

PASTORS

From the Greek, “poimen” meaning, “one who shepherds God’s people”

Pastors Ask: “Are the people of God caring for and showing compassion for people?”

Biblical example: Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41)

Jesus’ example: He refers to himself as the Good Shepherd who has come to lead his people (John 10)

Secular examples: Counselors, social workers, nurses, care-giving professions

The Mature Pastor: Can identify needs, provide comfort, and encourage others. Pastors easily empathize with others and exhibit lots of patience with those in need. Out of a drive to nurture, protect, and love God’s people, they spend most of their time with other Christians.

The Less-Than-Mature Pastor: May value stability, to the detriment of mission, holding up kingdom-building opportunities. Because they’ve seen how people can fail other people, or because of their own ego, they might foster unhealthy dependence between themselves and their followers.

The Baby Pastor: Because they’re so comfortable with people in their brokenness—and fearful of making someone angry—pastors just beginning to exercise their gifting may avoid challenging others to take steps toward healing, transformation and redemption.

The Communal Need: Pastors can rely on apostles and evangelists to help identify new territorial opportunities and recruits for the kingdom, and on prophets to help them identify ways the Body is called to grow and mature.

TEACHERS

From the Greek, “didaskalos” meaning, “one who seeks and shares the truth”

Teachers Ask: “Are the people of God immersing themselves in scripture and biblical principals? Are they living them out?”

Biblical example: Apollos (Acts 18)

Jesus’ example: Jesus was often referred to as Teacher or Rabbi; he taught with authority

Secular examples: teachers, professors, trainers, speakers

The Mature Teacher: Looks for effective methods to explain, enlighten and apply God’s truth, wisdom and ways. Teachers assist others in remaining biblically grounded, learning to discern God’s will, and helping the community remain faithful to Christ’s own teachings.

The Less-Than-Mature Teacher: May fall into dry intellectualism or dogmatism. They can favor the study of theology or Scripture over the actual application/practice of it, which might also keep them from supporting missional aspects of life.

The Baby Teacher: May aspire to “wow” their students with their own intellect and prowess rather than share the authority given to them from Scripture and the Holy Spirit, or leading by personal example. Hebrews 13:7 tells us to “Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.”

The Communal Need: A teacher’s authority doesn’t come from how smart they are, but from the Word of God and the power of a transformed life. Others within the Body can help Teachers keep that in balance.

THE FIVE FOLD MINISTRY



“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. . .” —Ephesians 4:11-12

You’re a vital part of our church Body! Whether your gifting falls in the “Pioneering” categories of Apostles and Prophets, and Evangelists or more in the “Settling” ministries of Pastors, and Teachers, we need you as an active part of our fellowship.

Some basics to understand:

- Jesus epitomizes the expression of each ministry base: He was the perfect apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher.
- There is no greater base ministry than another. Think of the ministries as five fingers on the same hand.
- We may be primarily “wired” for one of these ministries BUT we are not excused from exercising all five ministries. If we are to resemble Jesus, we’ll operate in all five ministries, just as He did.
- All the gifts interact. Learn from those who are strong in areas you are weak. We need one another in order to become mature and grow into the fullness of what it means to be the Body of Christ.
- On occasion, outside influences (ex. work demands it; personal crisis; need) might push us to operate within a ministry aspect that is not our primary gifting—we refer to that as a “phase” ministry.
- The Body of Christ is organic in nature and, like all living things, experiences rhythms in life. There will be “seasons” when we will be challenged by God to enter into new territory. Apostles, prophets and evangelists are particularly suited to that call. There will be “seasons” to nurture community and make sense of the new thing God has called us into. Pastors and teachers flourish in those roles. With Jesus as our Head, our differences are His gift to us so that we might equip one another, in unity, to be the Church He is creating.

APOSTLES

From the Greek, “apostolos” meaning, “one who is sent out”

Apostles Ask: “Are we leading the people of God to the new place God is calling them?”

Biblical examples: Jesus, the Twelve, Paul, Priscilla, and Aquilla

Jesus’ example: Jesus was the One sent by God out into the world (John 3:16)

Secular examples: Entrepreneurs and explorers

The Mature Apostle: Is a visionary, catalytic pioneer, always pushing into new territory, eager to discover and explore. Apostles like to establish new churches or ministries. They constantly come up with new, innovative means to do kingdom work.

The Less-Than-Mature Apostle: May have difficulty discerning/distinguishing between the constant flood of good and innovative ideas they have and the God-ideas given to them. They might never stick with an idea long enough to see it fully developed, jumping from one idea to the next.

The Baby Apostle: Might stay so utterly focused on initiating new ideas and rapid expansion, that they leave people wounded behind them. Others in the Body might refuse to follow after a while, because they see their investment as a waste of time, given that their leader is constantly on to the “new thing.”

The Communal Need: Apostles can rely on pastors and teachers to remind them that people need to be cared for on an ongoing basis. Mature apostles eventually celebrate the deepening maturity and wisdom within the Body, even as they continue to venture outward.

PROPHETS

From the Greek, “prophetes” meaning, “one who hears and listens to God”

Prophets Ask: “Are the people of God hearing his voice and responding appropriately?”

Biblical examples: Anna and Simeon (Luke 2); Agabus (Acts 11:28, 21:10); Philip’s daughters (Acts 21:9)

Jesus’ example: Every word he uttered was revelation from God

Secular examples: Creatives (musicians, artists, writers); people who speak out of their perceptions

The Mature Prophet: Listens closely to God and humbly communicates to the Body, even if it’s sometimes with a challenging or corrective word. Prophets are in-tune with God and therefore able to discern his will and his truth. They can stand back from circumstances and get a clear picture of what is happening; this allows them to see creative solutions and cast vision.

The Less-Than-Mature Prophet: May sound shrill in their struggle to be heard, and in the process, the Body “tunes them out” and therefore misses the word God wished to share through them. Prophets must develop their skills in other base ministries if they don’t want to “shoot themselves in the foot.”

The Baby Prophet: Assumes they’re always right. And because they’re “always right,” they want to move straight from Revelation to Application, skipping a critical Interpretation step in their desire to quickly see God’s will/vision completed.

The Communal Need: Prophets are called to share the word they’ve been given, learning from others in the Body on how to do that in the most winsome way. The community then weighs that word and gives interpretation. A prophet’s job is to share what they’ve received, then back away and see what others make of it.

EVANGELISTS

From the Greek, “evangelistes” meaning, “one who brings good news”

Evangelists Ask: “Are new people entering into God’s kingdom?”

Biblical example: Philip (Acts 8:12)

Jesus’ example: He embodied the Good News; he was the Good News

Secular examples: Salespeople, politicians, PR, networkers

The Mature Evangelist: Is an infectious communicator of the Gospel message, who recruits others to join the cause. Evangelists call for a personal response to God’s loving, saving redemption in Christ and draw believers to engage with the ongoing mission of growing the Church.

The Less-Than-Mature Evangelist: Might be so focused on reaching those outside the Church, that they neglect the need for maturing and strengthening the recruits already inside the doors. They have a propensity to “get ‘em in the door,” and then abandon their new disciples in favor of finding still more.

The Baby Evangelist: May be tempted to reduce the Gospel to keeping people from hell when they die, while ignoring Jesus’ invitation to discipleship and the power of the kingdom while living here on earth.

The Communal Need: Discipling others and building the kingdom requires building ongoing relationships. Evangelists can learn from teachers and pastors how to better care for those they bring into the fold, on an ongoing basis.

