

## **I. Review - Practical Changes in 2021**

- A. We have been doing an extensive series on church leadership and the five-fold ministry in order to establish a foundation for changes that we believe will position us more in line with a biblical expression of church. We have been approaching this series through a three-fold lens.
  - 1. Biblical - We desire to choose the biblical instruction concerning church leadership and the five-fold ministry over our cultural tradition.
  - 2. Prophetic - For many years the Holy Spirit has been highlighting a more biblical model of church to our leadership team and this has increased significantly in the past two years.
  - 3. Preparatory - We believe that the statistics of massive church fallout that we are seeing as a result of the pandemic and political shakings are a strong indication that the current cultural expressions of church will not survive the shakings of the end of the age.
  
- B. Two Connected but Distinct Arena's - Based upon the foundations established in this series, are making some immediate practical changes in the weeks to come that are intentional in helping us move towards a more biblical expression of church. Last week we covered governmental changes.
  - 1. Plurality of Elders - We are diligently seeking the Lord in adding more elders to our team.
  - 2. Intentional with Covering - We will be dividing up the ministry directors among the elders so that a more direct and intentional covering can be walked out by the elder team.
  - 3. Justin Frie Role - Justin will no longer be the "lead pastor" of Restoration, but simply one of the team of elders. He will continue to walk in his ministry calling as a teacher in our Sunday gatherings as well as online platforms. He will also continue to be a leader in corporate prayer and worship ministry, both locally and regionally.
  - 4. Lanes/Org Chart - We presented a chart to help us visualize our new governmental and organizational structure.

## II. Practical Ministry Changes

- A. Ministry Intentionality - Although there are eighteen spiritual gifts mentioned in the bible there are more than a few times where an emphasis is put upon your need to receive from the five primary ministry gifts that Jesus gave the church in order to come to the fullness of maturity in love and effectiveness in the Kingdom of God. Therefore, we will focus upon the stirring up and expressing these five primary gifts with more fervency than we have in the past. (Eph. 2:20, 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 12:28; Rev. 18:20)
  
- B. Two primary environments - We will be incorporating some intentional structure and focus to our already existing structures of Sunday gathering and lifegroups. (Heb. 10:24-25)
  - 1. Lifegroups - Lifegroups are the primary discipleship vehicle for our church family and we believe will be the most effective platform to see the five-fold ministry grow in our church. The elders are currently working with our lifegroup directors to incorporate intentionality to recognize, call out, and express the spiritual gifts in all our lifegroups.
  
  - 2. Sunday Mornings - During our Sunday gatherings the main way that ministry gifts are expressed is through the ministry that happens in corporate messaging. For the most part, the five-fold gift that is expressed is the gift of “teaching”. The elders are going to be seeking to establish a more balanced line up of messaging in order to both grow and be exposed to all five giftings.
  
- C. Intentional - From what we can glean from the scripture, the intentionality of both recognizing and calling out giftings, and then providing an outlet for that gift to be exercised and grown, seems to be the most effective way to see them more established in our midst.
  - 1. Recognizing and Calling Out - We all must work together and stir up the intentionality to encourage people with what we see and feel is their spiritual gifting. We strongly encourage you to make a prayer of blessing and increase part of that intentional encouragement. (Gal. 2:7-9; 1 Tim. 1:6)

2. Providing Outlet - It is not enough to simply call our or recognize ministry giftings in people. We must provide outlets for that gift to be exercised and grown in. We are planning on establishing and sustaining focused platforms in the days to come. (1 Cor. 15:10; 1 Pet. 4:10)

D. Diligence to Avoid Pitfalls - When it comes to intentionality in expressing and desiring spiritual gifts the potential to get off course must always be before us. I believe there are a few key areas of common pitfalls we must set our hearts to avoid as we move forward. (1 Cor. 12-14)

1. Arrogance - The most common pitfall when it comes to growing in spiritual gifts is the arrogance that can so easily ensnare us when we lose sight of grace. We must hold the posture of humility and teachability no matter the level or duration we operate in our ministry. (1 Cor. 4:1-7)
2. Emphasis on Power - Far too much celebration or exoneration is given to the level of power or impact a certain ministry gift has. The emphasis and celebration of spiritual gifts must be on the manifestation of the spirit of love not on the level of power walked in. (Mat. 7:21-23; 1 Cor. 13:1-7)
3. Gravitating Towards Gifting Cliques - We tend to neglect our need for the other gifts and gravitate to surrounding ourselves with a community of individuals with like gifting. Flowing out of that propensity, we isolate and insulate ourselves from the other giftings, and in doing so, place a higher value of Godliness upon our gifting clique. This is easy to do and absolutely debilitating and damaging to our hearts and to the body as a whole. (1 Cor. 12:4-22)
4. Prioritization of Giving over Receiving - As we gear ourselves to find and grow in our ministry gift, we tend to lose sight of the higher priority, which is to receive from the gifts of others. The biblical command and hope is the fullness of love for Jesus, which happens when we receive from Him through the ministry of the Holy Spirit directly to us and from others. (Eph. 4:16)

5. False Validation of Intimacy - A great pitfall is mistaking the Holy Spirit working through you in ministry as intimacy with Jesus. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given by grace alone for the sake of others, however it's very easy to interpret the realities of ministry as intimacy or depth in our relationship with God. Scripture is very clear that intimacy with God is found through relational knowledge of who Jesus is and what He is like and neither one of those are necessary for powerful or sustained ministry gifting.
  6. Primary Identity in Ministry - When we begin to see impact and the fruit or results of our ministry gifting, it's very easy to take on our ministry gifting and calling as our primary identity. The fruit of this is a constantly fleeting satisfaction and endless grasping for more ministry impact because we can only find our satisfaction and value through intimacy with Jesus. (Rom. 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1; Jude 1:1)
- E. Maturity of Love for Jesus - It's all too common to become focused on creating or producing an environment of maturity in spiritual gifts when there is an emphasis on them. We are pursuing an environment of spiritual gifts unto a culture of maturity in relational intimacy with Jesus and unto greater depths of love for him and, in turn, love for those around us. We have no desire to become “the prophetic church” or the “apostolic church”. Our greatest hope is to be the “love for Jesus church”. (Mat. 22:37; Eph. 4:16)