

Ephesians 4:11-13 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 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:*

1 Corinthians 12:27-30 *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 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. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*

Paul's style is to use rhetorical questions which imply negative answers:

- **Romans 3:3** *For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?*
- **Romans 6:1** *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*

Implication 1: not all are apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, etc. NOTE EXCEPTIONS!

Implication 2: since HELPS and GOVERNMENTS are excepted, it follows that anyone can have them

Dark Ages: distinction made between clergy and laity, a trick of Satan to reduce and confine ministry

- **Revelation 2:15** *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. (PERGAMOS)*

EVERY MEMBER OF THE CHURCH HAS A VOCATION!

- **1 Corinthians 12:11** *But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.*
- Every member has gifts; every member has at least one talent (Matthew 25:14-30)
- Every member can exercise the gift of HELPS or of GOVERNMENTS in some way

WHAT IS THE GIFT OF HELPS? (A CRUTCH)

- "antilepsis" - to participate or support (not an official capacity or title!)
- not necessarily "supernatural" gifts, but "natural" ones purified by the supernatural
- God uses "natural" to be a blessing, thus bringing "supernatural" benefit (loaves & fishes, pot of oil)
- some "gifts of God" can be the development of a natural capacity (playing the piano!)
- yet, these "helps" were thought worthy to be mentioned with apostles, prophets, teachers, etc.
- some are so busy looking for a "spiritual" job, that they miss God's plan for them!
- helps today in the church: tape ministry, music ministry, children's ministry, etc.

WHAT IS THE GIFT OF GOVERNMENTS? (A PADDLE)

- "kubernesis" - to steer or direct
- Paul was familiar with the sea and ships (shipwrecked three times, said that Hymenaeus and Alexander had made shipwreck concerning the faith, used many allegories like this one)
- this term applied to ships of the day, which were "steered" by many but under the leadership of one
- galley ship (joke: today captain throws party for slaves, tomorrow he wants to go water-skiing)
- this word CAN refer to deacons, elders, etc. who help steer the church, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY
- we ALL can "steer" the church by UNITY in our prayer and work; it takes more than one man!
- we need to "steer" the church around problems and into revival; every member can help (ie: canoe)
- humorous example: meddler who promoted unity ("he said you were kind to your family & honest!")

WHAT ARE THE BEST GIFTS?

- **1 Corinthians 12:31** *But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.*
- The best gifts are those which enable an assembly to be edified at a particular time. (G. Shalm)

- OUR church would definitely benefit from HELPS and GOVERNMENTS!

HOWEVER, MANY PEOPLE WANT THEIR GIFTS TO BE THE ONES THAT GET NOTICED!

- There is many times an artificial division between those who “help” (work) and those who “govern” (direct spiritually) - this hurts the church and is a frustration to the ministry!
- The fault lies with both parties: the “spiritual” who are waiting for their chance in the spotlight and won’t work, and the “workers” who back off of the spiritual just because of a few extremists!
- **1 Corinthians 12:22-23** *Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: 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.*
- **Phillips Trans:** “The parts which do not look beautiful have a deeper beauty in the work they do.”
- **Aesop’s Fable:** *Stag worshipped antlers and despised legs; caught by antlers and couldn’t run.*
- How important is your hand? (noticeable) How important is your heart? (much more crucial)
- SOME FRUIT CAN ONLY BE BROUGHT FORTH IN THE SHADE. (Everyone is important!)

MIKE ESSES, IN “JESUS IN EXODUS” ...

Praise God that He has given His children the high calling! If God has called you to be like Jesus in all of your spirit, and if you have absolutely sold yourself to be His slave, He will take you at your word. He will wrap you up in a jealous love and will put on you such demands of obedience that He will not allow you to do things which He seems to let other good people do. Other Christians may push themselves forward, pull wires and work schemes to carry out their plans, but you cannot. And if you attempt to, you will meet with such failure and rebuke from the Lord as to make you sorely penitent. Others can brag on themselves, on their work, on their success, but the Holy Spirit will not allow you to do any such thing. And if you begin it, He will lead you into some deep mortification that will make you despise yourself and all your good works.

Others will be allowed to accumulate great wealth, but God may supply your needs on a daily basis because He wants you to have something far better than gold - and that is a helpless dependence on Him. The Lord may let others be honored and put forward while He keeps you hidden away in obscurity, because He wants you to produce some choice fruit for His coming glory that can be brought forth only in the shade. God will let others be great, but He will keep you small. He will let others do a work for Him and get credit for it, but He will make you toil on without knowing what you are accomplishing. And then, to make your work still more precious, He will let others get the credit for what you have done. And all this will make your reward ten times as great when Jesus comes.

The Holy Spirit will put a strict watch on you with a jealous love. He will rebuke you for wasting your time or for little words and feelings which never seem to distress other Christians. And He will not explain to you a thousand things about His dealings which may puzzle your reasoning. So make up your mind that God is sovereign and has a right to do as He pleases with His own. Settle it forever that you are to deal directly with the Holy Spirit and that He is to have the privilege of tying your tongue or chaining your hands or closing your eyes in ways that others are not dealt with.

When you are so possessed by the living God that you are in your secret heart delighted over this peculiar, personal, private, jealous guardianship and management of His Holy Spirit over your life, you will have found the vestibule of heaven in Jesus Christ.

HERMAN MELVILLE, IN “MOBY DICK” ...

- joke: Jaws, the ultimate church gossip movie
- “To insure the greatest efficiency in the dart, the harpooners of this world must start to their feet out of idleness, and not out of toil.”
- Pastors are “harpooners” of sin, and responsible for throwing out the net of evangelism
- **Acts 6:4** *But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*
- **1 Corinthians 16:15** *I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)*