

“Jesus the Apostle”

Summary

In this powerful message, we're invited to explore the concept of the five-fold ministry and its profound importance in our spiritual growth. The central theme revolves around Ephesians 4, where Paul describes these gifts given by Christ: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These aren't just roles, but representations of who Jesus is and how we're called to mature in our faith. We're challenged to consider: which of these gifts makes our hearts leap? This isn't about titles, but about discovering our unique calling within the body of Christ. The message emphasizes that our ultimate goal is to grow up in every way, becoming a mature bride for Christ. It's a reminder that our personal spiritual journey isn't just about escaping hell, but about becoming everything God intends us to be. This perspective shifts our focus from self-centered faith to a broader vision of participating in God's eternal purpose for His church.

Main Points – Jesus the Apostle

Title: Understanding the Five-Fold Ministry: Jesus the Apostle

Sermon Summary: This sermon introduces a series on the five-fold ministry of Jesus, focusing on the apostolic grace. The pastor emphasizes that these five graces (apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher) are given to bring believers to maturity in Christ. He explains that the apostolic grace is about being sent, setting things in order, and having a regional or global perspective on ministry. The sermon highlights the importance of understanding and cultivating all five graces within the local church to fulfill the Great Commission and prepare the Church as the Bride of Christ.

Key Points:

- The five-fold ministry gifts are given to bring believers to maturity in Christ
- Apostolic grace is characterized by being sent, setting things in order, and having a regional/global perspective
- True apostolic ministry is fatherly in nature, focused on giving rather than receiving
- The local church should cultivate all five graces to fulfill its mission
- Understanding the different graces can help in personal growth and church dynamics

Scripture Reference:

- Hebrews 3:1 - "Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession"
- Ephesians 4:7-16 - Description of the five-fold ministry gifts

Stories:

- The pastor's experience in India, where he was convicted about focusing on preserving toilet paper instead of reaching souls
- The account of Jesus at age 12 staying behind in the temple, emphasizing the importance of being about the Father's business
- References to Paul's apostolic ministry and his relationship with Timothy as an example of apostolic fatherhood

Small Group Study Guide – Jesus the Apostle

Small Group Guide: Jesus the Apostle and the Five-Fold Ministry

Opening Prayer

Key Takeaways:

1. The five-fold ministry gifts (apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher) are given to bring the church to maturity.
2. Maturity in Christ means growing up in every way to become like Jesus.
3. Apostolic grace is characterized by:
 - Being sent out
 - Putting things in order
 - Laying foundations
 - Having a regional/global perspective
 - Fatherly care for spiritual children

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you most from the sermon? Why?
2. The pastor mentioned that each of us has been given grace according to Ephesians 4:7. How does this impact your view of your role in the church?
3. How do you understand the concept of "growing up in every way" as mentioned in the sermon? What areas of your life might God be calling you to mature in?
4. The sermon discussed the difference between true and false apostolic ministry. What were some of the key distinctions? How can we discern authentic ministry today?
5. Pastor Rob emphasized that apostolic grace is more about giving than receiving. How does this challenge or affirm your understanding of Christian leadership?
6. How might understanding these different ministry gifts help us appreciate and work better with others in the church?

Practical Applications:

1. This week, spend time in prayer asking God to reveal which of the five-fold ministry gifts you might be most aligned with.
2. Choose one area of your life where you feel God is calling you to "grow up" and make a specific plan to address it.

3. Look for opportunities to serve in the church that align with your perceived ministry gift.
4. If you're in a leadership role, reflect on how you can embody the "fatherly" aspect of apostolic grace in your interactions with others.
5. Study one of the Bible passages mentioned in the sermon (e.g., Ephesians 4:7-16 or 2 Corinthians 12:11-15) in more depth this week.

[Closing Prayer](#)

Discussion Questions – Jesus the Apostle

How can we discern if we are truly seeking God for His purposes rather than our own comfort or desires?

How can we practically apply the concept of 'taking a towel, not a title' in our service to others and the church?

What are some signs that distinguish true apostolic ministry from false apostolic movements in today's church?

How might understanding the five-fold ministry gifts (apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher) change the way we view our role in the body of Christ?

In what ways can we cultivate patience and a father's heart in our ministry, as demonstrated by Paul's relationship with Timothy?

How can we ensure that our church's outreach efforts are truly focused on building God's kingdom rather than our own?

What steps can we take to identify and nurture the specific grace or calling God has placed on our lives?

How might our perspective on church leadership and structure change if we viewed it through the lens of the five-fold ministry gifts?

In what ways can we practically contribute to bringing the body of Christ to maturity, as outlined in Ephesians 4:11-16?

Scriptures – Jesus the Apostle

Here are the [scripture references](#) mentioned or alluded to in the sermon:

1. Luke 2:48-50
2. Mark 16:15-19
3. Acts 8 (general reference to Philip's ministry in Samaria)
4. Ephesians 4:7-16
5. Titus 1:5
6. 1 Corinthians 11:34
7. 2 Corinthians 10:13-16
8. 1 Corinthians 3:10-11
9. 2 Corinthians 12:11-14
10. Revelation 2:2
11. 1 Timothy 1:18-19

Additional [relevant verses](#) that align with the main themes discussed:

1. Matthew 28:19-20 (The Great Commission)
2. Acts 1:8 (Apostolic mission to the ends of the earth)
3. 1 Corinthians 12:28 (Gifts in the church, including apostles)
4. Ephesians 2:20 (Apostles and prophets as foundation)
5. Ephesians 5:25-27 (Christ and the Church as bride)
6. Colossians 1:28 (Presenting everyone mature in Christ)
7. Hebrews 6:1-2 (Moving on to maturity)
8. Revelation 7:9 (People from every nation before the throne)

Devotional – Jesus the Apostle

Here's a 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide:

Day 1: The Father's Business

Reading: Luke 2:41-52

Devotional: Jesus' words to his parents, "Didn't you know I had to be about my Father's business?" challenge us to consider our own priorities. Like Mary and Joseph, we often get caught up in our immediate concerns and forget the bigger picture of God's plan. Today, reflect on how you're pursuing God's business in your life. Are you focused solely on your own needs and comfort, or are you seeking to align yourself with God's purposes? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas where you can be more intentional about participating in God's work, both in your personal growth and in reaching out to others.

Day 2: Growing in Wisdom and Stature

Reading: Luke 2:52, Ephesians 4:11-16

Devotional: Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. This growth wasn't just physical, encompassing mental, spiritual, and social aspects. God desires the same comprehensive growth for us. The five-fold ministry gifts mentioned in Ephesians are given to equip us for this very purpose. Consider which areas of your life need growth. Are you nurturing your mind with godly wisdom? Is your spiritual life deepening? How are your relationships with others? Ask God to help you identify one specific area where you can focus on growing this week and take a practical step towards that growth.

Day 3: Sent with Purpose

Reading: John 20:19-23, Acts 1:8

Devotional: Jesus was sent by the Father, and He in turn sends us. This "sentness" is at the heart of apostolic ministry. We're not called to huddle in our comfort zones, but to go out with purpose. Where is God sending you? It might be to a neighbor, a coworker, or even to a different culture. The key is recognizing that we're all called to be "sent ones" in some capacity. Pray for God to reveal your specific mission field and for the courage to step out in faith. Remember, as Jesus breathed on His disciples, He's given us His Holy Spirit to empower us for this task.

Day 4: Building on the Right Foundation

Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

Devotional: Paul speaks of laying a foundation, with Christ as the cornerstone. In our lives and ministries, it's crucial to build on the right foundation. Examine the structures you're building in your life - your career, relationships, ministry involvement. Are they truly founded

on Christ? Or have other priorities subtly taken His place? Building on Christ means aligning our values, decisions, and actions with His teachings and character. Take time today to assess one area of your life and consider how you can more intentionally build it on the foundation of Christ.

Day 5: Fathering the Next Generation

Reading: 1 Timothy 1:1-2, 18-19

Devotional: Paul's relationship with Timothy exemplifies the heart of true apostolic ministry - spiritual fathering. This isn't about creating dependence, but about nurturing and empowering others to fulfill their calling. Who has been a spiritual parent to you? Thank God for them today. Now, consider who God might be calling you to mentor or encourage. You don't need an official title to invest in others spiritually. Look for opportunities to share wisdom, offer encouragement, or provide guidance to someone younger in the faith. Remember, spiritual parenting is about pointing others to Christ, not creating followers for ourselves.

The following two pages contain identical information.
The only difference is the appearance.

The purpose of the second page is so that if you are trying to print the file and the background shading on the first page presents a problem, then you have a second option.

The Virkler Grid

A Comparative Analysis of the Foundational Offices of Ephesians 4:11

	Apostle	Prophet	Evangelist	Pastor	Teacher
Heart Passion	For the whole	For inspirational creativity	For the harvest	For people	For truth
Main Gifts	Ability to lead, organize, develop, build and expand	Creative abilities, sense of timing & rightness	Ability to be persuasive	Loves people and heals their hurts	Ability to research and present clearly
Emotions	Less emotional, more structured	Quite emotional—both ups and downs	Highly invigorated, intense	Very sensitive	Less emotional, more structured
Goal	See things organized and running smoothly	Experience the creative flow	Persuade others to see what he sees	For people to be healthy, safe and cared for	Truth clearly communicated and assimilated
Judges others by	Their ability and willingness to fit in	Their ability to experience or appreciate the creative flow	Their ability to influence	Their ability to be sensitive and concerned for people's needs	Their ability to discern and clearly express truth
Influences others by	Helping them to see their value and place in the overall picture	Edification, exhortation, comfort	Enthusiasm, excitement, dynamism	Warmth, love and acceptance	Helping them understand and grow
Value to Organization	Gets everyone working together as a team; is a good troubleshooter	Gives creative expression, spirit encounter, sense of divine timing and destiny	Convinces and excites people about moving in a certain direction	Ensures that people's heart needs are met; provides warmth, happiness, and contentment	Provides continuous clear, practical training for all who enter the organization
Overuses	Abusing power, authority; insensitive to people	Living only out of intuition without validation	Selling things not worth selling	Becoming mushy, weak, too flexible	Leaving no place for intuition; too analytical
Under Pressure	Meets with others to seek resolution	Retreats to be alone	Becomes more invigorated and passionate about what he has to sell; may become dishonest	Reaches out with more warmth and understanding	Does more research
Fears	Loss of authority, structure, organization	Not being able to capture the intuitive creative flow	Not being able to convince	Disunity and discord, brokenness, and emotional destruction	Not being able to pass on progress to the next generation

Danger: If we do not offer balanced fivefold ministry, the church will gravitate toward one or another extreme:

- ✧ **The Evangelist** tends to build a church focused exclusively on winning the lost, minimizing discipleship.
- ✧ **The Prophet** tends to build a legalistic church.
- ✧ **The Teacher** tends to build a theological church.
- ✧ **The Pastor** tends to build a social church.
- ✧ **The Apostle** tends to build a super-organized church.

Condensed from the book Gifted to Succeed by Mark & Patti Virkler – available at www.cwgministries.org

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