

# CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

## The Ministry

**Doctrinal Statement:** A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the church in:

1. Evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20).
2. Worship of God (John 4:23-24).
3. Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16).
4. Meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

### A. The Call to Ministry

#### 1. Every Christian is called to minister.

- The word minister (GK *diakonos*) means servant.

#### 2. The priesthood of all believers means all Christians can come into God's presence, and serve as God's representatives accomplishing His mission through various ministries.

Ephesians 4:4-5,9

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—<sup>5</sup> you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

#### 3. God calls some people to a specific level of service beyond that which is given to all believers. (Judges 6:12-16; 1 Samuel 3:1-14; 16:13; Isaiah 6; Mark 3:14-19; Luke 6:13-16)

Acts 13:2-3

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”<sup>3</sup> So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

- God equips us to carry out the calling. (1 Cor. 12)

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

- God determines our place in ministry. (Acts 16:6-10; 1 Cor. 12:18)

1 Cor. 12:18

But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

## B. Ministry and the Church

1. The Church is best described as an organism not an organization.

Romans 12:5

...in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.<sup>13</sup> For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.<sup>14</sup> Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

2. The Holy Spirit gives gifts to the church

1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 27-31

Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.<sup>2</sup> You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols.<sup>3</sup> Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

<sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,<sup>[a]</sup> and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. <sup>28</sup> And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues<sup>[d]</sup>? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup> Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.

#### Romans 12:6-8

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; <sup>7</sup> if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

#### Ephesians 4:11-13

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

- For the good of the church (1 Cor. 12:7)
- To equip his people for ministry (Eph. 4:12)
- So the church may be built up (Eph. 4:12)
- So the church may become united and mature in the faith (Eph. 4:13)

### 3. Certain gifts are given for equipping of the people of God for ministry. (Eph. 4:12)

- Apostle—means “one who is sent” (establishes ministry where it doesn’t exist)
- Prophet—calls people to the truth of God’s word
- Evangelist—takes the gospel to the lost
- Pastor—“shepherd” or spiritual caretaker
- Teacher—explains the truth of God’s Word