

Inventory

Essentials First, Important Second,

Waiting for the Audit

“So it is with you, since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church” (1st Corinthians 14:12)

Let us review these facts: Eight essential amino acid for the body-One if missing sickness will come. Three essential fatty acid for the body-One if lacking illness will come. Seven essential vitamins for the body-One if deficit disease will come. And now these three remaining faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love. So in Christ love if missing regression will come!

Parents programmed priorities in children caring, 1st the food, 2nd to cloth, 3rd accommodation, 4th education, 5th entertainment, 6th planning journeys, 7th....By this no education before food and cloth, and no journeys before accommodation. Shepherdess they do the same, first they secure protected place for pasturing before they think to get the milk or to shear the sheep.

Paul in chapter 14 of his letter to Corinthians from where we pick our scripture was speaking to a rapidly expanding church under heavy Pentecostal spiritual rain, where the members are elated and euphoric by the spirit of the Lord. And they were so eager for more spiritual gift to serve. And he compared to them two spiritual gifts. One is the gift of prophecy which is declaring the mind and the will of God for those who heard it and other gift is speaking in tongues which is speaking or praying in language not known to humans. Paul made it clear that the gift of prophecy is more important in strengthening, encouraging and comforting to the listener, but he did not forbid speaking in tongues. And he made it clear that the 1st edify the church but the 2nd edify the person. So Paul was speaking about well-balanced gifts and ministries.

Life in Christ is one of the most enchanted one, and some of the gifts are so beautiful in practice and might be pulled us into addicted state in practicing it to what the joy they bring to us, and by the time it become like a hobby. But by this we might be away from the essential gifts with their related services. Because subconsciously we are drawn away by the easy loveable one and neglect the essential services because it is difficult and need more efforts. So we may give all our time to the Lord but we may contribute little to the progress of the church. Large percentage of us may practice one gift and we may forget the essential one, and we may build very strong ministry but we are weakening our church. And large number of us may speak in

tongues but little prophecy, and we may build ourselves strongly in the Lord but we are not edifying others.

And at this point we may ask how we can avoid this and the way to gain balance gifts and ministries? The answer is to go to the starting point from where Paul start *“Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts” (1st Corinthians 14:1a)*. So the way of love should be the path and from where to start our ministries. No need here to speak about love for all of us we know it very well, but how we will measure it? In any laboratory to measure any parameter you need two things the control and indicator. And for that we can use *1st Corinthians 13:4&5* the first verse as control and the second as indicator”*4-Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.5-it is not rude, it is not self seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.”* So let us examine our hearts, our love and our motives in our services and if we are not sure about the result we can repeat the test again.

But why this subject at this season of the year? Companies and banks they use to do inventory at this time of the year, and the accountants prepare their papers expecting the audit personnel to come who may ask embarrassing questions about

- 1) Evangelism Index=Time spent outdoor/Time spent indoor, whether it is above or below the value of one.
- 2) Did we feed the sheep(giving ministry)
- 3) How many times we washed the feet(serving ministry)
- 4) Did we invite the poor or the rich to our banquets and feasts (showing mercy ministry). And so on.....

Dear Body of Christ and beloved brethren: I write you this for how much I can see you are faithful to the Lord. I write you this for how much you are endeavouring to keep the torch glowing. But we are in the last days of the year and we are preparing the budget for the next year and few more questions need to be answered. Is all the children well fed and clothed? Any one of them needs extra coat of affection? Are the sheep are well protected? Is someone needs special visitation? Everything OK and under control? Praise the LORD and God bless you.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord I commit myself to be an effective worker, being good steward using my time, talents, spiritual gifts and resources to the best of what I can. Lord gives me the skill, equips me and guides me and help to do your*

work and your will, so I can be a blessing to others and myself blessed. This is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.