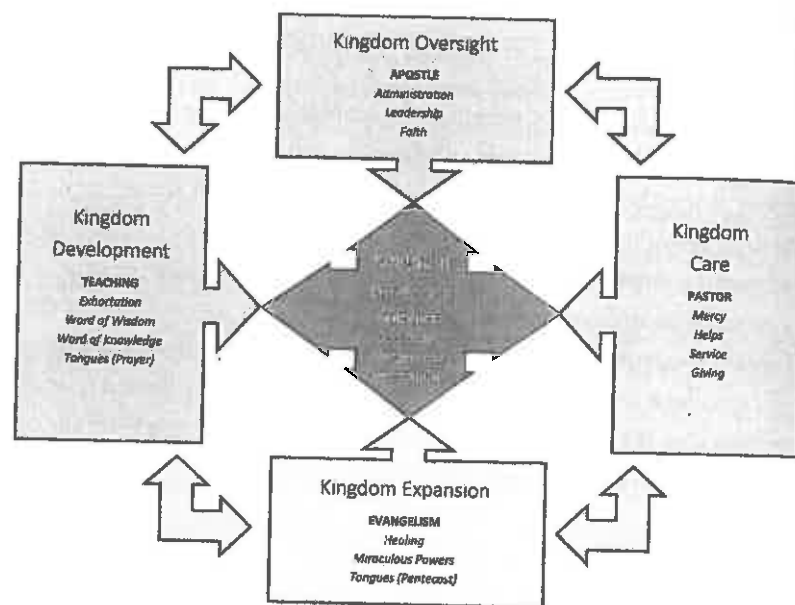




I had the opportunity to teach on spiritual gifts in my church and explore the themes of this chart in great detail. Our classes had some wonderful, challenging and thought-provoking discussion. God used those classes to tear down fears and open minds to new understanding. I believe we discovered some old abandoned paths, and determined to walk them.

Let's take a moment to point out seven key things found in this chart. An additional book would be needed to spend adequate time on a gift-by-gift analysis, but I believe these seven key points are the building blocks of changing our thinking and practice regarding spiritual gifts. The hope is to heighten our senses to many things we lack in our churches today because of wrong beliefs, and cause us to call on God, asking for the ancient path of His supernatural power.

1. **Every gift is represented and needed.** There is place for every gift and every gift has a place. The church is restored to wholeness and nothing is lacking. This should point out our neglect of many of the gifts. I believe the reason many gifts are neglected is that we lack understanding in terms of *why* the gift is needed and useful. God calls each manifestation a gift. He gives us gifts to do His work of ministry in the world. Just because we might misunderstand a gift does not mean the gift is useless, it just means we lack understanding and discernment. Wherever gifts are missing, so is true ministry effectiveness.
2. **The five-fold ministry is represented.** Paul's letter to the Ephesians says, "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-13) Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers represent the five cornerstones of keeping the

body of Christ in harmony and interdependent operation. Respectively, the five key gifts lead the five key areas of need and ministry: Oversight (Apostle), Guidance (Prophet), Expansion (Evangelist), Care (Pastor) and Development (Teacher).

3. **The most misunderstood gift finds its home.** The gift of speaking in tongues finally has its proper place within the body. Three manifestations of this gift are found in scriptures, and each manifestation serves the body of Christ in a unique way. The first is proclaiming the gospel in a *known world language* when the speaker has never been taught the language (Acts 2:6). This manifestation of tongues has an evangelistic emphasis. God, who confused human language at the tower of Babel, reverses this confusion at Pentecost. The second manifestation is a prophetic message for the church from the Holy Spirit that requires interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:27-28). This gift is manifested within the context of the body of Christ when God has a message for the whole body. When a prophecy is delivered in a tongue, it requires interpretation so the body may respond to God's message. Finally, tongues is manifested as a language for prayer that edifies the spirit (1 Corinthians 14:14-15). This is a personal edification. Prayers in tongues erupt when the known language of the speaker becomes inadequate to express what is needed. The Holy Spirit comes upon us, praying and interceding through us when we are at a loss for words.
4. **There is no control, only interdependence.** When spiritual gifts are used for the common good, there is harmony and interdependence. Everyone in the body of Christ has two needs: The need to *serve* with their God-given gift, and the need to *be served* by others and their God-given gifts. When this functions properly, there is no room for domination, control, elitism or elevated importance of one person or gift

over another. Each gifted person beautifully serves every other gifted person within the church. The servant's heart guarantees mutual submission and love. There is no pride and no top-down hierarchy.

5. **Prophecy and discernment provide needed guidance.** Prophecy is the word of God coming (by way of the power of the Holy Spirit) through the servants of God, both foretelling future events (near or far) and forthrightly telling the wonders and works of God with the authority that comes from God. Prophets speak out of the voice given them through the Spirit's unction and provide God's messages for God's church. Prophets are thereby guides for the body of Christ. Prophets are needed because we cannot accomplish God's mission if we do not hear from our King. However, we know there are false prophets, so how do we know who they are? We need those gifted by God with discernment. Discernment is a witness from the Spirit of God in accord with the spirit of the believer, revealing both true and counterfeit spirituality. Those with discernment are like the marking pens used on currency to determine if they are counterfeits. Prophets are accountable to other prophets (1 Corinthians 14:32), and those gifted with discernment uncover the work of the enemy to deceive and derail the work of the church.
6. **Evangelism Regains its Power.** Today, Evangelists are defined as people who are highly educated and cunningly persuasive people trained in Christian apologetics. In other words, evangelists can easily "talk people into believing in Jesus." Evangelists have the answers to debate evolutionists, atheists, agnostics, and humanists. Consider, however, the impact supernatural power has to convince people of the reality of God. When the dead are raised, when the lame walk, when the blind see, people believe! (1 Corinthians 2:4-5) Evangelism also means that people reach across language and cultural barriers to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus. The gift

of tongues, as it was manifested on the day of Pentecost, is still needed today. Christianity today needs more than mere apologists. We need the power of God in our evangelism.

7. **All the Gifts are Spiritual.** Teaching, Helps, Giving, Leadership, Administration, and Service, all have carnal counterparts in the world's businesses and organizations. In the Kingdom of God, however, these gifts have both supernatural *purposes* and *power*. In the Kingdom of God, teachers impart Spiritual truth. In the Kingdom of God, helpers and those with gifts of service discern peoples' needs through the Spirit's unction and minister to the person based on that guidance. In the Kingdom of God, givers do so out of humble, godly love, not in hopes of receiving recognition. In the Kingdom of God, leaders and administrators seek the will of God for the people first and never lead out of selfish ambition. They seek God's guidance through the prophets and boldly show the way to the rest of the flock.

For many, this model will be strikingly different from what we have been previously taught. For others who have seen this type of model taught, you may still not see all of the gifts welcomed or in operation in your church. We need to be firmly committed to relearn and understand the power and purpose in each spiritual gift.

Five: Restore the lost practices of proclamation and power.

To recap from the start of this chapter, Jesus **proclaimed the gospel of the Kingdom of God**, and He **proved** His authenticity with *demonstrations of divine power*. Jesus took twelve men and taught them these same two principles of proclamation and power. He sent them out into their world with His message and His power. This is the only method ever endorsed by Christ and remains to this day. The call to our churches today is to reclaim proclamation over preaching

in regards to sharing the good news, and power over persuasion or programs in regards to our evangelism.

At the crossroads, we stand and look over the current condition of our beloved church. Are we passive or powerful? Are we fearful or faithful? Is our power found in manifestations or management? We must decide if we will continue to extinguish the Spirit's fire or allow it to blaze in all its glory. It's time to launch a rebellion and overcome our fears and ignorance, blossoming into the full image of the church God had in mind from the foundations of the world.