

The Acts 16:5 Initiative[©]

Ministry Mobilization

© 2013, 16 E. Stanley Ott, Ph.D.

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A Transformational Ministry of Ministry Mobilization

Become an Equipping-Sending Church

Why Equipping-Sending Matters

For the individual, the lifestyle of ministry or õmissional lifestyleö is shaped by a three-dimensional Defining Vision such as õGlorify God, Grow Disciples and Meet Needs.ö Our missional lifestyle includes our use of the practices of witness, prayer, care, Word, with-me, send, and give.



In this module, we consider the congregation or role in making the lifestyle of osendo a reality in the daily lives of the people of God.

These seven Defining Practices are mirrored in the organized life of the congregation.

Personal Lifestyle	Congregational Lifestyle
Witness	Missional Endeavor
Prayer	Worship
Care	Fellowship
Word	Discipleship
With-me	Leadership
Send	Ministry Mobilization
Give	Generosity

Ministry mobilization is the organized work of the congregation for the Discovery and Deployment (D&D) of spiritual gifts. It aims to connect all persons with a greater understanding of their spiritual gifts and with specific opportunities for service.







Traditional ministry often sees the ministry of congregational members as that of serving on boards (Session, Deacons, Vestry, Council) and committees. Perhaps they are Sunday school teachers or ushers or musicians or they handle some other task. Most members of the typical traditional congregation when asked, õWhat is your ministry?ö have no specific understanding outside of generalities such as õI giveö or õI prayö unless they happen to be on a committee or some work group.

Transformational ministry sees ministry as first of all a lifestyle to be lived (such as witness, prayer, care, Word, with-me, send, and give) and second as one participation in some specific act of service according to one servant heart, spiritual gifts, and interests.

The lifestyle practice of õsendö involves first the sending of oneself to engage in service and ministry and second the sending of others to serve.

Consider the implications of the famous text, Ephesians 4:11-13.

READ: Ephesians 4:11-13 NRSV

¹¹The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

REFLECT: What is the role of the pastor and teacher?

What are the consequences when pastors and teachers fulfill their roles?

What is the role of a õsaintö (a believer in Jesus)?

RESPOND: How can you better fulfill that role if you are a pastor/teacher or if you are a participant in the life of the church (a õsaintö)?

We see immediately that this text offers very clear imperatives for us.

- ☐ Pastors and teachers are equippers.
- ☐ The equipping is specifically that which prepares all Christians for ministry.
- ☐ This equipping is shaped by a Defining Vision: õto equip the saintsí until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.ö

The norm in the mainline church has been to treat people as sheep, as receivers, as consumers of care and religious teaching. We want to develop people who are simultaneously sheep and shepherd, whose first aim in life is to be a growing disciple of Jesus Christ and whose second aim is to encourage others to become disciples while simultaneously meeting human need.

In the traditional church, people believe that the pastor is the prime õdoerö of ministry. We reinforce that by calling the pastor õthe *minister*,ö by dressing him or her in robes or other vestments, by ordaining him/ her to service in a very special ceremony to õset apartö the pastor. We call pastors õclergyö (a word not found in the Bible) and the rest of us õlaity,ö implying õthey are the experts and we are the amateurs.ö While there are

many reasons we choose to do this, the fact is that in order to move into a transformational congregation, we must find ways to affirm the role of the shepherd-leader while lifting up the shepherding role of everyone else.

The idea that ministry is primarily of the minister so to accomplish has roots early in the history of the Christian church.

The vast majority of church members havenot come to terms with their call to ministry, their gifts for ministry, or their opportunities for ministry. This isnot surprising when we take a look at church history. By the end of the second century, church organization and ministry were increasingly centered on pastors and other key church leaders. The core biblical concept of the priesthood of all believers of the idea that every believer has a God-given ministry of was superseded by the notion that the church leaders did the ministry and the people received it. Those attitudes have certainly continued to the present day and are clearly prevalent in many traditional congregations. But now a new wind is blowing.¹

Greg Ogden speaks of the õNewö Reformation, which he describes as returning the ministry to the people of God.

When you read in some church bulletin, õPastor: Mary Parks, Ministers: all of the members of Clarion Churchö it is not to be a nice sounding cliché. It is literally true. The issue is how to make it a reality in congregational life.

¹ Ott, E. Stanley. *Transform Your Church with Ministry Teams*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2004. Print.







Four Aspects of Your Personal Ministry:

- 1. Your heart to impart.
- 2. Your personal lifestyle.
- 3. Your spiritual giftedness.
- 4. Your servant spirit and the Holy Spirit.

1. Your Heart to Impart - the first aspect of personal

Your heart to impart.

Your personal

lifestyle.

Your spiritual giftedness.

Your servant spirit and the Holy Spirit.

Your heart to impart is your heart desire to give yourself away ó to invest your life in other people lives ó to impart to others what the Spirit of God has imparted to you.

We have frequently talked of the significance of õpeople eyes,ö seeing people through the eyes of Jesus. Having a õheart to impartö is simply another way of speaking of people eyes ó a heart to impart the Christian faith in ways that grow disciples and meets human needs.

õWhen Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, ∃acchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house todayøö (Luke 19:5).

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reoble	eves a	re me	eves	or jesus	CHITIST	for people.

☐ People eyes are shepherd eyes.

☐ People eyes see the hurting and comfort them.

☐ People eyes see the eager to grow spiritually and disciple them.

In Philippians Chapter 2, the Apostle Paul speaks of Timothy, ¹⁹I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. ²⁰I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. ²¹For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

Listen to the Apostle Pauløs heart to impart what God had given to him, õFor I am longing [can you feel the heart... I am longing] to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you--or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mineö

(Romans 1:11-12). When we help other people grow as disciple-followers, we do it to strengthen them; and we will be strengthened at the same time.

In 2 Timothy 2:1, the apostle Paul said a very interesting thing, õand what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well.ö In other words, Paul tells Timothy to both <u>be</u> a disciple and to <u>make</u> disciples. <u>Have a heart to impart</u>. Donøt you just be a religious consumer, be a giver. Be blessed and be a blessing. Be a sheep and be a shepherd.

Think about the number of spiritual generations in this verse õ*What you have heard from me through many witnesses.*" õMe,ö Paul, is the first generation. õMany witnessesö are the second generation, and õyouö, Timothy, is the third generation. From Paul to the many witnesses to

Timothy. Three generations. Then Paul continues, õwhat you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people." So õfaithful peopleö are the fourth generation, and "who will be able to teach others as wellö are the fifth generation.

Chuck Miller puts it this way, õGrowing disciples of other people is reproducing in others what the Spirit of God is doing in you and enabling them to pass it on to a third generation.ö That is the heart to impart. That third generation may be your own child, your friend, your neighbor, your fellow worker, anyone. So, in this matter of being disciples and making disciples, it would seem a first step is to consider who are the people you will seek to encourage in their faith? We talk extensively about õfocusing on a fewö

ó those who live in your home, your family members wherever they are, people in your small group, and individuals you feel a calling to encourage.

Again have a heart to impart ó to pass on to others what our Lord has given you.

2. Your Personal Lifestyle – the second aspect of personal ministry

Your heart to impart.
Your personal lifestyle.
Your spiritual
giftedness.
Your servant spirit and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus loved the many while he focused on a few. Everyone of us is given a few - family, friends, church people - into whom we are to invest our lives with the express purpose of growing with them as disciples of Jesus and addressing their human needs.

So what do we do with our õfewö in order to impart the faith to them? Our contact with most of the people in our lives comes through natural







interactions of life and our spiritual impact upon them is the impact of life on life, of our lifestyle on their lifestyle.

Although the church typically expresses ministry in its most visible form in its various activities and programs, ministry at its most essential level is a lifestyle to be lived rather than a program to be run. The classic practices of such a personal lifestyle are witness, prayer, care, Word, with-me, send, and give.

3. Your Spiritual Giftedness – the third aspect of personal ministry

Your heart to impart. Your personal lifestyle. Your spiritual giftedness. Your servant spirit and the Holy Spirit.

Another significant way to impart to others what God has given you is to use the spiritual gifts and abilities, the particular interests and capabilities God has given you for service.

Such gifts and passion may lead you to impart faith to others by being in a choir or teaching a class or being an usher or leading a scout troop or volunteering in the local hospital or food bank or Meals on Wheels or serving on the local school board. It is using your giftedness to build the Body of Christ, the church, and to engage missionally your communityon behalf of Jesus.

We have <u>gifts</u> that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness (Romans 12:6-8).

õNow concerning <u>spiritual gifts</u>, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformedö (1 Corinthians 12:1).

õSo with yourselves; since you are eager for <u>spiritual gifts</u>, strive to excel in them for building up the churchö (1 Corinthians 14:12).

"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has receivedö (1 Peter 4:10).

There are some twenty or more spiritual gifts listed in the New Testament, gifts given to those who are followers of Jesus.

A Few Thoughts About Spiritual Gifts

- God designed you with your gifts before you were born. You are no accident. The Body of Christ needs you and your gifts. Youhave been designed to fulfill a definite and particular role in your church or fellowship and you have the necessary gifts to function in that role and the necessary power in the person of the Holy Spirit.
- ☐ Gifts have no term of service. Romans 11:29 says, õThe gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.ö God will never, ever take them back.
- ☐ Lifestyle is the total life response of a Christian to Scripture. All Christians grow in the same lifestyle as we use the Scripture as our teacher. In this way, Christian lifestyle is a point of unity among all Christians. A gift on the other hand is a special endowment of the Holy Spirit to each one of us. This creates diversity among all Christians.
- What happens if you dongt use your spiritual gifts? According to the parable of the talents in Matthew 25, we discover that God will hold us accountable for our gifts. If you dongt use your gifts, it is easy to have a poor self-image of yourself as a member of the Body of Christ. You can feel like you do not have a part or do not belong. Yet, each of us has personal value and each of us has a unique role to play in the service of Christ.

The Relationship Between Serving Roles and Gifts

Spiritual gifts need a harness. To say, õI have the gift of teaching or of serving or of mercyö doesnøt mean much without a specific way to put that gift into service.

Now there are both public and private serving roles. The public or visible serving role is simply an up-front job such as elder, deacon, preacher, and teacher. Public serving roles receive lots of recognition. People often think, õIf I am not like an up-front person, I must not be gifted.ö Perhaps up to three-fourths of all spiritual gifts are not to be used in a public, up-front way. Instead, they are used privately, person-to-person, and therefore, are invisible to the public, recognized only by the people to whom you minister.

What Are the Gifts?

There are three primary biblical lists: 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4. There is no definitive list of gifts in the Scriptures. Nowhere does the Bible give õthe list.ö







How to Discover Your Gifts

Ray Stedman offered a straightforward process of spiritual gift discovery. I have always appreciated the simplicity of his approach, which may be summarized with these questions.²

- Do you see the gift in you? [Do you see yourself as having the gift(s) of mercy, serving, encouraging, giving, administrating, teaching, and so on?]
- Do others see the gift in you? [Do those around you recognize you have a gift(s) such as teaching, encouraging, mercy, and so on? Ask your friends, your small group, others who know you well.]
- □ Does using the gift bear fruit? [When you teach, show mercy, encourage, give, do you see fruit being borne in the people to whom you are ministering? Do you improve?]

You probably have several gifts and abilities, which the Spirit has given you. I want to say to the person who cannot seem to find anything on a list of spiritual gifts that fits you, that you can identify the strengths you have now and use those strengths in service of the Body of Christ.

There are many marvelous spiritual gift inventories that can help you in the discovery process. Such questionnaires are not õtestsö in the sense of evaluating your success or failure. You cannot fail a gift questionnaire. They function like an X-ray machine or CAT scan. They help you assess who you are and the gifts you have.

There are many excellent online spiritual gift assessments such as http://gifts.churchgrowth.org/cgi-cg/gifts.cgi?intro=1 É

http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcf pdf discover your sp iritual gifts.pdf

- É Group Publishing \$79 for access for your church online https://www. group.com/product/9781470710866-spiritual-gifts-discovery.do
- Holistic Spiritual Gift Analysis ó Looking at your whole sel



²Stedman, Ray. õEquipped for Community.ö His Mar. 1972: Print.. See also Stedman, Ray C. Body Life. Glendale, CA: G/L Regal, 1995. Print. For an excellent discussion of spiritual gifts and ministry teams see Bauknight, Brian Kelley. Body Building: Creating a Ministry Team through Spiritual Gifts. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996. Print.

4. Your Servant Spirit and the Holy Spirit—the fourth aspect of personal ministry

Your heart to impart.
Your personal lifestyle.
Your spiritual
giftedness.
Your servant spirit and the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 4:10 says, õEach one should use whatever gift he has received <u>to serve others</u>.ö Spiritual gifts are for service. õFor even the Son of man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.ö

This means we must be servant-centered. We focus on serving not simply on using our gifts (Mark 10:45).

Not infrequently, there is more to be done than we have people who are either appropriately õgiftedö or even interested. That is why one of the overarching attitudes of the equipping-sending church is that of developing people who have a servant heart. Such a person would say, õMy preference is to greet people and show hospitality but I will handle the publicity and the chair set-ups because that is the need of the ministry.ö

Finally, but of great significance, is that which powers the gifts of the Spirit is the Holy Spirit. Your humble openness to the filling of the Spirit, trusting the Holy Spirit by faith to work in you and through you is essential to the fruitful use of your spiritual gifts.

Summary of Personal Ministry

So we see the four aspects of the personal ministry of any person are:

- 1. One s heart to impart.
- 2. One personal lifestyle.
- 3. Oneøs spiritual giftedness.
- 4. One servant spirit and the Holy Spirit.

The question for any transformational congregation is how to equip and send a person in each of these four aspects.







The Nature of Equipping and Sending

Equipping is the key concept we discover in Ephesians 4:12 õTo equip [katartismos] the saints for the work of ministry...ö

The Greek verb *katartismos* means:

- ☐ To equip.
- \Box To make competent.
- \Box To make ready.
- ☐ To prepare.
- \square To make effective.

The basic idea is that the one who is equipped is ready to act. This doesnøt mean õhas no weaknessö or õis completely formed.ö If we waited until we thought we were 100% ready for anything, we would attempt nothing. To be equipped is to learn enough to begin, to start, and to trust God in the process.

Katartismos may also carry the sense of õmending the netsö or õsetting a bone.ö õRepairing the saintsö makes sense as a part of equipping since it is difficult for people to fully exercise their spiritual gifts and to serve if they are deeply wounded or broken in some aspect of their life. However, the major sense of *katartismos* is the equipping, the preparing of the saints, of making them ready to function in ministry.

Equipping the saints involves two steps: discovery and development. With *discovery* we discern the spiritual gifts, interests, and passion of an individual along with opportunities for service. With *development* we work to train, prepare the person to use his or her gifts, and to serve effectively.

- 1. Your heart to impart.
- 2 Your personal lifestyle.
- 3. Your spiritual giftedness.
- 4. Your servant spirit and the Holy Spirit.

Become an Equipping-Sending Church

An Equipping-Sending Church prepares and sends its people to serve with servant hearts and their spiritual gifts. This is ministry mobilization.

To become an Equipping-Sending Church, consider these requirements:

- 1. A new Defining Vision and new Defining Practices
- 2. A new congregational self image and culture

- 3. A new role for the people of God
- 4. A new role for the ruling board
- 5. A new role for the pastor and staff
- 6. Some new structures

1. A New Defining Vision and New Defining Practices

A new Defining Vision: Our aim is making the ministry of every believer a reality among us.

An Equipping-Sending Church takes seriously the ecclesiology, the theology of the church, given to us in Ephesians 4:11-13. The role of the pastor and congregational leadership is to equip the people for the work of the ministry.

The vision for ministry in <u>traditional</u> congregations typically has three emphases:

- ☐ The prime doer of ministry is the Minister. People ask, õPastor, how may I help you with your ministry?ö In transformational congregations, the pastor says to the people, õHow may I help you with your ministry?ö
- ☐ Church members serve by being elected to boards in three-year terms of service.

Thus the traditional congregation emphasizes the ministry of the pastor, elders, deacons, and other key leaders. In such cases, 20% of the people do 80% of the work. The famous 20-80 Rule applies in such congregations that the minority expends the majority of effort while the majority is in essence õreligious consumers.ö

It is true that in ordination, the church and the Holy Spirit set some of us aside as pastors, elders, and deacons for the specific ministries of the Word, leadership, and compassion. <u>However, as Greg Ogden says, all</u> of us were ordained in our baptism to service.

2. A New Congregational Self-image and Culture

As a consequence of the new Defining Vision of an Equipping-Sending Church, the congregation lives into the meaning of the priesthood of all believers. Just as we use methods such as the Halverson Benediction to develop the self-image, õI am sent, we are sentö so we use other phrases to constantly teach õI am gifted by God to serve.ö õI have a ministry.ö õI am to serve the people God puts into







my life,ö and so on. We develop a sense of õsent-nessö ó õevery one of us sent by God in all humility to serve.ö

3. A New Role for the People of God

õWe cannot be ourselves unless we are true to our gifts. We are responsible for spending them in the world and we will be held accountable.ö Elizabeth O@Connor

In her excellent and highly practical book on growing a ministry of church volunteers, Marlene Wilson tells us, õto stop looking at volunteers as the means to the end: completing tasks. Instead, volunteers *are* the end. Getting them involved in ministry is worthwhile in itself.ö³

The role of pastor and congregational leadership is to, õGet your ministry moving!ö

4. A New Role for the Session

The Session makes the ministry of every believer a congregational Defining Vision and supports the creation of the organization to make it happen.

This suggests a shift for the Session from purely policy development and supervision of church programs to also engaging in leadership development and supporting the beginning of new ministries. The fundamental change is the shift from a body that õapproves/disapprovesö to one that is permission-giving and communicates, õHow may we help you make your ministry dream a reality?ö

The Session shifts from reporting solely owno did what last month and what motions are there for us to consider? o to consider owno can we raise up or support in undertaking what new ministries?

A õsendingö mentality instead of a õcontrollingö mindset is grounded in the spirit of mutual trust and in Scripture and prayer as an on-going process of discernment.

³ Wilson, Marlene. Creating a Volunteer-friendly Church Culture. Loveland, CO: Group, 2004. Print.

5. A New Role for the Pastor and Staff

The pastor makes a gradual shift from the self-concept of ofthe doero of ministry (preacher/caregiver/administrator) to one who is both often one who is both often of everything begins within the seminary environment and is reinforced by the affirmation of the congregation. This, of course, limits the organization to the limit of the personal energy of the pastor and deprives the people of their own God-gifted opportunities to serve. It is why Greg Ogden has titled his book, *Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God.*

As a õdoer,ö there are certain functions that the pastor alone is to do (although there are fewer of those than may meet the eye) such as the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism. An equipping-sending pastor understands that õthe ministryö is not what she or he does alone but it is what the pastor equips the people to do ó in order to build up the church leading to unity and to the knowledge of Jesus in Christian maturity.

As Sue Mallory says in *The Equipping Church*:

õWhy are these things so difficult to do? I think part of the problem is the fact that we find it easier to *talk* about gift-based ministry than to commit ourselves to the trials and tribulation of applying this value to the way we actually do things. In a local church, the commitment starts with the senior pastor. Senior pastors cannot be those who think they can do everything but are willing to let a few help them. Rather, they are those who know they canot do everything, donot want to do everything, and are not willing to do everything; they welcome others to come alongside with their gifts in order to form a powerful team for Christ.ö

õAnother hurdle is the failure to remember that the largest group of people available and equipped to help in any ministry will not volunteer to do so on their own. They have to be detected and identified as passionate or gifted and then invited to respond to a specific opportunity to serve.ö ⁴

6. Some New Structures

☐ Small groups ó participants in small group Bible studies that engage in Word-Share-Prayer are equipped for lifestyle ministry.

⁴ Mallory, Sue. The Equipping Church: Serving Together to Transform Lives. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001. Print.







- Ministry teams ó ministry teams combine the emphasis on spiritual growth and supportive fellowship of the small group with the task-ministry orientation of a committee. Teams not only build participants as disciples, they work to plug every team member into a ministry responsibility that utilizes that personos gifts, abilities, and passion.
- A ministry mobilization system ó a ministry team that addresses two critical actions necessary to deploy a significant number of church people in specific ministry. First, õDiscovery,ö the process by which a person through self-assessment and coaching learns of the unique spiritual gifts, passion, interests, and abilities God has given her or him. Second, õDeploymentö by means of 1). an

assessment of all (or as many as possible) of the current and future specific opportunities for service that exist in the congregation <u>and</u> in its surrounding community and 2). a specific protocol that matches people with serving opportunities.

Ministry Mobilization Systems

Getting Started

Begin a ministry team. Seek initial team members whose interest, passion, and ability will be key to the success of the ministry mobilization effort. Such an effort takes a tremendous amount of organization and requires great sensitivity to individuals. The kinds of persons who best lead such an effort are proven leaders with a heart to help others find their places of service.

Resist the pressure to fill slots. The pressure to staff organizational slots to maintain the program of a congregation of any size can be rather heavy, especially on staff members, elders, and others with great responsibility. To ignore such pressure is naïve. On the other hand, to simply plug any willing servant-hearted person into any slot means such persons may not be serving in the place most capable of taking advantage of their unique abilities and gifts.

A Few Mobilization Systems

Make Vision Shift 10: Shift from a õleader-deployingö ministry to a õleader-developingö ministry, from committees to ministry teams.

• Ministry Teams Mobilize People for Ministry*

The power of ministry teams rests in their success in mobilizing ordinary people for ministry. The vast majority of church members have not come to terms with their call to ministry, their gifts for ministry nor their opportunities for ministry. See E. Stanley Ott, *Transform Your Church with Ministry Teams* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), pp. 14-16.

• Church Volunteer Central www.churchvolunteercentral.com

Sponsored by Group Publishing, Church Volunteer Central builds its work on three principles: The Priesthood of All Believers, The Giftedness of All Believers, and The Uniqueness of All Believers.

The work of Sue Mallory and her foundational text on equipping, *The Equipping Church*. It is one of the few ministry mobilization systems available that puts sufficient emphasis on both the discovery and the deployment halves of a mobilization effort.

• LifeKeys To get a copy of LifeKeys Discovery Workbook: Discover Who You Are go to Amazon.com

õAt LifeKeys we believe your unique design can be used for more than identification. Let us help you discover and use your God-given design.

• SHAPE (Saddleback) www.saddlebackresources.com

One of the key emphases of Rick Warren® Purpose-Driven model is to help people answer the question, õWhat is my ministry?ö in fulfillment of the fourth of five great life-purposes: õYou Were Shaped for Serving God.ö The process for discerning spiritual passion and direction for one® personal ministry that Saddleback offers is known as SHAPE.

Spiritual gifts óWhat I am gifted to do?
Heart ó What do I love to do?
Abilities ó What natural talents and skills do I have?
Personality ó Where does my personality best suit me to serve?
Experiences - What life experiences have I had?

