

Ministry Gifts (Ephesians 4:11-12)

- I. **Introduction**
 - A. Illustration: A 3rd Century pagan actor comes to Christ
 - B. Main point: **The church's ministers are His gifts to one another**
 - C. Review of the context and outline of the sermon
- II. **The Ministry Gifts**
 - A. Christ's gifts to His church are the *people* themselves – not their function
 - B. *Apostles*
 1. Every Christian is an apostle (Jn 13:16)
 2. Apostles sent out by the church
 3. "The twelve"
 4. *Apostolic succession* considered
 - a. Appointed by Christ Himself (Gal 1:1)
 - b. Eye-witnesses to the Resurrection (1 Cor 9:1, Acts 1:21-22)
 - c. Supernatural authority
 - d. No replacements sought as apostles died (James)
 - e. No positive command given to appoint new apostles
 - f. No illustrative examples of *Apostolic Succession* in the Bible
 5. History of the false doctrine of *Apostolic Succession*
 - C. *Prophets* – those who speak under the influence of the Holy Spirit
 1. Not OT prophets, but men and women in the early church
 2. Part of the foundation of the church (Eph 2:20)
 3. Are there prophets today?
 - a. The important difference between the prophets of whom Paul writes and prophets of today
 - D. *Evangelists* – those who share the good news
 1. A clearly recognizable gift different from regular witnessing
 - E. *Pastors* – nurture and oversee the flock of God
 - F. *Teachers* – clarify the apostles doctrine to the flock of God
 1. The succession of teachers is taught in Scripture (2 Tim 2:2)
 2. Is this a separate gift, or should it be linked to pastors?
 - a. Does the Greek clearly teach that all teachers are pastors?
 - b. 1 Cor 12:28, Gal 6:6
 - G. Just a *5-fold ministry*? How about a *20-fold ministry*?
- III. **What is the function of these ministry gifts in the church?** (Eph 4:12-13)
 - A. *To equip the saints for the work of the ministry*
 1. A difference in the 'clerically-centered' KJV
 2. JI Packer: *The conspiracy of clericalism*
 3. Pastors need to be challenged out of this way of thinking
 4. Lazy congregations must grow out of the idea of Sunday-morning ministry
 5. We are not to be *ministry-driven* either
- IV. **Conclusion**
 - A. Walking worth of the calling by living as the church of Jesus Christ should live
 - B. Being a witness to the world, just as the 3rd Century pagan actor