

# COMMUNITY: Oversee Your Revelation

Some members of our community don't know where they fit 'in the Body of Christ'. Why? I believe it's because we've been given church-focussed teaching in the past with no community-focussed teaching. We've missed the relevance of organs in an organism because of this religious/church-based interpretation of NT scripture.

Mostly, I believe, believers think of the 5-fold ascension gifts to the church when they think of a person's place in the Body. By those I mean: apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors and evangelists.<sup>1</sup> When this attitude is subscribed to, and there are 5 recognised people with those gifts installed in a fellowship, the "house full" sign goes up. Everyone one else – i.e. the supernumeraries – are pew-warmers because there's nothing else worthy to do.

Because we think of 'church' instead of a vibrant local Kingdom community, we can't see anything else that is spiritually valuable to do other than these 5 functions. However, taking Paul's allegory of the human body, that's like a person only being composed of a brain, heart, liver, kidney and lung. That isn't a human being! Where's the everyday skin, feet, fingers, hair, bones, etc? A person with such profound disability as to only have a couple of organs is as dumb an idea as the church's emphasis on the 5-fold gifts.

**Everyone has a place in the body.**

Paul lists some of the functions in the Body of Christ that are not in the 5-fold categories.<sup>2</sup> These are:

1. Miracle workers
2. Healers
3. Helpers
4. Administrators
5. Tongue-talkers (my slang)

How many of us fit into these categories? We need lots of these in the *ekklesia*.

What about waiters? Did you know that being a waiter in the 1<sup>st</sup> church was a highly spiritual function? Martyred Stephen and Philip the Evangelist were two of these waiters. These people were not known as 'waiters' in the NT, but 'servers'. They were called *shammashim* in Hebrew, or *diakonos* in the Greek of their day (where we get our word 'deacon'). However, *diakonos* were not an office or an elected person, but rather a functioning servant who had community tasks to undertake. This is obvious when we understand that *diakonos* comes from the Greek word *diakō* meaning 'to run errands'.

These servers were instigated by the apostles to serve on the tables at community meals.<sup>3</sup> This was because the task had become too laborious for the apostles who were distracted from their proper apostolic duties.

*Diakonos* had to be pious, godly men of good repute, not just anyone who could do the job. Paul gives a list of their characteristics to Timothy<sup>4</sup> so he could set them in place in the churches he oversaw. He also stated<sup>5</sup> that "they should also be tested first; then let them serve if they are found above reproach."<sup>6</sup> In the initial instance of setting up these servers<sup>7</sup> in the *ekklesia* the *diakonos* were chosen by the apostles using

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1 – Ephesians 4:11

2 – 1 Corinthians 12:28

3 – Acts 6:2

4 – 1 Timothy 3:8-13

5 – 1 Timothy 3:10 (MOUNCE)

6 – **NB:** The Greek doesn't use the phrase "Let them serve as Deacons" - that's a church interpretation found in most English translations.

7 – Acts 6:1-6

these criteria: “good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom”.<sup>8</sup> Quite high demands for a 'waiter'.

So, what does this all mean for our Kingdom Community?

I received inspiration last week as I pondered the place or function of everyone in our group. The guidance was this:

**Everyone should oversee each revelation they have been given and see that it impacts and benefits our community.**

This is Spirit-deposited revelation, not just a theology. It also includes the helpful desires that have been given to everyone. So, as I see it now, here are just a few things that need to be implemented now so that we all have input, aside from sharing.

1. **JT**: Revelational – See that we receive Kingdom revelation to advance our knowledge and understanding every week.
2. **KH**: Missional – See that we are focussed on being missional so that we don't become too introverted.
3. **JH**: Apostolic – Keep us moving down the path of becoming an apostolic people.
4. **PD**: Eschatological – Keep us aligned with End Times so we have a focus on the King and the King's return.
5. **CD**: Nutritional – Keep us supplied with bread and veggies as they are available.
6. **RS**: Intersessional – Ensure that there is personal intercession for our community.
7. **LS**: Instructional – Provide 'food' of the knowledge kind every week.

Each of you has more that has been revealed to you than these single items. Why not list all of them and email them to me so I can produce a full itemization of our 'bodily' functions.

**NOTE:** Others are missing from this list. As you haven't been regular in joining us, I am unsure of what your revelational roles are becoming. Please email me your thoughts.

**IMPORTANT:** All this activity must be done under apostolic oversight to see that it is all carried out rightly and in order.

Laurence

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