

And if the bugler doesn't sound a clear call, how will the soldiers know they are being called to battle? 1st Corinthians 14:8 NLV

FLM PRAYER STUDY #131

History of the Church and the Equipping of the Saints

Those who are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing.

Psalms 92:13-14

The Greek word for the church is *Ecclesia*. It means *a calling out* or *assembly*. Thus, we in the Body of Christ are *the called out ones*. It is for these *called out ones* that Jesus gave His life (Ephesians 5:25: *Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it.*) And it is this glorious church that Jesus is passionately in love with and is coming back for (Ephesians 5:27: *...a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*)

To equip the believers in this church to minister to each other and to a lost and dying world, Jesus gave gifts which are just as applicable today as they were in the first century church:

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 knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness 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 which 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 increases of the Body unto the edifying of itself in love. Ephesians 4:11-16

Why Did Jesus Give These 5 Fold Ministry Gifts?

1. For the perfecting or equipping of the believers
2. For the work of the ministry
3. For the edifying or building up of the Body of Christ
4. So that, we come into unity and knowledge of Jesus as the Body of Christ.
5. To a perfect or complete or mature person

Why Are These Gifts Necessary for Today?

Because the 5 Fold Ministry Gifts in proper operation will bring the Body of Christ both into unity and into a more complete knowledge of Jesus-remember that Paul said the goal of his life was *to know Him!* (Phillipians 3:10: *That I might know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death*)- the Body will come into maturity so that the Sons' Company might be manifest and Jesus can come back for a Bride without spot of blemish.

I have taken the liberty to quote extensively from Dr. Bill Hamon in his book *The Day of Saints* pp.183-187 to explain what each of the 5 ministry offices entails:

Five Fold Ministry Descriptions

How Apostles Equip the Believers: *Apostles specialize in supernatural signs and wonders. They give building strategy and lay foundations, along with the prophet, in the lives of people and the local church. The prophet receives the blueprint for the building of the Church, but the apostle is the master builder. Biblical examples of apostles' ministry to the Believers reveal that they help found and ground the Believers in foundations of the faith and present day truth. Apostles' miraculous signs and wonders enable Believers to be delivered from evil spirits, disease, and strongholds in their lives. Some apostles not only demonstrate the supernatural but are able to activate the Believers in their power gifts of the Holy Spirit.*

As part of the foundation of the Church, apostles are often sent to establish new works and then to support those works. Apostle Paul founded many of the local churches in the New Testament. Apostles in the marketplace may be those who launch a business or who form a network to accomplish certain purposes. As initiators and those who help provide structure and leadership, apostles make a place for the Believers. They provide platforms where others can serve God through their unique giftings. The apostles have a special ability to be master builders of the Believers in their callings and ministry. Apostles will be key in helping transform Saints from pew-sitters to active participants in the Day of the Saints. (Pp. 183-184)

How Prophets Equip the Believers: *The prophets help bring vision, spiritual insight, revelations, impartations, and activation of the Believers' supernatural gifts and calling. They do this best with their prophesying and revelation knowledge. All fivefold ministers are to minister the Logos Word*

to the Believers, but prophets have a special ability to minister a Rhema Word that personally enlightens and activates faith in the Believers. Prophets help bring God's direction and vision to the Church at large, to local churches, to business, cities, and nations, as well as to individual Believers. Some prophets use their gifts of discernment to bring warnings about the plans of the enemy or of potential pitfalls to be avoided. The value of hearing their revelation from God is beyond measure. (p. 184)

How Evangelists Equip the Believers: *Evangelists have a special anointing to stir up the zeal of the Lord in the Believers. They have an anointing and passion for winning the lost and making them active members of the Body of Christ and Believers of the Most High God. As well as helping to gather the Believers, evangelists help keep them focused outwardly on the need for bringing the Kingdom of God to the entire earth. Without their enthusiasm for tearing down the works of darkness and building up the Kingdom of God, churches would be in danger of becoming "bless me clubs" that are so inwardly focused they become stagnant. Evangelists impart to the Believers the need to take the blessing we receive and use it to be a blessing to others, including those who are not yet part of the Church. Their ability to train others in soul winning is vital to growing the Church. Testifying to others about Jesus Christ strengthens our own faith. (p. 185)*

How Pastors Equip the Believers: *Those truly gifted as pastors have the ability to nurture, stabilize, grow, and mature the Believers. They specialize in building character, faithfulness, and family relationship in the local church family. No matter how many prophecies you have received about mighty ministry, you will never fully reach your destiny without maturity. This is best developed by being submitted to godly leadership and being allowed to develop little by little, just as a child learns and grows little by little. Even those who have reached spiritual adulthood need to remain in committed relationship with those who have been charged to keep guard over their souls. We tell all those who receive prophetic words through the ministry of Christian International to write out their prophecies and submit them to their pastoral covering. (Pp. 185-186)*

How Teachers Equip the Believers: *Teachers help prepare the Believers in the milk and meat of the Word of God. A true teacher, who is an extension of Christ the Master Teacher, has the special ability to teach the truths of God with simplicity and revelation, enlightening and enabling the Believers in the Word of God. A wise teacher brings out of his treasure both old,*

foundational truths and newly restored present truth. We are all to study the Bible for ourselves. And we can all offer something to bless others. But we can also benefit greatly from the years of study, revelation, and gift of expression that teachers have been given by Christ. James 3:1 states that teachers will receive a stricter judgment. Therefore, it is important for them to know and rightly divide the Word of truth. The Believers can be blessed by the wisdom teachers have gained as they have developed to a point of commissioning. (p. 187)

*The **apostles**, in particular, are the fathers and mothers who impart to the Believers and raise them up as sons and daughters in the faith. The **prophets** bring supernatural revelation and insight concerning the calling and ministry of the Believers. They give vision and reveal the times and seasons of God so the Believers know what to do. The **teachers** teach the Word of God with simplicity and wisdom as a mother feeds a growing child. The **pastors** nurture the Believers with counseling, clothing them with Christlike armor and garments. They help the Saints become a family of God meeting in the local churches. The **evangelist** imparts zeal for souls to be saved and equip the Believers with wisdom and anointing in winning the loss. (Pp 182-183)*

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We have seen a remarkable restoration of these Five Fold Ministry offices in the last 60 years:

1950s **Evangelists**-Deliverance/Healing Evangelism(Oral Roberts, AA Allen, Jack Coe, Kathryn Kulhman)

1960s **Pastors**-Charismatic Renewal (Harold Bredesen, Dennis Bennett, Don Van Hoosier)

1970s **Teachers**-Faith Teaching Movement(Kenneth Hagan, Kenneth Copeland, Derek Prince, John O'Steen)

1980s **Prophets**-Prophetic Movement (Dr. Bill Hamon, Mike Bickle, John Paul Jackson, Bobby Conner, Rick Joyner, Bob Jones)

1990s **Apostles**-Apostolic Movement (Peter Wagner. Dr. Bill Hamon)

Jesus is ready to come NOW. What is holding Him back? He is waiting for a Bride that has made herself ready (By any stretch of the imagination, *she is not ready!!!*). The Word says, *For the LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at*

my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. (Psalm 110:1, Matthew 22:24, Hebrews 1:13, Hebrews 10:13). Are His enemies yet His footstool? *And* Who is going to make His enemies His footstool? I know there are still many enemies actively working against Christ and His church. I believe He is raising up a remnant of the Last Days, the Bridal Company or the Manifested Sons of God, as Mighty Warriors to do warfare against these enemies. This is what all creation is groaning for and waiting expectantly for. *For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God (Romans 8:19)* As we recently studied, Galatians 4:1 speaks of immature believers who are children, not the mature Bride or Sons' Company that has made herself ready: *Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all.* The children are in contrast to the sons: *Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ (Galatians 4:7)* The children have grown up. They no longer have a servant mentality but a son's mentality, a son who is in covenant relationship with the pattern Son and walking in maturity. So why did the Lord give the five-fold ministry offices gift to the Church?

Again,

1. For the equipping of the Believers
2. For the work of the ministry
3. For the building up of the Body
4. So that we come into unity and knowledge
5. To a mature Body

The Church must come to maturity before the Coming of the King. This is only one aspect of prophetic fulfillment that must take place before the coming of Jesus. At the same time, we will see Christians delivered up to be afflicted and killed, false prophets, iniquity abounding, the Gospel of the Kingdom preached in all the nations, the characteristics of the Days of Noah, etc, and the restoration of Israel, both natural and spiritual. You can study more about His Coming by reading the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24-25.

History of the Church

(Again, I have taken this material from Dr. Bill Hamon's books *The Day of Saints* and *The Eternal Church*.)

Early History

1. Birth of the Christian Church AD 30
2. Separation of the Christian Believers from the Jews AD 70
3. Dark Ages 500-1500 AD
4. The Period of Church Restoration 1517 AD to Present

Five Major Restoration Movements

1. The Protestant Movement 1500s
2. The Holiness Movement 1600-1900
3. The Pentecostal Movement 1900
4. The Charismatic Movement 1950-1980
5. The Prophetic-Apostolic Movement 1980-2010

Possible Future Restoration Movements

6. The Saints' (or Believers') Movement-Many believe the early start of this movement happened in 2008. This will be characterized by the believers in Christ taking their authority and beginning to live out kingdom principles and, as Daniel said in Daniel 11:32, "...the people who know their God shall be strong and do exploits." The church will continue to grow spiritually until it becomes that mature bride that Jesus longs to come after.

7. The Establishment of the Kingdom on earth. This will be marked by the rule and reign of Christ on this earth. Revelation 11:15 tells us, "*And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.*" Some prophetic voices believe that this will start around 2030. This of course will be marked by the Second Coming. We are not date setters here, but do believe the signs of the time are pointing to the imminent and soon return of Jesus.

There have been several movements in Church history in addition to the above 5 major movements. I will capitalize the major movements and lower cap the minor movements but want to include the latter so that you can see the restored principles that many denominations are stuck on. Typically the new denominations in each movement took as their foundation the major

truth restored. The problem came when they held on to and got stuck in their restore truth and refused to accept new restored truth and revelation that came after their own movements started. This information is from *The Day of Saints* pp. 156-157:

THE PROTESTANT MOVEMENT 1500

Major Truth Restored: Salvation by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9)
Denominations founded: Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregational.

Note: Protestants are wrong in not recognizing the importance of the Catholic Church in maintaining Christianity throughout the Dark Ages. As Dr. Hamon from an Assembly of God background, says, "I hope that...you will gain an appreciation for the Catholic fathers (and mothers) // who maintained the truth of the Christian monotheistic faith in one God and in His virgin-born Son, Jesus. They enabled the basics of Christianity, as found in the Apostle's Creed, not to be lost during the Dark Ages, a time of great Church apostasy. During this period there was great persecution and martyrdom of Christians from heathens, Muslims, and many other anti-Christian groups."

Evangelistic Movement 1600

Major Truth Restored: Water baptism, separation of church and state
Denominations founded: Mennonites, Baptist, All fundamental-evangelistic churches

HOLINESS MOVEMENT 1700

Major Truth Restored: Sanctification, the Church set apart from the world
Denominations founded: Methodist, Nazarene, Church of God, all Holiness churches

Faith Healing Movement 1800

Major Truth Restored: Divine physical healing in the atonement
Denominations founded: Christian Missionary Alliance, Church of God

PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT 1900

Major Truth Restored: Holy Spirit Baptism, Speaking in Tongues
Denominations founded: Assembly of God, United Pentecostal, Foursquare, Church of God in Christ

Latter Rain Movement 1950

Major Truth Restored: Prophetic presbytery, singing praises, Body of Christ membership

Denominations founded: Non-denominational churches

Deliverance Evangelism Movement 1950

Major Truth Restored: Evangelist ministry, mass evangelism with miraculous healings

Denominations founded: Independent churches and ministerial fellowships

CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT 1960

Major Truth Restored: Renewal of all restored truth from all past movements; pastors restored as sovereign head of local church

Denominations founded: Independent Charismatic churches and Charismatic groups within denominational churches

Faith Movement 1970

Major Truth Restored: Faith confessions, prosperity, and victorious attitude and life; Teacher ministry restored as a fivefold minister.

Denominations founded: Faith and Word churches

PROPHETIC MOVEMENT 1980 & APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT 1990

Major Truth Restored: Personal prophecy, activating gifts, warfare praise, prophets to the nations. Prophet ministry was restored and a company of prophets brought forth. Apostolic leadership, release of miracles, networking, great harvest, and Apostolic ministry restored to bring divine order, finalized restoration of fivefold ministry for full equipping of the believers.

Denominations founded: Prophetic churches and networks, and Apostolic churches and networks.

SAINTS MOVEMENT in the first decades of this New Millennium

Major Truth Restored: Believers will demonstrate the Gospel of the Kingdom and reap the Great Harvest at the end of the age.

Denominations founded: We don't know yet what denominations or groups will be founded since this is yet to be.

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The Gospel of the Kingdom

The more I study the more I feel that trying to explain the Gospel of the Kingdom is almost as complex as trying to explain the Trinity. The Kingdom of God (or called the Kingdom of Heaven by Matthew because he was a Jewish writer and the Jews believe that they are not worthy to write God's name and also believe avoiding using His name is pious and proper—that's why you see Messianic Jewish believers write G-d) is, as we have discussed here many times, the first and the last thing that Jesus spoke of on this earth. Both He and John the Baptist mentioned it frequently. The better translation for the word *kingdom* would probably be *dominion*, *sovereignty*, *kingship*, or *kingly rule*. Even Jesus said of the Kingdom of God that one cannot say, "Look here it is" or "There it is!" in Luke 17:21. When Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven, He is referring to a time of the fulfillment of the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants, a time of restored earth, when believers will worship the Lord forever under the rulership of Messiah. Remember from our recent study that the Abrahamic Covenant said that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through Abraham's lineage. The Davidic Covenant said that the temple would be built, the Messiah would come, and God would be merciful. It was marked by sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving. Thus, Jesus is referring to a future time in history when God's will is done on the earth as it is done in heaven.

The Gospels define the Kingdom as something that was both "at hand" and a future reality (Mark 1:15). This view sees Jesus and His life on earth as the beginning of the Kingdom but not the consummation, which will follow His second coming. Traditionally, Catholic, Liberal Christian, and Pentecostal denominations emphasize its present aspect, while conservative Fundamentalists and evangelicals have emphasized its future aspects. The present aspect of the Kingdom refers to the changed hearts and minds of Christians (Luke 17:20-23), emphasizing the spiritual nature of His Kingdom by saying, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." The activity of Jesus in healing diseases, driving out demons, teaching a new way of living, offering hope to the poor, etc., is the demonstration of this Kingdom. Yet the consummation of this is yet to come and will come only with the return of Christ.