

The Five-fold *Ministry*

Everything written in the New Testament about these different ministries working together to build up the Church will always apply as long as the Church is on earth.

Miki Hardy

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The Five-fold Ministry by Miki Hardy

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Chapter I

The Five-fold Ministry

“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”

Ephesians 4:11-13

If you have spent some time reading the Bible you will acknowledge that the Apostle Paul, who wrote these words, experienced an extraordinary conversion to Christianity while on the road to Damascus. He writes in Galatians 1:11-12 that the gospel he preached was not something man made up, or which he received from a man, or had been taught. Rather, he received it by revelation directly from Jesus Christ. However, Paul’s message was no different to that which the other apostles preached: The message of Christ and Him crucified. In his epistles Apostle Paul explains that the preaching of the Cross, which is the power of God, can only be effective in presenting every man perfect in Christ when it is exercised through the gifts of the Five-fold Ministry.

The Early Church

Sadly, today, many Christians who acknowledge the existence of the Five-fold Ministry fail to recognise its relevance or understand

its application for the Church. Others appear to be anxious about the potential impact it could have on their personal ministries and prefer to ignore it. Whatever one's belief, no sincere Christian can conclude that the gifts Jesus gives to men to lead and equip His Church were exclusively for the Early Church. Everything written in the New Testament about these different ministries working together to build up the Church will always apply as long as the Church is on earth. The same Spirit, who moved when the Church began, is still at work today. Jesus has not changed. He still gives the same ministries today as He did at the beginning – for the same purpose – so that the Body of Christ may be edified and His people brought to perfection in Him. During the Dark Ages of the Church, these ministries disappeared for a time as a result of the worldliness and religiosity that took hold of Christianity. But today, God is restoring them and bringing His people back to the true foundation, so that they may become mature and reach unity in the faith. That is why these ministries, which can only be united through the message of the Cross, are paramount for the Church.

Different anointings

Each of the five ministries is represented by a specific anointing, and each anointing is different. The work accomplished by each of these ministries depends entirely on the anointing that is linked to it. That is

why it is dangerous to try to define them by the way we believe they 'ought' to function. This leads to men assuming titles for themselves and imitating others. Jesus embodied all five of these ministries and He distributes them as He sees fit, so that His very nature can be imparted to the Church through the men in whom He invests His anointing. Thus, these ministries represent Jesus in the Church. When they work together in unity, Christ is manifest. The Five-fold Ministry and the other elders of the local church represent the authority of the Church of the New Covenant. They all work together to do the will of God. Therefore, one person alone can only represent a part of the authority of Christ in a local church.

Working together

This explains why in so many churches Christians are unable to grow beyond a certain point. Generally, the only spiritual food they receive is from a single anointing, that of the pastor. It all revolves around one man, and everything begins and ends with him. There are thousands of churches like this that do not have relationships with other ministries and churches and exist in complete isolation. But in the New Testament, we find no independent ministries or isolated churches. On the contrary, we find numerous local churches spread across the Roman Empire, linked by the five ministries, working and functioning as one. That is why the people of God were able to

grow and become mature. There were no barriers of race, culture, language, nationality, hierarchy, or social status!

In the same way, the ministries within the Five-fold Ministry are not independent. One person alone cannot accomplish God's work. All the five ministries working together are essential for the Church. There is an understanding in the Church today that if you are a teacher, you have your own ministry; an evangelist, you have your own ministry; and a prophet, you have your own ministry. Sadly, in most cases they are not linked with a local church, or with one another. Most are totally independent, accountable to no one. They preach what they choose to, do as they want and go where they please. I do not see any evidence of this in the New Testament. In fact, I see the very opposite. I see the different ministries working in relationship with one another and men who have been sent by the local church to other churches to contribute to the equipping of the Christians and the edifying of the Body of Christ. In all cases, I see that they were submitted to one another. Working in unity like this is the fruit of the Gospel; the power of the Cross at work in the lives of these men of God.

God's will for the Church

Another vitally important point that we need to understand is that the different ministries are always sent out. We see in the Book of Acts and in his epistles, that the Apostle Paul was sent by his local church, and when he returned he gave an account to those who had sent him. When you have not been sent there is no need for you to give an account to anyone. You are independent and you can come and go as you please. However, we see in Scripture that both ministries and believers, were sent out from their local church by the apostle or the body of elders. The Apostle Paul was part of the body of elders of the local church in Antioch. He would leave on his missionary journeys and then return. As he travelled, he built enduring relationships with his companions and with other anointed men in local churches. Furthermore, he continued to work in unison with them for the spreading of the Gospel and the strengthening of the Church.

There are numerous examples in the Book of Acts and in the epistles of the New Testament that confirm how the Five-fold Ministry worked in unity to equip Christians for works of service and bring the Church to maturity. We see the apostles working closely with all the ministries, whether they were prophets, evangelists, pastors or teachers. No one acted independently and each one recognised the role and the value of the other, and it brought unity in the faith and a firm foundation

for the Church. The Church needs all these ministries because each anointing is different and necessary for the building of the Church. Christians are then able to grow in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. That is God's will for His Church.

Building fruitful ministries

In the late 1980s, I experienced a miraculous intervention of God that transformed my life and ministry. At the time, I was the 'man in charge' and yet was not in any way accountable to my fellow elders. We were a group of pastors working in different churches around the Island, each with his own plan to build his own little kingdom. There was no real unity amongst us; but rather, division and competition. I acted totally independently and was struggling with a sense of disappointment and failure. I was discouraged because the people that God had entrusted to my care were not being set free from sin and seemed unable to grow in maturity. Added to that, I had problems at home in my relationship with my wife. I was ready to give up completely. But God, by His grace, led me to the Book of Acts and the epistles of the Apostle Paul and I began to see what the Church was meant to be. The message of the Cross opened my eyes and showed me my state. I realised that the problem was with me and I repented before the Lord. As soon as I accepted to lose my life, take

up my cross and allow the Lord to break and mould me – not an easy thing to accept - I began to experience great victories in my life, my marriage, my relationships with my fellow elders and in my ministry. The people of God sensed the change in me and responded with the same attitude of heart. What is important is that this work must start with the servant of God.

Today, we are in close relationship with different ministries from around the world, as we work together to build the Church. I have witnessed the Five-fold Ministry active and bearing fruit in the local church, as Christians are edified and brought to maturity in Christ. I am convinced this is the only way for the Church to rise up out of the shadows and make the light of Jesus Christ shine throughout the world.

The role of each ministry

According to the administration of God's grace, each anointing of the Five-fold Ministry carries a different authority - for example the apostle and prophet carry a greater authority than the other ministries.

The apostle lays the foundation; he reveals Christ and the heart of Christ for the Church. In other words, every Christian who receives the apostolic message knows from the moment he is converted that

he has surrendered his life and that it no longer belongs to him. The apostle is a father to many churches, leaders and Christians, as he provides oversight, direction and protection to the church, thanks to the anointing on his life. It is, therefore, easy to understand that his ministry and anointing brings unity amongst local churches. The apostle is also a protector of the sound doctrine of Christ.

The prophet has the very specific role of acting as God's mouthpiece, inspired by the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist best describes this ministry under the New Covenant. When talking about Jesus in Matthew 3:12 he said: *"His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."* It is a ministry of authority; preaching repentance, purification and separation, accompanied by the fear of God.

The evangelist's consuming desire is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ for the salvation of souls and he is ready to give his life for this. His message is simple but powerful and is accompanied by miracles and healing. The evangelist's presence in local churches is important because the anointing inspires Christians and encourages them to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Like a caring shepherd, the pastor watches over, nourishes and protects, the people of God. His anointing gives him authority in the local church, but he does not use it to dominate other elders or Christians under his care.

The teacher is anointed to build on the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets by communicating the Biblical doctrine of Christ in a clear and accurate way. He delights in delving deeply into Scripture and the anointing enables him to impart truth to the Church.

The Five-fold Ministry does not consist of independent ministries. They all form part of the eldership of their local church and work together in unity so that the saints may benefit from all the different anointings and be equipped for the work of the ministry.

Chapter II

The Apostle

The Apostolic Ministry is one of the five perfecting ministries that we find in Ephesians 4, and a vital ministry in the Body of Christ. The word 'apostle' is translated as 'sent', which means an apostle is a messenger or an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

The apostle is not someone who works independently, but like the pastor, the evangelist, the prophet, and the teacher, he forms part of the body of elders in a local church. He is sent by the church on a specific mission, and gives an account of it when he returns. The apostle, therefore, forms part of the ministry team of the local church; he is submitted to the body of elders and works closely with the other five ministries. According to the administration of God's grace, each of the Five-fold Ministry anointings carry a different authority. It is evident from the Bible that the apostle carries greater spiritual authority than the other ministries, simply because it is part of the anointing he has received.

God-appointed

We have no better example of the ministry of the apostle and the anointing that goes with it in the New Testament Church, than the Apostle Paul himself. When we study his life and ministry, we see the authority that God Himself had given to him for the edification of the Church. This anointing was felt and acknowledged everywhere

he preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet, despite the authority he carried, he was not a dictator but a man of relationship. It must be made clear that the apostolic anointing is something that is recognised firstly by the body of elders, but then also by the people of God. It cannot be fabricated; neither can it be claimed by anybody who wants to appropriate this title for himself.

The apostolic message

This anointing is first and foremost demonstrated by the revelation of the Gospel the apostle has received. The Apostolic Ministry cannot be separated from the Gospel that Christ revealed to Apostle Paul and the other apostles. In Galatians 1:11-12, Paul declares that the revelation of the Gospel he preached came directly from Jesus Christ. It was not something he received from a man, neither was he taught it. And in Ephesians 3, he speaks about his insight into the mystery of the Gospel that had been kept hidden in ages past, but had now been revealed by the Spirit to the apostles and prophets.

What did Paul preach? What revelation did he receive from the Lord? In 1 Corinthians 2:2, he states: *“For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified”*. In 1 Corinthians 3:10, he writes that by the grace God gave him, he has laid a foundation as an expert builder. The true foundation of Christian

life is not just our faith in Christ, but also our identification with Him in His sufferings, His death and His resurrection. This is the heart of Christianity... the apostolic Gospel, the message of the Cross, which he described as *“the power of God!”* It is therefore not just what we believe that is important, but also what we live. It was obvious to all the churches that Paul lived what he preached. Nothing he said or wrote contradicted the way that he conducted himself.

The revelation of this Gospel is a sure sign of the Apostolic Ministry, because it is the essence of God’s entire and only plan for His Church, with which apostles are called to build the Church. That is why when the foundation is laid in a church by an apostle, Christians receive a clear understanding of what God is asking of their lives, because the call becomes distinct and they have an example that they can follow.

Present-day apostles must receive and preach the same revelation as Paul did. The Lord Himself will enlighten the men who are called to this ministry and reveal to them the mystery of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ.

A father of the church

Another important proof of the ministry of the apostle is the spiritual relationship between him and the leadership of the church, with which he works, and God's people. This is clearly seen in the Book of Acts and in Paul's epistles. In 1 Corinthians 4:15, Paul writes: *"Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the Gospel."* He is declaring plainly to them that although many others may have come to testify to them about Jesus, it was he who had begotten them in the Gospel. He is not referring to new birth by the Spirit, but of the foundation he has laid in their lives through the revelation of the Gospel. We see Paul stating confidently in 1 Corinthians 16:1 that the church in Corinth should do what he had instructed the Galatian churches to do regarding the collection for God's people. He was not the pastor of that church, but he was at liberty to speak to them on that subject based on the relationship he had with them in the Spirit. They were submitted to the apostolic anointing on his life, and it was this anointing that gave him the authority to proclaim the whole will of God to them. We have a further illustration of this in Paul's relationship with the Christians in Macedonia. This confirms to us that the apostle is a father to the churches he works with.

Submission and authority

We can see the same submission to the apostolic authority in the hearts of the servants of God, who had recognised Paul's anointing and had forged powerful and enduring relationships with him in the Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 4:17, he writes: *"For this reason I am sending you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church."* Paul calls Timothy his son because he had begotten him in the Gospel. He had the liberty and confidence to send Timothy wherever he felt necessary, at any given time, because of their deep relationship in the Spirit. In Acts 20, we read of the relationship Paul had with the elders of the church of Ephesus. We can sense that their submissive attitude was the direct result of their spiritual relationship. The apostolic anointing was instrumental in unifying the local churches of the New Testament.

Protector of doctrine

The apostle is also the protector of doctrine. We see how often the Apostle Paul defended the Gospel he received and lived. He also warned the churches repeatedly about the false doctrines to which they were exposed. The lack of true apostles is the reason why so

many false teachings and emotional manipulation have been able to enter and take root in the Church today. The revelation the apostle imparts, the anointing attached to his ministry, and the example of his life, bring security and stability to God's people. The apostle carries a humble heart because of his identification with the sufferings and death of Christ. Thus, Paul was able to say: *"Follow me as I am a follower of Christ"*.

Chapter III

The Prophet

The prophetic anointing is one of the five perfecting ministries God gave to men so that Christians may come to spiritual maturity. The simplest definition of a prophet is that he is God's mouthpiece. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, he brings divine direction to the Church, as well as correction where necessary.

The gift of prophesy as opposed to the Prophetic Ministry

Christians today often misunderstand the Prophetic Ministry. They have tended to focus only on one aspect: the manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit, such as prophecy, and words of wisdom, or knowledge. However, we need to have a clearer picture of what the Prophetic Ministry is, and its importance for God's people.

Apostle Paul encourages us all to desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy, though obviously, not every Christian who prophesies is a prophet. We really need to grasp this point, because there are many people today who declare themselves prophets simply because they have been known to prophesy. The four daughters of Philip the evangelist were not prophets, even though they prophesied (Acts 21: 8-9). The prophet operates in the spiritual gifts as well, but because of the anointing and authority given by God, he brings much deeper clarity and spiritual insight, which God uses to edify and establish the Church.

The prophet in the Old Covenant

Under the Old Covenant, one of the main aspects of the prophet's ministry was to turn the hearts of God's people back to Him through repentance. In 2 Samuel 12, we read how God specifically chose the Prophet Nathan to confront King David over his sin. The prophetic word from Nathan did not condemn David; but rather it produced an attitude of godly sorrow and genuine repentance in him. This facet of God's authority is demonstrated most powerfully through the prophetic anointing.

The Old Covenant prophet would warn God's people in order that they might escape God's judgement. The prophetic word would come in a very clear and direct way and exposed the state of their hearts. God anointed the different prophets to bring an uncompromising message, which came with great conviction and the fear of God. When the prophet 'sounded the trumpet', the people knew that God was serious about what He had to say. Sadly, even then, they often hardened their hearts to His Word.

The prophet in the New Covenant

We need to understand that a true prophet does not just prophesy good things. In fact, the prophetic anointing should bring the fear of

God into the Church, because it exposes sin and proclaims the way of holiness and sanctification.

In the New Testament we have no better example of the Prophetic Ministry than Jesus Himself. In Matthew 3:12, John the Baptist declares: *“His winnowing fork is in His hand and He will clear His threshing floor, gathering His wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”* Jesus came preaching a message of repentance, purification, separation and judgement, but always with a heart full of grace and love.

In Matthew 21:12-13, again we see Jesus exhibiting the prophetic anointing when He found people buying and selling in the temple. His righteous anger was roused and He took a whip and drove the merchants out. Here is an aspect of the Prophetic Ministry that is often misunderstood. The Lord was still operating in grace and love, even when He expressed Himself in this way, because it was necessary to confront and rebuke those who were treating the house of God as a marketplace. God chooses to speak in different ways, but His heart never changes. He is a God of love and mercy, but also a God of righteousness and truth, whose holy attributes are expressed here through the prophetic anointing.

The prophet is called to do a very specific work of purification in the Church in these last days, because no other ministry is able to accomplish this. Where there is sin, a true prophet will fearlessly

declare it; but never out of an authority in the flesh. Thus the Church will not fall under condemnation but will feel the heart of the Lord, leading His people to repentance. The time is coming when prophets will bring light where there is darkness and expose the hidden motives of the heart, because the prophetic anointing brings purification and separation in the hearts of Christians.

The apostle and the prophet

Under the New Covenant, we can see another important aspect of the prophetic anointing from Ephesians 2:20.

It is clear from the lives of Paul and Barnabas that the prophet works closely with the apostle to lay the foundation of the Church. These two ministries carry greater authority in the Spirit than the other three. The apostle receives and imparts the revelation of Christ, and the prophet ensures that the Church remains in truth and sound doctrine.

The prophet is a member of the body of elders

Men can draw much glory for themselves when God speaks and acts through them. This is why submission and accountability to a team of elders in a local church is a vital protection against the misuse

of the prophetic anointing. Contrary to what we are used to seeing in the Church today, prophets are meant to form part of the local church leadership and be sent from there, like any other ministry. In Acts 15, we read how the Prophets, Judas and Silas, were sent from the church of Jerusalem to accompany Paul and Barnabas back to Antioch. If a man is not linked to a team, but has his own independent ministry, he can hide behind his calling and act on his own authority. He can say whatever he wants, and there is no one to speak into his life. But when a prophet is part of a team, he is accountable for what he says and how he acts. He will accept rebuke and confrontation in truth and grace. His life will be an open book to the elders of the church and the people of God.

True or false prophet?

The Bible warns us clearly that there will be many false prophets in the last days who will lead people astray by appealing to the desires of their sinful nature. But God is also raising up true prophets who will be examples for the Church; and their anointing will bring greater protection to the lives of believers. They will not be full of pride and arrogance, trusting in their own ability. Instead, they will be humble, with broken spirits and contrite hearts, prepared to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Jesus. They will be known by their identification with His sufferings and His death, and will carry the

fragrance of the knowledge of Christ. The time of independent ministries is over, for God is bringing order back to His Church through the prophetic anointing in these last days.

Chapter IV

The Evangelist

The evangelist is known to be part of the Five-fold Ministry, and has been given to the Church for a very specific purpose. However, we must differentiate between evangelism, which is a responsibility for the whole Church (Acts 11:19-20), and the ministry of the evangelist, who is anointed by God to proclaim what Jesus accomplished on the Cross in order to lead people to repentance and salvation.

Furthermore, there seems to be a lack of understanding, or revelation, as to the role of the evangelist in the Church today: the conception being that the evangelist is someone who just travels around winning souls for Christ. It is a misconception that needs to be addressed, as many itinerant evangelists end up being accountable to no one, their independent ministries often leading them to feel disconnected from other Christians, alone and discouraged.

Yet, three things are very clear from the Scriptures: firstly the evangelist always forms part of the eldership of a local church; secondly, he is always sent out from that local church to exercise his ministry to non-Christians outside the Church; and finally, he has a role to play in the perfecting of the saints in that local church. Thus we see why the anointing of the evangelist is necessary for the edification of Christians in the local church.

A ministry that operates as part of a team

Even though the evangelist is not mentioned very often in the Book of Acts, the examples we do have, show that the type of independent ministry around these days simply did not exist then. Philip was a prominent evangelist, mentioned in Acts 21:8. We see his ministry in action in Acts 8:5 as he preached the Good News of Christ. What is evident from Acts 8:14 is how the evangelist works in partnership with other ministries. Peter and John, hearing what had happened after Philip had evangelised in Samaria, felt the freedom to go and support him.

Philip, who was originally from the church of Jerusalem, gladly accepted the added spiritual investment brought by the apostles, who were elders in the same church as he was. There was true unity as the different ministries worked together for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. Philip had no intention of starting a new church with those who had been converted. On the contrary, he remained accountable to the team that had sent him. He was free to obey the Holy Spirit, while at the same time being submitted to the body of elders, which was a great protection for him. He knew that he belonged to a team in which each was ready to give their lives for the others.

To share the grace of God with the lost

As with all the ministries in the Five-fold Ministry, given by Jesus to perfect His people, Jesus Himself is our best example. We read in Isaiah 61 that He had been sent to “*preach the Good News to the poor*”. This is the prime example of the anointing an evangelist carries. It gives him the burning desire to reach out to the lost and proclaim the Good News of Christ, so that as many as possible will be converted. When he preaches, he does not need to enter into deep theology or academic teaching, but he preaches on the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ with a demonstration of the Holy Spirit’s power, and people are cut to the heart, repent and turn to Jesus. Through his anointing, people will always feel the love and grace of God for them. They will never feel condemned, judged or manipulated. That is why the message of the Cross is so important to the evangelist, because it is the Cross of our Lord Jesus that demonstrates the depth of God’s love for us.

To bring repentance

The true evangelist also knows that in order to be saved and cleansed from your sin, repentance is essential; not just a superficial invitation to Jesus to come into your heart. In Acts 2, Peter preached the simple

message of the Cross of Christ. When the Jews heard his words they were cut to the heart and cried out: “*What must we do?*” Peter did not reply, ‘Just invite Jesus into your heart.’ No! He said: “*Repent...*” Through this anointing and the message proclaimed, the Holy Spirit brings people to repentance.

To equip Christians

Furthermore, according to Ephesians 4:11-13, the evangelist plays an important role in the perfecting of the saints. As mentioned earlier, he has a role to play in the local church, and one to play in the world. Therefore, the idea many Christians have that he is an independent, roving agent in the Lord’s service is wrong. What benefit can he be to the local church if he is never there? He must be able to impart his passion for winning souls to the people of God and show them the importance of sharing the Lord’s love with others. Witnessing for Jesus is a sign of our spiritual maturity, and in this way the evangelist contributes to the growth of every believer. We should recognise the necessity for this ministry in the Church, as much as any of the other five-fold ministries.

Sent by the Church into the world

It is also obvious that a true evangelist needs to go out. Of course, he is free to go where the Lord leads him, because of the relationship, submission and trust that exists between him and the other elders. As he is sent from the local church, he knows he has their support and that of the church, and reports back on his return.

Accompanied by miracles

The mark of a true evangelist is that his message will be accompanied by miracles and healings as a demonstration of the power of God. Seeing the power of the Holy Spirit demonstrated through miracles, imparts faith to hearts and many believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and their Saviour. Therefore, because of the responsibility he has, it is important that the evangelist's life is an example of one given to Christ for the Church.

Chapter V

The Teacher

Among the five perfecting ministries mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 the teacher is the one anointed by God to impart the deep and lasting truths of God's Word, to His people. His role is not to fill Christians' minds with intellectual knowledge, but in teaching, to allow the Holy Spirit to write the Word of God on the tablets of their hearts.

There are many pastors with degrees and doctorates in theology, who have been teaching theology for years, but with very little to show for it. Unfortunately, many of these men have come to the end of themselves today, because all their knowledge has had no power to change their service for God, their lives, or the lives of the believers in their congregations. Some are even looking for an escape route from the ministry.

The teaching of the Word forms part of the commission Jesus gave to His disciples in Matthew 28:19-20: *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* The aim of teaching is not only to build knowledge of the Bible in the minds of Christians but, above all, to bring them to maturity.

Being united with the other ministries

The teacher must never forget Apostle James's warning (James 3:1) that he will be judged more strictly than others. There are countless independent, self-appointed 'teachers', circulating in the Church at large today – writing books, broadcasting television programmes, publicising their teaching on DVD and CD, posting blogs, and using every medium they can to reach the Christian public. There have never been as many teachers as there are today. Yet, the model we see in the Bible is of teachers forming part of the body of elders of a local church (Acts 13:1). As with the other four ministries, it is not absolutely essential that there be a teacher present in every local church, but each church should form part of a network of churches in which all the ministries in the Five-fold Ministry are represented. When the teacher forms part of the eldership of a local church in the network, he is sent to the other churches they work with, and so is a blessing to each one of them. In this manner, he is not just a guest speaker, relying on his credentials and imparting various facts to the church, without any real relationship with the people. Thanks to the apostolic Gospel, he is united with the other ministries, carries the same heart for the people, and is aware of the importance of building relationships.

Proclaiming sound doctrine

Once the apostle has laid the foundation in the Church by preaching the sound doctrine of Christ, the anointed teacher can build upon it (1 Corinthians 3:10), because he communicates in a more in-depth and profound way than the other ministries. As long as the teacher is submitted to the team of elders in the local church, God's people will be protected from false doctrine.

Imparting the heart of God

We have the perfect example in the ministry of Jesus. Before He came, the Pharisees were the teachers of the Law. Their teaching was without anointing, and so could bring about no change in people's hearts. But all those who heard Jesus were amazed at the authority with which He taught, and they flocked in multitudes to hear Him. The Pharisees drove people away because they were only interested in finding fault with others, but Jesus demonstrated the heart of His Father, and His words drew people. Though what He taught challenged and confronted His listeners, they recognised that He spoke the words of life (Matthew 7:28-29).

Leading Christians to take up their cross

The teacher's anointing causes him to delve into the depths of God's Word, to find the riches hidden within. He, himself, desires to be more enlightened, so that he can impart sound doctrine to God's people. Both a teacher's life and his doctrine must be founded on the message of the Cross – the power of God to those who believe. Therefore, he will be recognised by his ability to establish Christians firmly on this foundation. Teaching, when it is in the right spirit, automatically leads God's people to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Jesus.

Turning away from false doctrines

One of the biggest dangers in the teacher's ministry is that his burning desire to find hidden treasures in the Word of God can lead him off course and into error. This is how false doctrines enter the Church. The Bible often mentions false teachers, and clearly warns God's people against them. Titus 1:10-11 cautions against men who are mere talkers and deceivers, who teach things they ought not to, for dishonest gain. Such men deceive God's people. Some of them, as a result of certain experiences they have had, develop false doctrines, which are nothing more than destructive heresies.

Others create a whole doctrine from a few verses taken out of context. But we cannot draw from a personal experience with God, and teach it to the Church as part of the doctrine of Christ, neither can we base anything on one verse alone. However, we have seen this happen increasingly in recent years. On the other hand, when the Cross is at the centre of the teaching, God's people can rest secure, and will not be deceived!

When the five ministries operate together, the whole ministry of Jesus is revealed to the Church. The spiritual relationships between these ministries provide vital protection for God's people, as they prevent any wind of doctrine originating from the mind of man, from infiltrating the Church. The Church needs all these ministries in order to come to maturity, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ, which should be its objective. It is in the interests of God's people that they understand what a wonderful grace the unity of these ministries in the Church represents to them!

Chapter VI

The Pastor

We have left until last the most well known of the perfecting ministries in the Church – the pastor. The title ‘pastor’ comes from the Greek words ‘episkopos’ and ‘episkopeo’, which speak of watching over, keeping, taking care of, guiding, and feeding. In other words, the pastor could also, and often is, called the ‘shepherd’.

A shepherd’s heart

Various prophets in the Old Testament - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Amos, spoke on behalf of God, often quite severely, about shepherds and the flock. But in Jesus Christ, who stated that a true shepherd lays down his life for the sheep, we have the perfect example of the Good Shepherd.

It is impossible to consider the calling, anointing and role of the pastor, without the analogy of the flock, the sheep, and the shepherd. At the core of the pastor’s calling is a heart that cares for the ‘flock’, i.e. the Christians under his charge. In the conversation He had with Peter (John 21:15), we see that, prior to going to heaven, Jesus wanted to be sure that the New Testament Church would be in the hands of men who knew and understood their calling; who had a heart for the flock. He was looking for men who would not simply work for the Kingdom of God, preaching or teaching, but men who would love His people and take care of them. Feeding the sheep is about wanting the

very best for them, watching over them, loving them, nurturing them, instructing them, and leading them with the heart of Jesus.

Forming part of the body of elders in a local church

The pastor is one of the five ministries that always forms part of the body of elders in a local church. He is respected there for the authority his calling carries in the spirit; his is not an independent ministry. Even though all pastors are elders before anything else, all elders are not pastors, neither are they necessarily called to the Five-fold Ministry.

Therefore, the other elders have nothing to envy or to be jealous of; on the contrary, they accept the place or role that the pastor plays in the local church, because they sense this call and God's anointing upon his life. Nonetheless, it is vital that he does not dominate over the other elders, that they are not 'yes-men' to do his bidding without question. He does not have that authority in the spirit to do that. That is why he will always seek to take decisions in union with the other elders, and with their approval. In the same way, for his own protection, and that of the church he oversees, he will also be open to correction and rebuke from them, where appropriate. His heart's desire, his driving ambition, his vision, is always to ensure that he and the elders are working together in giving their lives for the people of God. The pastor has a special responsibility in this regard: he is the one to encourage

the other elders in that direction; to watch, and remind everyone of that vision at all times. The whole church acknowledges and accepts the call of God on the pastor's life. The life of the pastor should be known to the people, and they should allow him to know theirs. When we look at a pastor, we should see a man who is serving God and His people, not just a man carrying a title.

A ministry submitted to that of the apostle

If there is an apostle within the body of elders of a local church, he obviously carries more authority than the pastor, just as the pastor carries more authority than the other elders. The pastor should submit, not only to the whole eldership, but also to the apostle, whether the latter forms part of his own, or another local church, belonging to the same network of churches, as we see in Acts 20:17-36 and in Paul's epistles.

The danger of a solo ministry

The anointing that a pastor carries is different to that of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, or teacher, as it is more focused on the local church. At the same time, it also has its limits, and this is where the

danger for Christians comes in. Many small churches, today, are led by a man with a desire to lead God's people and take care of them, but who does not necessarily have the calling or anointing of a pastor; in other cases, he has the calling but is answering it alone. He is not working in submission to a body of elders, either because he does not consider himself accountable to them, or because he is the only elder and is leading his church on his own. At the same time, he has no relationship with other ministries outside his church. And yet, whenever we come across the word 'elders' in the New Testament, we note that it is always in the plural (Acts 14:23 & 20:17, Titus 1:5). Sadly, many churches today are led by a pastor who believes that he can bring all the spiritual nourishment that God's people need, on his own. This is very dangerous!

Interestingly, in the New Testament, we never see a church with a pastor as the sole authority. Quite the contrary, we see a model for relationships that should exist within the local church, and between churches. Even if there is a pastor in a local church, that church should never be alone and independent. Otherwise, the Christians will remain spiritual babies, because the only food they receive is from the pastor. They are completely isolated and without protection, and are unable to benefit from the different anointings within the Five-fold Ministry. The New Testament churches all formed part of one family; they received the contribution of all the different ministries, which enabled God's people to grow in maturity, and be equipped and perfected (Ephesians 4:11-13).

As long as the revelation of the Gospel and the structure of the Church of the New Testament is not brought clearly to the Church, it will be impossible for Christian ministries to work together in the unity of the Spirit. Many pastors will remain independent, and will feel insecure and threatened by other ministries. And yet, like all the other ministries, the pastor will one day have to give an account for the way that he has taken care of God's flock.

The Five-fold Ministry

Sadly, today, many Christians who acknowledge the existence of the Five-fold Ministry fail to recognise its relevance or understand its application for the Church. Others appear to be anxious about the potential impact it could have on their personal ministries and prefer to ignore it. Whatever one's belief, no sincere Christian can conclude that the gifts Jesus gives to men to lead and equip His Church were exclusively for the Early Church. Everything written in the New Testament about these different ministries working together to build up the Church will always apply as long as the Church is on earth. The same Spirit, who moved when the Church began, is still at work today. Jesus has not changed.

He still gives the same ministries today as He did at the beginning, for the same purpose: So that the Body of Christ may be edified and His people brought to perfection in Him. During the Dark Ages of the Church, these ministries disappeared for a time as a result of the worldliness and religiosity that took hold of Christianity. But today, God is restoring them and bringing His people back to the true foundation, so that they may become mature and reach unity in the faith. That is why these ministries, which can only be united through the message of the Cross, are paramount for the Church.



Church Team Ministries International (CTMI) is an informal Christian network, formed in 2001 by a team of leaders from various African countries who are united by the message of the cross and the work of God in their lives.

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