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The Ministry of Leadership!

6th in a series of 6

One of my favorite movies is Ice Age. In the beginning, after the squirrel is finished making face plants, it opens with this great scene of the migration of prehistoric animals, all in a line of flight, due to the coming Ice Age.

Slide #1 And all of the sudden you hear this booming thud, thud, thud, and all the animals start yelling, you're going the wrong way, and here comes the hero of the story, Manny the mammoth, going the wrong way, all by himself, refusing to go with the crowd.

If you really want to develop strength, go out in the stream and swim against the current! In both the OT and NT's of the Bible, the people of God have always been called to do things that are in opposition to the general movement of things. Join us next week for the beginning of a 4 week series of messages entitled, 'Swimming Against the Tide'..

Slide #2 This morning is our concluding week for 'Fan the Flame'.

A little later on in the service, the Ushers will be giving you a handout of the gifts, definitions and a list of resources. On that list of resources are several online inventories you can take, scripture verses and a list of books. There is a table in the foyer with a copy of each book listed. Please do not take these books, but you

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are free to look through them and check out their contents.

Spiritual Gifts are a part of God's bigger story... the story of discovering or rediscovering our purpose.

Slide #3 Psalm 138:8 The Lord will fulfill [his purpose] for me; your love, O Lord, endures forever — do not abandon the works of your hands.

Msg Finish what you started in me, God.
Your love is eternal — don't quit on me now.

The Psalmist is referring to our purpose... because discovering our purpose is critical to understanding who we are!

Slide #4 2 Timothy 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

Slide #5 Deuteronomy 9:3 But be assured today that the Lord your God is the one who goes across ahead of you like a devouring fire.

What in the world does that mean! The Bible is filled with these fire verses!

Slide #6 Fire is hot, fire consumes, fire spreads, fire is contagious, fire is intriguing and fire purifies. Fire is essential for survival.

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Each week we have been inviting the Holy Spirit of God to ignite the fire of our Spiritual Gifts, so week after week we have been bringing fire into the auditorium to encourage us to fan them into flame.

Interview with Loren: This morning I would like to introduce to you Loren Beiler (come up at this point). Loren is married to Karen and just like the Nafzigers they have three daughters, only their daughters are scattered all around the world.

Courtney is in Uganda, Stacy is in Costa Rica and this fall Kristin will be attending Montana Wilderness School of the Bible. So Loren, how does this feel, for a guy who has spent most of his life in Lancaster County? Let me tell you some very special about Loren. Even though I am not related to him... Loren is Lisa's first cousin, second cousin and third cousin. See if you can figure that one out! Only in Lancaster County! Loren is the Bakery Manager for a market stand owned by Stoltzfus Meats, that is located in New Castle Delaware.

1. So how do you use fire in your job? (Ovens for baking)
2. This morning we aren't going to talk about your work... but rather we want to talk with you about one of your favorite pastimes... camping. Do any of you enjoy camping?
3. What was your introduction to camping (as a kid) and how did you bring that into your own family after you got married?
4. How did you use fire power when you camped?

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5. As everyone can see, Loren brought a camping cook stove along. How about if you go over and tell us how to set it up and fire it up and then we can talk about it (set it up, start it, let it burn and come back over to talk with me)
6. When was the last time you actually went camping?
7. What are some of the things you have cooked on your camping stove?
8. I understand you used the stove for some things other than food... like what? (boil water)
9. What is the most dangerous thing about a camping cook stove?

Thanks Loren for giving us a glimpse into the fire power of a camper. You can go ahead and shut it down... and let's give Loren a hand.

Let's stand together as we read from the Word of God and please pay special attention to what is highlighted in red.

Slide #7

1 Corinthians 12:28-31 And in the church God has appointed first of all **apostles**, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of **administration**, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

Slide #8 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of

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healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts.

Let's pray: Be seated

This morning we are going to be focusing in on the Ministry of Leadership. Let's go to our notes.

Slide #9

1. Apostle - The Spirit given capacity and desire to serve God by communicating the Christian message across cultural barriers and planting Churches where there is no knowledge of the Gospel.

This past Wednesday I was visiting my father at Landis Homes and we had lunch with a guy named Mark. Soon into the meal Mark looked over at me and said, 'so, what kind of a church do you pastor and what's the name of it?' And I said, 'it's called TL'. And then he said, 'what kind of preaching do you do? Is it topical, expository or verse by verse?' And before I could answer, he made it very clear..., which one he preferred and which preaching style was right and I flunked!

And then he said, 'so what are you preaching about this coming Sunday, or don't you decide that until Saturday morning'. I said, 'Mark, I know what I'm preaching about this coming December, but this Sunday I'm preaching about Spiritual Gifts, specifically the gifts of Apostle and Administration.'

And he responded with, 'well I hope you tell them that the gift of Apostle has ceased.' And I said 'well I

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understand what you mean... but I think it does still apply for us today in some way.'

Slide #10 So here is what Mark was getting at. There is some indication in the Scriptures that the gift of apostle, in its strictest sense, was limited to the following:

1. One who saw Jesus and could testify to his resurrection.
2. One who was called to this office by Jesus himself.
3. One who was infallibly inspired, they could speak the words of God.
4. One who had the power to work miracles.

So, if that is the criteria, that pretty well lets most of us out of the loop and leaves us with the 12 disciples and a few chosen others from NT times. However... the word Apostle comes from two Greek words. Apo – 'away from' and Stello – 'to send'... so when you put it together it means, 'One who is sent away'. The Apostles were men, sent away on a mission, to proclaim Christ to the world.

This morning I would like us to look at the ministry of two NT apostles, Paul and Barnabas.

Slide #11 Acts 14:21-26 They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to

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remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

Slide #12 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. After going through Pisidia, they came into Pamphylia, and when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

Slide #13 From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed.

So what does the apostle look like? What did they do? They crossed cultural barriers, they preached to any audience they could engage, they encouraged the church, they appointed elders, they prayed and they fasted. Apostles moved from place to place, started new works and somehow were able to develop the authority to appoint leadership. They were like on spiritual steroids! Bigger than life!

Who comes to mind... write it down? You just might need to move outside of TL to find this gift carried out in a more complete manner, but I do believe that missionaries often have this gift and maybe some of you here today feel that nudge as well.

What are the spiritual gifts that have driven our young people into YWAM, YES and SCORE International? What is prompting Courtney to travel to Uganda and

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Stacy to Costa Rica? Perhaps it is evangelism or mercy or pastor/shepherd... but it just might be the birthing of one aspect of the apostle gift... pushing them out of their comfort zone, into another culture. Let's go to our notes.

Slide #14

2. Administration - The Spirit given capacity and desire to serve God by organizing, administering, promoting, and leading the various affairs of the church.

Slide #15 Romans 12:8 describes 'administration' this way... 'if it is leadership, let him govern diligently'... and it comes from two Greek words that mean, 'before' and 'stand'. So it has the idea of 'one who stands before others'. In other words... one who is out front directing.

In 1 Corinthians 12:28 we have another picture of this leadership gift and here we find the Greek word *Kubernesis* (koo-ber'-nay-sis). He was the steersman or the pilot of the ship. He had the responsibility of bringing the ship into the harbor safely, regardless of the pressure to miss the reefs and the rocks and all kinds of other hidden dangers.

Chuck Swindoll describes the steersman as, 'An expert in the midst of a storm!'

So what does the person with the gift of administration look like? They have the ability to lead others and manage the affairs of the Church. They are a goal

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setter and a leader. A take charge type of person that is quick to put a plan on paper and begin to delegate responsibility.

The person with this gift will lead because it's a leadership gift and it's natural for them to lead... and others will tend to follow. It's not about position, it's not about ego, it's not a matter of worth or value... but rather it is about function, the function of this gift.

In the OT we have this story about a guy named Jethro, not Jethro from the Beverly Hillbillies, but another Jethro. Many people have read the Bible and gone to Church for years and yet have never heard of this guy, even though he was the father-in-law of Moses.

A number of years after Moses married Jethro's daughter, he took off for Egypt to deliver the Israelites from the tyranny of the Pharaoh. After Moses and the people finally got away from the Pharaoh, Jethro paid him a visit, and Moses reported how God had delivered them from Pharaoh and in spite of all their hardships... God had still provided for them. And Jethro rejoiced with Moses and they ate together and sacrificed to God together and just had a good ole family reunion.

Well the next day Moses went back to work... and the people came to him from morning until evening with all their problems... and one by one... Moses tried to fix... all their problems. Meanwhile, father-in-law

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Jethro is standing off to the side, watching all this going on, and finally he had enough... just like Popeye the Sailor Man. Do you remember what Popeye always said? Hit it!

Slide #16 Popeye Video Clip

“That’s all I can stands, I can’t stands no more!”

And Jethro said to Moses... what are you doing! Why are you doing this all alone! And Moses said, the people come to me to find out God’s will and they need me to tell them what to do. And here was Jethro’s response.

Slide #17 Exodus 18:17-23 Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you.

Slide #18 You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. Teach them the decrees and laws, and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform. But select capable men from all the people — men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain — and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.

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Slide #19 Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied."

And Moses did what Jethro suggested and it worked and Jethro went home.

Think about it, Jethro used the gift of administration by telling Moses how to take charge and navigate and organize and delegate... and Moses followed his lead... and this is how the gift of administration works. Who comes to mind? Write it down.

One of the ways we can make these messages practical in our Christian life is to talk about it. So I would like to invite Crystal, Bill, Michele and Quinn to come on up and we are going to talk about it. And while they are coming up... the ushers can distribute the handouts... which you may want to check out while we talk.

Slide #20 Several weeks ago I sent out an e-mail to a number of individuals in the congregation and asked them to talk about their spiritual gifts and the gifts they see in others and these four responded.

Interview: Crystal, Michele, Bill & Quinn

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Questions:

1. So first of all... tell us a one of your spiritual gifts and what makes you believe you have this gift.

Bill – Teaching

Michele – Mercy/Faith

Chrystal – Not sure

Quinn – Teaching (he will share this in relation to last week's sermon)

2. Bill, you had an experience where you exercised a certain gift, just for a season. Tell us about that.... and why just for a season? (Evangelism)

3. How about if each of you now would share some of the gifts that you see in others here at TL and why do you believe they move in these gifts? (at this point just take turns, each of you sharing one person at a time, I don't care about order)

4. Michele, you pointed out a gift that your brother has, even though he doesn't attend TL. What is that gift and why do you believe he has that gift? (Jon Everhart – Prophet)

5. Bill you mentioned another person outside of TL. Who is it, what is the gift and why? (Butch Marvin – Giving)

6. Bill, at one point you had an opportunity to pray for healing for someone and something kind of interesting happened... tell us about it.

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Thanks for being willing to share and you may return to your seats. I want to encourage you to have these discussions... around the dinner table, after church, in small groups... wherever! Let's go to our notes.

Slide #21 Several things that may be helpful:

1. Don't seek the gift or the result of the gift... seek God.
2. Sometimes gifts are given to us for a season because there is a vacuum.
3. At times gifts are given spontaneously.
4. There is a difference between a gift and an office.
5. Give attention to spiritual gifts because it is one important step in discovering our purpose and our SHAPE.

As we close... what have we done with what the Holy Spirit has given us?

Imagine for a moment that for his birthday, you gave your Jr. High son... a brand new mountain bike, an I-phone 6 and a T-Shirt and two days later you found... the Mountain Bike crushed because he left it lay on the driveway, his I-phone had been given to a friend and the T shirt was soaking up some kind of fluid on the garage floor.

How would you feel about that? What have we done with what the Holy Spirit has given us?

Slide #22 I'd like to invite the worship team up for a closing song and during this song I invite you into a time of prayer, reflection, searching and confession.

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Are you willing to allow the Holy Spirit to fan the flame... to breathe new life... to abide within... to create hunger? May this song be a commissioning for us... a benediction.

Worship Team: Holy Spirit Breath of God

Invite Prayer Team: 9:00 Janelle and Jeff 10:30
Bryan and Christy

Go quietly when you are ready.