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**Gifts - The So Called Five Fold Ministry Was Temporary, Not Ongoing**



By Dan Maines

**The So Called Five Fold Ministry Was Temporary, Not Ongoing**

## Introduction

† The so called five fold ministry comes from Ephesians 4:11, but it must be read in context and in time, not pulled out and stretched into our day (Ephesians 4:11)

† The passage itself tells you there was a purpose and a stopping point, and that stopping point is key to understanding it

correctly (Ephesians 4:11-13)

† If you ignore the timing and the purpose, you'll end up rebuilding something that was never meant to continue (Ephesians 4:13)

### **Ephesians 4:11-13**

11 And He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ; 13 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.

† The word until sets a clear time limit on these roles, they were never meant to last forever (Ephesians 4:11-13)

† These roles were given to build up the body during a period when things were still being revealed and established (Ephesians 4:12; 1 Corinthians 13:9)

† Once the body reached maturity and fullness, those temporary roles were no longer needed (Ephesians 4:13; Colossians 1:25-26)

† You don't continue scaffolding after the building is finished, the structure stands complete (Ephesians 4:13; Ephesians 2:20)

### **Ephesians 2:20**

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone,

† Apostles and prophets are clearly identified as the foundation, not the ongoing structure (Ephesians 2:20)

† You don't keep laying a foundation over and over, once it's set, the building stands on it (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 3:10-11)

† This proves those roles were never intended to continue beyond the foundational stage (Ephesians 2:20; Hebrews 2:3-4)

## **Acts 1:21-22**

21 Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us 22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.

† Apostles had to be eyewitnesses of the risen Christ, that requirement can't be met today (Acts 1:21-22)

† This alone shuts the door on modern claims of apostleship in the biblical sense (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 9:1)

† What people call apostles today doesn't match the biblical definition at all (Acts 1:21-22; 2 Corinthians 12:12)

## **1 Corinthians 13:8-10**

8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away with; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away with. 9 For we know in part and prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away with.

† Prophecies, tongues, and partial knowledge were temporary and were going to come to an end (1 Corinthians 13:8-10)

† That partial state belonged to that first century generation while revelation was still unfolding (1 Corinthians 13:9;

Ephesians 3:3-5)

† Once completion came and the Old Covenant system ended, those partial roles were done away (1 Corinthians 13:10; Hebrews 8:13)

### **Hebrews 2:3-4**

3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

† God was bearing witness with them, confirming the message through signs and wonders during that time (Hebrews 2:3-4)

† The miracles and gifts were tied to those who heard Him and carried that message, not to an ongoing system (Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12)

† This again shows a time bound function connected to the establishment of the New Covenant message (Hebrews 2:3-4; Mark 16:20)

### **Historical References**

† Irenaeus noted that the apostolic authority was tied directly to those who had seen the Lord and received the original commission (Acts 1:21-22)

† Eusebius recorded that the apostles were unique witnesses whose role was not repeated after their generation (Ephesians 2:20)

† Clement of Alexandria spoke of the apostles as the foundation already laid, not something ongoing (1 Corinthians 3:10-11)

† After the apostolic age, leadership shifted to elders and bishops, not new apostles, confirming the foundation was already laid (Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5)

## **How It Applies To Us Today**

† We are not waiting for new apostles or prophets, we stand on what was already established (Ephesians 2:20)

† Our role today is to teach, shepherd, and preach what has already been revealed, not to add to it (Jude 1:3; 2 Timothy 4:2)

† The body of Christ has already reached its intended maturity in that completed covenant transition (Ephesians 4:13; Colossians 1:27-28)

† We walk in the finished work, not in an unfinished system that still needs new revelation (Hebrews 8:13; John 19:30)

† Chasing modern apostles and prophets pulls people away from the finished work and back into something that was already completed (Colossians 2:10; Hebrews 1:1-2)

† The danger today isn't lack of revelation, it's ignoring the complete revelation we already have (Jude 1:3; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

## **Q and A Appendix**

**Q** Are there apostles today in any sense?

**A** No, not in the biblical sense, because apostles had to be eyewitnesses of the risen Christ, and that requirement can't be met today (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 9:1)

**Q** What about modern prophets?

**A** Prophets were part of the partial system that was done away

when completion came, so there are no prophets today delivering new revelation (1 Corinthians 13:8-10; Hebrews 8:13)

**Q** Does the church still need the five fold ministry?

**A** No, that system was for the building phase until maturity, once the body was established, those roles ended (Ephesians 4:11-13)

**Q** What remains today?

**A** Teaching, shepherding, and preaching what has already been revealed, not adding new revelation (Jude 1:3; 2 Timothy 4:2)

**Q** What about Ephesians 4:11 being for today?

**A** The passage itself says until maturity, once that was reached, the roles fulfilled their purpose and were no longer needed (Ephesians 4:11-13)

**Q** Does the word until mean it stopped?

**A** Yes, until sets a limit, once the goal was reached, the roles ended because their purpose was fulfilled (Ephesians 4:11-13)

**Q** What was the goal of those roles?

**A** The goal was unity of the faith and full knowledge of the Son of God, reaching maturity in Christ (Ephesians 4:13; Colossians 1:27-28)

**Q** Has that maturity already happened?

**A** Yes, Paul said the mystery was revealed and Christ was fully made known in that generation (Colossians 1:25-27; Ephesians 3:3-5)

**Q** Why were prophets needed in the first century?

**A** Because revelation was still partial and being revealed, prophets delivered that message until completion (1 Corinthians 13:9-10; Ephesians 3:5)

**Q** What does foundation mean in Ephesians 2:20?

**A** It means a once laid base, not something ongoing, the apostles and prophets established it, and it was never meant to be repeated (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 3:10-11)

**Q** Can someone be an apostle in a different sense today?

**A** Not in the biblical sense, because the requirement was to witness the risen Christ and be directly appointed (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 9:1)

**Q** What about people who claim signs and miracles today?

**A** Signs confirmed the original message delivered by those who heard Him, not an ongoing system of new revelation (Hebrews 2:3-4; Mark 16:20)

**Q** Did the early church expect new apostles after the first century?

**A** No, historical records show leadership continued through elders and bishops, not new apostles (Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5)

**Q** What is the danger of believing in modern apostles and prophets?

**A** It shifts authority away from completed revelation and opens the door to adding new teachings (Jude 1:3; Galatians 1:8)

**Q** What should believers focus on today?

**A** Holding to and teaching the faith that was once for all delivered, not looking for new revelation (Jude 1:3; 2 Timothy 4:2)

**Q** Does God still work today without apostles and prophets?

**A** Yes, God works through His completed word and through believers, not through new revelation offices (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2)

**Q** What replaced the role of prophets?

**A** Nothing replaced them, their role ended once revelation was

complete, and now we have the full revealed message (1 Corinthians 13:10; Jude 1:3)

**Q** Why do so many still believe in the five fold ministry today?

**A** Because the timing element is ignored and the passage is applied outside its first century context (Ephesians 4:11-13; Matthew 24:34)

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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## Source Index

† Ephesians 4:11-13; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 1:21-22; Hebrews 2:3-4; Colossians 1:25-28; Hebrews 8:13; Jude 1:3; 2 Timothy 4:2; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 19:30; Colossians 2:10; Hebrews 1:1-2; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5; Mark 16:20

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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