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EYES, TONGUES, AND TOES

In the 14th chapter of 1st Corinthians, the apostle Paul calls the church "the body of Christ," and compares it to the human body. Christ is the head, and He tells the body what to do. We are parts of the body. Every part is different, important, and crucial to the functioning of the whole body. We might be called to be an **eye** or an **ear** - to see and hear what God is saying to the church or to confused and hurting people. That is a part of the ministry of the prophet. We may be called to be a **tongue** - to speak the gospel as a pastor or teacher. We may be called to be **legs** or a **foot** - to have the ministry of leadership and lead people in a church or business or government or family. Paul says that when one part of the body suffers, the whole body suffers with it. We might think that the toe is certainly an insignificant part of the body, but have you ever heard of a football player having "turf toe?" When an athlete stubs his toe really badly, it swells up and completely incapacitates him as far as football is concerned until it gets well.

In my November newsletter I talked about the call of God on our lives and how God has placed each of us in his body, the church, in a unique position. I listed some of the "ministries" enumerated in the Bible: Romans 12 - **Serving, teaching, encouraging, giving**....I Cor. 12 - **Prophecy, wisdom, healing, administration**.....Ephesians 4 - **Apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher**, and pointed out that that these are just a sampling of the multitude of ministries into which God has called his servants. Even these Biblical ministries are extremely difficult to explain and pin down.

FOLLOWING ARE SOME WILD AND STRANGE MINISTRIES:

The ministry of encouraging. God says in Romans 12 this is a "ministry" to which He has equipped and called certain people in the church. (During my 56 years as a Christian, I have known a number of people who seemed to have the "ministry of criticism," especially when I was a pastor, but I haven't been able to find that ministry in the Bible.) An example of someone with the ministry of encouraging is Barnabas. He is mentioned in Acts chapters 9-14 and Galatians 2 as a friend and co-worker with Paul. Barnabas in the Hebrew language means "Son of encouragement." Barnabas was a missionary, a prophet, an evangelist, and also had a ministry of encouraging.

NOTE: Many "ministries" in the Bible and in our lives are a mixture of several different callings on our lives. All of us teach, but some are called to be teachers. The same with healing, prophesying, encouraging, etc..

Paul and Barnabas had an argument about a young man named John Mark. Mark had gone with Paul on an early mission trip but had grown discouraged and fearful to the point that he abandoned Paul and went home. Some years later Paul and Barnabas were going on another mission trip and Mark wanted to go with them. Paul said "No way, Jose! That kid is a chicken. I can't trust him!" Barnabas said, "Come on, Paul, the kid has grown up. Let's give him another chance." Paul said, "No way!" So Paul and Barnabas split up: Paul and Silas went one way, while Barnabas and Mark went another way. The kid did prove himself, he matured and eventually Paul changed his mind about him. In 2 Timothy 4:11 Paul wrote to Timothy from prison, *Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is helpful to me.* Oh, yes, John Mark also authored the little Gospel of Mark. Has God called you to the ministry of encouragement?

The ministry of healings. The reason I made it plural with an "s" is because it is plural in the original Greek language. What could that signify? Apparently there are unique anointings (blessings or enablements) that God assigns to individuals. In a church where God's healing power was flowing mightily, I heard the pastor say that there were certain people in his church that seemed to be especially empowered to heal people with cancer, and others who were anointed to heal diseases of the immune system, and so forth. Does that make sense? There are medical specialists in all sorts of fields: oncologists, neurologists, podiatrists, etc. Can't God equip and enable certain people in His body to be specialists? Personally, I think God can do anything he wants to do. In fact, the Bible says so: *Our God is in heaven; He does whatever pleases Him.* Ps. 115:3.

Bill Johnson, pastor of Bethel Church in Redding, California, has a unique ministry of healing bones. There are many testimonies of people in his services receiving instant healing of broken bones, and even having metal plates disappear from legs and backs! A team of people from our church attended one of Bill's seminars a few months ago, and since they returned to Grand Junction they have seen several similar healings of people with bone problems. (The healing ministry is caught, not taught.)

Ex.: A lady named Donna, in her 60's, had a broken shoulder that was in a sling and immobile. She received prayer at the end of a worship service, and then raised her arm above her head without pain. Her shoulder was healed instantly! Ex.: A woman named Teresa, in her 40's, had a broken tibia. Her big dog had knocked her over and broke her leg. She had a brace on her knee. She received prayer, felt tingling and warmth in her leg, went home and took the brace off. The next day she went to her doctor, who was upset that she had taken the brace off; they took X-rays and found that the break was completely healed! Ex.: I seem to have a special ministry of healing backs, or at least I have seen many people healed of back pain over the years. The ministry of healings also includes mental, emotional, and spiritual healing.

The ministry of Fred Rogers. Remember "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood?" Fred said that God called him to that unique ministry to be a kind of surrogate television father and encourager to thousands of fatherless children.

The symphony ministry. I know a lady who has been First Violinist in a symphony orchestra in a large city for over 30 years, and she says that God specifically called her to minister to people in that orchestra. Over the years she has led many to Christ and disciplined them.

The auto mechanic ministry. In the 1970's I knew an automobile mechanic in Loveland who did not charge for his work. He said that God told him to work without a fee schedule and to trust Him. He worked for free and said his customers could pay him whatever they wanted to pay him, or they could pay him nothing. He was an outstanding mechanic, and he had a long list of customers waiting for his service. God took care of him and his family financially, and he bore a powerful witness to Christ. Is that an amazing testimony of trust and obedience to God! I also knew a **medical doctor** in Cedaredge who worked in exactly the same way.

The volunteer church construction ministry. On our return trip from Haiti in November, Lynne Cumming, Fred Feller, and I had a two-hour wait in the Haiti airport and ran into four guys who were going home after spending a month on a church building project. They lived in Oklahoma, as I recall. We asked about their trip, and the leader of the group (whose business card I have lost!) told us about their very unique ministry. He had been a home builder for many years, and about ten years ago he went on a short-term mission trip to help build a church in Mexico. On his way home from that trip, God told him (by an inner impression) that he was to quit his business and devote himself full-time to building churches in the third-world. He went home and prayed about this with his wife. She agreed that it was God, so he sold his business and started going wherever God led him to go. Since that time a great number of other men, women, and young people have felt led to go with him as their time and finances allowed. He has been to over 20 nations - in Africa, Asia, Mexico, Central and South America, etc, etc. He said he is usually gone from home about eight months a year. The volunteers who go with him may spend weeks or months assisting in the construction. He lets God lead him to the specific churches that he is to help. He said they had had many amazing (and difficult and scary) experiences, but he was thrilled about serving God full-time in this way. Many Christians are called to Habitat for Humanity's ministry of building homes for the homeless.

NOTE:

- When God "calls" you to a ministry, God will take care of you financially. (Obviously wisdom is required to discriminate between faith and presumption.) Learning to trust Him in this area is really scary. It is a key part of faith, and it not easy for us. I believe that tithing (giving a tenth of our income) is a way that God trains us to trust Him. Many people in the church are not tithing because of fear and disobedience.
- When God "calls" you to a ministry, you will find fulfillment and satisfaction in doing that ministry like you cannot find doing anything else! God is not calling you to a life of misery, God is calling you to a life of fulfillment, purpose, and adventure. Ex.: I just spent a period of time with a man who is a missionary to China. He told me that he was anxious to get back, that he loved the people and his ministry to them. Ex.: God called me to leave my "secure" job with the railroad. I put the word "secure" in quotation marks because it was certainly not secure. At the time I thought it was secure, but no job in this world is secure unless God is in it. As you know, our stocks and bonds and savings and investments and retirement funds and banks are also not very secure. Although I fell short in many ways, being a minister was fulfilling and adventurous for me, and I am so glad I obeyed God.

- God has spent a long time thinking about you and designing you so that you will fit like a hand in a glove into the ministry He calls you to. God said to the nation of Israel through Isaiah the prophet, *Before I was born the Lord called me; from my birth he has made mention of my name.....He said to me, You are my servant, Israel in whom I will display my splendor.* (Isaiah 49:1-3) God said to Jeremiah, *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.* (Jer. 1:5) God designed your DNA, your specs, your design, from the beginning! Psalm 139 says, *My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!*
- The fact that God has called you to a specific ministry does not mean that it will be smooth sailing. Walking with the Lord is what we were created for, and it is accompanied by many mountain top experiences. But there will also be many times in the valley with sweat, tears, frustration, pain, and persecution. When Jesus answered the call of God He was immediately "led" or "driven" by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness where He was tempted and tested by the devil for 40 days! (See Matthew 4 and Luke 4) Jesus made many wonderful promises to His followers. Included in His promises was the promise that we would be treated like He was treated: with rejection, persecution, and suffering. (Read John 14 through 17) Paul warned Timothy, *In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.* (1 Tim. 3:12)
- God has also promised us that as we walk in obedience to Him, a reward, an inheritance, is waiting for us in heaven: *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.* (2 Cor. 4:17) *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.* (2 Cor. 5:10)

MORAL INJURY

The December 10 issue of Newsweek had a long article about "moral injury" to our service men and women. Researchers have found that, from Vietnam to today, killing was the single greatest risk factor for PTSD, bigger even than heavy combat. A psychiatrist who served in combat in Iraq said that it was not fear, but "Survivor's guilt, moral injury, and feeling betrayed by leaders" were the leading causes of PTSD. The article said that the military vehemently disagrees with this new insight, that they reject the idea that soldiers could possibly feel guilt about killing the nation's enemies, but apparently the heart and conscience can't be controlled by military doctrine.

All of us who minister inner healing and deliverance need to research this further and be prepared to minister to those who suffer in our wars.

DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT

Last month I quoted from **Contagious Godliness**, a book by Paul & Gretel Haglin, my friends who live near St. Louis. I quoted from the Introduction where Paul tells how God used the sudden death of their eleven year old son, Christopher, to awaken them to His love and call them to an amazing ministry of signs and wonders. This month I will quote from Chapter 2, "Dealing with Disappointment:"

"God met us in a special way in the midst of our tragedy and pain. He sent His Son, Jesus, who truly bore our griefs and carried our sorrows through the days and months following that painful loss. We fell in love with Jesus and all five of us who were left in our little family entrusted our lives to Him. Eight years later, the Lord sent me (Gretel) to the emergency room to pray for a friend's child who had drowned in their family swimming pool. Memories of the emergency room and Chris's death tried to rise up to block me, but they were powerless to shake the healing that God had performed in my heart. I entered that hospital cubicle with faith in the faithful God we had come to know and trust.

Clothed in the Lord's special gift of faith, I prayed for life to fill the small, gray, lifeless body of my friend's son, whose death certificate was already being filled out by the emergency room doctors. Unintimidated by the disapproving stares of the doctors, who were our social friends, I cried out in tongues and prayed that Jesus would breathe the same breath of life into that graying little body that He breathed into the dirt body of Adam when He created him. Instantly Tommy's leg shot out. He gave a hearty cry and started to breathe again. I was elbowed out of the way by the amazed doctors as they jumped to attend to him, and the official hospital file was amended to read "apparent death by drowning."

Tommy was restored to life by the power of the Holy Spirit. Years later we found out from Tommy's grandfather, who happened to be the Chairman of the Board of that hospital, that the resurrection power of God had been so strong that two dead men who were lying in the cubicles on both sides of Tommy were raised from the dead as well! One had died of a massive heart attack and the other from a drug overdose!"

Again I want to encourage you to order a copy of "**Contagious Godliness**" for you and your family. For credit card, PayPal or eBook orders go to: www.ContagiousGodliness.com.

GOD'S ANGER AND GRACE

Philip Yancey tells about a pastor friend who was battling with his fifteen-year-old daughter. He knew she was using birth control, and several nights she had not bothered to come home at all. The parents had tried various forms of punishment, to no avail. She lied to them, deceived them, and blamed them for being so strict.

My friend told me, "I remember standing before the plate-glass window in my living room, staring out into the darkness, waiting for her to come home. I felt such rage. I wanted to be like the father of the Prodigal Son, yet I was furious with my daughter for the way she would manipulate us and twist the knife to hurt us. And of course, she was hurting herself more than anyone. I understood then the passages in the prophets expressing God's anger. The people knew how to wound him, and God cried out in pain.

And yet I must tell you, when my daughter came home that night, or rather the next morning, I wanted nothing in the world so much as to take her in my arms, to love her, to tell her I wanted the best for her. I was a helpless, lovesick father."

Now when I think about God, I hold up that image of the lovesick father, which is miles away from the stern monarch I used to envision. I think of my friend standing in front of the plate-glass window gazing achingly into the darkness. I think of Jesus' depiction of the Waiting Father, heartsick, abused, yet wanting above all else to forgive and begin anew, to announce with joy, "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." Mozart's *Requiem* contains a wonderful line that has become my prayer, one I pray with increasing confidence: "Remember, merciful Jesus, that I am the cause of your journey." I think he remembers.

MINISTRY

Big Announcement: The videos of my seminar, "Pathway to Freedom," have now been installed on my website (by my good friend and computer genius Jon James). These are the hour-long videos of my recently completed seminar in our church. The class lasted eight weeks and concluded with intensive personal ministry sessions for each of the forty people who chose to receive the ministry.

Go to my website: www.glennbrownministries.com

Click on the "[Pathway to Freedom Videos](#)."

The titles of the sessions are:

Session 1 - **Your Identity and your Heart**

Session 2 - **Breaking Word Curses & Inner Vows**

Session 3 - **Five Steps of Forgiveness**

Session 4 - **Overcoming Self-Hatred & Self-Condensation**

Session 5 - **Ungodly Soul Ties**

Session 6 - **Wounds of Trauma**

Session 7 - **Danger of the Occult**

Session 8 - **Demonization**

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

Glenn

WEBSITE: glennbrownministries.com

I would like to thank each of you for your support of this ministry.

If any of you want to receive tax credit for your financial contributions,
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