

The Five Gift ministries in the Church.

By Laurence Torr

It was in my heart to take a look at the five gift ministries, which God has recorded in the book of Ephesians Chapter 4, below are just some of the things I worked and I know there is a lot more we can find out from the scriptures about the gift ministries and their purpose and function. I pray this little study of what God was working in my heart encourages you, to take a look at the scriptures yourselves in your own personal reading and studying of God's word. There are many different views on the gift ministries and their purpose, but the only view we should be interested in is God's view. What does God say about it.

As we will later on see there are many different function in the body of Christ and each are important as the other functions. Regardless of the different Functions within the body of Christ, every Member in the body of Christ can move in great power and the wisdom of God, as they are led by the spirit of God, every one of us as we look to God and believe who we are in Christ, can do mighty signs and wonders, bringing deliverance to those that need it, as we preach Gods word boldly as ambassadors for Christ. we can reconcile the lost back to God, we can move with God, and as we move together as one body, with no schisms or believer against believer, we will see greater things happen and the body of Christ being built up and edified. These things were in my heart to share with you.

so let us have a look at the five gift ministries and their function

The Five Gift Ministries Given to the church by Jesus Christ is recorded in the book of Ephesians chapter 4 let us take a look

Ephesians 4:11 And he (Jesus Christ) gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

The Apostles, Prophets, evangelist, pastors and teachers are gifts to the church of God the body of Christ. The reason they were given is recorded in the next verse

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

The purpose of the gift ministries is to perfect saints to do the work of the ministry and for edifying of the body of Christ

In verse 12 we see the three purposes of the Gift ministries and why they were given and to show us how they should function.

God wants us to know this, that is why God has it recorded for us to see and learn for ourselves, what we can know by the scriptures we should endeavour to find out for ourselves through our own personal study of the scriptures.

Every believer can know what I am teaching here now, if they go to the scriptures to see for themselves. Every single believer has the responsibility to not only read the scriptures but to study them, and rightly divide the word by putting the scriptures together themselves, God will open and enlighten your understanding and help you as you desire to learn and know.

The three main purposes of the gift ministries is for,

- 1. For** Perfecting or equipping the saints
- 2. For** the work of the ministry
- 3. For** edifying or building up (**By way of doctrine which could be reproof, or correction which is instruction in righteousness that the man or woman of God may be perfected.**) of the body Christ,.

The body of Christ is built up by way of our ministry of reconciliation by the preaching of the gospel to the unsaved. (**In Reach & Outreach**) and by way of instruction to the body of believers.

We know spiritually that we are perfect, that the spirit of God in us is incorruptible, and we are complete in Christ, spiritually, so what are the gift ministers perfecting?

1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Colossians 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Although spiritually we are whole and lacking nothing, it is the mind of the believers that needs perfecting so they can walk and live as believers should walk and live, so it is the mind of the believer that needs equipping with the understanding of God's word that is addressed to us today and how God would have us live and move, along with encouraging the believers and teaching the believers who they are now as sons and daughters and heirs of God and Joint heirs with Christ and that is done by instructing the believers by way of teaching of the word of God. It is a continual encouragement from the gift ministers, working with individuals and groups along with visits and revisits to the areas that God would have us minister to, we see this by the life and manner of the apostles and also by way of instructing teaching and guiding. ordaining elders, setting things in order making sure sound doctrine is taught among other things.

Ephesians 2:20-22 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

We know we have an old man nature which we are to reckon dead and we are to put on the mind of Christ and be led by the spirit of God.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

As we receive Gods word with meekness and retain it in our hearts with the conviction of doing the word, as we walk out on the truths we are learning, with God working in us and with us, our minds start to be renewed in the knowledge of who we are in Christ, that right now we are sons of God, bought with a price that our lives are no longer our own, that we have made Jesus the Lord of Lives and we are now living our lives unto God and no longer living for this world. The gift ministers feed God's people, with what God is showing them by the scriptures and what God is working in their hearts by the spirit of God, to instruct Gods people to look only to God and to follow the loving encouragement and instruction that God is showing them by way of the gift ministers. That each believer is walking and being led by the spirit of God. Although Paul wrote this Epistle to the Ephesus believers and the faithful in Christ Jesus, in His day and time. The book of Ephesians is also addressed today to those born again of God's spirit. The Book of Ephesians, is addressed to the church of God the body of Christ today, the faithful in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

God is not the God of Confusion, But a God of peace as in all the churches of the saints. Every believer can and should be led by the spirit of God, with God working in their hearts and moving as He shows them how to move, Preaching the Gospel and healing the sick, raising the dead and cleansing the lepers, doing the same works that Jesus Christ did and greater, We all have the ministry of reconciliation we are all ordained to preach the gospel of Christ, and operate the

manifestations of holy spirit, we can all teach and preach the word of God. But the ministry of reconciliation is not the same as one of the five Gift ministries. The gift ministries reconcile within the body of Christ those believers back to God in their walk and behaviour, the gift ministers also preaches the gospel to the unsaved.

We see that although every believer can be sent, or prophesise, evangelise, teach, pastor, and care for people, that does not make everyone a gift minister right? there are many functions in the body of Christ many gifted and talented people that can use what God has blessed them with as individuals, bringing variety and diversity to the body of Christ. We will look at this a little later in this article.

God is a God of order, it is as we walk by the spirit of God, that our walk is being perfected and we begin to see how God would have us to function within the body of Christ.

Gift ministers, are not higher or better than any other believer in the body, but they have an important role in feeding Gods people the truth and the whole council of God's Word to God'S people, they serve the body of Christ, with humble and meek hearts to God, instructing and bringing God's people to be like minded on the truth of God's word and how they should live and move. Gift Ministers are a service to the Body of Christ and overseers, with Jesus Christ being the head and with God giving the increase.

If we take note of **Ephesians 4:11** it says and **he gave Some** this should indicate to us that not everyone has a gift ministry.

The body of Christ needs constant nourishing, and being uplifted and guided through the gift ministries of the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelist, Pastors, and Teachers, they are given to help the of Body of Christ the church of the living God, they are not just for the local fellowships or individuals. No Local fellowships, or organisation can dish out the gift ministries, and say we appoint you an apostle for example.

The apostle Paul's letters to the Corinthians and Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, and Thessalonians were written and sent to edify the body of Christ, teaching them what they should know, whether that was in the form of reproof or correction, it was done with great encouragement to comfort the hearts of the God's people, and with the truth of what God wanted them to know which was instruction in righteousness, so that they were equip and armed with the truth of God's word to them so they could keep living victoriously and overcoming any challenge of the enemy and to be sharp on what was being taught by others, and to teach the same things that Paul was instructing.

Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are leaders in the body of Christ, and Christ is the head of the Church, the gift ministries to the body are to be of service to the body of Christ. They are not there to be served and waited on hand and foot, so to speak they serve the body of Christ and feed them with the direction of God's word, equipping the saints to do the work of the ministries until we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:13

Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

With so many different doctrines and false teaching's, the gift ministers by their encouragement and teaching and instruction helps the believers to stay informed and to stay level headed and sharp, and not to be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they (the false ministers) lie in wait to deceive.

The apostle Paul was faithful to his calling, Paul was an apostle (not of men, neither by man, but Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead **Galatians 1:1**) Paul was faithful and when he left the believers he left them with these words.

Acts 20:27- 30 Take heed (**to turn the mind to, attend to be attentive**) therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous (**stern**) wolves (**destructive men**) enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse (**to pervert**) things, to draw away disciples after them.

31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

The gift ministries will last till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

This was God's structure that brought order in the early Church. This is what the gift ministries are for, to keep godly order within the body and for providing God's people with encouragement and comfort and direction through instruction.

The gift ministries help to provide the right focus and direction.

We need to recognise the gift ministries of the apostle, prophets, evangelist, pastors and teachers, instead of being a law unto own ourselves so to speak. We do not want the attitude of well "I've got the spirit of God", "I can teach the word," "I can preach the word", "there is no need for Gift Ministers", "We are all gift ministers".... I would beg to differ, what does God's word say and show us?

If we are following what God set out to the first century church by way of instruction tell me where these truths have changed today? would we not be walking by the same rule and principles that God set out to the first century church of the body of Christ? The answer is YES.

Just a quick reminder of the purpose of the gift Ministries to the body of Christ, there is a purpose for them.

1. For Edify or building up of the body of Christ.
2. For the work of the ministry
3. To Perfect the Saints (**In their walk**)

The gift ministers are training and perfecting the believers and it is an ongoing service to the body of Christ until we are gathered together.

Every believer has a function and a way of service within the body of Christ, we have all been empowered to serve, and every member in the body of Christ is as important as the other members and we all have the ministry of reconciliation.

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

¹²For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

¹³For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

¹⁴For the body is not one member, but many.

¹⁵If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁶And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

¹⁸ But now **hath God set** the members **every one of them** in the body, as it hath pleased him.

¹⁹ And if they were all one member, where were the body?

²⁰ But now are they many members, yet but one body.

²¹ And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

²² Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

²³ And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

²⁴ For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked.

²⁵ That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

²⁶ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

²⁷ Now ye are the body of Christ, and **members in particular**.

²⁸ And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

²⁹ Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

³⁰ Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

³¹ But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Romans 12:3-8 ³For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

⁴For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:(function)

⁵So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

⁶Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

⁷Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

⁸Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Every born again believer has a function within the body, we all have a role to play, as we begin to serve and minister in the body, we can see what God would have us do and our long suits and strengths begin to shine through. We develop

our long suits and strengths as we continue to walk with a humble heart, serving one another in love, each member is filled with the spirit of God and bought with a price, there is no one person better than another, in God's eyes we are all equal. We put God first and desire what God wants for us, then we begin to mature in our walk and service to others.

Romans 12:4 says there are many members in one body and all members have not the same office.

The office is a mode of acting or more easily put, a function, not every believer has the same function.

That is why it says in Ephesians 4:11 and He **gave some** and in **1 Corinthians 12:28** and God has **set some** in the Church, firstly apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers after that miracles then gifts of of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues

we all function differently according to the gifts of God's grace, so we can serve, and God has set the members in the body as it has pleased Him.

1 Corinthians 12:27 Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular.

Ephesians 4:7 But unto **every one of us** is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

We have all been given grace to function, to live, to move, and have our being, to serve with in the body of Christ as well as to reach out to those that are lost with the Gospel of Christ.

Romans 12:6 -8 ⁶Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

⁷Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

⁸Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

We all have a part to play within the body of Christ, and the parts we play should also be done with the love of God looking to building each other up not tearing each other down.

Paul goes on to instruct in Romans 12:9-12 the heart we should have

Romans 12:9-12

⁹Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

¹⁰Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

¹¹Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

¹²Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

¹³Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

¹⁴Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

¹⁵Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

¹⁶Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

¹⁷Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

¹⁸If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

¹⁹Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

²⁰Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

²¹Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

What are the functions of each gift minister, The Apostles, Prophets, Evangelist, Pastors, and Teachers?

What is the function of an Apostle?

an apostle – *apostolos* (652) **1.** *a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders* (Thayer's). An apostle is someone who is sent forth with orders and therefore also with the necessary authority to do the given job.

Paul was sent by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead. Therefore he had the highest possible authority to accomplish his task.

Paul was sent forth with orders and authority to establish the believers in their walk with God, working with the local leadership, establishing the churches in their area. To encourage the believers to walk worthy of their calling, to bring them back to the truth, when believers went off or others were coming in with a false doctrine, Paul established the churches in their areas, setting the things in order, correcting error, and so forth encouraging and comforting the hearts of the believers when they were under attack.

If we read the book of Acts and each epistle we can see how Paul and the other gift ministers worked, moved, and the heart of how they worked and moved. Paul was like a father to those he was encouraging, Paul encouraged the believers with sound doctrine, and also reproof and correction, that the leaders and believers were instructed in right living, as well as encouraging the believers of who they were in Christ.

Paul established the new churches as well as building them up. Paul didn't work alone either as we know he worked with other ministers, like Barnabas, Timothy, Silas and others. The apostles saw that God's work got done and things happened.

Paul also brought new light to his generation, of Christ in you the hope of glory and many other wonderful truths.

There are many more things you could study and look into yourself.

Prophets – One of Thayer's definitions *one who, moved by the Spirit of God and hence his organ or spokesman, solemnly declares to men what he has received by inspiration, especially concerning future events, and in particular such as relate to the cause and kingdom of God and to human salvation.*

A prophet is a spokes person for God a prophet can forth tell and speak the things that God wants His people to hear right there and then and also a Prophet can foretell a future event that God has shown them. A prophet is the eyes and ears of the church, forewarning Gods people of coming danger, or a calling of God's people back to God's word, where they have gone astray, if you look at the prophets in the old testament you will soon understand a prophets role. A prophet is one that can hear Gods voice and communicate what God has spoke to the prophet and to communicate that message to others.

Again as you study the word of God you will find out a lot more for yourself.

Evangelist - Thayer's says, Evangelist is a bringer of good tidings An Evangelist, preaches the gospel and their focus is the unsaved,

note every believer can evangelise we are all responsible to use our ministry of reconciliation. evangelist is ready to act on the word having a great desire to see those that are in darkness come to light, they bring healing and deliverance and great joy to those that believe and receive the message he brings. An evangelist preaches the gospel of Christ, leading people to the new birth.

As you study the word on what an evangelist is you will learn more for yourself , the only person in the new testament who was called an evangelist is Philip.

Remember we can all in part operate in one or more of the gift ministries but that does not mean you have a function of a gift minister. As born again believers we can all teach, we can all hear from God, and can prophesise whether that is forth telling or foretelling, we can all preach the gospel, we can all care for people like a pastor, and we should all be able to teach the word.

Pastors - *Thayer's says this 1) herdsman, especially a shepherd, 1a) in the parable, he to whose care and control others have committed themselves, and whose precepts they follow.*

The function of a pastor is to take care of Gods people, tending to the needs of the believers and their walk encouraging and guiding the believers by way of feeding them Gods word. Pastors are also an example to the "flock" to the people that God has given them to care for. for further study of the attribute of a pastor you can read Psalms 23:1-6 God is our shepherd, Jesus Christ is the chief shepherd 1Peter 5:4 false pastors is are shown in Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 23 those that did not care for Gods people.

by observing the good pastors and the false pastors we can see the true heart of those that are the real pastors for God.

One minister wrote this about pastors and it blessed my heart he wrote this.

"The pastor, for instance, would remind the apostle, evangelist, teacher, or prophet to consider the importance of cultivating and maintaining healthy relationships and not just dispensing information, accomplishing goals, delegating authority, or dispensing moral judgment".

I encourage you to look more into the role of a pastor for yourself.

Teachers *Thayer's says a teacher, in the New Testament is one who teaches concerning the things of God, and the duties of man.*

A teacher is one that has studied to show themselves approved unto God a workman that needs not to be ashamed, for he or she has rightly divided the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

A teacher sets before others the truth and right order of what God is showing from the scriptures, they rightly divide the word of truth and teach Gods people, even if it goes against the poplar teachings of the day. The truth of God's word is of utmost importance for the teacher and those that they teach. so they can live, right lives before God in Truth. one minister wrote this which is worthy to take note of.

“Since anyone can take what they have learned and to some extent communicate that to others, it can be difficult to distinguish between someone with the ministry of a teacher and someone who simply has a command of his subject. The way we can tell if someone has the gift ministry of a teacher is the same way we can identify other ministries: see what comes forth from them over time”.

I encourage you to do your own studying on what we look for in teachers, there are many records that you can look at in each of the gift ministries' roles, so you can know what to look for in those that call themselves gift ministers or others who call people gift ministers, you can know yourself and their importance.

We need to remember, there are false apostles, false prophets, false evangelist, false pastors and false teachers, we can identify them through their words and actions and fruit as long as we know what The Scriptures says about them and what to look for.

God through Jesus Christ has provided everything for the body of Christ the church of the living God to live and move and to not be ignorant.

Jesus Christ is the head of the Body, Jesus while walking this earth operated in all the gift ministries of an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher.

I was inspired to look these things up and share what I am learning. God wants His people to know these truths, to find it out for themselves to make these truths their own, to recognise what God has put in order, and to see what the Word of God says about these things is important and that we all should begin to find out and recognise the different functions and roles within the body of Christ, that we are all the one body of Christ and that we should be working together and at the leading and prompting of God, that we are to have humility of heart, that we are to serve one another and to build the body of Christ the church of the living God. This is strong in my heart, many believers are walking on their own or just plainly doing their own thing with no accountability to anyone calling it being led by God. Where there are believers desiring to know and are walking with God and are practising the truths in their lives, God would have us be with them, not out on a limb by ourselves.

When we recognise the gift ministries that Jesus Christ gave to the body of Christ, and that God is, a God of order then things can run more smoothly for all.

Gift Ministers are given to establish the believers walk with God to build up the body of Christ, by way of instruction and encouragement. To set in order the things that are wanting to establish the local church, even to visit other places where there are no gift ministers operating. God will supply that lack as I have seen this in my own walk and ministering. There should be no lone rangers in the body of Christ, No fellowship should be hid away from the rest of the body of Christ, we need each other and the encouragement of each other, the love of God and the forgiveness of God needs to be at work in the hearts of the believers, looking to reconcile in the body of Christ where things have broken down.

When we look at the apostle Paul he walked with great humility of heart even when reproofing it was in the spirit of meekness, he was led by the spirit of God, he manifested the fruits of the spirit in his life, he was abased at times and abounded in other times, he suffered loss and hardship, but his focus was to continue in his calling, encouraging others and appealing to others to walk the walk.

This topic of teaching is bigger than what I have written here. I encourage you to take a look at what God is saying about it yourselves. I will continue to study this subject myself and build upon that which I have already learnt. I will finish off with these verses here

Ephesians 4:1-16 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

²With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

³Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

⁴There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

⁵One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

⁶One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

⁷But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

⁸Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

⁹(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

¹⁰He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

¹¹ And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

¹⁴ That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

¹⁶ From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

God bless you

love

Laurence