

DO NOT COMPARE YOURSELF OR YOUR MINISTRY WITH ANYONE ELSE

(August 1998 – EKB)

A.

Reading: *Jn 21:18-23*

Jesus had just recommissioned Peter to his ministry and told him things that lay before him in the future. Seeing John nearby, Peter asked Jesus what His plans were for John. Jesus' reply was clear and to the point. **“If I will that John remains to the Second Coming, what has that got to do with you, Peter? You follow Me!”**

This is a clear word from Jesus, that His will for others is **no concern of ours**, and it is certainly wrong to compare what God has called us to do, with what God has called another to do, *Rom 14:4*.

Frequently we experience **satanic temptation to compare ourselves with another believer**, when we hear reports of how they have been blessed, or used by God, to extend or build His Kingdom. This is a snare of the devil that we must resist and refuse, *1Cor 10:13*.

Whenever you hear of the success or blessing of another ministry, rejoice and give thanks to God with all your heart, for what He is doing through, or in, your sister or brother, *Phil 1:3-6*. This will destroy the tempter's power and set you free to keep your eyes on Jesus, *Heb 12:2*. Pray for even greater blessing and anointing on their work of service unto the Lord.

B.

Readings: *Ps 139:13-18, Eph 2:10, 1Pet 4:10, 1Cor 12:11, 1Cor 12:12-27, Jer 29:11, Rom 12:4-8, 1Cor 12:28-31.*

God's Word shows us that each believer's calling, gifts, place and work of service are unique, as is our ancestry, inheritance, family, personality, finger-prints, face, voice and time in history. Each of us is different.

Because we altogether make up the full body of Christ, the Church, **our unity is not one of all being the same, but of all being different**,

1Cor 12:17 says, “There would be no body of Christ if everyone was an eye.” All you would have would be one big eye, not a body for the Holy Spirit to work through.

It is unity of diversity.

Every believer has God-given “identity, significance, self-worth and security.” See Pastors' Notes No 127.

Well then, it is very important for every Christian to **discover** the calling, gifts, place and work of ministry, that God has uniquely planned for them.

“The Happiest People on Earth” says Demos Shakerian, “are those who have **discovered the plan and purpose of God for their lives and are fulfilling it.**”

It is a great personal tragedy if we live out our Christian life without ever discovering our calling, gifting and ministry of serving God.

The teaching of the Bible on **rewards for diligent Christian service needs to be re-emphasised.** *Heb 11:6, 1Chr 15:7, 1Cor 3:8,14, Ruth 2:12, Mat 25:21, 1Cor 9:25, Phil 3:14.* God will reward your labour.

Ask God to show you clearly, and get with others who know you well and love you, to help you identify your:

“Passion” – the God-given desire of **where** He wills you to serve Him. It may be with a certain **people group**, in a particular **role**, or concerning a specific **cause**.
e.g. the poor of Calcutta or the local solo mums; to be a counsellor, pastor or lawyer; or to work hard to lower the abortion rate or establish a Christian TV station.

“Gifts” – Those abilities God has given to you to enable you to serve Him, *1Pet 4:10.*

“With what” are you going to serve God?

Identify your functional gifts, *Rom 12:5-8*

Recognise the manifestational gifts God has given you, *1Cor12:1-11.*

Acknowledge any appointment God has given to you to be a gift from Him to serve the Body of Christ, the Church, *Eph 4:11,12, 1Cor 12:27-31.*

Recommend: “Shape Sorter”. Available from Hamilton East Apostolic Church, New Zealand.

“Style” To understand whether or not you operate with a focus on: **“people or tasks”** and whether or not you like to work in a way that is: **“structured or unstructured.”**

When you have “discovered” your **identify, significance, self-worth and security in God**, or as Jerry Cook says:

“who you are in God,”

“what God has given you,”

“and how to use what God has given you”.

(Jerry Cook – “Acceptance, Love and Forgiveness.”)

Then **go forward in God’s service** and ministry with **great confidence and fruitfulness**, remembering always to **steadfastly refuse to compare yourself with anyone else or their ministry.**

You are uniquely made by God to serve Him, and after He made you He destroyed the mould.