



MINISTRY GIFTS

*Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists,
Pastors, Teachers*

Dr. A.L. & Joyce Gill



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Pastors, Teachers

Dr. A.L. Gill

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About The Author

A.L. and Joyce Gill are internationally known speakers, authors and Bible teachers. A.L.'s apostolic ministry travels have taken him to over ninety nations, preaching to crowds of hundreds of thousand in person and to many more through television and the digital media.

Their books and manuals have sold over twenty million copies. Their writings, which have been translated into many languages, are being used in Training Centers and seminars around the world.

The powerful life-changing truths of God's Word explode in the lives of others through their dynamic preaching, teaching, writing and video and audio ministry.

The awesome glory of the presence of God is experienced in their praise and worship seminars as believers discover how to become true and intimate worshipers of God. Many have discovered a new and exciting dimension of victory and boldness through their teachings on the authority of the believer.

The Gills have trained many believers to step into their own God-given supernatural ministries with the healing power of God flowing through their hands. Many have learned how to be supernaturally natural as they are released to operate in all nine gifts of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives and ministries.

Both A.L. and Joyce have Master of Theological Studies degrees. A.L. has an earned Doctor of Philosophy in Theology degree. Their ministry is solidly based on the Word of God, is centered on Jesus, strong in faith and taught in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Their ministry is a demonstration of the Father's heart of love. Their preaching and teaching are accompanied by powerful anointing, signs, wonders, and healing miracles with many being slain in waves under the power of God. Awesome manifestations of God's glory and power are being experienced by those who attend their meetings.

Dr. A.L. and Joyce Gill are dedicated to producing practical tools for equipping believers to do the works of Jesus. Their desire is to promote victorious, supernatural living for every believer at all levels of Christian maturity.

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A Word to Teachers and Students

The apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:8-12 that Jesus “gave gifts to men.” These precious and important gifts are men and women God has called as His apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. This study reveals how these gifts are being restored to His church today and how they are to function to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. It provides an understanding of biblical eldership, the fivefold ministry and how these ministry gifts function together in the local church.

Some of the truths presented in this manual may challenge traditional beliefs and patterns. We must remember that as the restoration work that God is doing with His church occurs, Satan would love to take this opportunity to bring division and disunity. Instead, we must all be open and teachable in our spirits, and at the same time loving and maintaining unity with those who desire to retain traditional patterns.

We suggest that before teaching this course you listen to the audio tapes on this series and saturate yourself with the truths of God's Word concerning biblical eldership and the fivefold ministry giftings. This manual will then provide the outline for you to use as you impart these truths to others.

Personal life illustrations are a must for effective teaching. The author has omitted these from this work so that the teacher will provide illustrations from his or her own rich experiences, or those of others to which the students will be able to relate.

It should always be remembered that it's the Holy Spirit who has come to teach us all things, and that when we are studying or when we are teaching we should always be empowered and led by the Holy Spirit.

This study is excellent for personal or group studies, Bible schools, Sunday schools and home groups.

It's important that both the teacher and the student have copies of this manual during the course of the study. The best books are written in, underlined, meditated on and digested. We have left space for your notes and comments. The format has been designed with a fast reference system for review and to assist you in finding areas again. This special format makes it possible for each person, once they have studied through this material, to teach the contents to others.

Paul wrote to Timothy:

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2b

We believe God planned for each student to become a teacher. This manual is designed for this multiplication in the lives, the ministry and the future teaching of others. Every student, by using this manual, can teach this course easily to others.

Lesson One

The Ministry Gifts

INTRODUCTION

Fivefold Ministries

In Ephesians four, Paul told us that when Jesus left this earth, He gave gifts to men. These are called the ministry gifts.

Ephesians 4:8,11 Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men."

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.

These five ministries are also called "The ascension gifts of Christ," because they were given "when He ascended on high."

The ministry gifts are:

- *Apostles*
- *Prophets*
- *Evangelists*
- *Pastors*
- *Teachers*

It was never God's plan that these ministry gifts be lost. Now they are being restored by God to their rightful place. These five ministry gifts of Jesus to His church are often referred to as the fivefold ministry.

➤ *Part of the Church*

Jesus said, "I will build my church." He will build the church, a united body of believers. He went on to describe the church He would build as being a victorious overcoming one which the "gates of Hades" (representing all of Satan's kingdom), wouldn't be able to overcome.

Matthew 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

The full restoration of the fivefold ministry is an important part of what Jesus is doing to build His church today.

God's Word reveals that this victorious church is made up of every believer in Jesus Christ, His body joined and working together, each one doing his or her part in forcibly advancing the kingdom of God on this earth.

Each believer will be doing the same works that Jesus did when He walked on this earth two thousand years ago. Each believer has an important part in the work of the ministry, or the works of service, in the church that Jesus is building.

John 14:12 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

When Jesus was here on this earth, He trained twelve men and sent them out to do His works.

Matthew 10:1 And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.

Matthew 10:7,8 And as you go, preach, saying, `The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

God's Plan

For many years, we have thought that the works of Jesus were performed by a limited number of men who we called ministers. We thought that all of the works of the ministry were to happen through their hands.

➤ *Ministry Gifts*

However, Jesus had a better plan. When He ascended back to His Father, He gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to His body.

Every ministry was to have the same goal. They were to:

- *Prepare God's people for works of service*
- *Build up the body of Christ*
- *Bring the body to unity in the faith*
- *Teach the knowledge of the Son of God*
- *Bring believers to a place of maturity*
- *Bring to the fullness of Christ*

Ephesians 4:12,13 For the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ...

Every Believer

Their functions were not to do all the work of the ministry themselves, but to prepare God's people to do them.

God's Word also reveals that every believer is a soldier in God's army. Those who are called by God into the fivefold ministry are not the front-line soldiers who will win the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Instead, they are like "drill sergeants," who are to train believers to be mighty soldiers in God's Army.

As we study the ministry of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher, we need to lay aside our traditional ideas that these are the ones who are to do the work as "God's ministers." Instead, let's give our attention to God's plan and purpose for every believer.

Believers that are taught by fivefold ministries will become mature believers. They will become strong, steadfast, operating in love, supporting one another just as the ligaments support the human body.

Ephesians 4:14-16 ... that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

In this study, we will give our attention to the ministry of each of the fivefold ministry giftings and God's pattern for these to function in the local church. These gifts are men and women, chosen by God as His good gifts to the church.

NOT TITLES, BUT FUNCTIONS

Apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher are not titles of rank or position in the church. Instead, they are functions. Each ministry function has its own important part in edifying the body of Christ.

For example, as Paul wrote his epistles, he often began by saying, “Paul, an apostle” denoting his being an apostle to be a ministry gifting or function in the body of Christ. He did not say “The Apostle Paul” which would have indicated his apostleship to be a title.

Appointed by God

The ministry gifts are appointed by God and not by the choice of men.

Many times, when we know in the Spirit that God is doing something, we try to help Him out. This is happening now as some men are going from place to place appointing apostles over certain geographic areas. God appoints each of the ministry gifts. Men, flowing in His Spirit recognize these gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:27,28 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

Romans 12:3-8 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry,

let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Called as Servants

The ministry calling is a call to be a servant to the body of Christ. It's never to be thought of as a matter of pride or position of self-importance. As always, Jesus is our example.

John 13:3-9,12-17 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter.

And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."

Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"

So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.

If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, happy are you if you do them."

JESUS FULFILLED EACH MINISTRY GIFT

When Jesus was on earth, He fulfilled every function of the ministry. But when He returned to the Father, He gave these gifts to men for the completion of the work He had begun.

Apostle

Jesus was the "sent One," an Apostle. He is called the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus ...

Prophet

Jesus was a Prophet under the Old Covenant.

Luke 4:24 Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country."

John 4:19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet."

Shepherd

Jesus was the good Shepherd. The same word in Greek is translated pastor.

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

1 Peter 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Evangelist

Jesus was a Preacher – an Evangelist – He preached the gospel of the kingdom.

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed ...

Teacher

Jesus was the greatest Teacher.

Matthew 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

MINISTRY GIFTS ARE FOR TODAY

Jesus Gave Gifts

Jesus gave the ministry gifts to believers when He ascended on high.

Ephesians 4:8 Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men."

Not Taken Back

The ministry gifts were given by Jesus until we all, every believer, reach the level of maturity that is the fullness of Christ Himself.

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ...

These ministry giftings will continue in the church until Jesus comes back for His perfect and completed bride. Therefore, we can conclude that all of these ministry giftings including the apostle and prophet are to be in operation in the body of Christ.

As we look at the body of Christ, we see how far short we fall in fulfilling the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." We see how much the full operation of each of these ministry giftings in each local church is needed.

For many years, the believers in most churches have been receiving the ministry of one, two or three of these ministry giftings. It's little wonder that there is so much immaturity in our churches.

In Old Testament

During the period of the Old Testament Aaronic priesthood, there was a division of ministry between Aaron and his four sons giving a fivefold ministry during that period of time.

It's also interesting to note that the human body has five senses for its protection and care, and that God has provided five ministry gifts for the protection and care of the body of Christ.

MINISTRY GIFTS DEFINED

Apostle

The Greek word, "apostolos," translated "apostle" means one sent forth, a sent one.

Prophet

The Greek word, "propheteuo," translated "prophet" means to foretell events, divine, to speak under inspiration.

Evangelist

The Greek word, "euangelistes," translated "evangelist," means a messenger of good tidings.

Pastor

The Greek word, "poimen," translated "pastor," means, shepherd, one who tends herds or flocks, guides as well as feeds the flock, overseer.

Teacher

The Greek word, "didaskalo," means an instructor.

RECOGNIZING CALL TO FIVEFOLD MINISTRY

Men shouldn't decide to appoint themselves or others of their own choice in the fivefold ministry. God appoints them. We will see, however, that God will often do the appointing as He speaks and ministers through His apostles and prophets.

1 Corinthians 12:28a And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers ...

Inner Witness

That person will have an inner witness of the Spirit.

Romans 8:14,16 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

An Anointing

The anointing of God is evidence of a divine call. There will be a strong anointing and free flow of certain gifts of the Holy Spirit in that believer's life.

God Makes the Way

If you are chosen by God for the ministry, let God confirm it to you and to others. Don't try to prove yourself.

Proverbs 18:16 A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men.

Psalms 37:6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday.

FIVEFOLD MINISTRY FUNCTIONS TOGETHER

The fivefold ministry is often likened to the human hand. The apostle is the thumb working with all other fingers. The prophet is the pointer-finger saying "thus says the Lord" and works closest with the apostle. The center finger has the longest outreach and is the evangelist. The wedding-ring finger is the pastor symbolizing the special love relationship between himself and the people. The little finger is the teacher who works closely with the pastor and is much needed for balance.

Just as all fingers are needed for a complete, well-working hand, all ministries are needed for the complete building up of the saints.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. List the five ministry gifts according to Ephesians 4:11.
2. What are the functions of these five ministry gifts according to Ephesians 4:12-16?
3. According to 1 Corinthians 12:27,28, who appoints those who are to be a part of these ministry gifts?

Lesson Two

Elders and the Fivefold Ministry

INTRODUCTION

There are two positions that were established by God in the local church.

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.

Elders

The position of an elder, also called bishop, is for ruling. They were chosen by God and appointed by the apostles.

Acts 14:23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a faithful saying: if a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

Deacons

The position of a deacon is for serving. They were chosen by the believers and confirmed by the apostles.

1 Timothy 3:10 But let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.

Acts 6:2-4,6 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

UNDERSTANDING THE GREEK WORDS

Elder

➤ *Presbuteros*

"Presbuteros" means elder, older person or a senior. It's an older man or woman who is advanced in years, a senior.

Titus 2:2,3a That the older men be sober ... the older women likewise.

It's also used to mean one who is the oldest.

Luke 15:25a Now his older son was in the field.

It's used in referring to the Old Testament saints.

Hebrews 11:2 For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.

It's used of the official leaders of the Sanhedrin at the temple in Jerusalem or of the leaders of the local synagogues.

Acts 6:12a And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes ...

Mark 5:22a And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name.

It was used of the appointed leaders of the local churches.

Acts 14:23a So when they had appointed elders in every church ...

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

Titus 1:5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you.

James 5:14a Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church...

➤ *Presbuterion*

“Presbuterion” means an assembly of elders gathered together in session.

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

The “body of elders” was translated “presbytery” in the *New King James Version*.

➤ *Sumpresbuteros*

“Sumpresbuteros” means a co-elder or a fellow elder.

1 Peter 5:1a The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ ...

Overseer

➤ *Episkopos*

“Episkopos” means an overseer, a superintendent or a guardian.

It's used five times in the New Testament. In the *New King James Version* it's translated “Bishop” in all but Acts 20:28.

Acts 20:28a Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers ...

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons...

1 Timothy 3:2a A bishop then must be blameless ...

Titus 1:7a For a bishop must be blameless

1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

➤ *Episkope*

“Episkope” is the noun form of “episkopos.” It refers to the position of an elder, an overseer, or a bishop in the New King James Version.

Acts 1:20 For it is written in the book of Psalms: ‘Let his habitation be desolate, and let no one live in it’; and, ‘Let another take his office.’

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

➤ *Episkopeo*

“Episkopeo” is the verb form of “episkope” and means to oversee.

1 Peter 5:2a Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers ...

ELDER AND OVERSEER COMPARED

In each of these words translated elder, overseer, or bishop, we see a close connection. “Elder” was most often used when writing to the Hebrew believers as they related this position to the elders or leaders of the synagogues.

“Overseers,” translated “bishop,” in the New King James version was most often used when speaking to Greek believers as that was the word for leadership to which they would most readily relate.

There is no scriptural distinction between these two root words. They refer to the same position in the church. Some Greek authorities say that “elder” refers to the man and “overseer or bishop” refers to the position.

There was no ecclesiastical hierarchy in God's pattern for the local church. Each local church was to have their own elders as the government of that church.

Each church was separate and autonomous from each other as far as organization was concerned.

Example of Paul

Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church, but when they came, he called them overseers.

Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

Acts 20:28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

We note also that all of the elders or overseers were to be shepherds even though there were certain of them that would function in the particular ministry gifting of a “shepherd” or a “pastor.”

Qualification the Same

The qualifications for those whom Paul called elders in verse five were said to be the qualifications of overseers in verse seven, indicating that they are the same position.

Titus 1:5,7 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you.

For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money...

Example of Peter

Peter wrote to those whom he called elders and told them to be shepherds over God's flock and to serve as overseers over them.

1 Peter 5:1,2 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by constraint but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly ...

ELDERS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

Appointed by Apostles

The apostles appointed and ordained elders in every church in every city.

Acts 14:23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Titus 1:4a,5 To Titus, my true son in our common faith ... For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you ...

Helped Make Decisions

The apostles gathered together with the elders for counsel.

Acts 15:2 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

Acts 15:4 And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.

Acts 15:6 So the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.

Obviously, the elders were involved in an important part in the decisions of leadership, policy and doctrine in the local church.

Acts 15:22a Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas ...

Acts 16:4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.

Directed Church Affairs

The elders directed the affairs of the local church.

Acts 11:29,30 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

While one of the qualifications of the elders is that they are “able to teach,” not all functioned in a preaching or teaching ministry.

Fivefold Are Elders

All fivefold ministers were elders. We see examples of this in Peter and John.

1 Peter 5:1 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed ...

2 John 1:1 For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth.

Those who Jesus has given to His church as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are to function together to “equip the saints for the work of the ministry.” These ministry functions are never referred to in the Scriptures as an office. However, each one of them stood in the position of an elder in the church.

Ministry of Elders

Elders are to function in each local assembly to shepherd and feed the flock to whom they were given oversight.

1 Peter 5:1-3 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by constraint but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock ...

ELDERS ARE FIVEFOLD MINISTRIES

Those God placed in the five ministry giftings listed in Ephesians four, were given a certain grace and anointing to equip the saints. It seems evident that those chosen to shepherd, feed and oversee the flock would need the grace and anointing of the fivefold ministry.

The elders of the local church were those God had called into the fivefold ministry. Each of them met all of the biblical qualifications for eldership. They were charged with the responsibility of ruling well.

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

While one of the qualifications of the elders was that they were able to teach, it appears that not all functioned in a preaching or teaching ministry within the local church.

Functions

After the foundations had been laid by the apostle and prophet and they had appointed elders in the local church, those whom God chose to function as pastors and teachers were appointed, recognized and released into ministry by the laying on of hands by the apostle, prophets and other elders.

As the believers were built up in the Word and disciplined by the ministry of those who functioned as pastors and teachers, those whom God had chosen to function as evangelists were also appointed, recognized and released into ministry by the laying on of hands by the elders. The evangelist trained and mobilized the believers in the local church into reaching out in miracle evangelism.

The body could only mature and be equipped for the works of service by being ministered to by each of the fivefold ministry giftings.

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Church government, instead of being an organization, association or denomination of men, was instead a relationship in the Spirit between men who were called to be apostles, and the elders, or overseers of a local church.

Elders, overseers, superintendents, or bishops only operated outside of a particular local church during the times that they were fulfilling the function of their fivefold ministry gifting and then, only as they were sent out by their local church for that particular function.

The local church instead of being a “mother church” that governs and controls other churches, was the sending body of

believers. They sent those who were to fulfill their ministry functions as the fivefold ministry.

As the apostles and prophets laid foundations, established churches and appointed elders in every church, they established deep spiritual relationships. These relationships in the Spirit were the only connection between churches. There were relationships between fivefold ministry people.

LEADING ELDERS IN LOCAL CHURCHES

The elders that were appointed by the apostles were apparently those who were called to function in one of the fivefold ministry giftings in that particular local church. The eldership in each local church was never limited to one individual. However, God has always raised up an individual for spiritual leadership of His people. Moses is an example of this.

One of the elders was always singled out as the leading elder. The one who is the leading elder would often have the ministry gifting of a pastor or shepherd. This man was called by God, confirmed by the apostles and prophets, and recognized by the other elders and believers in the local church. There was a leading elder that was recognized by his calling, gifting, anointing, vision and ability to lead.

Messenger

In Revelation this man is referred to as the angel. “Aggelos” in Greek means messenger or agent.

Revelation 2:1 To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands ...’

True Companion

It appears that Paul was referring to the leading elder in the church at Philippi when he called him a “true companion.”

Philippians 4:3 And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

James, a Leading Elder

James appears to have been the leading elder, who headed the other elders at the Jerusalem Church. All of the elders met with the apostles to consider a question of doctrine.

Acts 15:6 So the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.

Acts 15:13,19 And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, “Men and brethren, listen to me:

Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God ...”

All of the elders were involved in considering the doctrinal question that had become an issue. However, it was James as the head or leading elder that had to make the final judgment.

It's obvious that all of the elders and the apostles were actively involved in the decision making process with the blessing of the whole church.

Acts 15:22,23 Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.

They wrote this letter by them: the apostles, the elders, and the brethren, to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings.

Headship in Church

Jesus is the head of the church. However under the headship of Jesus, there was also a God-ordained headship over the local church. This headship was found in the leading elder who, together with all the elders, functioned to rule well, and to equip the saints for the work of the ministry.

➤ *New Testament Pattern*

If our traditional pattern of church government does not comply with the New Testament pattern, we must be willing to take steps to change our pattern. God is restoring the fivefold ministry to His church in our time.

➤ *Change Without Conflict*

When we receive this revelation, we must allow time for this revelation to be received by the local assembly before attempting to make the necessary changes. By doing this we can avoid the possibility of strife and conflict. Decisions regarding church government are to be a function of the one recognized as the apostle (foundation layer) together with the leading elder and elders of the church. It's not to become an issue that could lead to division among the assembly of the believers.

QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS

The elders were never elected by the congregation as a whole. They were chosen by God and appointed by the apostles. The list of qualifications given in the Scriptures were for the use of the apostles or the elders themselves, in considering God's call upon a particular person to be appointed as an elder.

Any person that God has selected as an elder, or one of the fivefold ministry, will meet the qualifications God has established. This list of qualifications was given in the following passages.

Timothy and Titus

1 Timothy 3:1-7 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:6-9 If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

These qualifications can be summarized in three categories.

In Personal Life

According to Paul, to be an elder, a person must be:

- *Blameless*
- *Temperate*
- *Sober-minded*
- *Of good behavior*
- *Gentle*
- *Just*

This person cannot be:

- *Given to much wine*
- *Greedy for money*
- *Quarrelsome*
- *Covetous*
- *Self-willed*
- *Overbearing*
- *Violent*
- *Quick-tempered*
- *Pursuing dishonest gain*

In Family Life

In family life, an elder must be:

- *Husband of one wife*
- *Hospitable*
- *Rules his own house well*

- *Has children who obey him with proper respect*
- *Has children who believe and are not wild and disobedient*

In Spiritual Life

In spiritual life, an elder must be:

- *Able to teach*
- *Not a recent convert*
- *Have good reputation with outsiders*
- *Holy*
- *Disciplined*
- *Hold fast to the faithful word*

THE MINISTRY OF ELDERS

Ruling

Hebrews 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:12,13a And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.

Teaching

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Shepherding – Overseeing

Acts 20:28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

1 Peter 5:2a Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers ...

RECEIVING THE FIVEFOLD MINISTRY

Recognize and Receive

Since the terms apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher are not titles, how then are they to be received and recognized?

One who is in the fivefold ministry, will be recognized and received because of his function and ministry gifting.

As we receive them, we will also receive the benefit of their ministry. If we fail to recognize and receive a ministry gifting that God has sent to us, we will fail to grow and mature and be equipped for the work of the ministry as God intended.

Matthew 10:41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

Finances and Accusations

We are to give honor to those who are functioning in the fivefold ministry as elders either in the local church or those who have traveling ministries sent out from that church. This honor is to include seeing that their physical needs are met and that they are blessed financially. This honor also includes not listening to accusations brought against them unless it's brought by two or three witnesses.

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

The elders are to serve willingly and not with money as their motive.

1 Peter 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by constraint but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly...

Receive as Brothers

We are not to receive one another by flattering titles as did the religious leaders of Jesus' day.

➤ *Flattering Titles*

Matthew 23:6-12 They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' but you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

➤ *All Brothers*

Jesus said "you are all brethren." Instead of Reverend, Doctor, Teacher, Father or Pastor, how much better it is to call one another brother. Even Jesus went by His first name, and we are all servants to one another.

Jesus Called Men Brothers

After His resurrection, Jesus told the women, to go to His brethren.

John 20:17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'"

Hebrews 2:11,12 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the congregation I will sing praise to You."

Paul

Paul began his letters by his first name, “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ,” never “The Apostle Paul.”

Peter

Peter referred to Paul as a brother.

2 Peter 3:15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you ...

Ananias

Ananias addressed Saul as a brother.

Acts 9:17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Respect the Position

While, we are clearly not to address one another by flattering titles, we must still respect those whom God has called into the position of an elder. We must honor and receive with respect those whom God has given to function in each of the fivefold ministry giftings in His church.

Matthew 10:40 He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

While Jesus said, “you are all brethren,” we must at the same time recognize and receive with respect each of those who are called to function in the fivefold ministry. If we therefore choose to refer to our pastor as “Brother James,” we should at the same time recognize and respect him as our pastor. Obviously, the same should apply to each of the other ministry giftings.

To those in the world who are looking for a title, we can be known as simply “ministers of the gospel.”

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What two positions were established by God in the local church?
2. What distinctions do we see in the Scriptures between elders, overseers and bishops?
3. Describe the functions of elders in the New Testament churches.

Lesson Three

Ministry of the Apostle

I Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...

INTRODUCTION

Definition

An apostle is one who is sent out with the authority to establish churches on a solid foundation of God's Word.

He will strengthen existing churches in foundational doctrines and practical teachings from the Word.

He will minister with boldness and authority and with revelation-knowledge by the Holy Spirit.

He will function in all of the ministry giftings and operate in all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

He will minister from a deep personal relationship with God and will have a "father" relationship to those to whom he ministers.

Signs, wonders and healing miracles will be continually manifested in his ministry.

His ministry gifting will be recognized and received as a relationship of the Spirit to certain churches and other ministries. It will not be a relationship of human organization or denomination. From this spiritual relationship, the apostle will govern and bring any necessary discipline, accountability, stability and protection from deception into the lives of believers, ministries and churches.

The apostle will function closely with the ministry of the prophet in appointing and ordaining elders, confirming God's call on certain believer's lives and establishing them into functioning in the ministry gifting into which God has called them.

He will impart and release believers into operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands.

The apostle will minister and speak with authority but he will be a man under authority because he is accountable to the other apostles and elders from whom he was sent.

Origin of Word “Apostle”

The Greek word “apostolos” means one who is sent forth.

The word “apostolos” was used in the classical Greek world to refer to an emissary or ambassador. It was used of a fleet of ships that was sent out with the purpose of establishing a new colony. It was used of the Admiral who led or commissioned the fleet and it was used to refer to the new colony that had been established.

The word “apostle” therefore in its usage implied a faithful relationship to the ones by whom they were sent, and a faithfulness to the commission and purpose for which they were sent.

Hebrews 3:1,2 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house.

The apostle was to be an extension and an actual visible manifestation of the one who sent him. Jesus was the great Apostle sent from the Father, to establish the church and to faithfully represent the will of the Father.

Hebrews 10:7 Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—in the volume of the book it is written of Me—to do Your will, O God.’

LEVELS OF APOSTOLIC MINISTRIES

Jesus Christ – The Great Apostle

As the Great Apostle, Jesus did not come on His own, He was sent by His Father. He only did what He was sent to do. Those that received Him, received the Father. As the Great Apostle, He became the pattern of ministry for all other apostles.

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus ...

John 5:30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Twelve Apostles

The first twelve apostles were called and appointed by Jesus during His earthly ministry. In the book of Revelation, they are referred to as the “twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

Revelation 21:14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Paul referred to these twelve as the “most eminent apostles.”

2 Corinthians 11:5 For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles.

Other Apostles in New Testament

We know, according to Ephesians four, that Jesus continued to give the ministry gifting of the apostle to the church after His ascension to His Father. There are more than the original twelve apostles.

➤ *Andronicus and Junia*

Romans 16:7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

➤ *Apollos*

1 Corinthians. 4:6,9 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.

For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.

➤ *Barnabas and Paul*

Acts 14:4,14 But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude.

➤ *Epaphroditus*

Philippians 2:25 Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need ...

➤ *James, the Lord's Brother*

Galatians 1:19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

➤ *Matthias*

Acts 1:26 And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

➤ *Silvanus and Timothy*

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 2:6 Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

➤ *Titus*

2 Corinthians 8:23 If anyone inquires about Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren are inquired about, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.

Apostles Today

The ascension ministry giftings which included apostles and prophets, as well as evangelists, pastors and teachers were given by Jesus to His church when he ascended on high. They were to function within the church to prepare God's people "for the work of the ministry." This way the body of Christ could be built-up until all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Since these goals have not yet been fully attained within the body of Christ, all of the ministry giftings given by Jesus are to continue to operate within the church today. This includes the ministry of the apostle and the prophet.

QUALIFICATIONS OF AN APOSTLE

Same as Elders

Since all apostles were elders in the church, they obviously must meet the general qualifications of the elders as given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 (Lesson Two, Qualifications of Elders).

Heart and Love of a Father

An apostle must also have the heart and love of a true father.

1 Corinthians 4:15,16 For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

1 Corinthians 13:1,4-7 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Signs, Wonders, Miracles

An apostle must consistently have signs, wonders and miracles occur in his ministry.

2 Corinthians 12:12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

Acts 2:43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

Walk in Humility

An apostle must walk in humility.

1 Thessalonians 2:6-8 Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.

So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.

1 Corinthians 4:9-13 For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored!

Even to the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure it; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.

Authority

An apostle must be willing to speak and write with authority when necessary to correct and bring discipline in the church.

2 Corinthians 10:8-11 For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed—lest I seem to terrify you by letters. “For his letters,” they say, “are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.” Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such we will also be in deed when we are present.

Servant's Heart

An apostle must have a servant's heart and be willing to suffer hardship and persecution just as Jesus did.

Matthew 20:28 ... just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Romans 1:1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God.

2 Corinthians 11:23-28 Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in

cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

MINISTRY OF AN APOSTLE

Establishing New Churches

An apostle is sent out from a local church in obedience to the Holy Spirit as a missionary to preach the gospel and to establish new churches and ministries.

Acts 13:2,3 As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

Laying Foundations

The apostle ministering together with the prophet will, as a "wise master builder," lay a solid foundation on the revelation of Jesus Christ and His Word upon which a local church will be built.

The ministry of the apostle is primarily to lay foundations upon sound doctrine and to appoint and establish solid leadership in the churches.

1 Corinthians 3:9-15 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Romans 15:20 And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation ...

1 Corinthians 9:1,2 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Ephesians 2:20 Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone ...

Establishing Bible Schools

An apostle will establish Bible schools to train believers for miracle evangelism and victorious Christian living. He will recognize the call upon certain believers into the fivefold ministry and train these believers for the ministry that God has called them.

Acts 19:9b-11 ... he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul...

The result of Paul's teaching "daily in the school of Tyrannus" was that all who lived in the province of Asia heard the Word of the Lord. Obviously, Paul was multiplying himself into the lives of others who in the midst of miracle evangelism were preaching the gospel to all who lived in that part of the world.

Strengthening Existing Churches

As we study the New Testament, we see that while not all apostles were establishing new churches, they were all helping to establish them in the "faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

Jude 1:3b ... I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

Appoint, Ordain Elders

The apostles will appoint and ordain elders in every church that they have established.

Acts 14:23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Approve, Ordain Deacons

They will approve and ordain those who have been chosen by the believers in a local church to the position of deacon.

Acts 6:1-6 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

Confirm God's Call

They will minister with the prophets to confirm God's call on certain believers' lives.

1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare.

Impart Spiritual Gifts

They will function together with an assembly of elders to impart and release believers into operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit by the ministry of the laying on of hands.

2 Timothy 1:6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

Romans 1:11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established ...

RECOGNIZING AN APOSTLE

An apostle is appointed by Jesus – not by a man, or groups of men. His ministry gifting will be recognized and received by those to whom he will minister. It will not be a recognition or an acceptance because of a title, or a position that he has received from any organization, association or denomination. It's not to be a relationship of coercion or political structure.

His acceptance will be based on a deep personal relationship in the Spirit of those who are the spiritual leaders of certain local churches.

By New Churches

This relationship will exist with those churches that the apostle himself has established. The fruit of the apostle's ministry will reveal and confirm his ministry gifting.

By Existing Churches

It may also be present with existing churches who were not started on an apostolic ministry or who have lost their relationship with an apostle because of death, incapacity or other reasons as they are led by the Spirit.

Unity

A local church that is already in relationship with an apostle and functioning under his authority may also recognize and receive the ministry of another apostle if that apostle's ministry can help to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. However, as these apostles minister at that particular local church, they will not have the same governing authority as will the primary apostle recognized by that body of believers. These apostles will be careful not to say or do anything that would not be in perfect harmony with the primary apostle who is recognized and accepted by that local church.

Ministry Confirmed

➤ *By a prophet*

Apostles may not be recognized by every local church. Their appointment to the ministry gifting of an apostle was made by God and not by man. However, where an apostle is to be received as an apostle in order that he may function as such to that local body of believers, his ministry gifting will be revealed and recognized. Often God will speak and confirm this through the exercise of the spiritual gift of prophecy operating through a prophet or another one of the elders in that local church.

Paul wasn't received and recognized as an apostle by all.

1 Corinthians 9:1-3 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

The apostles' ministry gifting will be recognized by the believers of the sending church because God had confirmed this to that local church through the ministry of the prophets and the elders.

➤ *By Himself*

The apostle himself will recognize his ministry gifting.

Warning Against False Apostles

The Word of God warns about those who claim to be apostles but who are teaching false doctrine and are leading people astray.

2 Corinthians 11:13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.

Revelation 2:2 I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars ...

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Give a brief definition of an apostle.

2. List five specific qualifications of an apostle.

3. Describe the ministry of an apostle.

Lesson Four

Ministry of the Apostle (Cont.)

I Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...

HOW AN APOSTLE OPERATES

With Boldness and Authority

Even in the face of persecution and threats on his life, an apostle will minister with great boldness and authority.

Acts 4:29-31 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

In the Old Testament, the Scriptures were written primarily by the prophets. The New Testament was written primarily by the apostles. In the age of the church, it's the apostles instead of the prophets who will speak and minister with the greatest authority.

With Revelation-Knowledge

An apostle will minister with revelation-knowledge and understanding of the truths of God's Word.

Galatians 1:11 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

Ephesians 3:5 Which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets ...

In All Ministry Giftings

An apostle is called into his ministry gifting as are all of the others in the fivefold ministry. He will, however, need to grow and mature until the time when his ministry gifting, as an apostle, will be recognized and will begin to function as he is sent out to do the work of an apostle by his local church. During this time, he will function in any or all of the other ministry giftings as an evangelist, pastor, teacher or prophet.

Once his apostolic ministry begins, he will also continue to do the work of an evangelist, pastor, teacher or prophet in addition to those functions that are specifically the function of the apostle.

As an Example

An apostle is an example of someone with a deep personal relationship with God. Paul said he had seen Jesus. He walked with a deep personal relationship with God and was a continual example to all believers.

1 Corinthians 9:1 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?

1 Corinthians 11:1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

2 Corinthians 6:3-10 We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well-known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

In a Father Relationship

An apostle will have a special father relationship to those to whom he ministers when his apostolic ministry is received. He will have a close relationship and respect from others who are functioning within the fivefold ministry and to all the believers in these local churches.

An apostle will have the heart of a loving father. He will love, nurture, encourage, instruct, govern, and admonish the elders and believers in the churches. He will gently guide them in the way that they should go. His relationship will be one of a loving father who cares deeply about each member of his own family. His life will bring a revelation to all to whom he ministers of the true image of our lovingly heavenly Father.

1 Corinthians 4:14-17 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

Philippians 2:22 But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.

1 Thessalonians 2:6-12 Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for

laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would have a walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

In Signs and Wonders

Great signs and wonders and healing miracles will be continually manifested during the ministry of the apostle.

Romans 15:17-19 Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient—in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

2 Corinthians 12:12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

Acts 2:42-43 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

Acts 5:12a And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people.

Spirit of Humility

An apostle will be characterized by a spirit of humility. His ministry will not be as one who operates as a dictator.

2 Corinthians 1:24 Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.

He will not be one who is a lord over the sheep, but will instead as a father, minister from a relationship that he has patiently and carefully established in the Spirit with those people.

1 Peter 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by constraint but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly...

Mistakenly, an apostle has been thought of as one who was at the top of the pyramid of a traditional government of man. He is thought of as one who is a high ranking official who would direct those who are below him in authority.

Instead, we see the ministry of the apostle as one who is at the bottom. He is one who with the prophet is laying foundations. He will minister and speak with great revelation and spiritual authority. But always, this authority will be from the heart of one who has humbled himself and has become a servant.

The ministry of the apostle isn't from the top down. Instead, it's from the bottom up. His authority and function in the

government of the church is recognized, not because of his title but because of his function within the body of Christ.

As Servants

The early apostles spoke of themselves as servants.

➤ *Paul*

Titus 1:1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which is according to godliness ...

Romans 1:1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God ...

➤ *Paul and Timothy*

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons ...

➤ *James*

James 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.

➤ *Peter*

2 Peter 1:1 Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ ...

➤ *John*

Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John.

There is no room for pride in the body of Christ. God does use a person to fulfill certain functions, however that person is never to walk in pride.

THE AUTHORITY OF AN APOSTLE

The apostle will speak with the authority of a father, but he will also be a man under authority. The only person who can truly speak with God's authority is a person who is under authority and in a proper relationship to others. He is accountable to the other apostles and elders from whom he is sent.

Matthew 8:9,10 "For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"

We see examples of the correct use of an apostle's authority in the ministry of Peter and Paul. They never exercised dictatorial authority. Instead, they used their authority for edification.

2 Corinthians 1:24 Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.

2 Corinthians 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed ...

Luke 22:24-27 But there was also rivalry among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves."

PURPOSE OF APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY

To Govern

As the apostles and the elders governed the local churches, they were building them up, bringing the necessary discipline, accountability, stability and protection for each one.

To Discipline

An apostle will use his authority to bring the necessary discipline to a local church, its leaders and if necessary to individual believers who have not been disciplined by the pastors or other elders in that church.

1 Corinthians 4:14,15,21 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

1 Corinthians 5:1-5 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife! And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged, as though I were present, concerning him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

2 Corinthians 13:2-4 I have told you before, and foretold as if I were present the second time, and now being absent I write to those who have sinned before, and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare—since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, who is not weak toward you, but mighty in you. For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the

power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.

Bringing Repentance

The ministry of the apostle will bring repentance, deliverance, revival and commitment among the people.

Acts 19:17-20 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

To Bring Accountability

The apostle will bring financial accountability into each local church.

1 Corinthians 16:1-4 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters, I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me.

To Give Stability

The apostle will bring stability to the church and establish its roots deep in God's Word thereby protecting it from false teaching.

Ephesians 4:14 That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive ...

Colossians 2:6,7 As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

To Provide Protection

An apostle will keep watch over the churches that he has established and where his ministry is received.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

KEY AREAS OF MINISTRY

The apostle will function as an elder within the local church where he is based. He will be a part of the ministry team of that local church when he is at home. However, the ministry team in the local church will usually be headed by an elder who operates in the ministry gifting of a pastor.

Ministry Teams

An apostle will frequently head an apostolic team.

The believers who form this team may include others who are functioning in the fivefold ministry giftings. The team may include some who are called into fivefold ministry, but are in a period of preparation for the time that they will be ordained and sent out. The team may also include those who are functioning in the ministry of helps.

Each of the team members will be in close relationship with a local church, to each other, and will accept and follow the spiritual leadership of the apostle. They will labor together in doing front-line evangelism, in establishing new churches and Bible schools, and in overseeing the rebuilding and ongoing development of existing churches. They are believers who have been chosen by God, recognized by the elders, who have the calling, initiative and vision and are empowered by the Holy Spirit to help advance the kingdom of God around the world.

Develop Strategy

The apostle will work together with the local elders in certain key areas of ministry. He will see the overall picture of the local church – its long-term and immediate needs. The apostle will usually see the type of ministry that a particular local church needs to receive next, in order that it might continue to grow spiritually. The apostle will recommend certain ministries that would be the best to invite to come and minister at the church.

He should help to develop a strategy and overall plan of ministry for the local church based upon the larger picture of what God is doing in His church today.

Appoint Leaders

An apostle will work with the elders in the local church and appoint leadership and confirm the existing leadership in the local church.

Acts 14:23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Train

He will train and give direction to the elders, to those in preparation for the ministry and to the whole assembly of the believers.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Establish Schools

An apostle will establish and teach in Bible schools.

Acts 19:9,10 But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

Correct Doctrine

An apostle will be concerned with correct doctrine and will see that the church is flowing in what God is saying and doing in the church today.

Resolve Conflicts

He will resolve conflicts, and bring necessary discipline to the church.

Acts 5:3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?"

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

Establishes and Releases

The apostle's function is foundational. He's not to be thought of as a traditional superintendent or manager. His involvement in pastoral detail will decrease as he turns over more and more leadership to the elders that he appoints in every church. Once he has developed the leadership in a local church, he will normally leave and establish another church as he is led by the Holy Spirit. He will, however, keep a relationship of the Spirit with the first church.

Instead of growing by addition, his ministry will grow by multiplication. He will recognize the call of God on the lives of others and then train and establish them in that ministry. He will not own or control the churches he has established. He will not be building another traditional denomination or association. His relationship will be one of the Holy Spirit. Each church will be separate and dependent only upon the Holy Spirit and Jesus Himself.

APOSTLE'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE LOCAL CHURCH

The church that sends the apostle provides a covering for the apostle but isn't to be considered a "mother church" for any churches that are established. Churches are covered by the ministry of the apostle and not by other local churches.

This covering is to be a voluntary one from the heart that is a result of a deep personal relationship between the apostle and the local church.

There should be an understanding between the apostle and the elders of a local church that the relationship not only brings the gift of apostolic ministry, but it also brings the government of that apostolic ministry.

Since the apostolic relationship is to be one of a father, even like in a functioning family, he will continue to function in that role. However, as the children mature so will the relationship change and mature between the apostle and the local church.

The apostle and the local church must be committed to one another and have a clear understanding of what that relationship means and what is to be expected. The local church must be willing to recognize and receive the ministry of the apostle including his God-appointed role in its government.

The biblical pattern of giving to missions in the New Testament was one of financial support of the apostle or apostolic team. Young churches were helped financially by other churches through the ministry of an apostle. As they become established, they will, in turn, help establish other churches through the ministry of the apostle.

Others, who are ministering on the apostolic team or who are ministering outside of the local church as prophets, evangelists or teachers should also be supported by the local church from which they are sent.

When financial needs arise in local churches and financial assistance is needed, the apostle should make that need known to the other local churches where he ministers.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Give two examples of how an apostle operates in ministry that are exclusive to the functions of an apostle.
2. What is the purpose of apostolic authority? Name as many areas of authority that the apostle has that you can think of.
3. Name two practical areas of ministry that the apostle will function in because of his authority in the area of the government of the church.

Lesson Five

Ministry of the Prophet

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ...

INTRODUCTION

For many years, the ministry of the prophet has been ignored or misunderstood. Many have thought the ministry of the prophet was limited to the Old Testament period. In Ephesians four, Paul states that this second of the ministry giftings is necessary to prepare God's people for work of the ministry and to bring us to maturity.

Jesus said that anyone who received a prophet as a prophet would receive a prophet's reward.

Matthew 10:41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

Definition

A prophet is one who speaks for God. A prophet has been given the distinctive ministry of representing God before men. This revelation, while in total harmony with Scripture, will give:

- *direction*
- *confirm guidance and vision*
- *give insight into the Word of God*
- *tell facts about people's lives*
- *rebuke*
- *judge*
- *correct*
- *warn*
- *reveal future events*

A prophet will minister under a greater level of the prophetic anointing and with greater detail and accuracy than will one who is simply operating in the spiritual gift of prophecy.

The prophetic word from one who is a prophet will often contain revelation that goes beyond edification, exhortation and comfort than can come as any believer prophesies.

Spokesman for God

The prophet is a spokesman for God even as Aaron was a spokesman for Moses.

Exodus 4:15,16 Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.

Even as Aaron was to communicate Moses' instructions to the people, so are the prophets to be God's spokesmen to His people.

Origin of Prophetic Word

A prophet is never to speak his own thoughts or from his own wisdom. He is only to speak as a prophet when God speaks directly through him.

2 Peter 1:20,21 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Root Words

There are a number of Hebrew words associated with prophecy. Two of these words give us insight into the prophetic ministry and to the spiritual gift of prophecy.

- *“Raba” occurs over four-hundred times and means to bubble up, to gush, or pour forth. This word reveals the ecstatic or spontaneous manner in which prophecy often comes.*
- *“Nataf” means to drop, to fall as drops of rain. This word reveals the divine origin of prophecy.*

The Greek word, “Propheteuo” used in the New Testament, means to say, or to speak forth. This word reveals two main aspects of prophecy.

- *Forthtelling is speaking forth a message from God.*

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets.

- *Foretelling is declaring something that will take place in the future.*

Jeremiah 28:9 As for the prophet who prophesies of peace, when the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the LORD has truly sent.

Ezekiel 33:33 And when this comes to pass—surely it will come—then they will know that a prophet has been among them.

TYPES OF PROPHECY

Spirit of Prophecy

Revelation 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The spirit of prophecy is a mantle of prophetic anointing, given as willed by the Holy Spirit, which enables a believer to prophesy the words of the Lord. When this spirit of prophecy comes, believers may begin to prophesy even if they don't normally do so. They will prophesy with greater detail and accuracy than is their normal experience.

The spirit of prophecy may come upon other believers when ministering in a meeting with a prophet who is ministering under a strong prophetic anointing.

Gift of Prophecy

1 Corinthians 12:10 To another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

The gift of prophecy can function in the life of any believer. However, when the gift of prophecy is operating through a believer other than a prophet, or one of the ministry giftings, it will normally not contain revelation beyond that for which the spiritual gift of prophecy is specifically given. That is for strengthening, encouragement and comfort.

1 Corinthians 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

A Ministry Gift

When Jesus ascended to His Father, He gave certain ministry giftings to His church to prepare His people for works of service and to bring them to maturity. One of the ministry giftings is that of the prophet.

Scripture Inspired

This type of prophecy is no longer being given because we have all the Scripture that God chose to give by His prophets. Nothing more is to be added and no prophecy is to be given the same authority as are the Scriptures.

Revelation 22:18,19 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Since the Bible is complete, all other prophecy must now be judged on the basis of its agreement with the infallible Word of God.

BIBLICAL HISTORY OF THE PROPHETS

All through history God has spoken to His people through the prophets.

Jeremiah 7:25 Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have even sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them.

Old Testament Prophets

Most of the Old Testament is written by prophets. Going by the size of the book they wrote, we sometimes refer to them as the major or minor prophets. There are many other prophets listed in the Old Testament. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Aaron are all referred to directly as prophets. There were also prophetesses.

Moses, a Pattern

Moses was given the guideline for a prophetic ministry from which all future Old Testament prophets were judged. We are told he was like no other prophet.

Deuteronomy 34:10 But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face ...

➤ *Visions and Dreams*

Numbers 12:6 Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision, and I speak to him in a dream."

➤ *God's Word in Mouth*

Deuteronomy 18:15-22 The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' And the LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good. I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

➤ *Must Listen to Prophet*

And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.'

➤ *Test of Prophecy*

And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?'—when a prophet speaks in the name of the, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD

has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

Samuel and School of Prophets

Under Samuel's leadership, the ministry of the prophet came into maturity.

Acts 13:20 After that He gave them judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

Acts 3:23-26 And it shall come to pass that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.

➤ *Established School of Prophets*

Samuel established the schools of the prophets and in so doing established a new prophetic order of men who were educated in the Word, sensitive to the voice of God, and who had a deep spiritual relationship to God.

1 Samuel 19:20,21 Then Saul sent messengers to take David. And when they saw the group of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as leader over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. And when Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. Then Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also.

Samuel, apparently, established these schools in four locations.

➤ *Ramah*

1 Samuel 19:18-21,23 So David fled and escaped, and went to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth. Now it was told Saul, saying, "Take note, David is at Naioth in Ramah!" Then Saul sent messengers to take David. And when they saw the group of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as leader over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. And when Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. Then Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. So he went there to Naioth in Ramah. Then the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

➤ *Bethel*

2 Kings 2:3a And the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?"

➤ *Jericho*

2 Kings 2:5a And the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?"

➤ *Gilgal*

2 Kings 4:38 And Elisha returned to Gilgal, and there was a famine in the land. Now the sons of the prophets were sitting before him; and he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets."

After Samuel had established his schools for the "sons of the prophets," God assigned a personal prophet to most of the kings of Israel and Judah to help them know God's will.

Prior to the ministry of Samuel, the people inquired of God through the priest. Beginning with Samuel, the people always heard from God through the ministry of the prophet.

DESIGNATIONS OF THE PROPHETS

Man of God

The prophets were men who were close to God and represented God in their daily life and ministry.

1 Samuel 9:6 And he said to him, "Look now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man; all that he says surely comes to pass. So let us go there; perhaps he can show us the way that we should go."

Seers

The prophets were called seers because of their visions, insight and foresight of God's revelation to His people.

1 Samuel 9:9 (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: "Come, let us go to the seer"; for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.)

2 Samuel 24:11 Now when David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying ...

Mediators

The prophets as mediators were the teachers, or interpreters of the law. They gave themselves more to understanding the spirit of the law than the letter of the law. They interpreted the history of the nation in the light of the Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 43:27 Your first father sinned, and your mediators have transgressed against Me.

Messengers

When God had a message to give to His people, He sent it through His prophets.

Malachi 3:1 "Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple,

even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts.

Prophets

This was the most common designation.

Matthew 10:41a He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward.

JESUS, HIS MINISTRY AS THE PROPHET

Jesus was revealed as a prophet in the New Testament. His ministry as a prophet provides a pattern for the ministry of prophets today.

Moses Called Him Prophet

Moses prophesied the coming of Jesus as the Prophet.

Acts 3:22 For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.'

Jesus Called Himself Prophet

Jesus referred to Himself as a prophet.

Luke 4:24 Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country."

Mark 6:4 But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house."

Recognized as Prophet

Jesus was recognized by many as a prophet.

John 6:14 Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

John 9:17 They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

Spoke as Prophet

As a Prophet, Jesus spoke for His Father on this earth.

Hebrews 1:1,2 God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets.

Has in these last days spoken to us by His Son ...

John 12:49 For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.

John 17:8 For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

Foretold Things to Come

As the Prophet, Jesus not only declared God's message on earth, He also foretold many things to come.

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETS

John the Baptist

John was the last prophet of the Old Covenant. His ministry was to prepare the people to receive their Messiah.

Matthew 3:3 For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.' "

Agabus

The believers in Judea were spared the devastation of the famine by the ministry of the prophet Agabus as he ministered in Antioch.

Acts 11:27-30 And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Agabus also ministered personally to the apostle Paul.

Acts 21:10,11 And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.' "

Other prophets were sent from Jerusalem to Antioch with Agabus. We are not given their names.

Acts 11:27 And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch.

Five Prophets at Antioch

Acts 13:1 Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Saul and Barnabas were faithfully ministering as prophets and teachers before they were sent out as apostles to the Gentiles.

Judas and Silas

As prophets, Judas and Silas had a ministry that brought strength and encouragement to the believers.

Acts 15:32 Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted the brethren with many words and strengthened them.

MINISTRY OF THE PROPHETESS

There are many examples of women who prophesied or who were recognized as a prophetess of God.

In the Old Testament we could study Miriam, Deborah, Huldah or Isaiah's wife.

Anna

Anna was the last of the prophetesses under the Old Covenant. She knew that the baby, Jesus, would soon bring redemption to His people.

Luke 2:36a,38 Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

Joel's Prophecy

Joel prophesied of the prophetic ministry of women and Peter confirmed the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy.

Acts 2:16-18 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'and it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy.'

Philips's Daughters

Acts 21:8,9 On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

While the New Testament references do not definitely state that women were given the ministry gifting of a prophet, it's clear that they operated in the spiritual gift of prophecy and were recognized.

Often a husband-wife team will operate in the same ministry gifting as did the prophet Isaiah and his wife, who was called a prophetess.

Other husband-wife teams operate in different ministry giftings such as a pastor and a teacher, or an apostle and a prophet. When this occurs there is great strength in the ministry. As a husband and wife who are one flesh, they are also one in the Spirit and will often flow and minister together with great strength in one ministry gifting.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Write the definition of a prophet in your own words.

2. What is meant by the “spirit of prophecy” and how does it function in a believer's life?

3. Name the other designations for the word “prophet” that are used in the Old Testament.

Lesson Six

Ministry of the Prophet (Cont.)

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ...

MINISTRY OF A PROPHET TODAY

God has restored the ministry of the prophet. We should look to the true New Testament pattern of the prophet and his ministry to give us a more full understanding of this calling.

Ephesians 4:12 For the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ ...

The prophet must be recognized, accepted and allowed to function as a prophet if the body of Christ is to be built up to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Brings Revelation

The ministry of the prophet brings revelation. A prophet will take time to hear from God in a special way. He will spend time meditating on and studying God's Word. As a prophet, he will receive revelation and insight into the Word of God especially as it relates to those he is ministering to and with what God is doing in restoring His body.

Ephesians 3:5 Which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets ...

The ministry of the prophet will reveal facts and information about people's lives including their sins and problems which are keeping them from victory and maturity in their lives. This type of prophecy brings people to a knowledge of God. It does not put them under condemnation.

1 Corinthians 14:25 And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

Brings Vision

The ministry of the prophet brings vision, purpose and a sense of direction to God's people.

Proverbs 29:18a Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint...

Gives Warning

The prophet will give warnings which can provide protection for God's people. These warnings can prepare them for what lies ahead.

Acts 21:10,11 And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.' "

Acts 11:27,28 And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.

Strengthens -- Encourages – Comforts

The ministry of the prophet brings strengthening, encouragement and comfort.

1 Corinthians 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

Even as the prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the people to rebuild the ruins, the prophet today will be continually encouraging, motivating and exciting the people to finish the work of God.

Ezra 5:1 Then the prophet Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them.

Ezra 6:14 So the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.

Grounds and Establishes

The ministry of the prophet involves the grounding and establishing of churches. The prophet will work together with the apostle in laying spiritual foundations for new churches and ministries.

Ephesians 2:20 Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone ...

Ephesians 3:5 Which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets ...

Confirms Calling

The prophets will be involved together with a team of ministering elders in confirming ministry giftings and in imparting and releasing the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in believer's lives through the laying on of hands. They will bring the prophetic word during this special time of ministry.

Acts 13:1-3 Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by presbytery with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

Works with Others

Since a prophet's ministry is somewhat subjective by nature, important checks and balances are provided as the prophet works together with other mature elders. This is for the protection of the body and provides safeguards against deception. It is important that the spiritual gift of the distinguishing between spirits be in operation.

1 Corinthians 14:29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.

PROPHETS OPERATE IN GIFTS OF HOLY SPIRIT

Revelation Gifts

The prophet will operate fluently and accurately in the revelation gifts of the Holy Spirit. While the revelation gifts can operate through every Spirit-filled believer, they will operate more fluently, with a higher level of accuracy and anointing through the ministry of the prophet.

1 Corinthians 12:7-10 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

The prophet will frequently receive and minister a prophetic word about things to come.

➤ *Inner Voice, Visions, Dreams*

The knowledge can come as an inner voice, a vision, a dream, a message from an angel, or as a sudden impression.

Daniel 2:19 Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Acts 27:23,24 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'

➤ *Follows Worship*

These revelations often come when we have been worshipping God and are totally immersed in His Spirit.

Revelation 1:10a I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day ...

Revelation 4:2a Immediately I was in the Spirit ...

Revelation 17:3a So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness.

Revelation 21:10a And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain ...

➤ *Unexpected Thoughts*

Often as the prophecy is given, the prophet is so inspired by the Holy Spirit, that he will hear himself say things ☩ he doesn't know in the natural.

Other times, the believer or prophet will suddenly hear new, fresh, creative words or phrases in his spirit. These words will most often interrupt the natural thought processes as if they are injected into the mind spontaneously.

Isaiah 30:21 Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.

Vocal Gifts

The prophet will operate fluently and accurately in the gifts of vocal inspiration.

➤ *Strengthen, Edify*

The prophet will strengthen and edify the church. To "strengthen" or "edify" means to erect, or build up.

1 Corinthians 14:4,5 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

➤ *Encourage*

The prophet will encourage the church.

1 Corinthians 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

To “encourage” is a Greek word meaning a calling nearer to God. The prophet will always be calling the church into a closer relationship with God.

➤ *Comfort*

The prophet will comfort God's people.

To “comfort” is a Greek word meaning speaking closely to anyone. The prophet will bring comfort to God's people by ministering to them in a close, intimate and personal way. He will reveal God's interest and desire to be involved in all the personal needs and details of their lives.

➤ *Knowledge of Word*

The prophet must be saturated in the Word of God.

The highest form of prophecy is when the Word of God is prophesied to a person by giving them a particular Scripture as the answer they have been seeking.

Proverbs 2:1-6 My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding ...

Note: For a complete study of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we suggest you study *Supernatural Living Through The Gifts Of The Holy Spirit* by A.L. and Joyce Gill.

PROPHETS PREPARING WAY FOR CHRIST'S SECOND COMING

Even as the prophet, John the Baptist, prepared the way for the ministry of Jesus at His first coming to this earth, the prophets today are preparing the way for His second coming.

Revelation 10:7 But in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

Revelation 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

In preparation for His return, Christ is restoring His church to its full, New Testament revelation and purpose. God is revealing Himself, His plans, purposes and His works through the ministry of the prophets.

Prophets Told First

As with every major event, God will reveal the events of His second coming so that His Bride will be prepared. God always reveals His plans to His people through His prophets.

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

Lay New Foundation

As the ministry of the prophets is restored to the church, new foundations will be laid and existing ones will be strengthened. The pastors, evangelists and teachers will be ministering together with the apostles and the prophets on solid spiritual foundations and the whole body of Christ will come into a new level of maturity.

As in the book of Acts, a mighty army of believers will once again be doing the works of Jesus and the world will be reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ before His soon return.

John 14:12 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

WARNINGS REGARDING PROPHETS

There are numerous warnings in the Bible regarding prophets and prophecy. Since God is restoring prophecy to His body, we must heed the warnings as we receive prophetic words.

Receive Prophets

First, God's people are told to receive His prophets and their ministry as prophets.

Matthew 10:41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

To the detriment of the church, many prophets have not been well received in their home church. Often their words have not been received by churches where they have been sent by God with a true prophetic message.

Matthew 13:57 So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house."

We are warned against refusing to listen to a prophet.

Deuteronomy 18:19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

Beware of False Prophets

A second warning has been given by God to be on guard against false prophets. Such warnings were given in the Old Testament.

Jeremiah 5:30,31 An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land: The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and My people love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?

Jeremiah 14:14 And the LORD said to me, "The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart."

Warnings were also given in the New Testament.

Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

Matthew 24:11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

➤ *Wrong Motives*

Many have dared to pretend to be speaking for God in order to get their own way or to control others. Others have prophesied from wrong motivations instead of from a deep personal relationship with God.

➤ *Familiar Spirits*

Some have prophesied what they have received from familiar spirits. When this happens, it's important that the gift of the distinguishing of spirits be in operation, then the so called revelations or prophecies can be exposed for what they are – witchcraft!

➤ *Ask Holy Spirit*

We must not accept a ministry even if great signs and wonders are being manifested without first asking the Holy Spirit for His inner witness to us. We must always be careful to discern a person's ministry for ourselves. We must never ignore the inner witness of our own spirit, even if that person's ministry has been received by respected leaders.

Mark 13:22 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Subject to Control

God warns the prophets themselves to exercise discerning of spirits and self-control.

1 Corinthians 14:32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

Even though the prophecy may come spontaneously, the spirit of the prophets and the operation of the gifts are subject to the control of the prophets themselves. The prophet has full responsibility to maintain a close personal relationship with God

so that he will always be a clean, clear and pure channel of God's communication with His people.

JUDGING PROPHECY

All prophets should expect, allow and give opportunity for all of their prophecies to be judged.

1 Corinthians 14:29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.

1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Remember that we are all learning, growing and maturing in our spiritual lives and in the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. As humans, we are fallible and subject to making mistakes. Just because a person gives a prophecy that's not right doesn't necessarily mean that he is a false prophet.

Questions to Ask

Always ask the following questions when judging a prophecy.

➔ **Is the prophecy in harmony with the Word of God?**

God will never give a message that is in conflict with His written Word. The Holy Spirit cannot be in conflict with Himself!

➔ **Is the prophecy given in a good, non-condemning spirit?**

God does not condemn – Satan does. When God points out sin it will usually be in private and will bring relief to the person involved. It is God's desire to bring us to repentance – not to put us under condemnation.

Romans 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

➔ **Do his or her prophecies come to pass?**

Deuteronomy 18:22 ... when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

➔ **Does he or she live a godly, Christ-centered life?**

Jeremiah 23:15,16 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets: `Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall; for from the prophets of Jerusalem profaneness has gone out into all the land.' Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; they speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the LORD."

➔ **Does the Holy Spirit bear witness with your spirit regarding this prophecy?**

Lesson Seven

Ministry of the Evangelist

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...

Acts 21:8 On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him.

2 Timothy 4:5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

INTRODUCTION

The evangelist is on the front lines of God's army today. He has a burning desire to tell everyone he sees about Jesus. He has a heart that is continually reaching out to the lost of this world.

The evangelist is never content to stay within the comfortable walls of his local church. He is always reaching out to the lost, whether in his own city or to the ends of the earth. Everywhere he goes, he is witnessing or preaching to people about Jesus.

Signs, wonders and healing miracles are being manifested in his daily life and ministry as the Lord is working with him and confirming His Word.

The true New Testament evangelist isn't only winning people to Jesus himself, He is actively involved in training other believers for miracle evangelism and then mobilizing them into evangelistic outreach ministries.

Contrary to traditional patterns of many, the evangelist isn't only to conduct evangelistic meetings in the local church. Instead, he is out on the streets, in the marketplaces, the villages or the jungles where the people that need to hear the gospel, live and work.

The ministry of the evangelist, when at his local church, is to keep the vision of local, national and world evangelism stirred up in the hearts of the people. It is also training the believers in the church how to reach the lost with the gospel of Jesus through miracle evangelism.

An evangelist is continually teaching believers effective methods of personal evangelism. He should be training them how to minister healing to the sick and deliverance to the oppressed.

He will be mobilizing evangelistic teams to reach the lost. He not only will preach the gospel boldly on the streets, he will also be effective in personal evangelism, reaching the lost, one on one, on a daily basis.

While the evangelist will use all of the modern tools of communication and transportation available to multiply the gospel to the lost, above all, he will be committed to the concept of people reaching people. He will expect and experience miracles as God confirms His Word to the lost everywhere the gospel is shared.

While evangelism is the ministry and responsibility of every believer, the evangelist ministers in a higher level of anointing in this area. He is a specialist in evangelism. His primary responsibility is to prepare all believers to do the work of evangelism.

GREEK WORDS DEFINED

Three Greek words are used relating to the evangelist or his work. All three come from the same root word and it's the source of our English word "evangelist."

Euaggelizo – The Ministry

"Euaggelizo" refers to the ministry and means to announce good news or glad tidings.

This word refers to the ministry of the evangelist and is used many times in the New Testament including references to the ministry of Jesus as the Evangelist.

➤ *Of Jesus*

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed ...

➤ *Of Angels*

Luke 1:19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings."

Luke 2:10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people."

➤ *Of John the Baptist*

Luke 3:18 And with many other exhortations he preached to the people.

➤ *Of Early Believers*

Acts 8:4 Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.

➤ *Of Philip*

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

Acts 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

➤ *Of Peter and John*

Acts 8:25 So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

➤ *Of Paul*

Acts 13:32 And we declare to you glad tidings—that promise which was made to the fathers.

2 Corinthians 10:16 To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment.

Ephesians 3:8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ ...

➤ *Of all Believers*

Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"

Euaggelion – The Message

"Euaggelion" refers to the message and means the gospel or a good message.

This is a descriptive word for the message that an evangelist delivers. While there are many things that could be referred to as good news this word is especially applied to the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

➤ *Gospel of Kingdom*

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

➤ *Gospel of God's Grace*

Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

➤ *Gospel of God's Power*

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

➤ *Gospel of Salvation*

Ephesians 1:13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise ...

Evangelists – The Messenger

“Evangelistes” refers to the man and means a preacher or messenger of good news.

This word describes the person and is usually translated evangelist. In addition to being used in Ephesians four to describe one of the five ministry giftings, it's also used of Philip “the evangelist” and also in Paul's instructions to Timothy to “do the work of an evangelist.”

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers ...

Acts 21:8 On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him.

2 Timothy 4:5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

MINISTRY OF JESUS, THE EVANGELIST

Prophesied by Isaiah

The ministry of Jesus as the Evangelist was prophesied by the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound ...

Confirmed by Jesus

Jesus read from this passage at the synagogue in Nazareth as He was beginning his earthly ministry.

Luke 4:18,19 The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Six Characteristics

According to these Scriptures there were six things that were to characterize Jesus' ministry as the Evangelist.

- *to preach the gospel to the poor*
- *to heal the brokenhearted*
- *to preach deliverance to the captives*
- *recovery of sight to the blind*
- *to set at liberty those who are oppressed*
- *to preach the acceptable year of the LORD.*

(The “acceptable year of the Lord” is a reference to the “Year of Jubilee” and was the time for all bondage and debt to be released).

Jesus, the Evangelist

Throughout the book of Luke, we see Jesus fulfilling His ministry as the Evangelist as prophesied by the prophet Isaiah.

Luke 4:43 But He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.”

Luke 7:22 Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: That the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.”

Luke 8:1 Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him ...

Luke 20:1 Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him ...

Jesus as Pattern

All through the Gospels we see Jesus' ministry as a pattern for the ministry of the evangelist today.

Matthew 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Matthew 11:5 The blind receive their sight and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

The ministry of the evangelist is very important to God's plan and purpose for His church today.

CALLING OF THE EVANGELIST

Specific Call

An evangelist, just like the other fivefold ministries, must have a definite call from God.

This calling will be confirmed by the prophetic ministry of the prophets, apostles and other elders and will be imparted through the laying on of hands of the assembly of elders. This ministry gifting will be recognized by the body of Christ

The evangelist should be recognized as such by the believers in the local church. He should be financially and prayerfully supported by that local church. As God leads, he should also be sent out to other areas by that church.

Call for Believers

Even though there is a special ministry gifting as an evangelist, all believers are to do the work of an evangelist even as Paul instructed Timothy.

2 Timothy 4:5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Every believer is to be His witness.

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Even though all believers are to evangelize, the evangelist has a special anointing for evangelism and will therefore be more skilled in this area of ministry.

EXAMPLE OF PHILIP

Philip is the New Testament example of an evangelist.

Acts 21:8 On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him.

There was a time of preparation in Philip's life before he stepped out into the full operation of the ministry gifting of an evangelist.

First a Deacon

Acts 6:1-6 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.

Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

From this passage we see several things about Philip's life and preparation before he began to function in the area of his ministry gifting.

➤ *Committed*

Philip was committed to the local church in Jerusalem. Later the church in Caesarea became his home church.

➤ *Good Reputation*

Philip had proven himself to the leadership of his home church as a man of character and integrity.

➤ *Full of Spirit*

He was a man who was continually full of the Holy Spirit.

➤ *Proven Wisdom*

He was a man of proven wisdom.

➤ *Servant's Heart*

He had a servant's heart. He had a heart of compassion that responded to the needs of those in need. He was a humble man, willing to serve others.

➤ *Proven Service*

Before Philip began to minister as an evangelist, he first proved himself as a deacon in his own local church.

➤ *Submitted to Authority*

Philip learned how to handle authority by first submitting to the authority of the elders.

➤ *Recommended by Elders*

Philip had the spiritual support of the elders at his local church.

Acts 8:14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them ...

Began with Persecution

Philip was forced into the ministry to which he had been called by the persecution that came in his life.

Acts 8:1 Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Acts 8:4,5 Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.

MESSAGE OF EVANGELIST

The evangelist preaches one main message. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Everywhere Philip went as an evangelist, he proclaimed Jesus Christ.

Acts 8:5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

Acts 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

Acts 8:40 But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

Water Baptism

The message of an evangelist will include baptizing those who receive Jesus in water as a seal and a testimony of their faith in Jesus Christ.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

Acts 8:36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"

Baptism in Holy Spirit

Through Philip's experience in Samaria, we learn that new believers not only need to be baptized immediately in water, but they also need to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:14-17 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

As these new believers received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, they too received the power to be effective witnesses to keep taking the gospel to others who had yet not heard.

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is the ministry of the evangelist?

2. How is the ministry of the evangelist different from the call on every believer's life to evangelize?

3. Describe the preparation, and character development that one would see in a believer's life before he would function as an evangelist.

Lesson Eight

Ministry of the Evangelist (Cont.)

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...

Acts 21:8 On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him.

2 Timothy 4:5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

PATTERN FOR MASS EVANGELISM

Philip's ministry in Samaria is a pattern of mass evangelism.

The following is an example of the fulfillment of the great commission of Jesus.

Acts 8:5-8 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.

When Philip went to Samaria, he was led by the Holy Spirit. An evangelist is a reaper. Philip reaped in a harvest field where Jesus had sown.

Fulfills Great Commission

Mark 16:15-18 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Philip obeyed the direct words of Jesus when he went to Samaria, a place that under normal circumstances, a Jewish person would prefer not to go.

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Philip obeyed the words of Jesus when he preached the gospel and the signs that Jesus had promised followed.

Acts 8:6,7 And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.

Mark described the beginning of the fulfillment of the great commission immediately after Jesus had been taken up into heaven.

Mark 16:20 And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

The people of Samaria received the gospel that Philip had preached because the Word had been confirmed by signs.

Miracle Evangelism

The only truly effective evangelism is miracle evangelism. For years the church has been trying to reach the world with the gospel by traditional methods and techniques without expecting God to confirm His Word with signs and wonders. We have used tracts and forms. Too often we have had a form of godliness but have denied its power.

2 Timothy 3:5 Having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

The evangelist is to have an anointing to minister with great signs, wonders and healing miracles. Every time God confirms His Word with healing miracles, many will come to Jesus.

Church of Acts

The church described in the book of Acts grew by the thousands because of miracle evangelism.

Acts 2:43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

Acts 2:47b And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Acts 5:12a And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people.

Acts 5:14-16 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Examples

➤ *Peter and John*

As Peter and John were walking down the street, they saw a man who was crippled from birth begging beside the temple gate.

Acts 3:6-10 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he, leaping up, stood and

walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God.

And all the people saw him walking and praising God. Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

As a result of this one miracle, five thousand people were saved.

Acts 4:4 However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

➤ *Philip*

When Philip went to Samaria, because of the miracles, many accepted Jesus as Savior and were baptized.

Acts 8:5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

➤ *Paul*

When Paul went to Ephesus, God confirmed His Word through miracle evangelism.

Acts 19:11 Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul.

As a result of miracle evangelism and as a result of Paul's teaching and training others for miracle evangelism in the school or lecture hall in that city, all who lived in the province of Asia heard the gospel.

Acts 19:10 And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

Church of Today

God is restoring miracle evangelism to the church today.

As the evangelists do their work and train every believer for miracle evangelism, a mighty wave of miracle evangelism will sweep around the world before the soon return of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Geometric Results

First Jesus sent out the twelve disciples, then He sent out the seventy. On the day of Pentecost, one hundred and twenty people received the power Jesus had told them about. Thousands came to know Jesus when they saw the miracle of the coming of the Holy Spirit. Thousands were saved when Peter and John healed the lame man. The crowds of Samaria heard and believed the gospel of Jesus when they saw the miracles of Philip. The beginning church did not grow by addition, it grew by multiplication as believers everywhere did

the works of Jesus. Evangelists today are still to mobilize the believers to do the works of Jesus.

FOUNDING OF NEW LOCAL CHURCH

Evidently, Peter and John founded a new local church in Samaria from those whom had been won to Jesus through the ministry of the evangelist, Philip.

Acts 9:31 Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

Works with Others

The evangelist is to work closely with the elders of his local church and other fivefold ministry giftings. The evangelist isn't to be out "doing his own thing" independent of other ministries.

Samaria is a good example of this. It would be unthinkable to bring babies into this world and then leave them to die of starvation. In Samaria, we see the apostles immediately coming and carrying on the work and, apparently, establishing a church in accordance with God's plan and pattern of effective ministry.

The Samaritan church is God's pattern for the growth of the church.

- *There was peace.*
- *The church was strengthened.*
- *It was comforted by the Holy Spirit.*
- *It grew in numbers.*
- *It had a close personal relationship and reverence for God.*

This was a church that according to God's plan and purpose was built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EVANGELIST

We observe several things from this passage about Philip that should characterize the ministry of the evangelist.

Recognizes Limitations

Philip recognized the limitations of his own ministry. He did not feel that he had to do everything himself.

Works with Others

He demonstrated a willingness to work with other ministries

Close to Leadership

He had a close relationship with the leadership of his home church and he relied on them when he needed help.

Welcomes Other Ministries

He did not leave this new group of believers unattended. He knew that they needed the ministry of apostles, prophets, teachers and pastors if they were to grow and be established in the faith.

Receives God's Direction

He did not leave until he had received definite directions from God.

Acts 8:26 Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert.

EVANGELIST AND PERSONAL EVANGELISM

Expert Soul Winners

An evangelist who is balanced in his ministry will be just as diligent and skilled in personal evangelism as he is in mass evangelism. The evangelist should be an expert soul winner. He will always be looking for opportunities to witness for Jesus Christ.

Obeys God's Directions

Philip was led to leave the glory and excitement that was going on in Samaria to go and witness to one man in the desert. This was certainly a test of obedience. Philip obeyed God and he had the opportunity to lead a very important man, the treasurer of the nation of Ethiopia, to Jesus.

Acts 8:26-40 Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. So he arose and went.

And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet.

Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot."

Quick to Teach

So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him.

The place in the Scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so He opened not His mouth. In His humiliation His justice was taken away. And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth."

So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?"

Baptizes New Believer

Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water.

And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"

Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may."

And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

An evangelist should always be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Philip was led to Samaria and the city was ripe for harvest. Then Philip was led to the Ethiopian eunuch. This man had already been seeking after God. As an evangelist is sensitive to the leading and timing of the Holy Spirit, he will be much more effective in his ministry.

An Example

Often believers feel inadequate when they read the great commission about preaching the good news to all creation.

Many feel that they are unable to preach as Philip did in Samaria. However, we notice that when Philip climbed up in the chariot, he sat down next to the eunuch and preached to him.

Acts 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

To "preach" means to simply proclaim, to tell, or to share. When Philip sat down next to this man, he simply witnessed to him. By so doing, he fulfilled the great commission of Jesus and was having part in preaching the good news to all creation.

Knowledge of Word

An evangelist should have a thorough knowledge of the Word of God. Philip had such a knowledge of God's Word that he could start where the man was reading and preach the gospel to him.

Balanced in Ministry

Certainly, Philip was a man who was balanced in every area of his ministry. He was a man of the Word and he was a man full of the Spirit of God.

Philip, as an evangelist, preached Jesus everywhere that he went.

Acts 8:40 But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

MINISTRY TO BODY OF CHRIST

To Equip

We often think the evangelist is one who goes out and holds large crusades. The emphasis has been on his traveling ministry. However, the primary ministry of the evangelist according to Ephesians four is “for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry.”

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers ...

To Train

The evangelist, just as the apostle, prophet, pastor and teacher is primarily given to train people to do the works of Jesus.

We have seen the works of Jesus as an evangelist. Jesus spoke of all believers when He said:

John 14:12 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

Work of Ministry

The works of the ministry are:

- *To preach the gospel*
- *Cast out Devils*
- *Heal the sick*

All believers need to be trained to do the works of Jesus. This includes preaching the gospel, casting out devils and healing the sick. The primary work of the evangelist isn't to do the work of the ministry but to prepare God's people to do the work of the ministry.

“Drill Sergeants”

Those who are in the fivefold ministry are drill sergeants in God's army. The drill sergeants are not the ones who fight and win the battle, even though they are experienced and skilled in warfare. Their function is to train the soldiers to be mighty warriors. The soldiers, functioning together as a mighty disciplined army, are the ones who win the wars.

Every Believer

- *Every believer is to do the work of the ministry.*
- *Every believer is to be a witness for Jesus Christ.*
- *Every believer is to “preach the gospel.”*
- *Every believer is to do exactly the same works that Jesus did.*
- *Every believer is to cast out demons and heal the sick.*

Jesus was speaking to all believers, not just those who are in the fivefold ministry when he said “these signs will follow those who believe.”

Mark 16:17,18 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

If all believers are to:

- *preach the gospel*
- *drive out demons*
- *place their hands on sick people*

Then all believers must be trained:

- *how to preach*
- *how to minister deliverance*
- *how to minister healing to the sick*

As all believers are trained for miracle evangelism, as all believers become miracle working evangelists, then the world can and will be won with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Mobilize Believers

We must not depend on those who have been called to be evangelists to reach the world with the gospel. We must train and mobilize every believer. This training is the primary work of evangelists. They are to train believers for powerful effective miracle evangelism. They are to mobilize evangelistic teams to reach the lost with the gospel.

In the ministry of Jesus, as He was preaching the gospel, healing the sick, raising the dead and casting out devils, He was also training others to do His works. He was multiplying Himself into the lives of others.

Key Is Multiplication

The key to being an effective evangelist, isn't addition; it's multiplication. It's not trying to build the biggest ministry; it's multiplying one's self into the lives of others.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

For more study on the subject of the evangelist, see the manual Miracle Evangelism – God's Plan to Reach the World.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Describe three characteristics that we saw in Philip, the evangelist, as he related to the rest of the body of believers.
2. Describe the purpose of the evangelist as he relates to the body of Christ.
3. What is miracle evangelism? Give some examples from the Word.

Lesson Nine

Ministry of Pastor, or Shepherd

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...

INTRODUCTION

The pastor is the most visible of the ministry gifts in the church today. However, during the time of the early New Testament Church this wasn't so. The word "pastor" is used only once in the New King James Version of the Bible. (Ephesians 4:11, above)

Traditional View

An impossible burden has been placed on the pastor due to our lack of understanding of this ministry gifting. In many local congregations, the pastor is responsible for everything including winning the lost, taking care of the flock, being responsible for the finances, being the teacher, and the evangelist.

When a man stands alone in this position, he becomes very vulnerable, and thousands of pastors have fallen into complete breakdowns, either morally, spiritually, physically, emotionally, or mentally. Many have fallen prey to the pride of life through adulation. Some have given in to the deceitfulness of riches and financial mismanagement because there have been no God-given checks and balances.

Biblical View

All of the fivefold ministry gifts are to minister and function together as a team in the local church, each one operating in their own ministry function. In the New Testament Church, we see each one of the fivefold ministry giftings in operation instead of leaving all the ministry to the pastor, as has been our tradition. The function of fivefold ministry in the local church is given by Jesus:

- *To prepare God's people for the work of the ministry*
- *To build up the body of Christ*
- *To bring a unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God*
- *To bring the saints to a place of maturity and fullness of Christ*

The ministry gifting of the pastor or shepherd normally functions in only one local church. The other ministry giftings will function within a local church but will also be sent, from time to time, to build up other believers in the faith or to establish other churches.

Pastor Defined

➤ *Shepherd*

The Greek word translated pastor in Ephesians 4:11 is “poimen” meaning shepherd, one who tends herds or flocks, guides as well as feeds the flock, an overseer.

“Poimen” is used eighteen times in the New Testament. Only one time is it translated pastor. The other seventeen times it's translated shepherd.

We frequently use the term pastor because it's the word used in Ephesians four where the complete list of the fivefold ministry giftings are given. However, because of the more common scriptural usage and the actual meaning of the word “poimen,” it would be more biblical to use the word “shepherd.”

Some have felt uneasy about using the term “shepherd” because of the lack of balance that was experienced some years ago. Some within the charismatic movement, used the term shepherd and became known as the Shepherding Movement. This movement became out of balance and caused a lot of hurt in the body of Christ.

We need to act and not react. We need to act on the revelation of God's Word as He is restoring New Testament truth to His body today. In our study we have chosen to use the terms, pastor and shepherd, interchangeably because they are both scriptural.

➤ *Pastor-Teacher*

Some feel that the pastor and teacher are inseparable and that there are only four ministry giftings. The reason for this is that Ephesians four says, “He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists.” Then both pastor and teacher are mentioned together as the verse continues, “and some pastors and teachers.”

There is much to substantiate this interpretation as the ministry of the pastor is certainly to a large degree a teaching ministry.

There are people who function effectively as pastors and have a great pastor's heart, but they are very poor teachers. There are also very capable and gifted teachers of the Word who don't have a pastor's heart and appear to have very little pastoral relationship with the people they teach.

Regardless of the differences in thought on this verse, we have chosen to study them, for sake of understanding, as five distinct ministry giftings.

Fivefold Ministry

Those who are called and are functioning in the fivefold ministry each have their strengths and their limitations. This is one reason that the five ministry gifts should be functioning in each local church. Each of the ministry giftings need to flow and minister together to prepare, build up and mature all of the

believers in that church so that they may all attain “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

When Jesus set different ministries in the church, He did it with purpose and with great care. He realized the variety of needs that exist among His people and He was concerned that each of those needs be met by the balanced operation of these ministry giftings in operation within each local church.

If each of the ministry giftings are not in operation on a regular basis in a local church, it's impossible for that body of believers to come to the full and balanced maturity in their Christian life and service.

PASTORS ARE OVERSEERS

Acts 20:28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Feeds the Sheep

The Greek word for overseer is “episkopos.” It is also translated “bishop.” The word means one who feeds the sheep. It is simply a reference to a pastor or a shepherd. A bishop in the scriptural meaning, is a function in the local church, not one who has authority over a group of local churches as does an apostle.

Traditional View

Bishops, as part of an ecclesiastical hierarchy, came into existence not by New Testament revelation or pattern, but by the attempts of men to improve on God's plan and purpose for the independent local church. A bishop is not to take the place of those whom God has established as apostles and prophets.

Shepherds are overseers of the flock. The visual picture is of a shepherd sitting on the side of a mountain and watching over the sheep that have been entrusted to his care.

All of the elders, or overseers, of a local church are to function as shepherds even if they have a ministry gifting other than that of a pastor.

Paul said that those who desire this ministry gifting are desirous of a noble task.

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

Function, not Title

Notice that a “pastor” or “shepherd” is a function, not a title. The same is true of each of the other of the fivefold ministry giftings. The apostle, prophet, evangelist and teacher are all functions and not titles.

BELIEVERS AS SHEEP

The terms “sheep” and “flock” are not the most complimentary terms that could be used to describe God's people.

However, these terms very aptly describe our total dependency upon God's guidance, provision and care for our daily lives.

Need Special Care

Sheep need special care. They are the most dependent of all of God's creatures. They simply cannot make it by themselves.

Genesis 4:2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

Even from the time of the first family, the sheep had to be kept.

Need to Be Fed

Sheep have to be fed.

1 Samuel 17:15,20 But David occasionally went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight and shouting for the battle.

David would not leave the flock unattended. Unlike most animals, sheep have no ability to find food and water for themselves. They also have a very poor sense of direction.

Get Lost Easily

Sheep get lost easily and have a tendency to wander.

Jeremiah 50:6 My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray; they have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill; they have forgotten their resting place.

Ezekiel 34:12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day.

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Need Protection

Sheep are very defenseless. They are susceptible to almost any kind of attack. They don't have any natural defense such as claws, powerful jaws or the ability to run fast.

By themselves, they are open prey to all kinds of wild animals.

Matthew 10:16 Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Sheep are only safe when they are huddled together. They must have sheepfolds and shepherds to protect them at night.

Valuable

Even with all of their faults, sheep were still viewed as a valuable possession. Sheep produce meat for food and wool for clothing. They have the ability to follow as they flow together and respond to the voice of their shepherd.

John 10:3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

Need Shepherd to Survive

V. 4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

He knows that without shepherds to feed, tend, watch over and care for them, they would not survive as His people.

JESUS, AS OUR SHEPHERD

The use of the word, shepherd, was very descriptive at the time of Jesus' ministry and while the early church was being established. Shepherds and sheep were a major part of their daily lives and economy. Shepherds were seen everywhere. However, the work of the shepherd wasn't a job of prestige or honor.

Jesus described the shepherd very completely in John 10:1-16.

John 10:1-3 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

A sheepfold was a wall surrounding an open area from which the sheep came and went. Often, several flocks would come into one sheepfold so that there would be more shepherds for protection at night, and so that the shepherds could get rest.

Jesus Is Gate

In some of the sheepfolds there wasn't an actual gate. The shepherd led the sheep into the safe area and then slept in the opening of the fold to protect the sheep during the night.

Jesus said that He was the gate and only the man who enters by the gate, or is called by God, can be a true shepherd to the sheep.

Know His Voice

vs. 4,5 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

In the large flocks of Jesus' time there was a chief shepherd who led his sheep out in the morning. The sheep knew their own

shepherd's voice and they would wait until he came and called to them.

Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

vs. 6-10 Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Good Shepherd

vs. 11-14 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

Jesus pointed out the difference between a person who took care of the sheep for money, a hired hand, and the true shepherd who would lay down his life to protect the sheep.

vs. 15,16 As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd."

Jesus is the Great Shepherd.

Hebrews 13:20 Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep ...

Shepherd of Souls

Jesus is our Shepherd and the Overseer of our souls.

1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Chief Shepherd

Jesus is the Chief Shepherd.

1 Peter 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

Compassionate Shepherd

Jesus had compassion on people, referred to them as "weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd." The pastor is to have compassion and be their shepherd.

Matthew 9:36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

The ministry of Jesus as the Shepherd is the pattern of ministry for each one who is called as a shepherd or pastor in the local church.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Define the words pastor, shepherd, overseer and bishop.
2. Describe the “sheep-like” characteristics of believers that reveal our need for a true shepherd.
3. What characteristics of Jesus best reveal Him as our Shepherd?

Lesson Ten

Ministry of Pastor, or Shepherd (Cont.)

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...

SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS OF A SHEPHERD (PASTOR)

In addition to the general qualifications of elders, shepherds (pastors) must also have some qualities and have developed some specific skills that will equip them to function in this particular ministry gifting.

Lead Sheep

A shepherd (pastor) must be able to lead sheep.

John 10:4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

If shepherds are going to lead the believers in a local church, they must have already walked in the ways of God. They must have a working knowledge of the truths of the Word of God and have experienced those truths working in their own lives.

As a leader, if the shepherds want the believers in the church to pray, they must be people of prayer themselves. If they want the believers to become faithful in their tithes and offerings, they must be faithful givers themselves. If they want people to be soul winners, then they themselves must be soul winners. The shepherds must be examples to the believers.

Hebrews 13:7 Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

1 Peter 5:2,3 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by constraint but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock ...

1 Corinthians 11:1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

Feed Flock

A shepherd must be able to feed the flock.

Jeremiah 23:4 "I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking," says the LORD.

Jeremiah 3:15 And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Acts 20:28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

If the sheep are going to be nourished and grow, they must be fed good balanced spiritual food and water from the Word of God.

Feed Themselves

The shepherds must give themselves to the study of the Word of God and prayer. If the shepherds are going to feed the sheep, they must first spend time feasting on the Word themselves.

Acts 6:4 ... but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.

Jeremiah 10:21 For the shepherds have become dull-hearted, and have not sought the LORD; therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.

Balanced Diet

The shepherds will see that the believers are being fed a balanced diet and that they are constantly exposed to the ministry of the other elders who are apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers. They will see that the food which is being fed is the fresh manna of what God is saying and doing today.

Jeremiah 15:16 Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ...

Communicate Skillfully

The shepherds must be skillful in feeding the Word. They must be able to communicate to all spiritual ages, from the very young to the mature as the flock will have sheep of all ages.

John 16:12 I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

Isaiah 40:11 He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.

Isaiah 40:29 He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength.

Have Personal Relationship

A pastor must have a personal relationship with the sheep.

John 10:27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

John 10:3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

A local church must have a sufficient number of shepherds functioning as part of their elders, in order that each one of the sheep are known by name and each have a personal relationship with a shepherd. Instead of shepherds being aloof from the believers, the shepherds should be accessible, taking time to know and relate personally with them.

Shepherds need to take to time to be with the people.

Although Ezekiel wasn't a pastor, he is an excellent example of a leader taking the time necessary to be with the people he leads.

Ezekiel 3:15 Then I came to the captives at Tel Abib, who dwelt by the River Chebar; and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days.

Source of Strength

Pastors become a real source of strength and encouragement to the people to whom they relate.

Philippians 1:27,28 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.

Hebrews 13:7 Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.

This is the kind of intimate relationship necessary for the shepherd to be able to have a heart of real compassion for the sheep.

Luke 15:4 What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?

Lay Down Life

A shepherd must be willing to lay down his life for the sheep.

John 10:15 As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

1 John 3:16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Revelation 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Shepherds are to have a deep sense of commitment and loyalty to the sheep. When the people know that their shepherd is fully committed to them, they will become fully committed to their

shepherd. This commitment involves a pouring out of one's life, time, concern, and strength for the sheep.

John 10:11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

Rebuked for Indifference

Shepherds were rebuked for indifference to the needs of the sheep.

Ezekiel 34:4 The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them.

John 10:12 But he who is a hireling and not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.

Jeremiah 23:2 Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings," says the LORD.

Deep Love

Out of a deep love, the shepherds will keep watch over the sheep knowing that they must give an account to God for each one.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

The shepherd will place the well-being of the sheep above his own life and ministry.

THE MINISTRY OF THE SHEPHERD (PASTOR)

Seeking the Lost

The ministry of the shepherd is seeking those who have strayed.

Luke 15:4 What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?

The shepherd is always reaching out to those who have cooled off in their relationship with God. He will be alert to any sheep which have started to stray. He will go after them. He will call and visit them, exhorting them to return to the fold.

Guarding the Flock

The shepherd will guard the flock from danger.

Acts 20:29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

The shepherd will always be alert to danger to the flock from without or within. He knows those who are hurting or those who have slipped or fallen. He is alert if some would try to bring in false doctrine or would try to bring in division or strife.

Care for Needy

The shepherd will care for those in need.

Isaiah 58:6,7 Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?

The shepherd will always be helping the hurting, the poor, the widows, and the orphans. He will visit and minister healing to the sick. He will bring comfort to those who have lost loved ones in death.

Correct and Discipline

The pastor will correct and discipline those who have sinned.

The shepherd carries both a rod and a staff. The staff is used for reaching and rescuing, but the rod is used for correcting and protecting.

Psalms 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Discipline must be given if the sheep are going to mature. The shepherd who really loves the sheep will discipline them.

Leaders of Leaders

Shepherds will be leaders of leaders.

The shepherds will be balanced in the use of their time. They will not only spend time with those who are hurting, but they will spend much of their time in developing those who have a desire to grow and mature in their Christian life.

Instead of spending all of their time “putting out fires” they will spend the majority of their time in “lighting fires” in the lives of those who are fully committed. They will recognize leadership and those whom God is calling into the fivefold ministry and spend time to disciple them for the work to which God has called them.

Feed the Sheep

The shepherd will lovingly and skillfully feed the sheep the Word of God.

John 21:15 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?”

He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.”

The greatest expression of love that a shepherd can give to Jesus is to be diligent in feeding His sheep the truths of the Word of God. According to these instructions of Jesus that He emphasized by repeating three times, the most important function of a shepherd is to feed the sheep.

All of these areas of the shepherd's (pastor's) ministry must be kept in balance with the most effective use of one's time. When the shepherds are faithful in all of these areas the sheep will respond by also being faithful and committed to the work of the Lord in the local church. Healthy sheep will reproduce themselves. By so doing, the local church will grow and expand its ministry. As the shepherd is faithful with the sheep that he has, the Lord will give him more.

Matthew 25:21 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Operates in Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

The shepherds should operate freely in all the gifts of the Holy Spirit. However, the revelation gifts are especially important to the ministry of the shepherd.

Through the operation of the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom, the shepherd will know when there is a need in a certain believer's life. In God's perfect timing, he will call that believer or go to his home just at the moment that personal ministry is needed.

God will warn the shepherd of danger by the operation of the gift of the distinguishing between spirits. There is great protection for the church and a greater effectiveness in a shepherd's ministry as he is led, moment by moment, by the operation of the revelation gifts of the Holy Spirit.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Describe some of the major qualifications that are specifically required in the life and ministry of a true shepherd.

2. List some of the most important functions of a shepherd as he ministers to the sheep.

Lesson Eleven

Ministry of the Teacher

Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...

1 Corinthians 12:28,29 And God has appointed these in the church: First apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?

Romans 12:4-7 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: If prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching ...

INTRODUCTION

Great Commission

When Jesus gave the great commission, He not only told His believers to preach the gospel, He also said to make disciples of all the nations. This was to be done by teaching them.

Matthew 28:19,20 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.

Definition

A teacher is one who instructs, and by his teaching causes others to learn. His or her teaching involves exposition and explanation of Scripture and instruction in doctrine to others.

The teaching ministry holds an important place in the New Testament. The teacher is the only one mentioned by name in all three lists of the ministry giftings given in Scripture.

Purpose

Teaching is necessary for unity, growth, maturity and to equip believers for service.

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ...

The ministry of the teacher is absolutely necessary if believers are going to become mature in the Word.

Ephesians 4:15 But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ ...

Hebrew Words

Two words were used for teacher in the Old Testament Hebrew which reveal the nature of the teacher's ministry.

➤ *Inform*

“Yarah” means to flow as water (as rain), to point out (as with the finger). It has been translated as: direct, inform, instruct, lay, shoot, show, teach through, and rain.

Exodus 4:12,15 Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.

Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do.

Exodus 18:20 And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do.

Exodus 35:34 And He has put in his heart the ability to teach, in him and Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan.

➤ *Diligently Instruct*

“Lamad” means to goad, or by implication, to teach by the incentive of the rod. It has been translated as: diligently instruct, learn, skillful, teach, teacher, or teaching.

Deuteronomy 5:1 And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: “Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them.”

Psalms 119:7 I will praise You with uprightness of heart, when I learn Your righteous judgments.

Deuteronomy 11:19 You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.

Psalms 25:4,5 Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day.

From these Hebrew words, we find that a teacher is one who points the way with his or her finger, directs, informs, instructs, and shows the ways of the Lord.

The teaching will flow like the rain coming down, when the teacher is skilled in instruction. This causes students to learn.

Teaching is like a goad or a rod that causes the people to walk in God's ways.

Greek Words

Six words were used relating to the teacher in the New Testament, however, each of these words come from the same root word.

➤ *To Instruct*

“Didasko” means to learn or to teach. It is translated teach.

➤ *Instructive*

“Didaktikos” means instructive. It is translated apt to teach.

➤ *Instructed of*

“Didaktos” means instructed of, convicted by teaching, and is translated taught.

➤ *Instruction (Noun)*

“Dikaskalia” means instruction, the function or the information. It is translated doctrine, learning, teaching.

➤ *An Instructor*

“Dikaskolos” means an instructor and it's translated:

- *Doctor 14 times,*
- *Master 47 times,*
- *Teacher 10 times,*
- *Scribe 67 times.*

➤ *Instruction (Verb)*

“Didache” means instruction, the act of instruction. It is translated “doctrine, has been taught.”

A teacher is therefore one who instructs, and by teaching causes others to learn. It involves exposition, explanation and instruction of doctrine to others.

The teacher who is a part of the fivefold ministry has been chosen by God to instruct others.

JESUS, THE TEACHER

Jesus is our prime example of the Teacher. Anyone that is called to be a teacher should go through the Gospels studying His life as a Teacher.

Recognized By

➤ *Disciples*

The disciples knew Jesus as a Teacher.

Mark 4:38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”

John 13:13 You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.

➤ *Pharisees*

The pharisees and teachers of the law knew Jesus as a teacher. They even tried to use His gift of teaching as a snare to involve Him in political and religious disputes.

Matthew 22:16,17 And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not regard the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

➤ *Rich Young Ruler*

The rich young ruler called Jesus "Good Teacher."

Mark 10:17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

➤ *Nicodemus*

Nicodemus was a teacher himself and he came to Jesus as a Teacher.

John 3:2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

Everywhere Jesus Went

Jesus was a Teacher wherever He went. He spent much of His time teaching multitudes of people.

Matthew 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Matthew 11:1 Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities.

Matthew 13:54 And when He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works?"

Matthew 21:23 Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"

Mark 10:1 Then He arose from there and came to the region of Judea by the other side of the Jordan. And the people gathered to Him again, and as He was accustomed, He taught them again.

Jesus taught in the synagogues, the temple, in the streets and on the mountainsides everywhere He went.

Mark 14:49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not take Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Luke 21:37 And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet.

JESUS TAUGHT DIFFERENTLY

With Authority

There were many teachers in Jesus' day, but there was something about His teaching that caused people to take notice. Crowds were attracted because there was a power and an anointing upon His teaching unlike any other they had ever heard.

They were all astonished because He taught with such authority.

Matthew 7:28,29 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Jesus has given this same anointing and authority to teachers in His church.

The success of Jesus' teaching wasn't in His techniques or presentation. It wasn't in His appearance or manner of dress. It was in His authority.

Received from God Anointing of Holy Spirit

What made Jesus successful as a teacher was that He taught only what He received from His Father and that He taught in the anointing and power of the Holy Spirit.

John 8:28 Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things."

John 7:16 Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me."

Used Illustrations

As Jesus walked through the countryside, He used visual or verbal illustrations.

Matthew 9:16 No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse.

Told Parables

Jesus would tell a story, or parable, and then explain it, relating truth to the lives of the people.

Started Where People Were

Jesus would start teaching where the people were and then take them to where He wanted them to be. The Samaritan woman at the well is an excellent example of this.

John 4:10,15,25,26 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."

Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

Miracles Proved Message

Signs and wonders drew people to Jesus. They confirmed that His message was from God.

Luke 5:17 Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

When Nicodemus came to Jesus, he was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish ruling council. Nicodemus said he knew who Jesus was because of the miraculous signs He did.

John 3:1,2 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

EXAMPLES OF TEACHERS

Paul

Paul was an apostle, an evangelist and he was also a teacher

1 Timothy 2:7 For which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

2 Timothy 1:11 ... To which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Barnabas and Paul

In Antioch, some of the believers that had fled from the persecution witnessed to the Greeks and a church was started.

Acts 11:21-26 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

➤ *Taught New Believers*

Paul, the very man who had persecuted believers causing them to flee to Antioch, was later found by Barnabas and brought to Antioch to teach the new believers.

➤ *Prophet – Teacher*

Both Paul and Barnabas functioned as prophets and teachers before they were sent out as apostles.

Acts 13:1 Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

➤ *Apostle – Teacher*

Paul continued to minister as an apostle–teacher.

1 Timothy 2:7 For which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

2 Timothy 1:11 To which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Apollos

Apollos was a teacher.

Acts 18:24-26 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

TEACHING BRINGS UNITY

Teaching should not divide the body of Christ, it should bring unity.

1 Corinthians 3:5-11 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise

master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. According to Matthew 28:19,20 how do we make disciples of all nations?
2. Give a definition or translation of one of the original Greek or Hebrew words that were used for teacher.
3. Give three things about Jesus' ministry that distinguished His ministry as a teacher from the other teachers of His day.

Lesson Twelve

Ministry of the Teacher (Cont.)

MARKS OF A TEACHER

Special Anointing

Any believer can teach what they know about the Bible, but the calling of a teacher is a divine gift. The fivefold ministry of the teacher isn't a calling based on natural ability or inclination to teach.

The ministry gift of a teacher will not be dry. It will convey rivers of living water, and be anointed by the Holy Spirit.

1 John 2:20,27 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.

But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

Gentle Spirit

Teachers must be humble and have a teachable spirit. They cannot have an argumentative attitude.

2 Timothy 2:24,25 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth ...

The body of Christ needs the ministry gift of the teacher.

Dependent on Holy Spirit

Anointed teachers will depend on the Holy Spirit when they are preparing and teaching. They understand that it's the Holy Spirit Who brings illumination and life to God's Word.

John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Ephesians 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him ...

1 Corinthians 2:13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Speaks with Authority

Just as our example the Great Teacher taught with authority, the teacher can also teach with authority.

Matthew 7:28,29 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Multiplication

Good, successful teachers will multiply themselves into the lives of those that they teach.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

They will give themselves to the study of the Word of God. Their teaching will instill in God's people a love and respect for the Word, and bring them to a place of maturity in the faith.

Receptive to Others

Teachers have an openness to be taught.

Romans 2:21a You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?

Student of Word

We know that Timothy was an anointed teacher, as well as apostle and yet Paul encouraged him to study.

2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

A teacher must have a full working knowledge of the Word of God.

Students by their very nature will ask difficult questions.

Always Teaches Others

Anointed teachers will put all they have into their teaching. They will not hold back any truth they know.

Acts 20:20 ... and how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house ...

Acts 20:27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

Is Precise

A teacher will be careful to use the precise words needed for accuracy.

Matthew 22:15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk.

The teacher must be able to apply the Word to every situation in life. The teacher will continually be establishing and grounding believers in the Word.

Hebrews 5:12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

Exemplary Life

The disciples learned by what Jesus did before they learned by what he taught.

Acts 1:1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach.

A teacher must have an exemplary life and practice what he or she teaches.

Matthew 23:1-3 Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do."

Teaches to Change Lives

Teachers are fulfilled when they know that they have taught their students the heart and mind of God, and then see their students walking in obedience to the things they have learned.

Deuteronomy 4:5 Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess.

Deuteronomy 31:12,13 Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess.

Great results can be expected when a teacher is teaching practical, life-related truths from the Word of God. As Paul taught the believers in Ephesus, he multiplied himself into the lives of the students. As a result, everyone in Asia Minor heard the gospel.

Acts 19:9b,10 ... he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

Financial Support

A teacher should be supported financially by those that he is teaching.

Galatians 6:6 Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

There should be just as much a pattern for the financial support of the apostle, prophet, evangelist and teacher in the church as there is for the pastor.

When a new church is being established, the apostle and prophet are to be supported by the sending church. However, as a church begins to grow it should begin to take on the support of the evangelists and teachers as well as the pastors.

Once a church has grown to sufficient size, it too, should be expecting to send out apostles and prophets with financial support.

METHODS OF TEACHING

By Example

A teacher teaches by what he is and does. The life of the teacher should be an open book, a good example to others.

2 Timothy 3:10 But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance,

John 13:12-15 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."

By Declaration

A teacher not only teaches by example, he teaches by declaring the truths of the Word of God. As he teaches, he should strive to keep a good balance in God's Word. It is important that his teaching be based on knowledge of the Word, an understanding of that truth, and with the wisdom of how that truth is to be applied.

HOW TO JUDGE THE TEACHERS

James 3:1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

The ministry of the teacher should not be taken lightly. The teacher has a great responsibility and has a very influential ministry in the direction of the church.

We are told that we should know those who labor among us. We should know a person's character and ministry before establishing him or her into any ministry of the church.

1 Thessalonians 5:12 And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you ...

What to Watch for

Timothy gave us a list of things by which to judge a teacher.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.

➤ *False Doctrine*

If a man teaches anything that is contrary to the written Word of God, it is false doctrine, and must be carefully avoided.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.

2 Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers ...

➤ *Destructive Heresies*

➤ *Traditions of Men*

If a person is teaching destructive heresies or the traditions of men contrary to the revealed Word of God, he needs to be disciplined, corrected or removed.

➤ *Judge by Word*

We should carefully judge truth by the Word of God.

Acts 17:11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

➤ *Judge by Motivation*

We should carefully judge a leader's motivation, and watch out for those who are teaching or ministering for dishonest gain.

Titus 1:10,11 For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.

2 Peter 2:3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

➤ *Judge Relationships*

Be careful of any ministry that is operating outside the checks and balances of a local church.

Romans 13:1,2 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

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Discover how you can release God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. Through intercession, praying the Word, prayers of faith and agreement, you can change your life, and even the world.

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