

Each of us has several distinct components to our being; our conscience, our personality, our mental and physical talents and our emotional constitution, for instance, were arranged by God when He shaped us in the womb. Of course, our life experiences and our own choices do affect how these parts of our selves ultimately readout in how we live and what we do. One aspect of our personhood that God wove together in making us is our *spiritual ministry*, or *gift-mix*.

Our *ministry gifting* is part of our God-given enablement to fulfill our calling. Just as our bodies have different parts and organs, so too, does the Body of Christ. Our *gift-mix* can be thought of as the body-part we are. Our *spiritual ministry* is how we have been designed by God to make us particularly suitable for accomplishing various kinds of things in the Kingdom of God. The better we understand who (and what) we have been made by God to be, the more fulfilled and effective we will be in serving Him.

I. Understanding Our Diversity

- A. “The Best Tool of All” or “The Right Tool”?
- B. Sweet Music When the Notes Fit Together
- C. Williams & Sonoma and Orchard Supply
- D. We’re not **SURE** which **font** *looks* **THE best** for what **we’re** TRYING to **accomplish**

II. The Basic Spiritual Ministry “Colors”

- A. Romans 12:1-8 (NASB)

Prophet Giver	Server Leader	Teacher Mercy /Shower	Exhorter
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- B. 1 Corinthians 12:5, 27-31

Apostle Healings	Prophet Helps	Teacher Administrations	Miracles
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- C. Ephesians 4:7-8, 11-13

Apostle	Prophet	Evangelist	Pastor/Teacher
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Mercy-Shower

Each of the spiritual ministries is an expression of God and His character. He is rich in mercy—hence, the Shower of Mercy. The Lord gives bountifully to us—hence, the ministry of the Giver; etc. We also realize that each of the spiritual gift-mixes has qualities about it that ought to be developing in every one of us, regardless of our spiritual ministry. For instance, we are not all Teachers, but we ought to teach one another; we don't all have the ministry of the Exhorter, yet we do exhort one another; not all of us have the ministry of the Helper, but we are called to serve. All ministry giftedness reflects the character of God and the ministry of Jesus. They are reflections of the light from the Lord.

I. The Mercy-Shower

- A. God Is “Rich in Mercy.” (2 Corinthians 1:13-16; Ephesians 2:4)
- B. Mercy Is Not Weak!
 - 1. For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment. James 2:13
 - 2. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. Matthew 23:23
 - 3. Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And have mercy on some who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh. Jude 1:21-23
- C. People Seek Out Mercy More Than Almost Anything Else (Matthew 9:27).
- D. Mercy Can Keep People from Losing Heart (2 Corinthians 4:1).
- E. Mercy Sees beyond People's Sin/Condition (1 Timothy 1:13-16).
- F. Mercy Is Neither Naïve nor Foolish; True Wisdom Is Full of Mercy (James 3:17).

- G. Mercy Showers move toward people's hurt; they understand pain.
- H. Mercy Showers believe the best of people and want the best for them—regardless of their guilt or present conditions.

Vulnerabilities of Mercy Showers:

- They can be too quick to pass over what needs to change in a person.
- They can confuse extending mercy with pronouncing “not guilty.” (Romans 11:32)
- They forget that consequences can be great teachers of life's lessons.

Development of a Shower of Mercy:

- Learns to listen; goes through things; experiences disappointments.
- Sensitive to those who “have less”; eager to relieve heart/ mind burdens.

Leader/Champion (Prostemi)

I. God Leads Us.

- A. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Psalm 23:2-3
- B. Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go. Isaiah 48:17

II. God Acts As Our Champion and Defender.

- A. ...for they will cry to the Lord because of oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver them. Isaiah 19:20
- B. But the Lord is with me like a dread champion; therefore my persecutors will stumble and not prevail... Jeremiah 20:11

III. The Ministry of a Leader/Champion

- A. Leading Well (1 Timothy 5:17) and Being a Good Manager (1 Timothy 3:12), Requires Diligence—Eagerness, Dispatch, Earnestness and Forwardness (Romans 12:8).
- B. The Ministry of the Leader/Champion Involves Aspects of Being in Charge, Presiding Over, Leading Out and Stepping Up—Sometimes with Official Position, but Often without It.
- C. Somewhat Different Than the Pioneer/Apostle, the Leader/Champion Not Only Starts Engaging in Things, but Also Maintains over the Long Haul (Titus 3:8, 14).

Vulnerabilities of the Leader/Champion:

- They can assume responsibility for situations too quickly or too completely.
- They can charge ahead with incomplete understanding.
- They can try to do it all alone—without mobilizing the rest of the Body.

Development of the Leader/Champion:

- Has an eye or ear for “what needs to be done”; aware of institutional short-comings.
- Concerned for the forgotten, the disadvantaged and the needy.
- Drawn toward causes, politics; somewhat independent and self-directed.

The Giver

Because the ministry gift-mixes are spiritual qualities of God's heart and of a mature believer's life, they will be vigorously opposed by "the Prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). Our enemy will introduce all sorts of lies and misperceptions in order to dissuade us from God's truth. One such lie, which strikes at the heart of God's intent toward us, is the notion that God is a taker rather than a giver. To the degree that we imagine He wants to diminish our life, rather than to enlarge it, we will be wary of anything related to giving stuff away. Our self-defense mechanisms will kick in and urge us to hoard.

I. The Giver

A. God Is a Giver.

1. Every good gift comes from Him (James 1:17).
2. God gives us all things freely (1 Corinthians 2:12).
3. "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys"(Luke 12:32-33).
4. God gives us our promised inheritance; that's why we tithe (give a portion back to Him), to declare that "giving" is God's way (Deuteronomy 25:19-26:2).
5. Freely we have received; freely we should give (Matthew 10:8).

B. There is Great Reward in Giving.

1. It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).
2. Those who "water" will be "watered" (Proverbs 11:25).
3. "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return." Luke 6:38

C. Givers Give with “Cheerfulness” (Romans 12:8).

1. They are sincere, generous, simple and straight forward.
2. They have no selfish agenda for what they give.
3. God loves cheerful givers:

So I thought it necessary to urge the brethren that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised bountiful gift, that the same might be ready as a bountiful gift, and not affected by covetousness. Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful give. 2 Corinthians 9:5-7

D. The Givers’ Primary Goal Is to Meet the Physical (Financial) Needs of Others.

E. Givers Invest in Kingdom Enterprises; They Facilitate Vision.

Vulnerabilities of the Giver:

- Can think that money answers every problem; can become self-sufficient.
- Can forget that everything we have comes from God; pride; unwise steward.
- Tempted to use money to control or direct people/ministries.

Development of the Giver:

- Likely to experience several financial reversals; must learn to live with little and lots.
- Unexplainable generosity; rarely computes what the money given away might do for themselves.
- Lots of faith; little worry.

The Exhorter

I. Exhortation Is an Act of Mercy, Comfort and Encouragement.

- A. We Equate Exhorting with Scolding or Lecturing; Our Image Is Silently Standing in Front of Somebody Who Is Saying, “You Know Better Than That!”
- B. The Biblical Concept of the Exhorter Is an Advocate, Not an Adversary; Drawing Close, Not Pushing Away; Being Told, “We’re in This Together,” Not “Get Your Act Together.”
- C. Parakaleo Means “to Invite, Call Near, Urge, Entreat, Comfort, Advise or Encourage.”

II. God Is an Exhorter.

- A. He Exhorts (Comforts) Those Who Mourn (Matthew 5:4).
- B. He Is the God of Mercies and Exhortations (Paraklesis, Comfort) Who Exhorts Us in the Midst of Our Afflictions (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).
- C. John the Baptist Taught “with Many Exhortations” (Luke 3:18).
- D. The Holy Spirit Is Called the Exhorter (Parakletos, Helper, Nearby One)
 - 1. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. John 14:26
 - 2. When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me. John 15:26
 - 3. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. John 16:13

III. Exhortation Revolves around Choices People Face—How to Think, Live, Behave or Believe—and Specific Counsel As to What Steps They Should Take:

- Do Not Delay (Acts 9:38)
- Remain True (Acts 11:23)
- Strive Together (Romans 15:30)
- Watch for Dissenters (Romans 16:17)
- Walk Worthy (Ephesians 4:1)
- Live in Harmony (Philippians 4:2)
- Work Quietly (2 Thessalonians 2:12)
- Assemble Together (Hebrews 10:25)
- Be Sensible (Titus 2:6)

IV. Characteristics of an Exhorter

- A. Exhorters Find It Easy to Get Close to People and to Their Situations—Usually by Identifying with Them—in Order to Urge Them to the Next Level.
- B. Exhorters Tend to Be Wordy; They Can Keep Talking Long after Most People (Acts 2:40 and 15:32). Their Verbal Stamina Is Incredible.
- C. Exhorters Usually Use Personal Testimony or, at Least, Lessons They Have Learned by Personal Experience, As Tools to Help Other People Move Forward in the Lord (see Rom. 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:1-13). They Are Great Motivators.

Vulnerabilities of the Exhorter:

- Can be repetitive, over and over, time and again, saying the same thing too many times.
- Can become impatient and fall into self-pity when people don't respond.
- Can be insensitive to and unaware of complicating factors; answers can be quick and simplistic when they should be slow and more thoughtful (Job).
- Can lose focus on others; and thereby, end up talking about themselves or talking without any purpose.

Development of the Exhorter:

- Has a fairly large circle of acquaintances; probably has had many different types of experiences; known as an excited and interesting story-teller.
- Really enjoys being with people; cannot work well alone for very long.
- Optimistic, team-player; encouraging “We’ll get ‘em next time”; wants to know how everyone is doing.

The Teacher

As we study the Teacher, you will likely find many things about teaching—what we want it to accomplish for the sake of others—that correspond with your heart for people. That is probably because teaching is one of the primary activities that Jesus admonishes us to engage in. The very process of discipling others is “teaching them to observe all that I [Jesus] commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 22:20).

I. Teaching

A. Definitions

1. Classical Literature—Getting someone to extend their hand to accept something.
2. Old Testament—More than communicating knowledge; explaining how to live God’s pattern for life.
3. New Testament—Providing practical instruction for earthly and heavenly living.

B. Purposes

1. Differentiating right from wrong (Ezekiel 22:26).
2. Unfolding the ways of God wherein we are to walk (Psalm 25:4-5; Daniel 9:10).
3. Bringing salvation [rescue, deliverance] to others (1 Timothy 4:16).
4. Explaining truths that are profitable for life (Acts 20:20).
5. Maturing people in the Lord (Colossians 1:28).

II. The Teacher

A. God Is a Teacher

1. He teaches us the “good way” in which we are to walk (1 Kings 8:36).
2. He teaches us to do His will (Psalm 143:10).

3. He teaches us to profit (Isaiah 48:17).
 4. Jesus is called “Teacher” by others and by Himself (Matthew 8:19; John 13:13-14), and He taught with authority (Matthew 7:29).
- B. We Should Be Teaching:
1. Our children...and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. Deut. 6:7
 2. One another
 - a. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another... Col. 3:16
 - b. And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. 2 Tim. 2:2
- C. Teachers Tend to Operate in Open, Public Venues (John 18:20; Acts 5:42).
- D. The Bible Is the Basis for All True Teaching (2 Timothy 3:16).
1. Like Jesus, their teaching is not their own to make up – Jesus therefore answered them, and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from Myself." John 7:16-17
 2. False teaching can be natural (Matthew 15:9) or demonic (1 Timothy 4:1).
- E. Teachers Want People to Be Well-Established in Truth (Colossians 2:7), so They Won't Be “Carried Away by Strange Doctrines” (Hebrews 13:9).

Vulnerabilities of Teachers:

- Pride from knowledge (1 Corinthians 8:1); impatience from having to explain over and over again (Jeremiah 32:33).
- Rigid, legalistic perspectives that do not allow for grace or extenuating circumstances; can become judgmental.

- Can forget the goal of instruction is love (1 Timothy 1:5), and that truth washes free (John 8:32).

Development of Teachers:

- Prefer boundaries, definition, order and organization.
- More oriented toward particulars than the whole; see lessons to be (should have been) learned.
- Fairly sure there is a right way to do most things; urge to correct people and situations; delighted when people “get it.

The Prophet

All of us can learn to prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:31), but not all of us have the gift-mix of the Prophet (1 Corinthians 12:29). This is one of the ministries that is so sensationalized that we can be intimidated by it.

Jesus said that the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than John the Baptist—and he was the greatest of the prophets because he pointed directly to Jesus. Any ministry activity we participate in ought to focus people's attention on Jesus; since the essence of prophecy is proclaiming God's heart and plans for people, any message about Jesus is prophetic!

Having said that, we do want to acknowledge that the Prophet is a particular ministry gift-mix in the Body of Christ. Those believers who function in this ministry gift tend to share some common traits.

I. Old Testament Prophets

- A. And the Lord has sent to you all His servants the prophets again and again, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear...Jeremiah 25:4
- B. ...but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, until there was no remedy. 2 Chronicles 36:16
 1. Not everyone wants to hear prophets
 2. Who say to the seers, "You must not see *visions*"; and to the prophets, "You must not prophesy to us what is right, Speak to us pleasant words, prophesy illusions. Isaiah 30:10

II. Prophecy Defined

- A. Literally It Means to "Speak Before."
- B. Rather Than Primarily Predicting Events, It Reveals the Heart and Plans of God for People.
- C. It Is a "Word from the Lord"—a Message to People about What He Is Doing (Plans Formed Long Ago).
- D. Old Testament Prophets We "Called Ones" Whom God Used to Point the Right Way, and to Warn of the Wrong Way's Consequences.

III. The Purpose of Prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:3, 25)

- A. Edification: Build People Up
- B. Exhortation: Encourage People
- C. Consolation: Bring Comfort and Assurance
- D. Conviction: Speak to Areas of Sinfulness
- E. For the Prophet, It All Comes Down to “What’s the Lord Saying (Right Now)?”
- F. Prophets (and Apostles) Often Introduce Foundational Truth That Gives People a Firm Stance

Vulnerabilities of the Prophet:

- Easily stuck on one detail or word
- Can be swayed by divination or soulish impressions
- May mix their counsel with God’s word
- Can be stubborn at the wrong times

Development of the Prophet:

- Counsels people according to God’s word
- Helps people see from God’s perspective

The Apostle

In order to understand a Biblical term or concept, we have to look at what the Scriptures themselves have to say about it. Otherwise our own ideas, impressions and associations cloud the picture. The teaching—on the gift-mix of the Apostle—is going to be more of a Bible study so we can see that this ministry is not, somehow, more special than all the other ministries. It holds a particular assignment in the Body of Christ—but all ministries do. This ministry has unique operations, and it is suitable for certain scenarios—but such is the case for all ministries. Let's be careful not to over-spiritualize or under-spiritualize any ministry gift.

I. Apostles

A. Definition from the Original Language—and a New Term:

1. **apostolos**, (Strong's Concordance #652; from Strong's #649); a delegate; an ambassador; a messenger.
2. **apostello**, (Strong's Concordance #649); set apart, send out on a mission, send away, send forth.

B. Like All Gift-Mixes, the Apostle/Pioneer Is an Expression of Jesus' Ministry.

1. Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. Hebrews 3:13. Are there more than twelve apostles?
2. And when day came, He called His disciples to Him; and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles. Luke 6:13
3. And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. Acts 1:26
4. Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. Romans 16:7

C. Apostles Lay a Foundation upon Which Others Build.

1. For this reason also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and some they will persecute...
Luke 11:49

2. ...having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone...
Ephesians 2:20
3. ...which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;
Ephesians 3:5

D. An Apostle's Ministry Should Be Accompanied by Certain Signs.

1. And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.
Acts 2:43
2. And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.
Acts 4:33
3. And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico.
Acts 5:12
4. For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, that I might win those who are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men that I may by all means save some. And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it.
1 Corinthians 9:19-23

E. Apostles Are Called and Appointed by God to Disciple Groups of People or Churches:

1. But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,
Romans 11:13
2. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God which is at Corinth with all the saints who are throughout Achaia:
2 Corinthians 1:1
3. Paul, an apostle (not sent from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead). Galatians 1:1
4. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:
Ephesians 1:1

F. Apostles Have a Unique Sort of Authority in the Churches:

1. Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees, which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe. Acts 16:4
2. Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 9:1-2
3. ...nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. 1 Thessalonians 2:6

G. There Are False Apostles:

1. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:13
2. The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles. 2 Corinthians 12:12
3. 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot endure evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false... Revelation 2:2

H. Like Prophets, Apostles Must Often Live out Certain Challenging Realities (1 Corinthians 4 and 2 Corinthians 11:12-33).

Vulnerabilities of the Apostle:

- Can be a spiritual “lone ranger” who launches out on their own without being accountable to others
- Can move so quickly or far ahead of others that they can’t “keep up”
- Can easily mistake new ideas as promptings from the Lord

Development of the Apostle:

- Constantly on the move; easily adapts to various situations and groups of people
- Creates, starts or establishes things that weren’t there before
- Goes “before” others in many areas of life to make a way for them
- The unknown isn’t intimidating—always looking for something new

The Server/Helper

All the gift-mix roles are ones of service. God has not set a privileged class of super-saints in the church who get to do all the neat stuff, while the other ministries do the grunt work. There is no such thing as a non-spiritual ministry! True ministry is an attitude of heart to do for others what they cannot do for themselves. Sometimes the “doing” is prayer; sometimes it is extending mercy or an exhortation; sometimes it involves giving finances or time or scripture; and, sometimes it is providing practical assistance.

I. Serving/Helping

A. Definition

1. diakonia—run on errands, aid or attend someone, wait on tables, minister
2. antilepsis—relief, help, support, from “to take a turn at”
3. Active participation in the whole; being part of a “Team Effort”

B. God is a Helper Who Serves Us

1. “A very present help in time of trouble” (Psalm 46:1).
2. He will “surely help” us and uphold us with His right hand (Isaiah 41:10).
3. He hears us when we “cry for help” (Exodus 2:23).

C. Serving is an Expression of Love.

1. It was the posture of Jesus (Philippians 2:1-11), who also said, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” Matthew 6:24
2. God wants us to love and serve Him (Deut. 10:12).
3. Will we serve ourselves, or others? For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13
4. Love should be “in deed and truth” not just in words (1 John 3:18).

D. All the Ministries are Ways of Serving.

1. Paul says, there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 1 Corinthians 12:5
2. We're all supposed to fully carry out our ministry: endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 2 Timothy 4:5 ...and take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it. Colossians 4:17
3. There is a blessing in serving, like in giving: by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Acts 20:35

E. The Greatest Ministry Is to Lay Down Our Lives.

1. Jesus tells us, but the greatest among you shall be your servant. Matthew 23:11
2. Maturity and spiritual significance come through serving: And sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all." Mark 9:35

II. The Ministry of the Server/Helper

A. The Assistance Role

1. To help do "other things" so other people can specialize more in their ministries (Acts 6:1-6).
2. To aid in practical and physical aspects of life and ministry.

B. The Support Role

1. To use know-how, skills, time and talents to under gird people and churches.
2. To relieve others of their burdens and workloads.

Vulnerabilities of Servers/Helpers:

- To become "distracted" with and too focused on tasks (Luke 10:40).
- To hide behind the scenes.
- To settle for less spiritual vitality.

Development of Servers/Helpers:

- Drawn to the practical side of things.
- Specialized skills, knacks and talents.
- Eager to do “whatever needs doing”—and can usually see what that is.

The Evangelist

During New Testament times, the Roman world was accustomed to hearing about numerous religions and philosophies—from regional mystery cults and Greco/Roman deities to Stoics and Epicureans. Each of these perspectives on life claimed to be the right one. Followers of different gods and philosophies sought to spread their faith to others by proclaiming the benefits and promises of their ideology. Those who actively announced the “good news” were known as evangelists.

A good example of such a proclamation comes from the Imperial Cult—the belief that Emperors of Rome, and other rulers like Herod (Acts 12:22), were gods. A common theme of these Imperial evangelists was a new world-order that would fix all problems. Listen to the language of a proclamation made in 9 BC by Paulus Fabius Maximus about the birthday of Augustus:

It is a day we may justly count as the equivalent to the beginning of everything...in as much as it has restored the shape of everything that was failing and turning into misfortune, and has given a new look to the Universe...Providence which has ordered the whole of our life...has ordained the most perfect consummation for human life by giving to it Augustus...a savior for us...to make war cease, to create order everywhere...The birthday of the god [Augustus] was the beginning for the world of glad tidings [evangel]....

Though the Enemy attempts to copy the beauty and dynamic of the true evangel, only the Lord Jesus can save the world from its failing misfortune. The Gift-Mix of the Evangelist is a powerful and delightful part of the Body of Christ.

I. The Role of an Evangelist

A. Definitions

1. Greek = ev (good) + angelos (messenger)
2. Classical = Messenger who brought news of (military) victory or (business) success. It was a promise and a reason to be glad.
3. Old Testament = The message is always about God’s eventual victory over the kingdoms of earth, and the new era of shalom (well-being, peace). When Messiah comes, He will be both messenger and deliverer.

B. Jesus Is an Evangelist.

1. He reads the proclamation from Isaiah 61 (Luke 4:16-21).
2. He tells John’s disciples about Himself (Luke 7:18-23).

3. He bears witness of Himself (John 8:12-18).
4. He delivers the words of His Father:

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

John 14:6-7

II. Other New Testament Evangelists

- A. Gabriel (Luke 1:19)
- B. John the Baptist (Mark 1:1-8)
- C. Philip (Acts 8:4-40 and 21:8)

III. Characteristics of an Evangelist

- A. Evangelists Have an Eager Readiness, a Compulsion to Proclaim.
 1. "Daily in the Temple, and house to house..." (Acts 5:42).
 2. Through many ups and downs, after good responses and bad ones, these Energizers keep right on evangelizing (Acts 14:1-7).
 3. They are "eager to evangelize" (Romans 1:15 and 15:20).
- B. Evangelists are Mostly on the Move.
 1. Jesus wouldn't stay in Simon's hometown (Luke 4:42-44); He was always departing and going everywhere (Luke 9:6).
 2. Their "feet" are lovely—and well-used (Romans 15:20).
 3. Like Philip, they often "find themselves" in different situations (Acts 8:40).

C. For Evangelists, All Roads Lead to the Cross.

1. “Beginning from this Scripture...” (Acts 8:35).
2. Their own personal journey is usually a testimony (Galatians 1:23 and Ephesians 3:8).

Vulnerabilities of an Evangelist:

- Can be one-dimensional, and insensitive to *irrelevant* issues/needs.
- Can be too persistent; may stand out in a crowd—*ill advisedly*.

Development of an Evangelist:

- *Many* relationships as opposed to a few really close friends; fairly verbal and easily engaged in conversation.
- Not easily wounded or discouraged; always cast things in a positive light toward people’s salvation.
- Focused on others’ need (for salvation), not on own needs (for attention).

The Pastor

I. Definition of a Pastor

- A. Classical—metaphorically for leader, ruler, commander; title of honor
- B. Old Testament—Guide, protector, feeder
 - 1. Psalm 78:72
 - 2. Ezekiel 34:11-16
- C. New Testament—contrast between good and bad shepherds

II. The Lord is a Shepherd

- A. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Psalm 23:1-3
- B. Jesus, the Great Shepherd (Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4):
 - 1. Had compassion on the distressed and downcast multitudes that had no shepherds (Matthew 9:36-38).
 - 2. Felt compassion for people without shepherds, so taught them many things (Mark 6:34).
 - 3. Calls His sheep (who recognize His voice), who then follow His leading (John 10:1-6).
 - 4. Lays down His life for His sheep (John 10:7-13).

III. Characteristics of a Pastor

- A. Pastors seek out, gather and unify people (John 10:16; Jeremiah 23:2, 4).

B. Pastors feed, tend and watch over people (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28).

C. Pastors lead whole groups of people (Numbers 27:15-23; Matthew 26:31).

Development of a Pastor:

- Want to make sure that everyone is taken care of properly; *who needs what to flourish?*
- People tend to follow the offered advice, direction and suggestions. Gather groups more than one on one.
- Focus on three things: immediate needs of individuals, longer-term direction for whole group, dangers on the trail.

Vulnerabilities of a Pastor:

- Try to hold on to everyone and make everyone happy. Can become paternalistic or authoritative, and too sure that *“this is the (only) way.”*
- Can become self-satisfying, self-congratulatory and self-serving—forgetting to care about the people in the group.
- Take advantage of people’s trust and willingness.