



APOSTLES

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ARE THERE apostles today? Let's begin with Ephesians 4:11-13:

"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of Yahweh, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ".

In today's church we have no issue accepting the ministry gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers, but for some reason, it is much more difficult for some to embrace the ministry gifts of apostles and prophets. It is probably due to the fact that the apostle and prophet are the governmental aspects of the ecclesia.

Most of today's churches are out of order governmentally. They are ruled by a "jezebel spirit". Not a "strong" woman with make-up, but a place where "helps" rules over "governments".

An example would be if a woman usurps her husband's "God-given" authority and responsibility in the home. That home would be "out of order"; Yahweh's order. Likewise, a church whose deacons (helps) rules over the man Yahweh "sent" to them, is also "out of order". This is most certainly one of the reasons apostles and prophets are rejected in today's churches.

For us to be absolutely consistent and scripturally true, as stated in Ephesians 4, if there are no apostles today, then neither are there pastors, evangelists, or teachers. Just because you don't understand it, you can't subjectively embrace some of the gifts while rejecting others. Each of these "gifts" is an extension of the ministry of Christ himself, and today we need this full expression of Christ more than ever.

WHY DID He give us these gifts? What is their purpose? Ephesians 4:12 states the purpose:

"to prepare Yahweh's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up".

These five manifestations of Christ were not simply given to do the work of the ministry, but to equip Yahweh's people to do the work of the ministry.

HOW LONG WILL these ministry gifts be needed? And what is their duration? Look at verse 13:

"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".

This full expression of Christ did not pass away at the end of the first century, but was to be in effect until the Body matured in unity, knowledge, and expression of Christ's fullness. Scripture never indicates that the role of the apostle would cease and become extinct with the passing of the

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original twelve. Not a single verse in the Bible can be found to even hint that apostles were meant to be temporary. The Bible plainly teaches that apostles (as well as evangelists, pastors, teachers, and prophets) will continue to function...

"until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of Yahweh, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

It is certainly obvious that the church has not arrived at this place of unity, perfection, and maturity.

The reason some Christians assume that the apostolic ministry ceased during the New Testament era is because of the failure to differentiate between the original "Apostles of Christ" and the other apostles mentioned in scripture. The original twelve "Apostles" have a unique and special place in Christian history. There will never again be apostles like them. And we are in no way saying that today's apostles hold that special place these original twelve had or will hold. These twelve, will be commemorated forever in the New Jerusalem (see Revelation 21:14).

But, they were not the only apostles. There were many others called "apostle" in the New Testament, including Apollos, Barnabas, Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25-messenger: greek- apostolos: apostle), James the brother of Yahshua, Matthias, Paul, Silas, Timothy, and others referred to but not specifically named.

1 Corinthians 15 (see 1 Corinthians 15:5-7) mentions that after the resurrection, Yahshua appeared to the twelve and then also to all the apostles, indicating that there were apostles other than the twelve.

Also, the warning in scripture against "false apostles" would be nonsense if apostles were limited to the original twelve. If there only were to be twelve, then Yahshua should have warned us against all subsequent apostles, not just the false ones. Yes, there are false apostles, but there are also true apostles. There are also false pastors, false teachers, and false evangelists. 1 Corinthians 11:19 states:

"For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you".

Yahweh is not afraid of the false. The false only helps to illuminate the true.

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

1 Corinthians 12:28.

