

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sermon: Spiritual Gifts, Part 9 He who Leads

Scripture Text: Romans 12:3-8

09/14/2014

**Quote: A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd. —Max Lucado**

Romans 12:3-8 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of *himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. <sup>4</sup> For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. <sup>6</sup> Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; <sup>7</sup> or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; <sup>8</sup> he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

There are three categories of spiritual gifts.

1. Gifts of Spiritual Abilities given by the Holy Spirit.
2. Gifts of different Ministries given by Jesus Christ.
3. Gifts of different Spiritual Activities given by God.

*1 Corinthians 12:4-6 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup> There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.*

Today I want to cover what I consider the spiritual gift of leadership.

**Romans 12: <sup>8</sup> he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.**

### LEADERSHIP/RULING

I believe these falls into the category of a Spiritual Gift of Ability from the Holy Spirit. We have identified in the secular world people that we feel have a natural ability to Lead.

There is a case that could be made that "he who leads/governs" could be refer to as a ministry of leadership. He or she who may be in a leadership position must do so with diligence (1. persistent personal attention, 2: the attention and care legally expected or required of a person)

I tend to lean more on the idea that it is a holy Spirit Spiritual Gift of Leadership Ability. (This thought may be contrary to a lot of thinking of others.)

"He who leads." Leads what? Leads within the church? That is the office of Pastor/Teacher. One who leads the Deacons? That is a deacon ministry with one as a leader (chairman). That which one leads is the ministry given by Christ, which could be given to many and the ability to lead that ministry is the gift from the Holy Spirit.

The Bible speaks of leaders as "overseers"/"Bishops"/ "Elders". The office of "overseer" can be desired as a ministry. Overseers and deacons have requirements outlined in this chapter.

It can be somewhat confusing referring to these titles.

In the New Testament, a bishop is a person who functions as a teaching leader among a local group of Christians. The Greek term *episkapos* has also been translated as “episcopal,” “elder,” “overseer,” or “pastor.” All refer to the same office and are therefore synonyms.

*For citation purposes, you may reference our CEO, S. Michael Houdmann.*

#### Definition - Elders

A title among the Christians, for those who presided over the assemblies (or churches)  
The NT uses the term bishop, elders, and presbyters (a member of the governing body of an early Christian church) interchangeably.<sup>1</sup> I believe this includes the Eph 4 office of Pastor/Teacher.

Spiritual ability gifts from the Holy spirit, Spiritual gifts of ministry from Jesus Christ and Spiritual activities from God can all be desired.

*1 Corinthians 14:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.*

The Holy Spirit still gives as He see fit. Paul speaking to the elders of the Church at Ephesus.  
*Acts 20:28 (NKJV) <sup>28</sup> Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

Like any other Spiritual office or Spiritual ministry, the Holy Spirit will equip us for it. Therefore, a Spiritual leader must be gifted with not what he previously had or learned, but with the ability in leadership to fulfill the office of leadership.

Now here come a part that we should understand in our churches today. It is not wrong to desire or aspire a spiritual office but we must be sure that it is the will of the Holy Spirit for us to have it. We may be better suited for another ministry for that is the purpose for the Spiritual Ability gifts.

Keep in mind that the Holy Spirit distributes on behalf of all three (God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit) as He wills

*1 Corinthians 12:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.*

But if you desire/aspire for a Spiritual office that is a good thing.

*1 Timothy 3:1 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.*

Keep in mind also that there are certain qualifications (*see Responsive Reading 1 Timothy 3:1–7*) for different Spiritual offices and to be effective you must be Spiritually gifted for that office.

#### **Leadership as A Spiritual Ability**

In the early church and in the church today this was and is a very much needed gift. It is a Holy Spirit Spiritual gift given to assist those that are called to a Spiritual office or Spiritual Ministry.

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<sup>1</sup> Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

As we discussed before that talent and secular ability or education do not equate to having been spiritually gifted in those areas. The Holy Spirit may spiritually use all that and our life experiences but modify or enhance them for spiritual use. Then they become Spiritual Ability Gifts.

Examples:

Apostle Paul - Paul was a well learned man *Acts 22:2-3* "...taught at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strictness of the Law." His education and knowledge were well known *Acts 26:24* ... "Much learning has made you mad."

When Paul was converted, He was gifted with a spiritual Ministry by Christ, gifted him with spiritual abilities to perform that ministry like Healing, Languages, prophecy and the word of knowledge. To explain how Jesus is the Christ.

*Acts 17:2-3 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, <sup>3</sup> explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ."

Closer to our topic of "Leadership" I think a very good example are the Apostles, mainly Peter. The Apostles of Jesus were first fishermen. Fishermen were crude, uneducated and not highly thought of as ones to follow.

True leadership does require a measure of ability. Leadership traits and skills can be learned just as a foreign language can be learned.

**Leadership** becomes a Spiritual gift when no formal training has taken place. When God raises a person up to lead often the most unlikely person (i.e. David) I believe it can happen in an instant or over a period of time.

I have listed in today's program some Leadership traits other successful leaders have identified. When the Holy Spirit puts them in you then they become Spiritual ability Gifts.

Peter could have been looked upon as a leader among fisherman. He was always out front. Impulsive to speak and impulsive to act. Before he met Jesus, I doubt he had many of the traits listed in our program.

Because of Peter's size he may have been viewed as intimidating or maybe even a bully. We know he had a foul mouth (*Mark 14:71*) quick to draw the sword (*John 18:10*) and was not considered humble and submissive (*John 21:18 NLT*). Maybe other fishermen would follow Peter out of fear or intimidation but he was destined to lead the church so there had to be a Spiritual Gift of Leadership skills given to him.

Peter the Apostle became humble, even unto the death on the cross. He was humble to give credit to God not his own strength (*Acts 3:12-16*).

Where he once showed an act of cowardice (*Matthew 26:75*) He later spoke boldly all the time risking prison and death.

Peter became, by the power of the Holy Spirit, a bold and effective leader.

Jesus is our best example of what a leader should be.

It is a dangerous thing to try to serve the Lord when no gift has been given; and it is also tragic to refuse to use a gift for His glory. The twelve men in *Acts 19:2* were ignorant of the Spirit and His gifts (*2 Tim. 1:6*) (NKJV). <sup>2</sup> he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So, they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.”

The seven men of *Acts 19:13–16* tried to counterfeit gifts they did not possess.<sup>2</sup> *Acts 19:15* (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> And the evil spirit answered and said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?”

The Holy Spirit is a powerful friend and ally.

Message Scriptures: **Romans 12:3–8**, *1 Corinthians 12:4–6*, *1 Corinthians 14:1*, *Acts 20:28*, *1 Corinthians 12:11*, *1 Timothy 3:1*, *Acts 22:2–3*, *Acts 26:24*, *Acts 17:2–3*, *Mark 14:71*, *John 21:18*, *Acts 3:12–16*, *Matthew 26:75*, *2 Tim. 1:6*, *Acts 19:13–16*, *Acts 19:15*.

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<sup>2</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). *Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament* (401). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

**Question: "What is a bishop, biblically speaking?"**

<http://www.gotquestions.org/what-is-a-bishop.html>

**Answer:** In the New Testament, a bishop is a person who functions as a teaching leader among a local group of Christians. The Greek term *episkapos* has also been translated as “episcopal,” “elder,” “overseer,” or “pastor.” All refer to the same office and are therefore synonyms.

In the earliest churches, its leaders were simply referred to as “elders.” For example, in [Acts 20:17](#) we read, “Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him.” In [Philippians 1:1](#), Paul introduces his letter “to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons.” Apparently, there were originally only two leadership positions in the church: elders and deacons.

Over time, additional layers of leadership were added to the church. Eventually, the term *bishop* came to be applied to a regional church leader who administered many churches. At the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325, the church leader of each city or area represented his region’s churches. These leaders were referred to as “bishops.” Many Christian traditions continue to embrace this role of bishops today.

However, the biblical teaching is that elders and deacons lead *local* churches. The elder was also known as a bishop or pastor and functioned in that role. This does not make additional church leadership roles wrong (to meet important needs for regional or national leadership among groups of churches), but indicates that Scripture points to elders and deacons as the local church leaders.