

Biblestudy about the Fivefold Ministry

Most well-known scripture is from Eph 4.11

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.”

1 Corinthians 12, 28 list also the 5- fold ministry

“And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.”

Different list but always apostle's and prophets are the first. In church History only the last 3 ministries have manly survived and therefore there is a great debate today what are Apostles and Prophets. No one has a problem with the ministry of a Pastor which means a shepherd who is looking after the flog. We also understand that we need evangelists, people who bring the none- believers to the Lord. We also need teachers who teach us the word of God and apply it to our daily life and walk with the Lord.

Now there where also prophets in the new Testament like Agapus and the daughters of Philip who told Paul what would happen to him in Jerusalem.

This gift is very helpful for us as Paul says and builds up our faith but there is also the danger that is can be misused for manipulation.

Not one a leader or pastor alone should check it out, but the whole congregation is asked to discern the prophesies.

1 Corinthians 12, 29 all the callings and Gifts are supposed to work together.

“Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?”

Apostle means a **send one** by God. No one can take the title of an Apostle by himself, but he will be identified and someone who was send by the Lord and brings needed changes to the Body of Christ. In Church History where also Apostles evens so they did not call themselves by this name.

In the letter to the Galatians 1,1 we read that Paul understands that he is an Apostle but foremost appointed by God.

“Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead.”

Gal 1, 16b to 17 ***“I did not imminently confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia and returned to Damascus.***

Because he was not one of the 12 in the beginning his apostleship was often questioned not by Peter or the 11 apostles but by other brethren who understood themselves as super or superius apostle's.

1 Corinthians 9,2

“If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.”

2 Corinthians 11, 5 ***“But I don't think I am inferior to these super apostles.”***

Out of the contexts we understand what the difference between them and Paul. They ask for money for their ministry which Paul did not do.

2 Corinthians 11,20 ***“you put up with it when they make you slaves, take everything you have, take advantage of you, put on airs, and slap you in the face.”***

They also say: chapter 11 verse 22 they are Hebrews, Israelites, descendants of Abraham? So am I.

The serve the Lord but Paul more and suffered more.

It looks like that this so-called apostle did not work with Paul together, but they wanted to take over the congregations Paul has founded and get the money of them. They had selfish motivations and therefore Paul is sure that they are not apostles.

2 Corinthians 11, 13

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.”

Rev 2, 2 The Lord Jesus is also praising the church in Ephesus that they found out who are the false apostles.

“I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;”

2 Corinthians 12, 11 and 12

“I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing. ¹² Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds. “

Paul stays humble as an apostle. 1 Corinthians 15,9 -10 ***“For I am the least of the apostles, who I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I have persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”***

In the letter to Titus Paul said 1,1 that he is a slave.

“Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness.”

Gal 2, 8 Paul is an Apostle to the gentiles

“for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles,

1 Timotheus 2,7

“for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.”

Romans 11, 13

“For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry.”

But not only to the gentiles because Jesus said to Ananias Acts 9, 15 ***“Go for he is a chosen vessel of mine to bear my name before gentiles, kings and the children of Israel. “***

The difference is for Apostle Paul only he is sent in the first part of his life to the Gentiles and in the end to the Israelites. At his last journey to Jerusalem and his imprisonment in Jerusalem the Lord appears to him and said: Acts 23,11 ***“Be of good cheer Paul for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.”***

Paul is absorbing his life and ministry as an apostle and as he looks back there is no pyramid where he is on the top. Not the concept of a Roman army, where Cesar is ruling over the general’s and officers. He is contemplating how it is to be an apostle and says in 1 Corinthians 4, 9

“For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.”

This is exactly what Jesus said to his disciples. Luke 22, 25 and 26 the world does it this way, but you do in the opposite spirit and attitude.

1 Corinthians 9,1 ***“Haven’t I seen our Lord with my own eyes? Isn’t it because of my work that you belong to the Lord?”*** Paul has seen the Lord. It was one of the criteria to elect an apostle instead of Judas someone who was with them from the beginning and has seen the Lord. Acts 1, 23 In 1 Corinthians 15,6 Paul gives us the information that after the resurrection more than 500 People have seen the Lord. ***“After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died.”***

Ephesus 2, 20 foundation are the 12 apostles and Jesus is the cornerstone

“having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”

Rev 21,14 Also in the new Jerusalem the apostles are the foundations stones and the gates the 12 tribes of Israel.

“Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

Why are the apostle the foundation? Paul says in Eph 3, 5 That the apostles received a new revelation but also the prophets. It is the revelation of the unity of the body of Christ made of Jew and gentile.

“which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets”

1 Peter 1.1 Peter said about himself **an apostle** not the apostle. And he could because he got from the Lord the keys.

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.”

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