



Energy: We have an advert in the UK picturing a soft toy powered by batteries. The toy with Duracell batteries goes so much longer and further than the toy with normal batteries! That of course is why they can charge so much more for them. Some people similarly have more energy and capacity to do an enormous amount of projects and keep going at a fast pace. Everyone needs breaks and the ability to pace themselves but at the end of the day it seems that some can cope and actually thrive on a faster pace of life than others.

Remember the poor guy who fell out of the window while listening to Paul preach in Acts 20:9. He went to sleep as Paul went on and on, fell to his death and had to be resurrected! Paul obviously had a capacity to preach for a long time. If you have been in meetings in the past with Joy Dawson you will know she had an anointing for long meetings too! Have you looked at a day in the life of Jesus? He was up early to spend time with his Father, preaching to the multitudes, healing the sick and casting out demons, creating a miracle for lunch, mending the roof of his home after the guy on the stretcher was lowered down, feasting with the tax collectors or Pharisees and then down to Bethel for a quick hello to Lazarus, Martha and Mary. Seriously though, Jesus must have had a high energy to travel, preach, minister and juggle so many relationships. A guy like Abraham however seemed to have much more time on his hands and years go by as he lives his nomadic life.

Growth: I was praying for someone recently and had a vivid picture of them lying on an operating table and the surgeon was about to use his scalpel. The procedure being undertaken was the enlargement of the person's spirit. A hard crust was being removed and the spirit was being freed up to grow and develop to its full potential. The after care involved regular exercising of the spirit, to enable it to establish new muscles, grow strong and develop greater stamina.

When it comes to our 'spirits' there is no limitation to the possible growth. Is that the same for leadership development growth? Perhaps not! Of course all of us have unrealised potential but it's also important for us to recognise our limitations (a topic we were looking at last month). Limitations aren't the same as staying in our comfort zones. Comfort zones always need to be pushed through and left behind, but there comes a point where we hit the ceiling of our leadership calling, gifting and scope of influence and can be promoted to a 'place of incompetence'. What does that mean? It's being promoted to a place beyond our abilities and calling in God where we are no longer effective and functioning in our anointing. We can simply be encouraged to step up to a role that we are not equipped to fulfil or allow our ambition and ego to get in the way of what God actually has in mind for us. So capacity is important to understand in our growth development.

Gifts: I have never been one for titles or putting letters after my name and so it is with care that I bring up the issue of the gifts listed in Ephesians 4 – for instance the apostle and prophet. I will be talking of the apostolic gift or prophetic gift rather than the office of an apostle or prophet.

People don't fit into boxes, have you noticed that? We can take all kinds of personality tests and can even come out with the same personality type as someone else but when we compare ourselves, we are still very different. Looking at the working of these gifts in our lives is similar. Several of us can have the same apostolic gift and yet be so different in the way we function with our gifting. Look at the apostles Barnabas, Paul, James and Peter. How different they were in their personality, approach and calling. Barnabas known as the son of encouragement, Paul the apostle to the gentiles, a pioneer and preacher, James who led the church in Jerusalem and Peter, the apostle to the Jews, also an evangelist and preacher.

Paul was a apostolic leader launching churches in different cultures and multiplying people on his team but probably more comfortable with a smaller team keeping on the move. James on the other hand was the leader of the Jerusalem church which was growing exponentially and required a breadth of gifting as ministries grew but he stayed in one place and happy to lead a large team and huge church of individuals.

I often teach about the four main gifts needed in a leadership team. These same four giftings are shared in the GLT outcomes paper for leadership teams: visionary (apostolic); spiritual (prophetic); relational (pastoral); operational (administrative). Through my experience with leadership teams, I recognise that most YWAM leaders have an aptitude to teach, as this gift is held in high esteem and so it doesn't need to be singled out. The evangelistic gift is often one that doesn't fit too well with attending of meetings but fortunately the leaders that we need in the leadership teams often have the apostolic gift as well. So the three gifts of apostolic, prophetic and pastoral plus the implementing gift of the operational tend to be key for the full functioning of the team.

As leaders we need an aptitude to develop and use all these gifts. It's like asking if you are a visionary leader. To lead we all need vision. However there are different capacities of vision and some will have this as a major and the other gifts as minor.

Capacity of gifting: For each of these gifts we can place ourselves on a continuum of low to high capacity. For instance the visionary or apostolic gift has huge variations. The apostolic gift can be seen in someone like Loren Cunningham, launching a worldwide movement like YWAM or Dale Koffman with a ministry like Kings Kids. The same apostolic gift is also seen in launching a pioneer team into a city to establish an evangelism team. It involves creating something where nothing as yet exists. Being apostolic means implementing something new. The same gift but different capacities.

Whenever a team, base, nation or region is passed on to new leadership, the size of the ministry often tends to settle at the capacity of the new leader. Of course as this leader develops to their potential, the size and or depth can grow significantly.

Some years ago a gifted apostolic leader developed a vision for a national work. It focused on church planting which was a real need. All the staff and leadership meetings were geared up to strategise and set goals to see the establishment of a new movement in church planting. It was a good vision but the problem was that it didn't embrace all that we were called to in YWAM. We believe in church planting but are called to evangelism, training and mercy ministries as three major strands of focus. The church planting vision narrowed the work so that some working in other ministries were no longer valued and didn't feel a part of the future.

The General apostolic gift: The apostolic gift can be categorised by breadth or depth of gifting. Where the leader develops a breadth of ministry, meaning a wide embrace of many types of ministries, I refer to this leader as a “general apostolic gifting.” This type of leader opens all kinds of doors and isn’t strong on boundaries of a certain type of vision.

If you are looking at a multi-faceted base, national or regional leadership team, a general apostolic leader needs to be a member, otherwise the vision shrinks. The general apostolic leader often without effort, dreams big dreams and has big visions, which usually take us beyond the realm of what we can possibly do without great faith and trust in God.

The Specialised apostolic gift: The leader of depth of gifting focuses into a specific ministry and seeks to develop it to its full potential. I call this a specialised apostolic leader. They would have a heart for a particular project or to develop a specific training school or focus on a specific ministry. If you are called as a specialised apostolic leader and are given a role where a general leader is needed, the vision tends to shrink to the more specific vision. This is an example of a different capacity of gift. On the other hand a specialised leader with capacity for general vision, trains in the specific ministry and can be promoted to a more general role where they see lots of specific ministries released.

Obviously within the general and specialised gifting there are also different capacities. You may have a heart for pioneering DTS’s and that’s what you are called to do. Overseeing a staff of 10 or 12 is as much as you desire. Someone else steps up to overseeing DTS development in a base or region and the sphere of influence increases. Or it may be you step up again to an international multiplication. It all depends on calling and capacity. So it’s important to know yourself!

Prophetic, Pastoral & Operational gifts: We could look at each of the other gifts in a similar way. The prophetic gift comes in all shapes and sizes. The general prophetic leader works alongside the general apostolic leader and speaks into the breadth of ministry. Their words of encouragement and insight will be broad in scope and minister to the wide body. The specialised gift is more focused in a particular team or for particular individuals.

It is similar with the pastoral gift. A general pastoral gift is able to embrace the people in a nation or region and oversee a network of pastoral leaders and give input and advice. The specialised gift is more limited for a certain number of people on the team.

The general operational gift oversees larger structures and systems, while the more specific, deals with more detailed administrative and organisational processes in a team or ministry.

We usually train for general leadership in specialised leadership roles. So it’s important to watch for the signs of a general calling. For example: the general leader is happier with more variety, accepts a little expertise, a little or lot of chaos and wants to do new things before the previous vision has been established.

When you begin to feel stressed, feel that the final responsibility is not sitting with you so well or wish there weren’t quite so many things going on, you have probably reached or gone a little beyond your capacity. Although being put in a stressful situation has the potential of stretching us, it can also break us! So work at matching your capacity, situation and strength for optimum effectiveness and fulfilment.

Blessings

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