

SERVICE ENABLEMENT & EMPOWERMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT TO HIS GLORY

OR

SERVING TO GOD'S GLORY

1 Peter 4:10-11

December 5, 2010

INTRODUCTION: *“I will serve You through football, but You will have to do the work.”*
Bobby Bowden, FSU Legendary Coach

“God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission.”
J.H. Newman

1 Corinthians 12:7, “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all”

1 Corinthians 12:11, “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills”

I. EVERY CHRISTIAN HAS RECEIVED A SPIRITUAL GIFT. 10

“As each one has received a gift”

- ◆ **A spiritual gift is divine enablement for ministry/service to the church, Christ’s body**
- ◆ **Each believer’s spiritual giftedness is unique**
- ◆ **Because the Holy Spirit sovereignly superintends the distribution of spiritual gifts, believers cannot earn, pray for, or in any manner generate them**
- ◆ **Gifts are discerned in service, therefore, we do not gain the answer by introspection.**

EXAMPLE: Taught RA boys, sang in the choir, disciplined men (six or so at a time). It was in the service of teaching/preaching the Bible I sensed my gift and calling.

Some candidates for the gospel ministry move through an academic program of preparation and present themselves for a pastoral call with little or no record of service other than academic achievement. In contrast, most Third World pastors seek preparation after their gifts for ministry have been shown in years of service.

ILLUSTRATE: William Carey went to India under the compulsion of his missionary vision, but he had demonstrated his gifts as a linguist by mastering Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Dutch, and French, and had shown his pastoral gifts in caring for a little church. His gifts as a missionary statesman and educator became evident as he carried forward his own challenge.

*“Expect great things from God and attempt great things for God.”
The Father of Modern Missions*

II. EVERY CHRISTIAN HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO USE THEIR SPIRITUAL GIFT. 10

“minister to one another”

“employ it in serving one another” – the word for service/ministry is a general word referring to all kinds of service rendered to others. This verb is used in Acts 6 for the serving of tables.

GREAT TRUTH: God has equipped each one to perform certain tasks. Since each member of the body of Christ has been divinely empowered for service, we have a corresponding responsibility to use the gift properly. If we fail to do our part, the Body of Christ suffers and someone else must pick up our slack.

1 Corinthians 12:4, “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.”

1 Corinthians 12:6, “And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.”

v.10 speaks of **manifold grace of God** – varieties of gifts and variety of ministries; means many colored. Each gift demonstrates a facet of God’s grace as the possessor uses it to minister to others.

NOTE: Spiritual Gifts are listed in Romans 12:6-8

<u>1 Cor. 12:4-11</u>	<u>Eph 4:11</u>	<u>1 Peter 4:1-11</u>
Prophecy	Word of Knowledge	Apostles
Service	Faith	Speaking
Teaching	Healing	Evangelists
Exhorting	Miracles	Serving
Giving	Prophecy	Pastors
Leading	Distinguishing Spirits	Teachers
Mercy	Speaking in Languages	
	Interpreting Languages	

1 Cor 7:7 Celibacy

It would be a mistake to suppose that Paul and Peter's list of gifts were intended to be exhaustive. Peter evidently does not fear that a Christian will miss his calling if he cannot find his gift classified in Scripture.

When believers employ their gifts in *serving one another*, they minister in a fashion that mutually benefits the church. Conversely, non-use of gifts or wrongly depreciating some gifts adversely affects Christ's body.

1 Corinthians 12:14-25, "For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'; nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unrepresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another."

III. EVERY CHRISTIAN IS RESPONSIBLE AS A STEWARD OF THEIR SPIRITUAL GIFT. 10

"as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" –

Stewards are those who manage their spiritual gifts wisely and use them obediently.

Col 1:16, "All good things were created through Him and for Him." Like Joseph in Genesis, a steward is a house-manager. God's house is managed by His stewards. A steward came to realize:

1. His life did not belong to himself

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

2. He belonged to his Master (Lord/Savior)

3. His purpose in life was to please his Master

Colossians 1:9-10, "For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God"

4. He owned nothing

Ecclesiastes 5:12-15

“The sleep of a laboring man is sweet,
Whether he eats little or much;
But the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep.
There is a severe evil which I have seen under the sun:
Riches kept for their owner to his hurt.
But those riches perish through misfortune;
When he begets a son, there is nothing in his hand.
As he came from his mother's womb, naked shall he return,
To go as he came;
And he shall take nothing from his labor
Which he may carry away in his hand.”

James 1:17, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”

5. He dispersed the good of his Master

1 Chronicles 29:14. “But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You.”

He was not the *owner*, only the administrator. A good steward was one who was true to the trust put in him, one who faithfully carried out his duties. Gifts, as God's divine endowments, are in fact a *sacred trust* from God, handed to us with His *special touch*, to be used to the end that He is glorified in a service that to us is His *specific task*.

IV. EVERY CHRISTIAN RECEIVES STRENGTH TO USE THEIR SPIRITUAL GIFT. 11

Ministers – serve; root of the word for deacon. It can refer to *all* kinds of service (menial tasks), same word Jesus used of His service; service in general (*all* service is important)

“If anyone ministers (serves), let him do it as with the ability which God supplies.”

A. THE SOURCE OF STRENGTH. 11

Peter and Paul understood this principle.

Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

“ability” – strength; if God is to be glorified by ministry in His name, it must be ministry performed in His strength.

Zechariah 4:6, “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts.”

Teaches Me Two Things:

1. Dependence.

God lavishly supplies the strength and without Him I can do nothing.

John 15:5, “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

Dependence on His enablements.

2. Confidence.

A confidence that resources expended in faithful stewardship will be replenished by a faithful supplier.

Warning: Ministry performed by merely human energy and for one’s own status in the eyes of others can soon become a wearying activity and increase one’s *pride* rather than one’s *faith*.

B. THE SUPPLY OF STRENGTH. 11

“which God supplies” – the source of the supply of strength. Points to someone who defrays the expense of something; verb means to supply lavishly. God provides: Jehovah Jireh – Our Provider. God abundantly supplies the Christian worker with the necessary strength to accomplish the task.

Thayer: The training of a choir; idea of equipping one for a task; to lead a chorus, providing for needs with unlimited liberality. To furnish or supply anything (Choregein)

1. Speaking Gift.

Preaching, teaching, evangelism, singing, sharing words of encouragement, praise, and testimony (verbal gifts)

“let him speak as the oracles of God” – utterances; used of Scripture; the very words out of the mouth of God; the sayings of God (**Rom 3:2, Acts 7:38**).

The teacher is not the purveyor of his own notions, but the transmitter of the sayings of God.

William Barclay said, *“If a man has the duty of preaching, let him preach not as one offering his own opinions or propagating his own prejudices, but as one with a message from God.”*

2 Corinthians 5:20, “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.”

Speaking gift has to do with the presentation of the gospel. It is God speaking through Him. Those who now speak the Word must depend upon the gift of the Spirit to proclaim the Scriptures.

v.11

2. Serving Gift.

“If anyone ministers (serves)” – there is an emphasis that insists we should treat our giftedness as a unique responsibility and honor.

Speaks of any kind of helping or acts of encouragement for the benefit of others; a doer, meets needs, frees others; behind the scene ministries that help to make the public ministries possible.

- ◆ Parking for single moms
- ◆ Greeters
- ◆ Nursery
- ◆ Ushers
- ◆ Webcast/Cameras
- ◆ Media Team

V. EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD GLORIFY GOD WITH THEIR SPIRITUAL GIFT. 11

“that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen”

This is to be the aim and goal of all service done in Christ’s name.

1 Corinthians 10:31, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

“that in” (so that) – a kind of all embracing imperative.

“In all things, let God be glorified.”

Doxology – an expression of praise and glory to God.

“belong” – they are inherently His

Malachi 2:2, “If you will not hear,
And if you will not take it to heart,
To give glory to My name,
Says the Lord of hosts,

**‘I will send a curse upon you,
And I will curse your blessings.
Yes, I have cursed them already,
Because you do not take it to heart.’”**

“God may be glorified” – depravity guarantees a selfish tendency in man that makes him liable to the use of spiritual gifts in a selfish fashion.

“Amen” – affirmation; Peter voices his own agreement to the exalted presentation of the Lord. So it is!

Revelation 5:13. “And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!’”

Since the ability to serve is a gift, and the strength for the ministry comes from God, why should a man boast?

CONCLUSION: *“One individual life may be of priceless value to God’s purposes, and yours may be that life.”*

O Chambers

“When we choose deliberately to obey Him, then He will tax the remotest star and the last grain of sand to assist us with all His almighty power.”

O Chambers

ILLUSTRATION OF MY GIFT: **EXHORTATION**

Characteristics:

- 1. A motivation to urge people to their full spiritual maturity in Christ.
Paul’s goal was to “present every man mature in Jesus Christ.” (Col. 1:28)**
- 2. An ability to discern where a person is in spiritual growth and to speak on that level.**
- 3. A desire to give precise steps of action in urging people toward spiritual maturity.**
- 4. A drive to explain truth with logical reasoning in order to gain acceptance for it.**
- 5. An ability to visualize spiritual achievement for people and to use this to motivate them to action.**
- 6. An ability to identify with people of different types and backgrounds in order to gain a wider hearing.**
- 7. A motivation to bring harmony between diverse groups of Christians, and an awareness that harmony is basic to spiritual maturity.**
- 8. An ability to welcome personal tribulations as a chief motivator of spiritual growth.**

CONCLUSION: Misuse of Exhortation

A. Raising The Expectations of Others Prematurely

Exhorters can visualize long-range projects and goals for people. These are often explained without reference to the amount of time that will be required to work them out. The people involved are led to assume that these projects and goals will be reached much sooner than they can be.

B. Taking “Family Time” to Counsel Others

The delight of exhorters is helping people with problems. Exhorters are willing to give whatever time is required to achieve results. All too often, this time cuts into family responsibilities. Exhorter assumes that their families will understand-until they learn differently.

C. Treating Family and Friends as “Projects” Rather Than As Persons.

Because exhorters put confidence in steps of action which have proven effective, they are usually ready to share these steps to others, including family and friends. Rather than making them feel like special people, the exhorter may give the impression that friends and family are just more “counseling projects.”

D. Sharing Private Illustrations Without Permission.

The importance and effectiveness of personal illustrations is well known to exhorters. Illustrations explain how to apply steps of action and also how to motivate the listener to take them. Exhorters tend to use recent illustrations which are either premature or used without permission.

E. Jumping Into New Projects Without Finishing Existing Ones.

Projects are often used by exhorters to reach ultimate goals. Exhorters tend to motivate others to get involved in a project and then they abandon it for a “better” project. This often disillusion those who were involved in the first project.

F. Encouraging Others to Depend On Them Rather Than On God and Their Authorities.

People who receive help by following counsel that is given by exhorters tend to rely on those who give it. Exhorters tend to encourage this because of their joy in being around those who are growing spiritually.

G. Trusting Visible Results Rather Than A True Change Of Heart.

Exhorters tend to communicate acceptance and approval when those they are trying to help respond to the steps of action which are given. This can encourage outward conformity without an actual change of heart within.

H. Neglecting Proper Emphasis On Basic Bible Doctrines.

Any teaching which neglects practical application tends to be minimized by exhorters. Because doctrinal teaching has been wrongly separated from its moral applications, exhorters have neglected it in favor of “life-related” teachings.

I. Giving Counsel Before Discerning The Type Of Person Or Problem.

Exhorters tend to categorize the problem in their mind before hearing all the important facts. This results in the shame of answering a matter before fully hearing it. Exhorters also tend to have more confidence in their own counsel than in God’s warnings on whom not to counsel.

FLESH VS. SPIRIT

SPIRIT

Wisdom

Discernment

Faith

Discretion

Love

Creative

Enthusiasm

FLESH

Natural Inclination
(Self-effort)

Judgmental

Presumption

Simple-minded

Selfishness

Under-achievement

Apathy