

Apostolic TEAMS

Penetrating the NATIONS

A Strategic 5-fold Ministry
Model for the 21st Century

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Matthews Publishing Co.
Shawnee, Oklahoma, U.S.A.

DEDICATED TO

- The ones who taught me to love Jesus
- The ones who have become real fathers to me
- The ones who believed in me when I doubted
- The ones who have allowed me to speak into their lives and love them
- The ones who have loved me in return and speak into my life
- The ones who stand together with me as we reach the nations
- The ones into whose eyes I look and see the destiny of Jesus drawing them to Himself

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PREFACE

In the pages that follow, you will be struck with the cry and the passion that is in the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ. This book is not a book about strategy and methodology, but about the purpose that is in the heart of Jesus and how He is bringing this purpose to pass. Jesus, in His heart and mind, has strategies and methods which we must find and implement.

This is a story about encounters with Jesus, the head of the church, and what He had to say about His body. Jesus desires to reveal His plans and purposes. Again, this is more than strategy and methodology. Jesus is eager to disclose Himself to each of us who make up His church (John 16:13-15). My excitement and fulfillment in this process has been because of my experiences with Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Scriptures, and very special men and women of God throughout the world. The Holy Spirit has made the reality of the church so clear and the manner in which He has destined to build His church so practical that I can now see the certainty of fulfillment. Jesus is building His church just like He said He would (Matt 16:18)

At this moment of unprecedented advancement in the church of Jesus Christ, I have the privilege of being the senior elder, or set man, of a local church, of being a leader in an apostolic team, and of being leader in an apostolic company of international apostles. What you will be reading is not theory or theology discovered in libraries, but Holy Spirit breathed revelations from prayer, intercession, scriptures, and dialogue with some of God's greatest servants.

The International Christian Leadership Connections (ICLC) is a fellowship or network of churches in more than 90 nations with over 6,000 churches. The Holy Spirit, not by our recruitment, but, by His own grace and miraculous acts, has united us. God is joining people together as bone to bone and bringing new life into His body.

I know that each member of our apostolic company realizes that the visions imparted, the truths revealed, the obediences walked, and the plans yet to be fulfilled have placed us on the cutting edge of a movement of God which is the fastest growing segment of Christianity on all six continents. I We are not trying or hoping to be involved. We are some of the leaders in this sovereign move of God. With the relationships formed and those still forming, we are on the threshold of executing one of the most strategic and systematic

outreaches of the Twenty-first Century. We are not networking together just because that is the popular thing to do at this moment in the church world. We have, over the past fifteen years, been strategically placed together by the Spirit as He is building His body and placing members of it together for His glory. We are apostolic in theology and practice through locally autonomous churches, plurality of eldership, regional and national extended or translocal apostolic teams, and an apostolic company to enhance the maturity and the strategic implementation of this vision throughout the nations.

May God bless you, expand you, anoint you, confirm to you and place you in His body in that perfect and strategic position that will cause His church to be built. This is a moment of destiny and awaits each of us. We must understand, embrace, and implement the biblical teachings concerning the proper functioning of the five-fold ministry gift is necessary for the body of Christ to reach maturity. May God open our eyes and ears that we might be presented complete without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:23)

Dr. Sam Matthews

Apostolic Teams

INTRODUCTION

The Holy Spirit, in 1981-82, took my wife Kathy and me into a very intense time of spiritual revelation and expansion of understanding. He began to reveal Jesus to us we had never known Him. The revelations which you will read in the following pages are some of the teachings which have changed our lives.

My heart began to cry out: “Jesus, I want to see what you see, hear what you hear, and feel what you feel.” I did not have any idea what was about to happen. I started seeing, hearing, and feeling things which went beyond anything I had known. This period started a time of praying, fasting, and Bible reading that caused me to love Jesus more than I knew was possible. My heart became captivated by Him and by a hunger for more of His presence.

One night during a period of prayer and fasting as God was taking me into a life of intercession, something was birthed in me which has directed my life into His destiny for me and for His church. This was the beginning of an apostolic anointing that started moving me to be an instrument in God’s hands, rather than my trying to move God to do what I desired. I saw that He was wanting to do something through me by His own Holy Spirit.

This is what happened: Suddenly, while lying on my bed, I felt the presence of God begin to settle down upon me. I started feeling the greatest sadness and grief which I had ever known. I began to weep, cry, and sob in an uncontrollable fashion. I knew that I could stop this if I so desired, but I knew that this moment was one for which I had prayed, and that the holy presence of God was upon me. I was overwhelmed with awe. My wife also recognized that this was a holy moment. She simply watched and prayed in the reverential fear of the Lord. Suddenly, in the midst of this excessive grief I began to pray in the Spirit, and a dialect in a tongue came forth that seemed to reach people far away from me. More tears and other dialect came forth. More grief and deep sobs and another dialect came forth. This grief, accompanied by numerous dialects, continued for over two hours. There were a few moments of silence and then the process began again.

However, the only difference was that in the midst of the tears, grief, and excessive agony, I began to feel my face beginning to pull or contort. My mouth began to turn downward in the greatest expression of grief I had ever felt. Suddenly, a gagging and then spewing action began. I did not know what was being communicated or accomplished through these actions. Again, I was very aware that something holy and powerful was

occurring. This went on for over two hours. I knew that the Holy Spirit was interceding and that the Father was accomplishing His purposes.

I asked God, after nearly five hours of intercession, what had been happening. What had He been saying? Why was I feeling these things? God said: “The first intercession is the way I feel for those who are dying and going into hell.” The Father was expressing His grief for nation after nation of people who were going into hell. I have never felt such love and brokenness for the people of the earth. Then He said: “The second intercession is how I feel toward My church. Did I not say that because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth?” (Rev 3:15-16). At that moment, I understood the strange actions and reactions of my body. I had been feeling what Jesus was feeling, true identification with Jesus the Great Intercessor.

My spirit was stirred at a level I had never known before this moment. It was as though my spiritual sensitivities were acutely increased. I cried out to Jesus for Him to show me how to see the nations reached and the church moved from being lukewarm to being filled with a burning passion to see His glory fill the earth. I was driven to even more prayer intercession. I missed more and more sleep as I desired to be in His presence. I was not disappointed. He met me day after day with new intercessions and insights into HIS word. I began to see something about His church which I had never known.

One of the next intercessions into which He took me was for the great harvest now ready and the lack of people to reach the nations. The Holy Spirit began to pray this prayer of Jesus through me: “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few: therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Luke 10:2). My life was captivated by this cry from the heart of Jesus. I not only read the words, I heard Jesus’ cry for someone to take up this prayer. I said “Yes,” and the results are being seen throughout the nations of the world.

The more the Holy Spirit intercede through me, the more revelation I received concerning the theological and practical functioning of the church. I had always known that the Great Commission was to be fulfilled. I had also known how that the church of Jesus Christ was to grow into maturity, but I did not know how that was to happen. God began to reveal these things as foundational and practical truths started flowing from His throne.

I found myself being consumed more and more by His vision. Today, I am even more consumed. The nations are calling, and Jesus has commanded us to take this gospel of the kingdom and present it as a witness to the world. The nations must be disciplined, and Christ's church must become mature, triumphant, and glorious. The glory of the latter house is to be greater than the glory of the former (Matt 24:14; 28:19-20; Hag 2:9) As I cried out to Him for more insight, He revealed the truths you will read in the following pages. May His glory fill the earth as we come further into alignment with His will.

VISION OVERVIEW**MOBILIZING FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY TEAMS
TO ORCHESTRATE A WORLDWIDE
PENETRATION OF THE GOSPEL**

The command of Jesus is to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16:15). While we are going, we are to make disciples of all the nations (Matt 28:19-20). These commands and instructions cannot be ignored. Just accepting them as true is not enough. We must see them implemented. Jesus said, “...I will build My church...” (Matt 16:18). So, we know that the church is to be built and that the church is to reach maturity. The question to be asked is: How will Christ’s church be built, and how will it reach this maturity? Without question, there are many facets necessary to see this happen, but what are the provisions given to us by Jesus that will enable the church to reach this goal of maturity in evangelism and discipleship?

Jesus has given gifts to His church that become the very spiritual enablement to accomplish this goal. The Holy Spirit revealed to the apostle Paul how this would occur. The important thing to realize is that we are not talking about organizations, methods, or programs. We are not talking about what people do in ministry, but who they are in the ministry. Jesus is building His church through gifts posited in His people.

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we 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. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every

supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. **(Eph 4:11-16)**

Notice the italicized phrases in these verses. The Holy Spirit revealed that Jesus had given gifts unto His church. These gifts were men and women who have been spiritually endowed with graces that for equipping...until..certain things happen... which produce dependency of each phrase upon the other. Each phrase represents concept, doctrine, and teaching which must be understood. This Jesus has in mind. It is not the methods of men that will accomplish tabernacle with men and fill the earth with His glory. He is not filling the earth with religious and church activities, but with His self.

Jesus said that He would build His church, and then he ascended to Heaven. Ephesians 4:7-10 says that after He ascended, He gave gifts to men. These gifts are expressions of Jesus to His body.

Through these gifts Jesus builds His church. This makes these gifts extremely important. They are more than just important because they are really the presence of Jesus being expressed to His church.

We must see these ministry gifts functioning in the most mature, competent, and effective manner because without them the church can never reach the maturity that Jesus wants it to reach. These gifts must be identified and understood. The theological and practical truths of these gifts must be known. Then they must be implemented for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Each of these gifts is necessary for the maturity of the church. Without each of these ministries functioning, the church will never become what it should. Teams, expressing a complement of each gift, must be identified, trained, and released into ministry. Then these teams must be sent into the fields which are white unto harvest.

This vision and the implementation of it demands that we as leaders identify those with five-fold ministries calls on their lives organize them and place them in training activities, and orchestrate their being sent to the world. Each of us must touch our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost ends of the earth.

If all the world, is to be reached with the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, and if the church is to be filled full of the presence of God and grow into the full measure of the stature of Christ, each of the ministry gifts is necessary. They must be functioning

and imparting the appropriate graces into the lives of each church member. If any of these five ministries is not functioning in the church, the church can never become what it is destined to be. Destiny is fulfilled as the Christ expresses Himself through these gifts to His body.

Therefore, it is not enough to send evangelists to see people saved or pastors to shepherd the local churches. It is not enough to send a generalist or a jack-of-all-trades missionary to all the work. Jesus has specifically and purposefully given gifts to His church to accomplish His task. The ministry of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher are all imperative for the building of the church.

We must pray for the laborers to be called by our God. Then, we must train these laborers and develop them in their respective ministry gifts. Next, we must send them into the cities and villages of the world. Then, we must watchfully give them oversight as care so that they can fulfill their ministry.

This vision is as follows: Send ministry teams into the nations with a full complement of each ministry gift. Such teams can be sent into any geographic area of any nation and can plant churches and schools for the reaching and discipling of that nation. These trained teams can also identify and train local five-fold ministry people in each of these nations. Since each ministry gift is essential, we as the proper growth of the body of Christ. We must pray for, believe for, train, send, and support such teams. Jesus said that He gave these gifts to build up His church; thus, we must see these ministries functioning at the greatest level of maturity.

Relationships among churches and the men and women with those churches must be developed because it is time to focus, crystallize, train, and implement teams to plant churches in every nation of the world. Together we can prepare men and women who are earth. This task is great; that is why it has been called the “Great Commission”

The question is not if we should fulfill the command of our Savior Jesus Christ. The question and the challenge become how to really accomplish such a task. How do we get this truth of world evangelization and discipleship out of the theological or theoretical into the practical? The greater question can even be how to make such a task manageable.

We must have more five-fold ministry teams which are truly identified, really maturing, and effectively functioning in the local churches throughout the nations of the earth. Since Jesus has given these gifts, we must pray that more and more people will respond to the call of Jesus and then faithfully fulfill this calling. We who know must walk worthy of our calling and obey the words of the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul: “And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach other also” (2 Tim 2:2)

We can do it! We can make it manageable! We can have thousands of laborers trained and ready to send to the nations as we conclude the Twentieth century and rush toward the Twenty-first century! Respond today this great challenge. God has not asked us to talk about it, but to do it!

THE FOUNDATION

When Jesus Spoke the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20, He made a profound promise to His disciples and to the church. He promised His presence and power by saying that He would always be with His followers even to the end of the age. This is not just some type of symbolic or theoretical presence, but it is the real presence of the Christ. Jesus is not with us in a spiritual expression of a general nature, but is being manifested in and through His people, His body, His church.

The apostle Paul, in Ephesians 1:18-23, gives insight into the magnitude of the ministry of Jesus through His church. The Holy Spirit revealed to Paul that in Jesus’ exaltation He was given a name above every name and that all things are subject to the exalted Christ. Jesus has become the head of His church. The church is His body, and He will fill all things pertaining to His church. Paul declared that Jesus’ very own fullness will fill up the church. The expression of Christ’s fullness must be preeminent in everything that the church is or does. Jesus desires to disclose Himself to the world through His people, not just to have a group of people doing religious things in His name. The church and those who make up His body are in the process of being changed into the very image of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 3:18)

I love to read Jesus’ words: “I will build My church” (Matt 16:18). I hear these words spoken with such strength. “I will build My church” sounds so certain and final. Jesus Himself is declaring that He is responsible for the building which needs to be done. In 1

Corinthians 3:11, Paul states that Jesus is the foundation and that no one else can lay another foundation other than Christ Jesus. In Ephesians 2:20-22, Paul states that Jesus is the cornerstone. Jesus builds and holds all things together by His own power. Jesus is seated in heaven, and His church is on earth. The church, under the headship of Jesus, is to accomplish the purposes of God in the earth. Jesus instructed His followers to pray that God's will would be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt 6:10). In the next chapters, we will see how Jesus Christ is building His church. He is not building with methods, programs, or the abilities and talents of men and women, but He is building with His very presence as he is being expressed through the ministry gifts. He is with us He has not forsaken us, and He is now in the process of building His church.

The church is to announce the manifold wisdom of God. The church is to preach the unfathomable riches of Christ and administer this truth to the world. The church is to make the truth known known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenlies. Men and women filled with the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit manifesting His gifts through them, and Jesus Christ anointing them with the ministry gifts of Ephesians 4:11. are the vessels to be used by God through His church to announce the message of the love and triumph of the Christ (Eph 3:8-12) These ministry gifts are given to equip the saints and see that they reach the maturity expected by Jesus.

Jesus Christ is filling all things with His own person and life. He is taking individual members of His body and is seeking to build them into His own household. These members of His body are actually being formed into the tabernacle of God (1 Peter 2:4-10) The body of Christ is to come into the unity of the faith, the knowledge of the Son of God, a mature man, and the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13). In Ephesians 4:11, Paul says that the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are given to the church for the building and maturing of Christ's Church. Each of these gifts is distinctive in focus and function (Eph 4:7-16) Yet there is a great interdependence among these gifts.

In the next chapters, we will look at the grace given by Jesus. We will see how each ministry gifts functions, how they function together, why they are given, what results they are to achieve, their historical pattern and development, practical relationships, and covenant as well as the glue which makes all of this work: trust through authority and submission.

***THE MINISTRY GIFTS:
WHY THEY ARE GIVEN
TO THE CHURCH***

GRACE IS NEEDED

Jesus desires to build His church and to see the church preach the gospel of the kingdom to the whole world. Ephesians 4:1-16 is a powerful revelation concerning the church of Jesus Christ. The truths contained in this passage are essential in the building and structure of the church.

The Holy Spirit gave the apostle Paul the revelation which instructs us as to how this is to be done. The scriptures are clear that there is a call which comes from God to His servants to place them in the work of the Lord. Paul said that those involved in the work of the Lord are to walk in a manner worthy of the calling which they have received (Eph 4:1) There is a right way in which one must walk. How can we walk in this worthy manner?

Paul knew something that we must know if we are to understand the real function of the ministry gifts. He called himself a wise master builder according to the grace of God which was given to him (1 Cor 3:9-11). Paul was not working to build the church only by his natural abilities. He was building according to grace. Abilities, talents, or skills are not synonymous with grace. Grace is given from God to His servants. Grace is the divine favor of God given to an individual for no merit of his own. This grace is not just a feeling of God toward someone, but it is the bestowing of God's life, love, and favor to an individual that enables one to accomplish God's purposes. Grace is the supernatural enabling of Jesus' presence in a life.

Jesus was full of the grace of God, and this enabled Him to fulfill His ministries. In the same way, when the servant of God is empowered by Jesus, he becomes a partaker of the grace that is necessary to fulfill the particular ministry which he has been given. The

Holy Spirit made this very plain Ephesians 4:7 by saying: “But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gifts.” There is a grace that has been measured out in each of the gifts will succeed with the appropriation of the grace measured out from Jesus. This grace is simply a supernatural enabling from Jesus. Grace is a gift, and the ministry gifts are each accompanied by their respective expressions of this measured grace.

Many scriptural references establish the working of grace in and through God’s servants. Peter states that he had received a special gift and was a steward of the manifold of grace of God (1 Pet 4:10). Paul calls himself a steward of God’s grace and says that this grace was given to him to preach the gospel. (Eph. 3:2, 8; Rom. 15:15-16). Paul also states that he received grace and apostleship in order to bring the obedience of faith to the Gentiles (Rom. 1:5-6)

Paul never leaves the impression that he is working for God, but he affirms that God’s grace is working through him. He states that his work as a wise master builder was according to the grace which had been given to him (1 Cor. 3:10; 15:10.) Paul gives instruction and teaching through the grace given to him. He states that each person has gifts which differ and that they differ according to grace given to each.

The previous scriptures indicate that grace is given in various measures and expressions. These verses also indicate that God does not call people based only upon their abilities and skills. However, God had given grace and ministries to men and women. The grace of God manifests itself in specific gifts and various expressions for building the church of Jesus Christ.

BUILDING IS NEEDED

When Jesus ascended on high, He gave gifts to His people in the church (Eph. 4:8-10) Jesus is releasing His very life into His servants through the presence of this grace and He is expressing Himself through these servants. These gifts are the expressions of Christ by which He continues to build His church. He gives more than titles to the people who lead the church. He does not give advice on how to build His church. Jesus builds through the people to whom He has given these gifts. These individuals are not people who are simply talented with abilities or human skills; they are people who have the grace of Jesus working in them.

There are many practical expressions of ministry which must be organized and structured in order for the church to be functional. However, it is not the program or the structure that builds the church. Jesus ascended to the Father after His resurrection and then imparted gifts. The gifts are not just titles assigned or offices to be filled. These gifts are not simply tools to be used by those in ministry. The presence and power of Jesus expressed through these gifts are actually using those who have received the gifts as tool in the hand of God. These gifts are given by Christ, and Christ alone. The gifts are gifted people equipped with the very grace of God.

These gifts, given and measured out by Christ's own grace, are apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher. The people who fill the office, no less than the office itself, are a divine gift. The exalted Christ has called and anointed specific to people to perform special expressions of grace to build His church. In Ephesians 4:11, Paul defines the gifts of Christ as ministers who have been endowed with the power and gifts of Christ and have been given to the church. As God gave Christ as head of the church, so Christ has given ministries to the church to enable it to function.

COMPLETION IS NEEDED

Jesus has given these ministries as a part of the overall purpose for which He ascended, that His work of filling all things might be brought to completion. The exciting element to receiving these gifts is not that it is what we are doing for Jesus with an assigned title of duties, but that it is Jesus Himself working His work through our lives. It is not what we can do for Jesus, but what Jesus can do through us. These ministries depict the abundant grace and life which flow to the church as a result of the triumph of the resurrected Lord.

The church is to come into completion. The wholeness or maturity of the church can happen only if all of these ministry gifts are functioning. If Jesus gave each gift and each gift has a purpose, then it is necessary for them to operate. Each gift is given for the benefit of the whole. The purpose of these diverse gifts is unity. These gifts are not engaged in a contest for ascendancy, but in a cooperative task of fitting all saints into a perfectly functioning, mature man, capable of resisting error and triumphing in word and deed. Jesus Christ is in the process of filling up everything pertaining to His church. He is filling His church and His body with Himself.

EQUIPPING IS NEEDED

The ministry gifts are given for the equipping of the corporate body of Christ. Jesus equips specific people with gifts beyond ordinary believers. The saints are to be equipped by the gifts given for this purpose. Some of the saints are specifically endowed with Jesus' gifts that the rest might become in Christ what they have been called to be. It is obvious that neither the saints nor the church just simply become what they are to be. Jesus has specifically stated that He has given the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher to the church. These gifts have been appointed or set in the church by Jesus Christ Himself (1 Cor 12:28.) He set them there because they are needed. These gifts were placed in the church so that Christ could finalize His work. Jesus has been faithful, has ascended to heaven, and has become glorified. He has now set these gifts in His church that it might become glorious. They are the equippers who fullness and maturity. The issue of equipping will be addressed in greater detail in later chapters.

DURATION IS NEEDED

What about the duration of each of these gifts? In later chapters, these gifts will be explained in detail. But for now, these ministry gifts are given to the church *until* certain things happen. They are not given just until a certain date occurs or until certain people have died. Jesus said that He would be with those who believe until the end of age. (Matt. 18:20). He ascended and the gave gifts unto the church. These gifts are expressions of the life of Christ. The ministry of Christ as the great Apostle, as the great Prophet, as the great Evangelist, as the great Pastor, and as the great Teacher is being imparted as these gifts are given to men and women. Jesus is giving Himself to His church by expressing Himself through each gift. Jesus is living His life through His chosen vessels.

It is very clear that after Jesus ascended, He gave these gifts. It is also clear that each gift will be present until certain gifts things happen, and specific results are obtained. Ephesians 4:11-16 states:

11 And *He* Himself gave *some* to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, **12** for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the [a]edifying of the body of Christ, **13** *until we all come* to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; **14** *that we should (as a result)* 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 of deceitful plotting, **15** but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things

into Him who is the head—Christ— **16** 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.

Notice the italicized phrases in these verses. The Holy Spirit revealed that Jesus has given gifts unto His church. These gifts are men and women who have been spiritually endowed with graces that are being measured out by Jesus Himself. Thus, He gave some... for the equipment ... until ... certain things happen ... which produce certain results. As you can see, there is a definite progression and dependency of each phrase upon the other. Each phrase represents a concept, doctrine, and teaching which must be understood.

Apostle, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers were all given until this moment of powerful perfection, maturity, and likeness of the Christ is reached. This maturity is not yet reached. We must pray that Jesus will find the willing servants who will allow Him to live His life through them. The church will never reach this maturity without these ministry gifts functioning in maturity and power. Lord Jesus, send us the laborers for Your church.

***THE RESULTS PRODUCED
BY THE GIFTS***

THE GOAL

The ministry gifts are given by Christ so that they might build the body of Christ. Jesus has entrusted His ministry to others and has provide them with the power to fulfill the task. These gifts bring individual believers into maturity, thus bringing maturity to the whole church. The goal is depicted in three ways: appropriating the unity contained in the one faith and one knowledge of the Son of God, becoming the mature man and reaching the full adulthood for the corporate body of Christ, and conforming to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ by having the full maturity of the presence and rule of Jesus in His church (Eph 4:12). These gifts are to enable the body of Christ to realize and appropriate what they are through the power of Jesus Christ. There is a standard of completeness for the body of Christ, and the ministry gifts enable the church to move toward this goal.

The saints who make up the church are saved for service in the kingdom of God. They are built to the body of Christ, and to do so they must receive the proper equipment to enable them to accomplish this task. The apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors, and teachers are given to train and equip the saints for service. These gifts are to train the saints as experts in building the church of Jesus Christ.

EQUIPPING

In Ephesians 4:12, the word *katartismos* means “to mend, fit out, equip, put in order, and arrange.” The ministry gifts are given to equip the church to function. The ministry of these gifts is to make the individual believer and the corporate church into what is ought to be. There is a divine standard that Jesus wants to see in His church, and He has given these gifts to the church for that reason. Each of these ministry gifts is equipped by Jesus with all that is necessary to bring the church to its goal of maturity. This goal is that the body be mature so that it can render the service necessary to build the church of Jesus Christ.

The word *kataristmost* is further explained as meaning “to complete, to restore, to prepare.” The word carries the thought of bringing the church to completion through restoring and training. This emphasis is very consistent with scripture and expresses the thought of the task set before the ministry gifts.

The ministry gifts are given to the church *until* certain things happen. These gifts are not temporary or limited based upon chronological time but are given until what which they are not to accomplish has been completed. The goal is that every believer, thus the corporate body, be so united with Christ that there will be no interruption. This unity is not based on doctrine or creed, but on the presence of Jesus being experienced by those who have embraced His salvation.

MATURING

The ministry gifts are working until the church arrives at a certain destination. They are moving the church to a certain end. The first destination is the “unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God” (Eph 4:13). This unity has to do with the one true faith which has been revealed by Jesus and is to be embraced and lived out by His church. The word *knowledge* or *epignosis* means “a correct or precise knowledge.” Jesus is the object of both the unity and the knowledge. He is the unity, and He is knowledge. Paul is expressing the fact that the goal is the revealing of Jesus Christ to believers and through the church. Upon receiving this revelation, the believer will then appropriate the salvation which is being offered by Jesus Christ. The ministry gifts are to receive the presence and power of the person of Jesus Christ and then release His life into the church. This precise or correct knowledge is known and experienced by the gifted people. This knowledge is then imparted to the church so that they will experience the same Jesus.

The phrase “to a mature man” expresses that the church of Jesus Christ arrives at the destination of being a fully-grown adult. The word *telios* means “brought to an end or finished.” When this word is used for a man, it indicates full maturity of the complete man. The ministry gifts are to bring the church, which is the body of Christ from childhood to mature adulthood. It is encouraging to note that the Holy Spirit reveals that the church will reach this mature adulthood position. This goal will be achieved.

Verse thirteen ends by stating that the body of Christ is to be brought “to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ”. The word *measure* or *metron* means “the required measure, or the due or fit measure.” Jesus is the head of His church, and the

church is His body. The head is mature and full, and the church, His body, is becoming mature and full. Christ is measuring out the full of His own perfection in His body. Jesus is seeking to accomplish something in His church. This something is not just what the church does, it is what the church is becoming, the expression of Jesus the head united to His body. The word translated “stature” is from the word *helix* and means “mature, or full age.” This word leaves the thought of “a certain point of time as in an exact point of maturity.”

This maturity does not have to do with adulthood as contrasted with young children. This adult church is able to minister in a competent and quality manner. The maturity referred to by the word *stature* means that there is an exact moment in time and an exact point of maturity that the body or church must reach. There will come a moment when the church has reached the full measure of the stature of Christ. Jesus will have measured out or given to the church everything which He is. Jesus, the perfect Head, will have produced the perfect body. The church, as the body of Christ, is His fullness. Jesus is God’s fullness expressed to the world. Jesus is the fullness to His body, and the body is His fullness being expressed to the world (Col 1:19; 2:9, 10). For this fullness to occur there is a necessity for each person in the body to possess the fullness of Christ to the limit of his capacity. The fullness of Christ is manifested as He imparts His fullness to the believer. Jesus measures out the grace to each person in order to fill each person with Himself. As each member of the church is being filled with the fullness of Christ, the church, which is the body of Christ, is growing up to the size of the stature of Christ Jesus.

The goal of the ministry gift is not just to reveal the perfection of Jesus as a teaching. Jesus, who is the fullness, is working to establish His church in His fullness. Jesus, with all of His attributes and all of His power, is to find expression through His church.

STABILIZING

The Apostle Paul, in verse fourteen, expresses the significance of Jesus’ giving of gifts to the church through the use of a negative contrast to his preceding statements. The working of the gifts brings the result of no longer being children who are tossed around by different doctrines and the trickery and scheming of other less principled persons. The building up of these gifts causes the completion process to occur. The completion toward maturity affects the immaturity and instability knowing in childhood. Maturity causes these weaknesses to be left behind.

The word for children is *nepios* and literally means “without the power of speech and denotes a little children. In Ephesians 4:14 it is used of believers in an immature condition. These believers would be impressionable and liable to be imposed upon instead of being in a state of spiritual maturity and stability. Immaturity is always associated with this world. This word also holds the meaning of childish, untaught, and unskilled.

The danger expressed by Paul in this verse has to do with instability in doctrine or teaching. He express this with the picture of the winds and waves tossing and carrying the young believer wherever the winds and waves will, while trickery and scheming are manipulating the unstable. The only way to keep this from occurring is for the believer to be grounded in the truth of the word of God. The ministry gifts are responsible to see that the church be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets and that truth and purity of doctrine be a way of life.

The contrast of the schemer and the ministry gifts themselves is impressive. The schemer causes confusion and turmoil in the believers’ life, while those with ministry gifts are “speaking the truth in love” Love is the motivation, and the result is that each body member, as well as the body corporate “is growing up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ” (Eph 4:15), The ministry gifts are empowered by Christ Jesus; thus they are bringing stability and certainty to the young church. The ministry gifts are causing the church to become mature and full-grown.

Jesus, through the ministry gifts, is causing His body to come together. Paul states in Ephesians 4:16 that is Christ:

From whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, cause the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Jesus is fitting and building His body into a living church which is being brought into fullness and completion. He is doing this by “that which every joint supplies.” The reference here is to the five ministry gifts functioning as joints which supply the body. Jesus gave these gifts to equip the body, mature the body, and fill up the body to look like Jesus. The ministry gifts equip the body members so that they may properly work the works of ministry. The ministry gifts are also the link that causes the members to function and work together in proper relationship. It is only as the members themselves grow and mature that

the body can reach the maturity desired. Growth comes as the ministry gifts impart into the body the expression of grace given to each one of them.

***THE HISTORICAL PATTERN
AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE GIFTS***

HOW I SAW THE PATTERN

I gained some of my greatest insights into the practical existence and the function of the five-fold ministry gifts by reading the book of Acts. This book reveals interesting facts about the emergence of these gifts in the New Testament church. The theology and practice of these gifts did not come fully developed and in a systematic theology book. In the book of Acts, we follow the Holy Spirit's work in revealing these truths and then implementing them. There is a wholeness and completeness which is revealed in this book.

Some feel that scriptures does not give enough insight into the proper function of the church, that there is not enough information given to establish a model or pattern or set doctrine or church polity and practice. The Holy Spirit spoke to me one day and said, "Read the book of Acts." I read it and enjoyed it, but when I completed the reading, He said, "Read it again." I read it the second time. Upon the completion of the second reading, the Holy Spirit said, "Read it again." I read the book of Acts three times in one afternoon. On the third reading, the Holy Spirit began to reveal a pattern or model of New Testament church government, order, and practice. I had missed it in the first two readings, but in the third reading I had my eyes opened to this model.

The subject of power is mentioned by many as they read and study the book of Acts. Many say that power is what is needed in today's church and that of the church just had power, everything else would be fine. Others say that organization and methods are necessary to bring growth to the church. Power is necessary and organizational methods are important. The question which will now be addressed is the package or vehicle in which power and method are to be delivered. Power comes from God and is expressed through people; organizational method is implemented by people. We see all these things in the book of Acts. These actions are carried out by men and women who have had grace measured out to them by Jesus.

In the following pages, you will see the emerging and maturing ministry gifts as the Lord Jesus Christ brings government and order to the young church. This model was present in the expansion of the early church, and it is necessary in the expansion of the

present-day church. What Jesus released through these gifts then is exactly what He must release through these gifts now.

Jesus promised the person of the Holy Spirit and made it clear that His ministry was one of power. Yet, it was a power that was to accomplish a specific function (Acts 1:8). The power of the Holy Spirit was given so that believers might be a witness of the Christ. Power is important and is a necessity in the church. The book of Acts is filled with accounts of the power demonstrations of the Holy Spirit. Yet, there is something more than just power flowing from these early believers. The emerging pattern is that of authority functioning in the church. This authority functions both in the natural activities and powers in the heavenlies and on earth. This authority is expressed through the ministry gifts and established Jesus' church in the earth.

Authority and order were established in the early church. The order brought direction and function to the church. It becomes evident that power without authority and order brings chaos. The church was being organized and brought into order, not by methods but by men. These men were endowed with specific gifts. This order was not something left to the whim or design of men. It was detailed by the instruction and revelation of God. These early disciples began functioning under this authority of God and thus brought order, direction, and function to the early church. The authority of God imparted through those to whom He has delegated authority brings growth and stability to the church.

It is easy to find references to the power of God in salvation and miracles. These are so evident that the establishment of order and authority through the ministry gifts are sometimes overlooked. We read and interpret scripture according to certain paradigms. This can be very limiting. It is necessary to develop a new paradigm for the church, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. For example, the book of Acts in scripture is entitled *The Acts of the Apostles*. Some commentators and ministers have stated that a more accurate title would be *The Acts of the Holy Spirit*. However, that title is not wholly accurate either. The book of Acts is more than the acts performed by the apostles, and it is more than the acts performed by the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts is filled with the acts of the Lord Jesus Christ as He was living out His life through the ministry gifts. It is truth and pattern of God. The emerging pattern of authority and order through the ministry gifts is important to see and understand.

“These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer” (Acts 1:14). This verse is often quoted as reference is made to the need for believers to have one

mind. It is important to have one mind and be committed to prayer, but there is more. Unity of mind is not enough to accomplish all that is in the mind of God. Even though everyone has the same mind, it is necessary that real people implement certain actions and methods in order to accomplish something. The questions then arise as to who does what, who has what authority, and to whom is one accountable.

The emerging pattern which you will read about it in the following pages reveals the reality and function of strong apostolic ministry. This apostolic ministry gave direction to all the other ministry gifts.

It will become obvious that the development of ministry in the early church was not left to chance but was directed by God through His servants. It will also become obvious that the apostles were involved in the expansion of the church and in the continual oversight which they received.

You will not see a spirit of independence in these first ministers. You will see cooperation, submission, humility diversity, and unity. The ministry of the apostles seemed to be the element which caused all the other ministry gifts to work together.

THE PATTERN BEGINS

ACTS 1 AND 2

As these early believers were gathered together, the authority of God began working to bring order and direction to the church. The one-mind experience was followed by specific events. Acts 1:15-16 states:

At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons who were there together), and said, “Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.”

When I read this scripture, the Holy Spirit asked me a question: “Why did Peter stand up? I said, “I don’t know. Why did He stand up?” The Holy Spirit spoke to me and said, “Because he had the authority to stand up.” I told God that I believed what I had heard from Him, but I wanted a scripture to substantiate His statement. Very distinctly, in my

spirit I heard Luke 22:32 which states, “But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

Jesus had specifically told Peter that he was to strengthen his brothers. Jesus, who had all authority in heaven and in earth, was setting authority and order in the early church. Peter’s authority is established in the following verses. Matthew 16:18-19 records:

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Peter stood up and exerted authority as he gave direction and purpose to the next decision which would be made. Peter responded in this manner, not because he simply decided to do so, but because Jesus had instructed him to do so.

Peter’s experience in the upper room was not an isolated one. God was establishing His purpose through leadership. There were one hundred and twenty other people in the room. Peter, by standing up to speak, was not simply acting as a man. It was an act of God. His standing up to strengthen the brethren was a delegated position with prophetic backing. He stood up and quoted the prophecy to be fulfilled, and the scriptures teach that every prophecy will be fulfilled (Matt 5:17-18). Pentecost was prophesied and could only follow the fulfillment of someone taking the place and apostleship of Judas (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 1:22-26; Acts 2:15-21.)

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came, and the disciples in the upper room emptied in the streets (Acts 2:1-13). As the crowd’s responded to this new manifestation, authority and order were further established.

Acts 2:14 states, “But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them.” Peter is now standing with the eleven. Why is this important? In Chapter 1 Peter stands up and fulfills prophecy, and in Chapter 2 Peter and the eleven stand up, and salvation comes to the multitude. Direction, order, and function are forming in the lives of the disciples in the early church. The disciples, when they walked with Jesus, were filled with power, confidence, and direction. However, on the night Jesus was betrayed, they entered into a period of great confusion and turmoil. The moment Judas walked out from the last supper, they entered into difficult days. When they became eleven, they experienced confusion and turmoil. The number *twelve* represents the divine government

of order of God. When they were twelve, they walked in the order of God. God's authority was manifested in their ministries. God, in fulfilling prophecy through Peter, was bringing order through the ministry gifts.

God's government and order being imparted through the ministry gifts in the life of His church is important. The church of Jesus Christ must follow the instructions and order of God. The prophecy was not just being fulfilled for the sake of fulfillment, but it was establishing authority and order in the church.

There were one hundred twenty persons in the upper room. All of those present received the same Holy Spirit and the same manifestation of His presence. Why did someone else not stand up to speak forth the word concerning Joel's prophecy? Peter had been given the authority to bring such revelation to the new church. The ministry gift functioning through Peter is establishing order, government, and authority.

ACTS 4 AND 5

The new Christian community began around the ministry of the apostles. These leaders gave direction and form to the early church. It is also obvious that the new believers looked to them and acknowledged their authority, these early believers immediately started caring for the needs of one another. They brought money to the apostles to see that needs of those in the new community be met. The apostles were, without question, respected leaders who were forming the direction and function of the early church (ACTS 4:34-37; 5:1-2).

ACTS 6

The early church immediately encountered problems. The Hellenistic widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. As this complaint was raised, the apostles dealt with the issue. According to Acts 6:2, the apostles summoned the congregation together and gave them instructions as to how to solve this problem. In this chapter the apostles began establishing their function and the priority of the ministry of the word and devotion to prayer, while at the same time establishing the office of deacon (Acts 6:2-4)

The deacons were chosen according to the qualifications given, and then the apostles officially prayed for them, laid hands on them, and set them into their office (Acts 6:5-7).

The apostles began giving the direction and polity for the new church. These men saw themselves as leaders, and the people responded to them as leaders. The pattern of the establishing of authority, order, and government in the early church continues to emerge.

ACTS 8

Phillip, because of persecution, went to Samaria. He began to speak to the people concerning Jesus, and a revival began which shook the entire city. Rejoicing was experienced throughout the city, and multitudes turned to faith in Jesus. (Acts 8:5-8).

In Acts 8:14-17, authority, order, and government are seen again. The ministry of the evangelist was in operation in Phillip's life, and the ministry gifts were functioning cooperatively. The apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of the Lord. These leaders sent Peter and John to give further leadership to the newborn church in Samaria. Obviously, Philip had just been involved in one of the greatest revivals of the early church. Salvation, miracles, and deliverances had occurred, but there was more to happen.

The apostles sent some of their fellow apostles to establish these new believers on a proper foundation. These men were not sent because of Philip's inability to minister. Philip had proven that the Lord Jesus was with him in great power. He was anointed by the Lord with the gift of the evangelist and had functioned adequately. The apostles were anointed by the Lord to lay foundation and to establish new believers. The ministry gifts are emerging together to bring growth, establishment, and permanence to the new church.

ACTS 11

This chapter gives insight concerning the growth of the church in Judea and the presence of the apostles throughout that region (Acts 11:1). The issue of the Gentiles coming to Jesus and the subsequent discussions reveal the function of the apostles and the ministry gifts. Further persecution caused more believers to be scattered to Antioch. These disciples preached Jesus to the people of Antioch, and many turned to the Lord. The apostles heard about this moving of God's Spirit and sent Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas observed the grace of God which had been extended to them and encouraged them to remain true to the Lord. Many more people responded to the message of Jesus as God continued to pour out His Spirit (Acts 11:19-26)

Barnabas found Paul and brought him to Antioch where they spent one year teaching and establishing the new believers. The ministry gifts were functioning again according to the emerging pattern. One groups of believers was anointed as evangelists, as they started a revival. The apostles sent Barnabas to assist the new believers. He immediately turned to Paul who helped him further disciple the new church.

The chapter ends with Paul and Barnabas leaving Antioch because prophets had been sent down from Jerusalem to impart prophetic ministry and directions to the young church. The ministry gifts are now functioning and are expanding the new church at Antioch.

ACTS 12

Paul and Barnabas finished their mission of delivering the money collection to the apostles in Jerusalem and returned to Antioch. There was a close working relationship between the apostles and other church leaders (Acts 12:24-25). The ideas of mission, purpose and delegation was present. There was a sense of cooperation in the advancing, building, and securing of the new church.

ACTS 13

In the church at Antioch, there were prophets and teachers who formed a plurality of leadership for this new church. While Paul and Barnabas and the other leaders were seeking the Lord, the Holy Spirit instructed them to send out Paul and Barnabas into the work of the Lord. The ministries of Paul and Barnabas took on new dimensions for further outreach. They immediately went to new cities, and churches were planted. God was using the ministry gifts working through Paul and Barnabas to evangelize, disciple, and establishing the new believers in the young churches (Acts 13:1-14).

ACTS 14

Paul and Barnabas entered the city of Derbe where they continued to preach the gospel, make disciples, strengthen the believers, and appoint elders in the new church. The gift of the apostles is seen functioning in these men (Acts 14:20-23). The anointing within them brought order and teaching to the young church.

They left Derbe and traveled through several cities until they arrived back in Antioch where they gathered the church together in order to give a report of all that God had been doing. They continued ministering to the church for a long period of time. These men were giving continual and repetitive oversight to the congregations which God had allowed them to build (Acts 14:24-28).

ACTS 15

The function of the ministry gifts is in operation in this chapter. The ministry gifts are functioning in specific local churches, while at the same time they are interrelating from church to church. There is an order, respect, and function which is operational.

In order to resolve the theological debate which had arisen in the Antioch church, Paul and Barnabas went to see the apostles and elders in the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:1-2). The church, along with the apostles and elders, received them and listened to the report which they brought. Debate began in this public gathering of the church, and the apostles and the elders determined to look into this issue. Further debate occurred during this leadership meeting. Peter arose to give a report and an explanation concerning the work of God in the Gentile believers of Antioch. Paul and Barnabas also gave a report of the work of God among the Gentiles (Acts 15:3-12).

James, who appears to be the leader of the Jerusalem church, exercised his authority by speaking his judgment concerning these issues. He spoke of the prophets and quoted a specific prophecy which he saw being fulfilled in the ministries of Peter, Paul, and Barnabas. He gave further instructions of practical dimensions for the Gentile believers. His judgment and instruction were accepted by the apostles, the elders, and the church. They sent the message in written form back to the Antioch church while also sending respected ministry gifts were functioning in power, effectiveness, and interrelatedness. The apostles and the elders were working together. James, sought and decision to Peter, who was one of the original called apostles.

Once again, the pattern of authority, order, and government emerges in the interrelatedness of the original twelve apostles and the post-ascension apostles (Acts 15:13-29).

Judas and Silas accompanied Paul and Barnabas back to Antioch where the letter from the apostles and elders of Jerusalem was delivered. Their ministry brought strength to the church. Silas stayed longer than Judas and remained with Paul and Barnabas to further minister in the Antioch church.

ACTS 16

Paul and Silas began traveling through the new Gentile churches giving them the decisions made by the apostles and the elders. The company of apostles and others with ministry gifts convened in Jerusalem and were giving direction, correction, and doctrine to the early Gentile church (Acts 16:1-5). The ministry gifts were being expressed through Paul and Silas as they ministered to the early Gentile churches.

ACTS 19

Paul came to Ephesus and found some disciples who had believed and had been baptized into John's baptism. He further explained to them that Jesus had come, and they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Paul then laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. He continued teaching them about the kingdom of God for the next three months. He then separated himself and taught them for two years in the school of Tyrannus.

Paul was ministering mightily under the power of the Holy Spirit. We see Paul sending Timothy and Erastus, two men who had ministered unto him and with him, into Macedonia while Paul stayed on in Asia. Apostolically Paul is laying foundation and sending others to further the work of the Lord (Acts 19:1-22).

ACTS 20

Paul called together the elders of the church of Ephesus and reminded them of his labor among them. He warned them of demonic schemes which would come and reminded them that they were overseers of God's church and that they must shepherd the flock of

God. He was seeking to instruct, warn, challenge, and impart to them that they would need in order to withstand the demonic attacks (Acts 20:17-32). He was working apostolically with the Ephesians elders.

CONCLUSION

The survey of the book of Acts establishes the presence of the emerging pattern of authority, order, and government. As Jesus 'original apostles ministered, and those given the ministry gifts of Ephesians 4:11 began to emerge, they did more than just preach, do miracles, and see people saved. They established the doctrine, structures, and practice of the early church.

The early church was built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The original apostles selected by Jesus during His earthly ministry and the apostles appointed after the ascension of Jesus were found working together. The original apostles and the later apostles were all found doing the same type of building and imparting to the churches.

The foundation laid by the original apostles was Jesus Christ. The foundation laid by the later apostles was Jesus Christ. The foundation laid by the present-day apostles is Jesus Christ. The foundational ministry of apostles is not a doctrine or theology to teach, but is the relationally real presence of Jesus Christ Himself being released through His ministry gifts to the church.

The pattern emerges and matures in the New Testament, and it continues to operate in the present-day church. The pattern must be seen, understood, taught, implemented, and perfected in the church.

FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

In the last chapter we saw an emerging pattern of apostolic ministry which gave oversight to the newly expanding church and to the ministry gifts which Jesus was using to build His church. In this chapter, we will further explore and develop what the Apostle Paul meant when he said that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Paul states:

So, then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit (Eph. 2:19-22).

GOD'S HOUSEHOLD BEING BUILT

Paul, in this passage, makes it very plain that we are saints of the household of God. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 3:9, states that we are God's fellow workers, God's field, God's building. We are being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone. Paul expresses that in Christ Jesus, this building is being fitted, framed, and organized into the whole building. Men and women are being arranged and placed in proper order for a dwelling place of God. Peter states that we are living stones being built into a spiritual house and that Jesus Christ is the living stone upon which this house is being built (1 Pet.2:4-5).

God is building a spiritual house that is not someday going to become evident. This house is being built this very moment through men and women who are embracing and accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Then Jesus Himself begins the process of sanctification and maturation in their lives. Jesus is strategically placing together each member or stone so that His church can reach the completeness He desires.

The Apostle Paul made it very clear that as a wise master builder of the church of Jesus Christ, He had laid the one and only foundation which can be laid. JESUS CHRIST IS THE FOUNDATION (1 Cor. 3:10-11). Jesus said: "I will build My church" (Matt. 16:18). Without question, Jesus will build His church, and He is the very foundation of it.

This fact being established takes us to another statement made by Paul. He said that the church of Jesus Christ is being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets and that Christ Jesus is the cornerstone (Eph. 2:19-22). Is the Apostle Paul contradicting himself by now calling Jesus the cornerstone while referring to the foundation of the apostles and prophets? I do not think that he is, but there are some facts which must be established.

Apostle's Doctrine

It is necessary to establish the fact that the *apostles' doctrine* and the *foundation of the apostles and prophets* are not synonymous. Understanding this difference will give us a deeper revelation of the practical function of the ministry gifts.

The apostles' doctrine has to do with the teachings and the instructions given by the apostles. These revelations, the teachings which have come from the Lord Jesus Christ, are extremely important; they are the basis of what we believe. Through these teachings, Jesus has preserved the revelations concerning Himself, the church, and the kingdom of God. The New Testament is filled with the revelations of Christ given to the early apostles. We are thankful for the apostles' doctrine. We are thankful that they received them, and we are thankful that they recorded them. We are commanded to teach these revelations of Jesus; they are the foundation on which we stand (Acts 2:42.)

Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets

The foundation of the apostles and prophets has to do not only with what they taught, but also with how they taught it. Jesus Christ is not a doctrine. The revelations from Him have allowed us to preserve this understanding. Jesus, the person, revealed Himself so that people would experience His presence and the work of salvation in their lives. He did not want the record of these things to be an end within itself that leaves people with only knowing about Him. He wanted this teaching or doctrine to enable others to experience for themselves the presence and the work of His salvation. Jesus Christ is a person who is to be experienced.

What these early apostles experienced was not a teaching about Jesus, but was Jesus speaking, working, and living His life through their lives. He was building His church through their willing vessels. They simply wrote down what they were experiencing of the living Christ. Jesus was building His church through them. Jesus does not want people who only read about what He did. He wants them to allow Him to do the same through them.

Paul gives us some insight into this distinction in 1 Thessalonians 2:6-8: “Having thus a fond affection 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 very dear to us.” We can see the reality of the apostles’ teaching ministry, but we also see that there was another aspect of the apostles’ ministry which was at work. The apostles’ ministry was not just what he taught, but who he was in his relationship with Jesus (Eph. 2:20).

The pattern expressed in the preceding chapter and this further insight allows us to see the importance of the apostles in the expansion and oversight of the new church. The foundation which they were laying has to do with the manner in which Jesus Christ lived His life through them as they ministered.

HOW IT IS BUILT

Jesus, the true foundation of the church, is being expressed to and through His church as the chief cornerstone. He is above all and beyond all. He is the supreme Lord who is filling His church with Himself. All things in the church are to be filled up with Him. As the cornerstone, all aspects of the church, His building, are united to Him and gather their life, stability, and substance from Him. Everything of the Christ flows from the cornerstone.

Jesus, after His ascension, gave the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher to the body of Christ. These gifts were given to build the church. These gifts come from Jesus Christ and are expressions of His life. He is the cornerstone that is laying a foundation and building His church as He lives His life through these gifted servants. Each of these ministry gifts is important, and we must not emphasize one above the other. One gift is not more important than another; each is an expression of Jesus. The foundation which the apostles and prophets are laying is the pattern in which Jesus is operating through these gifts.

The apostles and prophets have a unique role in teaching, training, imparting to, and coordinating the other three gifts. The apostolic and prophetic ministry, in this unique role, speaks with revelation and impartation directly from God. This ministry expresses God's will, purpose, heart, and doctrines which establishes the church on God's foundation. The apostles speak forth God's blueprint of what the church is to be; the prophets speak forth the directions in which the church should go and the methods necessary to get there so that the evangelists, pastors, and teachers might be used by Jesus to build up the structure or the house of God. The foundation upon which the church must be built is the reality of the living Christ operating through His servants. It is not simply people telling other people about Him and His church, it is the Christ Himself expressing His life through people as He builds His church. Jesus desires to see the church functioning in proper order and government and being filled with the glory of His presence.

CONCLUSION

The Old Testament gives a good insight into the foundational work of the ministry gifts. Insight from the tabernacle of Moses shows us the types of New Testament concepts. These types are not significant within themselves; they are significant because of their function.

TABERNACLE

The tabernacle of Moses expresses truths which greatly influence my reasons for using this apostolic leadership model. One such truth is that which accompanies the facts concerning the boards and bars used to construct the walls of the tabernacle (Exod. 26:26-30). The bars held together the individual boards which made up the walls of tabernacle. Each board in the tabernacle represents the redeemed life of an individual who has been cut away from the earth and covered with the precious gold of the salvation of Jesus Christ.

Each board, or redeemed person, is standing upon a silver socket which represents the ransom price of the life of our Lord and Savior. Each board placed side by side with others constitutes the building of the tabernacle walls. Jesus is now building a tabernacle of living stones. There bars were placed in the wall pieces to brace the structure against the desert winds and to give it the stability needed to hold the weight from the curtains and coverings. There were five bars which proceeded from the corner boards.

The number *five* represents the grace of God. God's grace has been given to the world through Jesus Christ. Jesus is now imparting grace to men and women who are to fulfill His purposes for His church. One task of the five ministry gifts is to bring the body of Christ into unity. They hold the body of Christ together. The five ministry gifts are given to the church so that it will not be driven to and from every wind of doctrine. The gifts give a stability and solidity to the church of Jesus Christ. The ministry gifts come through Jesus to His body, tabernacle or church. The bars came through the corner boards and reached out to the individual boards in the tabernacle or church in the wilderness. The bars are very things that cause the walls to stand. They give structure and form to the walls. Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, and all the gifts come through Him to equip, build, unify, impart knowledge of the Song God, mature, and fill up the church with the fullness of Jesus. The results of the ministry gifts are the same as the results of the bars in the tabernacle. The winds cannot destroy, the body is fitted together for vital function, and the church is a building able to support the presence and the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE APOSTLE

I do believe that apostles are given to the church and that this ministry is to continue to function until the church reaches the full measure of the stature of Christ. I know that much of the church world teaches that the apostolic ministry died with the apostle John. I believed that until I started reading the Bible in more of an in-depth manner rather than from a topical or demonic fashion. One day I was confronted with the possibility of present-day apostles. I saw that Paul recorded the Holy Spirit's revelation that it was after Jesus ascended that He gave gifts to the church. This ministry of the apostle was not referring to the original twelve because they were already apostles before the ascension of our Lord. As I prayed, I heard the voice of God speak to me and tell me to look up the word *apostle* in the concordance. This was a very simple instruction. I was stunned with what I discovered. I found that several other people besides the original twelve were called apostles. This made me very hungry and eager to find out more about this subject. This is what I found.

DEFINITION

The definition and function of the word *apostolos* are insightful. The basic meaning of the word is "to send forth." The sending takes place from a specific and unique standpoint which does not merely link the sender and the recipient. The sender becomes united with the person or object sent. The authority of the one sending becomes the authority of the one sent. *Apostolos* never means the act of sending or the object of sending. It always denotes the man who is sent and the full authority with which he is sent.

As stated, this word is more than just a description of what a person is doing or has done. This is not just a general word that applies to any person simply having been sent or going somewhere. Jesus gave great definition to the usage of this word by designating twelve men to be apostles. These men were, without question, appointed to a specific task and called by a descriptive and qualifying name. A new category of men had emerged because they had been appointed and anointed by Jesus. The definition of the word *apostolos* is given its spiritual and practical expression through Jesus' appointment and oversight of these men.

Usage

The word *apostolos* is used of the Lord Jesus to describe His relationship to God when He is called the Apostle and High Priest of our confession (Heb. 3:1). The twelve disciples called by the Lord Jesus for special training were also called as apostles (Luke 6:13; 9:10). The twelve apostles are listed in Matthew 10:2. *Apostolos*, though, has a wider reference and usage than in relation to the original twelve only. It is also applied to some of the first Christian disciples who went forth in the name of the Lord Jesus. The word *some* is used because some disciples were called apostles while other disciples were called deacons, evangelists, prophets, and teachers. In Romans 1:1 and in Acts 14:4, 14, Paul and Barnabas are called apostles without any sense of impropriety on the part of the author of the book of Acts. The word *apostolos* is also used for the following persons: Matthias (Acts 14:14), Adronicus (Rom. 16:7), Junias (Rom. 16:7), Apollos (1 Cor. 4:6, 9), Titus (2 Cor. 8:23), two unnamed persons (2 Cor. 8:23), James, the Lord's brother (Gal. 1:19), Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25), and Silvanus and Timothy (1 Thess. 1:1, 2:5-6). There are twenty-five direct references to persons who are called apostles.

CLASSES OR CATEGORIES OF APOSTLES

Sometimes I am asked this question: "Are you saying that apostles today are equal with Jesus and the twelve apostles?" My answer, very quickly, is, "No." I am not saying that they are equal. What I do see in scripture is that they are unique. In fact, distinct classes or categories of apostles are seen in the New Testament. Two of these three classes of apostles no longer operate directly in the church, although their influence forms the basis for what is operating in the present-day church. It is imperative to see these distinctions so that we can have a mature understanding of the present-day apostolic ministry.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the Chief Apostle, and no one has been or ever will be in this class or equal with Him (Heb. 3:1). He was sent from heaven by the Father to accomplish the Father's plan of redemption. Jesus is the unique and only begotten Son of God (John 3:16). He is the great apostle.

Original Twelve

The original twelve apostles are a distinct group who were specifically chosen and commissioned by Christ in His earthly ministry (Luke 6:12). These apostles are referred to as the apostles of the Lamb and have a unique place for all eternity (Rev. 21:14). Their uniqueness is in the time they spent with Jesus during His earthly ministry. This very special honor was bestowed upon them, and no one else can ever have the opportunity to fill such a destiny. They very specifically were used to see the transition made from the Old Testament period to the beginning of the New Testament period, and they saw the birth of the church.

Post-Ascension

Paul refers to a distinct group of apostles as gifts given to the church after Jesus ascended to the Father (Eph. 4:8-11). The apostles referred to in Ephesians 4:11 are not apostles of the same class as the original twelve who were called before the ascension. Nor are these apostles of the same class as the Lord Jesus Christ. The revelation of post-ascension apostles was given to Paul as a distinctive truth after the day of Pentecost and the birth of the New Testament church. Jesus, while on earth, gave us the example of how He would work through the apostolic ministry. Jesus, the Great Apostle, imparted apostolic anointing to the twelve. The twelve apostles went forth and did the work of Jesus because they were anointed as apostles. Jesus, now ascended to the right hand of God, imparts apostolic anointings to His called apostles. These present-day post-ascension apostles now go forth and impart apostolic anointings to others.

Apostle Paul

The issue of Paul's apostleship has been a delicate matter. The commonly held position has been that the original twelve were the only apostles; yet Paul called himself an apostle, and his writings were included in the canon of scriptures. Thus, Paul had to be accepted as one born out of time, while the apostles made a mistake in selecting Matthias to replace Judas. These positions are difficult to prove from the Scriptures. Deductive reasoning or bias tradition can never substitute for the truths expressed in the Bible.

The Apostle Paul was not an apostle on the same level as the original twelve apostles. He is included in the third class of post-ascension apostles. The qualifications for the apostle to replace Judas Iscariot are listed in Acts 1:15-22, and these requirements

eliminate the Apostle Paul. He would have had to accompany Jesus during His public ministry and to have been an eyewitness of Jesus' ministry, works, life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. There is no evidence that Paul was ever involved with Jesus in this manner.

The visions and revelations which the Apostle Paul had received indeed helped qualify him for his apostolic ministry. However, these experiences did not qualify him as an apostle of the same class as the original twelve. A common view shared by some scholars states that since Paul saw the Lord, knew the will of God, and performed miracles. this qualified him as an apostle along with the twelve apostles. However, it is not an appearance of the risen Lord nor a vision of Him which qualifies someone as an apostle of the same class as the twelve. The apostle had to be present with Jesus during His early ministry. Paul's claim to apostolic ministry is explained in the context of Ephesians 4:7-16. Paul's apostolic authority is derived from the ascended Lord who has bestowed gifts on the people who are to lead His church.

Apostolic Similarities

Jesus expresses Himself through the apostolic ministry. Each apostle is unique, but there are similarities. There are some things that are commonly seen in the ministry of the apostle.

1. The apostle is involved in founding and establishing churches. He desires to establish them on the teachings of Jesus and the apostles (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:42; Rom. 15:20; 1 Cor. 3:9-15; Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 9:1-2; 11:34; Heb. 6:1-3).
2. The apostle has the evidence of the gift of the apostle as signs, wonders, and miracles accompany his ministry (Rom. 15:18-19; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:1-4).
3. The apostle is involved in the ordination or appointing of elders and deacons (Acts 6:1-6; 14:23; Titus 1:5).
4. The apostle is involved in the maturing, training, choosing, and sending out of ministries into the work of the Lord (2 Tim. 2:2; 2 Cor. 8; Acts 14:23; 16:1-4; Phil. 2:19-25; Col. 4:7-12).
5. The apostle is concerned that the churches for which he has oversight have Christ formed in them (Gal. 4:19) and be transformed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 4:9-21; 2 Cor. 3:18; 10:1-6; 11:28; 12:12; 13:1-3; Col. 4:19).

6. The apostle is used in cooperation with other ministers to form a council or body for the laying on of hands so that others might receive spiritual gifts (1 Tim. 1:8; 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; Rom. 1:11).
7. The apostle gives his life to others in the church (1 Thes. 2:5-12; Phil. 2:17; Gal. 4:19).
8. The apostle is a father to the ministries (1 Cor. 4:15; Phil. 2:22; 1 Thes. 2:6-12).
9. The apostle is at times involved in church discipline (Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor. 5; Acts 13:11; 1 Tim. 1:20; Rom. 16:17).
10. The apostle is involved in dealing with false teachings or false practices (1 Cor. 1:1-16, 24; Acts 15).
11. The apostle is involved in church corrections (1 Cor. 11:34, 16:1-2; 2 Thes. 3:14).

Apostolic Differences

The apostles have similarities in their ministries; however, they also gave diversity in the expression of their apostolic gift. This diversity is not based on the personalities or the skills of the twenty-five apostles recorded in the Bible. If so, there would be twenty-five expressions of this apostolic ministry. Personalities are always unique, and the expression of the gift through the personalities will always be different. There are at least six distinct apostolic expressions which are evident in the New Testament. Each of these men expresses areas needed in the building of the church. These same expressions are observable in the lives of apostolic ministries today and are seen as necessary in bringing maturity to the church.

1. Peter was anointed for the gathering of people for salvation (Acts 2). He was also used to bring the revelation of the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10). Peter's ministry was accompanied by great miracles (Acts 3). It is interesting to note that Peter was called by Jesus while he was fishing (Luke 5). As a fisherman, Peter gathered fish, but after being called by Jesus, he gathered men and women.
2. Paul was the architect of the New Testament church. If Paul had not written his letters, the church would know very little about practice, procedures, and doctrines. Paul saw how the church was to look, how it was to function, and he was a great practical implementer. He built churches (1 Cor. 3:5-13). It is interesting to note that Paul was a tentmaker by trade. He was a builder of natural things and was called to build spiritual things.

3. James was the established leader in the Jerusalem church (Acts 15). He was a man of wisdom, revelation, scholarly knowledge in Hebrew prophecy, and a practical implementer of oversight for the early churches (Acts 15).
4. Barnabas was an encourager of fellow leaders. His name simply conveys the thought of one who exhorts or gives consolation. He gave this encouragement to Saul immediately after Saul's conversion (Acts 9:26-28).
5. Apollos was an eloquent man, mighty in his knowledge of scripture, fervent in spirit, accurate in his speaking and teaching, and teachable in spirit (Acts 18:24-28).
6. John was a restorer of churches. During his ministry he received the great prophetic revelation to the churches of Asia (Rev.1-3). His letters bring strength and restoration to those in Christ's church (1, 2, and 3 John). It is interesting to note that Jesus called him while he was mending nets (Matt. 4:21). All of these men are apostles, but they are not exactly the same. Their differences lies in more than skills, abilities, or talents. Each difference represented an expression of ministry which is needed in the body of Christ. Without these expressions, the church will be lacking. Each man represents a unique grace being imparted to the church. Ministry is occurring as these various graces are released. Jesus Christ is imparting His apostolic qualities and ministry through the gifts of the apostle.

THE PROPHET

DEFINITION

The word *prophetes* by definition means “one who speaks forth as a proclaimer of a divine message.” The prophet is one who speaks forth the mind and counsel of God. The origin of the prophecy which is spoken by the prophet is not in the will of man but in the will of God (Acts 11:27-30; 13:1-2).

By definition and usage, the ministry of the prophet is one that is supernatural in origin. Some hold the position that the prophet was nothing more than a preacher; thus, the preacher as we know him today simply replaces this term. The problem with this position is that it is not backed up by any scripture. Prophets did preach, but there was a God inspired anointing, authority, and grace that gifted them to release the prophet’s ministry. The ministry of the prophet is definitely seen in the New Testament accounts, and there is no indication that this ministry would cease.

JESUS

The ministry of the prophet continues in the church of Jesus Christ because He has ascended to the Father and has promised us that He will be with us to the end of the age. He has not left us, nor has He ceased to be. He is still with us building His church. Jesus is the great prophet who was sent from God (Luke 13:33-35; John 4:44). He was the mouthpiece of God during His earthly ministry, thus speaking the things given Him from the Father (Heb. 12:1-2; John 4:19, 12:49, 14:10 & 24, 17:8). The ministry of Jesus speaking for the Father is a ministry being continued through the New Testament prophet (Eph. 4:7-11).

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETS

In the New Testament, prophets are repeatedly listed after the apostles (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 2:20, 3:5, 4:11; Rev. 18:20). This is one indicator that the gift of the New Testament prophet is to be distinguished from the Old Testament prophet and that the apostles and prophets are the foundation for the New Testament church (Eph. 2:19-20). The Old Testament prophets prophesied of the Messiah, and Jesus is the fulfillment of their

prophecies. The gift of the New Testament prophet was given after the ascension of Jesus. Jesus is now building His church by expressing Himself as prophet through the New Testament prophets. The church is not simply being built on the Old Testament teachings which came from the prophets. The One spoken of in prophecy has now appeared, and He is doing the work which was prophesied. Paul expressed that Jesus ascended and gave these gifts to the Church. In no way could this refer to the Old Testament prophets. It shows us that there is a present-day ministry of Jesus expressing Himself through New Testament prophets.

The New Testament prophet is a person of full self-awareness. If a revelation is given to someone else while he is speaking, he can stop and allow that prophet to speak. Even though a prophet has a revelation, if two or three other prophets have spoken, he can remain silent (1 Cor. 14:29 ff). The revelation itself is not influenced by the prophet but comes from God. The whole person of the prophet remains intact while the prophet's understanding and will stand under the operation of the Spirit.

It is very obvious that the ministry of the prophet is super-natural. Neither Old Testament prophets nor New Testament prophets spoke from their understanding or knowledge. They were not lecturers or theologians talking about God or preparing sermons. They were anointed men and women of God who received the words which they spoke because God breathed revelation into them by His Spirit.

PROPHETIC MINISTRY

The prophet's ministry is expressed by Jesus through the gift given to the church (Eph. 4:11). This ministry has specific functions which are released to build the church.

1. The prophet, along with the apostle, is involved in founding and establishing churches. He lays the proper foundation for church growth and maturity (Eph. 2:20, 3:5, 13:1).
2. The prophet proclaims the revelation or message of God which has been imparted (1 Cor. 11:4, 13:9, 14:1, 4, 39; Eph. 3:5).
3. The prophet knows certain aspects of the future. He gives warnings, discloses things about peoples' lives, and speaks of problems. (Acts 11:28, 13:8-12, 21:10-11; 1 Cor. 14:25)
4. The prophet brings encouragement and strength to the body of Christ (Acts 15:32; 1 Cor. 14:3).

The uniqueness of the New Testament prophet is that this gift works alongside the apostle. The work of each gift forms a unit or symphony of expression which enlarges the individual gifts. It is not that the evangelist, pastor, or teacher does not hear from God because they do hear His voice. However, the scriptural record bears out the fact that the apostle and prophet seem to speak directly from God and that this is a key element of the foundation which is being laid. The apostle's revelation is more the blueprint of what the church is to become. The prophet points to and gives the direction and instruction necessary to arrive at the fulfillment.

THE EVANGELIST

DEFINITION

Evangelistes, by definition, literally means a “messenger of good.” In the Christian church context, this messenger is one who proclaims the good news. Thus, the evangelist is one who is a preacher of the good news. Jesus is the great evangelist who brings the good news of God’s love (Luke 19:9-10; 2 Pet. 3:9). The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is the great message which He lived, and this is the same message which is proclaimed by the evangelist.

NEW TESTAMENT EVANGELIST

Jesus, the evangelist, is doing now through the evangelist what He did while on the earth. The evangelist is not just proclaiming the message about Christ but is also being used as an instrument in God’s hand to accomplish God’s purposes. The evangelist’s proclamation is with full authority and power. Signs and wonders performed by Christ accompanies the evangelistic message. Sicknesses are healed, and relationships with God are set right (Matt. 4:23, 9:35, 11:5; Luke 9:6; Acts 8:48, 10:36 ff, 14:8-18, 16:17; Rom. 15:16-20; 2 Cor. 12:12; Gal. 3:5). The word of God is powerfully proclaimed, and salvation is imparted as Christ ministers through the evangelist.

THE EVANGELIST’S MESSAGE

Jesus commenced His ministry with a direct explanation of why He has come to the world. Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah’s description of His ministry (Isa. 61:1-2). As the early evangelists proclaimed the gospel message of Jesus, these are the things which they spoke. They saw and proclaimed that Jesus was the anointed of God (Luke 4:18-19), and that he had come to do the following:

1. Preach the gospel to the poor
2. Proclaim release to the captives
3. Preach recovery of sight to the blind
4. Preach freedom for the downtrodden
5. Proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.

The following verses give examples of how the disciples of Jesus experienced the manifestation of Jesus' ministry through them. John's disciples bore witness of the works of Jesus (Matt. 11:4-6). Jesus gave authority to His disciples so that they might cast out devils and heal the sick; then He sent them out to do it (Matt. 10:1, 7, and 8; Luke 9:1, 2, and 6). Jesus commanded His disciples to preach to the people (Matt. 11:1). Jesus sent out the seventy disciples, and they experienced Jesus' power over demons (Luke 10:1-2). Jesus' disciples tried to cast out the devil (Matt. 17:14-21). Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost was filled with the message of Jesus' ministry (Acts 2:22, 33, 36, 38). Peter's witness and ministry to the lame man expressed the message and miracles of Jesus (Acts 3:6-11). Peter's sermon to the crowd following the healing of the lame man expressed the ministry of Jesus (Acts 3:12-16). Peter's defense before the high priest, rulers, and scribes expressed the ministry of Jesus (Acts 4:5-13). Stephen's ministry conveyed the message and heart of the gospel of Jesus (Acts 6:8). Peter's sermon at the home of Cornelius expressed the message of Jesus and Jesus gave witness of His power (Acts 10:34-38). The evangelist proclaims these truths concerning Jesus Christ. However, he does not only proclaim them, but Jesus has imparted the ministry gift of the evangelist so that His ministry of reaching and saving people might be imparted to the body of Christ.

USAGE

The word *euangelistes* is specifically used only three times in the New Testament. It is used of Philip the evangelist (Acts 21:8); of one of the five gifts along with apostles, prophets, pastors, and teachers (Eph. 4:11); and of Paul's exhortation to Timothy to do the work of an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5).

EVANGELISTIC MINISTRY

Philip is the only post-ascension example of one who is specifically called an evangelist. The pattern of his ministry is utilized to establish the ministry of the evangelist (Acts 8:5-30). In this passage we have a record of both public evangelism and personal evangelism. Publicly in Samaria, God manifested Himself in salvation and power as Jesus the evangelist worked through Philip. After this spiritual awakening in Samaria, and after the apostles had sent Peter and John to minister apostolically, God spoke to Philip and directed him to go down a desert road. It was there that he met the Ethiopian eunuch and explained Jesus to him. It is very important that an evangelist have both a public and personal ministry of evangelism.

1. The evangelist is a messenger of the good news of the gospel (Acts 8:5). The message is centered in Jesus Christ.
2. The evangelist sees the results of people being saved (Acts 8:6).
3. The ministry is visited by God with confirming signs and wonders (Acts 8:6-7).
4. The fruit of salvation is evidenced as people believe the message of Jesus and are filled with joy (Acts 8:6-8, 12).
5. The obedience of baptism is demonstrated as imperative (Acts 8:12, 36).
6. The evangelist, working together with the apostles, leads new believers into receiving the Holy Spirit as prayer and the laying on of hands are administered (Acts 8:14-17).
7. The evangelist, working together with the apostles, establishes new churches (Acts 9:31).
8. The evangelist can be directed by God to a person who needs to be saved (Acts 8:26, 29).
9. The evangelist knows the Word of God concerning Old Testament and New Testament revelation of Jesus (Acts 8:5, 3-35).

SET IN THE CHURCH

The evangelist is not an independent ministry that leads only to salvation and then abandons those saved to others. The ministry gift of the evangelist is part of a team of ministers that make up the whole. We see this as Peter and John are sent to Antioch. These ministers must work in coordination.

Jesus, the Great Evangelist, is seeking to save the lost as He ministers through the evangelist. He will do this through two strategies. The first strategy is for the evangelist to work in a team context to take the gospel to unreached areas. The evangelist goes into an area as a groundbreaker to plant and to reap a harvest of souls. Thus, he opens the way for the other ministry gifts to function. The second strategy is for the evangelist to work in already existing churches to reach the lost. In this local church context, the evangelist imparts anointings, methods, and techniques, and stirs up the church members to do the work of the evangelist. This gift was set in the church to equip the saints to reach the lost.

THE PASTOR

DEFINITION

The word is *poimen* is defined as a “shepherd, or one who tends herds or flocks.” This word is used metaphorically and is translated *pastor* only once in the New Testament (Eph. 4:11). Jesus is the great shepherd or pastor (Heb. 13:20; John 10:10; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2:25). He is ministering to His body, the church, as the Great Shepherd (Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2:25). He is fulfilling His ministry through the gift of the pastor.

Usage

The elders, those who are set in the church to give rule and oversight to the local congregation, are instructed to shepherd the flock of God (Titus 1:5; 1 Thess. 5:11-13). One function of elders is to give this shepherding oversight (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet. 5:1-2). The preceding verses suggest the exercise of leadership through nurture, care, and guidance. The Apostle Paul clearly establishes in Ephesians 4:7-11 that one of the gifts given by the ascended Christ is that of the shepherd or pastor.

PASTORAL QUALITIES

Pastors must have certain skills and qualities that can be expressed through their lives. The next principles are taken from John 10:1-18. This passage speaks of Jesus who is the Great Shepherd of the flock of God. These same principles need to be expressed through one who is functioning in the ministry gift of the pastor.

1. A pastor is one who can lead his congregation. The pastor knows the sheep by name. The pastor is able to lead because the sheep know and follow the pastor’s voice (John 10:3-5).
2. A pastor provides pasture for the flock. The pastor leads the flock of God to nourishment through the bread of the word and through the water of the Spirit (John 10:9).

3. A pastor's life is laid down for the sheep. The hireling is one who flees when there is danger and is only interested in the benefit derived from the sheep. The true shepherd gives all for the health and life of the flock (John 10:11-15).
4. The pastor's desire is that the sheep experience abundant life (John 10:10).

PASTORAL MINISTRY

The ministry of the pastor is clearly defined.

1. The pastor provides protection and rule for those in the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2-4).
2. The pastor feeds those in the church (1 Pet. 5:2; Jer. 23:4; Ezek. 34:3).
3. The pastor visits, strengthens, and leads those in the church (James 5:14).
4. The pastor combats heresy (Acts 20:29-30; Titus 1:9).
5. The pastor sees that everything is done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40).
6. The pastor is an example to the flock (1 Pet. 5:3).
7. The pastor gives an account before God for those in the church (Heb. 13:17).

A DISTINCT GIFT

Jesus establishes the reality of this ministry gift by revealing to the Apostle Paul that He gave "some pastors" to the church. The only place where the word *poimen* is translated pastor is here. Whether this ministry gift is called *pastor* or *shepherd*, it has been set in the church by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus establishes this ministry gift as an entity of its own, not simply as a description of an activity.

This ministry gift exists because Jesus is the Great Shepherd. The Bible declares that Jesus is the "great Shepherd of the sheep, the Chief Shepherd, and the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls" (Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2:25). Jesus is leading, guiding, nurturing, feeding, protecting, encouraging, and strengthening His sheep, His church through the ministry gift of the pastor and shepherd.

THE TEACHER

DEFINITION

The word *didaskalos* is translated as “teacher.” The teacher is one who instructs in a manner which causes others to learn. The functions of the teacher are the preserving, transmitting, expounding, interpreting, and applying of the teaching. Jesus is the Great Teacher (Matt. 23:8; John 13:13). He speaks of Himself as the teacher, and others recognized Him as a teacher sent from God (John 3:2; Matt 4:25, 5:2, 9:35).

Usage

The teacher is a distinctive ministry given by the ascended Christ to His church. The ministry of the teacher is mentioned in three separate lists recorded in scripture (Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28-29; Rom. 12:7). These lists include ministries, gifts, and functions which operate in the body of Christ.

DEBATE

Concerning Ephesians 4:11, there has been great debate as to whether or not the teacher is a distinct gift separate from the other gifts or whether it is the same gift as the pastor. I hold the position and conviction that they are distinct in function and office. Ephesians 4:11 says, “And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers.” Traditionally there is no question that apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors are distinct ministries. The question arises over the lack of the word *some* before *teacher* while it is positioned before *pastor*, and each of the other gifts listed. It is said that the lack of the word *some* indicate that the pastor and teacher are the same ministry. I remember this discussion more than once during my seminary years. The position held was that pastor-teacher was the more accurate interpretation of these words. Four ministry gifts were listed, not five. All these discussions revolved around the rules of grammar. One position, which we failed to investigate, was what the Bible further says about these gifts.

It is interesting to note that Paul omits the second article in Ephesians 2:20 and 3:5 as he makes reference to the apostles and prophets.” This omission in no way establishes them as one ministry. If the rules of grammar are used to establish a theological position in Ephesians 4:11, then the same grammar rules must be used for Ephesians 2:20 and 3:5. The application of the grammar rule would violate scriptural truth concerning apostles and prophets.

It is of great value to note that it is *teacher* not *pastor* that is specifically listed in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Acts 13:1 as a distinct ministry in the church. In 1 Corinthians 12:28, Paul writes that God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, and kinds of tongues. By leaving out the word *then* following healings, Paul does not mean that healings, helps, administrations, and tongues are all the same. Such a position would violate the truth of scripture. All the gifts listed above are, without question, different.

In Matthew 2:4, “the chief priests and scribes” are referred to without the second article with no intent to establish them as the same entity. In Matthew 3:7, “the Pharisees and Sadducees,” which are obviously not the same group, are referred to without the second article.

In Philippians 1:1, Paul addresses the Philippians church by stating: “To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons.” Paul refers to “the saints”, “the overseers”, but omits the article before “deacons.” The overseers and deacons are without question two distinct groups. Paul specifically lists the qualifications for these groups in 1 Timothy 3:1-13. In verses 1-7, Paul identifies the office of the overseer, while in verses 8-13 he identifies the office of the deacon.

The lack of the word *some* before *teacher* in Ephesians 4:11 does not negate this gift from being distinctively received as a gift of equal standing with the apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor. Paul very consistently failed to include these additional words of delineation. The best commentary on scripture is other scriptures. The revelation of the truth is the goal. God usually repeats Himself in order to establish the truth.

TEACHING MINISTRY

The ministry of the teacher is uniquely expressed through the following statements:

1. The teacher and the prophet are obviously not identical (Acts 13:1). The prophet speaks by divine inspiration while the teacher edifies the congregation by means of clear understanding. The teacher has greater responsibility (James 3:1).
2. The teacher gives himself to the exposition of the word of God. The teacher instills in the people a love of and respect for the word of God so that the church can experience maturity (2 Tim. 2:15).
3. The teacher brings people to a new level in understanding the things of God (Acts 20:20-27).
4. The teacher sees the need to build solid foundation in the lives of the believers (Heb. 5:12).
5. The teacher desires to produce other teaching ministries (2 Tim. 2:2).
6. The teacher teaches by example (John 13:13-17).
7. The teacher needs the anointing (1 John 2:20, 27).
8. The teacher needs the Holy Spirit (John 14:26).
9. The teacher needs to speak with authority (Matt. 7:28-29; John 7:46; Mark 1:22).

SET IN THE CHURCH

Jesus placed this gift in His church so that He, the Great Teacher, can continue His teaching ministry. Teachers must have something different in their lives. They must have authority and anointing.

The teacher must teach like Jesus. The teacher needs more than facts or proper grammatical and hermeneutical skills. These skills should be evident in the life of the teacher; however, they must carry the authority of Jesus Christ. He spoke with an authority beyond the scribes and the Pharisees. It was not the words themselves or the ability with which He spoke with them. It was who He was that made the words resound with authority. Today, that same Jesus speaks to His church through the ministry gift of the teacher.

THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE GIFTS

The ministry gifts of Ephesians 4:11 are given to the body of Christ in order that the church might reach the full measure of the stature of Christ. Christ is filling up His church by releasing His life through these gifts. Jesus gave all five of these gifts so that His purposes might be fulfilled. If any of these gifts is not functioning, the church cannot reach its full potential of ministry.

This interdependence involves more than just the necessity of each gift working together. It is more than the fact that they need one another. There is a wholeness or completeness that is achieved when they are working together. Each ministry gift is distinctive, yet while functioning together, they express more than just the sum total of the parts. This reality is one which is almost inexplicable, yet the reality of it is experienced and the fruit of it seen.

UNITY FROM DIVERSITY

Each gift serves a distinct purpose, and only it can release what it is. The grace given out through each gift equals only its measure of grace and none other. The apostle and only the apostle can impart the apostolic grace operating through the gift. The prophet and only the prophet can impart prophetic grace. This holds true for each of the five gifts which Christ has given to His church.

The body of Christ, which is the church, can only reach maturity when all of these gifts are being imparted to the church. The omission of any of these gifts from the body of Christ will keep the church from reaching maturity. It is important that Jesus, through the gifts, is imparting all that He has given to the church.

These ministry gifts are not given just to provide diversity in ministry to the church. Some have spoken of the need that we as humans have for change in the type of ministry which we receive because we get tired of just one type of ministry. It is more than getting tired of or used to one type of ministry. We might get tired of one ministry not just because we need a change, but because we have needs that can be met only by the other ministry gifts. It is not a matter of what we like or dislike. It is what Jesus is wanting and needing to give to the people in His church. All five ministry gifts meet needs in the lives of

individuals as well as in the corporate body of Christ. The fact that they are diverse in calling culminates in their flowing together in unity. The body of Christ, even though made up of many members, is to become one in and through those who make it up. The many membered body becomes unified and mature because of the diverse gifts flowing into the church (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:27).

FUNCTION

There are many gifts provided for the church of Jesus Christ. Paul states in 1 Corinthians 12:4: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.” These gifts include the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, effecting of miracles, prophecy, the distinguishing of spirits, kinds of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, service, teaching, exhortation, giving, administration, helps, and mercy (1 Cor. 12:7-11, 28; Rom. 12:4-8) Each of these gifts is an expression of the work of the Holy Spirit. These are manifestations of the person of the Holy Spirit.

In Ephesians 4:1-16, the Apostle Paul lists the gifts given to the church to equip the believers and stabilize the church of Jesus Christ. These gifts are the work of Jesus Christ. He gave gifts after He ascended into heaven that are gifts of service to the body of Christ. These are gifts that equip and prepare the members of the church to minister under the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul states in 1 Corinthians 12:5: “And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord.”

Paul gives us insight into the gifts working together to form unity or oneness in the church. In 1 Corinthians 3:5-9, he addresses the issue of people taking preference in giving their allegiance to the servants of God. Paul states that he planted in the field of God while Apollos watered. He states that the one who plants and the one who waters are one. However, each person receives his own reward according to the labor expended. He states that the workers in the Kingdom of God are fellow workers. Paul is expressing a diversity which equals unity and oneness.

PATTERN OF INTERDEPENDENCE

The pattern in the Book of Acts expresses a close working relationship among the ministry gifts. Peter was seen standing with the eleven on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14). Peter and John were going up to the temple to pray and the lame man was healed (Acts 3:1-11). The early apostles were working together, and the people brought their offerings to the apostle’s feet. The apostles were doing great signs and wonders (Acts 5:11-16). The apostles gave direction in the establishment of deacons (Acts 6:1-7). Philip received assistance from the apostles in Jerusalem as they sent Peter and John to Samaria (Acts 8:1-

17). Ananias was sent to confirm the ministry of Paul and to pray for him to receive the Holy Spirit. Barnabas accepted Paul and presented him to the apostles for further confirmation (Acts 9:10-28). Several brethren began witnessing in Antioch, and, as the need grew, the apostles sent Barnabas to give further direction. Barnabas sought out Paul so that further maturity could come to the new church. The apostles sent down prophets to free Paul and Barnabas for new ministry to Jerusalem (Acts 11:19-30). Plurality of leadership is shown in these references.

In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers who were providing leadership to the church. Paul and Barnabas were sent out together into the work of the Lord (Acts 13:1-4). Paul and Barnabas worked together in Derbe until elders were established and appointed as leaders (Acts 14:20-23). Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem so that the apostles and elders could help them with the problem which had developed in the Antioch church. James, the apostles, and the elders functioned together until they arrived at a conclusion for the problems in the Antioch church (Acts 15:1-29). Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas all returned to Antioch where they ministered together to build and strengthen the church (Acts 15:30-41). Timothy joined with Paul and ministered with him (Acts 16:1-5). Paul sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia while he stayed in Asia (Acts 19:22). Paul called the elders together in Ephesus to give them further instruction and warning (Acts 20:17-38). Paul is shown working together with Silvanus and Timothy as he addressed the church of the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1:1). When Paul left him in Crete, he instructed Titus to set in order that which remained and to appoint elders to give oversight to the church (Titus 1:5). Peter saw himself as an elder among elders as he gave instruction concerning the ministry (1 Pet. 5:1-11). These references show how the early church leaders worked together to establish, equip, and expand the church of Jesus Christ. Each of these leaders was uniquely gifted by Jesus. As they worked together, they could bring greater maturity to the church.

SUMMARY

The plurality of leadership gives the elders a chance to express the ministry gifts with which they are endowed. Plurality of eldership is not simply for the sake of sharing responsibility or establishing democracy or accountability. The elders, as people who are qualified in character, are the recipients of the gifts; and by receiving these gifts, they are, in turn, able to impart the accompanying anointing of grace inherent in each gift.

Each gift is totally dependent upon each of the other gifts. It is only as they work together that the church can become whole. The grace inherent in each gift can be imparted only by that gift. If one or more of the gifts is missing, then nothing else can fill up its position. Each gift makes up a part of the whole.

The following statements give further insight into the manner in which the five ministry gifts interrelate and thus are interdependent. Together they bring the body of Christ toward maturity.

1. The apostle lives with the leaders.
2. The prophet lives with God.
3. The evangelist lives with the lost.
4. The pastor lives with the people.
5. The teacher lives with the Word.

As has been shown, Jesus is very distinctively releasing the grace for each specific gift. Each gift very distinctively affects certain issues. Each is dependent, yet each is interdependent. They are not fragmented parts. They are expressions of Jesus touching the fragmentation of the people and the nations of the world to cause them to be healed and brought together as His body.

***ELDERS: HOW THEY DEFINE
CHURCH LEADERSHIP***

Elders must be extremely important because the scriptures record that Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church (Acts 14:23). Paul told Titus that he was leaving him in Crete that he might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city (Titus 1:5). The presence and the function of the elders are recorded throughout the New Testament.

Paul called the Ephesian elders together and reminded them of the work which he had done among them. He was being very apostolic in his ministry to them. My point is not the nature of the ministry he was giving, but the manner in which he addressed the elders.

DEFINITIONS

Paul called them overseers for the flock of God. He said that their responsibility was to shepherd the church of God. Elders are called overseers who have been assigned the task of shepherding God's people (Acts 20:17,28).

It does appear that the terms elder and overseer refer to the same person, although they are not synonymous. The term elder refers to the person and makes reference to the character traits in one's life; while the word overseer refers to the office, task, or responsibility which one has been assigned. This is established by the definitions of the terms and by the way in which Paul addresses the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17,28). Paul gives Titus instruction as to the qualifications for the elders and also uses the term overseer in this list of qualities (Titus 1:5-9).

The word presbuteros is translated elder and indicates the mature spiritual experience and understanding of those placed in this function. The term episkopos is translated overseer and indicates the character of the work undertaken. Literally an overseer is one who is watching over something or someone.

If you have elders or leaders in the church, then you must have people who follow. The elders must function properly and spiritually. The government or rule of God is operational through the elders. What is included in the work of the elders?

THE ELDERS' WORK

Elders, because of their calling and maturity, give the oversight spiritually, practically, governmentally, organizationally, financially, instructionally, administratively, and pastorally to the church. The following words are used to describe the work of the elders:

Labor Diligently	Have Charge Over
Give Instruction	Rule Well
Preach	Teach
Shepherd	Exercise Oversight
Be Examples	Lead
Keep Watch	Exhort
Guard	Steward
Govern	

The scripture references for the above work descriptions are:
1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:2-3; Hebrews 13:7, 17; Titus 1:7,9; Acts 20:28; and 1 Corinthians 12:28.

FUNCTION

The leadership and government of the church is operated through a plurality of elders. A local church is to be autonomous and ruled by more than one person. Autonomous means that a local church is not ruled or governed by a central headquarters. Paul made it very clear that elders were to be appointed in every church (Acts 14:23). It is also clear that a local church is not to be ruled by just one person. Plurality of elders provides safety from a one-man rule, provides checks and balances for each person in the eldership, provides protection for each elder, provides greater wisdom through multiple counselors, and allows for a diversity of the gifts and graces of God to be released into the church.

However, even with a plurality of eldership, a need for a senior leader or set leader is necessary. God never has called committees to do a job. Elders do not form a committee. They are God's designated representatives to follow His leadership and guidance for His church. Throughout the scriptures, one finds God placing a calling or mantle upon an individual. That individual then finds people who will follow the mantle of God's authority placed upon him.

Throughout the history of Israel, plurality of elders was the practice. Even Moses found elders when he entered Egypt. Moses became the leader, and the mantle was on him to take the children of Israel to the promised land. We are on our way to Canaan, the promised fulfillment of the church of Jesus Christ. God continued this pattern through Aaron, the Judges, Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and others. He found servants on whom He could place His mantle of authority and leadership. In the priestly system, there were priests, chief priests, and the high priest.

Jesus had His twelve disciples. Within them, there was the inner circle of Peter, James, and John. After Jesus ascended, Peter becomes the lead man. As the church began to grow, expand, and enter new territory, Peter and Paul operate with new authority in different geographic regions. James becomes the leader of the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. Even with the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, the pattern of first among equals is shown. All are equal but the Father is first.

We see a great example of such a leader in a plurality of elders in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 15). We see elders, apostles, and the church body all functioning together. A problem was presented to the church during a public meeting. Debate began and the apostles and the elders met together privately for further discussion. More debate broke out, and more discussion was necessary for proper understanding. Ultimately James answered by referring to some things which had already been spoken. He saw that the events which had been related fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. He presented these prophecies to the apostles and elders.

At this point, James made a judgment, and the Bible records that it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to proceed in a certain direction with specific instructions. The apostles and elders had come to a decision and then led the church to implement that decision.

Another example of this procedure is in Acts 6. The early church immediately encountered problems. The Hellenistic widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. As this complaint was raised, the apostles dealt with the issue. According to Acts 6:2, the apostles summoned the congregation together and gave them instruction as to how to solve this problem. In this chapter the apostles began establishing their function and priority, while at the same time establishing the office of deacon. They did not ask the advice or the approval of the congregation. They led the church with their delegated authority.

The deacons were chosen according to the qualifications given by the apostles, and then the apostles officially prayed for them, laid hands on them, and set them into their office. These men saw themselves as leaders, and the people responded to them as leaders.

LOCAL ELDERS

The local elders can be placed into two categories or types. Category one is people who have received one of the ministry gifts. Without question, those who have ministry gift callings must also have the character strengths which would qualify them as elders. Peter addresses the elders and calls himself their fellow elder (1 Pet.5:1). If elders are to rule and have governmental authority, and if the ministry gifts are as important as the Apostle Paul says they are, then it is imperative to have ministry-gifted people in the local church eldership. Without them the church could never reach the maturity desired by Jesus.

The second category is people who are not called and gifted with a ministry gift, but who have received a call and the subsequent authority that is necessary to function as an elder. There are two verses which gives us the insight into this possibility.

Paul states “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching” (1 Tim 5:17). This verse indicates that there are some who are elders, but who do not preach and teach. Many times, our concepts hold us to the image of those who have public preaching ministries as the norm. Eldership is not a term used synonymously for a preacher. However, elders are to be able to perform the work which was outlined earlier.

Paul also states in 1 Timothy 3:2 that an elder must be apt to teach. This means that an elder may not be an eloquent public speaker with the credentials or the anointing of the teacher, but that he must have the willingness and abilities to communicate Biblical truths.

TRANSLOCAL ELDERS

A very dynamic element of the early New Testament church was the translocal, traveling, or extended eldership which was at work. It is fascinating to see how these ministry gifts expanded and established the young church.

Teams of people were sent out from the church in Jerusalem on a regular basis. The apostles from Jerusalem were coordinating and strengthening the new churches which were being birthed. These teams would regularly report to the apostles and the Jerusalem church. New churches were established, and ministry gifts were being sent to them on a regular basis.

This translocal ministry was not a dictatorial type of ministry, but it was a servant ministry. In the early church, true apostles and genuine apostolic teams were working to build the body of Christ and see it mature so that the glory of God would fill all the earth.

References pertaining to the historical pattern of the development of the ministry gifts and to functioning elders are recorded in Chapter 4. The work and function of the ministry gifts give expression to both the local and translocal elders. The terms recorded in the section The Elder's Work take on a greater definition through the authority released through the ministry gifts. In the chapters on each of these gifts, the practical manner in which these elders' function is seen. Elders are more than just administrative; they are qualified ministers who are releasing the presence of God. The one thing which all elders do is to shepherd. Each ministry gift shepherd through the graces which have been given to them. Shepherding is not just taking care of people, but it is allowing the Christ in one to be the Shepherd and to impart the very life of Christ.

CHARACTER QUALIFICATIONS

It is vitally important that an elder have the following character strengths. Every believer should have these qualities of character, but it is imperative that elders possess them.

Men and women who are called and anointed by God for ministry never fail God because of the anointing on them. They fail because there are character issues that little by little disqualify them from ministry. Elders must realize that a great responsibility has been entrusted to them. They are responsible before God to steward and oversee the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. What others might get by with, they cannot.

One very important aspect of the training of elders and other five-fold ministry people is that of character development. It is not something that can just be taught in the classroom, but real practical oversight and accountability must be required during ministry preparation. This is an ongoing, never-ending process that is cradled and cultivated in working relationships.

There are three passages which give us insight into the character qualifications for elders. They are 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1; and 1 Peter 5. The following qualities are taken from these passages. This is not an in-depth study of each of these qualifications. In fact, it is but a brief overview of the meanings of these terms. An exhaustive study would necessitate a teaching that would result in its own book. This overview is taken from one of the classic commentaries from Adam Clarke.

1. Blameless or above reproach: An elder must be a person against whom no evil can be proven and one who is invulnerable. It is difficult to bring correction to someone else if one is in need of correction himself. (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6)
2. Husband of one wife: An elder, if married, must have only one wife at a time (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6).

3. Vigilant or temperate: An elder is one who stays awake, is watchful, is not careless or lethargic (1 Tim. 3:2).
4. Sober: An elder is one who is prudent, has a sound mind, and has good understanding, not a person of emotional irrationality. (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8).
5. Good behavior or respectable: An elder is one who is orderly, decent, correct in conduct, and carries himself with dignity (1 Tim 3:2).
6. Hospitable: An elder is one who is a lover of strangers and enjoys providing for the physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of others (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8).
7. Able to teach: An elder is one who must have the capability to teach. He must possess wisdom and be ready to instruct others (1 Tim.3:2).
8. Not given to wine: An elder cannot be inordinately attached to wine or abusive or indolent through its use (1 Tim 3:3).
9. Not a striker or pugnacious: An elder must not be one who is ready to strike with fists or be violent and combative (1 Tim.3:3; Titus 1:7).
10. Free from the love of money: An elder must not be improperly desirous of money, be a hireling, or pursue unethical methods for the procurement of money (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 5:2).
11. Patient: An elder must be one who is meek, gentle, the opposite of quarrelsome (1 Tim. 3:3)
12. Not a brawler: An elder must be quiet and peaceable, not contentious and quarrelsome (1 Tim 3:3)
13. Manages his own household well: An elder must be one who properly presides over and governs his own family. He does not neglect in practical oversight or fail to love and encourage (1 Tim. 3:4; Titus 1:6).
14. Not a new convert: An elder must not be a novice because that would not allow the wisdom, maturity, or experience necessary to rule in the lives of others (1 Tim. 3:6).
15. A good reputation with those outside the church: An elder must have a good reputation in the secular or non-church world (1 Tim. 3:7).
16. Not self-willed: An elder must not be one who must have his own way in everything or who sets up his own judgments for everyone to follow (Titus 1:7).
17. Not quick-tempered: An elder must not be irritable or have no control over his anger (Titus 1:7).
18. Loving what is good: An elder must love good things, good people, truth, and goodness itself (Titus 1:8).
19. Sensible: An elder must be sober and prudent in all his conduct (Titus 1:8).
20. Just: An elder must be righteous, upright, and fair in all dealings (Titus 1:8).
21. Devout: An elder must be holy in heart and be pleasing to God in action and thought (Titus 1:8)
22. Self-controlled: An elder must be self-denying, under control, and disciplined (Titus 1:8).
23. Not lording it over God's flock: An elder must not lord it over God's heritage or use them, but feed, guide, and defend God's people (1 Pet. 5:3).

24. Example to the flock: An elder must be a model of what the servant of Jesus is to be. He is not just to tell the way but show the way (1 Pet. 5:3).

AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION

I have found that an understanding of these terms is what makes sense out of relationships and how they are to be maintained. This has nothing to do with working under someone as an inferior to a superior. It has everything to do with trust, covenant, fatherhood, and servanthood. All of these words do not seem to go with authority and submission. Yet, they are the very essence of the meaning behind the terms. I refer to this subject as the very glue that holds relationships together. Without true authority and submission, the ministry gifts cannot function together. Competition, jealousy, envy, arrogance, and power grabbing would rule working relationships. However, with true authority and submission, love, cooperation, unity, and preferring one another is the rule. Jesus showed us true authority and submission. Let us investigate these issues.

DEFINITIONS

The definition of the words *authority* and *submission* are revealing. Definitions are to be precise and clear, but many misunderstandings concerning these terms have occurred. A lack of knowledge of the terms, as well as fear of them, contributes to this misunderstanding. Authority and submission are very strong Biblical concepts. A deep understanding of their function is essential in the building of the church. These terms have become linked with control and manipulation. However, by definition, these words are totally different. The definitions are included here to insure proper understanding of the issues. Manipulation and control are abuses of authority and submission. Truth can be misused.

Authority is defined as: “power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior.” *Submit* is defined as: “to yield to governance of authority: to yield oneself to the authority or will of another.” *Submission* is defined as: “an act of submitting to the authority or control of another.” *Control* is defined as: “to exercise restraining or directing influence over: to have power over: RULE: an act or instance of controlling: power or authority to guide or manage.”

These words can be used in either a positive or a negative manner. The motives behind actions dictate their significance. The heart and purpose of an individual determine the effects of these terms. The persons responding to authority can perceive it in either positive or negative way. One’s heart determines one’s response to another’s authority.

The Bible gives a perfect illustration of the above statements. In Acts 7:25, 35, the response of the children of Israel to Moses’ authority is recorded. They said, “Who made you a ruler and a judge?” However, the Bible states that Moses was made “a ruler and a

deliverer.” The heart of the people saw Moses as someone who came to rule and to dominate them. God saw Moses as someone who came to rule and to set the people free. Oversight is given to leadership. How they use it and how people respond to it are different.

Authority and submission are not manipulation. *Manipulation* is defined: “to control or play upon by artful, unfair, and insidious means esp. to one’s own advantage: to change by artful or unfair means so as to serve one’s purpose.” Manipulation is a selfish and self-centered position which is used to achieve one’s own purposes. This attitude is not the attitude of Christ or His followers.

WHAT IT IS NOT!

Manipulation does not describe the biblical teaching on authority and submission. True function of authority is not that which manipulates someone else to fulfill one’s own purpose. Why is this question of manipulation or proper leadership so real in the life of the church? Either the church gives no real guidance or correction to its members, or the church becomes dominant and authoritative in the affairs of its members. The true expression of leadership is possible, and those who lead must find this true expression and live it.

In the church, ministers are continually seeking to understand the factors that motivate others to action. High levels of Christian commitment and service are not things that just seem to happen. Training, exhorting, rebuking, and even challenging seem to be utilized and are necessary. Church leaders want to influence the behavior of others.

The real issue here revolves around the word *control*. Leaders must not want to influence or manipulate others to do things that are for the benefit of the leader or the organization. Leadership is to accomplish the vision of Jesus Christ through people. Leadership helps men and women become in Christ what He has called them to be. Christ-like leadership develops people, while control and manipulation uses people to selfish ends. The selfish use of a leadership position is not the method to be used in the church. Leadership is not to be authoritative and domineering. Every action and task must be birthed by the Holy Spirit. Manipulation of someone’s life has nothing to do with the true leadership of Christ’s church.

WHAT IT IS!

Authority and submission are commanded by God. The Word of God teaches that these truths are important for the functioning and building up of the church. These commands are not to be feared. They are to be understood. Manipulation is not the proper expression of leadership. The very spirit and definition of manipulation is the opposite of a true Christ-like spirit. The very spirit of Christ is to be conveyed through those who lead.

How is this spirit and character taught in scripture? How is real leadership, which is properly related to the Word, to function?

The character and spirit of authority are important in the proper implementation of oversight and rule. God, through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, has given authority to leaders within His church. The lack of this authority is a limiting factor in the growth and maturation of the body. The leadership authority given to eldership gives the right to oversight and rule in the lives of those in the body of Christ. This rule is a very awesome privilege.

The words *authority* and *submission* are met with mixed feelings. However, the Word of God definitely teaches that authority has been given to some men. The Word of God also teaches that submission is required of all men. The issue of authority and submission is important in the functioning of the body of Christ. Each person is equal in position at the foot of Calvary. Jesus has given authority to some men for the accomplishing of the maturation of His body. God has given great responsibility and authority to leadership within His church. The very character, spirit, and position of eldership and authority will now be established in the following scriptures:

In 1 Peter 5:1-5, Peter addressed the elders as a fellow elder. He instructed the elders to shepherd the flock of God, exercising oversight without lording it over those allotted to their charge. Elders are to be examples. He instructed the younger men to be subject to their elders. Leaders and their responsibilities, as well as followers and their responses, are delineated in this passage.

In Hebrews 13:7 and 17, the author of the Hebrews letter established the position of leaders who speak the word of God and instructed that those who follow are to imitate the faith of their leaders. He continued with the strong admonition to obey and submit to the leaders. These leaders are to watch over the souls of those given to them because they will give an account before God.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:11-13, Paul addressed the need to encourage and build up others in the Lord. He instructed these believers to appreciate those who labor, and who have been given charge over them to instruct them in the things of the Lord. In 1 Thessalonians 2:5-14, Paul spoke of the authority he possessed as an apostle. He stated that he could have asserted his authority but that he did not. He stated that he had proved to be gentle among the brethren as a mother tenderly cares for her child. His next statement proves to be most revealing. He said that he came not only to impart the doctrine of God, but also to give them his life.

Real covenant and commitment of life is imperative if the body of Christ is to mature unto the image of Jesus. Leadership must reestablish its authority and rule in the church and in the lives of the individual body members.

In Romans 12:9-10, Paul stated how authority and rule are to be implemented. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those weeps. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind; but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

FOUNDATIONS

The biblical truth of authority and submission is vastly different from autocratic and dictatorial rule. The rule and oversight which God has given to the leaders in His church are employed with a different spirit. Authority is not authoritative, and submission is not subjugation. The rule of Jesus is released through leaders with a foundation of the Word of God. The truth and its expression establish a unique relationship and trust experience.

Priesthood of Believers

Leadership within the church must recognize that all authority is derived because each believer stands as a priest before God. Eldership within the church is not an elite and autonomous group. Eldership is a function rising up because of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

The eldership is a representative and spokesman for a priestly race. Those who make up eldership are servants in the body of Christ. Elders have roles and functions within the body which differentiate them from other members. In essence, every believer's relationship with God is the same. However, the role and function which the elders fill bring about the fulfilling of each individual member. The elders are to enable the congregation to come to maturity so that it may function as the church.

Covenant

Elders within the church must see that they are not like the leaders of any other organization. They have entered into covenant with Holy God. He is the initiator of His covenant. Believers in Jesus become members of God's family. A unique relationship with God and with other believers is established. God becomes Father, and Jesus Christ becomes Elder Brother. The relationship with them causes all believers to become brothers and sisters. The grace of God brings all into a relationship with one another. These relationships are born out of the covenant with God. God Himself places people in relationship. This

relationship is to be treated differently because it is not based upon man's initiative but upon God's.

The relationship of covenant must not be interpreted by how one feels. God's covenant is accompanied with His own instructions as to how one is to act and react. Covenant demands change of thought and behavior because it establishes God's rules for relationship.

Relationship: The Benefit of covenant

True authority and submission are understood in light of relationship. The covenant made by God is to be experienced through one's relationship with God and with others. Authority and submission express the oversight and rule of eldership in relation to someone's life. This rule must never be seen as an arbitrary position given to one to rule over another. The covenant-making God has established this rule. Rule is to be carried out based on relationship. Respect for the authority in one's life is not something which is demanded, but it is earned.

These types of committed relationship between believers are imperative if God's plans are to be fulfilled. The Word of God expresses God's plan as reconciliation. God is reconciling men and women to Himself while also working the reconciliation of men and women to one another. The church is to be the expression of God's reconciling grace at work.

The benefits of covenant relationships are many. Such relationships provide people we can trust, people who care for us, people who protect us, and people who can guide us with counsel. People with different gifts provide greater insight for our lives. Such relationships provide encouragement, correction, and just a general sense of well-being.

Through deep covenant relationships, we are able to give and receive honor, respect, and appreciation; thus, we are established as persons of worth and dignity. Deep and long-term relationships built on trust are a necessity for the church to reach the maturity which is in the mind of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Relationship and Trust

Authority and submission have no relevance except in the area of relationships. Elders with authority give oversight to those who follow. Those who follow submit to the direction of those who have authority. These relationships will be governed either by authoritarian dictates or by expressions of trust and commitment.

The foundational truth of relationship is imperative to a growing and maturing church. I see the relationship truths as holding supreme position. Authority and submission

become legalistic if they are expressed without relationship being established. Law and tyranny are not the spirit of these truths. Oversight is not given because someone desires to control another. Oversight is not given so that someone will have a ministry. The ministry of Jesus is expressed through people who have been given authority to encourage, instruct, correct, and discipline another's life. Oversight is not just a job with a task. Oversight is a ministry with a function. The function is to build up. The function is not to control.

The spirit of submission and authority is that which functions at the deep level of relating. The deeper the level of relationship, the more fulfilled and spiritually matured are the ones involved. Superficial relationships will not bring the unity, maturity, and power which God intends for His church.

Achieving closeness and depth of relationship requires a trusting attitude. Trust is the main factor which increases the depth of relationship. Achieving closeness is possible only as one allows another to know his innermost thoughts and feelings, and when the other person allows the same transparency.

Trust is not something which happens with just a few simple steps. There is not a formula which can be memorized that will cause one to enter into the area of trust. Trust comes in varying levels, and into each level one must grow. Trust is built on transparency, honesty, integrity, and risk.

It is an impossibility for a person to relate at a deep and transparent trust level with every person he knows. However, if the church is to experience unity, there must be individuals, families, and even churches which are relating to one another at a deep and transparent level of trust.

If a deep understanding and experience of authority and submission are to be realized, it will be because a relationship of intimacy and trust is experienced. The trusting relationship allows one direction and correction while holding one accountable for life, character, and ministry. The trusting relationship also allows one to experience the maturity which is derived from a submissive spirit.

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

True and effective leadership can only be released through a leader who is spiritual. Authority and submission are implemented correctly when the leader is walking with God.

Believers are able to submit to leadership when the relationship is open and honest. There is a proper spirit and character which accompanies a leader in true relationship with God and with other people. The follower must be able to see the presence of God in the

leader. Believers are to submit to God in a leader, not just to the leader himself. Submission is to the authority of Jesus Christ being manifested through a man, not just to the man. The presence and ministry of Jesus are the elements which make up authority. The character of Jesus is the reality for which one must look. There are some qualities which differentiate true leadership from manipulative leadership. These qualities are expressions of the nature of Christ.

The Shepherd-Leader

The picture of the shepherd leading his flock is a beautiful illustration of spiritual leadership. The leader in the church is to have the same tender care and oversight for the flock of God as the shepherd has for his flock of sheep. He is to prepare the way for God's people. He is to go before the people of God. He is an example in lifestyle. As this example, he leads the people of God into safety as he protects them from their adversaries. The shepherd of God's flock will lead them in the paths of God. He will lead them into the very presence of God.

The example of leadership must be from the spirit of servanthood. The leader must not be one who is interested in his own position. He must not be one who is domineering. The Word of God is clear that an elder is not to lord it over those given to his charge (1 Pet. 5:3). A spirit of manipulation is a spirit which is interested in ruling based on the benefit the one ruling will receive. Mankind has always found difficulty with this position. However, Jesus gave us the highest example of the real attitude toward ruling. The one who rules is to be a servant to all.

Jesus' disciples began to debate and to become indignant over the issue of who would be greatest in the kingdom. They wanted position and rank. By example, and now by teaching, Jesus lived another reality.

Jesus said in Matthew 20:25-28:

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. Jesus' life was definitely the pattern after which believers should live. His life became the example to multitudes of believers.

The Apostle Paul was one of those believers who learned and lived the life of Christ. He gave this instruction on how to relate to others in Philippians 2:3-5:

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your

own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.

The Fatherhood Principle

Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of the fatherhood principle. He definitely had a father's heart. He possessed the Father's heart. All leaders should seek to be possessed by the same spirit and understanding as that which possessed Jesus.

Jesus possessed the following attitudes which expressed His heart. He was filled with compassion, willingness, humility, forgiveness, brokenness, self-sacrifice, service, rebuke, correction, and a pure and true love.

The book of Proverbs uses the words *My Son* repetitively. The Word of God is filled with expressive and loving terms concerning the Father's love for His children. Jesus referred to His Father and clearly established His relationship as Son. The Apostle Paul refers to Timothy as having kindred spirit with his spirit. They had entered into close relationship and had developed a trust relationship which enabled Timothy to serve Paul as a child would serve his father (Phil. 2:9-22).

Paul made another reference which sheds great light upon the understanding of the fatherhood principle. He stated in 1 Corinthians 4:15-17:

For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus, I became your father through the gospel. I exhort you, therefore, be imitators of me. For this reason, I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.

Paul is making an interesting contrast in this teaching. He speaks of many tutors or instructors, but not many fathers. The word tutor or instructor denotes a student-teacher relationship of instruction. However, the word father denotes a father-son relationship. One is from the spirit of instruction, and the other is from a spirit of love. One is transmitting facts, and the other is transmitting life.

Paul made a very similar statement in 1 Thessalonians 2:8 when he said, "we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you became very dear to us." Paul was much more interested in them than he was in wanting to just preach them a sermon. He wanted to give them his own life in service and brotherhood.

Paul's teachings on authority and submission can be understood only through the depth of relationship. He is not expressing doctrine; although that is the way in which it is usually taught. He is talking about relationships of life. He is talking about men and women giving their lives to one another.

***APOSTOLIC TEAM AND
APOSTOLIC COMPANY:
A MODEL***

I believe in the function of the five-fold ministry. In fact, I believe that it is the leadership model of the early New Testament church, and it is the model to be used in the Twenty-first Century. Jesus Christ is head of His church, and if He gives gifts to His church to do all that Ephesians 4:1-16 says, then it is imperative and urgent to see that these gifts function at the optimum level. Jesus is living His life through these gifts and is building His church. He said that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, while Jesus is the cornerstone.

Apostles gave the oversight and direction to the early church. According to the scriptures which we have been studying, apostles are still to give oversight and direction to the church. The pattern which Jesus began is the pattern which He desires to continue. He will continue with these gifts doing what they were designed to do until the church becomes what He has destined it to be.

ELDERS-CHURCH

Each local church is to have the oversight of a group of elders. These elders are to give oversight to the church by shepherding the flock of God. Not every local church will give all five ministry gifts resident in its fellowship. Yet, all these gifts are necessary for the church to become mature.

APOSTOLIC TEAMS - ELDERS/CHURCH

Thus, the need arises for an apostolic team to bring the church to maturity. An apostolic team is to be formed with at least a complement of each of these ministry gifts. There may be more than one apostle or more than one of any of these gifts represented on the team. The size of the team depends upon the number of churches to be served. An apostolic team ministers to the local elders and to the church body to enhance their growth and maturity. The elders can minister to the saints and equip them even further for service. Apostolic teams will find that the number of churches desiring oversight will grow either because new churches are being planted or because existing churches are directed by Jesus to enter into relationship with the team.

APOSTOLIC TEAMS - NEW FIVE-FOLD GIFTS

Apostolic teams do not minister only to the local elders and the local church with that church's needs in mind. They look for other body members with five-fold ministry callings. The team's desire to prepare people for effective ministry, they will learn ministry in the local church context in order to develop the maturity to function as elders. As these ministries mature, some will be called of God to form teams and give oversight to other spheres of churches.

APOSTOLIC TEAMS - NEW SPHERES

As these new teams go forth planting churches and giving oversight to them, a new sphere of churches will begin, and it will be necessary to provide oversight to these growing churches. Thus, the process begins again. These teams will find more five-fold ministry called people who will be trained and matured in the local churches and who will be sent out to work in existing churches or to plant new churches. A new sphere of churches will grow, and a new apostolic team for oversight will be necessary. After this happens several times, there are local churches and spheres of churches which need oversight. In this process, spheres of churches overlap at local church and leadership levels. Apostolic teams in regions begin to overlap, and the growing number of apostolic teams need further direction and maturity.

APOSTOLIC COMPANY

AS the spheres grow and the need for a growing number of apostolic teams increases, there is a need for further maturity and coordination. Mature apostles from the apostolic teams and spheres are then needed to form an apostolic company to bring further growth and maturity to the apostolic team leaders and to coordinate the expansion of the kingdom of God in each of these spheres.

The apostolic company must be formed according to the team concept for the development of five-fold ministry. They are called to minister to, equip, and give themselves to the leaders who make up these teams.

The apostolic company is not at the top of the hierarchy. They are to be servants of all. Everything about the apostolic company functions so that leaders in the body of Christ and the church of Jesus Christ reach maturity. Apostolic teams are not to be served but to serve. The principles of fatherhood, sonship, covenant, and loyalty must describe this company.

The apostolic company must never exert apostolic authority for the sake of control or personal advancement. However, apostolic authority is to be exerted as a mother tenderly caring for her children or a father leading his children. 1 Thessalonians 2:8-12 states:

Having thus a fond affection 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 very dear to us. For you recall, brethren, our labor and guardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. The roles of an apostolic team are the same as the roles of an apostolic company with the exception being a lesser organizational involvement for the coordination of the larger sphere. The following are some examples of possible roles of the company.

ROLES OF THE COMPANY

1. Loving the brethren
2. Articulating the values by which we are guided
3. Building and stimulating vision through the leaders in each sphere
4. Giving direction to the leaders of each sphere: local leaders and churches working out particular strategies for reach region
5. Equipping each sphere to reach maturity and its full potential in God
6. Mobilizing the spheres for greater effectiveness
7. Releasing the volume of gifts that have been given into our hands, not just mobilizing the presently recognized ministries
8. Coordinating the equipping among the nations
9. Channeling resources
10. Caring
11. Encouraging
12. Correcting
13. Disciplining
14. Mentoring
15. Providing a forum for appeal
16. Initiating effective communication among the spheres
17. Creating a context where fellowship is happening so that cross-fertilization can happen and a feeling of family can occur
18. Giving oversight to the establishment of Bible colleges and training programs

IN REVIEW

An Apostolic Company is a group of mature apostles placed together by the head of the church, Jesus Christ, who have oversight in the ministries of apostolic teams.

An Apostolic Team is made up of at least a complement of each five-fold ministry gift and has spiritual, regional, and geographic oversight in the churches of specific areas. These regions may include national and international configurations of oversight. The Apostolic Team gives oversight to the local elders/five-fold ministry gifts. A Team consists of elders/five-fold ministry gifts who give oversight to a local church.

An apostolic company, an apostolic team, and local elders, with the various expressions and strategies of this model, are all given to build the church of Jesus Christ. This is the procedure and strategy which must be implemented in order for the numerous new laborers to come forth, be trained, and sent to the nations. This is a never ending and always expanding expression of Christ's life.