

Developing a Personal Ministry Philosophy

By Gregory Wiens, State Pastor

We're back with part two of the four-part journey toward developing a Personal Ministry Philosophy. This week we're focusing on what I've found to be the second component – gifting.

But before we talk about gifts, I want to know if you took time to think about why you are committing yourself to ministry through the local church? Are you prepared to give an answer? For me personally, I described those answers as an “assumption of ministry” -- the foundational beliefs for my actions. There's still time to write down your thoughts. Try the backside of the next napkin you can find! These are simply the truths that we hold true without having to prove them. We just believe them as true.

Assumptions are necessary for life. Every time you drive you “assume” people driving the opposite direction will stay in their lane. If you didn't assume that every time a car would pass you in the opposite direction you would have to swerve off of the road. So assumptions are necessary and helpful for life. These six statements from last week are simply my assumptions for ministry.

Now, moving on to gifts.

Imagine you and some friends decide to put together a football team. But, somehow your team ends up in the stadium playing a professional team. You would not fare too well and probably would be seriously hurt. This is because of your lack of equipment, training, conditioning, experience, and skills at playing the positions required.

The same holds true for the church today. People become involved in a church without the proper understanding of the equipment; little training, conditioning, or basic skills; and practically no knowledge of positions on the playing field.

It is essential to understand how we all can minister together toward our common goal. We must know how God can use us, i.e. the position we should play on the team. Gifts help to define your role.

My gifts have been demonstrated over the years to be leadership, faith, teaching, discernment and evangelism. During this time, I've also seen how the gift is “unpacked” and used for the good for the Body.

Leadership – I lead through building relationship, so I would be described as a relational leader.

Faith - My faith is demonstrated through strategic vision. I am able to see how a team must come together to strategically accomplish God's vision for them.

Teaching - I am a teacher when I preach. I enjoy taking God's Word and making it practical and relevant in new ways.

Discernment – In every conversation and context I am always aware of a sixth sense of what is really happening underneath the surface of words, behaviors and the obvious.

Evangelism - My evangelism is seen through building redemptive relationships with unchurched people. I enjoy hanging around with pagans who are seeking more.

Let me suggest that you really can't be effective as a leader in the Kingdom unless you are aware of how you are uniquely wired. This is surely more than spiritual gifts, but this is where it begins. When was the last time you reviewed your gifts? Have you asked God to help you better discover and/or use the gifts?

For those wanting to revisit their gifts, here's a complimentary online inventory with instant feedback – <http://www.gregwiens.com/gifts/>

Next week: Discovering your leadership style.