

Study on the Holy Spirit

Study 19

Apostle

This week we will look at the gift of Apostle, based on:

- **Eph 4:11** *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*

Greek Word: apostolos

Usage Notes: is, lit., "one sent forth" (apo, "from," stello, "to send").

So we see the definition is "*one sent forth*".

Jesus was the one who gave the name, Apostle to the Disciple.

- **Luke 6:13** *And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:*

Before we go too far let's look at the qualifications of an Apostle.

First let's look at Peter's definition in the book of Acts.

- **Acts 1:21-22** *"Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."*

According to Peter, it had to be someone who was there with Jesus during His ministry on earth, and had to be a witness of all things including His ascension into heaven.

But Paul was not there with Jesus, and he still considered himself to be an Apostle.

But before Paul even saw Jesus, he was called by Him.

- **Acts 9:1-9** *Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one.*

Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

But Paul did eventually see Jesus.

- **1 Cor 9:1-2** *Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.* (underlined for emphasis)
- **1 Cor 15:8-11** *Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.* (underlined for emphasis)

We should all be like Paul. Notice verse 9 & 10 Paul says, *who am not worthy to be called an apostle; But by the grace of God I am what I am.*

So many times we forget what the Lord has called us out of, and the gift we have we think that we deserve, like we did something so great deserving of the gift of God. But like Paul, I am so thankful for the gifts the Lord has given me; the gift of Teaching & Prophecy, and a strong desire to know Him more, feeling so unworthy of His calling and wanting to do more because he has done so much for me!

So what was Paul called or sent forth to do or say?

- **Romans 1:1-5 (NLT)** *This letter is from Paul, Jesus Christ's slave, chosen by God to be an apostle and sent out to preach his Good News. This Good News was promised long ago by God through his prophets in the holy Scriptures. It is the Good News about his Son, Jesus, who came as a man, born into King David's royal family line. And Jesus Christ our Lord was shown to be the Son of God when God powerfully raised him from the dead by means of the Holy Spirit. Through Christ, God has given us the privilege and authority to tell Gentiles everywhere what God has done for them, so that they will believe and obey him, bringing glory to his name.*

So Paul was sent forth to preach the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

So how does this all apply to us today, since we have neither walked with Jesus nor have seen Him?

I prayed about this a lot; it has seemed to be one of the more challenging studies for me. But by the grace of the Lord, He has shown me His word, and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I will do my best to bring this study to you.

This is from Barclays Commentary.

In a sense the apostles were bound to die out, because before so very long those who had actually seen Jesus and who had actually witnessed the Resurrection, would pass from this world. But, in another and still greater sense, the qualification remains. He who would teach Christ must know Christ; and he who would bring the power of Christ to others must have experienced Christ's risen power.

I've heard this same teaching from other Pastors; they say that it's the "Spirit of Apostleship", not the office of an Apostle. I believe that they are correct. Why? I believe all the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for today, and all includes Apostle. So how do we use this gift?

- **Heb 3:1-2** *Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house.*
- **John 20:21-22** *So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. "*

The heavenly calling is the same calling that Paul had, to tell the good news about salvation through Jesus Christ.

And here is the great commission from Jesus.

- **Mark 16:15-16** *And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*

We all in a sense have the gift of an Apostle, as we just read Jesus' words, not only to the Disciples, but to us also.

We are to **"go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"** But how can we go everywhere in the world? We don't have the money to travel. We don't have the understanding of different languages. We have families to take care of, jobs to do...

We have so many excuses!

- ◇ Funny how a \$20 bill looks so big when you take it to church, but so small when you take it to the market.
- ◇ Funny how long it takes to serve God for an hour, but how quickly a team plays 60 minutes of basketball.
- ◇ Funny how long a couple of hours spent at church are, but how short they are when watching a movie.
- ◇ Funny how we can't think of anything to say when we pray, but don't have difficulty thinking of things to talk about to a friend.
- ◇ Funny how we get thrilled when a baseball game goes into extra innings, but we complain when a sermon is longer than the regular time.

- ◇ Funny how hard it is to read a chapter in the bible, but how easy it is to read 100 pages of a best-selling novel.
- ◇ Funny how people want to get a front seat at any game or concert, but scramble to get a back seat at church services.
- ◇ Funny how we need 2 or 3 weeks' advance notice to fit a church event into our schedule, but can adjust our schedule for other events at the last moment.
- ◇ Funny how hard it is for people to learn a simple gospel well enough to tell others, but how simple it is for the same people to understand and repeat gossip.
- ◇ Funny how we believe what the newspaper say, but question what the Bible says.
- ◇ Funny how everyone wants to go to heaven provided they do not have to believe, or to think, or to say, or do anything.
- ◇ Funny how you can send a thousand 'jokes' through e-mail and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing.

Funny how we all have so many excuses. I'm guilty also.

We must ask the Lord to forgive us and to give us the opportunity to do the work He has called us to do. And when He does, No more excuses!

- **Romans 10:14-15** *How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:
"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!"*

People call on the name of Jesus, but only when they need help. After the storm is over, they forget about Him until the next that time they need Him.

Verse 14 says, " *How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?*

They believe in Jesus about as much as they believe in Santa Claus.

Why? Because they haven't heard the truth.

Why? Because we haven't told them!

Matt 20:1-16 (NLT) *"For the Kingdom of Heaven is like the landowner who went out early one morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay the normal daily wage and sent them out to work. "At nine o'clock in the morning he was passing through the marketplace and saw some people standing around doing nothing. So he hired them, telling them he would pay them whatever was right at the end of the day. So they went to work in the vineyard. At noon and again at three o'clock he did the same thing. "At five o'clock that afternoon he was in town again and saw some more people standing around. He asked them, 'Why haven't you been working today?' "They replied, 'Because no one hired us.' "The landowner told them, 'Then go out and join the others in my vineyard.' "That evening he told the foreman to call the workers in and pay them, beginning with the last workers first. When those hired at five o'clock were paid, each received a full day's wage. When those hired first came*

to get their pay, they assumed they would receive more. But they, too, were paid a day's wage. When they received their pay, they protested to the owner, 'Those people worked only one hour, and yet you've paid them just as much as you paid us who worked all day in the scorching heat.' "He answered one of them, 'Friend, I haven't been unfair! Didn't you agree to work all day for the usual wage? Take your money and go. I wanted to pay this last worker the same as you. Is it against the law for me to do what I want with my money? Should you be jealous because I am kind to others?' "So those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last."

How long have you been standing, waiting for the Lord to call you?
Is He calling you right now?
Will you listen?