***The Gifts of Giving and Administration
RO155-02***

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Today, we continue studying Romans 12:3-8. Our subject is "Service of the Body," and this is segment number six.

**Epaphroditus**

The believers in the city of Philippi sent a financial gift to the apostle Paul while he was in prison in Rome. This love gift was delivered to Paul from the believers in Philippi by a man named Epaphroditus. This man stayed on with Paul to assist him in his Roman ministry. Paul had a very great personal esteem for Epaphroditus in three specific ways which are described for us in Philippians 2:25. Paul, in writing to the Christians who sent the financial aid, is sending this letter back by Epaphroditus, and says of their messenger: "Yet I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in labor and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and him that ministered to my needs."

**Brethren**

Epaphroditus was related to Paul, first of all, he says, "As my brother." The Greek word is "adelphos." This word indicates a relationship based on a common parentage. Here it refers to the spiritual family relationship as children of God the Father. Not everyone who is born into the human race is a brother in God's household of faith. There is no such thing as the universal brotherhood of man. Paul and Epaphroditus exercised different spiritual gifts in the service of God the Father, but they had equal spiritual standing, because they were both members of the family of God. God's work on earth cannot be done through unbelievers. Therefore, it is important for us to know who our brothers are (who our true, genuine brothers are). And those are the people we rally together with, and to whom we look to do God's work. This is the first relationship that any spiritual leader has with the people he works with. They are his brethren.

**Companion in Labor**

The second association that Paul appreciated was that Epaphroditus was his companion in labor. The Greek word looks like this: "sunergos." This word means "a fellow worker." Epaphroditus was seen as a fellow worker with Paul in Christian service. The local church ministry is a team effort of different spiritual abilities, all coordinating together. Each member of a congregation has a job on the team – some by formal appointment of the congregation to specific authority. The purpose of the local church is to feed people the spiritual food of the Word of God, and to train them for spiritual service. This cannot be fulfilled by the pastor-teacher alone, but only by the team effort of all the believers as individual workers. Those who are inactive members in the local church cripple the body, and they hinder the work of Christ on earth.

Working of Christians as a team is hindered by believers who are guilty of mental attitude sins as well as overt sins – Christians guilty of envy; of competition; of bitterness; of self-centered; of a lack of preparation for their ministry; of a spirit of vindictiveness, of being erratic in their performance and attendance; and, of mechanical functioning without guidance of the Spirit of God.

**Fellow Soldier**

Epaphroditus came to Rome with more than just money. He came with a spiritual gift to become a coworker (a fellow worker) with the apostle Paul. This is the second level of relationship between a spiritual leader and the people he works with. Then Paul says, "He is even more to be than that." And these attributes are going in ascending order in this way: from "he's my brother;" "he's my fellow worker;" and now, Paul say, "He is my fellow soldier." And that is the Greek word "sustratiotes." "Sustratiotes" refers to a companion on the field of battle. We would say "a comrade in arms." This is a combat team engaged in angelic warfare against Satan and his demons, made up of Christians with spiritual capacities to serve. The Christian possesses spiritual armor given to him (issued to him) by God the Holy Spirit, to be used in exercising his spiritual gift in spiritual combat. Christian soldiers, who become spiritual casualties in the angelic conflict, weaken the whole army, because then we lose their spiritual gifts.

Christian soldiers, of course, do not fight each other. They fight the enemy. The only time Christian soldiers fight each other is when they go spiritually insane. Many Christians do not want to join in the heat of spiritual battle because they recoil from the sacrifices and the potential wounds which can be inflicted by Satan and his world agents. So, they choose to be AWOL. They choose to desert. They choose to hide. Christian soldiers, when they do fight, must fight as per the spiritual gift ability that they have. This is the highest level of camaraderie between a spiritual leader and a member of the local congregation.

So, when we talk about our spiritual gifts, as we are here in Romans 12, we're talking about people to whom we are related: as brothers; as fellow workers; and, as comrades in arms.

**The Holy Spirit**

The spiritual gifts, furthermore, are very important to all members of the Trinity. And you should know that when you exercise your particular spiritual gifts, the whole Godhead is in there on the team with you in one respect or another. In 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 we have this pointed out. We have, in verse 4, the role of the Holy Spirit in our Christian service ministry: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. The Greek word for "diversities occurs in verses 4, 5, and 6. Sometimes they translate it differently, but it's the same word in all three, indicating certain differences or varieties of something. It's the Greek word "diairesis." This refers to the fact that there are different spiritual gifts in the church. We've already learned that. This verse 4 is talking about spiritual gifts when it says that there are diversities of gifts, because that's what he's talking about in Romans 12:1: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." Most Christians are very ignorant about spiritual gifts. They don't have the foggiest notion. Or their ignorance extends to the fact that they're chasing gifts that are no longer operational in the church today. It's important to know about spiritual gifts.

Now, Paul says, in verse 4, that there are a variety of spiritual gifts. The word he uses there for gifts is "charisma." "Charisma" means a gift of grace. And you can see our word "charis" right there, which is the word for "grace." "Charisma" is a gift of grace. He is talking about special spiritual abilities for Christian service which go beyond our natural abilities. There are various spiritual gifts, all of equal importance. And it says that, while there are a variety of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ, there is the same Spirit, referring to God the Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit dwells in each believer in the church age. And the Holy Spirit is the giver of each spiritual gift as he chooses to give to each of us.

Noticed 1 Corinthians 12:11: "But all these (these spiritual gifts) works that one and the very same Spirit, dividing to every one severally as He will." The same Holy Spirit gives out the spiritual gifts at the point of salvation as he chooses. We cannot ask for a gift. We can only determine what the gift is. The Holy Spirit does not distribute these gifts on the basis of some merit in the recipient. You don't get a gift because you deserve it. It is purely a grace act.

**The Lord Jesus Christ**

Verse 5 brings in the second person of the Trinity: "And there are difference." And there, again, is the same word: "diairesis," meaning varieties of administration. The word "administration" is the word "diakonia." "Diakonia" means "a ministry." We get the word "deacon" from this. It is a service which is performed by a servant. Here, it refers to some spiritual gift being used in different situations with different techniques.

So, we have somebody who's administering the gift that the Holy Spirit gave to us in different ways as we are led to use that gift in different situations. And that person is the Lord Jesus Christ – the same Lord, referring to God the Son. All Christians are in union with the same Lord Jesus Christ. He administers the various gifts in different ways, and in different situations. In other words, He conducts the work of the church body as the Head of that body. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who directs the use of the believers' special abilities. Every Christian, therefore, is in full-time Christian service under the administration of Jesus Christ.

**God the Father**

Then in verse 6, we have the third person of the Trinity involved with the exercise of our spiritual gifts, and that is God the Father: And there are diversities." And again, there are a variety of (this time): operations. The word is "energema." And "energema" means "an effect." So, he says, "God the Father causes different effects to come out as the result of your use of your spiritual gift." Different results in different situations at different times produce different effects. But it's all done by the same God again – by God the Father. All believers are in His family. It is the Father who creates different effects for each of your gifts in operation. Some of you have the same spiritual gift that other people have. Your gift produces a certain effect. Others may produce another effect. Some people's gift may seem to produce a lot more impressive effect. It's not impressive with God. It is the Father who is determining what He wants to do with your gift, to the extent that He wants to do with it. The point is for us to be faithful to doing what we are to do with our abilities in the spiritual realm.

So, the Father produces the divine good fruit from a believer's service. It is not produced by our gimmicks for our personality. It is the father who works in every Christian to produce the desired results for the use of the spiritual gift.

So, the entire Trinity is actively engaged in a Christian's use of his spiritual gift. We are brothers. We are fellow laborers. We are comrades in arms. And God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (the Trinity) are engaged in a very specific way every time we take action with our spiritual gifts. I call all this to your attention because there is a certain tendency among Christians. And whole church groups have been built on the basis of belittling the spiritual gifts. They put them into a secondary, unimportant position. And I think you should see that that is not the case in the Word of God. When the apostle Paul met Epaphroditus in that prison cell, he welcomed him as one who had a spiritual gift that he needed in the work in Rome. When we exercise our spiritual gifts, it is something that God the Holy Spirit has given us to do. It is something that God the Son is administering for us. And it is something that God the Father is producing results from. So, we are dealing with something that is of utmost importance with God, though men may seek to set it aside.

Part of that is because everybody feels a little uncomfortable when you think, "Man, I've got an ability from God?" Yes, and maybe more than one. Usually you do: "So, I have to find out what that is. I have to make a very special, serious consideration before the Lord: what is my capacity? And that's where I try to serve him." That becomes so serious that some people just want to escape it and wipe that out. So, they go for such things as Christian maturity.

However, Romans 12 should teach us, if it does anything – right at the first, Paul says, "I don't want any of you Christians thinking of yourself more highly than you ought to think. I want you to set yourself where you belong in God's work." And then how does he proceed to tell us to peg ourselves? Then he tells us about the gifts. Obviously, your gift should be determined.

Paul's purpose, in teaching the doctrine of spiritual gifts in Romans 12, is, first of all, to orient us, as Christian brethren, to the service specialties with which God has equipped us. We need to know our gift. Secondly, he teaches us this in Romans 12 in order to call us to serve in spiritual combat in the Lord's army. The spiritual combat specialties supplied to believers of salvation thus far, we have seen, are the gifts of the apostle; the gifts of the prophet; the gift of the evangelist; the gift of pastor-teacher; the gift of ministry; the gift of teaching; and, the gift of exhortation.

**The Gift of Giving**

Now we come to verse 8, where he refers to the gift of giving. And Paul says, "And he that gives, let him do it with liberality." The word "giving" here is the Greek word "metadidomi." "Metadidomi" means to give a share of something. It doesn't mean to give it all. It means to give a share of something. It refers here to financial support of God's work here on earth by those who have large financial resources. God the Holy Spirit is not talking in this passage about ordinary Christians with their ordinary possessions, and with their ordinary incomes that are not in the extraordinary capacity and extraordinary category. Therefore, they do not have extraordinary capacity for giving.

So, right away we have reduced this to what a spiritual gift is. Everyone doesn't have it. And on one occasion, the apostle Paul asked that question in that way. He said, "Does everybody speak in tongues?" And in the Greek language, the question is asked so that the answer is indicated as negative: "Does everybody prophesy?" The answer is "no:" "Does everybody have the gift of apostle?" "No." And he goes through several of those, and the answer is always "no." Some people have it; and, some people don't. That is also true of this gift. Some of you have it; and, some of you don't. It is, as a verb, in the present tense, which means this is a constant activity to be performed by those who do possesses this gift. It is active, which means you have to do it – not talk about it. And it is a participle. A spiritual principle is being laid down.

This does not deal with what 2 Corinthians 9:6-12 deals with, which is ordinary Christian giving. Notice 2 Corinthians 9:6: "But this I say." And I remind you that in the New Testament, 2 Corinthians chapters 8-9 are the teaching for Christian church-age giving. And you will see that there's no tithing in this. It's not wrong to tithe. But the limitation of tithing, which was all they had to worry about in the Old Testament, is not the limitation for us as Christians. So, here, in the core teachings on Christian handling of financial support for God's work, in 2 Corinthians 9:6, the Holy Spirit says, "This I say: he who sows sparingly, shall also reap sparingly. He who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully." Those who give little finances to God's work will get a little reward in heaven. Those who give big finances to God's work will get big rewards in heaven. The Holy Spirit says, "I kid you not. It is a principle from agriculture. It should be self-evident. Every man, according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God's loves a cheerful giver."

Holy mackerel! What happened to the tithing system? It is turned upside down. Here God says, "I don't want your money if you don't want to give it willingly. I don't want to put that religious tax on you, of the tithe, that I put on the Old Testament Jews. They had to give it. They could give it grudgingly. They could give it happily. It didn't make any difference to Me. But if they didn't give it, that made a big difference to Me." And here He says, "I don't want your money if you can't give it under the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that you give it willingly and cheerfully, and not out of pressure – in grace.

You can see why the professional preachers reverberate when you hear this verse, because they want to put the screws down on Christians. They think that that's the way they can fund the work that needs to be funded. But God says, "That is not the way He works today." God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that you, always having all sufficiency, and all things may abound in every good work." Isn't that great? He says, "I'll finance you so that you will constantly have the stream of money to give to finance the work that should be financed. As it is written, 'He that dispersed abroad, he has given to the poor. His righteousness remains forever. Now he that ministers seed to the sower both ministers bread for your food, and multiplies your seed sown, and increases the fruits of your righteousness.'" The more you plant of God's possessions in His work, the greater returns there will be for you to be able to do more planting.

This is not to say, as the con artists on television have taken over (the religious people on television), that if you sow $100 (meaning sowed in their work), God will give you $500. You can see one operator that goes on the air several times a day all over the country, from the Metroplex area, who is constantly telling people to sow their seed money so they can get their returns. But God is talking about the fact that he will minister to us our needs on the basis of what we have invested in God's work, as He has guided us, and as He has provided us. And He will see to it that we have enough for what we need, as well as continuing to have a supply to put back into God's work. It is not a promise that we will become wealthy.

Verse 11 says, "Being enriched in everything to all of bountifulness, which causes through us thanksgiving to God." Because of our financial provisions, people rise up and thank God because God's work is able to do things that it could not do without those funds.

Verse 12 says, "For the administration of this service not only supplies the want of the saints, but it is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God." It causes people to rise up in gratitude.

**Liberality**

So, this gift of giving is not this normal Christian giving responsibility. It is above regular stewardship. It is an ability by those who have been entrusted with great sums of money. They should do this, if they find themselves in this category, with liberality. The Greek word is "hapolotes." The word means "generously" – with large-heartedness. It connotes not squelching a gift through greed in the midst of plenty. There are Christians who indeed do have large financial resources, but they do not have the gift of giving, because they do not have the freedom within themselves to let go of their money. They do not have the perception of eternity in terms of their money. They have a totally restricted perception that can only enable them to pile up and to pile up, but they cannot release.

The book of Proverbs puts it this way. Proverbs 11:24-25: "There is he that scatters, and yet increases. There is he that withholds more than is fitting, but it tends to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that waters shall be watered also himself." What is this piece of wisdom saying? This piece of wisdom is saying that the person who invests money in God's work finds that he himself is prospered by God, whereas he who is restrictive out of his abundance, finds himself losing, and becoming poor, and things not going well. And while he has this deal and that deal to prosper, it all falls to the ground. Whereas, if there was that liberal investment in God's work, he would prosper.

Many a Christian can look back at a time and say, "Boy, when I was liberal with what God was giving me, in giving back to God's work, was I ever prospering. Things were going well for me. When I started holding back, things started collapsing on me. It's a biblical principles.

1 Timothy 6:6-8 put it this way. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. That's it. You came into the world naked. We'll give you your best suit of clothes or your best dress when we check you out. We won't just put you in a body bag. But it doesn't matter. You're not taking anything with you. You can leave it here for somebody. The wealth of your eternity will be irreversible at that point.

We're talking about the gift of giving – a special ability with which one is not born. It does not come naturally. It doesn't mean just having a lot of money. It means having the capacity to release it.

Here is how this gift goes in action. It enables a Christian to be entrusted with large financial resources for financing God's work, through the local church ministry, and elsewhere. It is not a natural ability to take large sums of money and invest them in God's work, storing them as treasures in heaven. Matthew 6:19-21 is the admonition which the Lord gives for that very purpose. That is the principle that the Lord says should be followed, with these large sums of money that He may entrust to us. Matthew 6:19: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust does corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust does corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

So, here you have the guidance from the Lord Himself that the investment for eternity is the place you keep it. But that's not natural to do that. God gives some people (wealthy Christians) the special honor and the privilege of underwriting His work. He takes them in as His business partners, and, in Matthew 6:33, He says to them, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these other things that you need are going to be added to you.

The ability to give more than 10%, when it becomes a large amount, is not natural to us. Nobody, who is a normal Christian, minds giving God $10 out of $100. It gets a little harder to give him $100 out of your $1,000. And then to have $1 million, and to give them $100,000 out of that – it's very hard. That just isn't natural. It's supernatural. But now when you go beyond the 10%, and start talking about giving him $200,000 out of that million you made this year, that really is insane. And when you get up to saying, "Hey, I'm in a place a life where I only need half of what I make. I made $1 million this year. God gets $500,000." Now, that sticks like a broken chicken bone in the throat of the unspiritual disoriented Christians.

However, God says, "Certain ones of you I'm going to entrust with large sums of money, and I'm going to give you the capacity to release it. If you do not have the capacity to release it, you do not have the gift of giving, though you may have the funds to do it with. The ability to give large sums of money without any thoughts of personal commendation, or of notoriety here on earth, or some gain is something that God has to provide. Again, in Matthew 6:3-4, we read, "But when you do alms, let not your left hand know what your right hand does, that you alms may be in secret, and you Father, who sees in secret shall reward you openly." And those who are giving to the Lord's glory, and giving liberally, are only concerned that He knows it. They don't care whether other people know it, and they prefer that they don't.

**Ananias and Sapphira**

This kind of giving can only be motivated by the Spirit of God. You can give from your old sin nature for your own self-glory. These funds, of course, will bless God's work, but it's not going to help you. Acts 4:36-37 tell us that a man named Barnabas sold a piece of property, and he gave the returns completely to the local church because Christians needed a lot of financial help in the New Testament church, as they were under the attack of the Romans authorities. The Local church congregation was awed. They were appreciative. Some of them were eating because Barnabas had given the whole return of his sales. In Acts 5:1-11, you have the record of how another man and his wife, Ananias and Sapphira, also sold some property, and they were motivated by self-glory. They wanted also to awe the congregation, and to make people look to them with great respect and esteem and admiration. But they only gave part of the money, which was OK. The problem was that they said, "We're giving the whole thing. We're giving it all."

Unfortunately, there was, in the New Testament church, a spiritual gift which is no longer operational. And that was the gift of discerning of spirits. And, unfortunately, in that congregation was Peter who had the gift of discerning the spirits, so that he knew what was in your head which was motivating what you were doing. And he brought it out for everybody. And Ananias and Sapphira very quickly admitted it. And, as you know, they both ended up dead. So, even the little bit that they held back was lost. They didn't benefit by rewards in heaven because of the attitude (the motivation) with which they gave. But certainly the money they gave did help the work of the Lord, and people were benefited by it.

So, the gift of giving is a great, marvelous opportunity for some people to store treasures in heaven. The ordinary stewardship of giving is available to all of us, but the gift of giving is a primary target of satanic attacks. He wants to hinder its expression because he knows that then the local church will be hamstrung. But Satan does not do that. Satan's cults; Satan's religions; and, Satan's misinformation and disinformation churches are prospered by him because he wants that word to go out, but he hinders it among Christians. All of us have to be very careful about what Satan is doing with our checkbooks.

This gift is directed by the Holy Spirit, and it prevents also, when it is directed by Him, money from being given to improper spiritual causes. I cannot help but feel sad, as I look on what is going on public religious television, to think how many millions upon millions of dollars have gone down rat holes by sincere people who sat down and wrote a check; mailed them in; and, said, "Here it is to God's work." They're going to get it in heaven. They'll say, "But, Lord, I thought that he was wonderful. He was a miracle-worker, and he cried when he preached, and he just moved our souls. Surely he was doing Your work. That's why I wrote that check." And the Lord's going to say, "That was too bad. And it was a serious mistake. Your money has been wasted. Your object of appreciation was a false object. In fact, he was a false prophet. He wasn't even giving you the straight scoop." That's how God talks. He just puts it out there, straight on the line, so that people understand. And people are going to find that there's not going to be: "Oh, you sincere, good, wonderful person. I'm going to chalk up a reward for you, even though you stupid." No. God says, "I have given My Word. I've clarified the issues, and I've given you the combination of the Trinity to participate with you in your spiritual gifts, and I've given you the capacity to execute it right. And if you choose not to follow My leading, and if you're going to get emotionally from a human viewpoint mentality, then you are going to bear the consequences. You are going to suffer the consequences."

I used to attend church in Dallas. It was a Pentecostal operation. I always went there to get a high on, and to see what was going on when I was in seminary. And they used to collect an offering by the pastor going down the aisle, taking the money directly from people. And he'd say, "Here's a $10 bill. And here's a $5 bill. Praise the Lord. And who's next?" It was a competition as to who was going to give more. And I mean by the end of the service, this guy had two fistfuls of money, and he was stuffing them in places to hold it, and going down, and people were fighting to give: "Here's a $20 bill." And it was a circus. And it was money down a rat hole.

If you have the gift of giving, consider yourself fortunate. It's a great opportunity, and the God who has prospered you will also enable you to turn loose of it, and he will entrust you with more.

**The Gift of Administration**

The next gift for us to briefly look at today is a gift that I wish I'd see more of. It is the gift of administration. Verse 8 says, "He that rules, with diligence." The word "rules' looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's "proistemi." "Proistemi" literally means "to stand before;" that is, you're standing up and taking charge of a group. You have the ability to be an administrator. You have the capacity to be a leader in spiritual things. Some people have a lot of capacity to be leaders in the world about them. But when it comes to standing up before a spiritual group, or taking charge of a spiritual enterprise, they can't do it. It's strange. Some guy who could lead a whole business (a company) cannot move into the Lord's work. That's why there's the serious mistake that the leaders of your church should be businessmen, because they can lead. They can lead in the areas of life that they have natural abilities to lead, but that does not mean (and generally doesn't) that they can lead in spiritual things.

This deals with the capacity to superintend a group of believers in a local church ministry. Those who have this gift are constantly to be engaged in it. It is the middle voice here in the Greek Bible, which tells us that when you do this, this is to be to your great personal benefit. It is a spiritual principle. This gift is referred to in 1 Corinthians 12:28 by a different Greek word. The Greek word there is "kubernesis." "Kubernesis" means "guiding" or "steering." This is the Greek word which was used to describe what the helmsman does on a boat – the one who's steering the boat. He is functioning as a "kubernesis." He is the one who is guiding the vessel. This connotes the ability of guiding in a spiritual enterprise. This is the same gift of administration that Paul refers to here as the gift of ruling.

There are various departments in the local church ministry. They require administrators. If these areas of work are going to maximize their potential; if they're going to stay on top of things; if they're going to clean up their act as it needs cleaning up; if they're going to keep from becoming a dull, monotonous routine; and, if they're going to keep moving along to be effective in what they are trying to do, then we have to have administrators. Sunday school requires it. Training Union requires it. Berean Christian Academy requires it. The youth clubs require it. Berean tapes and publications require it. The choir requires it. The band requires it. Whatever the agency is, it has to have administrative leadership that is able to bring together a team of people who have capacities, and to enable them to execute a mission.

Paul says that if you have the gift of administration, you should do it with "spoude." This word connotes getting on with it. This Greek word means "to hasten to do it." A person with the gift of administration will move out with zeal to do the job, and he'll do it with earnestness. People with merely the natural gift of administration are often going to have to be coaxed to get on with the job. But when it's the Lord's work, and you have the gift of administration, you're going to want to get out there and do it. You're going to be looking forward to the time when you're ready to stand up before your group, and to lead out. You are going to be the officer in charge, and you will take charge.

Remember a basic principle that they teach you in Officer Candidate School in the military. When you are entrusted with a group of people, either you will take charge, or they will take charge of you. And when you are entrusted with a group of people, the first thing they're going to look at is to see whether you can take charge. And if they sense that you're sloppy; that you're a wimpish type; or, that somehow you've got into a place of responsibility such that you go through mechanical routines, and there's no creative thought, and there's no leading to do it better, and there's no commanding authority, they'll eat you up. The people that work under you will become sloppy; they'll become careless; and, they'll become indifferent, and what you're doing will become terrible. It will be a travesty, especially in God's work. That is a travesty of what is accomplished without that kind of leadership.

This is such an important gift. The ability to think and to act objectively under the pressures of competing interests, and the views of local church agencies is what an administrator has to have. The leader who creates a divine viewpoint vision, and a sense of confidence in his workers, is the leader who can execute God's will. If you can't inspire your workers; if you can create a confidence in them; and, if you can create a sense of the team pulling together, and the team being guided, then they're going to drift. These are the chiefs in the local church. The rest are the Indians.

The local church ministry is greatly hindered when this gift is lacking, quite obviously. Leaders lacking this gift then will forever be making plans, and nothing gets done. They have forever been talking about visions, and nothing is executed and carried through. I'm saying that a good talker is not necessarily one who has the spiritual gifts of administration. Somebody who can verbalize may be a good exhorter, but then the administrator has to step in and take his exhortation, and execute.

Satan, of course, encourages disrespect for those who do lead, because very often the leader is going to have to deny some people what they would like to do; what they want to do; and, what they would like to see, because he's marching to the beat of a different drum. He's marching to the beat, as he should be, of the drum of God the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God. So, there is often, for the administrator, the necessity of being able to take flak by the very people that he's benefiting by his leadership.

For this reason, in Hebrews 13:7, we have this serious exhortation and admonition: God says, "Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their manner of life. Jesus Christ: the same yesterday, today, and forever." Your administrator is to be followed. For what? For the faith. For the Word of God. For the truth of the Word of God that he demonstrates – not for himself. The administrator, the person in leadership in spiritual things, is also a worm. And he is also sin nature creature who is also going to be a potential sinner to fall. But should he do that, the faith, and the Word of God, and the truth that he has proclaimed is in no way affected by that, providing that he did not portray himself as a paragon of sinless perfection.

As long as you, as an administrator, don't try to pretend you are a paragon of perfection, then nobody will be able to discredit the Word of God that you have taught, which is the truth of God, and is reality. The gift of administration in action makes the machinery of the local church function smoothly. Pray for administrators. And may God help us to identify again where we fit into the body of Christ, and when we know to take hold and to execute.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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