

## Going to Work

Looking at the scriptures (and the other lessons in the Ministry Basics Series), we can begin to see that the Kingdom of God concerns His work and the Church of God concerns His family. It might help if we build a table to look at this from a fresh perspective.

CHURCH	KINGDOM
the household of God	the government of God
the family	the work
born into the family	called to the work
valued as sons	training, qualifying
right of inheritance	rewards earned
family relationships	authority relationships
grow up, mature	become a producer
always family	can be disqualified

It is in the family that we develop our character, our dependability, and our work ethic. We learn to work by working with our father and brothers. (I grew up on a farm and learning to work was very clear!) As children, we learn to be faithful in what we have been given to do. As we mature, we are given more things to do until, eventually, we can do the work without supervision and we will do it the way that our father wants it done. These same principles apply to us spiritually.

We learn to grow up in the Church. We learn character, loyalty, faithfulness, discipline, and an appreciation for the Father's heart. It is in the Church that we learn how to operate in the gifts and calling of God. We learn care, concern and discernment. We practice on each other. If mistakes are made, we are family; we love each other anyway.

But, there comes a time when a young man begins to learn a trade, a profession to help him fulfill his life's purpose. With his trade, he will provide for himself and his family. The same is true in the spirit.

**Romans 12:4-8** For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: (5) So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. (6) Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; (7) Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; (8) Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

While we may all prophesy one by one (1 Corinthians 14:3), we are not all prophets. It is a maturing process. As one begins to prophesy according to his proportion of faith, that faith grows. Then the person begins to prophesy more consistently, more frequently, and more precisely. The nature of his prophecies begin to move from the personal words of comfort, edification, and exhortation to a more corporate type of prophesy which begins to deal with revelation and insight into God's purposes. If the person's heart is also being dealt with and changed by the Word, he is well on his way to becoming a prophet, a gift to the people of God.

This same process works for those called as teachers, or evangelists, or shepherds. The type of work that each does is different but the process of development is the same for each and it is according to each one's proportion of faith.

The exception to this process is the apostle. The meaning of the word is "one who is sent", a delegate, an ambassador, and a messenger. The apostle is called and sent forth from the other ministries, specifically, prophets and teachers.

First, we need to understand that there are three types of apostles mentioned in the scripture. The first type is the apostle of the Father, Jesus Christ, sent forth to do the work of the Father. There will never be another of this kind. The second type is the apostles of Jesus. He chose twelve and they have a prophetic place in the plans and purposes of the Father (as seen in Revelation). Because of this, there will never be another of this type of apostle. The prophetic allotment has been fulfilled. The third type is the apostles appointed by the Holy Spirit. This type of apostleship will continue until the Lord's return.

The scriptural example and pattern is found in the thirteenth chapter of Acts.

**Acts 13:1-4** Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. (2) As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. (3) And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. (4) So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

This work of the Holy Spirit was in the predominately Gentile church at Antioch not in Jerusalem. The gathering of the prophets and teachers was probably (not necessarily but probably) the elders of the church in Antioch. They were ministering to the Lord, fasting and seeking Him when the Holy Spirit spoke (probably through one of the prophets) and called Barnabas and Saul (Paul). After they were sent forth from Antioch, both of them were called apostles.

**Acts 14:4** But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

**Acts 14:14** Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

After Barnabas and Paul left on their journey, it is immediately recorded by the scriptures that they were called apostles. Since neither Barnabas or Paul were a part of the original Twelve, we have in them another category of apostle which was sent forth by the Holy Spirit.

Since this is the only example that we have in the scripture of an apostle being called and sent forth by the Holy Spirit, we have to conclude that this methodology is a pattern for the future appointing of apostles by the Holy Spirit. We need to study this example carefully.

**Principles shown by Acts 13:1-4:**

- 1 Those called forth as apostles already have a proven 5-fold ministry that utilizes the Word of God, specifically, prophets and teachers.
- 2 Those called forth have already been dealt with personally by the Holy Spirit before the public confirmation.
- 3 Not all prophets and teachers are called to be apostles. There were five in the meeting but the Holy Spirit only called two forth.
- 4 The church leadership, the elders, (the other prophets and teachers) recognized them and confirmed the word of the Holy Spirit.
- 5 After recognition by the leadership, the Holy Spirit immediately sent them to do the work that He had called them to do.
- 6 After being sent from Antioch, Barnabas and Paul are each then called an *apostle* not prophet (Barnabas) or teacher (Paul).

If we take these principles to heart, then the Holy Spirit can send forth apostles today from any church assembly just as He did at Antioch. However, it would appear that we need to recognize prophets and teachers as elders from which the Holy Spirit will select and call forth. Could this be the reason that we see so few who fulfill the functions of an apostle today? As God restores prophets and teachers to the church, we will begin to see the Holy Spirit call forth apostles.