

KNOWING YOUR OWN GIFTING AND SHAPING CHURCHES TO REFLECT THE FULL MINISTRY OF JESUS

How does the church fully reflect the life of Jesus?

What is my place within that?

If I am a leader/priest how do I work out the kind of leadership/ministry I can best offer?

How can we know what gifts our church is needing so that we can fully reflect the life of Jesus in the world?

How do we discern where God is leading well?

How do I flourish in leadership and enable others to flourish?



In Ephesians 4, Paul writes that Christ makes His presence fully real in the world through giving gifts to His church – and there are five he describes which both support and complement each other.

- 11 So Christ himself gave **the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,**
12 **to equip his people for works of service,**
so that the body of Christ may be **built up**
13 **until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God**
and become mature,
attaining to the **whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**



I.D. GROUP RESOURCE

These five main gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers help us reflect fully the life of Jesus in the world. (There are other gifts, but these are the foundational ones). These five gifts not only help the church to be the church, but help all kinds of organisations to flourish.

Crucially, he writes that everyone has at least one gift. Therefore it's important that each disciple be helped to know what it, or they are.

The great news is that no one person is called to exercise all the gifts. Where these expectations are placed upon individuals the danger is burn out, and churches or organisations that cannot fully flourish.

Churches where some cannot use their gifts will be poorer spiritually, and their ministry will be weighted in the direction of the few who lead.

For example, typically churches can be very good at pastoring and teaching the flock, but be lacking in the missional and prophetic, and therefore find it hard to grow. Getting the balance of gifts in place can have a profound impact on the church as a missionary people.

A church community where each person is aware of, and offering their gifts, will result in:

*Good and balanced listening to where God is leading.
Growth in depth of discipleship and outreach.
Disciples who are able to embrace their particular callings.
The fullness of Christ being reflected in the church.*

You can take a short questionnaire to identify your particular fivefold gift(s): <https://www.fivefoldministry.com/>



APOSTLES extend the gospel. As the “sent ones,” they ensure that the faith is transmitted from one context to another and from one generation to the next. They are always thinking about the future, bridging barriers, establishing the church in new contexts, developing leaders, networking trans-locally. If you focus solely on initiating new ideas and rapid expansion, you can leave people and organizations wounded. The shepherding and teaching functions are needed to ensure people are cared for rather than simply used.



PROPHETS know God's will. They are particularly attuned to God and his truth for today. They bring correction and challenge the dominant assumptions we inherit from the culture. They insist that the community obey what God has commanded. They question the status quo. Without the other types of leaders in place, prophets can become belligerent activists or, paradoxically, disengage from the imperfection of reality and become other-worldly.



EVANGELISTS recruit. These infectious communicators of the gospel message recruit others to the cause. They call for a personal response to God's redemption in Christ, and also draw believers to engage the wider mission, growing the church. Evangelists can be so focused on reaching those outside the church that maturing and strengthening those inside is neglected.



SHEPHERDS nurture and protect. Caregivers of the community, they focus on the protection and spiritual maturity of God's flock, cultivating a loving and spiritually mature network of relationships, making and developing disciples. Shepherds can value stability to the detriment of the mission. They may also foster an unhealthy dependence between the church and themselves.



TEACHERS understand and explain. Communicators of God's truth and wisdom, they help others remain biblically grounded to better discern God's will, guiding others toward wisdom, helping the community remain faithful to Christ's word, and constructing a transferable doctrine. Without the input of the other functions, teachers can fall into dogmatism or dry intellectualism. They may fail to see the personal or missional aspects of the church's ministry.

