

PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)

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Prophetic Equipment

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Introduction

In our last issue, “[Five fold Failure](#)”, we looked at the purpose of the Lord's equipping ministries and the impact that the lack of them has had on the visible church. We also looked at how the Lord has compensated for the failure of those who have been called to the five fold ministry but who have failed to do the work assigned to them.

In this issue I would like to look at the prophetic aspect of the five fold ministry as an example of how the Lord equips His people in the prophetic function. Remember from our last issue, the five fold ministry, including the prophet, is to equip the believers by instructing, correcting, and repairing them to accomplish the work of ministry.

I have chosen the prophetic function because it is close to my heart as it is the area in which I function. However, all that will be said about the prophetic is also applicable to the other areas of the five fold equipping ministries.

Equipment Types

Any job that we perform seems to require some type of equipment to accomplish it. Even digging a ditch requires a shovel or similar equipment in order to do the job. This is true spiritually as well. However, our equipment comes in the form of several types depending on the type of job for which it is required.

The Scriptures present our work in three basic formats: building construction, body functions and spiritual warfare. When our work in the Lord falls into these different formats, different types of equipment are needed to do the job.

1. **Tools** are needed for building and construction repair.
2. **Instruments** similar to medical instruments are needed for the body functions
3. **Weapons** are needed for spiritual warfare.

The Lord provides the necessary equipment by giving us *tool boxes, medical bags, and weapon arsenals*. Each type of equipment has a different function and is utilized or applied in a different manner. A single type of equipment is not applicable to all types of jobs. Part of learning to mature in ministry is not only learning **how** to use the various types and pieces of equipment but also to learn **when** one is to open the tool box, or open the medical bag, or open the weapon arsenal. Maturity means knowing what the appropriate equipment is that we need to use for the type of job that is before us.

Example from the Prophetic

When a prophetically gifted person ministers a word from the Lord, the delivery of that word is colored by the personality of the prophet. A prophetic word is not delivered by the Lord through a person as if he or she is an automaton and the delivery process is not like a recorded message being played. God has sons who co-operate with Him in His purposes. Sons who have been changed into His likeness, who are like Him in character and thought. Therefore, the Lord allows His words to be flavored by the one who delivers it.

A prophet who receives a word to be delivered to the people of God must decide if the word is given to address a *building issue, a body issue, or a spiritual warfare issue*. This assessment determines the “flavor” of the word that is given. A prophet can have a right word, given at the right time, but given with the wrong equipment for the wrong type of problem. Much damage can be done if a word is received that is intended to be applied through the use of a surgical instrument but instead is applied with a power tool. Even more damage can be done if the problem is blown to bits with a warfare weapon. The same word can be delivered using the wrong equipment and produce dramatically different results.

Many times when a prophetically gifted person begins to minister it is either in the nature of warfare words or construction/demolition words. Since these are usually powerful words that are powerfully delivered, the prophet becomes focused on this type of delivery and assumes that all prophetic words that he receives are to be delivered in this manner. He also assumes that these types of words are applicable to all types of issues regardless of the nature of the issues. The prophet becomes limited in his usefulness to the Lord and may even be a danger to the Body because he will only carry a tool box or he will only use his spiritual warfare arsenal instead of being open to the leading of the Holy Spirit about the issues being addressed.

This type of prophet also becomes ineffective as a five fold equipping ministry because he doesn't reflect the fullness of the Lord's ministry. Because he only operates in a limited capacity, he only equips others to operate in the same manner. This is some of our problem with our so called modern day prophets. The “prophetic schools” have not taught them how to assess the issues with the mind of the Lord. They have not taught them how to select the proper equipment container much less the appropriate equipment. In other words, they have not been properly equipped themselves. How then are they to equip others?

Effective Discipleship

This is why a disciple of the Lord must continue in His word. A disciple is apprenticed to the Lord to learn His lifestyle, His character, His motivation, and His way to minister. As one matures, he learns to discern because his senses have been exercised in the apprenticeship process

[*Hebrews 5:14*] . Discernment is a necessary quality that is required of the mature. We must be able to discern good and evil (from the Lord's viewpoint and not ours). We must be able to discern the activity of evil spirits. We must be able to discern the Body and its members. We must be able to discern the correct equipment to be used for a specific time of ministry. Without this type of discernment we are not capable of fulfilling the work that the Lord has assigned to us. (See "[Work Assignments](#)" for more on this.)

Today we have too few mentors who are capable of equipping us. Instead, we have those who want to be "over" us and calling themselves "apostles" or "fathers" or "shepherds" or "the set man", etc. This very striving after position disqualifies these from the five fold ministry and eliminates them as examples to follow.

Where are the true fathers who are birthing sons through the Gospel as Paul birthed the Corinthians? [*I Cor. 4:15*] Where are the leaders who can say "be imitators of me as I am of Christ" as Paul said? [*I Cor. 11:1*] Who can say like Paul, "The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, ..."? [*Philippians 4:9*] Who among us labors over us until Christ is formed in us? [*Galatians 4:19*]

The current teaching about the five fold ministry has gone off on a tangent with focus on things that are not pertinent to the work of the equipping ministries. Trying to operate a five fold ministry within the denominational structure or as a television program will not produce the biblical results listed in Ephesians.

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, ([Ephesians 4:14-15 NASB](#))

The result of the work of the equipping ministries is

1. we are no longer children—believers have come to maturity
2. we are not tossed by every wind of doctrine—believers have been solidly founded in the Word of God
3. we are not deceived by trickery and deceitful scheming—believers have had their senses exercised and have learned discernment in the Spirit
4. we are able to speak the truth in love—no more tickling of the ears
5. we are able to grow up in all aspects into Him—our growth is no longer stunted

What's Required

1. We must learn either from the five fold ministry or directly from the Lord the nature of the equipment that the Lord has given us.
2. We must understand and respect the equipment before we can learn how to use it properly.
3. We must discern the types of issues involved and know how to select the appropriate equipment.

4. We must eliminate from our thinking the “one size fits all” mentality as it relates to ministry.
5. We must learn how to listen to the Spirit of the Lord so that we might know which equipment to use and how it is to be utilized in our ministry situation.

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