

PENTAGON



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Brief description:

As followers of Jesus we are each gifted by Jesus to serve in the church and help strengthen the body of believers. This shape helps us to see where we are gifted and understand how we can work with the Body, not against it, and live out our unique gifting as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds, or Teachers.

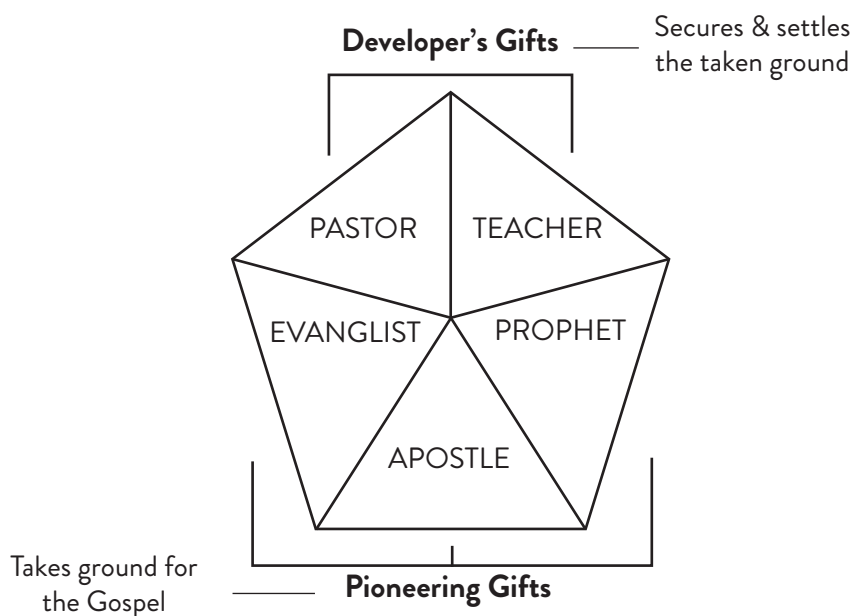
When to use this shape:

Use this shape to help your huddle take their next steps in serving the church and leading out in building up the Body. This can help them define their role in the house church as well as bring to light tension they have with others in the Body and their ministry leadership styles, helping them to encourage others and their roles, not fight against them.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:11-13, 16

“Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip his 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...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.”

Shape



Explanation

Jesus perfectly modeled each of the five-fold giftings of apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers during his time in ministry on Earth. The Church now functions as the Body of Christ, and we continue His five-fold work in building his kingdom. Each of us has received specific giftings by the grace of God, and when used together synergistically it gives a wonderful picture of who Jesus is to the world.

Aristotle once said, “The whole is greater than the sum of the parts”, which means when individual parts are connected together to form one entity, they are worth more than if the parts were in silos. Paul lays out this idea in his letter



to the Ephesians and explains how the Church is designed to function: in wholeness, or oneness. In Eph. 4:5-6 he says we are “all called to one hope in one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.”

To fully know Christ and mature in faith, as well as making Christ known to the world, is to learn from Him in each these giftings.

EXAMPLES OF JESUS MODELING APEST

Apostles extend the gospel. As the “sent ones,” they ensure that the faith is transmitted from one context to another and from one generation to the next. They are always thinking about the future, bridging barriers, establishing the church in new contexts, developing leaders, networking trans-locally. Yes, if you focus solely on initiating new ideas and rapid expansion, you can leave people and organizations wounded. The shepherding and teaching functions are needed to ensure people are cared for rather than simply used.

- Jesus was the ambassador of heaven, who left his Father and came to Earth to establish a new covenant for a new people
- Jesus says in Luke 4:43, *“I must preach the gospel to the other towns because that is why I was sent”*
- Hebrews 12:2 describes Jesus as the *“pioneer and perfecter of our faith”*

Prophets know God’s will. They are particularly attuned to God and his truth for today. They bring correction and challenge the dominant assumptions we inherit from the culture. They insist that the community obey what God has commanded. They question the status quo. Without the other types of leaders in place, prophets can become belligerent activists or, paradoxically, disengage from the imperfection of reality and become other-worldly.

- Throughout the New Testament, Jesus is constantly calling people to repentance and obedience to the true Word of God
- For instance In Matt. 23:27 Jesus says, *“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like white washed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.”* He challenged the status quo of the religious culture and called for something better.

Evangelists recruit. These infectious communicators of the gospel message recruit others to the cause. They call for a personal response to God’s redemption in Christ, and also draw believers to engage the wider mission, growing the church. Evangelists can be so focused on reaching those outside the church that maturing and strengthening those inside is neglected.

- Jesus doesn’t just share the good news of the gospel, he is the good news. He says in John 11:25, *“I am the resurrection and the life.”*
- When you follow the narrative of the gospels, you see in the life of Jesus a fervid faithfulness and frequency of him communicating the love of God and the forgiveness of sins. People are so captured by him that often large crowds gather just to hear him, touch him, or be healed by him.

Shepherd nurture and protect. Caregivers of the community, they focus on the protection and spiritual maturity of God’s flock, cultivating a loving and spiritually mature network of relationships, making and developing disciples. Shepherds can value stability to the detriment of the mission. They may also foster an unhealthy dependence between the church and themselves.

- Nobody embodied a life of service or sacrifice quite like Jesus. He loved God’s people so deeply he died for them. In John 10:11 he says, *“I am the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep.”*
- Even during Jesus’ chaotic and travelling ministry, you see him being interruptible, showing compassion to hurting and broken people, listening to the cries of the community, patiently discipling ragtag fishermen, and embracing little kids as they run to him

Teachers understand and explain. Communicators of God’s truth and wisdom, they help others remain biblical-



ly grounded to better discern God's will, guiding others toward wisdom, helping the community remain faithful to Christ's word, and constructing a transferable doctrine. Without the input of the other functions, teachers can fall into dogmatism or dry intellectualism. They may fail to see the personal or missional aspects of the church's ministry.

-Jesus is the greatest teacher of all time. The things he said two thousand years ago continue to ring remarkably true to our age. He expounded the Word of God using parables in order for people to understand and apply the truth.

-You see Jesus the Rabbi often giving revolutionary teaching:

-*"You've heard it said... do not commit adultery, eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, Love your neighbor, hate your enemy*

-*"But I say...anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery in his heart, do not resist an evil person, but if anyone slaps your cheek, turn to them the other cheek also, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."*

When a community has all of the giftings of APEST represented and is working together in oneness, it creates dynamic kingdom impact. When certain giftings are absent however, it creates an imbalanced an unhealthy context. A community characterized by predominantly one gift, will be imbalanced:

Apostles -- Crusade

Prophets -- Social justice club (catch Kony 2012)

Evangelists -- Dance party (summer camp)

Shepherds -- Care group (AA meetings)

Teachers -- Holy huddle (Bible Study Fellowship)

Often what happens in a church or village is that certain giftings begin to dominate the culture of the whole, usually based on who is leading the group. Many times people will devalue the gifts that aren't their own, placing a higher emphasis on the gifting in which they personally operate. This inevitably leads to tension and conflict, most notably between the "pioneer" gifts (apostle, prophet, evangelist) and "developer" gifts (shepherd, teacher). The key to continuous kingdom breakthrough is not to avoid this conflict or ignore the other gifts, but to embrace the tension of both "taking new ground" and "developing the ground that has been taken." When the Church dials this in, there is an explosion of new disciples being made and churches being planted and movements that begin.

Questions and Application for your huddle:

Do you know your APEST gifting? Take the survey below and find out.

Where are you actively using your gifting to build up the Body of Christ?

Where have you seen your immaturity play out in the community of Christ?

Of the 5 giftings, where is the biggest deficit in your life and how can you begin to learn from the example of Christ or others?

Where have you devalued other giftings?

What is God saying to you and what will you do about it this week?

Resources and sources:

-Free APEST Survey: www.fivefoldsurvey.com

-APEST in a Small Group (Jeff Vanderstelt): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKPW3Q1oGEM>

-Building a Discipling Culture by Mike Breen



ROLE	OTHER TITLES	DEFINITION	FUNCTION	DESCRIPTION	BIBLICAL EXAMPLE
Apostle	Entrepreneur, strategist, innovator, visionary	One who is sent out	Take ground (pioneer)	Establish new communities of faith, plant new churches	Paul in Acts
Prophet	Reformer, agitator, questioner	One who listens and calls	Hear God (pioneer)	Discerning God's will, ensuring the obedience of God's people	Anna and Simeon in Luke 2, Agabus in Acts 11:28
Evangelist	Passionate communicator, recruiter	One who bears good news	Sharing blessing (pioneer)	Convince others of what they are fully convinced, optimistic and winsome	Philip in Acts 8:12
Shepherd	Protector, social cement, humanizer	One who nurtures and protects	Take care (developer)	Help people grow toward spiritual maturity and fulfillment, good listeners	Barnabas in Acts 15:36
Teacher	Philosopher, systematizer, translator	One who holds out truth	Guard truth (developer)	Help people understand and apply/clarify the word	Apollos in Acts 18

ROLE	IMMATURITY	BAD NICKNAME
Apostle	Autocratic personality tends to wound a lot of people	Bulldozer
Prophet	Say what they say rather than God, belligerent activist	Jerk
Evangelist	Winning people to a personality and not the gospel, shallowness	Celebrity
Shepherd	Nonmissional, enabling people to sit in sin for too long	Patsy
Teacher	Valuing knowledge over transformation, theological dogmatism	Pharisee





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www.RESONATE.net/HUDDLE