



# Lecture 3

## Knowing Your God-Given Gifts

Ephesians 4:11-13 (Wuest translation)

**“And He himself gave some, on the one hand, as apostles, and, on the other hand, as prophets, and still again some as bringers of good news, and finally, some as pastors who are also teachers, for the equipping of the saints for ministering work with a view to the building up of the Body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the Faith and of the experiential, full, and precise knowledge of the Son of God, to a spiritually mature man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ”.**

Extract from Volume 1, *Word Studies in the Greek New Testament* by K.S. Wuest:

*“These gifted men are given the Church “for the perfecting of the saints.” The word “perfecting” is katartizo, “to equip for service.” These gifted men are to specialize in equipping the saints for “the work of the ministry,” that is, for ministering work, in short, Christian service. This is in order that the Body of Christ, the Church, might be built up, by additions to its membership in lost souls being saved, and by the building up of individual saints.”* (Kenneth S. Wuest, *Ephesians and Colossians in the Greek New Testament*, p.101)

Very often in Christian circles, you may hear about the “five fold ministry,” in which ‘pastors’ and ‘teachers’ mentioned in Ephesians 4 are considered two different people. As we see in the Wuest translation of these verses, pastors and teachers are the same person: it is a two-fold gift for the shepherds who are also called to teach the Word to the flock.

Evangelists are to spread the Gospel wherever the Lord leads them, and also teach the church in order that more evangelists will be equipped and sent out into the mission field, both home and abroad.

Some say the office of apostles and prophets are not for our times, that these ministries ceased when our Lord ascended to heaven. If this was the case, why would the Apostle Paul include these ministries in this passage of Scripture for the church in the New Testament?

Surely apostles today differ from the Apostles who walked with Jesus, especially given several of the first Apostles authored the New Testament epistles (letters), e.g. 1 & 2 Peter was written by the Apostle Peter and the epistle (letter) of Jude was written by the Apostle Paul. The Apostle is a ministry gift to plant churches, to initiate ministries and encourage the Body of Christ. This ministry is needed and this is why Paul included it, as well as the ministry of the prophet as mentioned in Lecture 2.

All these gifts are for the edification of the church in order for these gifts to multiply as believers. This was Jesus’ plan, He sent the Holy Spirit so there will be multitudes of believers ministering God’s Word.

John 14:12-13 (Wuest translation)

**“Most assuredly, I am saying to you, he who believes in me, the works which I am constantly doing, also that one shall do. And greater than these shall he do because I am proceeding to the Father. And whatever you may ask in my Name, this I will do, in order that the Father may be glorified in the Son”.**

**This is our confidence, that as believers, we can do His works by His grace and the Holy Spirit.**

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## MISUSE OF THE GIFTS IN THE CHURCH

We have studied the definition of these gifts according to Scripture. It is also important to identify the counterfeits of the enemy that have infiltrated churches. All too often the spiritual gifts are misused as a result of ignorance or selfish gain. We will discuss the most common:

### Prophecy, Word of Wisdom and Word of knowledge

Some people counterfeit these gifts in order to manipulate and control others, or as a result of self-importance or ambition in an effort to try and impress other believers. Innocent people become victims when such a person says something like: God has shown me, or God has given me a Word, etc. The person receiving the message will tend to believe it "being a message from God" with the risk of having bad consequences. To avoid this to happen it is necessary to consult with the pastor or leaders in the church.

It is a big responsibility to say "God told me or God showed me". The person receiving a prophecy or a word from the Lord from another Christian must take into consideration:

The integrity and reputation of the person giving the prophecy or word, etc.

The maturity of this person,

What authority this person has within the church or Christian ministry.

The prophecy/word must also never contradict the Word of God

If the word is from God, the Holy Spirit will confirm it to you. In addition, Scripture is clear, the prophecy needs to be confirmed by the church leaders. **Order in the Church is required.** God in His grace has established order in the church and the spiritual gifts operating in the church must be under the authority of the pastors and leaders.

### Money-manipulation

Beware of ministries taking money to "minister" the Word of God. Some ministries (apparently operating by the Holy Spirit) ask for considerable amounts of money for their services with no consideration of the financial situation of the client. This is a sign the ministry is not operating purely by the Holy Spirit because greed is not an attribute from God. The Holy Spirit is generous and giving. It is unacceptable to "sell the gifts of the Holy Spirit". Jesus and His disciples did not ask for money. False prophets prophecy for personal gain. While it is biblical for the Body to support pastors and missionaries financially, no one should ever put a price on the Gospel or the Word of God; the ministry is not about money. We should be willing to do what God tells us to do for free and be content with what God allows us to have.

1 Corinthians 9:18 (Wuest translation)

**What then is my remuneration? namely, that when I am proclaiming the good news I may give out the good news without charge,**

Matthew 10:8 (Wuest translation)

**Be healing those who are sick. Be raising the dead. Lepers be cleansing. Demons be ejecting. In a gratuitous manner you received, in a gratuitous manner give.**

1 Timothy 6:6 (Wuest translation)

**But godly piety associated with an inward self-sufficiency which is its natural accompaniment is great gain.**