**The Church**

*New Testament Leadership*

* Part VI: The Role of the Pastor, Apostle, and Evangelist
* Church leadership in the New Testament had the “offices” or leadership positions of: Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, Evangelists, Elders, Deacons
* This Teaching: the role of Pastors, Apostles, and Evangelists
* The New Testament Church model:
  + Local congregations
  + Led by local leaders
  + Connected to other like-minded churches by *apostolic* and *prophetic* leadership
  + In loose, relationship-based networks
* With no official institution and no leadership hierarchy
* The Holy Spirit is the leader of the Church
* The New Testament teaches us about our commission, our spiritual gifts, and the church offices
* Leadership offices that the Apostle Paul listed are to be filled by *servant* leaders
* Through much of Church history, corrupt, self-serving church rulers and hierarchies have:
  + Kept the Word out of the hands of their people
  + Un-supernaturalized, modernized, and paganized the Church
  + Attempted to make believers heavily reliant on institution-trained, institution-loyal, and often agenda-driven leaders
  + Not concentrated on teaching believers how to have their own personal relationship with God and how to grow in their spiritual gifts and ministries
* Fortunately, the Spirit in the Church has been slowly rescuing the people of God from corrupt self-serving, ineffective clergy
  + And has been enlightening us to the recovery of the New Testament servant leadership model
* The Protestant Reformation placed the *Word* of God back into the hands of the people of God
* The Second Reformation we are currently experiencing:
  + Is placing the *Work* of God in the hands of the people of God
  + With servant church leaders serving predominately as teachers and equippers
* Apostle Paul and New Testament Leadership
* Eph. 4: 11-13
* And it was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to *equip the saints for works of ministry* and to build up the body of Christ, *until we all reach unity* in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, as we *mature* to the full measure of the stature of Christ.
* The Pastor
* Jer. 23:4
* “I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking," says the Lord.

* In the New Testament, the English word "pastor" comes from the Greek word *poimen*: a word that is translated as "shepherd” 17/18 times
  + This Greek word *“poimen”* is rendered "pastor" only once, in Ephesians 4:11
* Both the words "pastor" and "shepherd" convey the idea that the responsibility of this church leader is to lead and care for the people of God
* Shepherd: the model of a leader from the Old Testament
* Psalm 23: God the Shepherd provides, restores, protects, honors, and promises eternal blessing
* Moses in the Wilderness
  + As a pastor interceding for the Jewish nation after the golden calf incident, and asking God (the prophet) to forgive Israel’s sins one more time
  + Contrasted with Moses at the rock in Meribah as the prophet railing at the Hebrews, with God as the pastor protecting the people from Moses’ wrath
* The first pastors in the church were the apostles who planted and then supervised the Mideastern and Mediterranean fellowships
* These apostles chose individuals they trusted—some from their own group of leaders (such as Timothy)--and some from the local churches (such as Priscilla and Aquila)
  + To be the leaders of the congregation when they left town
  + These appointed local leaders were called *“elders” or* *“bishops” (Gr: presbuteros or episkopos)*
    - From where we get the English words Presbyterian and Episcopal
* Acts 14:21; 23
* And when (Paul and Barnabas) had preached the gospel to that city (Derbe) and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, . . . (and) when they had appointed elders (*presbuterous)* in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.
* Acts 20:17-18; 28-29
* From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders (*presbuterous)* of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you. . . Therefore, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*episkopous)*, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock."
* The New Testament has surprisingly little to say about the office of pastor
* New Testament church authority rested with the local *elders*
* It appears that in early local congregations one elder came to serve as a leader of the elder group
  + Likely with the blessing of the apostles and the agreement of the other local leaders
  + As a “chief elder”
* Over time in Church history
  + Pastors (chief elders) were called “priests” (OT model)
  + Church hierarchy developed with priests, bishops, cardinals, archbishops, patriarchs and popes (due to the increasing size and spread of Christianity)
  + Priests were assigned to local congregations from afar (until the Anabaptist movement of early 1500’s)
  + The priest/laity divide widened
  + Only after the Reformation did:
  + Did churches start using the term pastor again instead of priest (a New Testament vs. Old Testament term)
  + And were pastors given more authority as leaders of their congregations
* Since then, local pastoral authority has varied widely from:
  + Most of the authority lying with the denomination or the local church’s board of deacons or elders
  + To absolute dictatorships and cult-leader status of the pastor
* The lack of definition of the pastor in the New Testament has blessed the church with flexibility in how she is governed
* But has also left the authority of the pastor to be decided anew in each church throughout history, resulting in innumerable power struggles
  + Between church congregations and boards and pastors
  + And denominational leadership and pastors
* The plight of the Western pastor (and priest and rector)
  + They are tasked to do the work of the ministry for their congregation
    - Preaching, teaching, disciplining
    - Counseling, making hospital visits
    - Being the administrator over staff and facility
    - Evangelizing the lost
* These numerous tasks are not New Testament assignments for only one person
* The apostle / prophet / evangelists / pastors / teacher / evangelist “offices” described in Ephesians 4 have the primary responsibility to train the believers in the congregation to do the work of the ministry
  + And not for these leaders (including the pastor) to do all the work himself
  + Most pastor are so busy doing everyone else’s work that they do not have the time to train others
* Many denominations assign pastors to congregations
  + Some allow local fellowships to search for pastors
  + Many denominations move the pastors around every few years
* Most pastors have little support from their denominations with very little apostolic and prophetic input into pastors’ decisions and lives
* Some congregations have the authority to kick their pastors out
  + And have authority over most church administration decisions
* The average time a pastor stays at one church is 4 1/2 years
  + This figure is higher in “conservative” denominations: 8 years on average
  + 60% of pastors serve less than 10 years
  + 40% say they would leave their current church if they did not have a make a living
* Pastors often have one or two spiritual gifts (be they teaching, counseling, administration, etc.)
  + But they are expected to operated under a gifted anointing for every need in the church
  + The congregation becomes critical and impatient when their pastor cannot fulfill all the tasks demanded of him
  + He is expected to be a brilliant pastor, a powerful prophet, a dynamic teacher, a skillful administrator, and a successful evangelist.
  + He is ”paid good money” to do the work of ministry for the congregation
  + Most pastor are doomed to failure and burnout
* Is there “hope” for today’s pastors?

Yes: if they are permitted to be fulfill their true commission of being the shepherd,

the caring protector of their flock

And not just as workers, entertainers, and babysitters

And yes: if they are permitted to train and equip their congregation to do the work of the ministry.T help them

* + To help them become disciples of Jesus
  + To help them transform their lives to be more like Christ
* Churches can best help their pastor:
  + By not having un-Biblical expectations of them—particularly that they demand that their pastor is paid to do *their* part in church life and personal transformation
  + But rather by stepping into their spiritual gifting and leadership roles in church life themselves
* Wise local church government will supplement their pastor’s leadership in other areas of church where he is not gifted, such as, perhaps:
  + Teaching
  + Administration
  + Worship
  + Outreach
  + Counseling
* The most effective pastor is one who has a passion for his gifts, ministry, and calling and is able conduct his occupation with that passion and excitement
  + Not as a dreaded burden, and not just to make a living
* Therefore, mature local fellowship leadership and congregational “buy-in” of this Jesus-as-leader of the church model with their elders co-leading with the pastor
  + This is the New Testament-taught description for the 21st century pastor
  + And our pastors’ hope
* The Apostle
* The Greek word for "apostle" in the New Testament is *apostolos,* meaning a delegate or messenger.
* Roman admirals sent by their government to establish new colonies were called “apostles”
* In the Bible, an apostle is a *human* messenger from God
* Whereas an angel *(angelos* in the Greek)is an *angelic* messenger from God
* The twelve disciples of Jesus are referred to as the twelve apostles
* Luke 6:13
* And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles
* Many other Christian leaders in the book of Acts are referred to as apostles in addition to the original twelve:

* Certainly, the apostle Paul
* I Cor. 15:7-9
* After that (Jesus) was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by oneborn out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.
* But even others:
* II Cor. 8:23
* If anyone asks about Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren are inquired about, they are messengers (*apostoloi*) of the churches, the glory of Christ.
* Phil. 2:25
* Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger (*apostolos*) and the one who ministered to my need.
* Titus and Epaphroditus, of Greek ancestry, did not follow Jesus during His earthly ministry or ever meet Him physically. Even so, they are referred to as *apostoloi* in the New Testament
* The New Testament mentions fifteen men *besides* the original twelve disciples plus Paul, Titus, and Epaphroditus, who operated in apostolic roles.
* Individuals who may have been apostles include:
  + Matthias (Acts 1:26)
  + James, Jesus’ brother (Gal. 1:19)
  + Barnabas (Acts 4:36*)*
  + Apollos (1 Cor. 4:6-9)
  + Timothy (in 1Thes. 1:1 and 2:6Paul referred to himself, Timothy and Silas as apostles)
  + Two unnamed Christians (2 Cor. 8:23—the KJV renders the word "messenger" here)
  + Andronicus and Junia (Rom. 16:7)
  + Judas (Acts 15:23: 1 Thes. 2:6)
  + Erastus (Acts 19:22)
  + Tychicus (2 Tim. 4:12)
* In the book of Acts, "apostle" is the functional title given to those sent by God as human messengers to plant churches and oversee church growth.
* The apostolic pattern:
  + Paul and his co-workers followed the leading of the Holy Spirit to a city
  + They preached the gospel there
  + Then set up home fellowships and appointed leaders
  + Once a church was established, the apostles departed to other towns where the gospel had not been preached
* The apostles sometimes sent other trusted Christian workers to help care for the young congregations:
* I Cor. 4:17
* For this reason, I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.
* Paul and the other first century apostles thought of themselves as *human messengers* of God, called to save and disciple souls
* An apostle planted then developed a relationship with a church
  + It was not a church hierarchical title
  + It carried spiritual authority from God
  + But did not carry any human, practical, authority unless that authority was recognized and accepted by leaders and member of local congregations
* The Responsibilities of an Apostle Include:
  + Preaching and teaching the word of God
  + Founding churches
  + Caring for churches
  + Having a spiritual burden for the churches
  + Ordaining and appointing ministry leaders, such as pastors, elders, and teachers
  + Bringing discipline
  + Perfecting and maturing believers (with pastors)
  + Providing a sense of connectedness between the churches
  + Encouraging unity
* The Evidence of Apostleship
  + Fruit—a demonstration that he is a wise master builder
  + Spiritual authority
  + Successful leadership
  + Signs and wonders
  + Suffering
* Above all, an apostle was a *father* to the churches he served.
* I Cor. 4:14-15
* I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many *fathers*; for in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel.
* Gal. 4:19
* My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.
* Throughout church history there have been many with apostolic gifting and commission
  + St. Patrick
  + Francis Xavier
  + John Calvin
  + John and Charles Wesley
  + Francis Asbury
  + William Carey
  + J. Hudson Taylor,
  + Numerous unheralded apostles in developing nations
  + Charlie Milbrodt; David Nelson, Ghita Ritisan
* The church continues to need the pioneering spirit and the spiritual oversight provided by modern day apostles
* The church (and apostles themselves) today may be uncomfortable calling men who operate in such a capacity, "apostles," because of the awe in which historical apostle are held…
* But if church “offices” are more verbs than nouns anyway:
  + Then “apostling”—church planting, church oversight and accountability, pastoral support--is still needed
* For God to build His church and restore Jesus in leadership, we must recognize and release the twenty-first century apostles
* The Evangelist
* Surely there can be no greater joy than that of saving souls.

Lottie Moon

* The evangelist is listed in the New Testament as a church governmental “office”
* Eph. 4:11
* And it was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be *evangelists*, and some to be pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for works of ministry and to build up the body of Christ
* Churches that name Evangelists as a position in their denominations
  + Fundamental Baptists
  + Pentecostal
  + What is the difference between an evangelist and all Christians that are called to testify to what the Lord has done for them?
  + Evangelistic gifting
  + Evangelistic recognition (office; evangelist for revivals)
* New Life and governmental “offices”
  + Elder (including pastor) is really the only “office”
  + We have “deacon-equivalents”
    - Our various ministry leaders
* We have many people who minister effectively in their *spiritual gifts*
  + Which include comforting, helping, teaching, ministering, interceding, evangelizing, prophesying, guiding church leadership
* We accept the spiritually gifted and their contributions as verbs:
  + Folks who comfort, help, teach, minister, pray, witness, prophesy, and help out other church:
  + We don’t call them Apostle Berry; Prophet Bill; Evangelist Bob; Teacher Boyd, Deacon Bubba
* If we could get out of using the term ”elder” for our elder team Biblically, we would
  + But Paul commanded the early churches to appoint elders
  + And our elders actually do *elder*
    - Teach, lead ministries, counsel, solve problems, oversee the ministry leaders, support the pastor
* Evangelists and the evangelistically gifted are crucial to the Church
  + The salvation of lost souls is our number one responsibility
  + The message of Christ’s death on the cross, His resurrection, His offer of the forgiveness of sins, and the promise of eternal life is what makes us a Church—not a soup kitchen, a Walmart or a Ruritan Club
  + Many folk who attend church are not saved
  + Evangelists help the church to not be completely inwardly-focused-only about meeting church folk needs
* Evangelists remind us of the importance of prayer and financial support of local and international missions
* The only person referred to as an “evangelist” in the New Testament was Philip (one of the men appointed in Acts 6 as a deacon)
  + Philip first preached the gospel to the Samaritans (Acts 8:5-13)
  + And to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:27-39)
  + His daughters became prophetesses
* Evangelism is encouraged in the New Testament:
  + Person to person
  + House to house
  + In hospitals and prisons
  + In public places
  + In churches
* Evangelists who are successful locally may become regionally known and asked to preach at other churches or tent meetings
  + And may mentor other evangelists
* Examples:
  + The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
  + Prison Fellowship (Chuck Colson, founder)
  + Cru--formerly Campus Crusade for Christ (Bill Bright, founder)
  + Intervarsity—on college campuses
* A wise church stays close to the gospel and encourages evangelists and personal testifying and witnessing
* Paul warns the church:
* II Cor. 11:2-4
* But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

* The only way Jesus will be effectively restored to leadership of His church is if His evangelists are identified, encouraged, and trained to go into "the fields that are already white for harvest" (John 4:35).