



Building an apostolic culture

Calp, 3-5 May 2019

Session 3 – Gift of Faith (and understanding doubt)

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Levels of the apostolic gift

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Gift type	Every believer	Spiritual gifts	Motivational gifts	Ascension gifts
Scriptures	New Testament	1 Corinthians 12	Romans 12	Ephesians 4
Apostolic	General and specific calling that extends the kingdom	Gifts of faith and miracles	Gift of leading (by pioneering)	Developing others apostolic nature

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Apostles and the apostolic

- We are not all called to be apostles but we are all called to be apostolic
- Being apostolic means that we bring an aspect of the Kingdom to people who haven't experienced it.
- Apostles should be helping people to
 - Enter the Kingdom and be leaven to others – We never leave this level
 - Understand and follow their gifts and calling
 - Build an environment of faith and miracles
 - Help people pioneer new works
 - Develop people in all the ways Ephesians chapter 4 says
- These make up an apostolic culture

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Apostolic level two Spiritual gifts

- The Lord distributes these 1 Corinthians 12 gifts "as the Spirit wills" (1 Corinthians 12:11).
- We should seek all of these gifts, however, an apostolic calling requires the gift of faith (1 Corinthians 12:9) and the gift of miracles (1 Corinthians 12:10)
- An apostolic calling requires the gift of faith to break ground that hasn't been broken before
- An apostolic calling requires the gift of miracles to see the Lord provide where there have been no channels
- The apostolic calling involves the Lord asking us to do things beyond our resident faith but He supplies gifts of faith to sustain our journey.

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Signs, wonders and deeds

- **2 Corinthians 12:12** "Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds."
- Paul separates the gift of apostle with the worker of healings and workers of miracles (1 Corinthians 12:29-30).
- This distinction between miracles (or healings) and signs and wonders is also reflected in other Scriptures (Hebrews 2:4, Acts 4:30, Acts 8:13).
- "sign", "wonder" and "mighty deeds" means "indicator", "prodigy" and "force".
- Paul told the Corinthian church that even if he was "not an apostle to others" that they were "the seal of my apostleship in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 9:2).

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Working of Miracles

- **1 Corinthians 12:10** "to another the working of miracles"
- "Working" (Greek: *energeōma*) – energy - we are involved
- "Miracles" = Greek "dunamis" = miraculous power, ability, abundance, meaning, might, strength, mighty (wonderful) work.
- Signs that cause others to wonder about how all these things are happening for them.
- Their deeds might be in healing or miracles, but they may also be strength, *financial, influence* or other wonders

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Gift of Faith

- **Faith - Hebrews 11:1** "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"
 - The substance of things hoped – It brings God's future good outcome into our present confidence
 - The evidence of things not seen – It brings the reality of the spiritual dimensions into the natural dimensions.
- **Spirit of Faith - 2 Corinthians 4:13** "And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, *"I believed and therefore I spoke,"* we also believe and therefore speak,
- **Gift of Faith - 1 Corinthians 12:9** "to another faith by the same Spirit"
 - This is the same nature of our regular faith but a larger amount comes as gift for situations, ventures that require more faith than we have built.

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The importance of faith

- **Hebrews 11:6** - "without faith it is impossible to please God"
- **Luke 18:8** - "When the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the Earth?"
- When He quietened the storm, He said to Peter "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14:31).
- When He fed the five thousand, He said "O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread?" (Matthew 16:8).
- When He cast out demons He said "if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you" (Matthew 17:20).

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The journey of faith

- **It requires diligence - Hebrews 6:11-12** "And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."
- **Building faith - Romans 10:17** "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
- **Using faith - Luke 17:5-6** "And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

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Spiritual leadings for apostolic action

Long term

- **Acts 20:22-23** "And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me."
- "Bound" here means to "tie with ropes"
- The highest level of constraint of calling on our lives
- Helps us to keep on track
- We do not plot our own course to this destiny
- Typically 10 plus years
- Mission, vision and values

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Spiritual leadings for apostolic action

Medium term

- **Acts 18:5** “When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.”
- “Compelled” is the Greek word “sunecho” and means “to hold together” or “to constrain”
- He remained there testifying for eighteen months (Acts 18:11)
- Strategies and goals
- Strategies are typically helpful to plan for the next three to five years
- Goals are typically helpful for the next six to eighteen months

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Spiritual leadings for apostolic action

Short term

- **Acts 17:16-17** “Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. Therefore, he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there.”
- “Provoked” is the Greek word “paroxuno” and means “to sharpen alongside” or “to stir”.
- The feeling will come and then go once we have done the task.
- Once our long- and medium-term direction has been settled, we can have a default orientation each day to achieve these long-term objectives the Lord can lead us out of

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Faith and good doubt

- **Mark 11:23-24** "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them."
- "doubt" is the word "diakrino" which means "to judge" and is the word used in "to judge prophecy" (1 Corinthians 14:29).
- This is doubt in our heart and we should understand it so we go on the journey of building our faith through our dialogue with the Lord

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Faith and bad doubt

- **Matthew 14:29-32** "So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you *doubt*?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased."
- The Greek word for this "doubt" is the word "distazo" and means "to mentally waver in opinion."
- This type of doubt is not about assessing your level of faith but is about allowing your thoughts to attack the faith you already have.
- This doubt originates in our mind and should be "cast down"
- 2 Corinthians 10:5 "casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"

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Building an apostolic culture

- Pray for and promote personal revelation in your group (Ephesians 1:16-17)
- Be personally apostolic
- Set "patterns" for others to follow (Philippians 3:17)
- Have a continual focus on the apostolic in your team. The Lord has placed apostles in the church first (1 Corinthians 12:28). As we continue to bring this focus it will have effect on us and those around us (1 Timothy 4:16).
- Help your group understand their calling, gifts and appointing. We should help them to see the hope of their calling (Ephesians 1:18)
- Expose your group to apostolic influences. Paul sent Timothy to remind them of his ways (1 Corinthians 4:17).

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Building an apostolic culture

- Provide coaching and mentoring in the apostolic
- Provide opportunities for people to receive prophecy to confirm, encourage or direct their apostolic action (Acts 13:2)
- Respect the diversity of apostolic endeavours - Paul's makeup, calling and motivations was for the Gentiles where Peter's was for the Jews (Galatians 2:7-8).
- We should attempt to resource apostolic ventures. Paul reminded the Corinthian church they needed to be financially helping the saints in Jerusalem (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).
- We should put the apostolic first in our planning, structuring and focus

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