The Five Fold Gift Ministries Bible Study 2014

The Fivefold Gift Ministries

Part 1: Apostles

1. Review -- Main Text: **Ephesians 4:11-14**

* What are the fivefold gift ministries?
* Who placed them in the church?
* What is their purpose?

2. Apostles

* The Apostles are the first ones on the list. What is an apostle?
* Greek: *apostolos* – “one sent forth, a messenger, an ambassador” or “one that is sent on a special mission” \*
* How many are there in the Bible?
* **Luke 6:12-15**; **Acts 1:15-17**, **20-22**, **26**; **1 Corinthians 15:8-9**; **Galatians 1:19**; **Acts 14:14; 1 Corinthians 4:6, 9, 11; Romans 16:7; Philippians 2:25 (the Greek Word translated *messenger* here is *apostolos*)**
* Who is the “Apostle of Apostles?” Hint: It’s not the pope… **Hebrews 3:1**
* How does the term “apostle” differ from “disciple?” How many disciples are there?
* Are there female *apostles?* Are there female *disciples?* **Acts 9:36**
* What is the difference that would disqualify a woman from being an *apostle?* **1 Timothy 2:12**
* Based on that, what would be the modern equivalent title for an apostle? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* What other modern ministry might fulfill that role?
* Note the order of the gift ministries listed in **1 Corinthians 12:27** – knowing what we know about apostles, why might *apostles* be listed first here?
* An apostle is not a title like “pastor” or “bishop” but a calling – an apostle is called by God to their apostolic role; apostles function as preachers, teachers, prophets and in exercising supernatural gifts as do others in the church who are not apostles… because apostles is a calling.
* For this reason you don’t get to call yourself an apostle; Paul acknowledges that he is recognized as one in **1 Corinthians 15:9-11** but note his self-effacing language.
* People who self-identify as Apostles often abuse the title and assume an un-Christ-like authority! **2 Corinthians 11:13-14**
* Gordon Lindsay\* identifies the following distinctive characteristics of an apostle:
  + An apostle does not try to divide the brethren in order to seek the pre-eminence (**3 John 9**)
  + An apostle possesses supernatural ministry (**Acts 5:12**)
  + Apostles minister discipline supernaturally (**1 Corinthians 5:1-3**)
  + An apostle is a messenger; sent on a mission (**Acts 13:2-3**)
  + Apostles are men of sound words and doctrine (**Ephesians 4:11-14**)

3. Questions and Comments

\*Note: Gordon Lindsay, *The Charismatic Ministry (*Christ for the Nations Inc., n.d.)

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Part 2: Prophets

1. Review -- Main Text: **Ephesians 4:11-14**

* What are the fivefold gift ministries?
* Who placed them in the church?
* What is their purpose?
* Note the word “some” in our text. What does it imply?
* What does the word *apostle* mean?
* How many apostles are in the New Testament?
* What are some examples of modern day apostles?
* Who raises up someone to be an “apostle?”

2. Prophets

* Prophets are second in the list. What is a prophet?
* Prophets are appointed in the church by God – **1 Corinthians 12:28**; a prophet is one who hears from and speaks for God; there are women prophets (prophetesses) in the Church: **Acts 21:8-9**
* Prophecy is a multifaceted Holy Spirit gift ministry that operates in several ways:
  + The Gift of Foreknowledge – **Acts 11:27-28**, **Acts 21:10-11**
  + The Gift of the Word of Knowledge – **1 Corinthians 12:7-10** – Here we see the “word of knowledge” listed separately from prophecy; however, words of knowledge are often spoken by prophets “hearing and speaking for God” as we see Jesus in **Luke 22:31**
  + Understanding the Times(discerning prophetic coming to pass) – This gift manifests in **1 Corinthians 12:8** as both the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge; it can be best understood using an Old Testament example of this in **Daniel 9:2**
  + The Gift of Prophesying in Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues – this is the main function of the New Testament prophet; Consider the detailed instructions in **1 Corinthians 14:1-3, 13-17, 18, 21-25, 27-32 –** In this context, “prophesying” is done in tongues with an interpreter; this appears to be a regular practice in Paul’s day
* New Testament prophecy is NOT infallible and New Testament prophets are to be judged: **1 Corinthians 14:29** and **1 John 4:1**
* This is quite different from the guidance given in the Old Testament – **Deuteronomy 18:20-22** -- What do we have that the Old Testament believers did not that might demand that an Old Testament prophet be infallible? **2 Timothy 3:16-17**
* Prophecy appears to be a ministry that is easily abused in order to deceive people; do you remember how Jesus instructed us to judge a prophet? **Matthew 7:15-23**
* Humility and submission to church authority appear to be the fruits of a genuine New Testament prophecy as Paul declares in **1 Corinthians 14:37-38**

3. Questions and Comments

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The Fivefold Gift Ministries

Part 3: Evangelists

1. Review -- Main Text: **Ephesians 4:11-14**

* What are the fivefold gift ministries?
* Who placed them in the church?
* What is their purpose?
* How might we define a Biblical *prophet?*
* How are some of the ways a New Testament prophet might exercise this gift?
* What is the difference between *prophesying in the spirit* and *praying in tongues?*
* What is the church supposed to do with a prophet’s words?

2. Evangelists

* Evangelists are third in the list. This suggests an importance we do not give to evangelists today. This is unfortunate. What is the main task of the Evangelist?
* The root word, *evangel*, merely means “good news” or “gospel” and may be used to describe a body of doctrine or one who proclaims it; an evangelist is *one who shares the good news.*
* The most famous evangelist in the New Testament is Paul but the one who has the title and focused on the true Bible definition in the book of Acts is a man named Philip -- **Acts 21:8**
* Philip’s ministry seems to have been characterized by the miraculous: **Acts 8:4-8, 26-30, 35-40**
* What is another characteristic of Philip’s ministry? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Jesus gave evangelistic instructions to His disciples in **Luke 9:1-5**
* In Luke 10 Jesus gives what appear to be outreach instructions to the larger body of believers who are called to do the work of an evangelist without it being a full-time calling: **Luke 10:1, 9**
* So we can conclude that the work of an Evangelist is characterized by *Gospel preaching*, *signs and wonders* and *mobility*. All of us are called to do the work of an evangelist but some people are called and gifted by God to perform this as a full-time calling. Note Paul’s instructions to Timothy, a pastor, about “doing the work of an evangelist” – **2 Timothy 4:5**
* This suggests that the modern fundamentalist evangelist who preaches the gospel but does not pray for the sick or exercise any other spiritual gifts is not really a true New Testament evangelist at all but rather, an *exhorter*, one who’s ministry is to challenge people to repent or to get saved: **2 Timothy 4:2 Titus 1:9**
* Exhortation is also the work of the spirit filled prophet: **1 Corinthians 14:3**
* There is another evangelist in the New Testament named Apollos. He is not directly called an evangelist but his ministry resembles Philip’s – Apollos travels around the churches planted by Paul performing the work of an Evangelist – note the way Apollos’ ministry is described in these verses and explain how an Evangelist edifies a church in a manner that is different than that church’s pastor, teachers or resident apostle: **Acts 18:24-28**, **1 Corinthians 3:6**, **Titus 3:13**
* Discuss the modern day evangelist – some have brought a reproach on the gospel. Does this mean that the ministry of an evangelist should no longer be employed by the church?
* Evangelists build a church. Why might some pastors not use evangelists?
* Some men here are called to this ministry. Keep in mind, an evangelist like Philip and Apollos need never be a pastor in order to fulfill their calling as an Evangelist.

3. Questions and Comments

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The Fivefold Gift Ministries

Part 4: Pastors

1. Review -- Main Text: **Ephesians 4:11-14**

* What are the fivefold gift ministries?
* Who placed them in the church?
* What is their purpose?
* Which New Testament disciple is called an evangelist?
* What does an evangelist do? Name some characteristics of an evangelist’s ministry.
* How does an evangelist’s ministry edify the church?
* Who is called to do the work of an evangelist?

2. Pastors

* What does the word “pastor” mean? What is the primary job of a pastor? **Acts 20:28**
* The ministry of a pastors are described using a variety of terms that all refer to the same ministry. These include *bishop, shepherd* and *elder*.
* Pastoring is one of the essential ministries in the church and pastors have the most stringent requirements for their office. Why might that be? **John 10:11-13**
* Entire books New Testament books such as 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are dedicated to providing guidance to pastors. Read and consider the requirements from Paul’s epistles:
  + **1 Timothy 3:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6, 7**
  + **Titus 1:5-9**
* Nowhere in the Bible are pastors called “Reverend” or “Father” – **Matthew 23:9-12**
* Pastors are not “holy men” nor are they superior to the sheep -- but they are different – a pastor is like the coach for a team, challenging the people to step up and out in their faith. For this reason, pastors have an authority that should be recognized by the sheep. Peter gave some important instructions to both pastors and their flocks in **1 Peter 5:2** – Consider:
  + Who is the Chief Shepherd? **Hebrews 13:20**
  + How is a pastor an example? **1 Corinthians 11:1**; contrast with **Matthew 23:2-3**
  + **1 Timothy 5:17-19** – what does verse 18 refer to? **1 Corinthians 9:14**
  + Why is it so important to respect a pastor’s authority? **1 Peter 5:6-8** **Acts 20:29-31**
* Some Pastors even work secular jobs like Paul did at Ephesus: **Acts 20:33-35**
* Paul provides a list of tasks for the Christian pastor in **2 Timothy 4:2-5**
* Are there any female pastors in the Bible? **1 Timothy 3:1** **1 Timothy 2:12**
* Some people claim they need neither a church nor a pastor to serve God. How can you show that that this is just not true? **Titus 3:1-3, 9-11 2 Peter 2:19 1 John 2:18-19**
* Which takes us back to our main text in Ephesians – God placed pastors in the church… *because we need them!*

3. Questions and Comments

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The Fivefold Gift Ministries

Part 5: Teachers

1. Review -- Main Text: **Ephesians 4:11-14**

* What are the fivefold gift ministries?
* Who placed them in the church?
* What is their purpose?
* What does the Greek word that we translate as “pastor” actually literally mean?
* What are other names for pastors in the New Testament?
* What essentially is the pastor’s job? What are some of the jobs he may do
* Why are the prerequisites for a pastor so detailed and strict?
* What would you tell someone who said that they don’t need to have a pastor?

2. Teachers

* Teachers are linked to pastors in the Ephesians 4 list of the five-fold ministries. Why?
* Teachers were a characteristic of the New Testament Church: **Acts 13:1**
* Can you define a New Testament “teacher?” Is all New Testament teaching in the classroom? Use examples to show your answer.
* Is there ever a time in our Christian faith when we won’t need a teacher?
* Being “un-teachable” or as the Bible calls them, “stiff-necked,” “stubborn,” “hardened,” or “heard-hearted”, is a bad place for a Christian to be: **Proverbs 5:12-14**
* James describes the proper way for a Christian to handle what they have learned: **James 1:21-25**
* Teaching goes hand in hand with evangelism in establishing God’s Kingdom on the earth as instructed in the Great Commission: **Matthew 28:19-20**
* Read **James 3:1** and explain why this would be true.
* Note that God takes notice: **Matthew 23:15**
* The correct attitude of a teacher is humility; the correct objective is to instruct people in the ways and the things of God – **Matthew 23:10** **1 Timothy 1:3-7**
* Based on the last scripture, what is the carnal motivation some people have to want to be teachers?
* False teachers are a definite characteristic of the church age: **2 Peter 2:1-3, 12-19**
* Why should we expect that to be the case? **2 Corinthians 11:14-15**
* There are people who actively follow false teachers even when they have been proven to be in error. Why is that? **2 Timothy 4:3-4**
* So what is the cure? **Ephesians 4:11-14**
* Which takes us back to our main text in Ephesians – God placed teachers in the church… *because we need them!*

3. Questions and Comments

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