



What Has God Created You to Do?



TITLE & AUTHOR

Created for Good Works
By W D Furioso



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W D Furioso
Editor, Frances Furioso
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Preface

“What has God created you to do?”

That’s a good question.

When do you ask that question?

When you’re about to graduate from high school?

When you’re about to graduate from college?

When you’re about to start a family?

When you’re about to turn 50?

When you’re about to retire?

All of the above would be my answer. Knowing what God created me to do has been a life-long pursuit for me. Let me explain - I believe, as my Creator, God has the absolute best answer to that question. I also believe God has a unique plan for each of us which He works in accordance with our free will, the desires of our hearts, our particular skills, and our God-given spiritual gifts. Each life scenario is a unique journey which God walks with each of His children.

Over the years as I’ve inquired of God about **“What He has created me to do”**. In the process, I have found that there are other related questions, and issues. I’ve also received words of knowledge and wisdom from the Holy Spirit from His written words. It’s my hope that what I have to share may be of some benefit to those of any age asking, *“What has God created me to do?”*

Who is Doing the Planning?

I realize the idea that God has “a plan” for our lives may be questionable to some, who would rather believe that “the plan” for their lives is their own doing rather than God’s doing. I believe Scripture indicates that both perspectives come into play:

“(You) Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for **it is God who is at work in you**, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”¹

I believe that here Paul is revealing a true perspective of how God relates and interacts with those who have been regenerated by His Spirit. Paul is specifically speaking of our “salvation”, but as I say, I believe he is indicating how God works with the regenerated free agents He has created. Who is working? God or us? Both. As free agents, we are allowed to choose the paths of our lives. Before faith in Christ, those paths are heavily influenced by the world around us. But when we come to faith in God and “salvation” in Christ, we have the stronger influence of the Holy Spirit dwelling inside us. So, the reality for those who are regenerated is that “it is God who is at work in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure”. And “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” for us to follow the influence of “His good pleasure” regarding **“What He**

¹ Philippians 2:12b-13

created us to do". In fact, Scripture tells us He has "good works" which He "prepared beforehand" for us to "walk in":

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."²

² Ephesians 2:10

A Privilege

It is a privilege and true freedom to be able to do
“What God created us to do”.

“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore, keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.... For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”³

Sadly, it is somewhat rare to find a person who is walking in this privilege and freedom. It seems that many Christians think that is an idealistic goal “in the real world”. But since we are “not of this world”⁴, and because our Adversary, “the god of the world”⁵, controls the world system according to “the elementary principles of the world”⁶, certainly, there can be many adversities to doing **“What God has created us to do”**. Nevertheless, while retaining our freewill, God has “a plan” which He patiently and lovingly works towards in accord with the desires of our heart and the particular gifts and callings He has placed in our lives.

³ Galatians 5:1 & 13

⁴ John 17:16

⁵ 2 Corinthians 4:4

⁶ Galatians 4:3, 9; Colossians 2:8, 20

Identity

We have been created in the image of God.⁷ What God has done, and what God is doing, and what God will do are all essential aspects of God's identity – particularly for us human beings. And because we have been created in His image, what we do is an essential aspect of our identity. Therefore, this question - *"What has God created you to do?"* - is an essential question about our identity.

This is also evidenced by the fact that, at least in earlier history, what we do has been reflected in our given names. There are many examples, but here are just a few: Baker (maker of baked goods), Fisher (fisherman), Miller (mill worker), Potter (maker of pottery), Smith (blacksmith, metal worker), Taylor (tailor), et. al.

Given names reflecting what people do or the role they play is seen throughout Scripture, with the name, "Jesus Christ", being our primary example: "Jesus"⁸ means "Yahweh saves" or "The Lord is salvation."⁹ "Christ" means "the anointed One" or "the Messiah" – that is, the Promised One who would come to deliver

⁷ Genesis 1:26-27

⁸ Yeshua (Hebrew/Aramaic) → Iēsous (Greek) → Iesus (Latin) → Jesus (English). Brown-Driver-Briggs.

⁹ Cf., Matthew 1:21

God's people.¹⁰ This is what the Father had put Him on the earth to do. This was His identity for the Human race.

Some questions or aspects of our identity include:

- *"Who am I?"*
- *"What do I do?"*
- *"Where will I do it?" ("Where do I belong?")*
- *"Who will I do it with?" ("Who do I belong with?")*

Concerning the question *"What do I do?"*: Prerequisite to knowing *"What do I do?"* is the answer to the question *"Who am I?"* And answers to *"Where I will do it?"*, and *"Who I will do it with?"* will follow the answers to *"Who am I?"* and *"What do I do?"*

In a word, all of this has to do with **change**. The answer to *"Who am I?"* is *evolving*. The answer to *"What do I do?"* is *developing*. The answer to *"Where do I do it?"* is *variable*. The answer to *"Who do I do it with?"* is also *variable*, but probably less so. While **change** may be difficult for us human beings to feel comfortable with, it is actually quite a natural phenomenon. So, we need to keep in mind that our identity is always in the

¹⁰ It comes from the Greek "Christos" (Χριστός), meaning "anointed one," which itself translates the Hebrew "Mashiach" (Messiah). So "Jesus Christ" essentially means "Yeshua the Anointed One" or "Joshua the Messiah."

Cf., Ligonier Ministries, <https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/jesus-christ-anointed-one>

midst of **change** – not from one identity to a different identity, but one identity which is always *growing*.

Acceptance

Becoming our identity is a very worthwhile endeavor. However, achieving acceptance by what we do should not be our focus. What you do is an aspect of your identity but has nothing to do with your being accepted by God. In other words, we should not work at “earning” God’s acceptance by what we do. We see in Scripture examples of this all too often misplaced effort:

“Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he (Nimrod) became a mighty one on the earth.¹¹ He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore, it is said, ‘Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord.’”¹²

This passage gives us a picture of Nimrod as a “high achiever”. And he was prone to displaying his “mightiness” in hunting “before the Lord”. In other words, he would bring his prized catch “before the Lord” in an effort to impress Him and earn His acceptance.

“²⁴ When her (Rebekah’s) days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵ Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau. ²⁶ Afterward his brother came forth **with his hand**

¹¹ Cf., Genesis 10:10-14

¹² Genesis 10:8-9

holding on to Esau's heel, so his name was called **Jacob**¹³; and Isaac was sixty years old when she gave birth to them.²⁷ When the boys grew up, **Esau became a skillful hunter**, a man of the field, but Jacob was a peaceful man, living in tents.²⁸ **Now Isaac loved Esau, because he had a taste for game**, but Rebekah loved Jacob."¹⁴

This is a rich passage in which we see Jacob *struggling to supplant* Esau in order to be the first-born of the twins in an effort to earn the father's blessing. And we see Esau earning the father's blessing *by what he does* – hunting. This innate motivation to earn the father's blessing – including our Heavenly Father's blessing - *by what we do* is indeed a strong motivation.¹⁵ But with the Lord, it is "To the praise of the glory of His grace, **wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved (Christ).**"¹⁶ – not by our works.

The reality is, if our identity is based totally on *what we do*, we will become "workaholics" – boring and generally substandard human beings.¹⁷

¹³ Meaning "heel", but by extension, "supplanter", "deceiver", Cf. Genesis 27:26; and "struggler", "wrestler", Cf., Genesis 32.

¹⁴ Genesis 25:24-28

¹⁵ For a more in-depth treatment of these subjects of "Identity", "Acceptance", and "The Father's Blessing", see my article, ["Wrestling for the Blessing"](#).

¹⁶ Ephesians 1:6 King James Version

¹⁷ Cf., Psalm 127:1-3

WE ARE HIS WORKMANSHIP



EPH 2:10

Faith

We need to see ourselves as God sees us. In order to be able to do **“What He created us to do”**, each of us need to see ourselves the way God created and recreated us. In “the first man, Adam”¹⁸, each of us were created with certain physical skills and giftings. And in “the Last Adam”¹⁹, Christ, each of us are being recreated with certain spiritual gifts and callings.

It takes faith to do **“What God created you to do”**.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”²⁰

¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:45

¹⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:45

²⁰ Hebrews 11:1 New King James Version

Seeing the image of the “new self” in Christ is “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” regarding **“What God created us to do”**. So, we should be no longer interested in seeing the “old self”, created in “the first man, Adam”. We need to see “the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth”²¹, “who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.”²²

“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”²³

We need to believe God knew exactly what He was doing when He created us²⁴, and that He is very pleased with what He is doing in recreating us. This is the faith required to do **“What God created you to do”**.

This is not “self-confidence”. In fact, our weaknesses become God’s strengths. The writer to the Hebrews tells us the heroes of faith “were made strong from weakness”.²⁵ And through the apostle Paul, the Lord has instructed that “His strength is completed²⁶ in our

²¹ Ephesians 4:24

²² Colossians 3:10

²³ Hebrews 11:6

²⁴ Cf., Psalm 139:13-16

²⁵ Hebrews 11:34

²⁶ Strong’s # G5055: “teléō (from 5056 /télos, "consummation, completion") – properly, to complete (consummate), i.e. finish (qualitatively) the necessary process – with the results "rolling-over" to the next level (phase) of consummation.” Gary Hill and Archer L. Gleason, *Emphatic Language Pointer*

weakness”.²⁷ But it is our personal responsibility to discover, pursue, and do **“What God created us to do”**.

System (Synonym Glossary, Discovery Bible, NASB New Testament) Moody Press (1987)

²⁷ 2 Corinthians 12:9

Jesus, The Pattern Son

Discovering, pursuing, and doing **“What God has created you to do”** is an essential aspect of doing the will of our Heavenly Father. And of course, regarding this, Jesus is the Pattern Son.

“I (Jesus) glorified You (the Heavenly Father) on the earth, having accomplished **the work which You have given Me to do.**”²⁸

What can we learn from the example of Jesus of Nazareth? In Scripture, we find a quintessential aspect of how Jesus did what the Father had put Him on the earth to do:

“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but **the will of Him who sent Me.**”²⁹

The will of our Father God was Jesus of Nazareth’s utmost priority in life. All too often, even with those who are born of God, our life vocation is chosen by our own desires and ambitions. And our decisions tend to be very much influenced by parents, teachers, model celebrities, and the current tendencies of our surrounding society and culture. Some particular verses

²⁸ John 17:4

²⁹ John 6:38

comes to mind which I think paint a picture of Jesus' "single and pure devotion"³⁰ to the Father's will.

"Therefore, Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.... I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."³¹

For Jesus of Nazareth, it was all about doing the will of His Heavenly Father.

"Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."³²

³⁰ Cf., 2 Corinthians 11:3

³¹ John 5:19 & 30

³² John 4:34

Spiritual Elders

While it is our personal responsibility to discover, pursue, and do **“What God has created us to do”**, I believe it is our Heavenly Father’s way to provide help and guidance in our personal endeavor. I am referring to what some call “spiritual fathers” and / or “mentors”. I also think it is an essential aspect of “disciple-makers”. However we understand and name them, the Lord provides **spiritual elders** in our life who have the love and care, as well as the particular God-given gift and calling **to help us discern our own gifts and callings**, as well as **help us to be released into that which God has created us to do**.

It is a **“cultivating” relationship**.³³ We see this ministry throughout Scripture in Moses and Joshua³⁴, Elijah and Elisha³⁵, Paul and Timothy³⁶, as well as with Paul and Titus³⁷. If these are truly God-ordained relationships, the younger is not a “clone” of the elder.³⁸ Nor does the elder impose his will on the younger with a view to having the younger serving him in his own ministry. Rather, before the Lord,

³³ For a more detailed treatment of the subject than what I present here, see my article [“The Husbandman”](#).

³⁴ Exodus 33:11, Deuteronomy 34:9, Numbers 27:18-20

³⁵ 1 Kings 19:19-21, 2 Kings 2:9-14

³⁶ 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 2:2, 2 Timothy 3:10-11, Philippians 2:19-22

³⁷ Titus 1:4

³⁸ 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 11:1

knowing he will have to “give an account”³⁹, the elder helps the younger **identify his own God-given gifts and callings – encouraging⁴⁰ and helping to release him into that which God created him to do.**

³⁹ Hebrews 13:10, Cf., James 3:1

⁴⁰ 2 Timothy 1:6

A Spiritual Journey

As I said in the Preface, knowing **“What God created me to do”** has been a life-long pursuit – a spiritual journey.

It is all about doing the will of our Heavenly Father. Yet we encounter some things crossing our path – more than once – giving us the impression we are walking in circles. But that is not the case. I would describe it more as climbing up a spiral staircase – encountering certain issues more than once, but on a higher (or deeper) level. What are those things?

- God-given Gifts and Callings
- Preparation and Saturation
- God’s Timing

Let’s consider those things as we look into a parable recorded in the Old Testament in which I found some truths that I have carried with me on my life-long spiritual journey:

The Parable of the Farmer



“23 Give ear and hear my voice,
Listen and hear my words.
24 Does the farmer plow continually to plant seed?
Does he continually turn and harrow the ground?
25 Does he not level its surface
And sow dill and scatter cummin
And plant wheat in rows,
Barley in its place and rye within its area?
26 For his God instructs and teaches him properly.
27 For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge,
Nor is the cartwheel driven over cummin;
But dill is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a club.
28 Grain for bread is crushed,
Indeed, he does not continue to thresh it forever.
Because the wheel of *his* cart and his horses *eventually*
damage *it*, He does not thresh it longer.
29 This also comes from the Lord of hosts,
Who has made *His* counsel wonderful and *His* wisdom
great.”⁴¹



**“24 Does the farmer plow continually to plant seed?
Does he continually turn and harrow the ground?”**

⁴¹ Isaiah 28:23-29

This verse speaks of **preparation** – plowing up the ground is a necessary process in **preparation** for planting seed. The parable indicates there is a time for the **preparation** to end and the planting to begin. But in the case of us human beings, there is also a sense that **preparation** to do “**What God has created us to do**” *never ends*. The reality is that **the doing one thing is always a preparation for doing the next thing on our spiritual journey.**

**“25 Does he not level its surface
And sow dill and scatter cummin
And plant wheat in rows,
Barley in its place and rye within its area?
26 For his God instructs and teaches him properly.”**

We can see reflected in these verses that God prepares us and then plants us for the purpose of **bearing fruit for His glory**.⁴² The apostle Paul highlights this in his letter to the Colossians: “So that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, **bearing fruit in every good work** and increasing in the knowledge of God.”⁴³ Paul also highlights in his letter to the Ephesians that we are “created in Christ Jesus **to do good works**”⁴⁴ – **thus bearing fruit for the glory of God.**

⁴² John 15:8

⁴³ Colossians 1:10

⁴⁴ Ephesians 2:10

Let's look at verse 25 again in the New King James Version:

"When he has leveled its surface,
Does he not sow the black cummin
And scatter the cummin,
Plant the wheat in rows,
The barley in **the appointed place**,
And the spelt **in its place**?"

Different types of seed (people) bear different types of fruit (gifts & callings). And the different types of seed (people) are planted in different and "appointed" places. Changing the analogy, Paul speaks similarly in his letter to the Corinthians: "But as it is, **God arranged the members in the body**, each one of them, as he chose."⁴⁵

**"26 For his God instructs and teaches him properly."
27 For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge,
Nor is the cartwheel driven over cummin;
But dill is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a club."**

Different instruments (people) are used to do different things (harvest different fruits). Again, Paul spoke similarly to the Corinthians about spiritual gifts saying there are "varieties of gifts", "varieties of services", and "varieties of activities" placed by God in the Body of Christ.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:18

⁴⁶ 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

**“28 Grain for bread is crushed,
Indeed, he does not continue to thresh it forever.
Because the wheel of his cart and his horses eventually
damage it, He does not thresh it longer.
29 This also comes from the Lord of hosts, Who has made
His counsel wonderful and His wisdom great.”⁴⁷**

In the process of God's plan and purpose progressing in our lives and ministries, if we continue to do a particular thing too long – that is, longer than God intended - the situation can possibly become "disturbed", "discomforted", or even "destroyed". Those adjectives are alternative translations for the word, "damage" in verse 28.⁴⁸ So, in our spiritual journeys, we need to learn to **be sensitive to when God wants to move us on to the next thing He has created us to do.**

⁴⁷ Isaiah 28:23-29

⁴⁸ The Hebrew word is "hamam", Strong's # H2000.

Addendum



*An Overview*⁴⁹

⁴⁹ An excerpt from “Spiritual Gifts, An Overview” (2010)

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Introduction

Throughout this article, I have mentioned spiritual gifts and callings. To help in the discovery, pursuit, and doing of what God has created us to do, I thought it would be good to present an overview on the subject of spiritual gifts which I have found useful in my life and ministry. It consists of three components:

1. The categorization of the spiritual gifts:
 - **Motivational** gifts
 - **Manifestation** gifts
 - **Ministry** gifts
2. Recognizing one's **Motivational** gift as the *root* of one's **Manifestation** and **Ministry** gifts.
3. Seeing the **Motivational, Manifestation, Ministry Connection**.

I trust this perspective will become clearer and more detailed as we go along. This overview simply lists and categorizes the various spiritual gifts found in Scripture. It is beyond the scope of this overview to give definitions for each of the spiritual gifts. But with regards to defining the various spiritual gifts, I think the phrase – “there are **varieties** of effects”⁵⁰ is important

⁵⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:6

to remember. One can settle on general definitions of the various spiritual gifts, but further details of the various definitions will vary, as will their manifestations and ministry expressions. It may be a bit frustrating for a teacher to not be able to “pin down” all the specifics of the various spiritual gifts. But, in fact, I believe that is the nature of the case: **The Lord, who is the Spirit, desires to have the freedom⁵¹ for probably infinite manifestations and expressions of His gifts to the Church.**

Much earlier in my ministry I spent a considerable amount of time studying and teaching on the spiritual gifts in seminars and workshops. The teachings included my personal definitions of the various spiritual gifts which were based primarily on the New Testament Greek words for the various gifts. However, except for this overview, little else from that body of teaching has been put into print thus far.⁵² So, for more detailed definitions of the various spiritual gifts, there are a good number of books written on the subject which include various perspectives and definitions.⁵³

⁵¹ 2 Corinthians 3:17; Cf. Galatians 5:13

⁵² This overview deals mainly with Motivational gifts. But the following articles which I've written have more to do with Ministry gifts, rather than Motivational and Manifestation gifts: [“The Apostles’ Teaching”](#); [“Christ-Centered Ministry for Discipleship & Equipping”](#); [“From Children to a Mature Man”](#); [“The Vineyard of the Lord”](#), and [“The Husbandman”](#). And also: [“1 Corinthians 14:26 – In Context”](#) (Concerning the gifts of prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues).

⁵³ Suggested Reading: [“Know Your Ministry: Spiritual Gifts for Every Believer”](#) by Marilyn Hickey (was most helpful on Motivational gifts). And also: [“Questions and Answers on Spiritual Gifts”](#) by Howard Carter; [“Concerning Spiritual Gifts”](#) by

The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts

“⁷But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. ⁸Therefore it says, ‘WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE *THE* CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO PEOPLE.’ We are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by **what every joint supplies**, according to the proper working of each individual part, **causes the growth of the body** for the building up of itself in love.”⁵⁴

The Body of Christ lives and grows by *the life of Christ*. Therefore, **the purpose of the spiritual gifts is to share the life of Christ with the members of the Body of Christ.**

“To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit **for the common good.**”⁵⁵

The “common good” is sharing the life of Christ.

Donald Gee“; [“The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today”](#) by Wayne Grudem.

⁵⁴ Ephesians 4:7-8, 15b-16

⁵⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:7

The Varieties of Spiritual Gifts

"Now there are **varieties of gifts**, but the same Spirit. And there are **varieties of ministries**, and the same Lord. There are **varieties of effects**, but the same God who works all things in all persons."⁵⁶

We will be discussing the three **varieties** of spiritual gifts –

- **"Gifts" of the Father** (God-given spiritual motivations)
- **"Ministries" of the Son**
- **"Effects" (or "Manifestations") of the Spirit**

"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the multifaceted grace of God. Whoever **speaks** is to do so as one who is speaking actual words of God; whoever **serves** is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."⁵⁷

Regarding spiritual gifts, there are two basic motivations:

⁵⁶ 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

⁵⁷ 1 Peter 4:10-11

- **Speaking**
- **Serving** (or Doing)

“Gifts” of the Father - **Motivational Gifts (7):**

“However, since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to use them properly: if prophecy, in proportion to one’s faith; if service, in the act of serving; or the one who teaches, in the act of teaching; or the one who exhorts, in the work of exhortation; the one who gives, with generosity; the one who is in leadership, with diligence; the one who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”⁵⁸

- Propheying - *speaking*
- Serving - *doing*
- Teaching - *speaking*
- Exhorting - *speaking*
- Giving - *doing*
- Leading – *speaking & doing*
- Showing mercy – *doing*

In this article, we are focusing on the **Motivational Gifts** listed above. However, below are merely listed the *Manifestation Gifts* and *Ministry Gifts* mentioned in the New Testament which emerge from the various **Motivational Gifts**:

⁵⁸ Romans 12:6-8

“Ministries” of the Son (10):

“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors (shepherds) and teachers.”⁵⁹

”And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, *and various* kinds of tongues.”⁶⁰

- Apostle
- Prophet
- Evangelist
- Shepherd
- Teacher
- Miracles
- Healings
- Helps
- Administrations
- Tongues

“Effects” (or “Manifestations”) of the Spirit (9):

”But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by

⁵⁹ Ephesians 4:11

⁶⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:28

the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another *various* kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.”⁶¹

- Word of Wisdom
- Word of Knowledge
- Faith
- Healings
- Miracles
- Prophecy
- Distinguishing of Spirits
- Tongues
- Interpretation of Tongues

⁶¹ 1 Corinthians 12:7-10

The Motivation - Manifestation – Ministry Connection

But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.”⁶²

Certainly, the giving and receiving of spiritual gifts is all of the Lord – not of our own choosing. We find ourselves gravitating towards certain gifts only because God has created us and given us certain **Motivations** – “just as He wills”. But explicitly because of these God-given **Motivations**, we find ourselves identifying with certain spiritual gifts more than with others. More significantly, we find we have **desire and faith** to step out in certain **Manifestation** gifts more than with others. And as we grow in **faith and experience** in those certain **Manifestation** gifts, we may find that the Lord has raised up a **Ministry** gift through us for the edification of His Body. Again, **it is all rooted in the God-given Motivation**. Accompanying that **Motivation** is **desire and faith** for certain **Manifestations** of the Spirit. And with growth in **faith and experience**, those **Manifestations** may develop into a life-defining **Ministry**.

⁶² 1 Corinthians 12:11

Recognition

There is nothing more un-Christlike than self-aggrandizement, and therefore it is obviously something to always be shunned. However, recognition of one's gifts and calling – in true humility, honesty, and integrity – is beneficial. I believe God Himself, in His own ways, affirms and confirms His gifts in our lives and ministries, and allows affirmations and confirmations through others.

Concerning the Recognition of Others

This statement which Paul penned has always intrigued me:

“If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.”⁶³

The gifts and calling which others recognize in you are determined by *how they have received you*. “The one who receives a prophet in *the* name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and the one who receives a righteous person in the name of a righteous person shall receive a righteous person's reward.”⁶⁴ Matthew 10:41

⁶³ 1 Corinthians 9:2

⁶⁴ Matthew 10:41

Concerning Self-Recognition

It *always* takes **faith** to deliver a Manifestation gift. For example: You receive what you believe to be a prophecy which the Lord would have you deliver: At that point, this thought *always* emerges: *“Is this really from the Lord? Or is it just my thought?”* After 50 years of operating in Manifestation gifts, that is *always* the case for me. But I have grown in **faith** in the sense of immediately trusting the quiet urgings of the Holy Spirit and stepping out in **faith** to obediently deliver the message.

It also takes **faith** to operate in a **Ministry** gift. It is very interesting to observe the chronological development of the salutations of Paul’s epistles. In his earlier epistles we find: “Paul, **called to be** an apostle....”⁶⁵ In his latter epistles we see: “Paul, **an apostle** of Christ”⁶⁶ It seems that Paul grew in his personal conviction of his gifts and calling.

The fact of the matter is this: One must believe that what we are and what we have to give has indeed come from the Lord. If we are not convinced of that, we should rather just *“sit down, and shut up”*, as they say. On the other hand, if we do believe that what we are and what we have to give has indeed come from the

⁶⁵ Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1

⁶⁶ Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:1

Lord, we have a responsibility to the gift and calling,
and to the Lord Himself.

Faith for **Manifestation** gifts and **Ministry** gifts is
based on **Motivation** gifts. We must recognize the work
of God in our lives and the deposit He has given us to
give.⁶⁷ Yes, He has given us something of Christ to give.
Some will recognize and receive it, some will not.

⁶⁷ 1 Timothy 6:20; 2 Timothy 1:14

Possible Ministry Callings

A Review

The working principle of this overview has been that our God-given **Motivation** gifts, when combined with faith, are the basis of **Manifestation** gifts and **Ministry** gifts. Therefore, there seems to be a **connection** between **Motivational, Manifestation, and Ministry** gifts. If so, it all begins with knowing one's basic **Motivation**.

Again, in this article, we are focusing on the **Motivational gifts**. Our God-given Motivation is the root of whatever God has created us to do – whether it is in the Church or in the marketplace. I realize that while every child of God is **Motivated** to serve **Manifestation** gifts of the Spirit – both in the Church and in the marketplace – not every child of God has a **Ministry** gift as listed in the New Testament.

However, I would like to present a perspective of Possible Connections between the Motivation gifts, Manifestation gifts and Ministry gifts below because I believe the Church needs:

- Better discernment of authentic Manifestation gifts
- More recognition of authentic Ministry gifts

Possible Connections

“God has allotted to each a measure of faith. For just as we have many parts in one body and all the body’s parts do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually parts of one another. However, since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to use them properly.”⁶⁸

A **God-given Motivation** *mixed with one’s faith* leads to a **Manifestation** gift. And consistent manifestations lead to a **Ministry** gift. Therefore, someone with a particular Motivational gift could possibly lean toward particular Manifestation gifts and Ministry gifts.

I offer the following *possible Motivation_–
Manifestation – Ministry Connections* (*with scriptural examples*):

Motivation of Prophecy (speaking):

John the Baptist: Luke 3:3-9

Possible Manifestations:

- Prophecy
- Word of Wisdom

⁶⁸ Romans 12:3b-6a

- Word of Knowledge
- Distinguishing of Spirits
- Tongues & Interpretation

Possible **Ministries:**

- Prophet
- Apostle
- Teacher
- Evangelist
- Shepherd

Motivation of Teaching (speaking):

Paul: Acts 13:1; 20:20 & 27; 2 Timothy 2:15; 4:13

Possible **Manifestations:**

- Prophecy
- Word of Wisdom
- Word of Knowledge
- Distinguishing of Spirits

Possible **Ministries:**

- Teacher
- Apostle
- Shepherd
- Administrations

Motivation of Exhorting (speaking):

Barnabas: Acts 4:36; 13:13; 15:37-38

Possible **Manifestations:**

- Prophecy
- Word of Wisdom
- Word of Knowledge

Possible **Ministries:**

- Prophet
- Teacher
- Shepherd
- Evangelist
- Administrations
- Helps

Motivation of Serving (doing):

Martha: Luke 10:38-42; John 11:8; Philippians 2:7

Possible **Manifestations:**

- Faith
- Healings
- Miracles

- Word of Knowledge (i.e., Knowing what needs to be done)
- Word of Wisdom (i.e., Knowing how to wisely do what needs to be done)

Possible **Ministries:**

- Helps

Motivation of Giving (doing):

Abraham: Genesis 13:9-11; 14:20; 22:10

Possible **Manifestations:**

- Faith
- Word of Knowledge (i.e., Knowing what is needed)
- Word of Wisdom (i.e., Knowing how to meet the need wisely)
- Healings
- Miracles

Possible **Ministries:**

- Helps

Motivation of Administration (doing):

Nehemiah: Nehemiah 2:5-19; 4:4-14

Possible **Manifestations:**

- Faith
- Prophecy
- Word of Knowledge (i.e., Knowing what needs to be done)
- Word of Wisdom (i.e., Knowing how to wisely do what needs to be done)
- Distinguishing of Spirits

Possible **Ministries:**

- Administrations
- Apostle
- Shepherd
- Prophet
- Teacher
- Evangelist

Motivation of Showing Mercy (doing):

“The Good Samaritan”: Luke 10:33-35

Possible **Manifestations:**

- Healings
- Prophecy
- Word of knowledge (i.e., Knowing what needs to be done)
- Word of wisdom (i.e., Knowing how to wisely do what needs to be done)

Possible **Ministries:**

- Healings

My Personal Spiritual Gifts Set

I've been engaged in the work of ministry for about 50 years. I've consistently spent time seeking the Lord regarding my personal gifts and calling.⁶⁹ Just as a plant grows and becomes more distinguishable as to its variety, so my gifts and calling have become clearer and more focused as the years have passed. But from very early on, I discerned the following in myself:

Motivation Gift: Teaching - with the teaching being *motivated* sometimes prophetically, and sometimes apostolically.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ See my article, ["Wrestling for the Blessing"](#).

⁷⁰ Please note: "prophetically" and "apostolically" are adjectives describing the teaching, not nouns as titles for myself. Again, words like "prophetic" and

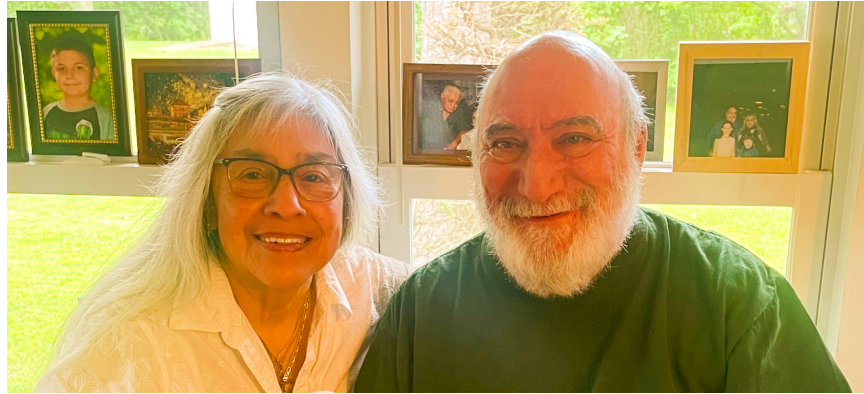
Manifestations Gifts: I find desire and faith for: prophecy, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, distinguishing of spirits, and very occasionally, tongues and interpretation.

Ministry Gift: Teaching. Particular people, in particular places, at particular times have also recognized in me and have received from me the ministries of prophet, apostle, and shepherd.

“apostolic” need defining. See: “[The Apostles’ Teaching](#)” and “[Christ-centered Discipleship & Equipping Ministries](#)”.

Bill & Frances Furioso

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Bill Furioso and his wife, Frances, have been married for more than 40 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill and Frances served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years making disciples, establishing churches, and training church leaders. Over a span of 40 years, they also traveled extensively in an itinerant Bible teaching ministry which took them to hundreds of gatherings on four continents ministering in churches, conferences, spiritual formation seminars, and home gatherings. They have shepherded several churches, discipled many to Christ, and mentored church leaders in the USA and abroad.

Being an avid student by nature, Bill has done both formal and informal study in various fields including Theology, Philosophy, Education, and Music. As a writer, he has authored many publications which are distributed worldwide. Because of Bill's disabilities resulting from a spinal cord injury, he can no longer travel, so their ministries of writing, recording, distributing, mentoring, and correspondence are now shared primarily via the Internet...

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