

“God’s Word, Alive!”

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A Biblical Teaching Ministry Dedicated to “Holding Forth the Word of Life”

by Velma Sanders

“*The Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor & Teacher*”

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore, He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. ***And He gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*** For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the

fulness of Christ; That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive; But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, who is the head, even Christ; From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

(Ephesians 4:7, 8, 11-16, King James Version)

Each of the twelve tribes of Israel were uniquely endowed by the LORD and entrusted with vital roles within the nation. However, the tribe of Levi was divinely set apart by God from the other tribes for special service. The Levites were not set apart based on any personal commendable acts of their own. Their uniqueness was solely an operation of God’s sovereign grace and wisdom. The tribe of Levi was given to assist Aaron and his sons in their priestly duties; to aid in the service and worship of God on behalf of Israel. “Levi,” which is translated “to join,” although unique in service and inheritance, was ordained to first stand “with,” and then “to join” together in worship with all of Israel to her common God. (Exodus 28:1, 2; Leviticus 8; Numbers 8:5-19; Psalm 135:19-21; Hebrews 5:1-4)

Likewise, during this current Church Age, God has graced each of His children with wonderful gifts. However, He has, as in the Old Testament offices of Prophet, Priest and King, strategically positioned within the New Testament Church viable persons as gifts themselves to the entire Body of Christ. Their position, as was Israel’s tribe of Levi, is to stand “with” and “to join” together in the building up and fitting together of the entire Church. These gifted men of God to the Church are called Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:4-16)

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It was upon Simon Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," that Jesus Christ responded, "Upon this rock I will build My church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Through the foundational, supportive and continual work of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, this earthly, and yet, spiritual task, is upheld and carried forth by Him who is now seated in heaven at the right hand of the Father. (Matthew 18:16-18; Galatians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3)

"The Word" which was "made flesh and dwelt among us" over 2000 years ago, presently continues "His Work" through these Christian offices. As in former times, when "holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," so today each of these gifted ones "speak;" whether it is by proclamation, exhortation or information. Although the individual spiritual call of God, as well as the personalities, backgrounds, preparation and methods are different, their common message of "Jesus Christ is Lord" becomes the Foundation upon which the Master Builder continues His work of building the Church. (John 1:1, 14; 1 Corinthians 3:9-11; 12:4-6; Ephesians 2:19-22; 2 Peter 1:21)

These "positioned persons" are assigned the umbrella task of "perfecting the saints for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ." As important as these five offices are, they are only spiritually successful and eternally effective as they bring into existence, by the power of the Holy Spirit, "the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God." It is their common task to fix and to form, to fill and to fashion, individual Believers, together, "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:7-16; Colossians 2:19)

From the Book of Genesis, we learn that it was "on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested." God's "six-day work" of restoration and creation was completed only after He had placed in the earth His "image and likeness." In this New Testament dispensation, through the continual "washing of water by the Word," the Church collectively and individually, spiritually and mystically is being conformed to the image of God's Son. "That He might present It to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that It should be holy and without blemish." (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:1-3; Ephesians 5:26, 27)

In John, chapter 17, we see Jesus in prayer for His Church. He prays, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth." He prays again, "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gave Me I have given them, that they may be one, even as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One." (John 17:17, 21-23)

It is only as all individual members of the Church, through the ministry of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, look "away from themselves," and "away to Christ," The Head of the Church, that the whole Body of Christ will be "fitly joined together," with each member contributing, in fullness, to the whole, and "growing into an holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye also are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22)

The Lord Jesus Christ who was anointed for public ministry at the River of Jordan, by the Holy Spirit, and was given all things by His Father fulfilled completely the ministry of the Apostle, the Prophet, the Evangelist, the Pastor and the Teacher during His earthly ministry. By studying His ministry as recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John we are brought into holy awe as we see “Him who does all things well” perfectly fulfill each of these holy callings. (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 7:37; John 3:35)

Jesus Christ, The Apostle

Matthew 18:18. “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church** and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Hebrews 3:1-3. “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider **the Apostle** and High Priest of our confession, **Christ Jesus**, Who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this Man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as **he who hath built the house** hath more honor than the house.”

“Apostle” Defined. The one sent to establish new churches especially in foundational truth and church order.

New Testament Examples: The 12 Apostles (Acts 1:21-26); Andronicus and Junias (Romans 16:7); Paul (Colossians 1:1)

Jesus Christ, The Prophet

John 12:49, 50. “For **I have not spoken of Myself**; but the Father, who sent Me, **He gave Me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak**, And I know that His commandment is life everlasting; **whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.**”

Acts 3:20-23. “And He shall send **Jesus Christ**, who before was preached unto you, Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the age began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, **A prophet shall the Lord, your God, raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things, whatever He shall say unto you.** And it shall come to pass that every soul, who will not hear **that prophet**, shall be destroyed from among the people.”

“Prophet” Defined: The one who speaks forth a specific, divinely inspired, message.

New Testament Examples: 4 Prophets (Acts 13:1,2); Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32); The Apostle John (Revelation 1:3); The Two Witnesses (Revelation 11:3)

Jesus Christ, The Evangelist

Mark 1:38, 39. “And He said unto them, Let us **go into the next towns, that I may preach there also**; for therefore came I forth. And **He preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee**, and cast out demons.”

Luke 4:43. “And He said unto them, **I must preach** the kingdom of God **to other cities** also; for therefore am I sent.”

“Evangelist” Defined: The one who goes from place-to-place proclaiming the Gospel.

New Testament Examples: Philip (Acts 21:8); Timothy (2 Timothy 4:5)

Jesus Christ, The Pastor

John 10:11. “**I am the good shepherd**; the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.”

Hebrews 13:20. “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead **our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd** of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.”

“Pastor” Defined: The one who tends to a local congregation.

New Testament Examples: The Angels of The Seven Churches of Revelation (Revelation 1:20; Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3)

Jesus Christ, The Teacher

John 3:2. “The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that thou art **a teacher** come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.”

Matthew 5:1, 2. “And seeing the multitude, He went up into a mountain, and when He was seated, His disciples came unto Him, And **He opened His mouth, and taught them.**”

“Teacher” Defined: The one who interprets the Word.

New Testament Examples: Paul (2 Timothy 1:11); Barnabus (Acts 15:35)
