

# Discovering Your SHAPE

## Session 3: Roles

### Gifts that Jesus Gives to His Church – Ephesians 4:7-16

#### Apostle

- “A sent one”. Sent on behalf of another. An ambassador or messenger.
- New Testament Apostles held a position of establishing doctrine.
- Today, apostles are often understood as someone who is sent out as a church planter, someone who establishes a new work.

#### Prophet

- A prophet is a person within the community who is God’s mouthpiece or messenger, often delivering God’s message to the community of faith.
- A prophet will often be given words of prophecy, but not everyone who prophesies is a prophet. Prophecy is gift widely given within the church. Prophets are recognised as having a unique role in delivering God’s messages as well as equipping others.

#### Evangelist

- An Evangelist has a gift set which includes sharing the gospel in a way that it is received and responded to.
- This person will often have new strategies for evangelism, and also has a role in the body to equip others. (Eph 4:12)
- There are only three mentions of an Evangelist in the New Testament
  - The list in Ephesians 4:11 Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers
  - 2 Tim 4:5- Be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, **do the work of an evangelist**, fulfil your ministry
  - Acts 21:8 ...stayed at the house of **Philip the evangelist**, one of the Seven (Acts 6:5)

## **Pastor/Shepherd**

- A pastor/shepherd has responsibility for the care and discipleship of a group of people.

## **Teacher**

- A person who instructs or trains others in the faith.
- In this context, someone in the church with the role of teaching others in various ministries.

**A note on evangelism:** While some people have a particular gift in communicating the Gospel, and some have a gift for talking to strangers about Jesus, we want to stress that **evangelism is the call to all believers**. We are all called to share the good news of Jesus' love and forgiveness. It's easy to just say, "I'm not gifted" or "I'm not an evangelist" and leave that to others. But whether it comes easy to you or not, you're still called to share Jesus. In fact, our prayer is that for those of us who find 'evangelism' intimidating, we will find a new empowerment in the Spirit to share Jesus in our own unique way.

## **Why does Christ give these people as gifts?**

**Read:** Ephesians 4:7-16 together. Note what/who is the gift.

These roles/people are given:

- to equip the saints for the work of ministry,
- for building up the body of Christ,
- attain to
  - the unity of the faith
  - and of the knowledge of the Son of God,
  - Complete maturity
- that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine

In our church, we don't put a lot of emphasis on titles, but we want to encourage you to explore what role God has given you in the body of Christ.

### **Discuss and Discern**

1. Who is someone in your life that has encouraged you in one of these roles?  
Share with the group the impact they have had on your life.
2. Pray and seek God about your role in the body. Do you feel called by God to one of these roles (voluntary part-time or supported full-time capacity)? Do you think someone in your group may be called to a role?
3. Our definitions of Pastor and Teacher are fairly broad. Discuss whether there are other people in our church who you would consider to be functioning in one of these roles.
4. If there are any teachers in your group, what stands out to you in Ephesians 4:12-16?
5. Close in prayer, asking for God to reveal to you your role in the body.

**Note:** There is an **Appendix to Session 3** available which demonstrates how the **SHAPE** Tool works in regard to this session.