

Ephesians Chapter Four - Verses 11

Verse 11

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. Paul here numerates the various gifts and positions of leadership used by the Lord to promote unity in His body. His great plan for edification and unity began with the *apostles*. Jesus originally called twelve men as apostles. The word apostle means “a messenger or one sent on a mission,” and this is the purpose of the apostles of Christ. They were to take the gospel to the whole world. These special men (with the exception of Judas who was later replaced by Matthias) had an essential part in establishing the unity to be found in Christ's church. Paul, of course, was included in this number because he was an apostle of Christ to the Gentiles. All these apostles preached the same gospel and called upon all to unite in connection with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The *prophets* were special spokesmen for God who received divine revelation from the Holy Spirit. This promoted unity for “no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (I Peter 1:20,21).

The work of unity was further established by giving some to be *evangelists*. An evangelist was a preacher of the gospel. These men, like everyone else, were under obligation to “speak as the oracles of God” (I Peter 4:11). In doing so, they would promote the unity that word called for.

Then Paul mentions *pastors* and *teachers*. Each local church of Christ was to have its own pastors and teachers. The pastors (or shepherds) are elsewhere identified as *elders* (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Titus 1:5; James 5:14) and *bishops* (I Timothy 3:1; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:7). While overseeing the local church, these men fed the flock spiritual food (Acts 20:28). With their special qualifications (I Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9), they were the kind of men who could keep unity and peace within the congregation. One of their qualifications was “able to teach” (I Timothy 3:2). They, along with others, had the ability to teach. Therefore, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers represented God's gifts to the church. Of course, it must be understood that this list was not intended to be exhaustive (I Corinthians 12:28).

There is the office of an apostle and a gift of apostleship – they are not one in the same.

Many biblical scholars believe the office of Apostle is no longer in function, one of the requirements to have the office of Apostle was to see Jesus. Now we can suppose that Jesus could appear to someone as He did to the Apostle Paul, who calls himself one “abnormally born”, but that office was established at the beginning of the church.

Question...what do you believe...is the office of an Apostle still in effect today?

It might be more likely that there are some who have the gift of Apostleship. They are church planters, missionaries, those individuals who are forging ahead in unreached areas, reaching, and teaching and establishing churches and ministry. They are doing the missionary work like Paul. In scripture, we see Barnabas, Apollos and others who didn't have the office of Apostle but seemed to have the gift and the calling on their lives.

Many scholars believe that the Office of Prophecy was only for the Old Testament. The office of Prophet was to train, equip, direct, correct, warn, and govern the church. In [Jeremiah 1:4-10](#) we see a biblical example and personal commission which gives insight into the distinctions between the office of a prophet and the gift of prophecy. So, again, there is the office and the gift that are not one in the same.

Question...after reading Jeremiah do you believe the Office of Prophet is still relevant today?

We do believe there is the gift of prophecy. It's a gift of the Holy Spirit for edification, exhortation, and comfort. The spiritual gift of prophecy means to “speak forth” or declare the divine will, to interpret the purposes of God, or to make known in any way the truth of God which is designed to influence people. Many people misunderstand the gift of prophecy to be the ability to predict the future. While knowing something about the future may sometimes have been an aspect of the gift of prophecy, it was primarily a gift of proclamation (“forth-telling”), not prediction (“fore-telling”).

For the next three mentioned by Paul, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, it is believed that “office” and “gift” are one in the same and it is just a matter of language. It is inferred that Philip walked in the Office of an Evangelist in Acts 8:4-40

Evangelists are people who proclaim the good news of the gospel. A person with the gift of evangelism is often someone who travels from place to place to preach the gospel and call for repentance. The human authors of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—are sometimes called “the Evangelists” because they recorded the ministry of Jesus Christ. An evangelist’s job is to convert nonbelievers to the Christian faith. Many who travel from church to church and who call themselves evangelists are not really evangelists because they only preach in church buildings to Christians, and they are not equipped with gifts of healings or miracles.

Question...do you have to perform gifts of healing/miracles to be considered an Evangelist?

Pastors are shepherds of a body of believers. **Pastors** are to act like shepherds by caring for the flock, and this care includes teaching. The New Testament typically uses the words "bishops" (Acts 20:28) and "presbyter" (1 Peter 5:1) to indicate the ordained leadership in early Christianity. **Pastors** are leaders in religious organizations, charged with helping to shape the vision, direction and messaging for their congregations. A **pastor's duties** include providing religious, moral, and emotional support for congregants. A **pastor** is also charged with being the public face of his houses of worship. Effective pastors are usually gifted with teaching as well, so everything noted about teachers applies to Pastors as well.

Teachers are in the body of Christ to make the word clear, to teach believers how to practically apply the word of God to their everyday lives. A teacher must be consecrated (dedicated, set apart) to the task of teaching as well as to the Christian life. A good teacher must be able to say, “It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. 2:20). A faithful teacher has a strong love for God, His holy word and for the Lord’s church. Good teachers feel devoted to the task of teaching and to those whom they teach. Teachers walk by faith because they cannot lead where they have not gone. Teachers are purposeful and not only do they walk by faith, but they are also faithful. Good teachers have vision seeing what students can become and leading them there. Of course, teachers are patient, cheerful, planners and tenacious.