

The purpose of the five-fold-ministry in the Body of Christ

The Fivefold Ministry is a concept taken from Ephesians 4:11-16 as Paul lays a framework to equip the saints for service and building up of the Body of Christ.

¹¹And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹²for the **equipping** of the saints for the **work of ministry**, for the **edifying of the body of Christ**, ¹³till we all come to the **unity of the faith** and of the **knowledge of the Son of God**, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—Church

Ephesians 4:11-16 (NASB)

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; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

First and foremost, the Body of Christ needs to realize that Jesus Christ gave a diversity of ministry gifts to the Church for a reason. The church cannot be effective the way it was designed by God without all of the gifts in operation. All of them are essential in order for the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ to come unto full stature in Christ.

Common Conflicts among Ministries

- Teachers can sometimes think evangelists are too flamboyant and sensational.
- Evangelists can think teachers are dry and dogmatic.
- Evangelists and teachers often agree saying that prophets can sometimes be intense and extreme.
- All such attitudes are wrong.

It is vitally important to understand, that all the work of the ministry comes under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Head of His body, the Church. The Head and the body are one; therefore, Jesus still directs all operations of His body from the right hand of God the Father.

LET US LOOK AT MARK 16:20

20 And they went forth, and preached everywhere, THE LORD WORK- ING WITH THEM, AND CONFIRMING THE WORD with signs following....

- Notice it was the Lord Jesus working with these early disciples.
- Although He is our Helper and helper, through the Holy Ghost, He is also our Lord.

It is important to note here that, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church and that;

- He is the One who **gave**.
- He is the One who **calls**.
- He is the One who **equips**.
- Let Him do it.

Here are a few common questions surrounding the Fivefold Ministry.

Is the Fivefold Ministry Relevant for Today?

The Fivefold Ministry *is* for today. As the text clearly states, the Fivefold Ministry of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers are purposed to build up the Body of Christ *until* the Body of Christ reaches unity of faith, knowledge, and is fully mature matching the fullness of Christ.

What does the Fivefold Ministry Do?

As Ephesians 4:11-16 teaches, the Fivefold Ministry should produce the following outcomes:

- Equip the believers for works of service
- Build up the Body of Believers in growth and maturity
- Create unity of faith
- Increase in knowledge about God, Jesus and the Kingdom
- Grow believers to be mature in their faith with sound doctrine
- Develop strong believers who are secure in their faith
- Mature the saints to be able to stand in the face of the challenges and deceits of the world
- Disciple believers in continual growth with an ever-increasing outward manifestation of love

In summary, the Fivefold Ministry is a framework to grow, build and mature the Body of Christ to continue the workings of Jesus through the lives of the saints.

Does Everyone Have A Gifting?

Because Jesus lives in and through every believer, it is expected that the attributes of Jesus would manifest in at least one detectable way through every believer. We believe that the gifts are found within our natural strengths and simply need to be identified.

Can People Have More than One Gifting?

Absolutely. In our experiences in over 100,000 participants, people score dominantly to two giftings. This is acceptable because the attributes and strengths of Jesus are being looked for in the test. Common pairs are Pastor and Teacher, Apostle and Prophet, and Prophet and Evangelist. It's good to identify a primary and secondary gifting but to seek to operate in the one you most strongly possess.

Can People's Giftings Change?

As people mature in their faith and relationship with God, it is not uncommon to see them develop stronger scores in their strengths – and even grow ones to dominant or primary positions. This is most common with someone who develops a teaching gift.

Is the Fivefold Ministry a System of Church Government?

There are differing views on this subject and the roles mentioned in the Fivefold Ministry can be extrapolated to mean things they may not have been intended to mean. Using the text of Ephesians 4:11-16 as our guide, these roles are explicitly purposed for equipping individual believers, so the body of believers is equipped for the work of service. In other words, the roles of the Fivefold Ministry are a model to build up the Church and grow believers.

While some believe, their gifting bestows as an office, such as an office of the Apostle, it may be more appropriate to identify themselves as being *Apostolic* – or one who pioneers new endeavors and grows people. Similarly, someone who believes their gifting bestows them an office of Prophet may more appropriately identify themselves as being *Prophetic* – or someone who reveals the heart of God for people, places and situations. The important thing is that these gifts are in partnership with the Holy Spirit and indeed are alive, active and instrumental for the growth of the Church.