

Lesson 7

**Five Ministries of the Spirit: Part 1**

We continue our study on how God has equipped His church with the things of His Spirit. Next, we look at the specific five ministries of the Spirit that God has provided to oversee the building of His Church. The ministries are in **Ephesians 4:11** *“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;”*. The purpose of the five ministries is in **Ephesians 4:12-16** *“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”*.

**The Purpose of the Ministries of the Spirit**

The plan of the Lord for His Church is not haphazard. It is very specific and well defined in the Word. His church is a many-membered body and all members supply to bring about the fullness of the Lord’s plan. The five ministries are given to establish and guide the Church, according to the plan of God, as shown in the Word. The ministries are to keep the Church on the narrow and strait path of God. **Matthew 7:13-14** *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”*

The ministries reveal, impart, instruct, and encourage the Church in the plan of God and things of the Spirit. They also root out the things that are not of the Spirit in His Church. The five ministries were all in Jesus when he walked the earth. Now they are given unto chosen men and women of God to build His Church. **Ephesians 4:12-16** identifies specific purposes of the ministries of the Spirit.

**Ephesians 4:12 “For the Perfecting of the Saints”**

Every believer comes to Christ Jesus as a sinner. Through the blood of Jesus and the indwelling Spirit, we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus and begin a journey with a new life in Him. The journey from a babe to mature Christian requires teaching, encouragement, exhortation, revelation, impartation, guidance, admonition, correction, rejoicing, and fellowship in the Spirit. All of these are part of our growth into perfection in Christ Jesus to be His temples on the earth. **Matthew 5:48** *“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”*

**Hebrews 6:1** *“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,”*. It is through these ministries that we are led into perfection in Christ Jesus.

**Ephesians 4:12 “For the Work of the Ministry”**

The “ministry” refers to the ministry given to every member of His Church. This ministry is becoming a servant to reconcile souls to the Heavenly Father through Christ Jesus. **2 Corinthians 5:17-19**

*“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”*

**2 Corinthians 4:1-7** *“Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”* It is through the five ministries of the Spirit that this ministry of reconciliation is revealed unto us and fulfilled in us.

**Ephesians 4:12 “For the Edifying of the Body of Christ”**

To edify is to “instruct or improve someone spiritually.” Every ministry of the Spirit is used to edify the Church body and that, in turn, equips and encourages the body to edify one another. We edify with the Word of God and our good works in the Lord, not for our sake, but for others. When we edify one another, God is edified in our midst. **Romans 14:19** *“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”* **1 Thessalonians 5:11** *“Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.”* **Ephesians 4:29** *“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”* **Romans 15:1-4** *“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”*

**Ephesians 4:13 “Till we all Come in the Unity of the Faith”**

The true church is to be one: one with the Lord and one with each other. This unity is so important that it was the final prayer of Jesus before He went to the cross. **John 17:11** *“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.”*

**John 17:20-23** *“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”*

It is important that the scriptures specifically say, “unity of the faith”. Our faith is in the Word of God. In Jesus’ prayer in John 17, the oneness that He speaks of is not of man’s nature or ability. It is given by the Father as an answer to the prayer of Jesus. Unity in the church is from faith in our Lord and His Word. The ministries of the Spirit are to lead the church into this unity by and through the Word of God. Unity cannot be achieved in any other manner. **Ephesians 4:2-6** *“With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”*

**Ephesians 4:13 “and of the Knowledge of the Son of God”**

**2 Corinthians 4:6** *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”* The knowledge of Jesus, the Son of God, is the foundation of our relationship with God. Knowledge is not only to know “about Him” but also to “know Him”. We know Him through personal revelation and we are “known of Him” by personal relationship. **Matthew 16:13-18** *“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”*

Our knowledge of the Son of God is revealed in the Word. The Spirit moves on the Word to bring His Church to a place of intimate understanding of Him and who we are in Him. **1 John 3:1-2** *“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”* **1 Corinthians 2:9-14** *“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”*

**Ephesians 4:13 “Unto a Perfect Man”**

Indeed, the Lord has called His church to a high standard. In the flesh, we are familiar with being imperfect and, in a strange way, content with our imperfection. Perhaps this is because it provides us with a convenient excuse for ungodly behaviours? The Lord has called His Church unto perfection in Him. He has called us to become new creatures in Christ Jesus.

**2 Corinthians 5:17** *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”* **Ephesians 4:24** *“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”* **2 Timothy 3:16-17** *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”* **Hebrews 13:20-21** *“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”* **Hebrews 10:14** *“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”* The ministries of the Spirit reveal God’s plan of perfection to His Church. They lead the body in the ways of perfection so that the perfecting of every believer might be fulfilled for a witness to those who do not yet believe.

### **Ephesians 4:13** *“Unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ”*

If “unto a perfect man” is a high standard, then “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” is so much more. What an incredible and glorious plan of God! He shows such mercy and love towards His Church that He would raise us up unto the stature of Christ. This is not in part, but in full. **1 John 3:1** *“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:”* **Ephesians 3:14-21** *“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”* **2 Corinthians 4:7** *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”* **Acts 1:8** *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”* **Colossians 2:9-10** *“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:”*

Even as you read this lesson, the ministries of the Spirit are at work in you (His Church) to quicken you unto the stature of the fulness of Christ.

### **Ephesians 4:14** *“That We Henceforth Be No More Children”*

We began our journey of faith as babes in Christ. We are fed the encouraging things of the Word but not yet the challenging things. **1 Peter 2:2** *“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”* We also see that we are to “grow” and go beyond being babes and children. **Ephesians 4:14** *“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”* We are called to be raised as sons and daughters of God, having a maturity in the Lord in all things so that He may use us for His purpose. **1 Corinthians 13:11** *“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”*

**Hebrews 5:12-14** *“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”* **Ephesians 6:10** *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”* It is the work of the ministries of the Spirit to raise the church up unto maturity in Christ Jesus.

**Ephesians 4:15** *“But Speaking the Truth in Love”*

There are two key elements given to us in this scripture: truth and love. These two are inseparable. It is the love of Jesus that leads us to the truth of God for our lives. It is essential that the truth of God abides in His Church. That truth is both, things that are easy and lovely to hear, and it is also things that are hard and challenging to hear. Both the easy and the hard truth are grounded in the love of God. Their purpose is to is to raise up true men and women of God to relationship and life with our Heavenly Father. **John 14:6** *“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* **John 8:32** *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* **Jeremiah 29:11** *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”* **John 3:17** *“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”* **2 Peter 3:9** *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”* **John 16:13** *“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”* It is the work of the ministries of the Spirit to uphold the truth and the love of the Lord in the church.

In our next lesson, we will study each of the five individual ministries of the Spirit.

Notes:

**DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS**

SCRIPTURES	QUESTIONS
<p><b>Colossians 1:9-11</b>  <i>(9) “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;                      (10) That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;                      (11) Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;”</i></p>	<p>1. What are the characteristics of the church identified in these scriptures that Paul prayed for?</p>
<p><b>2 Timothy 3:16-17</b>  <i>(16) “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:                      (17) That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”</i></p>	<p>2. Where does scripture come from?</p> <p>3. What works of the scriptures for the church are identified?</p> <p>4. What is the reason for these works?</p>

**2 Timothy 2:19-26**

*(19) “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

*(20) But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.*

*(21) If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*

*(22) Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

*(23) But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.*

*(24) And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,*

*(25) In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;*

*(26) And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”*

5. What assurances of God are identified verse 19?

6. What action is identified for every believer in verse 19?

7. What type of members (vessels) are identified in verse 20?

8. What are the qualities of vessels unto honour identified in verses 21-25?

9. What is the work of the vessel unto honour identified in verses 25-26?