

GIFTED VS. TALENTED MINISTERS – WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

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Are acquired		Are born
Through human efforts		God given
Depends in groups or organization		Depends in the Lord
Main aim is to build churches		Main aim is to preach the Word
Accepts what are thought to them		Questions what are thought to them
Are model students		Arguers to teachers
Are good followers		Are good leaders
Often in minister's gathering		Seldom in minister's gathering
Are good copiers		Has different approach
Knows the answer		Ask the questions
Takers of wide path		Takers of narrow path
Great in quantity of believers		Great in quality of believers
Afraid to be disfellowship		Often being disfellowship
Teaches old teachings		Teaches new revelations
Follows the crowd		Leads the few
Is the best		Is different

Romans 15:16 *"That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."*

MINISTER = SERVANT

Before tackling about the gifts and talents, it is very important to define first what does it mean to be a **"Minister"**.

The word **"Minister"** is a Latin word that literally means **"a servant"** or **"an attendant"**. It was derived from the root-word **"Minus"** which means **"less"**. So if you are called by our Lord to minister to His Church, you are literally a servant to the Church. You are the "less" (least) among the member of His Body for no servant is greater than his master (John 15:20, John 13:16). If you are called to be a pastor, you are a servant to the flock and not the other way around. It is you who is less compared to the flock. And it is you who must decrease. It is you who must serve and not that the flock will serve you.

But this is not so among the so-called "Ministers" of today. Their spirit of Nicolaitan origin has been conquering the flock ever since the first Church Age (Rev. 2:8). They want to be higher than the Church that they are "serving". They wanted to be served.

In Romans 15:16, the apostle Paul said that he was called to be *"the minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles."* Following in Paul's footsteps, any person who desires to be a minister of Christ should be a **servant**. This is the reason why Matthew 25:21a says *"Well done, my good and faithful servant"*. It did not say: "Well done my good and faithful pastor or apostle or evangelist or prophet or teacher." It says **"servant"**. That's why if you are a minister, **YOU SHOULD AND MUST BE A SERVANT.**

“YOU SHOULD ALWAYS ADDRESSED ME AS ‘PASTOR’”

Always remember this also: **No true minister of God will demand to the believers that he should address always as “Pastor”. This is because true ministers will always point you to the work of God (ministry) in their life instead of in their selves.** Take for example the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, when asked by the two disciples of John if He is the Christ that they have been waiting for, our Lord replied to them:

“Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.”

Our Lord can always answer them “Yes, indeed I am He.” But instead of pointing them to Himself, He pointed them to the work of the ministry. Shouldn’t ministers follow this example of our Lord? When Bro. William Branham was also asked if he is the 7th Church Age Messenger and the forerunner of the Second Coming of Christ, there is not a time that he claimed that he is. Instead, it’s the ministry that is given to him and the Voice in Heaven which testifies that he is indeed the 7th Messenger and the Forerunner.

So why are the true ministers of God like this? **This is because they recognized that it is not their work, but it’s of God that worked through them. They knew that if you are a carpenter, you don’t need to claim and proclaim that you are a carpenter, just show them your work.**

That’s why take heed of those who always wanted to be addressed as Pastors, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists or Teachers. They are often false ministers.

THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Take a look at this verse about John the Baptist who is the greatest among those who were born of women:

Matthew 11:11 “Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The above verse told us that there’s no man born of a woman who is greater than John the Baptist. This is true enough because John is the Best Man of the Bridegroom himself, the Governor of the wedding (Matt. 25:6, John 2:9). If you are the Groom, you will certainly select the greatest man whom you knew to serve as your Best Man at your wedding, hence the word “best”. But this Best Man is certainly the least (less) among those whom he will going to serve, and that is the Body (Church) of the Groom – the Groom himself, the Master of the Best Man! This is the reason why the other half of the

verse says, *"notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."* This means that the least in the Kingdom of Heaven, like a vulnerable little child, is Greater than John himself!

So if you think you are the greatest in the Body of Christ because you think you are an Apostle, a Prophet, an Evangelist, a Pastor or a Teacher, then think again. If you think you are the greatest because you are Part of the Hand (one of the five-fold), then read this verse:

1 Cor. 12: 22-25 (ESV):

On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

Those parts of the body that often we think are weak compared to others, those parts that we think unimportant because their functions are not that significant compared to others, those parts that we think are less honorable because we seldom use them – take heed of these parts. They are the parts to whom God have given greater honor compared to those strong, significant and often used parts of our body. This is the reason why the hand cannot say to the belly that he is greater or more honorable. Remember that our God gives honor and great modesty to the parts that lacked it *"that there may be no division in the body"*. No one can say he is greater than the others. And those who want to be great must be a servant to the rest (Matt. 20:26, Mark 10:43)

HOW TO BE THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?

Matthew 18:1-4: *At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them. And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

It is obvious now. If you want to be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, the only way is to lower yourself like a child. Humble yourself and be a servant to others. That's the only way to be the greatest. In God's Kingdom, in order to go up, you must go down. In order to receive, you must give. In order to win, you must lose. In order to live, you must die. In order to be the strongest, you need to be the weakest. In order to be the greatest, you should be the lowest.

See? In God's economy, having more isn't winning. Being served isn't best. Being honored isn't greatness. The ministers of the Lord are to follow his footsteps — who *"came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many"* (Matthew 20:28). Greatness in the kingdom of Heaven is obtained along the path of service, sacrifice, and suffering. This is the only way to be great.

GIFTS AND TALENTS

Now, let's go to Spiritual Gifts and Talents. First, it should be clarified that we are not talking about worldly gifts and talents here as what the world defines them. We are talking here about Spiritual gifts that are in operation to the body of Christ. But let us define the difference between Spiritual Gifts and Talents first.

On the previous message entitled "**THE ASCENSION GIFTS OF THE FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY – WHAT ARE THEY?**", Gifts are defined as something that is given willingly to someone without payment and that once given, the giver won't take it back (Rom. 11:29). A Gifted person is someone who is born with a gift. It is innate in him/her and it comes naturally. He/she did not pay anything to have it and it came from the Lord (James 1:17).

To best illustrate what a **Gift** is, let's make our body parts as examples to describe it just like what the Apostle Paul did in 1 Corinthians 12:1-31. Take for example our hands. We are born with our hands. We did not do or pay anything to have them, it is the Lord that gives them to us. Now, He designed our hands to be elongated and with five distinct fingers to be used for grabbing or holding things in order to serve the body. Just like how He designed our thumb to be the most muscular in all of the five fingers to serve its purpose as a foundational finger in grabbing or holding things. You did not do anything for your thumb to look like that. It functioned well because it is designed according to its use. And that's a Gift.

The same with Spiritual Gifts. They are given by the same Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 4-6). That means, it did not come from you, but it's the Spirit that works in you in order to manifest them.

Talents, however, are the opposite of gifts. You are not born with them. You have them because you develop them. You have them because you harness them. They are not freely given to you; you work hard to have them. One best example of this is when you are born without hands. Although your feet are meant for walking, you have no choice but to develop them also to function as the hands to grab things. You started to practice and used them to grab things. Even though it's hard at first, eventually you develop them to function as the hands. Even if they are not meant to be used like the hand, you develop them to function like it. And that's talent. We will call them Talents because their main goal is to imitate the Gifts.

So the main difference between the two is: **Gifts came from the Spirit of the Lord, it is the Lord that works in you. Talents, however, is the opposite of gifts. They came through human efforts, it is you who work to have them.**

They are Gifts, Not Offices

However, there are many misconceptions among the Endtime Message ministers here in the Philippines about the ascension gifts. It had brought too much confusion among them because they

regard these as "Offices" and not as Gifts. Beloved, let us always remember this, whenever the Bible says they are gifts, then they are gifts (Eph. 4:8). Why call them offices?

They regard these gifts just like an office which they can sit and work and then go out to that office and go to another office. They explained that a minister can be a pastor now and tomorrow he can be a teacher and the day after tomorrow he can be an evangelist. Just like an office person who works in different offices. This interpretation is so unscriptural. Remember, you can't imitate true gifts.

Talented Vs. Gifted Ministers

So let us identify the differences between the Talented and Gifted Ministers. Below are some examples of how to spot a gifted minister from the talented ones:

1. Religious Groups and Organizations

Because of the nature of talents that can be achieved through human efforts, talented ministers are often seen in Bible schools, groups and organizations. This is the first thing that you will notice about them. This is because they need to work hard in order to gain talents. And since it is through human efforts, they need other talented persons to help them, give them some techniques and advice on how to speedily imitate the gifts. That's why you can often find them as members or oftentimes having high positions in religious organizations. They are the ones who formed groups and organizations which leads to divisions. They can't actually survive without their organizations because the names of their organizations are their strong towers (Gen. 11:4). One best example of these are the prophets of Baal who hides in their organization (1 Kings 18). Yes, they are prophets as the Bible told us, but they are definitely not the gifted ones. They are really talented in creating groups or organization.

Gifted ministers are the opposite. They don't have any religious organizations. In fact, they don't need one. For it is the Lord who gives them gifts. Unlike the talented ministers, their strong tower is the name of the Lord (Pro. 18:10). You can't find them in groups for their authority is coming from the Lord alone. And they are not afraid to be alone for the Lord is with them. When coming face to face with talented ministers, gifted ones can easily devour them just like the Prophet Elijah who easily defeated the prophets of Baal during their showdown in Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18).

2. As Students

Talented ministers are good students. They are the model students that most teachers would want. They are the ideal students for teachers in Bible Schools or in religious organizations for they follow exactly what was being taught to them by their teachers. They are the ones whom you can often hear saying "Amen" during preaching. Just like the church in Thessalonica who readily accept the teachings of Paul without consulting the Scriptures (Acts 17:11). They are good followers.

Gifted ones, on the other hand, are those ministers who often argue with other ministers. They don't readily accept what was being taught, they make sure first if it's really in the Bible and they are very critical about it. Just like the church in Berea who were nobler than those in Thessalonica for they searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so (Acts 17:11). Seldom you can hear them say "Amen." In fact, you will always find them questioning you. Often, they have correct understanding compared to other ministers. Since they are led by the Spirit of God, they are not good students but they are good leaders.

3. Minister's Meeting

Talented Ministers loves minister's meeting. You will always find them in every minister's meeting. This is because aside from the fact that they love groups, they need this also in order to gain talents by observing other ministers especially those whom they consider as their elders and models. They will often copy them and this is the venue where they can copy them. This is the reason why talented ministers are also good copiers. Since they are imitators, they are really good copiers that they can even copy the gestures, the sound and even the tune of their model minister! Sometimes if you are not looking, you will think that the one preaching is their model minister but in fact, it is them! During the question and answer portion, talented ministers are the ones who always know the answer. They always have an answer. And it is the answer that everybody wants to hear.

Gifted Ministers, on the other hand, can seldom be seen on ministers meeting. Since there are diverse kinds of ministers attending the minister's meeting, there is also a diverse kind of opinions and answers. And since their teacher is the Holy Ghost, often times their answers will not be accepted by other ministers because it goes against the beliefs of their group or the beliefs of many. This is the reason why most ministers don't like their company. They have different views. And this is also the reason why Gifted ministers seldom attend. Unlike the talented ones who always answers, gifted ones are the ones who always asked the questions. Why? Because they don't go with the flow, they love to question. Most often, talented ministers can't give them the correct answer.

4. Fellowships

Talented ministers take the path that others have already taken. They follow the footsteps of others ahead of them. They are the assemblies that often have great fellowships and have a great number of believers in their fellowships. They would choose to have great fellowships with others even if it will result in compromising the Word of God. Their main aim is to build more churches so that they can have more members. They are afraid to be disfellowshipped by other churches where they are affiliated for they are afraid to be alone. Remember, their refuge is their organization.

Gifted ministers make paths for others to take. They are not afraid to take that path even if it means sojourning it alone and even if it means many will hate them. Unlike the congregation of the talented ministers, their congregation is often few in number because of their compliance to the Word. Their main aim is to preach the Word and not to build a church. They are often the one being

disfellowshipped. They are not afraid to be alone and they would rather choose to be disfellowshipped by following the Word of God than to be in a great fellowship with others. Because of this, gifted ministers are often brave and courageous ministers.

5. Teachings

Talented ones are the good expounder of old teachings and doctrines. Those that are already been revealed by the previous ministers. They can explain them better compared to those ministers whom the teachings were originally given. Because of this, they are loved by many. In natural work, they are like the technicians who fixed old things. And because they just follow what was taught to them, usually they get no further than the crowd.

Gifted ministers, however, are the ones being used by God to reveal new revelations which have been mysteries before. They are like inventors who discover new things. Since they don't follow the crowd, they often find themselves in places no one has ever been before. But people are afraid of new things, that's why these revelations are often not accepted. The unfortunate thing about this is when people finally realize they were right, it will be already too late.

Summary

To summarize the above here's the table:

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Gifted vs. Talented Ministers

Conclusion

In conclusion, **being a talented minister means being the best minister. While being a gifted minister means being a different minister.** I must emphasize here however that Talented ministers can also be used by God if only they are willing to be mentored by the Holy Ghost and not by men. If this will happen, they will be of great use in the body of Christ.

If you are a minister of the Word, you have two choices in life; you can dissolve into the mainstream and become a talented minister to be loved by many, or you will follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and harness the gift He had given unto you. Just always remember: to be gifted, you must be different. To be different, you must strive to sojourn that narrow path that is less traveled. Like what our Lord has advised us and the Apostle Paul had admonished us:

Matthew 7:13 "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide [is] the gate, and broad [is] the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:"

Romans 12:2 "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

May the Lord will guide us into all truth in my prayer.