

Some have asked the question 'If this passage teaches that evangelists are to teach us how to evangelise, does this mean that prophets will teach us to prophecy, teachers how to teach, apostles how to be apostolic, and pastors how to be pastoral?'

This is a good question.

The answer?

Think of how various specialists contribute to the building of a house: electricians, plumbers, roofers, glaziers, bricklayers, and so on. Each plays a vital role to make a house what it ought to be.

Think now of every individual in the Church. Each of us is like a house God is building. The five gifted people in Ephesians 4:11-14 have a vital role to play in making us what we ought to be, or bringing us to full maturity in Christ.



EVANGELISM

Strategies International

For example, a prophet is God's spokesperson. They can help make us what we ought to be by giving specific instruction for our lives; they can unveil revelation, illumination and inspired application of God's word which is relevant to our situation; through them God can elicit repentance, reformation, and restoration.

What about those with the gift of the Apostle? Those with the gift of an Apostle have the ability, authority and anointing to raise up churches and establish them. They are pioneers. They can also teach, train, and develop leaders who will be effective in discipling others. By 'catching' what they do, and imitating their attitudes and behaviours, they nudge us towards full maturity in Christ.

Then there are those with the gift of teaching. Teachers not only help us interpret and understand Scripture, but they also teach us how to teach so we can teach others. Being able to teach is vital aspect of being a disciple maker.

What about pastors? They teach us how to love and care for people. The skills and attitudes they model and pass on to us include empathising, encouraging, listening, loving, nurturing, serving, sacrificing, and so on. The evangelist is given by God to motivate and equip those in the church how to evangelise.

Doubtless the ministries of these gifted people overlap (e.g. evangelists can prophecy, teach, pastor, pioneer new initiatives, and love and pastor people). Yet, in the plan and purpose of God, each of the 'five-fold' has something vital and unique to contribute to each of our Christian lives.

A Christian who doesn't evangelise (or who rejects what any of the other four gifted people has to contribute) will be as incomplete in Christ, as much as a house is incomplete without plumbing, electricity, windows, roof, walls and so on.