



Sunday October 28, 2018

Ministry - Lifestyle, Anointing, Impartation

This is the last message in this three part series where we are attempting to address certain problems in the Body of Christ globally, and present truth on these matters.

On Sunday October 14 we covered the topic of "Spiritual fathers and mothers"

On Sunday October 21 we discussed the prophet's reward and challenged us to "Honor the least".

Today we cover another important area where we find a lot of things being said and done that could be erroneous and hence we desire to present the Word of God on this issue: "Lifestyle, Anointing, and Impartation" especially in the context of Christian "Ministry".

Five-fold Ministries

Ephesians 4:11-12

**11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,
12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,**

We recognize the five-fold ministries that Christ has placed in the church and their purpose. We also recognize that there are several other ministries, roles and functions that serve in the Body of Christ.

Minister's Lifestyle

Let's look at what God requires of a spiritual leader

1 Timothy 3:1-7

1 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;

4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence

5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);

6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.



7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

The apostle Paul was giving instructions to Timothy on appointing spiritual leaders at Ephesus. This is what Timothy must look for if somebody wanted to be a spiritual leader.

This passage describes God's standards for a spiritual leader.

The emphasis in this passage is not on a person's gifting or anointing, but on the individual's lifestyle - manner of life.

While anointing and gifting are important to serve God's people, we must not forget God's standard given to us in the Word.

The Scriptures talk to us about spiritual leaders being blameless, not greedy for money, not covetous, etc. These are the things we should look for in spiritual leaders.

As ministers, the life we live off the pulpit is as important as who we are behind it.

We must look at (evaluate, judge) the person - their life, character, behavior - and not just the performance - how well they preach and minister.

God call and raises up all kinds of people in all levels of society to serve Him. It is perfectly fine if a person who is a successful businessperson is also a minister of God and so has a luxurious lifestyle. That is their personal choice. However, we should not make the mistake of thinking that a preacher who has a lot of wealth is more special than someone who does not have as much.

Anointing

God anoints, that is empowers by His Holy Spirit, His servants in different ways.

Ephesians 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

The Lord Jesus has called, anointed and gifted men and women as He saw fit.

Here are some important truths to keep in mind:

#1, Just because a person is called, anointed and gifted and manifests signs and wonders - does not mean they are infallible and cannot be in error.



This may be difficult for us to understand - how is it possible that a minister of God who is being powerfully used by God, could be preaching and teaching something that is wrong. Yet, we see that this is possible.

John Alexander Dowie was powerfully used by God, but he thought he was the prophet Elijah and got involved in a lot of financial problems/irregularities. William Branham was a prophet used greatly by God in the prophetic, healing and deliverance and yet started preaching/teaching a lot of error in the latter part of his ministry.

So the important thing for us to do is to recognize and honor the empowering of the Holy Spirit through a human vessel - and then evaluate their teaching/preaching based on its alignment and accuracy to the Word of God.

#2, Be careful when ministers start "merchandising the anointing". Remember "The Holy Spirit is not for sale"

Both these statements "Merchandising the anointing" (by Rick Renner) and "The Holy Spirit is not for sale" (J. Lee Grady) are titles of books written by Charismatic leaders calling believers to discernment and alerting us to the authoritarianism, egotism and greed that has crept into the Charismatic/Pentecostal Church.

While it is true that God has used oil and cloth and other objects (rod, rock, brazen serpent, etc.) in Scripture as part of manifesting His power, we find ministers making all kinds of products available for sale at ridiculous prices, promising believers all kinds of spiritual blessings. They make all kinds of claims about the anointing, if you would purchase their products.

#3, Look for fruit not just for performance

Matthew 7:15-20

15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?

17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.



The real fruit of any Christian ministry that we should be looking for according to the Scriptures, are these:

- ✓ is Christ glorified and exalted (John 16:14)
- ✓ are believers lives transformed and growing into Christlikeness (Ephesians 4:13)
- ✓ are believers equipped for ministry (Ephesians 4:12)
- ✓ is the Body of Christ edified/built up (Ephesians 4:13)
- ✓ is the Body of Christ brought to unity of the faith (Ephesians 4:13)

Look past the entertainment, the excitement and all the other things that come at you - and look for fruit.

#4, Do not boast in men

Remember our identity and boasting must always be in God, not in "our man of God".

Listen to what Paul wrote in Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 1:12-13

12 Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ."

13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1 Corinthians 3:4-5,21

4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?

21 Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours:

1 Corinthians 4:6

Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.

Don't boast in men - even men of God.

Don't be puffed up on behalf of one minister of God against another minister of God.

Stop saying that one is better than the other.



#5, Who do you need in your life - Jesus or an anointed minister of God?

Today there is a trend and emphasis that you need to have "an anointed man of God in your life" and you need to be "connected to an anointed minister of God".

Typically Old Testament passages are used to present this teaching.

We understand that in the Old Testament God anointed certain individuals, and not every one. So the leader needed a priest.
The king needed the prophet.

However, in the New Testament, things are very different.
Every believer is a king AND a priest to God.
Every believer has the Spirit of God, the anointing within and the same anointing teaches us all things (1 John 2:20,27).
Every believer is connected to the Vine Jesus Christ (John 15:1-5) and has been qualified to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints (Colossians 1:12).

So it is incorrect to take Old Testament passages randomly and apply them to a believer without interpreting it from the light of what God has done for the believer in Christ Jesus.

You don't "need" a prophet or an anointed man of God in your life - you are already connected to Jesus Christ and have the Holy Spirit within you. God will use five-fold ministers to equip and edify the believer. That's the purpose of the five-fold ministry. But the goal is to help believers grow in Christ, and not be drawn to the five-fold minister!

(#6, God's work and cultural expressions - will leave this for another occasion)

Impartation

Impartation has to do with **the spiritual transfer of a gift, grace or empowering of the Spirit**, from one to another. We see this in both the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

Just briefly, Paul mentions this to the believers at Rome that he would like to come to them and impart to them some spiritual gift (Romans 1:11). Paul encourages Timothy to stir up the gift of God that was given to him through he laying on of hand (2 Timothy 1:6).



Receiving impartation of grace, gift and anointing is true, but here are some truths about impartation that we need to keep in mind:

#1) Impartation is always aligned to God's call and assignment on your life.

For example: if you are called to be a teacher, then you cannot have a worship leader lay hands on you and anoint you to become a worship leader if that is not God's assignment on your life. There could be a measure of grace given to me in worship for use in personal worship, but that will not make me a worship leader, if God has not called me to be one.

#2) Impartation often takes place in a measure

If an individual is carrying grace and anointing in ten different areas and he lays hands on you, you may only receive an impartation in one of those ten areas. Also you may only receive a portion of the full anointing in that area. Examples:

- ✓ Moses and the seventy elders - the seventy elders did not become a prophet like Moses.
- ✓ Moses and Joshua - Joshua received the wisdom on Moses but did not become a prophet.
- ✓ Elijah and John the Baptist - Elijah manifested supernatural miracles, John the Baptist who came in the "spirit and power of Elijah" did not manifest any. But John turned the hearts of the people to God, the same way Elijah did.

#3) Everything received through impartation has to be nurtured and developed

you personally have to develop, nurture, get trained and exercise what you have received

Example: Paul told Timothy not to neglect the gift and to stir up and exercise what he had received (1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6)

#4) You can grow beyond what was imparted - both in measure and realms

So if you have received a certain measure of anointing and grace in an area, you can take that to new levels of anointing and grace. You can also, through your own walk with God receive grace and anointing in other areas (realms).

#5) You can receive impartation from more than one minister of God

#6) Two factors determine what you receive through impartation - your hunger and God's assignment

When you deeply hunger for grace and anointing that is aligned to the call of God, impartation happens.

God also sovereignly initiates impartation, aligned to His call on your life.



#7) Impartation takes place through association and honor

As you learn from, get trained under, receive the teaching, observe the ministry and honor (respect) the work of God being done, you position yourself to receive).

#8) Impartation can take place remotely

You can receive impartation from a distance without hands being laid on you in person.

You can receive through reading books, listening to messages, observing from a distance, etc.

#9) Impartation cannot be purchased with money

The anointing is imparted through the grace of God and cannot be purchased by money.

So be careful when you hear ministers tell you to "sow a seed into the anointing" or "connect with the anointing with your offering", etc. etc...indirectly implying that you can "buy" what you want from the anointing. This is not true. You give to God (sow your financial seeds) at all times - but none of that buys you what God gives through grace and in response to faith.

Acts 8:18-22

18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,

19 saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

20 But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!

21 You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God.

22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.

#10) A double-portion can only be received from God

You cannot impart what you do not have.

Hence Elisha had to look to God for a double portion of Elijah's anointing.

#11) Impartation can take place across generations

Example: John the Baptist came in the Spirit and power of Elijah

CONCLUSION

While we honor God's ministers, we must walk with proper understanding of the truth and not get swayed by every fad, fanciful idea, strange teachings that are being put out.



Stay focused on Jesus Christ!

Ephesians 4:14-15

**14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,
15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—**

MINISTRY TIME
SALVATION CALL



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Sunday October 28, 2018
Ministry - Lifestyle, Anointing, Impartation

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at apcwo.org/sermons. Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture passages: *Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Matthew 7:15-20*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

1) *From Ephesians 4:11-15*

(A) *what is the purpose of the five-fold ministry of apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher and evangelist?*

(B) *what is God working towards in the Church?*

2) *Review some of the points discussed under "Anointing" and share/discuss your personal observations, if any, in the Church, in relation to these*

3) *Review some of the points discussed under "Impartation" and discuss how to correctly go about receiving impartation of grace, gifts and anointing.*



If time permits, each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

- 1, families to be protected and strengthened*
- 2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.*
- 3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.*

Close by thanking God together.