

4. PASTOR/TEACHERS

Now when we speak of a pastor, this gift that Jesus gave to the Church, we need to understand that a pastor is also a teacher. There is no such thing as just a pastor. We see this in I Timothy 5:17, **“Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.”** Those two functions define the teaching shepherd. You can be a teacher without being a pastor, and we will look at that, but to be a pastor and not a teacher is not biblical!

Now the word for, “pastor” in the Greek is POIMEN, and it speaks of one who feeds, one who leads, one who cares for a group of people just like a shepherd does for a group of sheep. That is the heart of a pastor.

There are basically three primary responsibilities that a pastor has for his flock. Let’s look at those for a few minutes.

First of all the pastor is to guide those who have been entrusted to him by God. The pastor is to lead his flock down the right path.

Secondly, we see that the pastor is to help his flock to graze. I know that sounds kind of funny, but hear me out. As a shepherd we are to bring the sheep into rich, fertile fields to feed upon, that is the Word of God. We are to teach them, for if we don’t they will be spiritually sick and malnourished. There are so many winds of doctrine blowing through the Church today, no wonder the sheep are so sick, weak, and easy prey for the wolves that are out there.

The third and last point is that a pastor is to guard his sheep. As a pastor, as a shepherd, I am to guard the sheep from the wolves that come in disguised as Christians, as sheep, but are ready to destroy and devour the sheep with their false doctrine. A shepherd needed to be on guard at all times, watching over the sheep. If a wolf was spotted, they would launch their rod to send those wolves running away.

In all three of these areas we have just looked at, **guiding, grazing and guarding**, they all contain one important element, the teaching of God’s Word! You teach them so they know where to go. You teach them so they can feed on the nutrients of God’s Word and be strengthened in the inner man. You teach them so they are aware of the danger that is out there. It is as Nehemiah 8:8 says, **“So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.”** Ezra read the Word, explained the Word, and then he applied the Word of God to their lives! That is what a shepherd is to do!

5. TEACHERS

The last of the gifted men that Christ gave to the Church are teachers. Keep in mind that this is a very broad office. Think about it for a minute. We have teachers at Bible Colleges, teachers who teach at seminars, teachers who teach small group Bible studies, teachers who teach through books they write. We have teachers that teach the young children in Sunday School, the middle aged children in Sunday School, and the teenagers in Youth Group, home Bible study and-so-on. All are very important. All are the same office, but used in a different way.

The problem many times is that people take teaching, the teaching of God’s Word, far too lightly. Remember what James tells us in James 3:1, **“My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.”** You see, if you are not teaching right, be it a Bible study, Sunday School, in books, at Seminars, or whatever, then you are misleading God’s people and He will hold you accountable for that! I am not trying to scare you, but from what I have seen, especially from the Seeker Friendly, Purpose Driven and Emerging Church, they are taking away or adding to God’s Word. They see no problem with that, and I think they are taking what James has said far too lightly! Thus, stick to the Word of God and you won’t go wrong. The gift of teachers that Christ has given to His church!

Let me leave you with this to think about as we finish up looking at these gifted men that Christ has given to the Church to build it up, to help it go out and do the work of the ministry. Every believer today is indebted directly or indirectly to these specially gifted men God has given to His Church. Through their preaching, teaching, writing, exhortation, and other ministries, they lead the lost to Christ, enrich our knowledge of God and His Word, and encourage us, **“to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which [we] have been called.”** Ephesians 4:1.

All of the gifts that Christ gives to individuals, and to the church as a whole, are gifts which He Himself perfectly exemplified. If ever there was a preacher it was Christ. If ever there was a teacher, ruler, administrator, servant, helper, or giver it was Christ. He is the perfect illustration and example of every gift, because His gifts to us are gracious gifts of Himself. In saying all that, remember these gifts of Evangelists, Pastor/Teachers, and Teachers are given as gifts to the Church by Jesus to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ‘til we are transformed into His image when we go to be with Him!

What the Bible says about . . . Gifts of the Spirit Part 1

As we look at what the gifts of the Spirit are, we need to begin in I Corinthians 12:1 where Paul tells us, **“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant.”** Verse 1 it should read, **“Now concerning spirituals”** for the word **“gifts”** was added for clarity but it truly is not needed because the context of these verses tells us that Paul is referring to gifts. The Greek word that is used here for “spirituals” is PNEUMATIKA, and the IKA ending on a word means, “characterized or controlled by.” Adam Clarke defines these spirituals this way, “Gracious endowments, leading to miraculous results . . . These all came by the extraordinary influences of the Holy Spirit.”

Let’s paraphrase what Paul is saying here to help us to understand it more clearly. “Now concerning the things of the Spirit that are controlled by the Spirit.” Do you see how important it is to have a correct understanding of what Paul is saying here? But again, many put their own ideas, their own thoughts here and what they believe is in stark contrast to what Paul was saying here in Corinthians! We see people running to and fro for this healing service on Thursday, another on Monday, and-so-on. When the reality is, we don’t control the Holy Spirit or place our demands on Him as to when healing services are going to take place. The Spirit of God is in control and He gives gifts as He sees fit, not necessarily when we want them. These are the things of the Spirit that are controlled by the Spirit, may we not forget that!

There are those who deny these gifts of the Spirit or at least part of them, and others who abuse them. But without the gifts functioning in the Church, without the operation of these spiritual gifts, the Church is lifeless and ineffective in its mission. It is the Spirit of God that draws people to Christ and the Spirit of God uses the body of Christ to do that. He uses us through the various gifts that He bestows upon us. So, let’s not be ignorant of these things!



You see, God is going to give to us the things we need to do the work He has called us to do, and He tells us just to ask Him! It is as Vance Havner said, "We will move this world not by criticism of it, nor conformity to it – but by combustion within it of lives ignited by the Spirit of God." Folks, we need the power of God upon our lives today just as much as the first century church did. Why is that?

John Courson gives to us an excellent example of why it is needed, what it is all about. He tells us that, "The steam in a locomotive does not exist to toot the whistle. Its purpose is to power the engine and move the train. So too, the empowering of the Spirit is not given for people to feel 'Holy Ghost goose bumps', emotional highs, or warm fuzzy feelings. The Spirit comes upon people in order that the message of the Gospel might be moved throughout the world." May we not forget that. Let us not be ignorant of these things as we look at the gifts of the Spirit that are given to us as He wills, not as we will!

The Scriptures speak of these spiritual gifts in four different portions of Scripture and some of them repeat the gifts, and some add new gifts to the list. You can find these in Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11, I Corinthians 12:4-11 and I Corinthians 12:28. To help simplify this, let me put the gifts in these three categories.

1. Ministering Gifts: These are the gifts of an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor/teacher, teacher, exhortation, discerner of the spirits, the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge.

2. Serving Gifts: These are the gifts of ministering, giving, leadership, showing mercy and faith.

3. Sign Gifts: These gifts are the gifts of prophecy, healing, miracles, tongues, and interpreting tongues.

Now keep in mind that there may be more gifts than what I have listed. Also keep in mind that every believer has a spiritual gift and I believe God will give to each believer what they need in a given situation.

We are going to begin looking at gifted men that Christ has given to the Church. In Ephesians 4:7-8, 11-16 we see that Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastor/Teachers and Teachers Jesus has given to the Church to build them up in the faith. He has given these men to the Church so the Church will not be tossed to and fro by all the winds of false doctrine that come blowing through the Church. They are to keep us strong and help us so we can go out and do the work of the ministry. So let's look at these gifted men that Christ has given to the Church.

1. APOSTLES

The first appointment, the first gift, that God gave to the church, was men who were apostles. For the office of primary apostles, there were certain criteria that had to be met. We are told in Mark 3:14 these apostles had to be hand picked by the Lord. We are told in Acts 1:21-22 that they had to be with Jesus from the beginning of His ministry and eyewitnesses of His resurrection. We are told in John 14:26 that God used them to give the Church its doctrine. In Ephesians 2:20-21 we are told that they laid the foundation of the Church. In II Corinthians 12:2 we are told that they had power to do miracles. And in Matthew 19:28 and Revelation 21:14 we are told that they have a future role in the Kingdom Age and in the New Jerusalem.

The primary office of Apostles has passed off the scene with the death of these men, the apostles. Yes, we are all apostles in a sense because we too have been sent by the Lord to bring the Good News of Jesus to this world, but the office of apostles has passed off the scene. The foundation for the Church has been laid.

2. PROPHETS

Now as we study prophets, understand that this is not speaking of the gift of prophecy, which we will deal with when we study that gift. But this is speaking of the office of a prophet. What a prophet did was to be someone who forth-told the things of God and foretold the things of God. That is, he spoke the Words of God and he also spoke of future events with 100% accuracy as God revealed things to them.

The Hebrew word for "prophet" is NABIY, and it carries with it the idea of someone who spoke on the behalf of another. The biblical thought is that they spoke for God. The New Testament Greek word, PROPHETES, carries with it the same idea.

Now, as we looked at the apostles, they moved around a lot. They had more of an itinerant ministry. As they traveled they laid down the doctrine of God to the people. Whereas the prophets tended to be more local, speaking the Word of God to the local church, encouraging them to move ahead, admonishing them not to give up, strengthening them in the faith, and-so-on.

Once again I believe that this office has passed off the scene as they too were laying the foundation for the Church to be built upon. Interestingly enough, we find no mention of apostles or prophets in the Pastoral Epistles. Why? Because they were passing off the scene and would not be in the Church anymore. They laid the foundation, as Ephesians 2:20-21 tells us.

You see, once the foundation was laid by the apostles and the prophets, their work was completed, and now the walls of the building are being put together by the Evangelists, Pastor/Teachers and Teachers. We are "**living stones**" building up the Temple of God, as I Peter 2:5 tells us. So I believe the office of a prophet has passed off the scene even though we all are prophets in the broadest sense of the word in that we are speaking forth the Words of God.

3. EVANGELIST

Evangelist is another gift that Christ has given to the Church. The Greek word is EUAGGELISTES, which means, "one who declares good news." In other words it speaks of proclaiming the Gospel message. The work of the evangelist is to preach and explain the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ to those who have not yet believed. He is a proclaimer of salvation by grace through faith in the Son of God.

As you go and share your faith with others, that is not the gift that Paul is speaking of here but we are all called to be witnesses of Him. But there are some who have this gift. They are evangelists. You talk to people who have this office, and people are getting saved all the time. Waiting in line at the movies, people get saved. The waitress at the restaurant gets saved while the person is ordering his meal. He comes out of the bathroom and someone got saved in there! Pastor Raul Reis can mess up a Bible story and 300 people get saved! And it makes you nuts, thinking their must be something wrong with you. You present the same information, the same message as they do, but you don't have the same results. It is because they have this gift. It is a divine appointment by God and they do get results.

The New Testament evangelist went to where the sinners were. He didn't wait for them to come into the Church. They preached the good news and as people got saved, they would remain with them until a pastor could be raised up or sent to these new believers.

Two examples of this gift in operation are seen in the life of Peter in Acts 2:22-24, 37-41 and Philip in Acts 8:5-8. This gift or office of an evangelist, these gifted men, are uniquely designed and given to the Church to reach the lost with the saving gospel, and every Church should consider this ministry as high priority. Local Churches should raise up evangelists. We are to send some out in mission enterprises and others to remain permanently in the Church fellowship - to teach, mobilize, and lead others out to fulfill the commission of winning the lost to Christ. The gift of evangelists!