

Leadership • Diverse Gifts • Equipping

Let each do its part

The next three sections are obviously intertwined and I prefer to address them each separately, but here I will combine them into one large topic.

You see first, leaders **MUST BE SERVANTS** (Luke 22:24-27) or they will lead the Body like worldly Gentile CEO's. They need a heart to heal, empower and mature the people to serve in whatever ministries God has called them to be when mature (Isaiah 61) ... because the leaders' main purpose is to **EQUIP THE SAINTS** to do the work of the ministry (Eph 4:11-12), not to do it themselves because the ministry is not just talking, it is diverse and supernatural, and so it cannot all be done by one or two people, no matter how gifted or talented they are ... and so the people who will serve each need a chance to practice ... this is also important because the Body will only come to maturity as 'each does their part.' (Eph4:16) So the various graces and gifts of God must be allowed to flow **THROUGH** a wide range of different types of people, not just by a pastor, and not just through a sermon, because "*We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.* (**Romans 12:6**) So people need to be allowed to **USE THEIR UNIQUE GIFTS** in order to release God's diverse graces (anointings) in their various forms (1 Peter 4:10) ... for the common good (1 Cor 12:7).

If pastors don't equip, if pastors don't allow people to serve in spiritual gifts and practice and develop their proficiency, if pastors think ministry is only talk ... this entire plan of God for the Body's maturity will be shut down; the various blessings of the diverse graces of God will not flow, people will not be transformed and maturity will not come; the Body will not be strong and Satan will easily defeat her.

Why would a church only have pastors who only are empowered to preach if the Kingdom of God is NOT a matter of Talk, but of ... POWER!?

Why do people think academic knowledge solves all problems, so maturity they think is merely an exercise in acquiring knowledge, higher education, earning a higher degree? They really don't know what else to do!

I know this is confusing because the diverse ministries and gifts that are active in the Body now are but a mere shadow or poor reflection of the true diverse ministries God has created to operate and flow through for the common good. These are outlined in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4, and only once is the role of pastors mentioned, and when it is, its only 4th in importance. So once these ministries are rediscovered we will realize the need to equip people to function in them.

Then you will understand huge benefit of a church full of 50 or 100 gifted people, ministering prophetically, with healing, inner healing, miracles, business insights, genius ideas to earn money, so those who have gift to give money, gifts of administration and organization ... this dynamic community offers blessings in hundreds of ways a church that simply gives sermons by a preacher on Sunday cannot ever match.

The model of such a community is in Ezekiel 37, where a valley of dry bones was turned into ... an Army. To equip such an army, we need leaders who will serve people's actual spiritual needs, and not be afraid of developing a mature Body of gifted saints.

So let's start by looking at the leaders.

LEADERSHIP ... Who is the greatest?

Who wants to be great?! I do!!

But I find it noteworthy that many of our doctrines come from ONE verse, such as "it is more blessed to give

than to receive.” This is ONE time in the bible as far as I know, and odd that Paul said it was the words of Jesus, since Paul never knew him on earth in the Flesh and none of the gospel accounts mention this. Nevertheless it is a well referenced verse, and only written once.

But when Jesus told the disciples they needed to be SERVANTS if they wanted to be great, this lesson is at least NINE TIMES in the New Testament ... not one but NINE! In one chapter of Mark it is TWICE in the same chapter! And yet we STILL don't do it!

Who wants to be greatest?! It's not that they weren't to ask to be great, it's not that to be great was not a thing to be desired! It is good to want it, it's a good thing to seek ... and you can do it! You can have it! But this is how it is to be done. By humbling yourself and becoming a servant of ALL. WE NEED more GREAT people. What we have now is not great!

So a quick overview of these verses is here, but there really are nine plus about five others of similar topic, plus you need to read and be familiar with Ezekiel 34! This is not a small side note!

Luke 22:24-27 ²⁴“Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest.

²⁵Jesus said to them, “**The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors.** ²⁶**But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.** ²⁷For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? **But I am among you as one who serves.**”

This hits all the key ideas! Do you know that there is a way the Gentiles lead, a leadership style in the world, that we are not to act like because it is NOT LIKE the leadership of Jesus in the Kingdom? Did you know this? I'll explain.

But first also read:

Matthew 23:1-13 ¹“Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: ² ‘The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. ⁴**They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.**

⁵“**Everything they do is done for men to see:** They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; ⁶they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; ⁷they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them “Rabbi.”

⁸“**But you are not to be called “Rabbi,”** for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. ⁹And do not call anyone on earth “father,” for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. ¹⁰Nor are you to be called “teacher,” for you have one Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹**The greatest among you will be your servant.** ¹²For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

¹³“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! **You shut the kingdom of heaven in men’s faces.** You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.”

First, these people DO NOT HELP the people with their burdens. This is the OPPOSITE of what Jesus was empowered to do in Isaiah 61. Bad Pharisees! Bad!

Second, you are NOT to be called Pastor, I mean Rabbi. What’s the difference? I don’t know. Titles of religious leadership are not Christlike. We are a priesthood of believers and all must submit to each other. Where is there room for rank, and seniority and authority? Didn’t we JUST READ THAT, “*the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.*” This is the opposite of what we are doing!

This WRONG kind of leadership is modelled and TAUGHT by example by the Pharisees, who are all extinct

right? So we don't have to worry about it.

But why then did Jesus ask me, "Who ARE the Pharisees?" I stopped in my tracks! Who ARE? No, who WERE! They are all gone, right? ... unless!! Oh No!! The Pharisees ARE STILL AMONG US. So the warning in the Bible is still valid that WE MUST BE ON GUARD against their teaching, their demonstration of what is acceptable, their YEAST!

Matthew 16:6, 12

"Be careful," Jesus said to them. 'Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.'

...

¹²*"Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees."*

The other verses making nine are referenced here, just so you know I didn't make this up:

Matthew 18:3 *And he said: 'I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'*

Mark 9:33-37 ³³*"They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the road?'" ³⁴But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.*

Mark 10:13-16

¹³*"People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child*

will never enter it.'

Mark 10:35-45 ³⁵"Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. 'Teacher,' they said, 'we want you to do for us whatever we ask.' ³⁶"What do you want me to do for you?' he asked. ³⁷"They replied, 'Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.'

* * *

⁴²Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.

⁴⁵"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'"

Luke 9:46-48 ⁴⁶"An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest.

⁴⁷Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. ⁴⁸Then he said to them, 'Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest.'"

Luke 14:11, "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

3 John 1:9-11 ⁹"I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will have nothing to do with us.

Also:

1 Corinthians 4:9, "For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men."

2 Corinthians 10:8 "For even if I boast somewhat freely about

the authority the Lord gave us **for building you up** rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it."

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you **as men who must give an account**. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

James 3:1 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that **we who teach will be judged more strictly**.

Ezekiel 34:2b-5, 10, 17-23 and 31

^{2b}...Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! **Should not shepherds take care of the flock?**

³You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, **but you do not take care of the flock**. ⁴**You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally.**

⁵So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals.

* * *

¹⁰This is what the Sovereign LORD says: **I am against the shepherds** and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them.

* * *

²³**I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd.**

* * *

³¹**You my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are people, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign LORD.**"

This last quote from Ezekiel is just too powerful and sums up everything from Pergamum to Isaiah 61!

HOW we lead is also a part of the Gospel!

One main problem we have is that people think the Gospel is merely telling people Jesus died for them. Jesus and Paul demonstrated that the Gospel is also the transformation into Christ-likeness the Holy Spirit enables, the Gospel of the Kingdom I mean. But most people stop there, or before there, and so most are making two vital mistakes.

One is they think leadership style, managerial methods and organizational behavior are separate from the Gospel and so they can run their church or ministry in any way they want to. As a best practice they use managerial methods they learned from an Ivy-League school endorsed text book. They do not yet understand Godly, or Christ-like leadership is also a vital component of the Gospel.

I live in a town with a church statue of Christopher Columbus with a sword who is ready to kill anyone who opposes his message. Jesus told me in nearby Cebu that ABOMINATIONS were committed in God's name against the local people. They shared the Gospel, in a way, it contained the message of Jesus' vicarious death and atoning crucifixion to buy their salvation ... but it was done with murder, torture, kidnapping and rape. Is it OK because the Gospel is preached? Does not God also care HOW the Gospel is preached?

Ok, this is maybe a bad example, but really is it? The WAY people lead churches is carnal and worldly and upsetting and hurtful. Must the Gospel be preached through a veil of abuse, greed and worldly ambitions?

The answer is clearly no. God has a WILL but also he has a WAY he wants his WILL obeyed.

But what then are we to do is still unclear so Jesus showed me a vision.

In a vision Jesus explained leadership:

Jesus said, "Let me explain the **style of leadership in the world to you.**"

He said the leaders stand on top of the organizational pyramid looking down on the people in the organization telling the people things like, "**No, you can't come up here! No, you can't have a raise. You don't deserve it. I'm the boss, not YOU!! The answer to you is NO!**"

I understood this could be called the "spirit of No!" The Boss can call himself anything he wants to: the people's servant, the benefactor, a benevolent dictator, it only serves to hide what is really in his heart: self exalting, control, the dominance of others to serve himself.

The Spirit of YES!

Then I saw Jesus holding the pyramid and said, "**Let me now show you the way leadership is in my Kingdom, which can be called the spirit of Yes!**"

I watched as he turned the organizational pyramid upside down with the point facing down and now he was standing UNDER it, and so Jesus, the leader was now under everyone and was telling them things like, "**Yes! Yes, you can do it! You can achieve your calling. You can achieve that goal. In fact, I'll help you—and together YOU WILL SUCCEED. The answer to you is Yes!**"

Godly authority therefore is the spirit of Yes, to serve the needs, callings and lives of the people! It is to set people free and empower them to achieve their destiny, it is to "**strengthen the weak, heal the sick, bind up the injured, bring back the strays, search for the lost...**" It is to transform people into the image of Christ. It is not to dominate, control, manipulate or harness the energies and resources of the people merely to benefit man's religious agendas or the comfort of its leadership circle. It is never to "**rule them harshly and brutally.**"

These two vastly different attitudes of ‘No’ and ‘Yes’ in leadership are as different as night and day; they come from different mindsets, different worlds and certainly produce different fruit, but only after Jesus told me this did I start to see the difference and the counterfeit standing right in front of me!! Surely everyone insists they are doing it the right way but really it is very, very rare.

Ask: Who’s on FIRST?

One way that you may be able to tell where someone’s heart is ask how they understand the hierarchy of the church.

1 Corinthians 12:28 says God has appointed “first apostles.” Ask people what this “first” means. If someone thinks that being ‘first’ means they are on top of the pile, they’re probably operating in the world’s spirit.

If instead they realize its more like being the first layer of a foundation, the first ones to be laid down as the base or the bottom of the pile, where they have to carry everyone’s burdens, everyone’s weight, then they would be seeing Christ’s real leadership model.

Paul talked about this in **1 Corinthians 4:9**, where Paul says apostles are like the ones marched out into the coliseum last, those who are condemned to die, to suffer, to bear all the burdens of the people! No Fortune 500 CEO thinks this way!

And I know that as soon as you tell someone this they will know how to give the “right” answer **so no, you can’t really tell a person’s heart attitude with a witty question.** But at some point the real motives of people make fruit and we can see where their hearts are by their actions and help them find the truth!

When Over is Under — Leaders who suffer!

But yes, often in the New Testament the traditional, opposite language is also used, describing leaders in

a natural way as being “over” the sheep. Such language is used three times in Hebrews 13; it is used in 1 Thessalonians 5:12, and even in Acts 20 where Paul charges the elders of Ephesus to watch themselves and those they are overseers “over.”

But nevertheless, we can see the behavior of Paul expressed in **I Corinthians 9:11-12**:

¹¹If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

*¹²If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? **Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.** (KJV)*

Or verse 12 from NIV, “*If others have this right of support from you, shouldn’t we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, **we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ.*** (NIV)

The heart of Paul was to SUFFER rather than make the sheep support even his real and legitimate needs if this got in the way of his ministry goals. He himself bore the burden!

Leaders are described as being ‘over’ the people about five times or so in the New Testament; but these same leaders having to SUFFER to fulfil their duties as leaders is mentioned nearly 90 times—often describing the actions and experiences of Christ himself—He SUFFERED for the sake of those He leads, saves and is head ‘over.’

Real leaders SUFFER to help their people, but hired hands would never do such a thing, never but once in a blue moon! And they would probably remind you every week after they did it even once, and that by accident.

But really it’s easy to understand this if you look at any good PARENT and what they will sacrifice to help their

children. A real leader has the attitude of a good parent and this is how we often explain this plainly. What would a parent do to a child in the church? Rule them harshly? Or rather empower, train and equip them to succeed, even to succeed better than their parents had!

Ezekiel 34 — I am AGAINST the Pastors!

Finally, you need to be familiar with Ezekiel 34 listed above and what God said about the Shepherds who eat the people, feeding themselves, instead of setting the people free, and he also says this is now coming to an end; I expect abruptly. This is what we've been hearing from many prophetic words recently. Not only will God judge and remove these leaders, God will even judge between sheep and sheep, since we are called to care for each other, even the sheep have duties to each other.

This is such a powerful summary because it links together Isaiah 61, nine verses in the Gospels, and the biggest lesson on false leadership Jesus ever showed me, the prophecy against the church in Pergamum. That is a heavy lesson.

Most Churches have Wrong Ministry Model

So Jesus told me that the way most people minister in churches WILL NEVER produce his Kingdom.

Churches are meant to heal, restore, then train and equip the people to do the work of the ministry. The needs are too many and too varied to be met by one or two ministers, who only preach, and only on Sunday.

And why do we think all problems can be addressed by a sermon? Why do we think all growth can be achieved by doctrinal study? Self help! Mind over matter!

It looks like our churches are modeled after secular universities, and that we seem to think all power, blessing and success can be attained through intellectual education, by acquiring knowledge, as if we are in the Age of Reason.

It may be that our current denominations were created in this era, with these mindsets, with people who were primarily skilled in these careers. The church as university, the university as church, but this kind of worldly pollution would produce an un-supernatural gospel, with ministers who do what? Hold to a form of religion but deny its supernatural power. Paul said to STAY AWAY from people like this.

Sure knowledge is power, but it also fades away. Knowledge about God is not the same as KNOWING God.

1 Corinthians 8:1-3 ... *“knowledge” puffs a person up with pride; whereas love builds up.* ² *The person who thinks he “knows” something doesn’t yet know in the way he ought to know.* ³ *However, if someone loves God, God knows him.*

Ephesians 3 Paul prayed for STRENGTH so we can know God’s Love and to know it BEYOND knowledge. What is beyond knowledge I asked, easy he said, Experience. The value of your doctrinal knowledge is limited even in this! Experience trumps knowledge.

Jesus even told me, Doctrines don’t cause people to KNOW ME, only know ABOUT ME; my enemy, whose fall is inevitable, knows a lot about me, but he does not KNOW me. Like Adam knew Eve and had a baby, I want my bride to know me in the inner most chambers of their secret hearts.

Diverse Gifts, Callings, Graces

Now consider the issue of the diversity of gifts, roles, callings and ministries in the Body, which are in three scriptures : Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4.

Romans 12

⁴For just as there are many parts that compose one body, but the parts don’t all have the same function; ⁵

so there are many of us, and in union with the Messiah we comprise one body, with each of us belonging to the others.⁶ But we have gifts that differ and which are meant to be used according to the grace that has been given to us.

If your gift is prophecy, use it to the extent of your trust;⁷ if it is serving, use it to serve; if you are a teacher, use your gift in teaching;⁸ if you are a counselor, use your gift to comfort and exhort; if you are someone who gives, do it simply and generously; if you are in a position of leadership, lead with diligence and zeal; if you are one who does acts of mercy, do them cheerfully.

1 Corinthians 12

⁴ Now there are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. ⁵ Also there are different ways of serving, but it is the same Lord being served. ⁶ And there are different modes of working, but it is the same God working them all in everyone.

⁷ Moreover, to each person is given the particular manifestation of the Spirit that will be for the common good.

⁸ To one, through the Spirit, is given a word of wisdom; to another, a word of knowledge, in accordance with the same Spirit; ⁹ to another, faith, by the same Spirit; and to another, gifts of healing, by the one Spirit; ¹⁰ to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, the ability to judge between spirits; to another, the ability to speak in different kinds of tongues; and to yet another, the ability to interpret tongues. ¹¹ One and the same Spirit is at work in all these things, distributing to each person as he chooses.

²⁸ And God has placed in the Messianic Community first, emissaries; second, prophets; third, teachers; then those who work miracles; then those with gifts of healing; those with ability to help; those skilled in administration; and those who speak in various tongues.

²⁹ Not all are emissaries, are they? Not all are prophets,

are they? or teachers? or miracle-workers? ³⁰ Not all have gifts of healing, not all speak in tongues, not all interpret, do they? ³¹ Eagerly seek the better gifts. But now I will show you the best way of all.

Ephesians 4

⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, ... ⁷ Each one of us, however, has been given grace to be measured by the Messiah's bounty. ... ^{8b} and he gave gifts to mankind." ...

¹¹ Furthermore, he gave some people as **emissaries**, some as **prophets**, some as **proclaimers** of the Good News, and some as **shepherds** and **teachers**. ¹² Their task is to equip God's people for the work of service that builds the body of the Messiah, ¹³ until we all arrive at the unity implied by trusting and knowing the Son of God, at full manhood, at the standard of maturity set by the Messiah's perfection.

¹⁴ We will then no longer be infants tossed about by the waves and blown along by every wind of teaching, at the mercy of people clever in devising ways to deceive.

¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in every respect grow up into him who is the head, the Messiah.

¹⁶ Under his control, the whole body is being fitted and held together by the support of every joint, with each part working to fulfill its function; this is how the body grows and builds itself up in love.

What do we see here?

First, there are SO MANY roles, gifts and 'callings' that are currently not allowed to operate in normal church services. Does this in any way resemble YOUR church? If someone asked you to describe your weekly church service, would you say ANYTHING LIKE this in any way? I bet no! This model is far beyond the normal model of most churches. The way most people minister in church, Jesus told me, will NEVER produce his Kingdom.

The real purpose of our ministry is to raise an ARMY. Yes, this is Ezekiel 37. His prophecy make dry bones into bodies but they were still dead the prophet asked God,

what now? What now? Now tell the Holy Spirit to go into them. He did ... it did ... and then ... wow! An ARMY!

Without the holy Spirit baptism, and Kingdom ministries the body will have a form of life, but remain lifeless. It needs the Holy Spirit to enter into it and ... Wow! It's an Army!

This supernatural work cannot be done by motivational sermons alone. God gave these diverse gifts for a reason, they and they alone can meet our needs. If we prevent these from functioning, we will doom the people to go home week after week without their needs ever being met.

Second, the list of gifts, callings and ministries is very diverse yet in only one time to one church does Paul even say the role of pastors or preachers exists. He ignores the role of pastors when he spoke to both the Corinthians and the Romans! When he mentioned this to the Ephesians he listed pastors as one among five, but not in the top three.

Yet we have most all churches that ONLY really allow 'pastors' to minister, and all they are really allowed to do is just 'talk.'

Also notice here that gifts are not callings, roles are not gifts ... A pastor can have prophecy, an evangelist can have healing. There is a realm beyond gifting but there is no gift of Apostling ... there is no gift of evangelizer-ing ...

What I mean is the Apostle, the person, IS the gift. There are skills in teaching, which are extremely common, and some are naturally better at it, but we can always learn and improve ... some are more extroverted, others more introverted, but the real power in ministry is not from our natural temperaments but from the flow of the Anointing through you, which even flows sometimes better in a weaker, less 'prideful' vessel! But again note here in Ephesians, teaching is not the gift. The Teacher is the gift. "He gave some to be ..."

Let Each Do Their Part

Finally, tie into this the verse in Ephesians 4:16 ... that the Body ONLY comes to MATURITY AS EACH DOES IT PART, as each part functions the way it is meant to.

Therefore, what happens if we forbid each part from existing? Or prevent them from serving? The Kingdom will simply not come. At best you would get a congregation of Unwise Virgins, left behind when the Bridegroom comes.

The idea of church 'service' being primarily an hour long sermon (ministry is mostly all TALK) given to a large crowd (people do NOT participate except by singing and tithing) delivered by the head preacher (ministry is a lecture, as intellectual exercise) ... well, this is a relic of a by-gone, powerless age. This model does not resemble the ministry of Jesus, and is not a response to the revelations of Isaiah 61, 1 Corinthians 2, Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, and the numerous verses in between.

So leaders must serve the people ... by healing, and then equipping them; by restoring and then empowering them, in a very wide array of diverse gifts and callings ... And the people need a chance to practice, learn and even make mistakes when they are being equipped to minister ... and finally there has to be a way the regular people are allowed to offer their own particular ministry to the community for the common good.

How to incorporate this into Sunday Service

Jesus asked me, What can you do without the Holy Spirit? Can you have lunch? Can you tie your shoes? ... Can you have a church service without the Holy Spirit? ... The Holy Spirit IS the Ministry / Service.

If there is no Holy Spirit, there is no service/ministry.

So there needs to be a time and manner to allow for the Holy Spirit to flow to meet the needs of the people, more than just giving a nice sermon. Since Sunday is

already given to the work of the ministry, people are already coming, then just set aside the right time, allocated differently, to allow these Kingdom Power Tools to be used.

Yes, weeknight home group meetings are great, as are weekend retreats, operating prayer and healing rooms, yes! But it's best to incorporate Kingdom ministry into the normal Sunday service because that way you can reach the most people, making the most impact on regular believers.

What about having One Prayer Line to the pastor ... is that a good start? Well, to begin with, ok. It's better than no prayer at all. But I dislike this for three reasons.

1. It again exalts the one person to be the one 'Man of God' and makes everyone else look UP to him like he's special, and this is the same pride and selfish disempowering of the Body that got us into this mess to begin with. OK, you say, let the pastor's wife join. His sister. His son. OK, I know a small church this may be unavoidable, but this Dynasty mentality is man controlling power for his own family—it is not the Body of Christ being allowed EACH to do their part for the common good. So I don't prefer this.

2. The gifts, faith and attitude of ONE person is never as rich and effective in prayer as a group of people all with varying faiths, gifts and strengths. Some people pray better for cancer, or marriages, or get words of knowledge for money, or for romance, or certain kinds of sicknesses. No one person operates in all these diverse areas, and even though Jesus did, he also empowered a huge team of people to help him because of point 3.

3. THERE IS NO TIME to do this. Imagine a church of 100 people and they all want prayer that takes 2 minutes each. Well, imagine only getting prayer from a prophetic healing elder for 2 minutes!!! Not much can be done in that time. It usually takes 10 or 15 to do a good job. But let's

say you do give 100 people only 2 minutes, how long will it take, after service, to pray for everyone? I think that's 200 minutes, which is over 3 hours, plus the time it took to do your normal service. Do you have time for this? Do the people waiting around? The one person who is praying will normally be exhausted, but there is also a secret to allowing the Flow of the Holy Spirit to energize you and you won't get tied even praying for 1,000 people. But still there is no time to do things like this.

I prefer small groups where regular people each pray for each other in turns. I don't mind prayer lines as long as you have 10 of them. I don't mind one gifted person who is doing double and triple duty, but I find this pattern unsustainable. All Satan has to do is stop that ONE person from coming today and all ministry is shut down. What if this lady praying is someone you are uncomfortable with, for any number of reasons! What if you, as a lady, want prayer for a sensitive female issue and don't really want to talk about it in front of the whole church and certainly not to a man you hardly know, or maybe not to a man you DO know.

Small groups are more private, more effective, faster and also, there is another benefit: more people get practice praying, prophesying, inner healing, physical healing, casting out, helping angels, so many things that need experience and practice to learn: as they are caught not taught.

So a simple way we can solve this bottleneck, is first to expand the ministry we do on Sunday by usually reducing the time spent talking, and increasing the time people in small groups spend praying for each other to impart and activate the very things the pastor just gave his sermon on. Was it a sermon on Peace? Then pray for everyone in your small group to receive an impartation of peace, right here, right now. Was it about spiritual gifts? Good, then right now take time to pray for everyone to receive what ever gift they seek, whatever gift the Lord tells you he wants to impart to them. Then let them try it out for themselves!

Was it for finances, education, new jobs? Great! Lay on hands to command the blessings and let the Holy Spirit do what only he can! Release the goodness of God in its various forms for the common good.

Yes host more weekend retreats, weeknight home group 'soaking' times, weekday healing rooms, you name it! But if you don't introduce Kingdom power ministry to the main service on Sunday you will never reach most regular believers. ~~~END~~~

Note on Pergamum

Jesus told me this about a church I went to and I had to research it to understand what it meant; it's deep and disturbing. I won't talk about in depth, but will make this available if you want it. Basically Pergamum is the place where Satan has his throne, this meant it was his style of leadership or his style or 'spirit' of authority. Leaders were exalted, put on pedestals (literally 'pergamums' or posts that held household idols); this was the era when the infallible Papacy was invented, as was the doctrine of praying to saints, to idols of saints and the cult of Mary. This was also when the head of the church was the empire's political leader and also the era when church was 'married' to the world and there was a polluting mixture of profane and divine; the emperor merged Mithraism, his favorite pagan religion with Christianity to make what we now call Roman Catholicism, marrying the hats, titles, roles and beliefs of paganism to the practices in the bible.

The leaders were not only held to be divinely infallible, a clergy class was created with power over the 'laity' destroying the priesthood of believers, and in fact Pergamum

was where the pagan emperor was held to be divine and was worshiped as a god. Antipas (Anti-pope) resisted this and was boiled alive in a sacrificial offering kettle, so too modern people who expose and oppose this sinful leadership style in church will be harshly punished.

This leadership worship, Christian 'hero worship' really, allowed two types of evil powers to operate in this environment: Balaam the hireling, and the brutal, uncaring Nicolaitans. These words have similar meanings, one is to devour the people, the other is to rule the people harshly like a dictator, and BOTH are prevalent in this modern church atmosphere. This is a huge insight and is actually echoed in the prophecy of Ezekiel: *"You have ruled them harshly and brutally."* It says God hates these Nicolaitans.

Again this prophecy is the current, modern Christian church environment where 'Satan has his Throne.' It is sometimes good to know your history but especially good to know your prophecy!

The good news is if people overcome this sin they will find a WHITE STONE and a NEW NAME, so forgiveness and a higher identity in Christ is theirs, but what a mess!