

Fountaingate Christian Foundation presents...

The King's Table

Series
The Body in Action



***Sending the Word of God
to the Ends of the Earth***

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A Personal Letter to You

Dear Friend

We all belong and are a part of the Body of Christ, which is the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23). We all have an important part to play. The Church is God's vehicle of expressing His purposes in the earth.

In the Reformation God gave the Bible - His written Word - back to the people. This we all enjoy today. Now the emphasis of the Lord is to give the ministry back to all believers.

For too long many believers have seen the ministry as only that of full time paid ministers. However, the concept has always been clear that the leadership ministries in the Church have a central purpose and that is to train and equip every believer for their work in ministry. In other words, every believer is full time in the ministry in their home, on their street, at their place of work, in the church and in the community. We all are significant in the spread of God's generous salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe these studies in the Body in Action will encourage you and challenge you in the purposes God has for your life. We need one another in its fulfilment.

Kind regards,

*Paul, Bunty and David
The Collins Ministry Team*

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"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

Understanding the Body

☉ And God...appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. Ephesians 1:22-23 ☉

The Body of Christ

"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others"
Romans 12:4-5.

The Church is described in Scripture as the Body of Christ. This picture reveals three things:

Our relationship to Christ

Jesus is the Head of the Body (Colossians 1:18). Just as every part of our physical body functions according to the desires and instructions of our brain, so it is with the Body of Christ.

Our relationship to one another

Every part of our physical body is important to the rest. In order for our body to be healthy, each part must function according to its individual purpose. In the same way, the "healthy functioning" of every individual Christian is essential to the whole Church.

Our purpose in this world

Just as our body is our means of communicating our inner person to the world around us, so it is with the Body of Christ. It is through the Church that Christ communicates Himself to the world.

The Fullness of Christ

"For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ" Colossians 2:9-10.

When Jesus walked the earth, His physical body housed the fullness of God – His body was the temple of the Holy Spirit (John 2:19-21). Now the Church is His Body, the temple of God's Spirit.

"In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit"
Ephesians 2:19-22 (see 1 Cor.3:16; 2 Cor.6:16).

Jesus said it was "expedient" for Him to return to His Father, for only then could He send the Holy Spirit (John 16:7). Whereas His physical body was limited by space and time, His corporate Body – the Church – has no such limitations (John 14:12).

A Body Prepared

"Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: 'Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, "Here I am – it is written about me in the scroll – I have come to do your will, O God"'" Hebrews 10:5-7.

This is the function of any body – to do the will of that person. Jesus came to the earth in bodily form to fulfil the will of His Father (John 5:19; Matthew 26:39). Jesus was God manifest in the flesh (John 1:1,14,18; 1 Timothy 3:16). Now the Church, as Christ's corporate Body, is to express God's will on earth (Matthew 6:10) – to be God manifest again in the flesh.

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Purpose of the Body

“ The church is Christ’s body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with his presence. Ephesians 1:23 (The Message) ”

The Fullness of God

God’s plan is that Christ should manifest to the world, through His Body, four things:

The glory of God

“...to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen” Eph.3:20-21 (see also Hab.2:14).

The wisdom of God

“His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord” Ephesians 3:10.

The grace of God

“And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus” Eph.2:6-7.

The praises of God

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” 1 Peter 2:9 (see also verses 5, 10-11).

The Whole Christ

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ to

the world (John 16:14-15), and He does this by indwelling the Church. In order to reveal the whole Christ, the Body must reveal Christ...

In His character

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control...” Galatians 5:22.

In His power

“But to each one is given the manifestation of the (Holy) Spirit – that is, the evidence, the spiritual illumination of the Spirit – for good and profit. To one is given in and through the (Holy) Spirit [the power to speak] a message of wisdom, and to another [the power to express] a word of knowledge and understanding according to the same (Holy) Spirit; To another (wonder-working) faith by the same (Holy) Spirit, to another the extraordinary powers of healing by the one Spirit; To another the working of miracles, to another prophetic insight – that is, the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose; to another the ability to discern and distinguish between [the utterances of true] spirits [and false ones], to another various kinds of [unknown] tongues, to another the ability to interpret [such] tongues” 1 Cor.12:7-10 (Amp).

In His authority

“In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name” John 16:23-24 (see also Matthew 16:19).

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One But Many

☉ The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 ☉

One Body

The Body of Christ is a unit comprised of many members. This unity is possible because in Christ we have:

One Spirit

The Body of Christ is filled with the Holy Spirit – also called the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:6-7; Galatians 4:6). This Spirit is the bond which holds the Body together.

"For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one body..." 1 Cor.2:12-13 (see also Ephesians 4:4).

One Blood

All true Christians have one common denominator (1 Corinthians 10:16-17) – we have been redeemed by the Blood of Christ.

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one..." Ephesians 2:13-16 (see also Ephesians 1:7; Acts 20:28).

This Blood is the basis of our life in God and continues to nourish us (John 6:53-56) and cleanse us (Hebrews 9:14).

One Mind

This is not just doctrinal agreement, but agreement in purpose and vision. For the Body of Christ to function as God intended, we must all be motivated by the heart of Christ (Philippians 2:5-8) and guided by the mind of Christ.

"... we have the mind of Christ" 1 Cor.2:16.

Many Parts

"...Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us..." Romans 12:3-6.

In 1 Corinthians 12:15-27, Paul deals with two problems in attitude that will hinder the proper functioning of the Body:

- **Inferiority** (verses 15-20)
- **Superiority** (verses 21-27)

We are not to think more highly of ourselves nor more lowly of ourselves than we should. Rather, we should see ourselves as a vital but inter-related part of the Body.

Example of Early Church

The early Church expressed this bond of unity on three levels:

"All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had" Acts 4:32.

- **One in heart** – a common Spirit
- **One in mind** – a common purpose
- **One in life** – a common concern

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The Unity of the Body

“...I [Jesus] pray...that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us... John 17:20-21”

Relating to one another

“No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us...” 1 John 4:12 (read vs.7-21).

The Christian life is designed to be a “one another” experience. We each have an individual relationship with the Lord but there is also a “together” aspect to the Christian life (Eph.2:18; Acts 4:32-33).

Together, the Temple of God

“...For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people” 2 Cor.6:16 (see Eph.2:21-22).

Together, the Body of Christ

“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others” Romans 12:4-5 (see 1 Cor.12:12,20).

Together, the fullness of Christ

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you [plural] have been given fullness in Christ...” Colossians 2:9-10.

Together, walking in the light

“If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin” 1 John 1:6-7 (see also 1 John 2:9,11; 4:20).

The bond of peace

“Be completely humble and gentle with one another, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” Ephesians 4:2-3 (read also verses 1-6).

Read Philippians 2:1-16. Paul describes in verse 1 four things that have become reality to us in Christ:

- United with Christ
- Comfort from His love
- Fellowship with the Spirit
- Tenderness and compassion

If this is the case, says Paul in verses 2-8 (and it is for the Christian), then let four things outwork in your relationship together:

- Be like-minded (united)
- Having the same love
- Being one in spirit and purpose
- With the same attitude as Christ

This is how we “work out” our salvation (verse 12) – it is in relationship with others! – living out of the grace that is within us in Christ (Ephesians 2:6-10).

Let peace rule in relationships

“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace...” Colossians 3:13-15.

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Unity in Diversity

“ All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! The variety is wonderful. ”
1 Corinthians 12:7 (The Message)

Positioned by God

“But as it is, God has placed and arranged the limbs and organs in the body, each (particular one) of them, just as He wished and saw fit and with the best adaptation. But if [the whole] were all a single organ, where would the body be?”
1 Corinthians 12:18-19 (Amp).

The Body of Christ has unity, but not uniformity. Just as there is a wonderful diversity in the natural body, so it is with the Body of Christ – a diversity of function and a variety of expression.

Great variety

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines” 1 Corinthians 12:7-10.

In this passage, Paul uses two different words in the original Greek language. These two words describe the diversity of the Body of Christ in action:

- **Allos** – “to one kind”
- **Heteros** – “to an entirely different kind”

Christians tend to gather with others of their own kind (*allos*), but the Body is also made up of people of completely different kinds (*heteros*). It is only when the *allos* and the *heteros* come together that the whole Christ is manifest to the world.

Wonderful diversity

“God’s various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God’s Spirit. God’s various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God’s Spirit. God’s various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God himself is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits...” 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (The Message).

- **Different kinds of gifts** (verse 4)
- **Different kinds of service** (verse 5)
- **Different kinds of working** (verse 6)

Not only is there a great variety of gifts and ministry (different kinds of service) distributed by the Holy Spirit within the Body of Christ, but also, because of the uniqueness of each individual and the anointing upon them, there is wonderful diversity in the way these gifts and ministries are expressed.

In all things – love

Read 1 Corinthians 13. After describing the great variety and diversity within the Body of Christ he then goes on to show how in “the most excellent way” it all works.

“Do everything in love” 1 Corinthians 16:14.

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Structure of the Body

‘ ...the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. Colossians 2:19 ’

The head

"... Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour" Ephesians 5:23

The word "head" is used to describe one who is "the most exalted, the most excellent, the chief" (Ungers Bible Dictionary) (see 1 Samuel 15:17; Ephesians 1:22). It is also the seat of intelligence. From the head comes all the directions for the rest of the body. Christ is the Head of the Body.

The skeleton

The skeleton gives our physical body structure but it does not restrict it. Rather it makes free movement possible. Without our skeleton our body would have no form and no ability to control its movement. This pictures the function of the Word of God in the Body of Christ. It is the Word that gives the boundaries and "shape" to the life of the Christian and the Church as a whole.

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" 2 Timothy 3:16 (see also Romans 15:4; Acts 17:11).

The sinews & ligaments

But the skeleton alone is not sufficient for movement. It needs the ligaments (the bands of tissue which join the bones) and it needs the sinews (the tendons which attach the muscles to the bones). These parts of the body initiate movement. So it is with the Body of Christ.

Without structure, the body will collapse. With too much structure, the body becomes immobilised. The Body of Christ has structure, but it is a structure designed for flexibility. The two elements mentioned in Colossians 2:19 – *ligaments* and *sinews* – picture this. The leadership ministries of the Body of Christ are like the ligaments and sinews joining the Body together for free movement.

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" Eph. 4:11-13.

The cells and organs

Every believer is part of the intricate workings of the Body.

"...speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work" Ephesians 4:15-16.

The breath of life

The Holy Spirit is the breath of life of the Body. He is the One who communicates the Head's desires to the rest of the Body and empowers each believer to fulfil his or her part (John 20:22; Genesis 2:7).

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The New Wineskin

Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins...No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved. Matthew 9:17

The picture of a wineskin

In Bible days goat skins were used to hold the fresh grape juice while it fermented. It had to be pliable and flexible so that it could stretch as the wine expanded. A used skin – already stretched as far as it could go, and rigid – would break, causing the wine to spill.

"Neither is new wine put in old wineskins, for if it is, the skins burst and are torn in pieces, and the wine is spilled and the skins ruined..." Matthew 9:17 (Amp).

The new wine

The new wine Jesus is speaking of is the Spirit of God dwelling within God's new creation people.

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit... Some, however, made fun of them and said, 'They have had too much wine.' Then Peter...addressed the crowd: '...These men are not drunk, as you suppose...No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel... 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people...' " Acts 2:4-17 (see also Ephesians 5:18).

We are not to put the new wine – God's new creation life – into an old wineskin.

The old wineskin

"Then John's disciples came and asked him, 'How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?'" Matthew 9:14.

Jesus' reply of verse 17 was in response to this challenge to follow the religious order of Moses –

the Law. It is the Law that He calls an *old wineskin*.

Law and self-effort

The Covenant of Law was outward rules and regulations with self-effort the only means available for fulfilling them (Romans 10:5). It resulted in condemnation (Romans 3:10-20,23).

Professionals and laity

The Law necessitated top-down control. The structure was "pyramidal" – Moses at the top, beneath him the professional priesthood whose job it was to do everything for the people in their worship of God, and under them the people. Jesus called it an old wineskin that cannot contain the new wine without breaking and spilling it.

The new wineskin

The new wineskin that God has prepared for His new wine involves grace on two levels:

The individual experience

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works so that no one can boast" Ephesians 2:8-9.

The corporate experience

Read 1 Peter 4:10. The new wineskin is the Body of Christ – every part essential to the other, and every part functioning according to its calling. It is a new flexible "wineskin" – a structure which is constantly growing into the stature of Christ, expanding in dimensions of the glory of God.

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Leadership in the Body

“...Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care...not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 1 Peter 5:2-3”

“New wineskin” leadership is not like that under the old structure of the Law. It is not top-down control but of a totally different nature. It is of the same heart as the Lord Jesus.

“...You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them...Not so with you...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servants, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 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” Mark 10:42-45 (read from v.35. Luke 22:25; 2 Cor.1:24)

It is foundational

“...God’s people...built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone...” Ephesians 2:19-22.

A foundation is not on top of the building – it is beneath. It is the underlying strength and shape of the building which is seen above. The whole purpose and desire of leadership in the Body of Christ is that the believers are strong in Christ and seen by all displaying the beauty and glory of Christ.

It is by example

“Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you” Phil. 3:17 (see 1 Peter 5:3; 1 Cor.11:1; 1 Timothy 4).

It is by relationship

“...Even though you have ten thousand guardians

in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me...” 1 Corinthians 4:14-17.

It is unselfish

True leadership is not interested in personal success, gain or recognition.

“Since an overseer is entrusted with God’s work, he must be blameless – not overbearing...not pursuing dishonest gain” Titus 1:7 (read verses 5-13; 1 Timothy 6:5-11).

It is willing to suffer

True leadership is willing to embrace the suffering zone when it is necessary to fulfil the purposes of God.

“...For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer...” 2 Corinthians 1:5-6 (read vs 1-11).

It has a vision for all

True leadership emphasises that all Christians are full-time in the ministry – at home, on their street, in the workplace and in the body of believers. It sees its mission to establish, prepare, teach and release all believers into their giftings and callings to proclaim Christ (Ephesians 4:12-13).

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The Five-Fold Ministry

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers. Ephesians 4:11

The five ministry gifts

The five ministry gifts described in Ephesians 4:11 are examples of how "grace has been given as Christ apportioned it" (Ephesians 4:7). All ministry is simply the ministry of Christ expressed through the believer by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. These five types of ministry are gifts to the Church. They are not titles (e.g. Apostle John, Prophet Jack, Pastor Paul), but are descriptions of ministry functions (e.g. John, an apostle; Jack, a prophet; Paul, a pastor). There is nothing "elevated" about these gifts. They simply have a special purpose.

"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. We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honoured, we are dishonoured! To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world" 1 Corinthians 4:9-13 (read also 2 Corinthians 11:23-33; 12:7-10).

The purpose

"...to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up... [so

that] we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" Ephesians 4:12-16.

These five leadership gifts were not given just to do the work of the ministry but to *enable God's people* to do the work of the ministry. They are given to train and release every believer in their specific gifting and function. It is only as *each part does its work* that the Body of Christ can be "built up" and grow into the fullness of Christ.

The time-frame

"...until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" Ephesians 4:13.

These ministry gifts did not pass away at the end of the first century, but were given *until* the maturing of the Body in the *unity* of the faith, in the *knowledge* of the Lord, and in the expression of the *fullness of Christ*. They are still needed!

Selected and sent

Read Acts 13:2-3. The five-fold ministry are not self-commissioned, nor are they simply leaders of a church. They are clearly defined ministries that have an impact *on the Church as a whole*. By nature, their scope of ministry is wider than a local church. Recognition of this is evidenced by invitations to minister in the wider Body.

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An Apostle Servant Leader

“ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God. Romans 1:1 ”

An apostle is one who is chosen and sent with a special commission. The original twelve apostles chosen by Jesus were witnesses of the resurrection (Acts 1:15; 4:33), but there were many other true apostles (Acts 14:3-4; Romans 16:7; 1 Cor.15:5-7; Gal.1:1,19). With the prophet, they are a foundational ministry of the Church (Ephesians 2:19-20).

An apostle's credentials

Paul, the great example of an apostle, presents his "credentials"...

Life-style

"We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, im-prisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; through glory and dishonour, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything" 2 Corinthians 6:3-10.

Paul is describing the whole heart attitude of an apostle – sincere love for the Lord and the people needing to be reached. This consumed his whole

life at whatever cost. Read 2 Corinthians 11:5-33. In this passage, Paul contrasts the heart of the true apostle with some he calls "super apostles", who were not true apostles but were using the people for their own benefit (2 Corinthians 2:17).

The ministry evidence of a true apostle includes:

The miraculous

"The things that mark an apostle – signs, wonders and miracles – were done among you with great perseverance" 2 Corinthians 12:12.

Changed lives

"...do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" 2 Corinthians 3:1-3.

Churches born

"...Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord" 1 Corinthians 9:1-2 (see also Romans 15:20).

The ministry of an apostle also includes grounding the Church in truth (Colossians 1:25), preserving unity in the Body (1 Cor.3:3-5), laying foundations in the Church (1 Cor.3:10), setting things in order (Titus 1:5), fostering a wider vision (2 Corinthians 8) and fathering new ministries (2 Timothy 1:6).

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A Prophet Servant Leader

“ Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers. ”

Acts 15:32

The foundational ministry of a prophet (Eph. 2:20) is not just someone with a prophetic anointing, but is a recognised ministry to the Body at large. There are three levels of prophecy:

The word of prophecy

This is limited to “strengthening, encouragement and comfort” and is open to everyone in the Body of Christ to move in (1 Corinthians 14:3,31).

The spirit of prophecy

This is when the Spirit moves in a special way on a group of people (1 Samuel 10:10).

The ministry of a prophet

This is the foundational leadership ministry. The ministry of the prophet involves two aspects:

Prophetic word

The prophet is “moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21) in prophetic utterance on a deeper level than general prophesy. This can be:

Predictive

“...a prophet name Agabus came down from Judea. Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, 'The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles'” Acts 21:10-11 (see also Acts 11:27-28).

Directive

“In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers... while they were worshipping the Lord

and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off” Acts 13:1-3.

Corrective

“Peter answered: 'May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin'...” Acts 8:20-24 (see also Matthew 23:34).

Prophetic vision

The prophet is visionary. He has special insight by the Holy Spirit and sees the direction the Lord is taking His people (see Acts 13:1-3).

Scriptural caution

There is such a thing, however, as a false prophet (1 John 4:1; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Peter 2:1; Revelation 2:2), and so God sets clear guidelines:

- Prophecy is time-tested (Acts 11:28).
- Judged by other prophets (1 Cor.14:29).
- Confirmed independently (2 Cor.13:1).
- Lines up with Scripture (2 Peter 1:19-21).
- Operates in teamwork with the apostle, in the context of the local church where proper responsibility can be taken (Acts 15:30-40).

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

An Evangelist and a Teacher

☉ ...This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed...by the commission God gave me to present you the Word of God in its fullness. Col.1:23,25 ☉

An evangelist

The ministry of an evangelist is two-fold:

Extends God's Kingdom

Philip (Acts 21:8) is our greatest biblical example of an evangelist.

"Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city" Acts 8:5-8 (read also verses 26-40).

Three major things are evident:

- **He preached Christ** (verse 5)
- **Miracles took place** (verse 6-8)
- **Lives were transformed** (verses 12,14-17)

Evangelists are co-workers with, and extensions of, apostolic ministry. Paul tells Timothy, his co-worker in the Gospel...

"...do the work of an evangelist..." 2 Tim. 4:5.

Releases the Body in evangelism

As we saw in Ephesians 4:11-12, a major part of the ministry of an evangelist is to release the Body of Christ into evangelism.

"We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith" 1 Thessalonians 3:2.

A teacher

The ministry of teacher impacts the Body of Christ in four ways:

Imparts a hunger for the Word

"Now the Bereans...received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true" Acts 17:11.

Gives Clarity

"...Apollos...was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervour and taught about Jesus accurately...he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ" Acts 18:24-28.

Waters the seed of new life

"What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe...I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow" 1 Corinthians 3:5-6.

Imparts living reality of the truth

"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?'" Luke 24:27-32.

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

A Pastor Servant Leader

Keep watch over...all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made over overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. Acts 20:28

Shepherds of God's flock

The Greek word for pastor – *poimen* – means “one who tends sheep or cares for flocks”. It is only once translated as “pastor” (in Ephesians 4:11). The few other times “poimen” is found in the New Testament it is translated “shepherd”.

“Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away” 1 Peter 5:2-4.

Two other words are used to describe leadership ministries within the Church:

Elder

From the Greek word *presbuteros* meaning “older, senior”.

Overseer

Sometimes translated “bishop”, this is the Greek word *episkope* meaning “to inspect, to go see, relieve, look out, visit”.

The ministry of a pastor

A pastor is not simply a leader over a local church but, as one of the five-fold ministry, expresses his ministry to the Body at large, not just to a single church. The gift of a pastor is to the whole Body of Christ. In present terminology he is more accurately

a “pastor of pastors” or a “pastor of elders” beyond the local body. A pastor's emphasis in ministry is in relationship networking.

The ministry of an elder

An elder is simply someone older in the faith. An elder is not a particular type of ministry, but is a more general leader in the Body. An elder's qualifications are described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. Peter, called as an apostle to the Jews (Galatians 2:8), writes...

“To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder...” 1 Peter 5:1 (see 2 John 1:3; 3 John 1).

Peter then goes on to exhort the elders to be shepherds of God's flock that is under their care and to serve as overseers. Paul gives the same exhortation to the elders of the Ephesian church (Acts 20:17-31). Thus we see, *elder* refers to any leadership ministry. An elder may be one of the five or an *overseer* over a church. But whether a pastor (one of the five) or overseer (local body), both are called to be *shepherds*.

The Lord Jesus is the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4) and the great example of a shepherd's ministry. Read John 10:1-16. Here we see a shepherd's ministry is to guide (vs.3-5), to feed (v.9), to protect (vs.11-13), to love (vs.14-15). Read also John 21:15-17.

A deacon is someone who is appointed by the people to assist the elders in ministering to the practical needs of the people (Acts 6:1-7). Their qualifications are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

Apostolic Teams

His intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people), that they should do the work of ministering... Ephesians 4:12 (Amp)

Just as the Godhead – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – function in “team” ministry, so it is with the Body of Christ. Not one part is designed as an independent functioning entity within itself.

Five-fold ministry teams

Read again Ephesians 4:11-16. God has designed the five-fold ministries to flow and function together as apostolic teams as they travel to the whole Body. Each needs the other. Two important aspects in relation to these ministries are that they are *sent* and *received*. They have safety in a point of reference (Acts 14:26-27; Prov.1:14; Acts 15:33).

Sent

“In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers... While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off” Acts 13:1-3.

These team ministries both *send* and are *sent*.

Received

“...So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. The church sent them on their way... When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders... Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and

sent them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas... The men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together...” Acts 15:2-30 (see also 21:17-19).

As the apostolic teams travel to the different parts of the Body of Christ, they are then *received* by the leadership in that area and the church is gathered together to receive from their ministry. The time they stay will vary according to the need and situation (Acts 11:25).

Impact of apostolic teams

The five-fold ministry teams impact the Church in four ways:

Equip the saints

“...for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” Ephesians 4:11-12 (NKJV).

Confirm and release ministries

“Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you” 1 Timothy 4:14 (see also 1 Tim.5:22; 2 Tim.1:6; Heb.6:2).

Confirm major decisions

“...The apostles and elders met to consider this question...” Acts 15:6 (read verses 1-35).

Authority based on relationship

“To Timothy, my dear son...continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it...” 2 Timothy 1:2; 3:10-14 (see 1 Cor.9:1-2).

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

New Wineskin Local Church

“...When you gather for worship, each one of you be prepared with something that will be useful for all...
1 Corinthians 14:26 (The Message)”

The whole Church is the Body of Christ but the believers of a locality are the living expression of the whole. The local church is made up of people filled with the effervescent new life of God, who are ever-growing in the dimensions of His glory. It is through the local church that God's purpose is outworked, and His glory seen by all in the community around. Only with the “new wineskin” – God's structural design – can this be a reality.

Everyone doing their part

“For because of Him the whole body (the church, in all its various parts) joined and firmly knit together by the joints and ligaments with which it is supplied, when each part [with power adapted to its need] is working properly (in all its functions), grows to full maturity, building itself up in love” Ephesians 4:16 (Amp).

How do we attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ? – as *each part does its work!*
This is the new wineskin!

Body ministry

“...When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All these must be done for the strengthening of the church” 1 Corinthians 14:26.

Body evangelism

“...On that day a great persecution broke out...all except the apostles were scattered...Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went” Acts 8:1,4.

It was everyone *except the apostles* who were

scattered and preached everywhere. They literally “gossiped” the Gospel.

Body functioning

Every individual believer is meant to fulfil God's call on their life (Romans 12:4-8). Every believer's home is a redemptive house on their street, a house of prayer and a house of mercy (Acts 9:36-42).

Body worshipping

“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord...” Ephesians 5:19-20 (see also Colossians 3:16).

Body giving

Every believer is meant to have a missionary mentality, releasing finances for the spreading of the Gospel.

“Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints...they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will” 2 Corinthians 8:2-5 (read chapters 8 and 9).

In the New Testament, the local church experienced regular gatherings with every-believer involvement, special gatherings to receive from the travelling ministry teams, home expression, neighbourhood outreach and the practical, daily outliving of the Christian faith (Acts 2:42-47; 5:42).

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

What is Ministry?

“ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God.
Romans 1:1 ”

Three Levels

In introducing himself to the Roman Church, Paul describes the three levels of his call and ministry. These three levels of calling also apply to every Christian's ministry.

The General Calling

Paul introduced himself first of all as “a servant of Jesus Christ”. To minister means “to serve”. The Greek word Paul uses for servant is *doulos*, which actually has the deeper meaning of “bond servant”, “love slave” or “a slave by choice” (see Exodus 21:5-6; Deuteronomy 15:16-17; Psalm 40:6-8). This is the general calling of every believer – the starting point and foundation of all ministry.

The Special Calling

Paul then identified his special calling – “called to be an apostle”. God's grace is given to each believer for a particular kind of function, and here we begin to see the wonderful variety in the Body of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 12:27-30).

The Particular Calling

Finally Paul specifies the bounds of his ministry – “set apart for the gospel of God”. Paul was an apostle, like Peter and John were apostles, but the particular calling upon his life outworked differently than each of the other apostles. Peter was an apostle to the Jews, while Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:7-9). In the same way, even in ministries of like kind (the special calling), there is a great variety in scope, focus, operation and mix of gifts (the particular calling).

Five Expressions

Every believer has five expressions of ministry, and each must be in balance:

Ministry to the Lord

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light”
1 Peter 2:9 (see Matt.22:37-40; Ps.150; Heb.13:15).

Ministry to Ourselves

“But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit”
Jude 20 (see also Col.3:16; Psalm 42:1-2,11).

Ministry to the Family

- Husbands (Eph.5:25-33; 1 Tim.3:4-5).
- Wives (1 Peter 3:1; Ephesians 5:22-24).
- Widows (1 Timothy 5:1-16).
- Singles (1 Timothy 5:1-2).
- Children (Eph.6:1-4; Col.3:18-21).

Ministry to the Body

“I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong – that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith” Rom.1:11-12 (see 12:13; 14:19; 15:1-7; Eph.4:16; 1 Thess.5:11; Gal.6:2).

Ministry to the World

“And then he told them, ‘You are to go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere’” Mark 16:15 (Living Bible) (see also verses 17-18; Luke 10:2; Acts 1:8).

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

Ministering Christ

“ For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. 2 Corinthians 4:1-5 ”

Who we are

Ministry is not preaching, teaching, pastoring or witnessing etc. (although these are some of the outward expressions). Ministry comes from who we are. We can only impart to others what is real in us. It is ministering *Christ* to people.

“Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ’s affliction, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness...” Colossians 1:24-25 (read to verse 29).

Presenting the Word

Paul’s commission by God was not just to *preach* the word of God but to *present* it. And the effect and result of his ministry was not just that God’s word would be *known*, but that those who received it would be *presented* “perfect in Christ”. In other words, the word was not just spoken but was a living reality within him. This is what he meant when he said “I fill up in my flesh” – he desired to express Christ to the fullness and that came from a life filled with Him (1 Thess.1:4-10; 2 Cor.1:3-11).

Treasure in the clay jar

“For God...made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us” 2 Corinthians 4:6-7 (read to verse 15).

What we have

“... Then Peter said, ‘Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk...He jumped to his feet and began to walk...” Acts 3:2-8.

Apart from who we are in Christ, we have also been given gifts by the Spirit (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11). The simple principle in ministry is: Whatever you’ve received from the Lord, you are able to give to others (1 Peter 4:10-11; Matt.10:8).

Attitude in ministry

The motivation of all ministry should be that of building up others, not tearing them down (2 Corinthians 10:8; 1 Corinthians 14:12,26).

Ministry is not competitive

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others” Philippians 2:3-4.

Ministry is not for self-gain

Read 1 Corinthians chapters 3-4 (especially 4:6-7) and 2 Corinthians 2:17 and chapters 10-12. Paul describes the wrong attitudes of some to ministry.

The measure of success

We do not measure the success of our ministry against each other (2 Cor.10:12-18), but against the ministry of the Lord Himself. He is the yardstick of our life and of all ministry (Eph.4:13; 3:19-21).

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

Discovering Your Ministry

Just as each of us has one body with many members...so in Christ...We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. Romans 12:4-6

Every Christian is full-time in ministry, not just a professional few (Eph.4:12). Only as each part of the Body "does its work" (Eph.4:16) will the Body grow and express the glory of Christ to this world.

What is my ministry?

In order to discover the ministry potential which God has placed within each one of us, it is important to understand three things:

Ministry gifts are not unnatural

Though there is a supernatural element to the gifts of God – they are called "grace" (Rom.12:6-8) – they will not sit uncomfortably with a believer. If there is strain and pressure in ministry, this is an indication that you are possibly stepping beyond that grace. Many experience confusion when trying to identify their gifts and calling. But there is no need for us to try. The answer is just to be who we are for God's ministry gifts have been put within us by the Holy Spirit and are part of us.

"...fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord...But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God" 2 Timothy 1:5-8.

Ministry starts with the heart

To minister means "to serve". It is love in action. This heart attitude is the basis of all ministry – to the Lord, to our family, to the Body and to the

world. As we move out with the desire to serve others, the gifts which are within us will rise and be expressed, for God has given them so that through us He can bless others.

Ministry is outward-looking

Ministry is people-focused (Matthew 9:35-36). The focus is not *our ministry*. The focus is *other people*. As we begin to look out – to see the needs in others, the cries for help, the gaps in ministry – and move to meet those needs, our gifts will be clarified.

How do I begin?

There are three keys to getting started in ministry:

Offer yourself to the Lord

Read Romans 12:1-2. Begin each day in worship and fellowship with the Lord, committing yourself to His service for the day. Then experience the excitement of "divine appointments" – God orchestrating your day and organising encounters with people in need (Isaiah 50:4; Acts 8:26-40).

Be ready with a word to reconcile

Read 2 Corinthians 5:19-20.

Serve the saints

Read 1 Corinthians 16:14-15. Being ready and willing to do anything that will minister and bless God's people is the heart of ministry (read John 13:1-17; 1 Peter 4:7-11; Galatians 6:2).

Gift recognition comes out of observation. It is only as we operate in these three things listed above that our special gifts and calling become obvious.

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

Gathering Together

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another...
Hebrews 10:25

Purpose for gathering

The gathering together of Christians is a priority to the Lord. It is only together that Christ in His fullness can be revealed. We meet together both to give and to receive of the Lord who is within each of us (Acts 2:40-43). There are five basic reasons for regularly gathering as Christians together:

- To worship together (Colossians 3:16)
- To hear from God together (Acts 11:26)
- To break bread together (Acts 20:7)
- To pray together (Acts 12:5)
- To build one another up (1 Cor.14:26)

Building One Another

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

Each of us has a basic choice to make in our dealings with others in the Body of Christ: to tear down or to build up. Building up is, in practice, a five-step process:

- Accept one another (Romans 15:5-7).
- Be devoted to one another (Rom.12:9-10)
- Encourage one another (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- Pray for one another (James 5:16).
- Serve one another (Galatians 5:13-15).

Built together

"And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his

Spirit...From him the whole body...grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" Ephesians 2:22 (see also 4:16).

We build up other Christians in two ways:

Exhort one another

"Exhort" means to come alongside, to encourage, counsel or comfort. This is the work of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17), but He uses *us* in this ministry.

Edify one another

The root meaning of the Greek word translated "edify" means "to be a house-builder". When we edify another Christian, we play a part in building the "house" (or dwelling place for His presence) that God has designed their life to be.

Receiving and Giving

"...Freely you have received, freely give" Matthew 10:8.

God gives freely to each one of us in order that we give just as freely to one another (1 Corinthians 11:23). There are two things that we receive which we can pass on to others:

- ***Revelation*** (1 Corinthians 11:23) – what we hear *from* the Lord
- ***Experience*** (2 Corinthians 1:3-4) – what we go through *with* the Lord

When members of the Body minister strength and encouragement to one another and share of what they have received, this is called "Body ministry".

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

Ministering to the Body

☞ Naturally there are different gifts and functions; individually grace is given to us in different ways out of the rich diversity of Christ's giving. Ephesians 4:7 (Phillips) ☞

Body ministry

"What shall we say then, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church" 1 Corinthians 14:26.

God desires for His Body to minister to one another, both during and outside of meeting times. For this reason, He has distributed gifts – not just to church leadership, but to every believer (1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Romans 12:4-8).

A simple guideline

"Be completely humble and gentle with one another, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" Eph.4:2-3 (see also Col.3:15).

Body ministry has only one purpose – to build one another up toward the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:26). The guidelines given for prophecy apply to all forms of believer-to-believer sharing. What we say should be "for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort" (1 Corinthians 14:3). Directive words are *not* within the jurisdiction of Body ministry.

Mutual identification

"...But God has combined the members of the body and...its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it" 1 Corinthians 12:24-26.

Body ministry works on the basis of mutual identification – knowing what the other is going through. We must learn to feel with the other person before we can truly minister comfort and encouragement to their heart (Galatians 6:2). This principle is shown in Romans 12:15:

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice; weep with them that weep" (KJV).

Anointing of the Spirit

Each of the gifts of the Spirit is a "manifestation" of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. There are many manifestations or expressions of the Spirit's anointing. 1 Cor.12:7-11 falls into three categories:

- Gifts of supernatural understanding
- Gifts of supernatural power
- Gifts of supernatural utterance

During Body ministry, the anointing of the Spirit can be expressed in any of these. It is the same anointing (1 John 2:27), but expressed in different ways. This anointing is controllable (1 Cor.14:32-33), and can be expressed in a form (prophecy, prayer, tongues, sharing or song) that best fits the time and situation. God desires for us to be filled with His Spirit..

"...be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs..." Ephesians 5:18.

...and that the overflow of this infilling will spill over in the form of encouragement and comfort to the lives of others within the Body and out in the world (read 2 Corinthians 1:3-6).

The King's Table

"He brought me into His banqueting table..." Song of Solomon 2:4

Ministering to the World

☉ And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. Matthew 24:14 ☉

The preaching of the Gospel to the world holds high priority in God's heart (2 Cor.5:14-21). God's Word declares there are three things which will win the world:

Loving one another

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another" John 13:34-35 (see 17:20-23).

This is the underlying element of all testimony to the world of the Lord Jesus.

Witnesses of resurrection

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth" Acts 1:8 (see also Matthew 10:18; Luke 21:12-13).

The original Greek word for "witness" is *martus*, which means "a witness, a record" (see 2 Corinthians 3:3). It is a noun, not a verb – in other words, you are not called *to* witness; you *are* a witness. A witness proclaims what they have seen and heard – what they have experienced! *Martus* is where we get the word "martyr" from. Being a witness is being willing to place your whole life on the line to share the Lord Jesus with others.

Power to witness

God desires each one of us to be filled with His Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), and that this infilling will overflow to the world (John 7:38-39).

Witnesses that Jesus is alive!

"With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all" Acts 4:33 (see also 2:22-32; 3:11-16).

It is the *resurrected* Lord who said "you will be My witnesses". We, too, are witnesses of the resurrected Lord. By His Holy Spirit we have experienced His resurrection life within us (Acts 5:30-32). Being a witness involves three things:

Our words

"...do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you" Matt.10:18-20.

Our deeds

"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" Matt.5:16 (1 Peter 2:12).

Our life

"Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life..." Philippians 2:14-16.

Giving glory to God

"But you are a chosen people... that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light..." 1 Peter 2:9.

Making the Truth Mine

Write out in full the scripture from this lesson which means the most to you. We encourage you to commit this verse to memory.

Write out one statement from the study which you feel is most significant for your life.

Write in your own words how you believe you should respond to the truth of this study. Are there any decisions you should make?

You can make a difference!

For this study to have its full effect in your life, we encourage you to:

- Read and digest the study – meditate on the Word of God.
- Put into action what you have learnt (James 1:22).
- Share the Word of God with others.

Your places of ministry have been pre-arranged by God: your home, the street you live on, your place of work and your church.

“I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free” Psalm 119:32.

Food for Thought

Sending God's Word to the Ends of the Earth

The Word of God made available in a
clear, simple layout for personal study
and for use in sharing with others.

The King's Table is designed to help...

- ***Every believer for personal study***
- ***Parents to teach their children***
- ***Leaders of home groups***
- ***Ministers of congregations***
- ***Christian schools and home schooling***
- ***Missionary projects to other nations***

Our Project 21 series for leaders has been widely received and multiplied throughout Asia and the Pacific. The reports from many places of growth and blessing encourage us greatly in the spreading of the life-giving Word of God. It is something that for us never loses its excitement.

The King's Table is an extension of the Project 21 teaching program, where people like yourself can receive a different series of 21 lessons each month. Our prayer is that this series might be a great blessing to you.

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