

# Fit or Misfit? (Part 10): The Gift of Administration

by Richard Siple

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*The motivational gift of administration is a gift that enables individuals to plan, organize, and execute projects and tasks efficiently and effectively.*

**Duration:** 40:51

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Luke 9:12-17, Romans 12:6-8

**Topics:** "Church Leadership", "Stewardship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of organization and administration in carrying out God's work. He uses the examples of Nehemiah and Jesus to illustrate this point. Nehemiah was focused on the facts and not swayed by opinions, which helped him bring unity among the workers. Jesus demonstrated organization when he fed the multitude, instructing his disciples to sit the people in groups and then collecting the leftovers. The speaker emphasizes the need to be goal-oriented and not waste resources in order to effectively carry out God's work.

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## Transcript

Well, we're almost finished. We have two to go. One tonight and then one next Sunday night.

And we will be finished with these motivational gifts from Romans chapter 12. Tonight, the gift of administration. Extremely important gift.

Romans 12 verses 6 and 8. Paul says we have different gifts according to the grace or the gift given to us. If it is administration, let him govern diligently. Two missionaries were planning a preaching itinerary.

They had traveled together before, preaching, evangelizing, winning souls, planting churches. Now they were going to go back and visit those churches, see how they were doing, strengthen the people, set up the church government, and in every way help them to go on with the Lord. A great and important missionary task.

One of them wanted to take a younger missionary along that they had taken the time before, but the leader of the expedition said no. The young man had traveled with them before, but under the pressure of missionary, life had quit and gone home. The one who said no felt the success of the project was too important to risk for one young man, and he was adamant.

The other man was just as firm. He saw the life and ministry of this young man as just as important as the project. He believed the young man should be given another chance.

They could not agree, so they decided on two expeditions, which, by the way, turned out very well. Who were these two missionaries? You've already guessed. Paul and Barnabas, and the young man was Mark, the writer of the Gospel of Mark.

Paul had the motivational gift of administration. Barnabas had the motivational gift of exhortation or encouragement. The son of consolation is what his name means.

So they had two different viewpoints. What is so impressive to me is that in the church, in the body of Christ, we need all of the gifts and all the viewpoints. It's the only way we can function as a healthy body, and God has seen to it that they are there.

Mark was just beginning to develop his gift of prophecy, which later would become an outstanding ministry. In this instance, Paul saw the project as more important than the individual without thinking of it like that. If he had been asked if that were so, he would not have agreed to that.

But actually, that's the way he saw the work. To Barnabas, the opposite was true. The individual was more important.

And, by the way, Mark had had a strong beginning. Why not give him another chance? And of course, it turned out this time, it appears that he was right, because Mark did recover fully and was greatly used of God and greatly loved by the Apostle Paul. Let me ask you a few questions this evening as we start on this particular gift, because they will help to get your mind going in the right direction.

Number one, would you rather be a chairman of a committee than a member of the committee? Think about it. Number two, are you more interested in getting a job done than finding out how the people feel who are doing it? That's a very interesting one. Number three, if someone brings a problem to you, are you more interested in the facts than the person's feelings? Number four, would other people say that sometimes you're too firm? If you can answer yes to all these questions, you should prayerfully consider whether your motivational gift is administration.

By the time my son was 17, he was assistant body shop manager for a major Ford dealership in Akron, Ohio. 17. When 18, he became manager of the body shop for a large Pontiac dealership in the same city.

At 18, eventually he managed the body shop for the largest Chevrolet dealership in Ohio. In his early 30s, he was plant manager for an industrial container plant in Cleveland, Ohio. Today at 51, he owns three companies, which are all highly successful.

I should have seen it coming, but didn't. When he was a child, he tried to fix all of our problems at home and wanted to organize the family. He had problems with a reluctant father who was a prophet and a determined mother who was a teacher, and neither of which intended to let him run the home.

One time my wife wanted the screen door fixed. You husbands all understand that sometimes we really mean well, but we don't get things done, and he just did it really quickly and easily. I don't have any doubt what his motivational gift is.

It's been really obvious for a long time. What is the motivational gift of administration or ruling? How does it function? I want to give you now some characteristics of this particular gift. A person with this gift can teach and can teach well and thoroughly.

They can do detailed work well, but would rather delegate and organize others to do it. They are good coordinators, getting all the pieces together. Sometimes they are misunderstood and not considered spiritual because of their viewpoint, but this is a mistake, for they can be some of the most godly people you will ever know.

They have an overview of a project and delight to plan all the pieces and make them work. They set goals and objectives and want to know where are we going. Now there are others that ask that question, especially if you're a manager, but the one who has this gift is very strong about that.

They're motivators, but not as strong of a motivator as a prophet or an encourager. They see blind spots in the plans of others and why it won't work that way, and they're usually right, and this irritates some of the rest of us. They see the importance of the whole project, concerned about your piece as it fits in the whole.

Sometimes they tend to make the project more important than the people. This is the reason that in a church setting, if you have a full-time administrator, you need to have a different gift for the senior pastor so that he can kind of keep it in balance. They are fact-oriented people and sometimes seem to have a thick hide, but that isn't true.

The opposite is true, and people with this gift who work so hard really need appreciation. People with the gift of administration are some of the hardest workers in our world. They get huge amounts of things done and they work diligently and sacrificially and very seldom get the appreciation they ought really to have.

Remember that. If you came in where one of these people were and said to them, I hate your guts, they would probably say calmly, well, that's too bad, you shouldn't have hate in your heart. I might answer quite differently.

I might say, well, you're on your way to hell, but probably the administrator would be a lot more calm than that and not get too upset and just say you shouldn't have it. They are not as concerned about your feelings as they are the facts. They like to report the outcome and the results of what has been accomplished.

They like to see it done and be able to report it. There are weaknesses and dangers, of course, because we are a fallen race and all of our gifts have weak points because of our fallenness, our sinfulness, our weakness as human beings. People with this gift can have a problem with impatience with the rest of us.

They can, if they're not careful, have some pride in their ability to get things done and they can become dictatorial if they're not filled with the Holy Spirit. So they better be careful to get self on the cross and be filled with the Spirit of God and let the love of God reign in their hearts. Amen.

They can use people to accomplish goals and objectives, though they don't mean to do that. Their greatest joy is to gather concepts and facts and coordinate them and accomplish an important project and see it through. What do they do in secular vocations? Well, they can really be highly successful in any kind of business venture as long as it suits their other abilities.

They're good as supervisors in trades and professions. They do well in military careers and usually rise to an officer's position. They're good at government administration positions in the civil service, especially appointed ones, not elected ones.

Politicians are more likely to be prophets or something else. They're good at office management, farm operations, run as a business, writers of certain kinds of manuals and teaching books, leaders in some fields of education, do very well in colleges and universities, Bible colleges, seminaries, contracting and construction of all kinds, fabricating and manufacturing industries, et cetera, et cetera. Secular world.

Christian ministries. Tremendous opportunity for Christian ministry for somebody with this gift. They make good senior pastors.

One of the greatest examples of that that I have known personally was Dr. Bill Gates, who was pastor of Seven Oaks Alliance Church in Abbotsford. I held a revival crusade there at one time and they had 2,200 people on Sunday morning and we had a great meeting there. A great pastor, administrator.

That was his motivational gift. He could teach. He was not a great preacher.

What did he do? He was the pastor and the leader of the church and he brought in a full-time preacher for the pulpit. Wise man. And God blessed and God used that combination and he led the church.

They make good denominational executives, district superintendents, those kinds of positions, heading up church projects of all kinds, fundraising, building, repairing, celebrations. I still remember the building committee that we had in Campbell River. Wonderful committee with an engineer as the chairman of that committee.

And he just did a fantastic job. Kept everything moving. It was just a pleasure.

It was a joy. You know, sometimes church buildings create problems. Huh? Anybody know about that? But I tell you, that one was a joy from one end to the other.

It really was. And it was a joy for a number of reasons. One was we had a good chairman of the building committee.

And the other is that our full-time church administrator on our pastoral staff was right in there, keeping the ball rolling. And you don't know how fortunate you are. And he'll get me later, but to have him in this church, they're good, uh, leading conventions and business meetings.

And they're good as department heads, chairman of various committees, anything that requires organizing and supervising to reach a predetermined goal. Writers of church reports and manuals, various positions in Christian education in churches and Christian colleges, both administration and teaching. Usually when they are speaking, when they are teaching, they do a thorough job.

And, uh, what they have to say is really worth hearing. Financial planners and investment people and personal investment for Christians. Many other things we could say.

Of course, all of us need to do some organizing and supervising, right? How many of you here have been, well, you still would be parents, parents, parents, parents, many of you, most of you, well, you better do some administration as a parent or you're going to have chaos, right? There has to be some administration in the home because there's all kinds of things that need to be done properly. So there has

to be, uh, organizing and directing and planning and goal set and all kinds of things that have to be done in the home. Children need someone to do this kind of thing.

And it has to be done whether you have the gifts or not. Our finances need some administration. You know, a lot of Christians are good Christians and love God, but can't handle their money.

That's true. Absolutely true. One of the things we've had, some of the churches where I've been a pastor, we've had, uh, elders or deacons who were good at this kind of thing who would help those who were not and sit down with them, go over all their finances, their bills, why they couldn't get them paid, all this kind of thing, try to help them get those things in order.

So whatever we're doing in life, our vocation, our career will require some planning and organizing. So we all have to do some of it, right? Even if we don't like it. And I don't like it, but I've been doing it for years and years and years, but I don't really like it.

I don't, you know, it's not some great thing. It's just something you've got to get done. There are other things I really enjoy, as you can tell.

Let me give you tonight some biblical examples, because I think this will help us. And we're here as a Christian group, and we're thinking about how God has created us and how the fact that he has created us and given us a motivational gift, and then we'll add spiritual gifts to that, and then we'll pour out his spirit in our lives, how all that will work in the Christian setting in the church is very important for us to understand our place. So I want to give you a few biblical examples tonight.

And the first one is one of my favorites in the Bible, Nehemiah. Now, I'm not going to turn, I would have to read the whole book of Nehemiah tonight. I'm not going to do that.

So I'm just going to give you a fast sketch of his life and let you see how this gift was so predominant in the life of this man. To begin with, he was what was called a cupbearer to the king at that time who had the great power in the world and was basically the most powerful man on earth. Nehemiah was his cupbearer, but that doesn't mean what most of us think, that every time the king was handed a cup of wine, he drank some first, and if it didn't kill him, he gave it to the king.

It may have started like that, but that's not the way it was when Nehemiah was involved. He was more likely an executive secretary for the king and kept everything in order about the king's business. He was very close.

Someone who had that position had a very powerful governmental position of appointment in civil services, we would call it, and was right at the top and was the most trusted person that the king had. And so there he was at the apex of government because of his ability at administration. He became very upset by the terrible confusion in his homeland of Israel, especially in Jerusalem, because it had been laid waste, and there was nothing there but confusion.

He prayed about it, and then he went to the king, and the king decided to send him as his personal envoy to straighten out the mess. So Nehemiah set a goal worthy of an administrator, the rebuilding of an entire city. Wow, that reminds me of New Orleans.

Now I'd be happy if they never rebuilt that city. It is a cesspool of iniquity if there ever was one, so it wouldn't bother me if they never rebuilt it. But here is Jerusalem, the capital of the nation of Israel, totally

laid waste, and he is going to rebuild an entire city.

He gave the king a carefully worked out plan, including time, materials, and needed authority. He didn't miss a thing. When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem, he spent three days just inspecting and assessing the situation.

He actually traveled around the walls at night. He went through the city, he inspected all the breaches and everything that was wrong, and got a full picture of what was there, and then he laid out a plan of action to accomplish his goal. Number five, the whole project was carefully organized right down to the last foot of the wall.

I tell you, when I read the book of Nehemiah and how he laid that thing out, it makes me tired just to read it. He went in there with enthusiasm, and he planned the rebuilding of that city totally. Workers were carefully organized and placed in the most advantageous way.

Money and materials were provided and arranged for every need. Nehemiah was not hindered by criticism, scoffing, and opposition. Amen.

See, prophets can only take a certain amount of criticism, and then they throw up their hands and are ready to quit. I just thought I'd tell you that, but people with this gift usually just grit their teeth, trust God, and plow right on through. And they helped the prophets then to get back in line.

Wonderful, wonderful body working together. So he wasn't hindered by that. He even had workers carry weapons and plan for every contingency.

His enemies said, what they are building, if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break it down. Nehemiah 4.3. Nehemiah was only interested in the facts, not opinions. When discussion arose between the workers, he confronted them with the facts and brought unity.

When opposers of the work said, let's have a meeting and discuss the project, Nehemiah said, are you kidding? I'm carrying out a great project for God, and I cannot meet with you. Why should I stop the work to talk about these things that will not profit? When his enemies tried to make Nehemiah afraid, he said, should a man like me run away to save his life? I will not go. I love this man.

He was goal-oriented, set a timeline, and finished in 52 days, and it's all there. He reports how many days it took to do it. He wanted to report the outcome, and he did report it in every detail.

Finally, he completely organized a civil government in Jerusalem and the total organization of temple worship. He planned and carried out a great celebration at the completion of the project. This man is a great administrator, greatly used of God, and becomes an author in the inspired holy word of God.

Amen? These are wonderful people with this gift. They're just wonderful people and can be so blessed of God. The great apostle Paul is my next one.

Paul had the administrative, listen to this now, Paul had the administrative responsibility for all the Gentile churches of his day. He said so. He said so.

Did you know that? He said it in God's word. Second Corinthians 11 38. He said, I have the responsibility for the administration of all the churches which falls upon me daily.

Wow. Tremendous administrator. Paul was goal and project oriented.

In Romans 15 20 we read, it has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known. He knew what he wanted to do. He knew what he was going to do, and he set out to do it.

He said, I want to take the gospel where Christ has never been preached. That's my goal. I'm going to do that.

And he did it. In Philippians 3 13 and 14, Paul said, this one thing I do. See, see the, the mindset of this man.

See is how his abilities and gifts directed him. Second Timothy four seven. He said at the end of his life, when he's about to be executed for Christ, he said, I have fought the good fight.

I have finished the course and I've kept the faith. Oh, that's great. Now I want to say that, but that statement that we all love so much and have quoted so many hundreds of times over the years came from this man with this great gift of administration and added to that, of course, were great spiritual gifts and a great filling and anointing with the Holy spirit and a great call on his life.

What a missionary he was. One of my favorites in the old Testament is Jethro. Do you know who Jethro was? Huh? Yeah.

Moses father-in-law. Yeah. Oh, he's a good one.

In fact, at one time I had some overhead projections all made up in color and everything to deal with Jethro in helping other pastors to get themselves organized Jethro, Moses, father-in-law. Now, when Moses was sent by God, you see, he was back there living with Jethro basically with his wife and family as a shepherd. And when God sent him back to Egypt, he left his family there because he's going back and risk his neck with Pharaoh.

But now of course, they have come out of Egypt and they're in the promised land. And so Jethro is going to come and bring his wife and children to him. So Exodus 18, I'm going to read verses one, five, and then 13 to 27.

Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, this is a godly man, a priest and father-in-law of Moses heard of everything God had done for Moses and for his people Israel and how the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law together with Moses' sons and wife came to him in the desert where he was camped near the mountain of God. The next day, you know, they got there and I suppose he had a great reunion and a big dinner that night and everybody went to bed.

And the next day Moses had to go to work. So he goes down to the office. Whoa, he's got 3 million people to take care of and he's a prophet.

He'll never do it. So here they are. The next day, Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people and they stood around him from morning till evening.

I know what you mean, Moses. When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, what are you doing? Why do you sit alone as a judge while all these people stand around from morning till evening? Moses answered him, because the people come to me to seek God's will. Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's

decrees and laws.

Can you imagine the mess? One man, 3 million people. I mean, just think now, what city do you know that has 3 million people? Okay, now think of one man trying to handle all the problems. Now this is exactly what a prophet might try to do, but it's not very smart.

Okay, it's all right to say that Moses did some things that weren't smart. He never got into the promised land because he lost his temper once. So prophets aren't perfect people, right? You're afraid to say that because it's Moses.

Yeah, great man. And so there they are. And so he said, what you're doing isn't good.

You and these people who come to you will only wear yourself out. The work is too heavy for you. You cannot handle it alone.

Listen now to me and I will give you some advice and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. Teach them the decrees and laws and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform.

But select capable men from all the people, men who are capable, men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain. Now these are fine. Some really outstanding men, godly men, right? And appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens.

He organizes 3 million people right down to 10. Fantastic. Have them serve as for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you.

The simple ones, they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain and all these people will go home satisfied.

And Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. He is smart enough to know when he heard, heard the right thing. He chose capable men from all Israel, made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens.

They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves. Then Moses sent his father-in-law on his way and Jethro returned to his own country.

So great example, fantastic example of a great man of God, Jethro, a priest, one that was a leader among the people of God, but he was an administrator and he came and he helped Moses get straightened out and get the whole nation organized. What about Jesus? Well, the Bible says the Spirit of God is given to Jesus without measure and because he is the second Adam, listen carefully, because Jesus is the second Adam and because that he is perfect man and God, he had all the motivational gifts and I could go through the life of Christ and show them all to you, but I want to just illustrate this one tonight from his life, how he carried on his ministry. He is a perfect example of the gift of administration.

For instance, if you read Matthew 10, and I'm not going to read it tonight, how he spent a night in prayer and then called together the men who were following him and chose the 12 disciples that were following him and picked them out, organized them, got all that in order. He was careful in the organization of the

feeding of the 5,000, Luke 9, 12 to 17, I'm going to read that one. Late in the afternoon, the 12 came to him and said, send the crowd away so they can go to the villages and countryside and find food and lodging because we are in a remote place here.

He replied, you give them something to eat. They answered, we have only five loaves of bread and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all this crowd, about 5,000 men besides women and children, says the word of God. So this is a big crowd, probably at least 15,000, maybe more.

But he said to his disciples, have them sit down in groups of about 50 each. Now he's going to start to organize the thing and get it laid out so that they can handle it. Do you see that? Now, if it had been me, I'd have probably just said, start passing it out, you know.

And if Gordon had been there, he just said, wait a minute, pastor, you're going to have a mess. Let's get this organized and get it organized. So the disciples did so and everybody sat down taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven.

He gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to set before the people and they all ate and were satisfied. And they didn't leave it at that.

And the disciples picked up 12 baskets full of broken pieces that were left over. In fact, Jesus told them to do it. Administration, organization, getting it done properly.

Don't waste it. Well, they did pretty good. Really started out with five loaves and two fish and ended up with 12 baskets full.

That's pretty good. And they fed all these thousands of people. And then Jesus said, now don't, don't waste it.

Pick it up what's left. And they had 12 baskets full. I don't know what they did.

There were 12 disciples. Maybe each one of them had a basket or maybe they gave it to some poor people in need. I don't know what they did, but they didn't waste it.

It was very well organized when, when Jesus was approaching the end of his life before his crucifixion. And he set up the last supper with his disciples. Remember that you remember what he did? He said to two of his disciples, you go into the city and you will meet a man and you say to him, the master has need of your room and he will show you the room and he will make arrangements for our supper.

I mean, he had it all carefully planned. He didn't just walk in there. He had it planned ahead.

You'll see this in the life of Jesus at every turn. When he was going to raise Lazarus from the dead, they came to him and he tarried a certain number of days. And had he gone immediately, Lazarus would have still been alive.

In fact, the Lazarus sister said, if you'd come quickly, he wouldn't have died. You could have healed him, but he purposely waited because he had a plan. He had a plan.

He was going to raise him from the dead. And you watch all the life of Jesus, everything. He was, he, he did not go to Jerusalem at a certain time.

They kept back. Are you going to Jerusalem to the Passover? No. And then finally at a certain time, he went.

Why? Because he had a plan. He had it all laid out. He knew what he was going to do.

Jesus had this wonderful motivational gift of administration. Luke 9 51 says as a time approach for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. And he sent messengers on ahead who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him.

Luke 12 50. He said, but I have a baptism to undergo and how distressed I am until it is completed. And on the cross, he cried out what it is finished.

He said, I, I have come for a purpose and how I am, uh, under stress until that purpose is finished is to die on the cross is to make atonement for sin is to save the people of God for eternity. And I'm under great stress until I get it done. And what joy in his heart and life, as he cried out right before death, it is finished.

Moody monthly, June, 1991, carried a story about a Christian with a gift of administration. It is entitled, why I left the fast track. The story is about Thomas Fortson, Jr. A successful young black man who was an executive in general motors.

He had five promotions in six years. That's pretty good. The organization like that and all the perks that went with it, a large salary, a new car each year, a beautiful home, a fine family, everything.

Thomas was the role model for young black men, but he was paying an increasing price of tension and absence from his family. Then God called him to resign and take an executive position with a small banking firm in Atlanta, Georgia, hard to do. That must've been really hard for him to do, especially in Atlanta.

It was a great struggle for both he and his wife, but they finally obeyed God today after success in that firm and a stint in seminary. Thomas Fortson is now dean of the Atlanta center for theological studies, a part of Columbia Bible college and seminary. His gift of administration fully surrendered to the Lordship of Christ.

Great. So what about you? If you have this gift, the Lord has need of you. The Lord has need of you in the work of God.

There is so much need for godly anointed spirit blessed administration. So if that is your gift, give it to God totally and let him use you for his glory. Let's bow in prayer.

Amen.

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