lives up in the lives of others. They don't have to be just Christians. "As every man hath received the gift even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (IPeter 4:10)

22. Mature Christian

After you have met all these needs in a person's life, that person becomes a mature Christian.

23. the TEAM

The team is a group of active people indwelled and empowered by the Holy Spirit. No doubt about it, this is the most powerful force on this earth, and for years we have let this force lay mostly dormant. As said by Edmund Burke, "***All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.***"

24."LASTING GROWTH"

The real bottom line for a church is lasting growth. For lasting growth, the church has to meet all these needs in the members' lives.

Let's be realistic, very few churches can minister effectively to all these needs. But, the more that are met, the more effective the church will be in lasting growth.

In a Nutshell

God has uniquely equipped each individual with one or more spiritual gifts to perform a function in the body of Christ. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. . . . But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. (I Cor. 12:4, 11). Just as the physical body functions best when every member is actively doing his or her part. The body of Christ is incomplete without all of its members using the gifts God has given them.

TEAM EVANGELISM acknowledges that even though all Christians have a responsibility to be witnesses, only 10% have the gift of evangelism and are naturally aggressive and confrontational. The other 90% have equally important gifts that should be used in the evangelism process. No one should feel compelled to perform a gift that God has given someone else, but everyone should exercise his or her own spiritual gift(s).

Reference:

Team Evangelism (Giving New Meaning to Lay Evangelism)
by Larry Gilbert,
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