

Study Notes based on Sunday 1 July 2018

Keith Bowley: The spiritual gift of administration

Genesis 41:29-41

1. What characteristics did Pharaoh look for in the man who was to administer Egypt's famine strategy? To what extent does this match Keith's initial definition of someone with the spiritual gift of administration – a facilitator of God-given vision, someone who can make it happen, known for getting things done?
2. Reflect on Keith's kingdom perspective, as he distinguished between natural and supernatural and placed Kingdom Administration on the supernatural side. (i.e. doing God's work in God's way, not in the world's way.)
3. What place does this position allow for use of expertise in Kingdom activity? E.g. Accountants, those with Masters in Business Administration (MBA's), Charity lawyers. Are we too involved and implicated with the world's ways of doing rather than God's? Reflect on the argument that God does not call the qualified, but qualifies the called. Is this a general rule?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 12:28. Different translations/versions of the Bible have different words for administration – guidance, governments, leadership, those who can get others to work together, organisers. Keith drew attention to the nautical roots of the underlying Greek word – as helmsman, captain, pilot. (Incidentally the English word cybernetics – the science of systems – comes from the same root.) How does this concept of the gift of administration compare with what we may have had in mind previously? What difference might it make?
5. Reflecting on the story of Joseph as Prime Minister (or was it Chancellor of the Exchequer?) in Egypt, Keith identified a process: Clarity of purpose – God's will; Clarity of method – God's way; Co-ordination of people; Co-operation of people. Such a person builds peace and confidence. What do we learn from this?
6. Reflect on Keith's statement 'God's definition of success is not effectiveness, it is fulfilling his purposes. In the 'natural' we may see obstacles, in the Kingdom we ask 'How can we do this?'
7. Keith gave the example of aid to Romania etc in the 90s. The world's way may have been to centralise and transport in bulk. God's way seemed to be lots of little operations which led to relationship between senders and receivers of aid. Can you think of other examples like this?
8. Keith drew attention to the gift of administration used personally, citing Ephesians 2:10. Ears open to God; clear goals and priorities; wise use of time and resources; priority for people. What does this say to us?

John S Smith 3 July 2018