

Sunday, August 27, 2023
THE HAND OF GOD – A STUDY OF THE FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY
PART 2: APOSTLE

Today, we continue our study of the five-fold ministry titled “The Hand of God.” Last time, we introduced the study by looking at the foundational function of the five-fold ministry. Do you remember what it is? Ephesians 4:11-16.

To equip the believers to do the work of the ministry. To aid in the maturation, edification, and unifying of the body of Christ.

These giftings are to reflect the love, honor, and unity of the Godhead as they work together. Today’s focus is on the apostle. Controversy surrounds the operation of the five-fold ministry among many in the body of Christ. Some believe that the five-fold ministry changed after the passing of the original apostles. More particularly, many believe that the ministry of the apostle and prophet ceased because of their role in the formation of the Bible. In other words, the Bible being the full and final revelation of God to man has caused the ministry of the apostle and prophet to be complete and unnecessary. Is that the truth? What does the Bible itself say about the ministry of apostle?

*The word **apostle** is a transliteration of the Greek word **Apostolos** meaning “a messenger” or “one sent on a mission.” Apostles were literally commissioned messengers carrying out their sender’s mission.*

Ephesians 2:19-22 (NKJV)

An argument could be made that the OT was given through the prophetic – the Law and prophecies. Moses and David were called prophets. Then, you have the Major and Minor Prophets. David commissioned the Levites to praise the Lord and prophesy before Him. Thus, the prophetic being one of the foundations.

Hebrews 1:1-2 (NKJV)

As far as the teachings of the NT, much came from the apostles of the Lord or those closely connected to the apostles with the writings of those closely connected being measured by the writings of the apostles. So, the apostles being another of the foundations. There is no doubt that the original

apostles including Paul were unique in that they were entrusted with the teachings of Jesus. Speaking of foundations, this scripture reflects the original apostle's unique position:

[Revelation 21:10-14 \(NKJV\)](#)

Did the apostolic gifting cease upon the death of the original 12 and Paul? First, there were apostles in the days of the NT other than Paul and the original twelve:

[Acts 14:13-14 \(NKJV\)](#)

Barnabas was an apostle.

[1 Thessalonians 2:2-6 \(NKJV\)](#)

Paul was the only recognized apostle on this trip, but he said that others with him were apostles as well.

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31 \(NKJV\)](#)

None of these we have read about wrote parts of the Bible, yet they were apostles, and 1 Corinthians 12 indicates that along with other gifts, the apostolic continues in the church. The word "missionary" is not found in the Bible. Establishing churches on the Word of God – is really the work of an apostle.

Today's apostolic ministry does not create doctrine – it enforces doctrine.

Today's Scriptures:

- Ephesians 4:11-16
- Ephesians 2:19-22 (NKJV)
- Hebrews 1:1-2 (NKJV)
- Revelation 21:10-14 (NKJV)
- Acts 14:13-14 (NKJV)
- 1 Thessalonians 2:2-6 (NKJV)
- 1 Corinthians 12:28-31 (NKJV)