

Eternity Daily Bible Study

(A ministry of Eternity Christian Fellowship)

Walking In The Spirit - 52

Studies in this series can also be found online at www.globalchristians.org/walkspirit/

Topic: What Is Spiritual Ministry?

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Spiritual ministry is ministry with spiritual goals which is done under the power, inspiration and direction of the Holy Spirit. It is ministry that simply cannot happen unless God shows up. Its basis and its main priority is the Word of God and prayer:

Acts 6:2-4 EMTV *Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not pleasing to us that we should forsake the word of God to serve tables. (3) Therefore, brothers, select seven men from among you, of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint for this need. (4) But we will faithfully engage in prayer and in the ministry of the word."*

The following verses indicate some areas of spiritual ministry that Jesus expected His disciples to be involved in:

Matthew 10:7-8 MKJV *And as you go, proclaim, saying, The kingdom of Heaven is at hand. (8) Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. You have received freely, freely give.*

This is 'scary ministry' because you are totally reliant on God showing you what to do and how to do it and for Him to provide 100% of the results.

Areas of spiritual ministry may include:

1. Proclamation of the Good News of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 10:8, Luke 10:9)
2. Casting out demons (Matthew 10:8, Acts 8:5-8)
3. Healing the sick (Luke 10:9, Matthew 10:8, 1 Corinthians 12:9, James 5:15)
4. Cleansing lepers (Matthew 10:8) & raising the dead (Acts 9:36-42, 20:7-10)
5. The gift of special visionary faith (1 Corinthians 12:9)
6. The working of mighty miracles (1 Corinthians 12:10)
7. The discerning of spirits (1 Corinthians 12:10)
8. Tongues & the interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10)
9. Prophecy (Acts 2:17,18, 1 Corinthians 12:10, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40)
10. Words of wisdom and knowledge (1 Corinthians 12:8)
11. The ministry of the Word – anointed teaching (Acts 6:2-4, Romans 12:7)
12. The ministry of prayer and intercession (Acts 6:2-4, Colossians 4:12)
13. Shepherding the flock as ones appointed by the Spirit (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:1-4)
14. Providing Scriptural counsel and encouragement (2 Timothy 3:16,17, Rom 12:8)
15. Anointed helping of others in constructive ways (1 Corinthians 12:28)
16. Godly wise leadership administration (Romans 12:8, 1 Corinthians 12:28)
17. Sharing (Romans 12:8, 13; 1 Timothy 6:17-19, Hebrews 13:16, 1 John 3:16-17)

28)

18. Mercy (Romans 12:8, James 1:27)

Some of these gifts such as mercy, helps, sharing, leadership and administration may not seem to be 'very spiritual' yet they are among the leading causes of burn-out, rage, and compassion fatigue in ministry when they are attempted without the proper calling and anointing. And spiritual leadership and administration are vastly different from that in the business world (just ask any businessman who has tried to transition over to a missions organization or church).

All of these eighteen powerful gift areas require sustained immersion in the Word of God and prayer if they are a) to work at all and b) if they are not become destructive of either the hearers or the practitioners.

During the next few weeks we are going to have a deep look at spiritual ministry and how it differs from ministry done the world's way, with the world's attitudes and means just as if the church or missions agency was a small, medium or large sized business or bureaucracy and without much real dependence on God the Holy Spirit.

For instance there is a mile of difference between preaching that has anointing and comes from deep bible study, prayer and dependence on God and preaching that is just theology on display, or preaching that is all theatrics and showmanship. Real spiritual ministry comes from Christ Himself working through that person via the gifts and calling that He has imparted to them.

Spiritual ministry is not automatic and needs to be fanned into flame:

2 Timothy 1:6 MKJV *Therefore I remind you to inflame anew the gift of God, which is in you by the putting on of my hands.*

When the flame goes out a real ministry crisis can result. This is why we need to deeply study the ministry gifts and how they operate and how we can develop them and sustain them so that the body of Christ is fully edified.

I am not meaning to imply that normal day-to-day operational areas such as 'waiting on tables' (Acts 6) or being a parking lot attendant are un-spiritual. They are still very much needed. But they support the work of the spiritual ministries. If no one is getting healed, saved, delivered or instructed in the Truth inside the building then there is not much use parking the cars outside the building!

Jesus was 100% focused on spiritual ministry. He never built a building or set up a publishing house. Even when he fed the five thousand it was with spiritual teaching purposes and faith-building in mind. And this miracle caused Jesus much trouble when the multitudes then wanted Him to become King, and when Jesus refused they deserted Him in droves so only the twelve were left (John 6).

Spiritual ministry was the focus of Jesus and the apostles and so it should also be the focus of the Church today. But our program mentality will have to move out of the way in the process!

Blessings,

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