

Course 112:
The Ascension Office-Gifts (Five Fold Leadership Gifts)
An apostolic teaching of the Global School of Ministry - UK

Synopsis

This Course probes deep into the Word of God to show the origin of the Five Fold Offices and spiritual Leadership gifts in the Body of Christ as well as why they are placed. We will examine the scriptures concerning the offices, especially **Ephesians 4:7, 11, 12 and 1 Corinthians 12: 28-30**.

Though He was the Son of God - another term meaning the incarnate God or God made flesh - Jesus needed to function with the infusion of the Holy Spirit while in human form. This happened at the baptism of John, shortly before He began His public ministry. John 1: 32-34; Matthew 3: 13 – 17. As John later testified, Jesus received the Holy Spirit without measure, meaning an unlimited quantum of the anointing to represent the Kingdom of Heaven and advance it forcefully and in power on planet earth! John 3:34, 35. With His incarnation, heaven came upon earth in discreet fashion, known only to a select few. At His baptism and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was unveiled, as it were and manifested to all Israel by a man who had been accepted as the national prophet, after over 400 years of spiritual darkness when no one ever uttered ‘Thus says the Lord’.

Jesus later went to the Cross as propitiation of the sins of the whole world, rose again and ascended into the heavens. In relation to His Church, Jesus Christ is:

- **Chief Apostle:** Jesus was the ‘Sent One’ who came from heaven to earth. He came to show the way and set a plumb line to what was taught and known so that mankind may know the right way to serve God. In His epic Sermon on the Mount, Jesus provided sharp contrasts of what Moses and the Prophets declared to be the way to serve God with what He taught. Matthew 5:21 – 45. By proclaiming the liberating truth and showing people how best to please God (**John 8:32,36**), Jesus is the Chief Apostle of the Church. His word perfects us till today and there is simply no way anyone can ever hope to reconcile with God outside of Him as the sure access. **John 14: 1-6**. The way He picked, trained, empowered and sent forth/released His disciples shows His apostolic mindset of empowerment in bold relief. **Mark 3: 13-19; Acts 1:8**.
- **Chief Prophet.** The words of Jesus are prophecy in action. They have guided the Church from the days He walked the dusty streets of Galilee and Capernaum till today and will ring true till the end of the age. The Revelation He granted His servant John on the Isle of Patmos defined and continues to define the course of history Revelations 1: 19; Revelations 22: 6,7,10-20.
- **Chief Evangelist.** Jesus is the ultimate soul winner. The gospels record His unparalleled three and half year tenure as the greatest soul winner ever. The precepts He enunciated and the life He lived were centred on the concept of doing everything possible to ensure that all those ordained for salvation were enabled to reconcile with God; Luke 19:10; John 4: 34 – 38.
- **Chief Shepherd (Pastor).** Jesus is the Chief Shepherd of the Church. No one has ever cared for the flock the way He did. His compassion for the people was unparalleled and His ministry was hall marked by a holistic mindset which cared for spirit, soul and body. **Matthew 9:35, 36**. His teaching on caring for the physical, emotional and other needs of humans was paradigm changing! **Matthew 25:31-46**.
- **Chief Teacher.** The teachings of Jesus were radical. Yet, He taught in such a way that had depth and was illustrative. He taught with great authority, so much so that on one occasion, those sent to arrest Him were so enthralled with His words that they forgot their assignment! **Matthew 7: 28, 29; John 7: 40 – 47**.

General Purpose of the Five Fold

As He ascended on high, says Ephesians 4:7–12, Jesus released to His Church spiritual gifts and His fivefold offices. In the economy of heaven, these gifts are sovereignly bestowed on whom the Lord pleases to represent Him in the process of building up His saints and His Church to full maturation 1 Corinthians 12: 4-14.

There is always a reason for everything that God does. The core reason for the five fold is stated expressly in Ephesians 4:11, 12, namely, to prepare God's people for the work of ministry. In other words, the Office gifts are designed to work in synergy to produce a divinely ordained outcome of perfection or maturation of the saints who grow rapidly to become all that God had in mind for them to be.

Proper Kingdom Governance and Spiritual Basis of the Five Fold

All saints are gifted and called to fulfil the divine purpose of their creation and redemption. This is because no saint is designed to be useless in the Kingdom or cumber other parts of the Body of Christ with un-productivity as a dormant 'laity'. Our lives as functional parts of the living Body of Christ on earth and assignments in the Kingdom of God were planned by a supremely intelligent God before the foundation of this world!

Ephesians 1:4

According as he hath chosen us in him **before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame **before** him in love:

Jesus chose, set apart and committed to some specific saints He chose by His own sovereign will the responsibility to enable all saints to know who they are in Him and who He is in them. This can only be achieved as they die to self, take up their cross, follow Jesus as His disciples engaging in single minded pursuit of the Kingdom of God and its righteousness.

In the divine plan, the way saints live; work and minister in this present dimension of the Kingdom on earth are to be based on a radically different paradigm from their unbelieving natural relations, friends, neighbours and colleagues. Those in the world get by with natural strength, scheming, plots, bribery and corruption.

Each saint is gifted with a measure of divinity called spiritual gifts! Each saint also has a specific calling that defines what God wants to accomplish on earth in and through them. These gifts and callings can lie dormant if not understood, discovered and pursued. They can also be utilized on a sub-optimal basis. Many saints – indeed the vast majority live through life being just like the Joneses and consequently approach eternity with less than assured approval at the Judgement Seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:10

¹⁰For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

This is not a judgement for determining those who will go to heaven or hell. Those who are saved are no longer under condemnation. It is rather a judgement which will deal with such critical issues as: did saints discover and utilize their spiritual gifts? Did they discover the specific callings Jesus vested in them? Did they build up the Body of Christ according to plan? Was life and ministry done with the right motives: to please, worship and obey God? Was the master plan of God adopted in doing ministry or the ideas of men?

1 Corinthians 3:10-15

¹⁰According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

¹¹For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

¹²Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

¹³Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

¹⁴If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

¹⁵If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Called specifically and installed by Jesus Christ Himself!

The huge responsibility of making saints to walk in the consciousness of eternity, effectively occupying for Jesus in the present dimension of the Kingdom and be just what God ordained them to be and to do is vested in specific saints who Jesus Christ Himself chose and ordained to manifest an aspect of His five offices in the Church: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors & Teachers.

Ephesians 4:11-16

¹¹And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Individual offices within the fivefold do not function alone! Within them is wired a 'Body' or 'corporate' consciousness. Each one of the five fold heartily releases their vessel to be used of the King to impart the saints and gives room for other office gifts other than their own to do likewise. That is why congregations which will be used by the King to produce mature saints who flow in their divine placements are those who are open to the full synergistic ministry of the Five Fold!

Purpose of the Five Fold and Outcomes of their synergistic work

Ephesians 4:12-16

¹²For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

¹³Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

¹⁴That 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, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

¹⁵But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

¹⁶From whom 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 increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Let us break this scripture down to see the outcome of the work of the five fold:

1. **V.12. Saints are perfected** - properly taught, trained and equipped - to function as ordained by God who redeemed them with the precious Blood of Jesus. They graduate from passive 'laity' to functional members of the Body of Christ.
2. **V.12. The Body of Christ is edified, enjoying the rest in Christ which marks it out from the world which is full of trouble.** Jesus prayed the Father to leave the Church to function within the world but not of it! John 17:9,11,14-18
3. **V.13. Saints will come to the place of Unity of the Faith.** Regardless of being in various local congregations, locations, races, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, age or political opinions, saints see themselves as having the same Father, Lord, Spirit and therefore do not

quarrel over non-essentials since there is unity on the essential issues of the Faith and Kingdom! Ephesians 4:1-6

4. **V. 13. Saints come to a proper understanding of the real Jesus Christ, Yeshua who is very God and very Man.** The real Jesus is the central issue in the Kingdom of God for His life is what we live and it is by Him alone that all humans will be judged.
5. **V.13. Saints who are thus led will mature to the measure of the fullness of Jesus.** In other words, they will be complete in Him and He will be complete in them through their totally yielded vessels which abide in Him. John 15:1-8
6. **V.14. Such saints will no longer be immature like babes needing milk always.**
7. **V.14. Saints who receive the synergistic ministry of the Five Fold will be so stable, rooted in the Word and the Spirit of Truth that they will not be tossed to and fro by various winds of doctrine** – errors, heresies and apostasies – which will be unleashed on the world in the end times.
8. **V.14. Such saints will not fall victim of schemes of so called men and women of God** who set up ministries and use seeming charismatic gifts such as ‘miracles’, ‘prophecies’ and such to make money off them. They will spot when a preacher is trying to manipulate them for monetary gains.
9. **V.15. Saints who are imparted effectively by the Five Fold will know how to avoid prideful speech and thus speak the truth in love** as they interact with other members of the Body.
10. **V.15. Saints are able to grow up into Christ in ALL things.** This is a remarkable purpose of God – to bring many sons to glory who will give Him the kind of pleasure Jesus gave when He lived on earth! Hebrews 2:10-14.
11. **V.16. As all saints grow in the manner prescribed above, each is able to release virtue as they serve others and in turn receive virtue from others who minister to them.** In this way, the whole Body of Christ is brought to a place of organic unity, manifesting as an organism, rather than an organization! When this is the case, the world will take note that the Church is a supernatural reality which expresses the Presence and Power of Jesus Christ. The resurrection and divinity of Jesus Christ is thus confirmed not by mere preachments in human wisdom but by the demonstration of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

An Imperative: Restoration of the Five Fold!

The ideal way in which each saint is to receive the synergy which comes from all parts of the five fold is by leaders of congregations and ministries planning the ministry schedule with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and intentionally being open to the ministry of the entire five fold. This is one of the reasons God is allowing networks of ministers and ministries to be birthed. All leaders need to give heed to Romans 12:3 and be realistic to assess who they are in the Spirit and determine what they lack. They are then to prayerfully draw up their annual ministry schedules in such a way that those who are gifted with offices other than theirs come in to impart and impact the flock of Jesus. It is wrong and carnal to exchange pulpits based just on friendship.

In structuring congregations, God may use an individual to birth a vision. However, that individual should realistically take stock of his or her office in the five fold and go to God in prayer seeking the other folds to come and make the leadership team complete. Where such is not effected, there is an additional remedy. The visionary should studiously train saints until they discover their gifts and callings. Those called to the fivefold should be identified and released to function as integral parts of the leadership team.

It is imperative therefore that all saint must be delivered from the yoke of religion and wisdom of men which trap them in human religious corporations where they contribute tithes and offerings to sustain a system of worship which is at best the present day equivalent of the Golden Calf. Racial, ethnic, gender driven or age driven ministries are clearly out of the way. So also are various vestiges of Rome that blunt the cutting edge of the dynamic Church which Jesus Christ clothed with His Presence and Power to be His axe head for demonstrating the Kingdom of God. True Kingdom teaching and ministry therefore must hinge substantially on the rediscovery and restoration of the Five Fold office gifts working in synergy to ensure that the Master Plan of Jesus Christ is observed and practice by all in the Body!

What should saints do if their ministries are closed to the fivefold?

All saints have a solemn responsibility to locate the Apostle(s), Prophet(s), Evangelist(s), Pastor(s) and Teacher(s) Jesus Himself assigned to feed their spirit-man and soul. When God opens your eyes to them, connect and tap into what God is releasing through them. Do not be apologetic about this. On the other hand, do not also allow those God has ordained to speak into your life to control your relationship with other fivefold leaders. The Holy Spirit is He who will confirm who it is that are approved to minister to you. Every saint is under a divine obligation to eat the complete diet Jesus provides through the various dimensions of revelation He grants through His Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers!

When this glorious vision of Christ for His Church is effected, mono-gifted ministries and ministers will be seen for what they are: imperfect expressions of Christ. We all see in part and know in part. No single gifting has it all. That is why Jesus deliberately distributed His Headship of the Body across five different offices. We need each of the offices and all of them to become all that He ordained us to be! Let no one miss this critical point!

In order to fully appreciate what Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers are called to do please request for your free copy of these two courses which deal with Spiritual Gifts and Callings of saints in detail: GSoM Course 113: Concerning Spiritual Gifts and GSoM Course 119: Discovering and fulfilling your God Given Ministry. Write to ariseoffice@yahoo.co.uk.

It makes sense for us to examine each of the five fold offices in detail.

The Apostle

The first question to be answered in this critical course is: Who is an Apostle?

An Apostle is one who is set apart (or specially consecrated) and sent to represent Jesus Christ in a generation, community or geographical location. The Apostle does not send himself nor is he on his own. He does not speak for or by himself. The Apostle receives a direct revelation of Jesus Christ as very God, very Man. That revelation changes his or her world view to the degree that whatever the apostle suffers for the testimony of Jesus Christ is taken with all joy. The office of an Apostle is not a badge to be worn with pride but a spiritual function to fulfil with humility and holy boldness!

Is the office for this day and age?

The office of Apostle is for all ages until the Church is re-united, in a physical sense with Jesus. Those who claim that it ended with the original 12 Apostles are ignorant of the Word of God and are blinded by the Spirit of Religion. The Bible is clear that there were people who were called and sent out as apostles apart from the original 12. These include but are not limited to Matthias (Acts 1: 15-26); Paul and Barnabas (Acts 9: 1-19; Acts 13: 1-4); Andronicus and Junia (Romans 16:7). Junia was a female.

What are the specific roles God assigns to His Apostles within and without the Body?

1. The Apostle is primarily a personal representative of Jesus Christ, vested with a measure of His authority. To do this successfully, the apostle receives a personal revelation of Jesus Christ as God and man.

2. The Apostle is 'Sent'. He is one on the go with a burden relative to the size of the assignment. The apostle could be sent to a geographical location; a city congregation, local assembly or family/individual to faithfully deliver the message of the Lord.
3. A true apostle will carry an unusual burden to break new grounds in the gospel. Genuine apostles have great distaste for the lukewarmness which characterise maintenance mindsets in the gospel.
4. Apostles apply and draw the plumb line to the work of the Lord in territories they are assigned to ensure purity of the word, doctrines and practices and bring correction where necessary.
5. Apostles exert a greater dimension of the authority of Jesus Christ when they appear in locations where they are sent to.
6. Apostles provide balance to the work of the gospel and understanding of the core precepts of the faith.

What are the privileges and pit-falls of apostolic ministry?

The privileges of apostolic ministry are:

1. **Primacy in leadership.** Where leaders are Spirit led and directed and where there is no room for politics and humanistic agendas, there is no difficulty in according confirmed Apostles with the primacy ordained in the bible. In all places where the fivefold is mentioned, Apostles are always listed first. In 1 Corinthians 12:28, this primacy is expressly stated. True apostles however will not strive with any one over seating arrangements, protocol or contention over who will chair a meeting! Humility is required from apostles and if anyone gets high minded about this, God is able to permit the messenger of Satan to smite, dealing with the body so that the soul is saved. 2 Corinthians 12: 7-10.

The Pitfalls of Apostolic Ministry.

1. **Pride** is a present danger in the apostolic ministry, considering the awesome endowments as well as privileges.

2. **Impatience** with those who are less consecrated or those who draw back may lead to what some may perceive as lack of compassion or patience. This was the case of Paul in the matter of John Mark in Acts 15: 36- 41.

What are the signs of an Apostle?

Paul the apostle spoke of manifesting the signs of an apostle. Some relate to the marks of Christ which he bore in the flesh while others relate with the great signs and wonders which attended his ministry. A proper and balanced perspective reveals that these are signs of apostleship:

1. **Willingness to receive and walk in the shadow of the Cross of Jesus Christ.** This releases the grace not to be offended with God for the things the apostle is allowed to suffer for the sake of Christ. The marks of Christ including persecution, rejection, torture, evil speaking, opposition, physical trauma and even death are counted as light afflictions for the sake of the calling. Matthew 16:24-26; John 12:24; 1 Corinthians 2: 1 – 3; 1 Corinthians 4: 9 – 13; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 6:14; 2 Corinthians 11:22-33.
2. **Receipt of deep revelation knowledge and divinely granted utterance to declare the counsel of God. 1 Corinthians 2: 4 – 16.**
3. **Insistence that the Church must be built according to pattern with the God-Man Jesus and His vision as the basis of all that saints do. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15;**
4. **Ability to walk with signs and wonders following as evidence that the apostle is a commissioned ambassador of Jesus Christ. Matthew 28:18; Mark 16:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 2:4, 5; 2 Corinthians 12: 11 – 13**
5. **Ability to walk in a measure of self denial and be able to abase or abound so that the gospel programme may prosper. 1 Corinthians 9: 1 – 27; 2 Corinthians 1: 3-11; 2 Corinthians 4: 7 – 18; 2 Corinthians 6: 1- 10.**

6. **. Holy Boldness in declaring the counsel of the Lord and making sure that the standards of the gospel are maintained.**
7. Burning passion for saints to fulfil the dual mandate of the Kingdom: know their assignments, gifts and callings, using them to ‘occupy’ in this present time with consciousness and readiness for the return of Jesus. Luke 19:11-27 To present saints chaste before Jesus at His appearance becomes a consuming passion. **2Cor 11:1-3**

Apostles are sent to the entire Body of Christ and to the society as a witness. However, they are not to barge in where they are not received or seek to impose themselves on people or authorities. As with everything concerning the Kingdom of God, Apostolic Authority is relational. Those to whom God has assigned an apostle will know it and receive His ambassador without struggle. The words of the apostle will lift up the hearts of those who are so ordained and build them up to be who God ordained them to be.

The Apostle of Jesus Christ: Digging Deeper

Of the things we shared so far, here is the sum: the one called to be an apostle is called to be a personal representative of Jesus Christ, very God and very Man.

He who was the Son of God, Son of Man and Seed of the Woman will, in every generation until He returns to set up and physically rule in the future phase of the Kingdom of God, raise witnesses to His unique life, death on the Cross to atone for the sins of the whole world, declare forgiveness of sins in His name and minister all the benefits deriving from redemption! They will proclaim, without reservation, that He will soon return to rule and reign in the fullness of the Kingdom of God.

For that reason, apostles of Jesus will be unusual people who are not afraid to be politically incorrect. They know that their calling will occasion stepping on toes of brethren who want to be at ease in Zion. They know intuitively that their greatest challenge will not come from outside but those who have chosen to backslide or those who have embraced another gospel. The depth of the revelation of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom they have received will impel them to proclaim the truth with passion and expose the shenanigans of those who seek to lead the Church astray. Galatians 1: 6-10

The Lord will use apostles to draw His plumb line from time to time and what they see will lead them to make bold proclamations calling the Church back to true fidelity to her Lord. In these issues, they share an uncanny similarity of disposition with Prophets who walk and work closely with them.

They yearn to see all saints walking in the fullness of light and are fairly lonely people who can be misunderstood by saints who see themselves as called to ‘enjoy’ this present life. True apostles will therefore heed the words of our Lord and his early apostles not to love this world and its attractions!

They will know intuitively that they are ambassadors of Christ to witness to and against this world system about the coming King who alone can bring the peace, joy and prosperity people yearn for. John 17: 1- 21; 1 Corinthians 6:14 – 18; 1 John 2: 15 – 17

Work-In-Progress/ Principle of Process

It is important to disclose here that Apostles are at varying levels of development. There will, at any given time be matured apostles, growing apostles and baby apostles and it pays to know where you are. Do not be intimidated with the depth of knowledge of the word or experience of the more mature apostles, if you are yet a baby in the calling. God will connect you with those He will use to mentor and challenge you until the fullness of Christ is formed in you and until the apostolic mantle begins to manifest to the degree ordained by God.

In effect, apostles, like other ministers are truly Work-In-Progress. Do not be ashamed to acknowledge your current state and evident or not-so-evident weaknesses. Be true to God and real to yourself so that He will enable you to grow in grace. From the day of your calling to the actual day of manifestation to the Kingdom is often a gap of time called process period. This is the period of time

the Lord uses to work in you a fuller knowledge, a deeper intimacy, a greater passion for the Kingdom and a sharper focus. It is also a time the Lord uses to pluck out every self confidence and every love of the world that lurks within the soul. This was the case of Peter who was expertly processed by Jesus Christ Himself and further processed by the Holy Spirit to the degree that his impulsive, soulish reflexes finally gave way and he became the rock steady character who even, according to historians, volunteered to be crucified upside down rather than suffer exactly the same fate as his saviour. Peter was eventually qualified to counsel ministers of the gospel concerning the right attitude to ministry and spoke of the principle of process. 1 Peter 5: 1-4; 10.

James and John, who enrolled their mother to lobby for the choicest places of honour in the coming Kingdom of God were so broken in their continued walk with God to the degree that James became the first saint to be martyred for the testimony of Jesus Christ Matthew 20: 20 – 28; Acts 12: 1,2. John was to suffer untold persecution including, as church historians disclose, an attempt to fry him alive. Failure of that cruel approach caused the Roman authorities to banish him to the Island of Patmos. Revelations 1: 9. Apollos who was a great apostle in his later years was once so ignorant that God used Priscilla and Aquila to give him a more perfect understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Acts 18: 24 – 28. 1 Corinthians 3: 4-6.

The eaglet apostle of yesterday may become the leading apostle of tomorrow. This was the case of Paul the apostle. When he was called by Jesus in Acts 9: 1- 22 he was a baby. He was however wise to realize his need for deeper understanding of God and intimacy with Christ. His trip to Arabia and Tarsus produced that effect. It took Barnabas, who God used to affirm and provide mentorship to summon him to the mission field in Antioch. Acts 9: 26 – 30, Acts 11: 19 – 26. Barnabas continued to lead until the equation changed when God deemed Paul sufficiently mature. From Acts 13: 9, we see a paradigm shift as the led became the leader! We also see that in Galatians 2: 11 – 18 Paul had to rebuke Peter and Barnabas when they strayed away momentarily from the truth and gave in to antics of Judaizers. Paul went on to be the leading apostle of his generation and was in no way inferior to any of the older ones, including the 11 who walked with Jesus Christ while He was on earth.

Labouring according to Standards

In doing the work of the Lord, Apostles will generally build according to Biblical provisions and clear Kingdom principles. They will thus emulate John the Baptist and point the saints towards Christ rather than themselves. They will see every saint God brings their way as a candidate for empowerment. Their emphasis in ministry therefore will be to Train, Equip, Activate gifts and callings and release saints into productive ministry. They are not likely to clutch at people who come into the ministries they lead. Apostles will seek to build the Kingdom rather than personal empires and will be more concerned with the glory of God rather than securing their comfort and convenience. 1 Corinthians 3: 10 - 16

Generally Apostles yearn for and practice divine order. They are not likely to suffer gladly, brethren who walk in disorderly fashion or who are self centred or ambitious for vain glory. They will appreciate faithfulness and rank keeping more than competence or brilliance. 1 Chronicles 12:32, 38; Joel 2.7,8.

The reality that one day they will stand before Jesus to account for every word spoken, action taken and degree to which they fulfilled the apostolic commission drives every true apostle to labour with every ounce of strength and measure of grace to discover, pursue and fulfil their spiritual mandates. In so doing, there is a hidden instinct to say like Paul that they truly completed their assignments! 2 Corinthians 5:8 - 11; 2 Timothy 4: 6-8

Compass of the Apostolic Ministry.

Many of us are familiar with road maps and satellite navigation systems which guide us to our destinations. Few of us have experienced the work of the compass. The compass also helps you to locate your way but of a far more superior paradigm. Whereas the road map will follow the contours of roads, twisting as it were through mountain sides and down the valleys, the compass is fixed in showing you where you in relation to what are called the true North, East, West and South. This means that the compass will enable you to know where you are on earth relative to the North and

South poles. That way you are able to know the degree to which you are on or off course. That is why aircraft and ships use navigation systems that are based on the compass. As any real traveller knows, a slight deviation can lead you totally off course! The compass helps you to remain on course and avoid the pitfalls of diversion. While all roads may lead to Rome, not all lead to the Kingdom of God!

There are many who have been called and will be called to the apostolic ministry whose greatest pitfall will be the tendency to operate without the compass. Their ends are often tragic as the carcass of many an apostle mightily used by God but who missed it reveals. There have been saints called to this great work who ultimately missed it.

The compass is no other than Jesus Christ Himself! Apostles are called first and foremost to be with Him before He sends them out! Taking the title first without being called is tragic. Taking the Apostolic Office as a means of joining the Joneses is a sure pathway to spiritual and physical death! Concerning the very first 12 Apostles, Mark 3: 13-19 tells us clearly that:

1. Jesus first went up to a high mountain. Luke 6:12,13 explains that to be that He engaged in all night prayer, seeking the face of the Father to determine who to call into that office.

2. He called only those He wanted, out of the multitudes that thronged His ministry. No one can bulldoze Jesus to make a decision regarding a calling!

3. They left fathers, mothers, businesses and indeed all else to respond to the call. From that day, they crossed a Rubicon in the spirit. The desire of Jesus became their command. He took care of them and they trusted Him for everything they needed during their earthly pilgrimage. This included food, shelter, tax and indeed everything.

4. **He numbered those that were called.** They were not anonymous. These were definite people whose badge of identity from then on consisted of 'being with Jesus as Acts 4:13 says. Their backgrounds were varied and their personalities were different. Peter, Andrew, James and John were fishermen who appreciated the skills involved in hauling in and sorting out fish Matthew 4:18-22. The Lord considered that background of more value than scholarship, of which they had none. Matthew was recruited because his skills in recording minute details would come in handy for production of a biography that would proclaim Jesus as the Son of David that the Jews had long expected Matthew 9:9. Nathaniel made it because he was as plain as water with no hidden heart.

5. **Those called were first and foremost to come into an intimate personal relationship with Jesus.** Being with Jesus in the secret place will always hold precedence over doing anything for Him! Verse 14.

6. **Jesus delegated to them the authority to demonstrate the Kingdom of God.** They were to preach that the Kingdom of God was at hand and demonstrate that reality by being used of God to cause the supernatural intervention in the affairs' of the people to whom they were sent. Verse 14. Matthew 4:17; Matthew 10: 12 – 15. Jesus charged them to lay all else aside and seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, knowing assuredly that God will provide all their needs. Matthew 6:25 – 34. The single minded pursuit of the Kingdom was not an option. It was to be the very basis of acceptable Kingdom life and service Matthew 6: 19 – 22. Whoever cannot approach the affairs of the Kingdom with this singleness of purpose cannot be an apostle of Jesus Christ!

7. It is instructive that Judas Iscariot was among this extremely privileged 12 people. That he eventually fell because of love of money and desire for political power establishes the fact that an apostle can backslide or divert into apostasy. Hebrews 6: 1- 8; Hebrews 10: 26 – 36. One can be mightily used of God and ultimately miss the mark because of loss of first love as the Church at Ephesus was warned in Revelations 2: 1- 7. Today, the amount of ministers, including apostles missing the mark and like Ephraim, oblivious that they are disconnected from reality is too high to ignore. Many there are in apostolic ministry who are so immersed in public ministry that they neglect their personal spiritual lives! Songs of Solomon 1: 6. In so doing, they allow little foxes of cares of this life, competition with others for numbers, money, fame and power to eat up the inner core of spirituality Songs of Solomon 2:15.

Means of growing in Grace

The validity of an apostolic commission therefore will largely depend on the extent of intimacy with Christ. In Christ is everything we need to function in ministry. It makes sense therefore to grow in intimacy with Him. This is done through some principal means of grace.

- 1. The first is to yearn and hunger for Christ and refuse to be absorbed by ministry business to the degree that the apostle relies on spent fuel or the irrevocability of the gift and calling to function** Romans 11:29. It is entirely possible to be disconnected from Christ and yet do signs and wonders. That a minister is raising the dead, healing the sick and delivering the oppressed is no indicator of the state of his heart! Ask close aides of the mega church Pastors and TV superstar preachers and what they will share with you of the private struggles of celebrity preachers will give you an idea of the extent of this malaise.

It is no wonder that Paul the Apostle made it his overriding desire to press into the fullness of Christ and to apprehend that for which he was apprehended by Christ Jesus. He sought to know Christ intimately and to regard every other knowledge including his famed scholarship dung. Philippians 3: 1 – 14 is a wonderful piece of the holy writ we must resort to often to be challenged. As Colossians 2: 18 – 23, we should be mindful of the need to hold fast to the Head of the Body, Jesus Christ lest we slide into religious norms and activities.

- 2. That yearning must translate into a life of intense prayer.** Apostles must avoid the temptation to spend more time praying for signs and wonders otherwise they may become hirelings who preach others into the Kingdom and miss it due to loss of first love! 1 Corinthians 9: 24 – 27. Apostles and indeed all ministers must spend quality time worshipping God, praising Him even in the midst of fire as Paul did often (Acts 16: 25- 34). Apostles should spend a good deal of time seeking to know and walk in the ways of God as did Moses, the great Apostle-Prophet of Israel Psalm 103:7. Apostles must also learn to pray about everything, just like Jesus did so that they can operate with the express will of God. John 5:30; John 6: 38. Prayer enables ministers to draw down the fullness of the glory and presence of Jesus. This is what gives any true apostle a divine presence.
- 3. The true apostle must covet the presence of the Holy Spirit and communion with Him.** He is the live wire, connecting the sent one to heaven and validating the commission. Cultivating a deep communion with He who will take the things of Christ and show His ministers is not an option! Many who live in secret sins often find themselves uncomfortable or shy (some even afraid of the apostle). There are many saints who feel certain unease when they come before a true apostle. That is the presence of God as they wear Christ as a garment and His presence through the Holy Spirit who energizes their spirit convicts of sin, righteousness and judgement.
- 4. The true apostle must therefore be a person of few, weighty words.** The lifestyle of rattling and tattling must be taken to the cross whenever this upward call comes through. Too much speaking drains the anointing. This is also true of love of the world and its dainties. 1 John 2: 15 – 17
- 5. In order to know Christ and be found in Him, the apostle must be an avid student of The Word.** The word is to be studied, meditated on and allowed to be made flesh. This makes it possible for the word of Christ to dwell richly in him or her in all wisdom Colossians 3:16. You begin to speak the word of God concerning any and every situation. This means we must begin to study the word with a new attitude and mindset. The Apostle no longer approaches it as an impersonal, dry religious tome. The word of God is seen as Christ Himself to instruct us since He is the living Word. There are many good books and commentaries. There are many good spiritually uplifting articles apostles will of course read. However, those who are truly called come to a point that no book by any man or woman, no matter how anointed becomes a substitute for study and knowledge of the bible. Apostles also do not permit or allow commentaries and concordances to interpret the word. They resort to the Holy Spirit when any word seems dark.

Oh! That we may have Apostles with fixed hearts! Apostles, who will, like Jesus, chase out the merchants who have corrupted the purpose of the House of God and restore true worship! Matthew 21: 12, 13. That day, we saw the flip side of the Great Shepherd: He who was meek and lowly could also bark and bite when the need arose!

Concerning Women as Apostles

Living with Jesus Christ as compass means that a true apostle will emulate Jesus by loving righteousness and hating iniquity Hebrews 1:9. Drawing on the grace released through the aforementioned means that one called to be an Apostle must find it necessary to press into the fullness of Christ giving no place in the heart for the things of Satan. This by no means implies the apostle will be sinless. It simply means that the one so called understands that light and darkness cannot dwell together in the same heart and a conscious decision is made for the way of Light.

The totality of life is thus entrusted into the hand of Jesus Christ who supplies grace for His servant to do the work of the Kingdom above reproach. Because of the great esteem with which the commission is apprehended, the question an apostle will ask when faced with temptations and life threatening persecutions is akin to what Paul asked in Romans 8: 31-39. Nothing of course including money, power, fame, sex or persecution, evil speaking, conspiracies or martyrdom should ever have the power to cause an apostle to miss the mark.

When life is lived this way, the authority of Christ over His Church is thus delegated to a worthy vessel who has not received the grace of God in vain. God has always valued discipline, contrary to what many false preachers advance. In the New Testament, saints are enjoined to work out their salvation with fear and trembling Philippians 2:12 even though it is God who by the Holy Spirit does the actual work of holiness as Philippians 1:6 and Philippians 2:13 reveal. We have a role to prove our love of God by our obedience and those called to this high office of apostle must lead the way. John 14: 15; John 15:14; Philippians 2: 12 – 16. The Kingdom of God is built on obedience of the Word of God, out of love and holy reverence!

Deriving from this complete submission of self to Jesus and enthroning Him first above life and all else according to Matthew 16:24 – 26, emerges a man or woman who is dead to the old nature, life, ambitions and inhibitions. One that is crucified with Christ has nothing to boast of in the flesh and of the flesh. Galatians 2:20; Galatians 6:14. Out of this broken being whose sacrifice as laid on the altar has been accepted by God, emerges a son of God who is neither male nor female any more John 6:33; Romans 12: 1,2; Galatians 3: 26 - 29. Such a one functions primarily in the spirit and knows no one after the flesh because of the renewed mind.

It is in the realm of the spirit man that the spiritual gifts and callings of God are received. It is in the realm of the spirit man that the apostolic commission is received. The flesh profits nothing because flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom and God does not want any flesh to glory in His presence hence He uses the weak things of this world more of the time to bring to pass His purposes! John 6:33; 1 Corinthians 1: 26 – 31. When we understand this dynamic, the religious mindset which questions whether women can be apostles will naturally fizzle away.

The issue is the election and calling of God. It is not of him that wills or he that runs but of God who shows mercy. And this God says He calls who He wishes and fortunately, no one is qualified to ask Him any questions or to counsel Him! Romans 9:14 – 16. Instead of engaging in dry religious arguments of whether a woman can be an apostle, the main issue is to understand who is an Apostle, the functions and mandate. When you see an individual manifest what the word says, please give him or her right of way, lest you strive against God! In a separate course we will dwell exhaustively on the subject of women in Ministry and take on all the critical issues headlong. As to the question of whether women can be apostles, the answer is yes indeed! It is not a gender exclusive mandate. It is a spiritual assignment and function, bestowed on people who are willing to die to the demands and pull of gender.

She who would accept and operate in this Office:

1. Cannot live in the flesh and its entrapments. It is impossible to seek to fulfil an apostolic commission and still be beholden to Hollywood and the catwalks. While you should take good care of your body, it is not expedient to make yourself a sex object by the way you dress and your demeanour. You cannot remain in some of those entrapments to the spirit of the world and seek to please He who called you. 2 Corinthians 6:14 – 18; 1 John 2:15 – 17.

2. Must not buy the lie that a woman must need a man in order to be optimized! You cannot eat your cake and still have it. If you believe that lie and rush into marriage at all costs, you must realize that marriage has its own specific laws including primacy of the husband in the home. 1 Corinthians chapter 7 should be read in full for an understanding of this construct.

3. Ideally, woman who is called to the Apostolic office should be happily married to Jesus Christ so that He can pass through her to fulfil His will.

4. Where she is married, she must lovingly submit to her own husbands in the home and take good care of their children so that the name of Christ is not reproached. If she cannot submit to him, she has already failed! The husband must recognize, love and honour her lest the heavens over the family be closed and all end up suffering lack and oppression. 1 Peter 3: 7

5. She who will be an apostle cannot be seen swaggering to lord it over men or have a spirit of feminine triumphalism. Doing so will negate the authority of Christ that she ought to be carrying. She should not seek vain glory over her husband or treat the Church as her personal estate to do what she likes with it.

6. She who is called to the apostolic office will ultimately prove it by her ability to do the work Jesus sent her to do, in spite of reproaches, rejection, abuses and indeed all kinds of suffering for Christ sake. She should commit everything to Him who judges righteously, just like Christ. 1 Peter 2: 21 – 25.

Apostolic Authority Down to the wire...

As we go down the wire, let us reflect on some salient truths.

The four pronged strategy for united action with other five fold offices

As we conclude, it cannot be emphasized enough that Apostles are chosen specifically by Jesus Christ and set in the Church to represent Him by faithfully proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

A four pronged strategy enables apostles to fulfil their calling. With Prophets, they are to keep the Church in the mood of the wise virgins, in perpetual readiness for the soon return of Jesus Christ. With Teachers, they are to also emphasize that while we wait for His soon appearance, there is serious work to be done by saints during their pilgrimage in this present life through discovering, pursuing and fulfilling individual mandates, as part of an organic whole. Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16. In so doing, their compass which is Jesus Christ Himself drives them to yield their vessels to be used of Him to build a Church that is radiant, mature, powerful and able to manifest the glory of Christ to unbelievers as well as principalities and powers in heavenly places. For that to happen, Apostles work closely with Evangelists to ensure that unbelievers hear the gospel and come into the Kingdom as true converts who repented of their sins, not 'members of congregations'. The true Apostle will challenge Pastors to truly shepherd the flock of Jesus in an empowering way and not as if they belong to him or her. Ephesians 5:26, 27; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

This will entail the following:

1. As Master Builders, they take the architectural plan of the Church that Jesus has handed down in The Word to ensure that the Bride is made ready for the Groom. Ephesians 5:27; 1 Corinthians 3: 10 – 16.

2. Accordingly, true Apostles cannot stand the spirit of religion, denominationalism, the pseudo gospel movement and the so called prosperity gospel as well as abuse of the prophetic and other errors

that Satan activates from time to time. They will not sit back idly, unconcerned and *'mind their own businesses'*. They will lay hold of Jude: 3 – 19 as well as 1 John 2: 18 - 27 and the very words of Jesus Himself in places like Matthew 24 to contend for the true faith and warn as many who have ears to hear to escape the snares of the enemy. Apostles are therefore often vested with the spirit of holy boldness to stand for the truth of the gospel.

3. Apostles will lead the five fold in the area or sphere of influence granted them to challenge the Church there to make the transitions required from being an organization warehoused within buildings to be the vibrant living, loving organism – the Body of Christ – where all saints take their places to be vessels through which the Holy Spirit manifests the divine presence and power so that by that which every joint supplies, the Body makes increase of itself in love. In this scenario, the people of God become mature enough to know wolves and false shepherds by their fruits and avoid their wicked schemes to fleece them. Ephesians 4: 7 – 12, 13-16; Matthew 7: 13 – 27.

4. Because Apostles train and empower the saints, they will make teaching of spiritual gifts and priesthood of all believers a cardinal part of their teaching ministry. One core beneficiary is Ministers in the Market places who are challenged to see their work places and businesses as their prime platform for Kingdom expression and expansion. They will be encouraged to take the Church from the building to the Community and manifest the light of Christ right where Hr planted them without feeling guilty of 'not doing enough in church'

5. Apostles are vested with the grace for spiritual warfare and will lead congregations they oversee to rise in the dimension of the spirit to dislodge all satanic ruling influences and spirits. Taking over the spiritual atmosphere of their territories, they are able to, by the Holy Spirit leading and empowerment, establish the purpose of God. Matthew 16: 18, 19; Ephesians 3:10.

6. True Apostles stretch the saints and literally smoke them out of their comfort zones. They are wired to reprove, correct and discipline the saints and expect such to be received spiritually and gracefully. They are empowered to recommend for dis-fellowship those who fall into gross sins, apostatize or seek to lead the Church astray. 1 Corinthians chapters 5 and 6; 2 Corinthians 2: 1 – 11. Even if a fellow apostle goes into error, he/she needs to be corrected as the occasion and gravity requires. Galatians 2:

7. True Apostles will always yearn for emergence of true Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers who will work in synergy to produce the outcomes of Ephesians 4:11-16. The apostle knows he or she cannot bring the saints to perfection alone. Whenever God opens a door, he/she goes all out to pray in others to make up the team 2 Corinthians 2: 12 – 14. Apostles will encourage congregations under his/her oversight to be open to receive the ministry of the entire fivefold. Philippians 2:1- 4.

8. True Apostles will understand the cornerstone nature of the Word of God and will use it as plumb line to determine what is acceptable. Intense communion with the Holy Spirit is necessary for correct understanding of the Word and the quantum of anointing needful to execute the divine agenda.

If the preaching of the true gospel of the Kingdom of God must be done, the starting point is the restoration of the five fold offices that Christ ordained for His Church. It is all by grace however and those who are called to be apostles must come to a point where His grace is sufficient for them. 2 Corinthians 12: 7-10. The fullness of grace is the sure guarantee from buckling under the weight of the challenges and fires along the way.

Part 2 of the Ascension Gifts/ Fivefold offices: The Prophet

Who is a Prophet?

A prophet is a person elected by God to be a vessel for declaring His mind to the saints and their generation. In effect, Prophets are formal representatives of God to convey His messages.

Is the office for this day and age?

The answer straight away is YES!

Flash-back to the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, Prophets were the predominant vessels through who God revealed His purposes to Israel and the nations for the present and future times. Consequently, they were set apart from their generations in order to be used to speak to them. Sometimes they brought messages of hope and care from God while at other times they declared His warnings and pronounced judgements.

One way God showed His displeasure with His people was to withdraw prophets such that the people walked in darkness. In that kind of situation, His people would feel a sense of desolation which set the stage for them to receive any vessel He chooses to send.

The Bridge years

This was the case with Israel in the time when Rome exercised over lordship of Israel and the Jews more than 400 years before Jesus was born. As John the Baptist blazed forth in the wilderness proclaiming the imminence of the Kingdom of God, a chapter was closing while another was opening in the dealings of God with man!

God was invading the earth in a new dimension. After millennia of dealing with humanity from afar off, speaking occasionally to people through one vessel or the other, the Seed of the Woman prophesied by God Himself in Genesis 3: 15 had just been incarnated. Divinity had invaded humanity in the form of Emmanuel, product of the Virgin spoken of by Isaiah 7:14.

In that sense, John was the end of the Old Testament prophets with a special assignment to introduce Jesus to Israel. Jesus was of the tribe of Judah which produces Kings while John was of the tribe of Levi which anointed those whom God chose to rule His people. Even though they were related maternally, God did not want to take a chance with the public announcement of Jesus Christ. His testimony in John 1: 29 – 34 is instructive.

The Law and the prophets were to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ, very God and very man. He was the bridge between divinity and humanity; eternity and time; the supernatural and the natural and a model of the God kind of life and living which He purposed for all saints. As the Law and Prophets were fulfilled in Christ, He became the author of salvation for all who accept the grace poured out by His propitiatory death. The people who were redeemed by His poured out blood were to be His Church and Body to proclaim His life, death, resurrection and return to earth to establish the fullness of the Kingdom of God. As they lived out the present dimension/dispensation of the Kingdom of God through the ordinances He instituted, they were to have privileged access to the mind of God.

The Chief Prophet

While still in the flesh, Jesus began to fulfil His fivefold office of Chief Apostle, Chief Prophet, Chief Evangelist, Chief Pastor and Chief Teacher. As Chief Prophet., the words of Jesus are prophecy in action. They have guided the Church from the days He walked the dusty streets of Galilee and Capernaum till today and will ring true till the end of the age. He spoke with precision of this day and age when some would come in His name and deceive many with false doctrines and prophecies. He spoke of the degeneration of moral values that are evident everywhere. He also spoke of the age to come. The Revelation He granted His servant John on the Isle of Patmos defined and continues to define the course of history Revelations 1: 19; Revelations 22: 6,7,10-20.

General Prophecy and the Organic Body Factor

At the end of His brief manifestation in the flesh, Jesus ascended on high and gave gifts to men. Ephesians 4: 7 – 10. He knew that without the power of the Holy Spirit and attendant gifts as well as those He would specially call, His Church would be overrun by a determined enemy who is full of wiles. Jesus therefore commanded His disciples not to proceed with the Great Commission until they received the gift of the Holy Spirit Acts 1:8.

With the Holy Spirit came definite gifts that, when exercised in love and righteousness, solidly demonstrated the supernatural origin and nature of the Church, made every saint a functional part of a living loving organism and demonstrated that Jesus is indeed who He says He is! Ephesians 4: 7, 13-16; 1 Corinthians 12: 1- 27; Romans 12: 1- 8; 1 Peter 4:10-11.

The Church of Jesus Christ was designed to function as stated above, demonstrating a foretaste of the Kingdom of God and not the dry religious organization the enemy sought to foist on it. To ensure that the organism was lively, the Church was designed to be a place of light. The Light of Christ was to be continually present, just as the Lamp in the Temple was not supposed to ever go out of oil.

The Holy Spirit, when given the right of way and enabling environment, was to use various saints within the Body to issue words that bring edification, exhortation and comfort – which are the purposes of general prophetic utterance 1 Corinthians 14: 3. For this reason, substantial space was spent in various New Testament texts to explain that the Church of Jesus Christ will be better off if saints are open to prophetic utterances and prophetic flow. The raft of revelatory gifts that were placed in the Body (1 Corinthians 12: 4-8, 10, Romans 12: 1-6 and the long treatise which encouraged saints to covet prophetic utterance is too obvious to ignore 1 Corinthians 14: 1-25. The fact that a complete section of the Word was dedicated to regulate order in use of the revelatory gifts shows the profound impact they were ordained to have in the Body 1 Corinthians 14: 26 – 40.

In effect, we have a scenario whereby the Church of Jesus Christ was clearly ordained to flow as a prophetic organism. The reason is simple: Jesus Christ is the Light of the World and those who are in Him are destined to walk in the fullness of His Light. Every saint has a birthright to hear the voice of God and know the will of God, always! John 10: 26, 27. In relating with fellow saints therefore, there was to be such pouring forth of the mind of God through various vessels speaking prophetically or by word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discernment of spirits, visions, dreams and other revelatory gifts.

This is more so that as saints privileged to live at the end of the age, we are to experience the fullness of what was prophesied in Joel 2: 28, 29. The first fruit of that Prophecy was on the day of Pentecost as Peter explained to the bewildered audience who saw them Acts 2: 1- 21. That was the first rain. We are to enjoy the latter rain when all – male and female; young and old would flow with such clarity in the gifts of revelation that there would be no hidden thing and matter of darkness lurking in the shadows of the hearts of people. In this scenario, no Ananias and Sapphira would thrive with a straight face in Church Acts 5: 1-11. Sinners who come to church would be so convicted by an x-ray of their lives that they would repent genuinely and turn to Christ 1 Corinthians 14: 23 – 25.

What makes the Office of the Prophet different from what we have shared so far?

Jesus knew that the enemy would seek to harass His saints with suggestions of failure, fear of the unknown and insecurity, hence the sure promises that in Him, we will be secure and that He will be with us always till the end of our tenure in this present life **John 16:33; Matthew 28:18 – 20**. As He ascended on high, the Holy Spirit was released to empower the Church with all it takes for a vibrant family of God to thrive in the midst of a harsh environment called the world; have the capacity to witness to it and disciple the nations. **Acts 1: 8; Acts 2:1-4; Ephesians 4: 7- 10**.

As we have seen from the previous lesson, the Lord purposes that His Church will walk in fullness of light. For this reason, He released several revelatory gifts in the Body through which there is a constant flow of His Light. These include the spiritual gifts of Prophecy in Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12: 10; Exhortation (Romans 12:8); The Word of wisdom, word of knowledge; Faith, discernment of spirit; Tongues; Interpretation of tongues. When you add to these the gifts of dreams, interpretation of dreams and visions spoken of by Joel 2:28, 29 as an inheritance of end time saints as well as the gift of seeing trances such as Peter experience in Acts 10: 9-16, it is clear that God provided sufficient resources for edifying, exhorting and comforting His own as 1 Corinthians 14:3 states.

The Prophet as a Personal Representative of Jesus Christ!

Beyond this general purpose to edify, exhort and comfort the saints which the revelatory gifts bring to the Body, Christ set in His Church as part of the Five Fold, the office of Prophet. The New Testament Prophet therefore is called by Jesus Christ as personal representative to ensure that the Church is shown the way forward in its walk with Him. The office is called **Prophet**; what he or she utters is called **Prophecy** and the action is called **Prophesying**.

In effect, the prophet is a conduit or mouth piece through whom Jesus speaks to His Church. He decides whom He ordains for this role. It could be male or female; young or old saint. Neither age nor gender nor even theological training nor capacity to teach have anything to do with the divine choice called election. You cannot be promoted into this office by humans. You cannot get there by ambition. You cannot procure it by primogeniture, inheriting it from your parents!

It is interesting that the same Paul the Apostle who vigorously taught the Church to covet the spiritual gift of prophecy and explained powerfully that it is a valid need of the New Testament Church in Romans 12: 6; 1 Corinthians 14: 1 – 25, 29-32, 39 is the same instrument God used to ask the potent question in 1 Corinthians 12: 29, “Are all Prophets?”. The obvious answer is a resounding No! As a matter of fact, the proportion of saints called into this office is relatively low, perhaps lower than all other offices, except that of apostles! The reasons will be obvious as we continue this treatise. In Ephesians 4:11, we see that prophets are specifically mentioned as part of the five fold headship gifts of Christ set in the Church to make it complete.

What are the specific roles God assigns to His Prophets within and without the Body?

1. Perfection of the Saints for the work of Ministry. The Prophet is to weigh in with his/her gifts and callings to make the saints mature in Christ and built up in righteousness and obedience to the degree that they can successfully live the Kingdom life here on earth. Ephesians 4: 11-16. When the saints receive the ministry of the Prophet, along with that of the Apostle, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher, they become mature and are not easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine nor are they easily deceived by those whose god is their belly. A saint who is in a ministry or congregation where the Office of the Prophet is ignored or absent is being deprived of a very valuable spiritual facility for perfection! Any Pastor who denies his or her congregation the right to hear the word of the Lord through a chosen and pure vessel is doing a disservice to Christ and will answer for that on the last day. In building the Church according to pattern, it is necessary that every living congregation must make room to receive the Prophet who walks in integrity and who does not hire out his/her services for a named fee. Prophets and other ministers however are to be taken care of properly for the sake of whom they represent, even Jesus Christ Himself! Matthew 10:40-42.

Certain ordinances and principles of God are valid both in the Old and New Testaments. It is thus necessary to reflect on roles of Prophets in the Old Testament and juxtapose them with the provisions of the New Testament in order to get a full picture of what God has in mind in raising people to this High Office. This will also enable those who receive this gracious calling to walk in sobriety and humility.

2. Intimacy with God: Let us start with Abraham, listed as the first of the Prophets. In Genesis 20:7 we see God Himself calling Abraham by that appellation when He spoke to Abimelech in a dream. Earlier in Genesis 18: 17 – 19, we see God declaring Abraham as a man who had an intimate relationship with Him. A true Prophet cannot function outside of an intimate walk with God. That is a response of choice by one who deems the presence of God of more value than the riches of Egypt! When God was reproofing Miriam and Aaron in their rebellion, He pointedly announced the degree of His intimacy with Moses in Numbers 12: 6 – 8 “I speak with him face to face”.

3. Divine Insight: Intimacy with God translates to what Amos 3:7 describes in poetic language: The Lord God does nothing without first revealing it to His servants the prophets! He or she who claims to be a Prophet and does not receive the mind of God concerning things to come is engaging in delusion of grandeur!

4. Accurate declarations of things to come. True prophets will be used by God to declare accurately, the things to come. Some of them may be unfolding things in the now or things that will happen at a future date. Some of the things declared may sound improbable and they themselves may be bewildered at what they utter. They do not have to have any idea whatsoever as to what they are saying. The most sensitive prophetic utterances are often passed through the spirit man and the vocal cord of the prophet without any contact with the soul realm. God has ordained it this way so that the soul will in no way interfere with or corrupt His message. The soul is the seat of the Mind (where

mankind exercises the thinking/reasoning faculty); the will (where humanity makes decisions as to what to say or do) and the emotions (where attitudes emanate from and where the humanity of the prophet often exercises itself and accordingly can influence the mind and will). Inability to make clear declarations of things to come disqualifies an individual from claiming to be a prophet! Agabus was able to accurately inform Paul and his companions the famine that was to ravage the land and his imprisonment in Acts 11: 27 – 29 and Acts 21: 10, 11. On the other hand, mere ability to predict future events is not sufficient to confer the office of prophets on a person. There are many diviners and star gazers who operate with satanic powers to predict the future! Paul dealt with a young lady with the spirit of divination who said accurate things about the mission Acts 16:16-18. Peter also dealt with a sorcerer who held Samaria captive Acts 8: 9 -13, 14 – 24.

5. Keeping the Saints on the path of Holiness and God centeredness. It is meaningless to speak accurately of things to come but use such to lead God's people astray. A true prophet has, as a critical part of his/her assignment, the task of reminding the saints of the thrice Holy God whose eyes are purer than to behold iniquity. Consequently, the true Prophet will utter words that will keep the saints on the path of rectitude. The words may include warnings of the consequences of sin and disobedience. When true prophets are in the House, secret sins are exposed at times wisely or at other times harshly 1 Corinthians 14:24,25. The consequence is always the same: sinners convicted by the word and real saints often repent and receive the mercy of God while those who refuse fall into problems or experience the judgement of God. Deuteronomy 18:18-20.

6. Denouncing false shepherds and peddlers of strange doctrines. There is a holy boldness true Prophets are wired with to reprove false ministers and those who preach errors, falsehood, heresies and apostasies. Many prophets sadly refused to see the dangerous leaven of the pseudo Kingdom movement where denial of the divinity of Jesus and need for saints to be ever ready for His return were central planks. Many have chosen to be politically correct and therefore unable to warn the Church about the way celebrity preachers use the word of God deceitfully to enrich themselves, live worldly lives at the expense of the souls and resources of saints. Prophets are raised to engage with situations like this.

7. Pronouncing of Divine Warnings/Judgements. True prophets are used of God to issue warnings when His people or specific individuals cross the line. That is why Prophets are lonely people. In Jeremiah 1:7-10, 17-19, we see that God sets up prophets to engage with the issues that are massed against His Church and hinder the work of His Kingdom. The Prophet Elijah was mightily used in this regard in the days of King Ahab and his wife Jezebel. Jeremiah was used of the Lord to warn the Jews of the captivity to Babylon.

8. Conveyors of message of Hope. Prophets are used of the Lord to also convey His messages of hope for the future. The prophet Isaiah was mightily used to proclaim the grand hope of Israel when God would incarnate as the Seed of the Woman Isaiah 7:14 – 16; Isaiah 11: 1- 5, 10. Even Jeremiah who God used to pronounce judgement was also used to proclaim the hope of a return to the land.

9. Commission those who are called into Ministry Offices. Just as Prophets commissioned Kings in the olden days, Prophets are also called to be part of commissioning meetings when Apostles and other ministers are set forth into ministry. This is of course a privileged that is to be held with a great sense of responsibility and not something to brag about. Acts 13; 1-4. The reason for having prophets as part of presbyteries to commission saints into offices in the Body is to ensure that there is an accurate download of the mind of God from eternity into time.

10. Speak boldly against evil in the society and injustice. God is concerned about righteousness not just in the Kingdom but also in the society. It is God who appoints people into public office whether as Kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Members of Parliament/Congress, Mayors and Councillors. This is why He requires the saints to submit to those in authority Romans 13: 1- 7. God however has standards for those in authority to follow Micah 6:8. They are not to be tyrannical and make themselves idols. God always judges those who err from the path of rectitude in time or in eternity, not just in the Old Testament, both also in the New Testament and in the now. Herod was condemned to a cruel, painful death because of his pride Acts 12: 20 – 23. God However requires the saints to

leave judgement to Him which He often pronounces ahead of time through His chosen vessels the Prophets. Amos 3:7

What are the signs of a Prophet?

There are some core signs of the true Prophet of Jesus Christ. These are:

1. Manner of life validates his/her ministry. Jesus himself put this benchmark for determining whether someone is truly a prophet from Him. Matthew 7: 15 – 23. A true prophet should have

- i). a clear testimony of salvation Matthew 7:13, 14
- ii). Fruit of the Spirit shall be evident in his/her life. Matthew 7: 16 – 20; Galatians 5: 22, 23
- iii) Unwillingness to touch the glory of God by speech or attitude. A true prophet will deliberately seek to decrease while pointing the saints to God just like John the Baptist John 3: 25 - 36.

2. Accuracy of the word he or she brings forth and it's lining up with the written word of God. The word brought forth is meaningless if it contradicts clear provisions of scripture, rightly divided. 2 Peter 1: 16 – 21. If for instance a prophet tells a young lady married for 2 years that she married the wrong person and she should divorce her husband to look for the prophesied Camelot, that prophet is a deceiver!

3. Unwillingness to speak except expressly prompted by the Holy Spirit. It is sad these days to see so called prophets turn on the prophetic flow as a faucet at will. This ends up being soulish projections that corrupt the prophetic mantle and bring it into disrepute in the long run. 1 Corinthians 12: 7, 11 establish a basic ground norm that utterance is activated by the Holy Spirit and not the vessel. In reality, He should prompt a prophet to speak. When there is no such prompting, the prophet should not feel obliged to say a word! The captain of our Salvation, Jesus Christ of Nazareth who Himself is the Chief Prophet modelled this approach when He said that all He does or says is at the express prompting of the Father. John 5:30, John 6:38. The sight of so called prophets who are tattlers and gossips is an aberration and of extreme absurdity!

4. Willingness to submit. Prophets are known for their obedience to the law of submission. As people who wield great authority in Christ, they are tested by the degree of yieldedness to higher authorities. 1 Corinthians 14:32, 33; Romans 13:1-7.

5. Willingness to have their prophecies judged to determine the source and direction. True prophets know that no human being has absolute knowledge and all saints are capable of misreading God. No matter how greatly they esteem the prophecies given, they should be willing to have others judge them. 1 Corinthians 14: 29 – 33.

What are the Pitfalls of Prophetic ministry?

Jesus knew the strategic nature of this office and its potentials for causing His saints to err. That is why He personally issued more warnings about false prophets in the gospels and the book of Revelation than on any other office. Matthew 7: 15 – 23; Matthew 24: 11, 24 – 26; Revelation 2:14, 20 – 24. Strong warnings abound in other scriptures concerning false prophets. 2 Peter 2: 1 – 22 is a case study as well as Jude verse 3 – 19.

The gift and calling of a prophet is without repentance. What this means is that even where someone has backslidden or gone into apostasy, the capacity to still speak accurately about the future may still operate. Romans 11:29. Whereas it operated to the glory of God and served His purpose, this corrupted state now stands in judgement against him or her who once walked sincerely with the Lord. Matthew 7: Hebrews 6: 4 – 8; Hebrews 10: 26 – 31. That the word a prophet speaks comes to pass therefore should not confuse any one at all.

The clear pitfalls which every truly called Prophet should observe are these:

1. Satan's entrapment. Satan will always target those called to this high office. It is necessary to recognize this reality and proactively resist him **John 10:10; 1 Peter 5: 7-9; James 4: 7.**

2. Souliness. The greatest danger the prophet will face will however come from within him or herself! The soul is the seat of reasoning, emotions and attitudes. If the soul is not crucified and not subject to the spirit of the prophet which in turn should be subject to the Holy Spirit, carnality will run riot in personal life. The soul has a voice and can speak just as the Holy Spirit has a voice and speaks. The prophet who allows emotion to engage with a person or situation may therefore speak from the soul realm. This is often the case when the prophet believes he or she has a right to open the mouth any time and release prophecy. Whoever does not first cultivate an intimacy with God and close communion with the Holy Spirit will utter what the soul wants and claim to speak for God! On the last day there will be several wailings when people fail to account for idle words they uttered in this present life! The escape route therefore is to repent now! It is to avoid activation of their soulish propensities that the Lord has always allowed Prophets to live fairly isolated lives. Emotion therefore is a present danger in the Prophetic calling. The pains, rejection and persecutions which true prophets often experience are sometimes designed by God to be instruments of reminding them of their humanity lest they are exalted and conceited! This principle was demonstrated with Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:1-10.

3. Pride of Life. God personally hates pride and says He will resist it wherever found! James 4:6. Pride will cause a prophet to seek glory for the words uttered whereas these are the word of the Lord for His people. The prophet is merely a conduit to convey a message and actually has nothing to glory in. On the other hand, humility and gratitude should be the right attitude that it pleases God to use one in this way! Boasting about prophecies that one gave which came to pass is a very dangerous tendency!

4. Using Prophecy to manipulate and control saints. A present danger in the prophetic ministry is tendency to use prophecy to manipulate and control the people of God. It is wrong to make the saints to remain babes ever seeking for a prophetic fix regularly. It is worse when a prophet takes advantage of such vulnerability to manipulate those same people to do his or her bidding. Saints are to be trained in the Word to grow in the Lord to the degree that they can hear His voice and draw from the anointing of the Holy Spirit to judge all things. 1 John 2: 18- 27; 1 John 4: 1. The principal function of prophets is to be used of God to perfect and equip saints for the work of ministry! Ephesians 4: 11, 12. This is achieved when Prophets points people to Christ to grow in grace and not to themselves.

5. Covetousness/Prophecy for Profit. True prophets live frugally. The intimate knowledge of God and His righteousness they embrace whole heartedly is based on an absolute trust in Him to meet all their needs as part of the great Kingdom promise. Matthew 6:33, 34, Matthew 10: 7 – 15. They know that the love of money is the root of all evil and realise that there is a present danger and occupational hazard when people want to compromise them with undue favours and gifts. Elisha knew this reality and rejected Naaman's gifts 2 Kings 5: 1- 19. They learn to be temperate so that they do not put themselves in situations where their needs will drive them to merchandize the precious gift they carry. Philippians 3:17 -19; 1 Timothy 6: 6 – 10; Hebrews 13:5-6. The ungodly fundraising ways of the Church in the Western world lends itself to much misuse. It is wrong to hawk/merchandize prophetic utterance for people to come and buy or to negotiate fees to speak at prophetic meetings. Hosts should know how to take care of the Prophet and where they neglect their duties; the prophet should never fight for himself/herself but forgive them or commit everything to He who judges righteously as Jesus did. 1 Peter 2: 21-23! The tendency to take advantage of one's prophetic gifting to engage in fund raising after every meeting is a very dangerous trend. Hosts should avoid the temptation of foisting the role of fund raising to offset bills on the visiting Prophet!

6. Misuse of Points of Contact to lead the people into idolatry and syncretism.

Points of contact are biblical means of activating the faith of the weak, babes and those who need to see "something tangible" to believe the unseen". Jesus Himself used point of contact to facilitate the healing process John 9: 1- 7. Paul the Apostle had handkerchiefs taken from his body to heal the sick Acts 19: 11, 12. . The shadow of Peter was a great point of contact for healing Acts 5:15, 16. When points of contact are used in a fleshly manner, it can lead the saints astray into idolatry or mixture of the spiritual and religiosity called syncretism. Excessive use of points of contact can also lead the people of God into carnality and therefore not growing in their spirit man which is the base of true faith Romans 8: 5-8.

7. Carnality in engaging in Prophetic Actions/Parables without the specific direction of the Holy Spirit.

Prophetic actions in prayer and spiritual warfare are biblical. In the days of Jeremiah, God directed him to undertake a number of actions that seemed bizarre. On one occasion, the Lord asked him to test the Rechabites with alcohol Jeremiah 35. Yet on another occasion God asked him to buy and destroy jars of clay to demonstrate the impending destruction of Judah. In all these cases, the Lord directed His prophets concerning what to do. The idea was to convict the nation of sin and give her a chance to repent or be punished. In the New Testament, we see Agabus illustrate the imprisonment of Paul by using his belt to demonstrate what lay ahead. Acts 21:10, 11. When Prophets begin to carnally invent prophetic actions, they set the saints on a path of error which may take many years to blossom. The deliverance ministry today is reaping the fruits of prophetic actions which were documented and are now practiced without any specific prompting of the Holy Spirit. Syncretism does not start in a day but is often the cumulative effect of error over many years.

8. Pride and Boasting over Prophetic skills. It is sad to see the degree of self promotion and projection which some prophets get involved with. There is a wide ranging degree of competing for the glory of God that goes on in the marketing and promotion of prophetic meetings. When you see a prophet boasting that his/her prophecies must come to pass, there is indication of something wrong in the realm of the spirit.

9. Supposition that humans can transfer the mantle of Office of Prophet at will.

It is the height of pride or a prophet to claim that he or she can make a prophet out of anybody! The idea of establishing Schools of Prophets, admitting every one who can pay the required fees and promising to “impart “and or “activate” them into the office of prophet insults the divine and must be denounced by all who know God and His Holy Word. God can indeed use humans to activate or impart gifts. However, in the case of calling into any of the five fold, Jesus alone calls and sends! Ephesians 4:11.

It is important to understand the difference between canonical prophets like Elijah and Elisha and seer-priests who were organised into spiritual guilds like the Sons of Prophets at Jericho 2 Kings 2: 3,5 – 7, 15. A prophet can be used by God to mentor another prophet like Elijah did to Elisha. It was God however, who called Elisha 1 Kings 19: 15 – 21 and assigned Elijah to groom and prepare him for his assignment.

Prophets can be used of the Lord to activate prophetic flow in the saints so that they can edify, exhort and comfort one another but they cannot make any one a prophet!

Conclusion:

We may need to conclude this section of the teaching on Prophets with a verbatim reproduction of substantial parts of Jeremiah Chapter 23. Let him or her that reads receive a measure of the heart beat of God concerning those who lead His people generally and prophets specifically:

Jeremiah 23

¹Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD.

²Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. ³And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. ⁴And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

⁹Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness. ¹⁰For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right.

¹¹For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD. ¹²Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD. ¹³And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err.

¹⁴I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness; they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah. ¹⁵Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land. ¹⁶Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD.

¹⁷They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you. ¹⁸For who hath stood in the counsel of the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? Who hath marked his word, and heard it? ¹⁹Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. ²⁰The anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly.

²¹I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. ²²But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

²³Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? ²⁴Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.

²⁵I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. ²⁶How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart; ²⁷Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.

²⁸The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD. ²⁹Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

³⁰Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words everyone from his neighbour. ³¹Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith.

³²Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

³³And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, what is the burden of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? I will even forsake you, saith the LORD. ³⁴And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even punish that man and his house. ³⁵Thus shall ye say everyone to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, What hath the LORD answered? and, What hath the LORD spoken?

³⁶And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more: for every man's word shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the LORD of hosts our God. ³⁷Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What hath the LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD spoken? ³⁸But

since ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore thus saith the LORD; Because ye say this word, The burden of the LORD, and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of the LORD;

³⁹Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence: ⁴⁰And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

Three Trends that must be stopped.

These three trends must be halted in their tracks within the community of prophets:

1. Tendency to minister out of wounded souls

A wounded soul is one which is out of sync with true spirituality. This happens when an individual is offended, hurt, rejected or in any other form of emotional disconnect from the ideal described in Philippians 4: 4 – 8. A prophet must recognize when his/her soul is hurt and desist from ministry. A wounded soul will release death rather than life. Words spoken are backed by the spirit of the person uttering them. When a prophet is hurt, feeling rejected and dejected, there will be tendency to release words that cannot build up or perfect the saints.

This explains the ugly tendency by some prophets to utter curses on people, even for flimsy reasons. There are those who will curse pastors and congregations for not spending lavishly on them. There are those who would curse those who they transacted businesses with and things did not quite go well. Any prophet who lays curses easily on people (and using the case of Elisha and the young children who taunted him as excuse) is out of order! The negative words uttered must be rejected, cancelled and rendered of no effect by other Prophets or Apostles.

2. New fad to cover the head with Jewish prayer shawls by male prophets.

We owe Judaism a debt of gratitude for being the root from which the New Testament sprang up. The moral laws of the Old Testament such as the 10 commandments are still valid for this dispensation. We are also grateful for the feasts which God instituted to mark His dealings with His people. Those feasts, such as Passover are worthy of study and application of principles enshrined thereto to enrich our walk with God. They are far more edifying than the pagan festivals Rome foisted on Christendom!

However, the trend to lead the saints back to Judaism championed largely by Prophets is extremely dangerous. There is a liberty which the Lord Jesus brought us into as members of the family of God who have access to the Throne of Grace by His Blood that the Jews of old never enjoyed or thought possible. Take the liberty of receiving the Holy Spirit by which we know the mind of God. In the Old Testaments, the Holy Spirit came occasionally on a few people in each generation and gave them utterance to speak forth the word of the Lord.

One way this tendency to Judaize the prophetic is in the way male prophets seek to cover their heads with Jewish prayer shawls in order to give an impression of extra spirituality. This is the spirit of religion at work and must be denounced as such! 1 Corinthians 11:7; 2 Corinthians 3:5 -17; Galatians 1: 6 – 12; Galatians 3: 1- 15, 21-29; Galatians 5: 1 – 14. Even to speak in tongues that are not inspired but just to catch attention before releasing the word of God is Phariseism!

3. Crave for Honour and Pre-eminence

The tendency for those who claim to be prophets to seek honour at all times is a very dangerous one and has no scriptural support. Rejection, despising and even evil speaking are part of the standard fare every prophet must face. Those who reject these marks of the prophet are either backslidden or were never called. God told clearly Jeremiah what lay ahead for him Jeremiah 1: 17 – 19. Jesus himself acknowledged that prophets are without honour in their localities Matthew 13: 57; Mark 6:4; John 4:44. He also acknowledged the track record of Jerusalem as a killing field of prophets Luke 13: 33. To seek accommodation in 5 star hotels, a limousine and other perks because you are the one with the prophetic mantle in a conference is **Covetousness 101** in action!

Even in the pecking order of 1 Corinthians 12: 29 and Ephesians 4:11, Prophets are put behind Apostles. To barge in on meetings and seek to dominate them with long windy prophecies is clearly a breach of spiritual protocol. Love of pre-eminence by Diotrephes was judged and denounced by Apostle John in 3 John verses 9, 10.

The Way Forward: Prophets must grow in grace

Just like Apostles and indeed all other ministers, prophets must grow in grace. Every prophet must walk humbly with the Lord and fellow saints, avoid gift projection and minister according to the measure of faith Romans 12: 3, 6. An adaptation of what was written concerning apostles is in order here:

The validity of a prophetic commission therefore will largely depend on the extent of intimacy with Christ. In Christ is everything prophets need to function in ministry. It makes sense therefore to grow in intimacy with Him. This is done through some principal means of grace.

The first is to yearn and hunger for Christ and refuse to be absorbed by ministry business to the degree that the prophet relies on spent fuel or the irrevocability of the gift and calling to function Romans 11:29. It is entirely possible to be disconnected from Christ and yet do signs and wonders. That a minister is raising the dead, healing the sick and delivering the oppressed is no indicator of the state of his heart! Ask close aides of the mega Pastors and TV superstars and what they will share with you of the private struggles of celebrity preachers will give you an idea of the extent of this malaise.

It is no wonder that Paul the Apostle made it his overriding desire to press into the fullness of Christ and to apprehend that for which he was apprehended by Christ Jesus. He sought to know Christ intimately and to regard every other knowledge including his famed scholarship dung. Philippians 3: 1 – 14 is a wonderful piece of the holy writ we must resort to often to be challenged. As Colossians 2: 18 – 23, we should be mindful of the need to hold fast to the Head of the Body, Jesus Christ lest we slide into religious norms and activities.

That yearning must translate into a life of intense prayer. Prophets, like Apostles and indeed other ministers must avoid the temptation to spend more time praying for signs and wonders otherwise they may become hirelings who preach others into the Kingdom and miss it due to loss of first love! 1 Corinthians 9: 24 – 27. Prophets must spend quality time worshipping God, praising Him even in the midst of fire as Paul did often (Acts 16: 25- 34). Prophets should spend a good deal of time seeking to know and walk in the ways of God as did Moses, the great Prophet of Israel Psalm 103:7. Prophets must also learn to pray about everything, just like Jesus did so that we can operate with the express will of God. John 5:30; John 6: 38. Prayer enables us to draw down the fullness of the glory and presence of Jesus. This is what gives any true apostle a divine presence.

The true prophet must covet the presence of the Holy Spirit and communion with Him. He is our live wire, connecting us to heaven and validating our commission. Cultivating a deep communion with He who will take the things of Christ and show us is not an option! Many who live in secret sins often find themselves uncomfortable or shy (some even afraid of the apostle). There are many saints who feel certain unease when they come before a true apostle. That is the presence of God as they wear Christ as a garment and His presence through the Holy Spirit who energizes their spirit convicts of sin, righteousness and judgement.

The true prophet must therefore be a person of few, weighty words. The lifestyle of rattling and tattling must be taken to the cross whenever this upward call comes through. Too much speaking drains the anointing. This is also true of love of the world and its dainties. 1 John 2: 15 – 17

In order to know Christ and be found in Him, the prophet must be an avid student of The Word. The word is to be studied, meditated on and allowed to be made flesh. This makes it possible for the word of Christ to dwell richly in you in all wisdom Colossians 3:16. You begin to speak the word of God concerning any and every situation. This means we must begin to study the word with a new attitude and mindset. We no longer approach it as an impersonal, dry religious tome. The word of God is seen as Christ Himself to instruct us since He is the living Word. There are many good books and commentaries. There are many good spiritually uplifting articles we will of course read. However, we

come to a point that none becomes a substitute for study and knowledge of the bible. We also do not permit ourselves to allow commentaries and concordances to interpret the word for us. We resort to the Holy Spirit when any word seems dark.

Foundational Functions and the Reformation Assignment of Apostles and Prophets

Apostles and Prophets are part of the foundation of the Church with Jesus Christ Himself as the Chief Corner stone Ephesians 2:20. This is not only true of the prophets of old and the first apostles of Jesus Christ. In a very practical sense, this is to be a present truth with all dispensations from Pentecost until the consummation of the assignment of the Church when the Lord appears again. Whenever these two strategic ministries are received and exercised with balance, the Body of Christ is enriched, strengthened and matured.

Backsliding and apostasy are real possibilities.

In the Holy Writ, there have been many who were called into the high calling of apostles and prophets who missed it. Some missed it temporarily in what is called backsliding and were eventually restored. A leader's sin can have far reaching consequences. Every backsliding is a function of soulishness when the mind, will or emotion interferes from our spirit's walk of faith and simplicity with God. Human mindsets are enmity with God Romans 8: 5-8. Human emotions will often cause the wrong responses to the things of God who desires that our worship be in spirit and truth. John 4: 21 -23. Let us consider these Prophets and Apostles who stumbled at one time or the other.

- **Abraham**, the father of faith and one of the notable prophets of all time missed it on two key occasions. In Genesis 16: 1 – 15, Abraham buckled under pressure from Sarai and fathered Ishmael. The fruit of that indiscretion is at the root of an unstable Middle East till today. Abraham once allowed fear to get hold of him leading to a lie in the matter of his relationship to Sarai in order to save his skin in the court of Abimelech (Genesis 20). Thank God that he was restored and learnt his lesson!
- **Moses**, the great prophet of all time who spoke with God face to face (Numbers 12: 5-8) missed entry into the promised land because he allowed the murmuring and carnality of Israel to get under his skin, causing him to strike rather than speak to the rock in anger. In so doing, Moses dishonoured God and paid for It! Numbers 20:1-12; Deuteronomy 32: 48 – 52; Deuteronomy 34: 1-12.
- **Elijah**, the great Prophet who was used mightily by God to destroy the priests of Baal grew weary and fearful when Jezebel threatened him. Out of despair, he asked God to take his life. God acceded by terminating his ministry. 1 Kings 18: 1 - 40; 1 Kings 19: 1-21.
- **David, the great King of Israel** missed it when instead of going to war like other kings, he sought premature rest. What his eyes saw in the naked Bathsheba captivated his soul and led to a series of sins including adultery and murder of her husband Uriah 2 Samuel chapter 11. His household was to reap the consequences of that faulty foundation. Moral failure and the sword became regular fare of life in his lineage. 2 Samuel Chapter 13. David also allowed pride of life to once cause him to conduct a census of the military might of Israel. **2 Samuel Chapter 24.**

The Experience of Jesus with His 4 Apostles

- **Peter** – once allowed familiarity with Jesus to cause him to be rude and resist the truth of the Cross. This was after being commended by Jesus for the revelation of His divinity. Matthew 16: 13 – 23. He was still impulsive, rising and falling. Because he did not take away the old yeast of unstable character, he eventually denied his Master 3 times as predicted. See Matthew 16: 13-19, 21-23; Matthew 26: 31-35; 69-75; Luke 22: 31 – 34, 54-62.
- **James and John** allowed the leaven of ambition and strife for recognition to get the better part of them when they recruited their mum to lobby for chief places of honour in the coming Kingdom Matt. 20:20-28. They also displayed sectarian tendencies **Mark 9:38-40** and vengeful with a temper, ready to call down fire from heaven to destroy a village of Samaritans.
- **Judas Iscariot** allowed the **love of money; different perspectives with Jesus and desire for honour** and vain glory to corrupt his heart. In that state, he fell and betrayed his Master. **He was a man who was chosen and mentored by Jesus for 3 ½ years, was an insider and Treasurer of the Fellowship Luke 6: 12 – 16; Mark 3: 13 – 16; John 12: 6**
He did not deal with the leaven of love of money which caused him to steal John 12:6

He allowed himself to differ from the vision of his Master and even voiced it publicly **John 12: 1-5, 7,8**. It was only a matter of time before sin laid hold of him and propelled him to betray Jesus. The warnings of Jesus could not save Judas because his heart was long corrupted and bent on evil! **Matthew 26: 14 – 16, 17 – 25**

The bible teaches that none of us should ever come to a point where we think we are infallible! Switching from spiritual to fleshly mode is easy once Apostles and Prophets forget the fate of their predecessors who once walked with God and later stumbled and take their eyes off eternity 1 Corinthians 10: 1 – 13. Many were eventually recovered but some missed it permanently and will eternally gnash their teeth! We should emulate Paul the Apostle to resolve that we do not want to be cast away after being mightily used of God! 1 Corinthians 9: 24 – 27.

Apostles and Prophets Occupy a Very High and Strategic Office!

The reason why the Lord is releasing the quantum of information on unacceptable tendencies amongst those who are called to the offices of apostle and prophet is that to whom much is given, much is expected! Great responsibilities are thrust upon apostles and prophets and no one should be in any doubt about this.

Those who seek to switch off from apostles and prophets because of excesses by those who live and minister in error are equally missing the mark. To receive apostles and prophets is not an option. It is imperative for true and balanced healthy growth of the Church of Jesus Christ as Ephesians 4: 11- 16 and 1 Corinthians 14 clearly show. The key is to check out the fruit and test the spirit of those who claim to walk in these strategic offices and to follow them only as they themselves follow Christ! Matthew 7: 21- 23; 1 John 4: 1-3; Philippians 3:17 – 21.

Revisiting the Dual Mandate of the Kingdom Driven Church

As we conclude, it cannot be emphasized enough that Apostles are chosen specifically by Jesus Christ and set in the Church to represent Him by faithfully proclaiming the true gospel of the Kingdom of God and ensuring that the Church is built and operated according to the Master plan of Jesus Christ. Prophets are personally appointed by Jesus Christ and not human beings for the purpose of receiving deep mysteries of the Kingdom and proclaiming such with clarity so that the saints do not walk in darkness. 1 Corinthians 3: 10-16; Ephesians 4: 11-16.

As we said in an earlier part of this message, a dual mandate is inextricable involved. Apostles and Prophets are to keep the Church in the mood of the wise virgins, in perpetual readiness for the soon return of Jesus Christ. That is why Apostles, Prophets and indeed all true ministers of the gospel will prove the validity of their calling by how much they have received a revelation of the divinity of Christ and the reality of His soon return to personally rule and reign on earth in the fully established Kingdom of God. The totality of scripture in the Old and New Testament point to the fact that this present world system will run its course. We already see the great moral declension and the redefinition of values within the past 100 years. What was abominable just 15 years ago in terms of sexual orientation is now a celebrated reality in the major nations of the world. Organized Christendom has caved in too!

The world powers have enough nuclear stock piles to destroy the earth. If they have been held back because of the principle of mutually assured destruction (MAD), that restraint is about to give way with rogue regimes and unstable societies about to enter the league. When nations like Iran who have vowed to wipe Israel off the map are close to this acquiring nuclear weapons; when an unstable Pakistan is already a nuclear power; when North Korea has already acquired the capacity, it is clear that the day of reckoning is not far away. Throw in the escalating tension in the Middle East, the isolation of Israel by the Western Powers and its demonization in the world media; the only sensible deduction is that the clock of time is ticking to the H-Hour!

Apostles and Prophets have their work cut out for them to close ranks and keep the saints reminded of the word of God that a day is coming when the King of Kings and Lord of Lords will come to finally redeem His saints and establish the long prophesied Kingdom of God. In this Kingdom, the saints will co-reign with Jesus as Kings and Priests over specific territories according to their faithfulness in this present life. Whoever claims to be an Apostle or Prophet and has not got this understanding is out of the way. Whoever has got this understanding and refuses to rebuke the pseudo Kingdom preachers

who deny the return of Jesus and claim that we are to invest all our faith and hope in 'making it' in this world system has made him or herself an enemy of the Cross.

Apostles and Teachers are to also emphasize that while we wait for His soon appearance, there is serious work to be done by saints during their pilgrimage in this present life through discovering, pursuing and fulfilling individual mandates, as part of an organic whole. Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16. Jesus prayed that while we are in this world, we should be kept out of the loop of the system. We cannot live by the principles of the world. We put our trust in God; receive insight and direction from Him through His Prophets and in so doing, all that pertains to life and godliness needful for our holistic welfare is received. 2 Peter 1:3. We therefore do not dwell in sickness, poverty or dead religious activities. Under the guidance of Apostles and Prophets, the saints are challenged to rise in the dimension of maturity to become all that God created, redeemed and called them to be as the Salt of the earth and Light of the world.

In so doing, their compass which is Jesus Christ Himself drives Apostles and Prophets to challenge saints to allow the Holy Spirit to empower and release them to be the living Church that is radiant, mature, powerful and able to manifest the glory of Christ to unbelievers as well as principalities and powers in heavenly places. Ephesians 5:26, 27; Ephesians 3:10.

The grand picture is that of complementing rather than competition. The question of who is greater or more anointed between Apostles and Prophets is a childish strife that has no value. In Matthew 18: 1-5, Jesus outlines principle of Kingdom greatness. In John 13: 1-17, Jesus demonstrated the reality that the only acceptable competition is who will out serve! We need to take up the challenge and model humility and simplicity of life. Any Apostle or Prophet who charges for ministry or insists on a range of honoraria and perks before blessing the saints is out of the way and must be rebuked. No unit of the Church should ever cave in to such ungodly contracts of service! Enough of this deadly virus of love of money! Philippians 3: 17 – 20.

Oh! That we may have Apostles and Prophets with fixed hearts! Apostles and Prophets, who will, like Jesus, chase out the merchants who have corrupted the purpose of the House of God and restore true worship! Matthew 21: 12, 13. That day, we saw the flip side of the Great Shepherd: He who was meek and lowly could also bark and bite when the need arose!

The Evangelist

Let us now continue our in-depth teaching on the Fivefold with a thorough look at the Office of the Evangelist.

□ Who is an Evangelist?

Simply put, an Evangelist is an announcer of the good news that God in Christ has paid the price of redemption of man from the yoke of Satan and sin and that new life is possible in Him! The Evangelist is thus a megaphone through who God declares in human language with great simplicity and clarity, that mankind has a hope and future grounded in His supreme love that was evidenced in the incarnation, life, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ..

Like Apostles and Prophets, Evangelists are specifically chosen by Jesus Christ Himself and vested with a measure of His authority and power to back up their assignment. Evangelists are represented by the long middle finger on the hand which indicates their special grace and ability to bring in the harvest more than any other member of the five fold.

By the nature of their calling and gifting, Evangelists are itinerant. They are at their best when on the go. That way they are not bogged down by familiarity with the audience or internal squabbles and emphasis on bread and butter issues which keeps the Church in maintenance mode.

What are the specific roles God assigns to His Evangelists within and without the Body?

The supreme passion of the heart of a truly called evangelist is that as many people as possible be saved from perishing in eternal damnation which is the logical end of those who reject Jesus Christ,

the only lifeline that God has provided humanity. To this extent, Evangelists carry a dual burden: love for sinners and realization of eternal damnation for those who do not have Jesus Christ.

In calling the fivefold and vesting in them His leadership of the Church, Jesus Christ selects some people to bear His mantle as Chief Evangelist. He is who spoke the word of life like no one else offering hope for the hopeless, the outcasts and breaking down all barriers that hindered people from approaching or relating with God. It was Jesus who gave women unrestrained access to His ministry. Even outcasts like the woman with the issue of blood could relate with Him and receive attention. So also were lepers able to relate with Him as well as prostitutes, the woman caught in adultery and the demonized beauty, Mary Magdalene! No Rabbi of His time and the generations before had liberalized human relationship with God in that manner.

In some of His parables, Jesus explained the rationale for His actions: the worth of a single soul! He therefore taught on the need where necessary, to leave 99 healthy sheep to seek out the missing one Luke 15:4-7.

Luke 15:3-7

King James Version (KJV)

³And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

⁴What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

⁵And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

⁶And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

⁷I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

He also taught about the prodigal whose father yearned for his return and gave a sumptuous feast to celebrate his recovery. Luke 15:10-32

As part of His leadership development process, Jesus sent out His disciples to evangelise and gave them a measure of His authority. Matthew 10: 5 – 15.

The grand project for which Jesus left the Church on earth following His resurrection and ascension to heaven is to ensure that lost humanity is reconciled to God by the supreme price He paid at the Cross of Calvary. That is the grand key for recovery of the mantle of the Kingdom of God. For several millennia, man had been under the over lordship of Satan who took away the mandate of Adam in the Garden of Eden. That is how Satan became the Prince and god of this world..John 14: 30; 2 Corinthians 4: 3,4.

When God found no sacrifice as sufficient to atone for the sin of man, it was necessary for a sinless sacrifice with 3 key qualities. The first is that the sacrifice would be of the same class as man or higher. (Animals are of a lower nature than man and therefore not able to atone for the sin of Adam and Eve Hebrews 9:11-28). Secondly, the sacrifice had to be sinless. Animals and everything that grew on earth were part of the curse pronounced by God in Genesis 3:17-19. Thirdly, the sacrifice had to be so great as to atone for the sins of all humanity and redemption of the entire earth and all that is on it. No animal or human could meet these three extraordinary conditions. The solution is the greatest love story ever known: God had to beget a Son! God had to be made flesh! Divinity had to be laid incarnated as the Seed of the woman in the most profound demonstration of the love of God! Genesis 3: 15; Luke 1:35; John 1: 1- 3; John 3:16; Philippians 2: 5-11. Please send an email to ariseoffice@yahoo.co.uk to request for a free copy of the definitive teaching note **Understanding Jesus Christ**.

To preach this profound, supernatural truth, Jesus knew that His Church would meet and contend with various dark forces and powers and that human reasoning would try to block people from receiving the truth. For this reason, He commanded His disciples not to proceed with the Great Commission until the Holy Spirit empowered them to witness boldly in His name. Acts 1: 8.

With the Holy Spirit came the general capacity to witness for Jesus and stand boldly before all manner of people and forces to proclaim that Jesus had paid the price for mankind to enjoy a relationship with God and freedom from Satan and all his powers including sin, fear and death! Every Christian is called to preach the good news 2 Corinthians 5: 17 – 21, 1Timothy 4:5.

Critical significance of the work of the Evangelist

God has specifically called and anointed some with the special role of bearing His deep burden for sinners to be saved. For people to be built up in Christ the way they ought to be (Apostolic function) and even hear the message from the Lord (the Prophet's function), they have to be first saved and brought into the family of God. This primal assignment is given to the Evangelist! His or her job is to bring them in; any how they are and leave the disciplining process for Pastors and Teachers.

For this reason, the Evangelist usually does not engage in sorting or setting standards of behaviour for those who respond to the message of hope and love that is preached. What concerns the evangelist is that the sinner has made the critical decision of responding to the message of salvation that is preached!

Signs of the Evangelist

- **The first sign of the Evangelist is a deep and unquenchable thirst for as many sinners as possible to be saved!**
- For this reason, most Evangelists do not bother much about doctrinal finesse. Dogma rankles them as well as all religious barriers that hinder people from coming into a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Evangelists tend to keep the gospel message so simple that many religious minded folks often flinch in disbelief!
- Evangelists are able to convey the love of God to sinners with remarkable clarity and ease.
- Evangelists have extreme distaste for church politics, strife for positions, preferring to venture outside the familiar and normal, in order to cast the net of salvation as widely as possible.
- Evangelists love being on the road, in the open. They consider it of more value than the activities which go on within buildings. They may seem bored with many congregational activities.

If the Church is to be alive again, there has to be regular infusion of new folks who have made the transition from sinner to saint. To come out of the maintenance mode and Laodecian mindset of Revelations 3: 14 – 19, there is a great need for Evangelists to rise in the dimension of their calling and take their rightful places to spread the net of salvation by grace far and wide again!

All the evangelists who made themselves Pastors because they were unappreciated and rejected must give up the Pastorate and hit the road to do what God has called them to do. Pastors will need to be more secure and reach out to partner with itinerant evangelists, providing their needs so that they can get back to work!

What are the privileges?

Those who are called to this office have the following core privileges:

- They bear most the passion of the Lord to seek and save the lost Matthew 18:11 - 14

- They are more filled with joy than other ministers because of the approval from heaven concerning sinners who repent.
- They exercise the spiritual liberty to make the gospel simple and uncluttered with doctrines and dogma.
- In the process, they are more sinner sensitive than the other ministers

What are the pit-falls of Evangelistic ministry?

Evangelists tend to make some mistakes of the head. These include:

- Become so fixated with keeping the doors of the Kingdom of God wide open for as many as possible to enter that they may unconsciously or consciously begin to play the numbers game. Today you hear evangelists claim that half a million people gave their lives at a crusade. When you check out the statistics, you will notice that probably first time decisions were about three thousand. All the rest may have been believers who were mass mobilized through their pastors to participate. The numbers game is very dangerous one, though it is one of the chief tools with which evangelists raise money. 2 Samuel 24.
- They try to help God. By going extra mile to simplify the gospel, some evangelists tend to de-emphasise the real deal: Conversion. The result is that people can answer altar calls and fill out decision cards without necessarily being saved and a real understanding that they are called to receive the power to live a new life. 2 Corinthians 5:17. Unconverted people are not truly saved.
- Some Evangelists tend to take Prophets of old as their model, rather than Jesus Christ. In effect, their messages tend to focus on impending doom which they use to drive people to fear. While some decisions made out of fear may stand the test of time, it is not a reliable basis for bringing people into the Kingdom of God.
- Some modern day evangelists have made the gospel programme more complex and expensive, staging money guzzling crusades. In the end, the cost deters some people God has called from stepping forward because of the high bar already set by visiting Evangelists.
- Some Evangelists have turned gospel meetings into religious equivalents of show business complete with exquisitely decorated stages, strobe lights, high velocity music by the main musical acts in the season. Those attending tend to be so carried away by the dazzling sights and pomp attending the superstar preachers that all forms of solemnity are lost. That such things take place in fora where the key transaction is the souls of humans is a serious let down.
- As the case of one of the well known evangelist of the day shows, Evangelists can be so concerned about achieving what they deem targets from God that they neglect their own families and may display extreme insensitivity to emotional needs of their spouses. Songs of Solomon 1:6 addresses this anomaly. So also does 1 Corinthians 9: 24 – 27.

Transition from a ‘lower’ to a ‘higher’ calling: The Philip Case Study.

The New Testament shows a number of people who experienced transitions in ministry and calling. One remarkable case was Philip, the only man specifically called an evangelist in scripture. He was originally called to be one of the seven deacons whose principal assignment was to ‘serve tables’, another term for taking care of the welfare of the less privileged as well as participating in the business affairs of the early church so that the Apostles could concentrate on ministering the Word and prayer. He and his colleagues did their job so well that the Church in Jerusalem experienced great growth. See Acts 6: 1- 7.

The Jerusalem church had developed, over time, a maintenance mindset and forgot the Great Commission. God had to allow persecution to come. In the ensuing pain, the disciples scattered to various areas. Philip found himself in Samaria, the third dimension of the territory Jesus assigned them to cover in Acts 1:8. What happened next was mind boggling: the man who was serving food in Jerusalem, faced with the great opportunities in Samaria, exploded out of the deaconate shell and literally transitioned into the fivefold office of Evangelist and became a one man gospel riot squad! Samaria was turned upside down. Acts 8: 1-13. If it were today, a minister from backstage who experienced such open doors would have launched a Philip Evangelistic & Fire Ministries. But the

man Philip knew what it was to balance liberty with order. He knew what it was to keep rank. So he reported progress to the Church in Jerusalem and the Apostle Peter went to see for himself and help to establish the Church in the full truth. Acts 8: 14 – 25.

A less consecrated man would have settled down to ‘disciple’ the converts of Samaria. Not Philip! As sensitive to the voice of the Lord as ever and realising that Pastors and Teachers were best suited to disciple the saints, Philip received and obeyed the instructions of God. An angel of the Lord directed him towards Gaza. The rest is history. Along the way, Philip encountered the Eunuch from the Palace of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia and led him to Christ. By that singular act of Philip, a door was opened in the first century for the gospel to reach Africa and the uttermost part of the then known earth! Acts 8: 26 – 39. The anointing being so strong on him, Philip thereafter preached in all the cities in the region as an itinerant evangelist Acts 8: 40. We need more people in the office of Evangelist who will go forth, as the Holy Spirit leads them to preach in all cities and rural areas, handing over souls to local congregations and trusting God to provide all their needs.

It is interesting that Philip from that time began to carry a dual identity as one of the Seven Deacons as well as a fully recognized Evangelist in his own right with Caesarea as his base. Acts 21:8. The lesson here is that even when God transitions you into another office, you do not lose your root gift or calling. Romans 11:29 says that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance (irrevocable).

Another strategic lesson from the life of Philip is this: human beings can give you an assignment far below your worth and capacity. As you do it with all your heart, the Lord will in due season orchestrate your manifestation into the very office and assignment for which you were created and redeemed! Men selected Philip as a deacon in Acts 6. God however appointed him an Evangelist in Acts 8! It pays therefore to be humble before the Lord and do even menial assignments in the fellowship of saints for in due season, God will exalt you! James 4:10.

The worst thing to happen to anyone in our generation is to bear the office of Evangelist as a title and have no fruit of souls led to Christ to show for it! Worse still are saints God is calling into this extraordinary ministry but who are preoccupied with bread and butter issues while the very souls assigned to them are perishing. How much wailing there may be on the last day?

The Pastor

The declension of the spiritual health of the Church is directly traceable to the way the enemy successfully confused saints over the years that the fivefold is not necessary. In the process, the Church bought a religious concept that is alien to the Kingdom principles enshrined in the Bible: that one man and one office are sufficient for leading and guiding the people of God. This dangerous doctrine was borrowed from the religion of Rome which was structured as a hierarchy in which one man at every level had sole authority that is unquestionable. Such a man was essentially a supreme leader! Whether you spoke of a Pope or an Archbishop or Bishop or Parish Priest, the principle was the same – that in one man you will find all the gifts, callings and talents that are required to lead the people of God.

In varying degrees, the Protestant movement picked up and cultured this error over the years. In many denominations including independent Charismatic and Pentecostal groups, the founder is indeed a Pope! When a single human has powers to determine what doctrines of the bible to adopt and others to leave out in the name of drawing up Articles of Faith; when that same person is the sole source of feeding the Sheep, counselling them; when that same person oversees the finances and assets of the ministry, what you have is a supreme pontiff! The truth is that time has come for Pentecostals to apologize to Rome for adopting and even perfecting the very concept of leadership they denigrated for many years!

On the opposite side of the spectrum is another depravity: the concept of a weak Pastor who is virtually led by an elected board or council of carnal elders and deacons. These are men and at times women who have no time to pray or study the word but have time to throw out proposals of a Pastor who spends quality time to seek the face of God!

The concept of a Pastor as a religious professional, employed by a Board of Directors to do a job as part of a tenured contract is one of the worst manifestations of how far Wall Street has permeated the Church!

Both sides are of course out of sync with the provisions of scripture. As a matter of fact, the prevailing scenario in American, European and African ministries is a manifestation of the concept of abomination of desolation on the altar of God! The fact that saints are in blissful ignorance of how ungodly and unscriptural their ministries are structured does not in any way absolve them from blame Hosea 4:6.

Two men received strong commendation from God for building structures committed to their trust according to exact specifications. These two, Noah and Moses, are a type of the kind of reformers God is looking for in the closing chapter of this age! For many years, Noah laboured to build an unusual structure, the Ark, according to the specifications received from above. God commended his work and it became the instrument of saving him and his family while the whole earth perished! Genesis 6, 7, 8. In the case of Moses, he received the exact specification of the Tabernacle on the Mount, documented it to the last detail and supervised its construction. Nothing was left to the human imagination.

Concerning the Church, Jesus Himself arrested and gave to the former executioner, Saul (Paul), a detailed description of how the Church birthed at Pentecost is to be run in order to be an instrument for manifesting the Kingdom of God. Paul faithfully documented this divine plan in the epistles that he was inspired to write. 1 Corinthians 3: 10 – 15; Ephesians 4: 1- 16 are very descriptive. Speaking of this plan of which he exhibited the rare privilege of calling himself a ‘wise master builder’ who lays the foundation in 1 Corinthians 3:10, the faithful saint warns all those who participate in building the Church to take heed how they build. In 1 Corinthians 3:14 and 15, Paul makes it clear that at the end of the day, what substance we use to build the Church will be tried by fire.

He then goes forward to state that those who build with enduring substances will see their work evaluated and rewarded while those who build with combustible materials will see their work destroyed by fire. There will be surprises on the last day, saints! Many ‘great men and women of God’ will barely manage to squeeze into the Kingdom on the last day because they built according to their fancies for their soulish pleasures or according to standards of the world. There will on the other hand be ministers of ‘small congregations’ who built faithfully according to the divine pattern who will be rewarded with Crowns on the last day!

This long introduction is necessary because of all the office gifts; none has been corrupted and disfigured like that of the Pastor. Satan knows how to go for the jugular! This is the very office which epitomises Christ in His Office as Great Shepherd of the flock.

Who is a Pastor?

A pastor is not a title to be bestowed on brothers and sisters who are kind, gentle or compassionate. It is not a reward for loyal service in a church. It is not a political position that can be attained by votes of the Presbytery, deaconate or an executive search committee!

The Pastor is one who is called by Jesus Christ and vested with the authority to feed and care for the flock committed to his trust. He or she is, in effect, a shepherd that leads the flock to find pasture. The Pastor is therefore expected to be adept at using the staff to lead and the rod to chastise. Ability to exercise both with gracefulness and excellence of spirit is at the heart of the call of a pastor. This office is especially sensitive because it is the very one that has been ordained to care for the flock and ensure proper nurturing so that the saints are protected, preserved and grow in grace. The examples of Jesus in Psalm 23; Isaiah 49:11 and Jeremiah 3:15 are instructive.

In the model of the Kingdom driven Church whose emergence will precede the return of Jesus Christ, the Pastor is not automatically the leader of the Congregation! He or she is just one of the leadership with the grace to shepherd the sheep while the other leaders do their own work. In effect, the Pastor may not be the instrument God used to set up the fellowship. The Pastor may not be the most charismatic or anointed. The Pastor may not be the eldest or strongest. However, without any shadow

of doubt, he or she is the one the Lord has given grace to provide the one on one care and systematic nurturing that the saints need in order to grow up in Christ and be all that God created and redeemed them to be.

If perchance the Pastor is the one the Lord used to start the fellowship, such a one will recognize his or her limitations and realize that without the input of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists and Teachers, the saints will be grossly malnourished and grow out of shape! The true Pastor who has a heart for the people of God will thus recourse to two potential remedies. The first is to prayerfully seek that God will raise the missing office gifts from within the flock or bring such people from outside to join forces to be a complete fivefold led assembly. Since this may take time to happen, the true Pastor who shares the passion of Christ for His flock will prayerfully align with a ministerial fellowship where these other leaders are. The pastor now puts in place an annual programme through which an Apostle /Apostles; a Prophet/Prophets, an Evangelist/Evangelists and a Teacher/Teachers come in to impact and impart the saints.

Another approach may be to seek out, by the Spirit, an Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist and Teacher to align with in ministry. These then come in at specified times to make their ministry input so that the saints are built up and become all that they were created and redeemed to be. Any Pastor who is not asking the question '*why did God create these saints?*', '*why did God redeem them?*' and '*what is their specific role in the Body and Kingdom?*' will never weigh in on the process of enabling the saints to locate their proper identities and will therefore be unable to empower them!

Signs and Privilege of Pastoral Ministry

No matter how anointed the Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists are, the people of God will not grow as rapidly as they ought to if they do not receive proper pastoral care. Pastors are the part of the ministry team that “brings it all together” and bring home” all the truth and purpose of God into the lives of the saints. As part of the five fold, Pastors are to perfect the saints and equip them for the work of ministry so that they mature in their knowledge of God. Ephesians 4: 11-16.

True Pastors therefore have certain signs and privileges that are peculiar:

- The Pastor is the minister who shares the closest proximity with the saints. Good Pastors are a gift from God who declared in Jeremiah 3:15 “And I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding”.
- The Pastor is the one who is able to reach deep into the spirit and soul of the saints and establish a real connection. The Pastor is thus able to achieve greater intimacy and rapport with the flock than any other member of the five fold.
- The Pastor is thus able to win the confidence of the flock to a profound degree which enables them to open up at their basic level. Here the masks are off and the Pastor can understand the sheep better. This degree of vulnerability is fundamental for true spiritual growth to occur rapidly.
- The Pastor has greater grace to minister to the sheep as individuals and not as a statistic. Here is how Isaiah 49:11 describes this privilege, from the lenses of the Great Shepherd Himself: “He will feed his flock like a shepherd. He will carry the lambs in his arms, holding them close to his heart. He will gently lead the mother sheep with their young”

The Charge of Peter

In an extraordinary charge to Elders of the Household of Faith that is of great application to Pastors particularly, Apostle Peter exhorted “Care for the flock of God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly – not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don’t lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example. And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never ending glory and honour”. 1 Peter 5:1-4. If we break down this exhortation, the following elements are unchanging principles:

1. The flock is entrusted by God to the Pastor. The saints are the people of God and members of the Body of Christ. They are not members of the Pastor, denomination or the local assembly! A Pastor should never lose sight of this foundational truth! No Pastor ‘owns’ any brother or sister! We are all children of the same Father, citizens of the same Kingdom having the same Lord and baptised with the same Holy Spirit! Getting this truth into the deepest cavity of the human heart will enable a Pastor to walk in sincere appreciation of the privilege of being called to be an under-shepherd of Jesus.

2. The saints are to be cared for. It is about them, not the Pastor. The flock is the basis of the office of Pastor, just as any good businessman knows that customers are the reason for being in business! If Pastors allow this paradigm shift to occur within their psyche, they will succeed in ministry. No matter how good, bad, ugly or difficult the saints seem to be, they are the reason for the Office of Pastor to exist! A Pastor who sets out therefore expecting an easy ride in ministry may well go for a mental check up. It is the very things we call dysfunction in the saints that occasion the need for God to specially empower Pastors with the grace to, with great humility, focus and sensitivity apply the healing balm of Jesus on their wounded souls and show them the way to worship God in Spirit and in truth.

3. Pastors are to watch over the flock with willingness – enthusiasm and joy, not with grudges and complaints! Remember Moses, the great Pastor, who allowed the murmuring and hard heartedness of Israel to get the better part of him, leading to an incomplete pilgrimage on earth.

4. The motives of Pastors must be pure – it is a calling, not an avenue for making money off the flock! In the economic meltdown going on world-wide and with the creeping doctrine of materialism closing in from the pseudo Kingdom movement, is very easy to forget this truism. Once quest for money, desire to exercise control over saints and other impure motives take root, the Pastoral mantle is corrupted, opening the door for backsliding and possible apostasy.

5. Pastors are not to lord it over the saints. This simply means the Lord has not given any Pastor the liberty to treat God’s people as slaves. God has not given to any Pastor the liberty to control them, against their will. Respect of the will of the saints and their consciences is the hallmark of matured pastor ship! No matter how strongly we feel about a particular course of action, Pastors must allow the flock to make their decisions and enjoy the benefit or consequences of their choice. That way, their will is respected. Even when they stumble and make poor choices, they will learn the relevant lessons and grow from what they suffered. This may sound difficult but that is the way to go. Pastors have no business trying to make the sheep live a crises free life. Crises are part of the appointed learning curve for every saint! Pastors cannot love the flock more than God!

6. Pastors are to lead by example. Every precept from the pulpit should be lived out in real life so that the sheep can see the way to go. For this reason, Pastors must live with transparency; take off the professional masks that create a double identity. They must look up to Jesus, not Janus, the two faced-god! Pastors must take off the ramparts which separate them from the flock. The saints should be given access to homes of their pastors, their home and cell numbers and access, outside the plastic professionalism of Personal and Executive Assistants! If the saints have no access, the minister is not their pastor! Period!

7. Every pastor must be conscious of the fact that judgement day is coming! There will be a day to appear before the judgement seat of Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:10. On that day, those who pastored well will receive the crown of never ending glory. What an awesome prize to work for? Paul laboured that he may obtain the crown as an example for all of us. 1 Corinthians 9:24 – 27; 2 Timothy 4: 6 – 8.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

²⁴Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

²⁵And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

²⁶I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

²⁷But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

King James Version (KJV)

⁶For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

⁷I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

⁸Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Corinthians 5:10

King James Version (KJV)

¹⁰For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Additional Pitfalls to avoid.

It is sad but true that Pastors easily forget the potent instructions above and tend to slip into certain pitfalls. The chief pitfalls to avoid are these:

1. Misuse of confidential information. When people open up to the Pastor, it is a transaction of confidence and trust. Such trusts should be respected and held in confidence. What a saint shared under conviction of the Holy Spirit in a private counselling session should not be the object of a Sunday sermon or alluded to in a way to discomfit and embarrass the confessor. This does not mean Pastors should not deal with matters that require discipline. Due process must be in place and followed with great compassion when issues of discipline arise

2. Bearing malice or exercising discipline with malice. It is wrong for a Pastor to bear malice with a sheep entrusted to his or her care. If a brother or sister falls into sin or crosses the line of proper behaviour, the biblical principles adopted by the ministry should be followed.

3. Feeding fat off the sheep. It is wrong to use Old Testament examples such as Elijah's encounter with the widow to fleece the saints, especially the poor off their resources. Pastors should not prey financially on the flock. True saints will not need coercion to bless and support their pastors. This is best when done willingly and not by manipulation of emotions. Here is how Paul the Apostle described this tendency:

Philippians 3:17-19

¹⁷Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

¹⁸(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

¹⁹Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

4. Taking undue advantage of vulnerable members of the congregation. The Pastor is to bind up the broken hearted and nurture them back to wholeness. It is wrong to take advantage of the vulnerability of the flock. Unholy visitations with saints of the opposite gender should be avoided as

well as life styles which promote immorality. Pastors who steal funds of older folks who rely on the them for financial transactions and other such practices are enemies of the Cross.

5. Not empowering the flock. This is a function of insecurity. It is wrong to keep the saints in ignorance of whom they are in Christ and who He is in them. Insecure Pastors tend to find pleasure in the flock remaining babes ever needing to be fed with milk. Insecure Pastors do not train the flock and never allow the thought of releasing them one day to cross their minds. The result is that the saints constantly recourse to the Pastor for all their needs. If they want to change career, they want the Pastor to pray and confirm before they proceed. The same is the case when they want to marry or travel. This tendency is tolerable when they are young in faith. As they grow, the saints should be taught how to pray and release their faith and how to hear the voice of God and discern His will.

Whenever saints grow in Christ and are trained to serve Him, the true Pastor must be willing to affirm them and surrender to the will of God concerning their call! If this implies creating space for their gifts and callings to flourish unhindered, this should be done as unto the Lord. Where it is the will of God to use such saints who have grown in other mission fields or to plant new congregations and ministries, the Pastor should act proactively to encourage them – as long as it is the will of God

Reformation of the Church to make it Kingdom driven will require the emergence of truly called Pastors. The havoc of professionally trained staff that has turned the office of Pastor into a cold executive function has led to an anomaly. It has heralded politics into the Church. The time to root out this leprosy has come. The starting point, saints, is for Pastors to bring the work of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists and Teachers together. Their job is to bring the synergy produced by the five fold into the lives of the individual saints.

The Office of Teacher

At the beginning of this course, we listed the five offices of Christ in His Office as Head of the Church. As **Chief Teacher**, His teachings were radical. Yet, He taught in such a way that had depth and was illustrative. He taught with great authority, so much so that on one occasion, those sent to arrest Him were so enthralled with His words that they forgot their assignment! **Matthew 7: 28, 29; John 7: 40 – 47.**

When He ascended to heaven, Jesus took captive all the powers of Satan which cast a covering cast over humanity and gave gifts to men. Among the gifts He released are the fivefold office gifts to lead and guide His Church. The collective purpose of the fivefold is to perfect the saints and equip them for the work of the ministry. Ephesians 4: 7-11-16.

What it is not

Teaching is not just the ability to speak or preach. There are many fine preachers who are merely exhorters. Their words may sound nice and attractive but they are not able to convey the mind of God concerning the principles of His Word. The person who can only tell the saints what they want to hear or what will enable them to “live successful lives”, meaning acquire money, influence or power may be an exhorter but not a teacher. A teacher will not be one sided with the truth! Teaching is not the ability to rehearse the doctrines or building blocks of the Word of God.

What it is

Teaching is rather the systematic presentation of the Word of God in such a way that the letters are understood within the context of the purpose and intention of God (the Spirit of the Word). It is the process of expounding the Word so that the saints learn, line by line and precept upon precept who God is; how they should live as citizens of the Kingdom of God on earth with contrasting cultures of the world and Satan all around them; what kind of life they can validly look forward to when Jesus returns to establish the fullness of the Kingdom and life in the hereafter. These principles, which cover every conceivable aspect of life on earth are enshrined in the Constitution of The Kingdom which is the Holy Scriptures. The Holy Scriptures are therefore the principal equipment of The Teacher called by Jesus Christ! He or she cannot even imagine a situation where a principle of the world or religions of the age take pride of place in spiritual formation of saints!

Who then is a Teacher?

A teacher is an individual vested by Christ with the gift and capacity to gain a deep understanding of the letters and spirit of the Word of God, the Holy Spirit led capacity to rightly divide same and present the truths within it to saints in such a way that they are able to hear, understand, learn and therefore become transformed into the image of Christ in order to be His Kingdom ambassadors on earth and prepare effectively for the world to come. A truly called teacher will first gain a proper understanding of God by revelation so that he or she can communicate the truth about Him and His word with conviction and passion!

Marks of a good teacher/good teaching

What is the Purpose of the Teaching Ministry – Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:23
A teacher teaches the Word of God. The best place to teach from is truth that the teacher has internalized. That way, teaching proceeds from a living proof that the Word is for real!

However, this rule should not be turned into a religious dead end. A teacher should be able to understand and teach the Word of God faithfully, even if he or she has not come into an experiential reality of the Word. The reason is that the Word should and will always remain elevated above the personal experience of saints! God Himself exalts His Word above His very names that are greatly revered as Psalm 138:2 says. In effect, a good teacher will learn from what he or she is teaching, have the mind renewed thereby and proceed to practice same!

Good teaching is inspired, just as the Word to be expounded was inspired. It is the same Holy Spirit who caused the holy people of old to pen down the letters of the Word who lays hold of the one ordained by Christ as Teacher and uses him or her to bring forth a clear understanding of the letters and intent of the Word.

Good teaching should have the following hall marks:

1. It makes hidden truth clear
2. It shows the way for the saints to walk and be established in the Word
3. It should answer the questions that linger in the hearts and minds of the saints
4. It should make clear the principles of God and show how they are for our good
5. Good teaching should point to God and His purpose rather than the teacher.
6. Good teaching should show clearly the way God wants His people to go
7. Good teaching should produce results in the life of those who are taught.

The Outcome of Good Teaching – Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:11-16

Teaching is serious business and the purpose of God is that it is the principal means of building up the saints to know Him and walk in His principles of life. We are born again by the Word of God 1 Peter 1:23. We should constantly desire the sincere milk of the Word to grow thereby 1 Peter 2:1 – 3. We need to graduate from drinking the Milk of the Word (the easy portions for the new convert and young saints) and grow to appreciate the meat and bones of the Word so that we can mature Hebrews 6:1-3; Hebrews 5:12 - 14. The Word may be unpleasant to those who hear but when they receive it and allow it to do the assigned work in them, the results are greatly manifest! The uniform testimony of scripture is that these outcomes are valid expectations from a good teaching ministry:

1. The saints are to know and understand all that Jesus Christ requires of them to function as valid members of His Body, the Church. Matthew 28:20
2. Consequently, the saints are to be transformed from believers to disciples who come to the point of consecrating all of their beings and possessions to Jesus and willingly enthrone Him as Lord of their lives. Matthew 16:24-26
3. Good teaching therefore renews the mind by washing off old mindsets and ways of thinking Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23. Those who are well taught are able to locate the negative mindsets and strongholds that are within them and deal with them. 2 Corinthians 10:3-6

4. Good teaching will, with time, produce a new mindset and change of attitude to life within the saints. This new mindset is the mind of Christ which manifests in a soul rooted in the love of God and love of fellow humans. This mindset powers a life without condemnation because it easily aligns with the mind and will of God. Romans 8:1-8; 1 Corinthians 2: 14-16; Philippians 2:5; Philippians 4: 6 – 9
5. Good teaching creates the right foundation for the saints to exercise real faith as they learn to believe the Word of God implicitly and explicitly.
6. Saints who are well taught learn to trust God and focus on what they believe. Consequently, they are not moved by what they see but are able to rest in the Lord. Psalm 37: 3-7; Proverbs 3: 5-7; 2 Corinthians 4:18
7. Saints who are well taught will understand the purpose of God for their lives and receive clear directions from the Word as to how to live out the Kingdom life on earth as ambassadors to manifest His life and light to the world and to reconcile the lost to the God 2 Corinthians 5:17-20.
8. Well taught saints are able to rightly divide the word of God to apply it to their circumstances.
9. Well taught saints cannot be easily deceived. They are able to see through the gimmicks of those who are out to fleece them of hard earned money or manipulate and control them. Ephesians 4: 11-16.
10. Well grounded Saints will withstand all the storms of life and even thrive in the midst of adversity Matthew 7:24-29.
11. Well taught saints are easily sensitive to the Holy Spirit, hear the voice of the Lord and are able to discern error and false teachers. John 10: 27-29; 1 John 2: 18-28.
12. Well taught saints know that in spite of every good thing God may bless them with, nothing can compare with the riches of the world to come. They are fully engaged in occupying for Him in this present life, advancing the frontiers of the Kingdom everywhere God plants them. They know, with strong assurance that the full deal will manifest when Jesus returns to set up the Kingdom in its fullness and reward the faithful. Matthew 19:27-30; Matthew 25: 14 – 30; 31 – 46. They therefore seek first the Kingdom and its righteousness, knowing implicitly that all they need in this present life will be graciously provided by their loving heavenly Father. Matthew 6:19 – 34; 2 Peter 1:3.
13. Well taught saints know that the end of the disobedient and apostates is eternal death or separation from God and they make a value decision to reject that option. God then keeps them and upholds them. Jude verse 24.

The Teaching Ministry in Biblical context

Each Kingdom is marked by four fundamental factors. One is a King with authority and Power; the second is a domain which is the sphere of his authority or power; the third is the Dominion or People who are subject to His Authority and the Fourth is the Constitution or Document which governs behaviour of citizens. The Sermon on the Mount was essentially an outline of the fundamental principles while the whole of the New Testament represents the Constitution of the present phase of Kingdom of God.

This Constitution needs to be taught by those who are called and who understand it. Getting involved in teaching these laws of the Kingdom without being called will result in an absolute mess! Those who proclaim that the Liberty of the Spirit implies absence of Law and Order are making a mockery of spiritual knowledge. Liberty and Order are two wings of the same bird that bring the balance and impetus needful to fly and remain airborne. If either wing is cut off, the bird cannot fly! Those who will teach need therefore to know, understand and rightly divide the Word of truth to ensure that the saints are properly nourished in a holistic manner which brings balanced growth and maturity. It is interesting that of all that Jesus could ever have instructed Peter when he went fishing after the death of His death the most profound was to “feed my sheep” John 21: 1- 17.

Jesus was essentially known as the Great Teacher. The words He spoke were authoritative and deep. He knew His spiritual identity as the One in whom all that Moses and the Prophets of Old pointed to. He knew that in Him was fulfilled the Law received at Sinai as well as the various ordinances which were given as a School Master to hold the people in check until He came to reveal the perfect way to serve God which is to receive a new heart that intuitively knows the Laws of God and lovingly lives them out by the power of the Holy Spirit who leads and empowers the saint to do what is well pleasing to the Father. Galatians: 19-29; Galatians 5:13-26

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used the teaching ministry to great effect. He revealed that the Law was not abolished but rather, fulfilled in Him Matthew 5:17-19. He then went on to state a startling fact: the requirements of the New Covenant are higher than that of the Old! For those who confuse saints with claims of a gospel that makes no demand on behaviour, Jesus outlined the essential superiority of the Laws of the New Testament over and above those of the Old. Jesus came to announce and establish the Kingdom of God on earth and His first priority was to establish the reality of the Constitution as basis of new life in Him. Why was this so? The answer is simple: Jesus and The Word of God are one and the same! He is the Living Word.

Superiority of the New Testament

While the Old required that no one should murder another, the New Testament went further to require that saints should not give room to anger or hate others in their hearts! Matthew 5:21 – 26. While the Old forbade adultery, the New Testament went further to forbid lust in the heart! Matthew 5:27-30. The Old prescribed rules for divorce while Jesus declared marriage as a bond of union which can only be broken by immoral conduct of either party before the marriage is consummated Matthew 5: 31 – 32. The Old gave conditions for oath taking, the New expressly forbids that Matthew 5: 33-37. The Old approved vengeance while the New expressly forbids it Matthew 5:38-42. The Old permitted hatred of enemies while the New requires us to love our neighbours as God does Matthew 5: 43-48.

These and all rules in the New Testament simply point to the life expected of citizens of the Kingdom of God! In effect, the Lord was laying out the rules of behaviour which will constitute the culture of the Kingdom. In John 4:21 – 24, Jesus told the woman at the well of Samaria that those who worship God must do so in Spirit and in Truth. By so doing, Jesus made it clear that good intentions are not enough. Those who subscribe to the Kingdom of God are required to submit to the leadership of the Holy Spirit and base their faith on the Truth of the Word of God. The reason for this elevated nature of the Constitution is that it is actually written in the hearts of saints! It is wired internally by the Holy Spirit who releases grace for us to live them out as a function of a living, loving relationship with God as Father! Hebrews 10:12-16.

In effect, those called to the Office of Teacher have a great responsibility ahead of them. To them is given the awesome responsibility of rightly dividing and serving the Word of God as nourishment so that the saints can understand what they already know intuitively which speaks through their living consciences so that they can grow properly in knowledge of God, His Kingdom and their roles therein. A vital component of the Great Commission is to teach the new believers everything that will establish them in the faith Matthew 28:19.

Within the Body, there will be those who have the gift of teaching and are exhorted to do so with all diligence Romans 12:7. There will however be those who have the specific office of Teacher whose principal function is to be used of the Holy Spirit to perfect the saints and equip them for the work of ministry as part of the five fold office gifts/functions. Teachers are therefore to instruct saints as well as contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints Jude 3. The reason why this is so is that weak or backslidden saints will tend to develop itchy ears and want to hear what will make them comfortable rather the truth which liberates 2 Timothy 4: 2-5; John 8:32.

Consequences of bad teaching –

The Lord Jesus and His disciples warn the saints in several places about the dangers of false teachers and their teachings. The reason is that people tend to grow according to what they hear or learn. Whatever you teach will, when received, become the substance upon which hearer's life will grow. It is only a matter of time when what was taught becomes life itself.

In this closing chapter of the age, there will be serious attempts by Satan to plant dangerous doctrines and ideas in the minds of influential people so that he can use them to cause many to err. The last days will see the increase of knowledge most of which are unbiblical or extra biblical. While the unbiblical teachings are easy to recognize, the extra biblical ones are equally dangerous. The danger arises from the intelligent ways their purveyors deliberately play on words and yearnings of humans for the better and “successful” life to twist certain parts of the bible out of context and in so doing deceive their hearers. A little leaven, Apostle Paul warned, leavens the whole lump! 1 Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:9. It is the work of the Teacher to teach truth by the leading and utterances prompted by the Holy Spirit as well as identify errors which constitute leaven so that the people of God are not led astray.

The most dangerous trend however will be the new raft of soulish doctrines. The human soul is powerful and can invent anything, including good sounding doctrines which purport to solve problems but eat like a cancer. Many people often forget that the human soul (the realm of the mind, the will and the emotion) conceived or designed most of the things that are the evidence of the civilization we enjoy today. The human mind conceived the aircraft, the submarine; nuclear weapons; restaurants, home and office conveniences and equipments and indeed the good life people enjoy today.

When deployed to the realm of religion and spirituality, the results can be devastating. Good sounding doctrines can be developed but which lead people astray in pursuit of wealth, power and ego (packaged as healthy self esteem!) In the process, humans develop and propound clearly unbiblical thesis and their acolytes buy such with gusto, lacking the capacity to discern. In this way, there are many pseudo Kingdom preachers who have successfully downgraded the Bible in the mind of their followers and elevate their own teachings. This is usually the first step towards mind control and charismatic witchcraft! This crafty pincer movement causes soul ties to be developed between so called masters and their disciples. The outcome is sophisticated syncretism which results from a combination of extracts from the bible taken out of context and mixed with soul driven doctrines.

In effect, this is the time and season when the best of the teaching ministry should come forth. Those who are called to be Teachers should emulate their forerunner in the business of reformation Ezra 7:10! Teachers will be used to bring forth the cleansing function of the Word so that the Church of Jesus Christ is perfected and made radiant for His soon return! Ephesians 5:27

Epilogue: The Grand Purpose of the Five Fold

As Supreme Ruler of the universe, God is particular about how His subjects obey instructions. He has never been known to suffer gladly those who modify His express instructions and do anything according to their personal fancies. Adam and Eve lost the Kingdom and a world of matchless bliss because they allowed a third party, Satan, to confuse them and activate their souls to be the engine of their lives. In the process, they disconnected from God who desired to relate with them through their spirit-man. Adam and Eve, from that point, worshipped God according to what they felt and thought rather than how He wanted – complete submission to His will. Genesis 3:1-6.

God is Particular about His Design for everything!

God variously commended Moses for his faithfulness in building the Tabernacle of witness to the exact specifications received at the Mount. Here was a mobile sanctuary with a complex set of materials required to build and carry it round. Yet Moses instructed the builders and supervised their work so that the exact specifications of God were followed. The result is that the express will of God was done.

Noah was a man whose life should challenge us. Living in an environment where there was no sea or record of a flood, he set out to produce the ark according to exact specifications from God. Laughed at by his generation, Noah was eventually vindicated when the rains came, the fountain of the deep broken and he and his immediate family as well as the animal species therein alone were saved. Genesis chapters 6, 7, 8.

Saul lost the Kingdom when he modified the divine instruction concerning Amalek. Applying reason, Saul spared Agag and the fatlings. In pronouncing the divine judgement for such perfidy of soul worship, Samuel painted a vivid picture of how disobedience is ranked with witchcraft 1 Samuel 15: 1 – 23.

The Kingdom of God and His Church.

The divine plan of salvation required that God be made flesh in Jesus Christ for the purpose of redeeming man from the power of Satan which he procured by craftiness from Adam. God then required those who received His mercy to stop living for themselves but to be part of a new reality that was hidden from human understanding throughout the ages. That plan is the emergence of a new spiritual family of God amongst human beings. Before then, the world was divided into two classes: Jews and Gentiles.

The plan of God was to create one new being – The Church - as prime beneficiary of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ Ephesians 2: 11- 18. Those who claim that the Church is irrelevant or dead are jokers. They do not know the Word of God! The Church which was birthed at Pentecost will exist until Jesus returns to consummate it. The Church is the fullness of the Body of Christ and comprises all the saints who are beneficiaries of the grace freely released in Christ.

The true gospel of the Kingdom reveals that there are two phases we will enjoy: The Kingdom that now is in our hearts, which is the spiritual dimension Luke 17:21; John 1:12. All who have Jesus the King enthroned in their hearts, fully submitted to His sovereign rule are part of it. They are the true Church within the physical Church! We are not to fold our hands and wait for when Jesus returns! We have great work to do: Occupy or do Kingdom business on His behalf and in so doing, be the Salt and Light of our depraved and dark generations! We are the instruments Jesus will use to save others who are part of the Kingdom but are yet in the world! Luke 19:11-27. It is an active and fully engaged life we are called to live, making every moment count!

In spite of all the Lord will do with us and how far He blesses us in the now, we are instinctively conscious that a Day is coming when Jesus will return to rule and reign in a physical sense from Jerusalem, when the kingdoms of this world give way! That is the Kingdom to come which Jesus taught the disciples to pray about in Matthew 6:10. That Kingdom to come is graphically illustrated in the parables of Jesus as worth losing all else for, living and dying for! The return of Jesus to rule and reign on earth was obscured by the spirit of religion and now basically denied by the pseudo-kingdom preachers who insist that all there is about the Kingdom is now. In so doing, the divinity of Jesus, authority of the scriptures and reality of His return have faded in the minds and hearts of many who once believed. What a great falling away! Revelation 11:15; Revelation 20:1-6

The Church – will continue to be relevant until Jesus returns!

The Church is not and can never be a building(s), religious organization(s) or humanistic institution(s). We do not ‘go to Church’! We are the Church! The Church is the called out people of God comprising Jews and Gentiles who accept the free gift of salvation by faith. We are the Body of Christ, the physical organs through which His Presence and Power is released to impact the world around us! As members of the family of God on earth, the saints have their faith resting on the sure foundation of the ministry of the Prophets of Old and the Apostles to whom Jesus entrusted the gospel of the Kingdom. The saints thus become the new Holy Temple of God and His habitation by the Spirit on earth. Ephesians 2: 19 – 22. It was for this reason that Jesus prophesied destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem which General Titus and the invading Roman army executed in AD 70. Matthew 24: 1, 2. In effect, the Church is not and cannot be the building nor is it the denomination or even programs of man! The paradigm that Jesus announced to the Samaritan woman had come into effect and worship is to be in spirit and truth rather than in rituals and activities. John 4:21-23.

To ensure that the Church of Jesus Christ is built with understanding of its details and specifications, Jesus Christ personally recruited a man who had good understanding of the Old Testament and the capacity to articulate down to the wire, all the details of the Church that was to play a significant role in the plan of God for the ages. Acts 9: 1 - 27.

To this vessel, God committed a detailed description of the Church; what it is; how it should operate; how Satan would fight it and an understanding of its timeline; and what it will be like at the return of Jesus Christ Ephesians 5:26, 27. There is no way anyone can engage in New Testament ministry without a proper understanding of the Pauline epistles! Of them, these are particularly critical: Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians; 1 & 2 Timothy; Titus and the Book of Hebrews which is widely attributed to him also.

Writing in 1 Corinthians chapter 3, Paul describes himself as a wise Master Builder who received the architectural drawings from Jesus concerning His Church. Paul went on to admonish the saints to take heed how they build, warning that God will not accept anything offered to Him outside His master plan 1 Corinthians 3: 10 – 15.

Central to the Master Plan of God for His Church is that it will be led by five categories of office gifts and functions – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. To each of these office gifts/functions, Christ has released a measure of Himself. They are not to operate alone or the Church will remain immature and inadequate. Jesus deliberately made it so lest preachers try to build human empires around their persons or the office gifts. Each of the fivefold was to receive a good understanding of who Jesus is His Kingdom as detailed in the Bible and proclaim Him with conviction and power, by the Holy Spirit.

In effect, the Church of Jesus Christ will be inadequate and less than what it is ordained to be anywhere and anytime the fivefold is dysfunctional or absent. That is why Satan went for the jugular within the first 400 years of the Church when he caused the true Gospel of the Kingdom of God to be sidetracked and dead religion was foisted with its humanistic systems of religiosity. Rome has grown fat on this anomaly claiming the fivefold as valid in one man they chose to call “supreme pontiff” and “holy father”.

As we enter the closing chapter of the Church age, the enemy has struck again and foisted upon humanity an equally dangerous diversion, the pseudo Kingdom gospel. Certainly more dangerous than the leaven of Rome, this one has ensnared many Spirit filled saints who have relapsed into soul based worship and in the process, opened themselves to the same Old serpent who tricked Adam and Eve to try and worship God through human reasoning and mental permutations!. These men and women have decided to set aside the true gospel of the Kingdom, as described in the Bible. They claim that the Bible is inadequate to guide them and they have proceeded to create a new gospel in which the Bible is severely twisted and distorted to mean what they want it to mean. Their antics were exposed in the teaching series on the leaven of the Pseudo Kingdom movement which God graciously released to us here on face book two years ago.

Danger Lurks where the fivefold is absent!

The reason why the pseudo Kingdom movement has deceived many is because of the absence of the five fold at ground level. No saint can be deceived who receives the full ministry of the five fold! As stated in Ephesians 4: 11 – 16 the fivefold has the sacred trust of executing this divine agenda:

- Perfect the Saints to know who they are in Christ and who He is in them
- Equip the saints to know their roles in the work of God and do so
- Enable the saints to play their assigned roles in building up/edifying the Church
- When the saints receive ministry from the five fold, they come to a place of unity in faith to the degree that regardless of racial/ethnic backgrounds, social status, age, gender or location, the knowledge of God, His Kingdom, the Church of Jesus Christ and the lifestyle we are called to live on earth become entrenched lifestyles.
- The saints thus become mature and measure up to the fullness of the stature of Christ
- With this, immaturity will be removed and the saints will no longer be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine/sweet sounding doctrines of devils and soulish inventions of men and women. The saints will be able to read a book or listen to say the greatest of the pseudo Kingdom teachers and know exactly where leaven is hidden. They will thus be able, by the Holy Spirit at work in them have an internal sensor which places a check in their spirit to know when even famous teachers have deviated from the faith! 1 John 2: 18-28.

- Saints who are thus built up will discern when preachers are setting them up to milk them – whether in promoting books, seeking funds or any avenue of crafty fund raising to finance vanities.
- Saints are able to mature to the point where they freely receive and release all their gifts and callings for the mutual edification of the whole Body.

Responsibilities of Saints to the reality of Ephesians 4:11-16

On the last day, all saints will give account of the life God gave them; of the salvation they received freely; of the providential care of God and of the gifts and callings they were redeemed to exercise for building up other saints, contribute to health of the Body and for how they faithfully served as Ambassadors of Christ and how they effectively participated in the Great Commission. No saint can plead ignorance because we all have access to the Bible which is the divine manual for life. No saint can plead that he or she was ineffective because the Pastor did not reveal the mind of God. Saints who are conscious of judgement day are obligated therefore to:

- By the Holy Spirit's help and in prayer, audit the gift and calling of their Pastors and leaders to ascertain how much of the five fold is impacting on them.
- If the church operates in limited understanding of the five fold or is closed to the fullness of the five fold, the saints are obligated to ask the Lord in prayer to guide them to other vessels to receive what is missing in the local assembly.
- Through media like face book, Television, Radio, Podcasts, Books, etc, the saints can fill up the missing measure of office gifts speaking into their lives.
- No saint should sit easy in a place where he/she is not receiving training; not being equipped; not being activated in the gifts of the Holy Spirit and not given any opportunity to exercise the gifts and callings of God. These experiences are their fundamental spiritual rights!
- If a local assembly or leader is totally closed or opposed to the ministry of the five fold, he or she loses the moral right to lead the saints in any way and should be denied support, including participation in the ministry!
- Any saint who is truly part of the remnant should 'come out' of any ministry which is structured on the religious Babylonian system. The Hallmarks include where the minister and his/her family 'own' the ministry and because of that are insecure to allow other fivefold offices to impart on and impact the flock! Such ministries will end up trading in the souls of saints and they may atrophy in their growth, backslide or apostasies completely. Revelation 18:13 is very revealing when read in the context of the whole chapter. A full teaching on Mystery Babylon and how it has permeated independent Pentecostal and Charismatic ministries will be released soon.

Responsibilities of Ministers of the Gospel

All Pastors and leaders must recognize the reality that the saints are MEMBERS OF CHRIST! That they are in our congregations is a privilege and we must not regard them as our properties or slaves to feed them with what we want! Their Lord and Saviour has already determined what He wants to feed them with and how to build them up. Any minister who refuses to follow the divine plan is unqualified to lead the people of God!

Necessity beckons every true minister of the gospel to do these things:

- Prayerfully connect with and align with other ministers with gifts and callings you do not have for mutual edification, accountability and support.
- Be fully connected with any fellowship where you will tap into the full grace of God evidenced by the ministry of those other fivefold office gifts and functions that are not given to you.
- By being part of such a company of ministers who are faithful and true to the word of God and His end time agenda, you are properly nourished. It is your responsibility to locate fellow ministers who have the graces and anointing that are lacking in you to bless the saints you lead. If you lead a congregation, it is your duty to regularly call in Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers who have anointing, revelation/insights and capacities you lack. The idea is to experience a synergy of the five fold on the congregation so that they are rapidly built up to be all that God ordained them to be.
- If you pray in faith, God will reveal the company or fellowship you need to align with.
- Depending on your specific needs, the Lord may also align you with a mentor so that you can receive help by the Holy Spirit.

For ministers in the United States of America, please visit the web page of International Ministers Fellowship and see if the Lord will have you become part of a mutually edifying movement in the reformation movement www.imf-usa.com

The Inconvenient Questions since Pentecost and the Pauline Epistles...

In reality, is rejection of any of the ascension or office-gifts a rejection of Christ Himself? The answer is YES!

Can any unit or part of the Church be perfected if it operates outside the impartation of any or the entire fivefold? The answer is NO!

The Lord impressed strongly on our heart that He still had a few more things to say. Speaking by the Spirit, Paul the Apostle clearly said that we can build on no other foundation than Jesus Christ! 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. Any activity so called which purports to be part of the Church but which is built in a manner contrary to the spirit and letter of the Word of God is an exercise in futility!

It matters less to God that millions of people or thousands are part of the purported spiritual activity! It is mere religion in disguise to the extent that the activity is done outside the specifications of God! This may seem a scary proposition to many. However, the uniform testimony of the Holy Writ is that this is the essential dividing line between spiritual and soulish activity.

Soulishness did not begin today. It was in fact, the root of the original sin of Adam and Eve as the Lord has stated repeatedly in the course of our study here on the Global School of Ministry. What the devil activated in Adam and Eve was essentially to come off their spiritual worship of God marked by simple faith and obedience. This was achieved because Satan successfully caused them to activate their soul to reign supreme over their spirits! The soul is the faculty of man with three organs – the mind, the will and the emotion. These organs are good and were placed there by God to enable us deal with our environment, subdue the earth and exercise dominion over other created beings and things (not fellow humans!). In effect, the soul is a vital part of man and has a role to play. However, the Lord has ordained that the spirit realm is the place He wants to meet man. The spirit represents the Holiest of Holies in man and was breathed into man by God Himself. In effect, the Lord wants the Holy Spirit to interact with the spirit of man and lead it so that it will in turn lead the soul and the body.

The activation of the soul to gain pre-eminence of the spirit was the root problem at Eden. It was back of the problem of Cain. Cain was a soulish worshipper and so offered to God a sacrifice that represented not his faith but his ability. When his sacrifice was rejected, he became angry with God and jealous of his brother Abel. Anger and Jealousy are soul driven responses to challenges of life. The rest is history – Cain committed murder, another soulish response.

That problem has persisted till today. Soulishness occurs when the mind becomes activated to lead the spirit and soul of the believer. The spirit is where the Holy Spirit activates at the new birth. It becomes quickened, comes alive and becomes sensitive to what God desires.

Those who are in ministry by soulish propensities will try to build for God according to what their reason tells them. Others will try to build according to what their ambitions throw up. Ambition and Vision sound alike. Ambition is from man and is earthy while Vision is from God and is heavenly.

Soul driven ministry is the greatest threat to the emergence of the Church that Jesus Christ died for. Soulish propensities are behind the building of great denominations that divide the saints into sects that are busy fighting each other in the name of God. The soul is self conscious, self driven and selfish. Whatever it does will always come unstuck in the sense that it will cause division, strife and competition.

Change is coming...

The reformation of the Church of Jesus Christ has begun and the Kingdom of God is now being preached with greater clarity. What are you doing to occupy your niche?

If you need help to adjust yourself to receive the fullness of the five fold, you may wish to be part of a global move of God to re-discover and exercise these truths in every day ministry, please feel free to let us know. You are welcome to join us on the journey to see the fivefold spring up and exercise the headship office and gifts in cities, regions and nations across the world.

The Lord has planted in us a burden and vision where the City Church will be restored as platform for expressing the fullness of Christ, receiving all the office gifts and seizing the moment and spiritual authority in various cities/regions. It is instructive to note that the City Church model is the sure cure for the spirit of denominationalism and party spirit which keeps the Church at war with itself. In the City Church model, local congregations complement themselves and tap into the various available gifts and callings. It was to the City Churches that most of the epistles were written. God wants to make it happen again using all of us! That is what the International Ministers Fellowship is all about since the Lord began a special work through it. If there is no local chapter of the Fellowship in your nation or city/province and you have what it takes to rally other leaders and ministers together to tap into the grace of God in each other, please write to imfcoordinator@yahoo.com.

6. Keys to restoration of the Five Fold + Ejecting Babylon out of Church!

As we wind down on this foundational issue of putting the Fivefold back in place, it may be necessary to share a few keys and the pathway to the desired outcome. These are biblical principles that will be proved in the ministries of all who dare to believe God to watch over His word to perform it!

1. **Realization by Saints that every word of God is true exalted and cannot be adjusted to fit the fancies of humans, cultures of people and our preferred ways of life.** As a matter of fact, one key reason for the gospel is to bring our mindsets, lifestyles and prevailing cultures of various generations to conform to the Kingdom lifestyle. To do church therefore according to principles of the world and believe that God will accept same is to live in delusion of grandeur!
2. **As in all things, all it will take for reformation to begin in a ministry, community or city is one person!** It matters not if that person is male or female, young or old; educated or not! God is looking for an individual who will surrender the whole of the heart and mind to Him! God is looking for dead saints: saints who surrender their old beings –with its ambitions, preferences and rebellious tendencies – to be crucified with Christ at Calvary and resurrect in newness of life with Him! Galatians 2:20; Mathew 16:24-26; Romans 12:1-2.

This kind of ‘dead’ saint who becomes alive in Christ is thus able to love God with all the heart, mind, will and abilities. Such a one does not struggle to obey God, even if it requires giving up rights and privileges. When God finds this kind of person, He has found a precious resource who, like Gideon, can be trusted to destroy all altars of Baal within and around the house! The process of dying to self and coming alive in Christ in this manner will take various routes for different people. But the process of God has the same effect of a refining fire! There will be those who will be well intentioned in mis-understanding you. There will be others whose minds will be manipulated by Satan and self to see you from perspectives that are not real. There will be evil speaking, rejection and all manner of attacks to wear you down, side track you or even entrap you into sins that will cut off the vital link with God. All these things will however work together for good as Romans 8:28-39 reveals.

3. **This individual will never want any trace of Babylon in the ministry committed to his/her trust.** Such saints will know the depths of Babylon and hate the system with a perfect hatred! Babylon is the prevailing spirit of the world and is evident in the religious, political, economic, social, cultural, educational and all arenas of life. It hates the pattern of God and seeks like a python, swallow things of God and replace it with fakes! Traces of Babylon include these benchmarks:
 - a. **Enthronement of money as a key reason for being in ministry.** This takes many forms. A partial list includes: exalting money beyond what is reasonable; a clear favouritism of

leaders towards those who are 'rich', keeping titles and offering records and using them to determine what kind of care and support a saint deserves;

- b. **Living a worldly lifestyle by those in leadership and expecting saints to finance same.** This lifestyle translates to loving worldly amusement; seeking to appear like the Joneses in town and other things which contradict 1 John 2:15-17; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18
 - c. **Entrenching a culture of superstardom in which a leader forgets that he or she is to emulate Jesus Christ in His simplicity, approachability and access.** It was this lifestyle which made it necessary for religious leaders to hire Judas Iscariot to identify Jesus from among just 12 people! Quest for superstardom creates a cult image of a leader and people unconsciously worship him or her. This is often subtle but so strong that saints see themselves as inadequate to approach God except through the leader who becomes a kind of mediator/mediatrix. To enslave saints who the Son of Man set free in this way is perhaps the worst betrayal of the privilege of leadership!
 - d. **Babylon therefore subtly comes to Church, so to say and the mixture is syncretism pure and simple!** It corrupts the very heart of the gospel and like a cankerworm eats up the strength of the Church. Saints become disciples of fellow humans rather than Jesus Christ! Such leaders do not and cannot empower saints!
 - e. **Babylon hates the collective grace that is wired into the Church of Jesus Christ.** For this reason, Babylon fosters a hierarchical structure on ministries. At the apex is the founder who leads for life. Because of insecurity, such leadership is a dead end with the individuals concerned except there are off springs that are foisted on the ministry as successors – often against the will of God or even will of the poor fellows! Where room is made for other leaders, it is in an employment capacity. They are employed to fulfil specific tasks which strengthens the position and revenue of the 'owner' of the ministry which is certainly not Jesus Christ! To all intent and purposes, Babylon fosters family owned ministries which are basically social security safety nets of such founders.
 - f. **Babylon is the mother of covetousness and hates righteousness, transparency and integrity.** For this reason, in spite of the great revenue which comes in, the 'owners' of ministries keep same as well as expenditure as a tight secret. Members of congregations are not supposed to know the revenue as well as expenditure profile of the ministry. Accounts presented to Governmental and regulatory agencies are routinely doctored just as many in the world do.
 - g. **Babylon corrupts the Church by actively injecting worldly principles that meet needs and expectations of seekers rather than challenge them to bow to the authority of Christ and principles of His Kingdom.** This morphs into creating of meeting places which are decorated according standards of Hollywood with all it takes – including rock music, strobe lights, special effects and such to pump adrenalin into the soul and body of saints so that mind control can take place without much discernment and difficulty.
A full teaching note on Babylon and its subtle invasion of the 'Church' will be made available soon. Please study Revelation chapter 18 and especially verse 13 to see that souls of people are among the 'articles of trade in system!
4. **The reformer found by God will of course need to be 'strong' otherwise the mission will be dead before it matures!** This strong leader will be dislodging satanic principles and worldly mindsets by the Spirit of God. This strong leader will deal with many saints who do not understand the vision of God but love offices and may be willing to sabotage the grand purpose of God without knowing it. The strong leader will be secure in God and sold out to His purpose and proceed with conviction, passion and total focus to ensure that both the content and structure of the gospel mission is expressly in line with the revealed will of God. These will be non negotiable foci of the Spirit led, bible based ministry:
 - a. Exaltation of The Word of God and Jesus Christ in all His Divine Office. There will be an openness to the Holy Spirit to lead, direct, correct, chastise and change course even when inconvenient. To produce true worshippers in line with the criteria set out by Jesus in John 4:23-24 is non negotiable!

- b. The reformer will do a self audit to ascertain the gifts and offices graciously endowed by Jesus through the Holy Spirit. He/She will deploy all of those gifts and discharge the offices with every grace and strength God has blessed.
- c. The reformer will know that he/she alone cannot and should not lead the people of God. The realization is real that the master plan of Jesus is to use the Five Fold – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers – to synergistically perfect the saints, equip them for work of ministry and mature them to be strong and stable, able to withstand various winds of doctrine. Ephesians 4:11-16. With this, the reformer will never rest until God connects him/her with other sincere fivefold officers who have what he/she lacks. The real people who will last in the relationship are men and women who are equally dead to self and ambition! They come together to complement, not compete! As spiritual people, they have no difficulty submitting to one another in their various areas of grace neither is there any difficulty in submitting to the Christ in the vessel chosen divinely as vision holder.
- d. The reformer realises that beyond the days of expounding the vision, training the leadership and empowering them, it is his/her responsibility to be used of the King to create space for the other folds to rise in the dimension of their calling. He/she will do this because the purpose in ministry is pure!
- e. To safeguard their hearts from corruption, such reformers will also walk in understanding that the fivefold is not sufficient to lead the saints. The five fold need to concentrate in the Presence of God in prayer, worship, studying and meditating on the word and need to be insulated from the potential distractions of management of money and other material assets as well as welfare of saints. Accordingly, the reformers will doggedly challenge and empower those in the Market Place to consecrate their skills and hearts to the King and serve as Deacons in the local congregations. When they take their place, the resources of Kingdom ministries will be managed more efficiently and the Five Fold will labour under open heavens, entering into the rest which Jesus releases. Acts 6:1-7.
- f. The true reformer cannot subscribe to any purported move of God which exalts one fivefold office over the others! For that reason, such reformers will excuse themselves from attempts to run caucuses of say Apostles or Prophets or Evangelists or Pastors and Teachers! They will realize that the King deliberately gave His fivefold offices to the whole Body with none preferred above the others! They also realize that the fivefold is best and most effective when in true Spirit-led alignment which leads to each complimenting the other. This scripture is etched strongly in the heart and mind of all true reformers:

Ephesians 4:11-16

¹¹And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

¹²For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

¹³Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

¹⁴That 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, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

¹⁵But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

¹⁶From whom 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 increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

5. **True reformers will never go back to the Levitical Order of Priesthood which was fulfilled in and by Jesus at the Cross of Calvary!** The Levitical Order first crept back into the House of God about 1,700 years ago and today has over 1.5 billion adherents in a few

major religions that are part of organized Christendom. Many Protestant denominations and sadly, Pentecostal and Charismatic ministries and ministers have jumped into the ship of Levi. These are some of the marks of the Levitical order:

- 5.1 **A Hierarchical structure** in which people fit into various classes with varying degrees of access to God and mysteries of the Kingdom. At the apex is the new High Priest or 'pope' of the religious order he or she founded who is accountable to no one and needs special care because of the high 'anointing'!
- 5.2 **Special robes which distinguish priests according to their classes.** It must be noted that for the sake of the world, saints who are being ordained into ministry, if they so wish, may wear collars 1 Corinthians 9:19-21. The collars should however not be worn as a badge of honor and exaltation over other saints but strictly for the purpose of access to places like prisons, hospitals and other structures society has grown used to granting access to only 'men and women of the cloth'. To glory in wearing special clothes, robes to show the degree of access to God and distinguish a professional clergy from a passive laity who are far from God is to negate the entire Priesthood of all believers Jesus activated! Thank God for delivering yours truly from this sin for I was fully involved until Abba rebuked me a few years ago!
- 5.3. **Seals of Authority** with names of leaders or their preferred emblems inscribed thereon. These seals are supposed to establish the authority specific people carry! Lord Jesus, please have mercy on us and forgive us for introducing barriers within your flock!
- 5.4. **Signet rings to be worn** to declare to those who behold the fingers that the wearers are special class of priests. With time, touching or kissing the ring creates a new version of idolatry.
- 5.5. **Vanity that manifests by hanging of life sized portraits of founders of ministries within sanctuaries of congregations.** It is only a matter of time and the photographs begin to have life of their own!
- 5.6. **Allowing photographs or images of the 'servant of God' to be inscribed by screen printing or other means onto materials such as Tee shirts, loin cloths, hand kerchiefs and other materials.** Other details of the Levitical Order and the Order of Nimrod which many leaders are trying to emulate, revive and practice are to be released in a forthcoming guidance note. Please pray for us!
- 5.7. **True reformers will also stoutly resist manifestations of the priesthood of Nimrod.** Nimrod was the first ruler who extended beyond his assigned boundaries through hunting after the souls of men to subdue and control for personal agenda. Genesis 10:8-12. It was no surprise that almost all the key cults and lodges on earth revere this cult figure who is believed to be the grandfather of masonry and occultist dark arts. This man was believed to have also inspired the Tower of Babel project which united human beings to oppose God to His face! Genesis 1. In several countries, occultists are in high religious offices as Archbishops, Bishops and 'healing evangelists! They are not in some dark temples practicing skulduggery but have assumed the posture of angels of light! Some own TV and radio stations with elaborate network of marketers who promote their 'miracle' working powers and ability to 'heal' all diseases. In three African nations, the spirit which ruled Nimrod has positioned his human agents to deceive. In North America, the spirit of Nimrod has the upper hand in the political, economic, social and religious system with many supposed 'clergy' as holders of degrees of their true craft. True reformers will not be deceived but will be alert in the spirit and call the bluff of these sons of belial who are masquerading as Apostles and Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. 2 Corinthians 11:12-14.

2 Corinthians 11:12-15

¹²But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

¹³For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

¹⁴And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

¹⁵Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

5.8. These people are trading in the souls of men and women who they subdue to serve them under the illusion that such slaves are serving God. Revelation 18:13 is very insightful.

Revelation 18:13

¹³And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

To partner with such people whether in organizing prayer rallies or indeed any other activity is not unity but ecumenism! To refuse to speak out in order not to sound offensive is to betray the very calling into the Five Fold!

6. True reformers are jealous for the glory of God revealed in the priesthood which Jesus modelled: the Order of Melchisedeck! It is this priesthood which enables leaders to realise that all saints are children of the same Father, ambassadors of the same Kingdom and part of the Kingdom of Priests and Kings! It is for this awesome purpose of raising many sons to glory and turning trash to treasure that Jesus came. He modelled the Priesthood of Melchizedeck in that the pedigree and circumstance of birth or family does not determine how far God can use us! From the tribe of Judah, Jesus was unqualified to be a Priest under the Levitical order but by the endless Oath and Covenant promise of Abba, He became not just a Priest but our High Priest who, having gone through the veil lives forever to intercede for us until we are glorified in the fullness of the Kingdom!!! Psalm 110:4; Hebrews chapter 5; Hebrews 6:10-20; Hebrews chapters 7, 8 & 9; 1 Peter 2:9. How can any one called to the fivefold – with its greater and more noble priesthood - ever partner with the spirit of religion to create a special priestly caste in a supposedly New Testament ministries? Can there be a greater sin?

This does not mean, as some suppose, that there will be no leaders in the New Covenant! There will be leaders who do not glory in carrying their weight around: leaders for whom the only model is Jesus in His holiness, love, humility and service rather than Satan in his pride, sin, desire to be served and agenda driven nature! For such leaders, their matching orders are in Ephesians 4:11-16 and 1 Peter 5:1-4 among others. These kinds of leaders will not demand respect and honour. They will not seek to seat on elevated platforms or occupy any position reserved for Christ in the hearts of saints. Their very simple and uncomplicated lives marked by sacrifice of even life itself, health, pursuit of wealth and status because of the glory of the Kingdom they have apprehended will lead to manifested Kingdom lives which attract divine approval, the Presence and Power of God. True saints will be drawn to them and honour them not out of slavish obligations but as unto the King who called them into service. Because they are secure in the King, they will be satisfied with His certificate of approval and will have no need for the flip flop Hosannas of humans!

7. **The outcome of the scenario above will be a dynamic expression of the Kingdom of God in the lives of individual saints who become empowered and secure to express the presence and power of Christ in them! When they congregate together, everyone is a blessing to everyone leading to strong, healthy ministries based on Body strength rather than the ‘anointing’ on a single individual.** The real power of God will be evident in signs, wonders and miracles that are not the products of emotional manipulation or make believe. People of God grow from babes to

disciples. From the religious spirit of orphan hood, saints discover to their great joy, their standing as sons of God with a living, loving vibrant relationship with God as Father. They thus lovingly respond to His invitation for deeper preparation in ministry to be effective ambassadors of the Kingdom. In the process, their postings become clear: whether as fivefold to function as presbytery of congregations engaged in spiritual formation; as Market Place Ministers God will use to sustain His agenda for individual saints and Spirit birthed ministries or as hybrid ministers with grace for both. For such people, we are the Church, not the building, ministry or congregation! The building becomes relevant largely as an Empowerment and Equipping center and a forum for body ministry – by that which every joint supplies, the Body makes increase of itself in love! When this is the case, the saints will be rightly empowered and envisioned to fulfil the Great Commission from a standing of Ambassadors of Christ, not apologists of failure. As Mark 16:20 records, we will go forth everywhere, the Lord working with us with signs and wonders following! Acts 6:7 also gives us a clue: many, including religious leaders will embrace the gospel of the Kingdom seeing its ‘other worldly quality’ and the manifest stamp of divine approval! We must get here for so has the King appointed before hand when He caused us to have a sneak peek into His wondrous mind for the Church in Ephesians 5:27: a Church without spot(sin); wrinkles (traditions of men) and other such things (spirit of dis-unity, denominationalism, lack and insufficiency).

Please send an email to ariseoffice@yahoo.co.uk requesting for your complete copy of GSoM Course 112: The Ascension Office Gifts (Five fold Leadership Gifts). This 62 page download from the Throne Room is made available, free of charge this week on the only condition: study, pray it in and apply it in your life and ministry. This will enable you to build according to the Master Plan of the King so that you may be bold at His appearing! 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. Please share this and all materials of the Global School of Ministry freely on and off face book with friends, family and other saints. Please do not use them to print books! The right to do so has been granted to Kingdom Business International Limited www.kingdombiz.org but Abba says we should offer the materials freely at first to all His saints so that no one will have any excuse for failure! We love you with a deep love, planted by He who died that we may live and therefore labour daily that Christ will be fully formed in you and all the remnant of this generation. To any who feel offended with the word, we sincerely apologize and request that you go to The King and ask Him whether He gave this word or if we just made it up!

Apostle George & Pastor Grace are visionaries of Global School of Ministry London, England www.globalschoolofministry.com From their base in London where they oversee the New Testament congregation, Arise Metropolitan Assembly, the couple are used by the Holy Spirit to feed the flock of Jesus in over 100 nations, teaching, training, equipping, activating and releasing saints into the priesthood of Melchisedeck. They also coordinate the global operations of International Ministers Fellowship. Networking the remnant is a passionate engagement of the couple who have been blessed by God with five children – Favour, Elect, Arise, Praise and Destiny.