

## The Spiritual Gifts of Lay and Ordained Ministry

Notes from Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology*

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### The Scriptural Lists of Spiritual Gifts (Charismata)

1 Corinthians 12:28	Ephesians 4:11
<i>Within our community God has appointed</i>	<i>These were his gifts:</i>
In the first place apostles	Some to be apostles
In the second place prophets	Some prophets Some evangelists Some pastors
Thirdly teachers	Teachers
Then miracle-workers	
Then gifts of healing	
The ability to help others	
Those who can get others to work together	
Those with the gift of ecstatic utterance	
	To equip God's people for work in his service, to the building up of the body of Christ

- On behalf of the whole church, these specific gifts are given by the Spirit to individuals for the good of the community.
- Many NT passages refer to gifts of the Spirit, gifts for laity or set-apart (ordained) ministry (1 Cor 1:7, 7:7; 1 Peter 4:7-11; 1 Cor 12:5-11): wise speech, discernment, ecstatic utterance.
- Others (Romans 12:6-8) seem more intended for the called, prepared, and appointed leadership: prophecy (*propheteia*), ministry (*diakonia*), teaching (*didaskalia*), exhortation (*paraklesis*), governance (*proistemi*).
- Others seem clearly intended for ordered ministry (Eph 4:12; 1 Cor 12:28; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 4:10)
- The ministerial office is not divided into segments of prophets, teachers or evangelists. All the gifts work together for the good of the body. No single member possesses all of the gifts, but all benefit from them. Each individual participates in one body that possesses all of the gifts (1 Cor 12:8-11).
- The gifts differ “according to the grace given to us” (Rom 12:6) and are intended for the whole community (1 Cor 12:7).
- Other gifts include hospitality (*philoxenia*) (1 Pet 4:7-11; 1 Tim 3:2), public speaking (*lalia*) (1 Pet 4:11), and self-control

#### Things to think about

In Tradition, these are thought of as gifts to the church.

Wise speech is a particularly desirable spiritual gift.

Modern Anglicanism highly values lay ministry.

None gives grounds for individual boasting, and there's no need to despair over missing out on a particular gift.

resulting in sexual chastity in the celibate state (1 Cor 7:1-7).

- Let's look at the gifts in more detail.

### **Apostolos: The Gift of the Apostolate**

- An apostle is a “fully prepared and authorized messenger sent forth as an ambassador or legate with a clear commission to deliver a particular message.”
- The twelve were distinctive:
  - Jesus called and commissioned them
  - They were eyewitnesses to his ministry, and resurrection
  - The emergent church depended on them for accurate reporting and inspired interpretation
- Matthias was viewed as an apostle. Paul was a “called apostle” (*kletos apostolos*), entrusted with the Gospel for the Gentiles, as Peter was entrusted with the Gospel for the Jews.
- Others referred to as apostles are Barnabas, Andronicus and Junia, James the brother of Jesus.
- Jesus is the foundation stone of the church. The church is built on the foundation laid by the apostles. All subsequent ministries depend on *apostolos*. “...even the strongest objectors to historical succession would still talk about some unbroken symbolic descent from the apostles.”

### **Prophetes: The Gift of Prophecy**

- The prophet is “an extraordinary ministry of special inspiration, of discernment of the meaning of events already revealed or, in some cases, yet to be revealed.
- God the Spirit continues to illuminate particular Christian ministries in special ways. An extraordinary measure of spiritual insight to grasp the divine leading for others.
- The prophetic Christian ministry is not a completely new source of truth. It is fresh discernment of the truth already revealed in the history of Israel and Christ.
- The OT prophets stood in a subordinate relation to Moses. The NT prophets are subordinate to the apostles and their teaching.
- This spiritual gift and others, illuminate and extend the apostolic witness.

### **Euaggelistes: The Gift of Proclamation**

- The work of pastor and evangelist are similar. The term evangelist is given to Philip and Timothy.
- All Christians have the responsibility to proclaim the good news; some have extraordinary gifts to do so with unusual effectiveness.

### **Dunameis: The Gift of Miracle**

Anglicanism traditionally believes in apostolic succession, the idea that the original apostles commissioned others, and that this process extends to the present day. The modern apostles in Anglicanism are our bishops.

Very few of the modern branches of Christianity recognize individuals as prophets.

TEC provides for lay preachers who have received specialized training, and are licensed by the diocesan bishop.

- Dunameis is “mighty works”, “extraordinary acts of power”.
- This is seen as divine power working through finite means. It is not an inherent power of individuals.
- Miracles done in the “apostolic ministry are done in the name of and by the power of Christ, in continuity with his teaching and Spirit.” Christ’s miracles “pointed beyond themselves to attest the coming governance of God.” “God’s mighty acts with the apostles attest the living presence of Christ.”
- Dunameis is not given for sheer exhibition. The gift of miracles is potentially subject to considerable abuse.
- Whether miracles continue to happen is discussed in Wesley’s Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion.
- The church must “scrutinize carefully any claims of miraculous power made on Christ’s behalf. Not all paranormal events are miraculous.

### **Iama: The Gift of Healing**

- Paul viewed healing as part of the apostolic ministry (1 Cor 12:30). Jesus, in commissioning the 12, charged them to heal (*therapeuein*) every disease. The 70 were commissioned to heal (*therapeute*) the sick (Luke 10:9).
- Cures were seen as signs of the coming kingdom (Luke 9:2,11; Acts 10:38), as a fulfillment of OT prophecy.
- Jesus rejected the view that every sickness is the direct result of a particular sin (John 9:2), but did not deny the mystery of intermeshing of sin and sickness.
- Healing is often viewed as an apostolic gift (1 Cor 12; *therapeuo* in Matt 10:18 and Mark 6:13; *iaomai* Luke 9:2 and Acts 2:43).
- Modern ministry cannot ignore the body-spirit interface. All pastors are called upon to palliate bodily discomfort to improve the possibilities for spiritual growth, and to seek to mend souls in a way that has bodily effect.

### **Glossolalia: The Gift of Ecstatic Utterance**

- Speaking in tongues; ecstatic utterance.
- Pentecostals believe that glossolalia is normative in ministry.
- Acts 2 refers to the day of Pentecost, as the church was “filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other tongues as the Spirit gave them power of utterance”. This is seen as a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 (I will pour out my Spirit...see visions...dream dreams.”)
- 1 Cor 12 – 1 Cor 14. Paul speaks of divisions and problems in the church of Corinth. There are two lists of charismata, one for the laity (1 Cor 12:8-11) and the other for those whom “God has appointed” (1 Cor 12:28-31). He carefully links the gift of ecstatic utterance with the gift of “the ability to interpret it” (1

So-called “Progressive” Christians don’t recognize miracles, either in history or in the present. In modern Christianity, this is a minority opinion.

In any case, God is the source of all miracles. Who parted the Red Sea? God. Moses did the hand gestures.

The Hebrew and Christian Scriptures make it clear that God is the source of all healing.

Some other handouts in this series examine healing in more detail.

In Anglican tradition, diocesan bishops provide blessed olive oil to clergy, and sometimes to lay persons. When used, it symbolizes the bishop’s healing gift from God.

Traditional Anglicanism does not emphasize the importance of glossolalia, which is more associated with Pentecostal Christianity. However, some Anglicans and Episcopalians appear to have received this gift.

Cor 12:11).

- 1 Cor 13 places the gift in the context of the agape of God. He also notes that he has experienced it. See 1 Cor 14:18-19.

**Didaskalia: The Gift of Teaching**

- Teaching is an intrinsic part of ministry.

**Oikonomia: The Gift of Administration**

- The image of steward (*oikonomos*). Conserving and dispensing resources justly. Manager, guardian, “one who is over a house”.
- Lay and ordained Christians are called to stewardship as “stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor 4:1).
- Pastors are stewards of the resources of the community, charged with the administration of the work and mission of the church.

Teaching is the responsibility of all Christians, lay and ordained.