

Head of the Church



The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church (Eph. 5:23), which is His Body. This doctrine needs to become a reality. It is not merely something to be believed; it should be lived out by the Church. For this to occur, it is necessary for the Church to be disposed to hear when the Lord speaks, not only when the Lord takes the initiative to give some orientation. The Church also needs to take the initiative to seek the Lord's counsel, asking for his orientations, consulting the Lord in every important matter pertaining to the accomplishment of God's Work.

An example that illustrates reliance on the Lord's direction is the life of David, the king of Israel. He consulted the Lord whenever he made an important decision. He would consult about battles against the Philistines, about returning to fight them again, and to know if the people of Keila would hand him over to the Philistines, etc. That is why the Lord testified about him: "I have found David, a man after my own heart, who will do everything according to my will."

Moses was another example of submission to God's will; he frequently sought counsel from the Lord and then carried out the instructions. He was the greatest a leader of the people of Israel. After his experience with the burning bush, he never made decisions without consulting the Lord. That is why the Lord testified concerning him, saying, "With Moses, my servant, I speak face to face." It was a remarkable comment on the intimate fellowship the Lord had with him, a level reached by no other prophet.

The reason the Lord decided to baptize his servants - youth, adults, and the aged - in the Holy Spirit was to allow Jesus to govern His Church in these last days. According to the prophet Joel, the result of this baptism is that God's servants receive

visions, dreams, and prophecies (Joel 2:28). In other words, all these gifts let the Lord reveal His will to his servants. Thus they continued as he planned until the twentieth century, at which point the popular emphasis shifted to the gifts of tongues and healing. Moreover, prophecies, visions, and dreams began to be used exclusively to benefit individuals, instead of transmitting the orientations of the Lord for the Church, with a view to directing its operation.

In the Apostolic era,

however, it is clear that the gifts were used primarily to reveal God's will about His Work. We have examples of this in the spiritual gifts through which the Lord revealed to Cornelius that he should summon Peter to his house (Acts 10:3-6), to direct Philip to preach to the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26, 29), to reveal the secret sin of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-4), to direct a different Ananias to visit Saul to pray for him (Acts 9:10-16), to tell Peter not to hesitate to preach to Gentiles in the house of a centurion (Acts 10:9-16, 19-20), to tell Paul not to preach the gospel then in Asia or Bithynia, but instead in Macedonia, (Acts 16:6-10), and to tell the Church which rules from the Old Testament applied to Gentiles who converted (Acts 15:28-29). Paul was told to go to Jerusalem to submit to the teaching of the Apostles (Gal. 2:1-2), and the Lord revealed that he had chosen Timothy for the ministry of the Lord (2 Tim. 4:14). And so on.

To have similar

experiences today, the Church needs to understand that the Lord Jesus should become the Head of the Church in practice, not just in theory. Through His written Word we have the doctrine and general guidelines for the edification of the Church. But specific applications of the doctrine, guidelines that should apply in one particular church, practical advice for the pastors about the daily life of the Church – these the Lord transmits through the spiritual gifts. In this way, the Lord Jesus reveals his project to build his church. Through the fivefold ministries, the specific instructions that come through the spiritual gifts can be tested and sorted (1 Thess. 5:10-21), and the gifts can be applied and handled with wisdom. (1 Cor. 14:20, 40).