

# Ministry and Teaming

Connecting with You Church—part 3

March 1, 2020

**Review: Week 1:** Deepest connections with people are only possible with connecting meaningfully with God. This begins at our conversion to Christ. Only God can meet the deepest desires and needs in the human heart. When we look to Him as our primary source of “life” we become more and more freed to connect with others deeply.

**Week 2:** Connections deepen as we grow in Christ. That happens as we obey the bible, and engage in fellowship with others that helps shape us. The power of example is a mighty “teacher” in a church.

What is church? Who are ministers? What is a church supposed to do? Is the church a building? A place to worship?

## **DAY 1: The “ministers” are the “administrators”. The people are the ministers!**

1. In our Western culture we consider “ministers” as the paid clergy. *They are the ministers*, or so our culture tells us.

2. But that is not how the New Testament sees it. In the N.T. the people are the ministers! They have their regular jobs that pay their wages, but the ministry of the church is moved along by the “volunteers” of every church.

*Ephesians 4:11 (RSV) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers ...*

*Ephesians 4:12 ...to equip the saints (believers) for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,*

3. The people in verse 11 are using their ministry gifts. The question to ask is, toward what end?

4. Leaders are to equip believers to do the ministry!

5. It is the believers who carry on the bulk of the ministry, not the “clergy”!

6. Do you see yourself as a “minister,” as one who helps move the ministry forward?

7. Are you willing to be equipped by the leaders in your church to learn how to do the ministry?

## **DAY 2: The church as a body.**

1. The church is not fundamentally a building. The church is more than going to the movies to see a show.
2. The word “church” in the Greek language means “the called out ones.” The “church” is a group of people that God has called out of the world and its ways in order to serve Him and His ways!
3. The church is made up of incredible diversity—in background, culture, strengths, weaknesses, from different nations, family backgrounds, various work backgrounds, etc.
4. Yet, the church is to be united even with such diversity!
5. Paul illustrates this unity in diversity with a simple metaphor.

*1 Corinthians 12:12 (RSV) For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.*

6. How is the church to be both a unique place of unity while at the same time an incredible amount of diversity? How does the body metaphor illustrate this point?

*1 Corinthians 12:14 (RSV) For the body does not consist of one member but of many.*

*1 Corinthians 12:15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell?*

*1 Corinthians 12:21 (RSV) 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."*

*1 Corinthians 12:22 On the contrary, the parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup> and those parts of the body which we think less honorable we invest with the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty,*

7. What strikes you from this passage?

8. Is there any valid reason for a church person to feel superior? Or inferior? Why?

### DAY 3: Spiritual gifts

1. Spiritual gifts are given to every believer. Every believer has at least one spiritual gift.

*1 Peter 4:10 (RSV) As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace...*

2. There are five spiritual gifts listed below. (There are others in different scripture passages).

*Ephesians 4:11 (RSV) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers ...*

3. How do you know what gift(s) you may have? Spiritual gifts are usually seen in three ways:

- a. What you are doing to serve motivates you.
- b. Others notice that you enjoy and are motivated by this service.
- c. You see some fruit in the lives of others because of your service.

*Ephesians 4:12 ...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,*

4. What is one of the ways in which spiritual gifts are to be used?

5. As a result of believers using their gifts there should be some outcomes. Underline the outcomes we would like to see.

*Ephesians 4:13 ...until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;*

*<sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles.*

*<sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,*

*<sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.*

6. Of the different outcomes that Paul mentions, which ones strike you?

7. Are you using your spiritual gift(s) toward some of these outcomes?

## **DAY 4: Church as groups of ministry teams**

1. Most of the ministry in a church is performed by volunteers, often working in teams.
  
2. Paul took three missionary journeys. Each journey involved hundreds of miles traveling in the Middle East, what is now Turkey, a few Mediterranean islands and Greece.
  
3. Each missionary journey involved a small team that carried on the ministry.
  
4. Ministry teams have the potential to:
  - a. Utilize the different strengths and gifts of team members,
  - b. Provide a way for lesser experienced believers to gain some ministry experience without having to be the “lead dog,” and
  - c. Provide outcomes that are “greater than the sum of its parts.”
  
5. One of the challenges of ministry teams is the challenge of leadership. Will the leader provide credible leadership? Will the followers follow the leadership?
  
6. One of the tasks of leaders is to provide a vision for what we are trying to accomplish. In the following episode we gain some insight into how leaders and followers are to think about the vision for their team. Paul and his team had been stopped from moving in directions they wanted to go.
  
7. Paul had a vision of the man from Macedonia. (You can read about this in Acts 16).  
  
*Acts 16:10 (RSV) And when he (Paul) had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedo'nia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.*
  
8. What was the interplay between Paul the leader and his mission team regarding the vision?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. If you are a team member on a ministry team it is important both:
  - a. To serve in a way that benefits the whole team and church, and
  - b. Follow the vision your ministry team leader and the church.
  
10. What strikes you from today’s devotional on ministry teamwork?

## **DAY 5: Church as an army.**

*Philemon 1:1 (RSV) Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Phile'mon our beloved fellow worker <sup>2</sup> and Ap'phia our sister and Archip'pus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house ...*

1. How are the each of these believers described?

Philemon: \_\_\_\_\_

Apphia: \_\_\_\_\_

Archippus: \_\_\_\_\_

*Philippians 2:25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs.*

2. How is Epaphroditus described?

3. Each of the metaphors Paul uses suggest something of the nature of ministry. What do each of these metaphors suggest to you?

a. "My brother" (Epaphroditus was not Paul's blood brother) -

b. "Fellow worker" -

c. "Fellow soldier" -

d. "Your messenger" -

4. Why was Epaphroditus "sent"?

5. These are very challenging examples which strike at the heart of a take-it-easy church life. We are in a battle with Satan and his minions, a cosmic war of good against evil.

6. As we finish our week on ministry and teaming, connections are supposed to happen as we serve and team with others. What is your biggest takeaway from this week?