

HOLY SPIRIT: GIFTS (II)

“When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men...And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:8, 11). These are the gifts of the Son. With the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, Jesus gifted certain “men” to lead the in the church “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (12). Two offices are mentioned here: The office of apostle and the office of prophet. These offices were temporary. Apostles and Prophets were called by Jesus Himself to be the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20). They were replaced with evangelists and teachers. Evangelists and pastor-teachers are to build on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The qualification of an apostle was to be with them from the baptism of John and a witness of the resurrection (Acts 1:21-22). Matthias met the qualifications and was chosen to replace Judas. Paul was unique. He was later chosen by Jesus to be an apostle (II Corinthians 12:12). Paul was also a New Testament prophet. There were apostles of the church who were not chosen by Jesus, but these were not part of the office of an apostle that Jesus chose. The word apostle simply means “sent one,” like our missionaries today. The office of prophet was not only to declare divine revelation but to give it. The apostle received his information by direct revelation from God. Through direct revelation the prophet received knowledge of divine “mysteries” (I Corinthians 13:2). This prophecy involved foretelling future events. The office of prophecy had to do with the foundation of the church. Since the foundation of the church has been laid and the canon of Scripture is complete there is no need for the office of prophecy. Evangelists proclaimed the good news of salvation so people could respond and be saved. Evangelists have the ability to present the gospel in a clear and simple way and see people come to Christ. That is his burden and his passion. Evangelists are not called to shepherd people but to preach salvation to them. Pastor-teacher is one gift. The word pastor (Gr. poimenas) means “shepherd,” and is only used here as a gift. The word is used of Christ. It refers to the work of spiritual shepherding done by a pastor-teacher. A pastor (shepherd) leads, feeds, guides, and guards the flock of God (Acts 20:28). Pastors do much of this through teaching the Word of God. Some people have a gift of teaching but don’t have a gift of shepherding. If a person has this gift, he is both a pastor and a teacher. Elder (Titus 1:5) and Bishop (I Timothy 3:2). Refer to different functions of the same office. Pastor emphasizes the function of a shepherd and a teacher.