

The background of the entire image is a detailed architectural drawing, likely a floor plan or blueprint, featuring various lines, dimensions, and labels such as 'HEAD', 'TAIL', 'FLOOR', and 'SECTION'. Overlaid on this background are several drafting tools: a large circular protractor in the bottom left corner, a long ruler in the bottom right, and several pairs of compasses and dividers scattered across the center and right side. The title text is prominently displayed in the upper half of the image.

John Eckhardt

THE
Ministry
Anointing
OF THE
APOSTLE

*And God hath set some in the church, first APOSTLES, secondarily prophets
— 1 Corinthians 12:28*

The Ministry Anointing of the Apostle

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John Eckhardt

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Unless otherwise indicated, all scriptural quotations are from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

The Ministry Anointing of the Apostle

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Dedication

To the memory of Pastor Timothy Longley who helped birth my ministry and was always a dear and encouraging father to me.

John Eckhardt

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Chapter 1

The Restoration of the Apostle

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:28

So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Matthew 20:16

Apostles have been set in the church by God, FIRST. The word *first* is the Greek word *proton* meaning firstly in time, place, order or importance; before, at the beginning, chiefly, first of all. This is God's order: first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers. I call this *the law of first things*. When God says first, He means FIRST. When the church violates this order, we are violating the law of first things.

When you break a law, you will suffer. Many local churches suffer because they have not recognized God's order. A church out of order will not experience the fullness of the anointing. The anointing flows through *order*. The beginning of the Church started with Apostles. The beginning of the reformation started with Apostles. The beginning of many denominations started with Apostles. When something begins in the right order, it has a better chance of success.

It is amazing how many churches don't recognize this order, although it is plainly stated in the Word of God. It is

so simple. First means *first*, second means *second*, third means *third*. It is as easy as one, two, three. Another definition of first is foremost. The word *foremost* means first in a series or progression; of first rank or position. When the office of the Apostle is not recognized as foremost, the Church will end up in serious trouble.

The 20th Century has been a century of divine destiny for the Body of Christ. It has seen a great restoration of the offices and anointing that God has set in the Church. The order of this restoration has been the first restored last, and the last restored first.

The first thing restored to the Church in the beginning of the twentieth century was diversities of tongues. This occurred with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Azusa in Los Angeles, California. Helps and governments followed with the establishing and structuring of many Pentecostal fellowships to continue the move of the Holy Spirit.

The 1940s and 1950s saw a restoration of healing and miracles with the *evangelist*. The restoration of the *teacher* came in the 1970s. This was followed by a strong move of the *prophetic* office in the 1980s.

Now, we are seeing restoration of the office of Apostle as we come into the 21st Century. The first office set in the Church by God is the last to be restored in its fullness.

The apostle Peter preached about the times of restitution, spoken of by the prophets since the world began (Acts 3:21). There are seasons in the Spirit in which the Lord magnifies certain offices and their anointings and restores them to the Church. Although all of these anointings have been in operation since the day of Pentecost to some degree, I am referring to the Office being restored in its fullness.

There have always been men who have ministered under the mantle of the Apostle throughout the history of the Church, but the Lord is restoring this office to the Church in such a way that you will see many raised up in the last days to minister as Apostles. The Lord puts honor upon the part of the Body that lacks (1 Corinthians 12:24). The Lord is honoring the office of the Apostle by putting His glory upon it in this hour.

As we honor what God honors, we will receive the blessing and fullness of what the Lord has reserved for this last day Church.

With the restoration of the office of the Apostle, there is coming a restoration of apostolic *doctrine*, apostolic *binding and loosing*, apostolic *revelation*, apostolic *governments*, and apostolic *boldness*. According to the prophet Haggai, the glory of the latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former house.

The word *apostle* is from the Greek word *apostolos* meaning a delegate, an ambassador of the gospel, officially a commissioner of Christ with miraculous powers. Apostle means *one that is sent*.

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also

betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

Matthew 10:1-5

Notice in verse one the twelve are called *disciples*, and in verse two they are called *apostles*. Jesus was entrusting to them His power and authority in sending them forth. An apostle is someone who has been given power against unclean spirits and is sent forth with specific instructions to a certain group of people. Apostles *are forerunners*. Jesus sent them into cities and areas where He, Himself, would come (Luke 10:1).

They were official representatives of Him, given authority by Him to preach the gospel, heal the sick, and cast out devils. Apostles are ambassadors. An *ambassador* is an official delegate or representative of a foreign country. They speak for and represent the nation from which they come. They have been given official authority to act in this capacity.

This will give you some idea of the tremendous authority given to the twelve disciples who were sent forth as apostles. Jesus was entrusting to them His power and authority in sending them forth. They were representatives of Christ. The twelve had an awesome responsibility to represent Him correctly as His ambassadors.

The dictionary definition of an ambassador is "an official envoy, a diplomatic agent of the highest rank accredited to a foreign government." A *delegate* is a person acting for another. A person with delegated authority. The twelve were sent forth as official delegates of Christ with delegated power and authority. The twelve, as a group,

really formed an *apostolic delegation*. This delegation had specific instructions in what to do and what not to do. They had to follow these instructions because they were not representing themselves, but Christ. A delegate does not speak or represent himself but another.

A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health.

Proverbs 13:17

As an ambassador, the Apostle has to speak and represent the One who sent him—faithfully. He will bring healing and deliverance with his message. He does not speak his own message, but speaks the message of the One who sent him. A faithful ambassador brings health. There is healing and deliverance in his message.

The apostle Paul embodies this truth when he stated that his message did not come from man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:11-12). He had to be faithful to the message of grace because he received it directly from Jesus. This does not mean that apostles cannot be affected by the doctrines of men. They can be affected by tradition like any other ministry gift.

However, apostles need to be faithful with the message committed to them by the Lord, not man. They are sent by the Lord, not by man. This may cause them to fall out of favor with men, but they must walk in the revelation that they are *ambassadors of Christ*. The Lord is sending forth apostles that will be faithful to the *truth* and not to the false teachings of men.

(For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

Galatians 2:8

Another key to understanding apostleship is to know

to whom the Apostle is sent. Peter was sent to the Jews (circumcision), but Paul was sent to the Gentiles (uncircumcision). Jesus told the twelve to go only to the lost sheep of Israel. They were forbidden at that time to go to the Samaritans (Matthew 10:5).

Some apostles are sent to certain nations, some to certain regions, some to certain cities, and some to local churches. There are different administrations of the apostolic office. This does not mean that apostles cannot be used in certain geographical areas, but they will be most effective in ministering to the people to whom they are *specifically* sent.

For instance, Peter was used to open the door to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10), but his most effective ministry was among the Jews. I believe that God sends apostles to every generation and to every nation and group of people on the earth.

When the Apostle discerns the people he is sent to and ministers in the grace given to those people, his ministry will be most effective. Every ministry gift is sent by God.

Prophets and evangelists are also sent. But the name *apostle*, by its very definition, means *sent*.

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Matthew 10:14-15

The people to whom the Apostle is sent need to also discern his message and his mission. Jesus gave a stern warning to those who rejected apostolic ministry. To reject the apostle is to reject Jesus, Himself, because the Apostle

is an *official representative* of Christ. Jesus warned of judgment to those cities that would not receive apostles. The Body of Christ must discern the ministry of the Apostle and receive from this anointing.

Apostles can bring healing and deliverance to entire nations, regions, cities and local churches if they are received and honored. To reject them means to reject the truth, revelation, healing and deliverance they bring.

Apostles can prophesy and minister prophetically. Apostles can evangelize. Apostles can pastor. Apostles can teach. There are different administrations of this office. Some apostles are more prophetic, some are more evangelistic, some are more pastoral. Although there are different administrations of this office, it does not mean the apostle can do it all.

Remember, the Lord has given five ministry gifts – and no *one* can perfect the saints. If the apostles could do it all, the Lord would have just sent apostles, but He sent prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers as well. Each gift has its function, and each is necessary to perfect the saints.

Some have taught that the apostle is like some "SUPER" gift – better than all the rest, and able to "DO IT ALL"! Although the office of the Apostle is a strong gift, it has limitations. The apostle needs the other gifts, and the other gifts need the apostle.

Apostolic Revelation

**How that by revelation he made known unto me the
mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,**

**Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my
knowledge in the mystery of Christ)**

Which in other ages was not made known unto the

sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

Ephesians 3:3-6

There were mysteries that were hidden in God, that were revealed to apostles and prophets by the Spirit. Apostolic and prophetic ministry is vital to the Church if we are to be restored in the revelation that the early Church walked in. Martin Luther brought forth a revelation of *justification by faith* to the church of his day. We now walk in that revelation that was lost to most of the Church for hundreds of years during the dark ages. Even though there was always a remnant who walked in that revelation, it took the apostolic anointing to restore this truth to the majority of the Church.

Alexander Dowie was used by the Lord to bring attention to the Church on the subject of *divine healing*. His revelation on this subject was apostolic. The anointing upon his life gave him the ability to impart this revelation to the Church, in spite of intense persecution. The apostle has the ability to bring revelation to the Church in areas where there has been spiritual blindness and ignorance. Revelation is not readily received by many. It is often fought by people in the Church who have no desire to change.

Different apostles have different administrations. The apostle Paul received and ministered in the revelation of the Church consisting of both Jew and Gentile. The apostle Peter received a revelation of Jesus Christ being the Son of God. The apostle John ministered the revelation of the love of God.

Without the revelation that comes through the Apostle, the saints will not be perfected. There are certain truths that the Church will not walk in without the

Apostle.

The Church is built upon revelation (Matthew 16:18). Revelation is foundational, and so is apostolic and prophetic ministry. Apostles bring forth revelation which becomes the foundation upon which the Church is built. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the church that is built upon apostolic foundations. It should not be surprising that devils hate the anointing of the Apostle.

They desire to prevail against a spiritually weak church. Apostles bring strength into the Church through revelation that gives the saints the ability to overcome and defeat the powers of hell.

Chapter 2

Apostolic Reformers

Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

Jeremiah 18:2-6

In addition to being forerunners, apostles also minister with a reforming anointing. They are often *reformers*. To *form* means to give a particular shape to; to shape or mold into a certain state or after a particular model. The Lord desires to form and shape His church after His own design. When the Church is not in its proper form, He has to reform it even as a potter has to mold the clay. To *reform* means to amend or improve by change of form, or removal of faults or abuses.

The clay that was upon the wheels was "marred". Often the Church has been marred by the hands of men who have tried to shape it according to their design, instead of the design of the Lord. When men try to form the Church according to religious tradition instead of the Word of God, the result is a marred vessel. When the

Church is not formed according to divine pattern, it must be *reformed*.

A *part* of the anointing of the Apostle is to bring reform. Apostles have the ability to bring the Church back into its proper form. The Church was formed in the book of Acts through the *apostolic anointing*. It has had to be reformed throughout its history by apostolic anointing. It is still being reformed today through apostolic anointing.

Recently, the Lord began to deal with me as well as other ministers about Reformation. We did not know at the time that the message was apostolic. I personally have done some studying on the Reformation of the 16th Century, but I had not equated it with the ministry of the Apostle. The Lord began to show us the return of the spirit of reformation to the Church. The Lord has been reforming the Church since the 16th Century. However, the *spirit of reformation* is coming stronger into the Church with the restoration of the Apostle.

There is coming a return of *apostolic reformers* to the Church. The anointing upon them will bring forth reformation to the Church. Religious leaders often fight reform because the present form of the Church suits *their* purposes.

**If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him:
and the Romans shall come and take away both our
place and nation.**

John 11:48

Many in leadership are often concerned with their position only and fear losing it. Reform always disturbs those who are satisfied with the status quo. Jesus is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. Jesus was also a Reformer. The religious form or shape of the religious community of His day was shaped by the tradition of

men. He challenged the religious tradition of His day and began to *reform* the system.

Consequently, the entire community of Israel was about to take on a completely new face, changing from the law to Grace. There was a complete Reformation about to take place in the economy of God. The apostles were used in the book of Acts to begin to shape a new community called "the Church". The apostle Paul was used to bring forth the revelation of the Church consisting of both Jew and Gentile. This was a radical and complete reformation from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

The Spirit of the Reformer

**And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things,
but will walk contrary unto me;**

**Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will
punish you yet seven times for your sins.**

Leviticus 26:23,24

Reformation is not new. The Protestant Reformation of the 16th Century was not the first reformation for the people of God. The Lord spoke of reformation in the book of Leviticus. The beginning of the New Covenant through the apostles was also a time of reformation. During the 16th Century, the Church needed another reformation. The Lord is always concerned about the shape and form His church is in.

One of the functions of the apostle is to bring the Church into proper form. Apostles are concerned with biblical order. If the church is not in the correct form, the apostle will come forth in *the spirit of the reformer*. God will send apostles to bring reformation to the Church.

**Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers
washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them**

until the time of reformation.

Hebrews 9:10

There are times of reformation that are *predestined* by the Lord. There is also a release of the apostolic anointing to bring about the changes *ordained* by the Lord.

Religious systems that have been in place years before a reformation are the greatest enemies to a new move of God. Religious systems that need reform serve the interests of the leadership of that system, and they are usually a reformation's greatest opponents. The religious leaders during the days of Jesus and the early apostles were the Sadducees and Pharisees. They had the most to lose during a reformation: their position, power, and control over the people. The early apostles were persecuted by them in order to prevent the completion of a reformation.

Apostolic Boldness

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:31

In the midst of persecution comes *apostolic boldness*. Apostolic reformers are noted for their boldness in preaching the truth in spite of persecution, and even death. Intimidation is a tool of the devil to stop reformation. The enemy does not want the Church to come into the form intended by the Lord. When the Church comes into proper form, it will fulfill the plan of God in the earth. The enemy will use every method available to stop reformation, but one of his major weapons is *intimidation*.

And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

Acts 4:29

Religious systems and leaders who desire to maintain the status quo for their benefit will use *threatenings* against apostolic reformers. Apostolic reformers have the anointing and boldness to reform. They are often hated and called troublemakers because of their message, but they bring to the Church what it needs the most—**REFORMATION!**

Martin Luther, The Lion-Hearted Reformer

Martin Luther was called the lion-hearted reformer because of his boldness and stand against the errors of the institutional church of his day. His ministry was apostolic, and he is an example of an apostolic reformer.

In 1517, Pope Leo X needed money to finish building St. Peters Church in Rome. He granted permission to a man named John Tetzel, a dominican monk, to sell indulgences to finance the building of the cathedral. An *indulgence* was a promise to the buyer of forgiveness of all sins, granted by the Pope. It was an official pardon from the church, granted for a certain amount of money, which was in turn used to finance the building of the church.

The church was literally *selling* forgiveness of sin. This was, of course, nonscriptural but the majority of the people believed what they were taught by the church. The Scriptures were interpreted by the clergy, who in turn were bound by an oath to follow the teachings of the church and the Pope (who was considered infallible).

The 95 Theses

When Martin, who at the time was an Augustinian monk committed to the church, heard of Tetzel selling pardons, He posted 95 theses (or statements) to a church door in Wittenburg, Germany, opposing the buying and selling of pardons.

Luther was not trying to leave the church by posting his 95 theses, but only acting as a scholar desiring to debate the subject. In his day, if a scholar wanted to debate on a subject, it was proper to write the arguments out and post them in a public place. In this case, Luther nailed his 95 arguments on a church door in Wittenburg, Germany on October 31, 1517.

He had no idea his 95 theses would cause such an uproar in the church. His statements were translated from Latin to German and circulated among the common people. Soon Tetzel began having trouble selling indulgences and began to attack Luther, accusing him of being a traitor to the church. Luther was summoned to Rome to answer these charges. He feared for his life knowing that many who had attacked or questioned the teachings of the church had been burned at the stake.

Luther went to Augsburg, Germany instead to be interviewed by a cardinal named Cajetan who requested Luther apologize for his 95 theses. However, Luther refused and ended up fleeing Augsburg for fear of his life.

On June 15, 1520, Leo X gave Luther 60 days to take back everything he had written or be excommunicated from the church. By the time Luther received word of Leo's document, four months had passed and his writings were being burned in Rome and many cities in Germany by order of the Pope. In some cities, however, the people refused to burn his writings and defended him instead.

The church was losing its grip on the minds of many of

the people who had been exposed to Luther's writings. On December 10, 1520, Luther responded by burning the most sacred writings of the church including the Pope's order in Wittenburg. Martin Luther was excommunicated from the church on January 3, 1521.

Martin Luther's simple act of nailing his 95 theses on a church door began what is known as the *Protestant Reformation*. The spirit of reformation was upon him as he began to attack the teaching of the church that was not based on Scripture. He began translating the Scriptures from Latin to German for the common people to read and understand. People in many cities began to destroy statues, and priests began to marry.

Those who followed the reforms were called *Lutherans*. The church was now concerned with stopping the spread of Lutheranism. The Pope called upon the German princes to seize Luther, but there were many who supported him, and some feared the social unrest that would occur if they obeyed the edict of the Pope.

Luther began teaching and training pastors and preachers, many of whom knew nothing of the Word of God. Apostles also train ministry gifts to sustain and carry on what reformation has begun.

Whenever there is reform, there must also be a retraining of ministers to maintain the new form of the church brought about by the reform. Luther began publishing books of his sermons for preachers to read and study. Luther was not the only apostolic reformer of his day, but he is often referred to as "the father of the reformation".

The apostolic anointing that was upon Martin Luther was strong enough to shake the entire religious system of his day. The form of the church during his day was not

correct because it was not based on the Word of God. Luther caused the people to return to the Word of God, and away from the traditions of men. Apostles have the ability to steer the Church in the right direction. This is the reason why we need apostles today.

The Church has always needed apostles because it has a tendency to be influenced by the traditions of men, and leave the course ordained by God. Reformation is unpleasant and controversial, but necessary. The Lord will continue to reform the Church until it is the glorious Church prophesied in the Word of God. He will continue to raise up and use apostles to accomplish His purpose for the Church.

Repairers of the Breach

One of the definitions of a *breach* is a gap (as in a wall) or a gap in continuity. There were breaches in the Church between the deaths of the early apostles and the beginning of the Reformation. There was no continuity in apostolic preaching of salvation, healing, miracles, and other truths preached by the apostles. Apostles throughout the history of the Church, as well as those today, are *repairers of the breach*.

They restore to the Church those truths that were lost during the times of the breach. They plug up the holes and fill up the gaps. There are still many gaps in the teaching of many local assemblies. There are many truths that are missing, many spiritual gaps that need to be filled in by apostolic preaching and teaching.

And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

Isaiah 58:12

In 1896, from his headquarters in Chicago, John Alexander Dowie preached a sermon entitled, "The Ministry of an Apostle—Is It For Today?". Dowie skillfully debated the fact that those who maintained that there were twelve apostles could not be correct if you count the apostles Matthias, Paul, James (the brother of Jesus), Barnabus, Apollos, and others who are called apostles in the book of Acts and throughout the New Testament.

You see, most of the church of Dowie's day did not believe that the ministry of the apostle continued beyond the deaths of the twelve who were with Jesus and, of course, the apostle Paul. Dowie maintained that the ministry of the apostle was a perpetual one, set in the Church by God, until the return of Christ. Amazingly, the church today is very similar to the church in Dowie's day. There are still many who believe that the office of the Apostle was done away with after the death of the early apostles.

Dowie maintained that God's order is *first apostles, second prophets, third teachers*. This was indeed a radical message against the religious tradition of his day. Even though many did not like his message, it was nonetheless scriptural and true. Dowie preached a message of the Restoration of the Apostle to the Church that was ahead of its time.

In addition to his preaching, if you study the life of John Alexander Dowie, you will have to admit that his ministry was apostolic. He also was a "reformer" in that he preached a strong message against the apostasy of the Church during his time. He brought to the Church a message of healing and deliverance that had been lost for hundreds of years.

Dowie was bitterly opposed by much of the clergy

who called him a fraud for practicing divine healing. He was also opposed by the press and the City of Chicago who arrested him, more than a hundred times in 1895, attempting to stop his ministry of divine healing. However, the more he was fought, the more successful his ministry became. Hundreds were healed, and thousands came to hear his preaching. He was able to fill up the second largest auditorium in Chicago.

He preached against the hypocrisy of the Church and the evils of tobacco and alcohol in the city. The results were phenomenal! Thousands were saved and many of his enemies were eventually exposed for their sins, and many died in shame. Dowie literally shook the City of Chicago and caused trouble in civil and religious circles. He eventually left Chicago and set up his headquarters, 40 miles north of the city, naming it Zion.

Dowie's sermons were directed against the denominationalism and sectarianism of the church of his day. As mentioned earlier, apostles are concerned with the form of the Church. When the form is not according to the Word of God, the apostle will discern it and preach and teach the Word to bring it back into God's proper form.

A strong reforming spirit was in Dowie's preaching, especially in the area of healing. The Church's lack of practice and faith in this area troubled him. He thought it was hypocritical for the Church not to have compassion on the sick to pray and believe God for their healing. Remember, during Dowie's day, healing was not widely preached and taught like it is today.

Babylon Hates Apostles

**Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles
and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.**

Revelation 18:20

Babylon represents *false religious systems* of men. The judgment of God upon Babylon in the Apocalypse calls for the apostles and prophets to rejoice because God has avenged them for Babylon's mistreatment. Apostles and prophets cannot tolerate the false religious systems of men. This is why they are so hated and persecuted by these systems. Apostles, like Martin Luther, are a constant thorn in the flesh to the religious systems of their day. The message of the apostle disturbs and bothers the religious systems of men. Apostles are a threat to Babylon. They are feared, hated and persecuted by this Antichrist system.

Chapter 3

Spirit of Judgment

And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

Isaiah 1:26-27

When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.

And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

Isaiah 4:4-6

Isaiah prophesied the restoration of judges to Zion. The result of judges returning would be righteousness and faithfulness, because Zion would be redeemed with judgment. The *spirit of judgment* is coming back into the Church in a strong measure. Apostles often minister with the spirit of judgment through their preaching and teaching.

True apostles will minister and operate as spiritual judges in the house of the Lord. This is one reason why

apostles and prophets are often hated by religious leaders and systems, because they judge the traditions and false teachings of men.

To *judge* means to pass sentences and issue verdicts. Remember that apostles deal with form and structure. When the form is not correct, they will come as reformers. Judgment is a part of Reformation. That which proceeds from man, and not from God, must be judged. It will be judged through the preaching and teaching of apostolic reformers. Martin Luther judged the teachings of the church of his day and found that most of the teachings were not based on Scripture.

The teachings of men always benefit those in leadership positions. To no surprise, religious leaders often fight apostolic ministry the most. Religious leaders usually desire to keep the system in tact, because it benefits *them*. They often resist change and fight Reformation. But the spirit of judgment will always purge from the Church what is not of God. The spirit of judgment comes upon apostles causing them to judge the teachings of the Church in their preaching and teaching. The apostle Paul referred to false teachers as "dogs and evil workers".

Many have concluded, "We are not to judge."

However, the Lord was referring to *judging after the appearance*. We are not to judge after the appearance, but we are to judge *righteous judgment*. The apostle will know when things are out of order and will judge it. Apostles will often be accused of being hard and judgmental in their preaching and teaching, but there is no room for compromise. The Church will never come into proper form until that which deforms is judged and purged out.

Issuing Sentences and Passing Verdicts

For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Corinthians 5:3-5

Here, the apostle Paul is issuing a sentence and passing a verdict concerning a fornicator in the Church. This is the spirit of judgment operating through the apostolic office in the Church. It is also a manifestation of the power of *binding and loosing*. The apostle Paul was binding this individual from operating in the church. A judge issues sentences and passes verdicts. Behavior in the house of God must be judged. Since oftentimes it is not, there is much confusion and disorder in many local assemblies.

Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; but they did not so.

And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the Lord because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that

they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

Judges 2:16-19

There are four points I want to bring out concerning *judges*:

- 1) Judges were raised up in times of spiritual darkness and bondage to bring deliverance to God's people.
- 2) God's people always ended up in trouble when they did not listen to their judges.
- 3) The Lord was with the judge and delivered His people all the days of the judge.
- 4) When the judge died, God's people returned to their own doings and back into bondage to the enemy.

In addition, these following four points also relate to apostles who, along with prophets, are *spiritual judges* in the house of the Lord.

- 1) Apostles are often raised up during times of spiritual darkness to bring deliverance to God's people. This deliverance is often from the bondage and control of men and religious systems.
- 2) When God's people reject apostles and do not hearken to their message, they will end up in spiritual trouble.
- 3) The Lord is with His apostles (sent ones) and will deliver His people through the apostles' ministry all the days of the apostle.
- 4) When apostolic ministry ceases, God's people often return to their own ways and back into bondage. History records the spiritual decline of the Church into the dark ages after the death of the early

apostles. Although there have been apostles throughout the history of the Church, it was not until the Reformation of the 16th Century that a major break through came to the Church.

And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

Acts 5:5,11

The spirit of judgment also brings *the fear of the Lord* into the Church. Apostolic ministry will bring the fear of the Lord into the house of God. There is so much irreverence and disrespect for authority in many local assemblies. This is the result of the absence of judges in the House.

Isaiah prophesied the return of judges into Zion. The restoration of apostles is a fulfillment of that prophecy. The death of Ananias and Sapphira was the result of the apostle Peter's judgment, through the Holy Ghost, of their dishonest act.

Remember, to *judge* means to pass sentences and issue verdicts. Peter passed judgment upon their act, which resulted in their deaths. This judgment brought *the fear of the Lord* into the early Church. There is coming a return of the fear of the Lord into the Church through the ministry of the Apostle.

Judging Witchcraft

But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy

heart is not right in the sight of God.

Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Acts 8:20-22

But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

Acts 13:8-11

Both Simon and Elymas the sorcerer were judged through apostolic ministry. Witchcraft is a spirit that attempts to hinder and stop the gospel. The apostle Paul dealt harshly with this spirit among the Galatian churches. Apostles judge *witchcraft* which is domination and control by men. They can discern the operation of witchcraft against God's people and are vicious in destroying it.

Witchcraft can operate as a subtle spirit working in the Church to hinder and block God's people from living in the spirit. Religious witchcraft seeks to control people through religion and false teaching. Apostolic reformers come and destroy the operation of this spirit through anointed preaching and teaching of the Word.

The apostle Paul called blindness down upon Elymas the sorcerer. I like the way Paul dealt with witchcraft. He didn't play around with it. He judged it through the power of God. I believe this type of anointing will return to the Church with the full restoration of Apostles. Some are already here but have not begun to walk in the fullness of this anointing. We are only on the fringes of it. There is coming a full return of *apostolic* Christianity in this age.

We will see the same manifestations return to the Church that we read about in the book of Acts. People falling dead, sorcerers smitten with blindness, leaders being eaten up by worms. This is not a pleasant picture, but the Lord will allow no man or woman to hinder the preaching of the gospel in these last days.

Apostles are returning to the Church in boldness. They will pass sentences and issue verdicts against ungodliness inside and outside the Church. The Church and the world will once again see the awesome power of God released through this anointing.

Chapter 4

Spiritual Pioneers

Another characteristic of apostles is that they are *spiritual pioneers*. Martin Luther was a pioneer. The apostle Paul was a pioneer. The apostle Paul was a pathfinder. Apostles are usually trailblazers. They cut a path for others to follow. Apostles are often the first to go into a new territory. They are often the first to bring forth a new truth. Anyone who is *first* is sure to be misunderstood for the simple reason that they are the first.

As a result, apostles are often resisted and persecuted. Pioneers are usually considered odd and sometimes crazy. Apostles are often attacked because the truth they preach and present seems to be so new to the Church.

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:28

For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

1 Corinthians 4:9

Although they are set first in the Church, they are usually treated as *last*. The Greek word for first is *proton* meaning first in time, place, order or importance. It also means before, at the beginning, chiefly, first of all, and foremost. A *pathfinder* is one that discovers a way; especially one that explores untraversed regions to mark

out a new route. Pioneers are the first to enter a new region. This can be a new region geographically or a new region of knowledge.

Pioneers leave a heritage for others to follow. They leave a spiritual legacy for those who will come after them. They are *spiritual predecessors*. This ministry precedes and opens the way for others.

The early apostles left a spiritual legacy for the Church to follow. We have all inherited the spiritual legacy of the early apostles.

It takes an apostolic anointing to be able to break through into new areas and regions and clear the path for others to follow. Apostles must be able to break through the spiritual opposition that attempts to block them from clearing new paths in the spirit. To *pioneer* means to open or prepare for others to follow. It means to originate or take part in the development of.

Spiritual Architects / Wise Masterbuilders

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1 Corinthians 3:10

The word *masterbuilder* means an architect. An architect is one who designs buildings and advises in their construction. Apostles are concerned with design, structure and form. When there is reform, there must be redesign and restructuring of the Church. Structures are constructed after designs are drawn. This applies to the natural as well as the spiritual.

The first part of a structure that is laid is the *foundation*. Therefore, apostles deal with foundations because it is the

first part of structure. The Church is a spiritual structure. The Church is referred to as God's building. *Edify* means to build. From this we get our word *edifice*.

If the Church is not being constructed according to the pattern of the Lord, the apostles will discern and know it. They will know when things are out of order. Just as an architect knows when the builders have diverted from an original design, the apostles know when the Church has diverted from God's original plan. Apostles are concerned about how the spiritual building of the Lord is erected after the foundation has been laid.

The foundation for the reformation under Martin Luther was the doctrine of *justification by faith*. Luther received and began to preach that believers were justified by faith and not works. The Church had to be built upon this foundational doctrine. However, in addition to preaching and teaching this doctrine of salvation by faith, preachers had to be trained and taught, and churches had to be organized and governed. It is not enough to lay a foundation. A building must be constructed upon the foundation laid.

Many of those around Luther did not have the wisdom to build upon the foundation of faith. Luther had to correct and even disassociate himself from some who would have taken the reformation in the wrong direction. This is not to imply that Luther was necessarily correct in all of his theology, but the apostolic anointing upon his life gave him insight to build the Church after the foundation was laid.

When reformation does come to the Church, there are those anointed to govern. The word *governments* found in 1 Corinthians 12:28 is the Greek word *kubernesis* meaning to steer or pilot. There is an ability to steer the Church in the

proper course through the anointing of governments. Those who do not operate in governments will get the Church off course if they try to steer without this anointing. Apostles flow strong in governments. They are the ones at the helm of the ship, steering the Church through winds of doctrine and deception. Governors are needed to keep the Church on track throughout Reformation.

Spiritual Frontiers

A *frontier* is a new field for developmental activity; a region that forms the margin of settled or developed territory (Webster). We call this *living on the cutting edge*.

Frontiersman live on the frontier. They are on the forefront. Apostolic anointing will keep the Church on the cutting edge. Apostles are *spiritual frontiersman*. They live and minister on the frontier. Just as there are natural frontiers, there are also spiritual frontiers. We must never be satisfied with our place in the spirit.

Often the church becomes settled in a place and the Lord continues to send apostles to expand our borders. They are sent into new regions both geographical and spiritual. They expand our spiritual horizons and release us from the spiritual boundaries and limitations of tradition and past experience.

There is a song (we sing in our church) written by my good friend, Kevin Leal. The chorus reads: *Opening places in the spirit where men have never been, Opening places in the spirit so He can come again, Opening places in the spirit letting men break through, Opening places in the spirit touching you and you and you!*

These are new places in the spirit that need to be opened where most saints have never been. It takes the anointing to open those places for others to follow and

enter in. These are individuals and churches that will operate in apostolic anointing to open new regions and new frontiers for men to enter and experience the fullness of God.

This agrees with the fact that the apostolic anointing is a *pioneering* anointing. Pioneers are the first (proton) to go into a new area with a new truth. Because they are the first they hold a special place of importance. Those who leave a *spiritual legacy* will always have a special place of importance to those who follow. Additionally, the word *last* is the Greek word *eschastos* meaning the lowest; and because this ministry does so much damage to Satan's kingdom, it is the most persecuted and attacked by the enemy.

Paul says that this ministry is "made a spectacle". The Greek word *theatron* from which we derive our word *theater* is the translation used for the word *spectacle*. This means that apostolic ministry is on a stage for the world, the Church and the angels to see. Apostles are often treated as the scum of the earth.

Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place;

And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

Being defamed, we intreat we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

1 Corinthians 4:11-13

This is Paul's description of apostolic ministry. By definition, the word "buffeted" means punched. "Reviled" means abused. "Defamed" means blasphemed. Therefore, apostles are often *punched, abused and blasphemed*. This is the

reaction of some people to this anointing.

Further, the word "filth" means offscouring which in turn means offscrapings. In other words, apostles are often treated like leftovers. *Why is a ministry that the Lord says is first, often treated as last?*

The answer is that apostles are forerunners and pioneers in the spirit. Forerunners and pioneers are often misunderstood and mistreated. It is not easy to be a pathfinder. When you study the lives of many of the apostolic reformers, you will discover how they were hated and mistreated by the religious systems of their day. *Any ministry that does so much damage to Satan's kingdom is sure to be attacked.*

Because the Body of Christ has not understood the operation of the Apostle, the Church has often ignorantly opposed this ministry.

Apostolic Grace

A part of the grace given to apostles is the ability to withstand the persecution and opposition that comes against this Office. It would be insane to try to walk in this Office without the necessary grace.

Anyone who understands the intense persecution that comes against apostles would never try to wear the title or walk in the office of the Apostle without the firm conviction that they are called and anointed to do so. Grace gives one the ability to walk and minister in a certain Office in spite of the misunderstanding and persecution.

As forerunners and pioneers, apostles will often be rejected, misunderstood and persecuted. But the grace that is upon them and flowing through them will cause them to be successful in their mission.

Opening New Regions to the Word of God

And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

Acts 13:49

To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

2 Corinthians 10:16

Some will say our city already has enough churches, and we need to revive the already existing ones. But many of the existing ones will not receive revival and often fight against a fresh wave of the Holy Spirit. Many of the present churches in our cities are ineffective. This is why I don't look at the number of churches in an area, but the number that are having an IMPACT!

Often the number is a few to almost none.

This is why apostolic ministry is so needed — *to plant effective, powerful churches that will have an impact!*

Before a region opens up to the gospel, the strongman must first be bound. This *strongman* is a principality that rules over a certain geographical area. The "goods" are the souls that are being influenced and controlled by this ruling spirit to keep them from the truth. Apostles can go into new regions and break through the spiritual resistance by binding this strongman.

The strongman is bound through the preaching and teaching of the Apostle. The apostles then establish new churches, new truth, and new revelation in these areas. Even where there are already churches in existence, an Apostle can come in and establish new truth. Often the strongmen in these areas are spirits of Religion and Tradition.

The apostle Paul had a desire to preach the gospel and to establish churches in new regions. He did not desire to boast in another man's work, but desired to preach Christ where He had not been preached.

And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

Acts 13:44

In addition to regions being opened up to the Word of God, the Lord uses apostles to affect cities as well. Remember, some are called to the nations, some to regions, and some to cities. Those called to certain cities will be commissioned to establish the truth in that city. This does not mean that every church in that city comes under an apostle's authority. The apostle only has authority in the place where he ministers or is allowed to minister.

The Lord is, however, raising up apostles that will be a voice in major cities. They will help to change the spiritual climate of their cities. The result will be that people are more receptive to hear the Word of God.

Church Planters

I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

1 Corinthians 3:6

The word *plant* is the Greek word *phuteuo* which means to set out in the earth, to implant, to instill doctrine.

Apostles are planters. Planters establish churches and doctrine. Where there is no growth, there needs to be a planting. Paul was a planter. He would go into areas as a pioneer and plant new churches.

Planting is important for *replenishing*. As churches die

out, new ones must be planted. There are many churches that once had the fire of God and are presently dying out. This can be because of tradition or because the worship has lost touch with the present generation. You cannot sing 1850 songs to a generation of the 21st Century. Many denominations birthed in previous generations have lost touch with this new generation. The Lord raises up apostles to plant new works in order to reach a new generation.

Chapter 5

Apostolic Authority

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 16:19

Although I believe that every believer can operate to some degree in binding and loosing, I also believe that the full extent of authority released through binding and loosing will come through the ministry of the Apostle. All believers have the authority to use the name of Jesus, but *authority* is also related to *anointing*. Some will walk in greater spiritual authority because of a stronger anointing in a particular area.

Apostolic anointing releases a greater authority to bind and loose. The Church has heard teachings on binding and loosing, but we have not yet seen the fullness of it yet. Apostolic preaching and teaching binds the powers of darkness and looses people from their grip. Entire cities and regions can be opened up by binding the strongman and loosing multitudes from his control. The result is multitudes of people being saved, healed and delivered.

There is a great amount of authority released through true apostolic ministry. Devils will only respond to *authority*. They don't respect those who do not walk in authority. Strong apostles are a threat to Satan's domain, and he fights them viciously to stop or hinder them from ministering.

Paul At Ephesus

If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die.

1 Corinthians 15:32

Paul is describing his warfare in Ephesus as fighting with beasts. The principality over this region was the demon spirit, Diana—the goddess of the Ephesians. Demetrius, the silversmith, organized opposition to Paul's ministry because Paul's preaching was driving them out of business. People were abandoning the idols that Demetrius and the silversmiths made of Diana (Acts 19:26-27). This is an example of an apostle going into a region and literally binding the strongman.

All apostles will not necessarily minister in this degree of anointing and authority for there are different degrees of apostles, just as there are in any other ministry office. Some apostles are called to nations. Some to regions. Some to cities, and some to the local church. Again, there are different administrations of the apostolic office, and all do not minister exactly the same.

Paul went first into certain regions to break through the spiritual opposition and establish the kingdom of God in that area. The prophetic and teaching ministry followed to confirm and instruct in the faith. As a result, strong churches were birthed and organized in new regions after the strongman was bound. This is an example of *apostolic* binding and loosing.

Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

Matthew 12:29

Binding and Loosing

The following prophetic utterance was given at a recent conference concerning apostolic binding and loosing:

"There is coming a realm of binding and loosing that will emerge through the vocabulary and utterances of Apostolic/Prophetic ministry that will be unmatched by any other generation that the earth has ever known before. We think we understand binding and loosing, but the day is coming when we'll surely understand binding and loosing as the fathers of God begin to take their place in the land. And when they bind, it will be bound in the city. And when they loose, it will be loosed in the city. And when they speak, there will be an allowance. And when they speak, there will be a disallowance. When they speak, the heavens will be opened. And when they speak, the heavens will be shut. These will be those that will govern. These will be those that will defeat the power of the adversary."

Apostles Set In Order

And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

1 Corinthians 11:34

Let all things be done decently and in order.

1 Corinthians 14:40

For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

Colossians 2:5

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

Titus 1:5

Apostles are concerned with form, structure and order. When things are out of order, they will discern and know it. Without proper order, there will be disorder, confusion and strife. This is the atmosphere that the devil loves because he can then operate in the Church. God is not the author of confusion. Where there is envy and strife, there is confusion and every evil work (James 3:16). The Corinthian church was full of carnality and strife. The apostle Paul had to use his apostolic authority to correct them and set things in order.

This is one of the purposes of authority: *to correct and set in order*. This does not mean that an apostle has the authority to go into every church and correct it. The authority of the apostle Paul could operate in Corinth because he had established this church during his second missionary journey. Paul did not stretch himself or boast beyond his measure of authority (2 Corinthians 10:13).

He did not try to exercise his authority in the church at Jerusalem. He did not walk around saying, "I am an apostle of God. Everyone submit to me."

He only exercised his apostolic authority in the churches he established. This authority included ordaining elders. To *ordain* means to set. Elders were *set* in the church through apostolic authority. I believe this is the pattern for the local church. Elders and bishops need to be set in the church through apostolic and prophetic anointing. This is the biblical pattern found in the book of Acts.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.

And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the veil.

And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the

things that are to be set in order upon it; and thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and light the lamps thereof.

Exodus 40:1-4

Moses setting up the tabernacle is a type of apostolic anointing. He was instructed by the Lord to set in order the furniture and vessels of the tabernacle. After Moses set the tabernacle in order, a cloud covered the tent of the congregation and the glory of the Lord filled the house (Exodus 40:34). The glory of the Lord was the Lord's approval upon the *order* of the tabernacle. When the church is set in order, the glory of the Lord will appear.

The glory of the Lord is the manifest presence of God. Often the presence of God is lacking in our assemblies because the house of the Lord is not set in biblical order. When the house of the Lord is not in order, we cannot expect God's approval upon it.

Every piece of furniture had to be set correctly in the tabernacle by Moses. He had to follow the Lord's instructions precisely in this matter. There was no room for deviation on the part of Moses. The tabernacle was to be the habitation of God, His presence residing in the Holy of Holies. The Church today is the habitation of God. We are the temple of the living God.

The Church cannot be set up the way man thinks is correct. We must follow the divine pattern of the Lord as revealed in Scripture. The ministries of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher, all need to be SET in the Church. Elders, bishops and deacons also need to be set in the Church.

It is also important to set the correct *people* in these positions. You cannot set people who are deacons into the position of an elder or bishop. I have been in churches

where people had been set into positions of elder when they were really deacons. They were out of place and out of order which brought confusion into the church. Moses could not place the altar where the laver was to be set, and he could not place the candlestick upon the altar of incense.

Apostles have the ability and discernment to set people into their proper positions so that they will function according to the will of God. This eliminates the confusion resulting from people being out of place and out of order. Some people need to be removed from certain positions and put in their proper place. You should not be trying to function in a position you do not have the grace for. When you are out of your grace, you will be a problem instead of a blessing.

Again, I am not saying that the apostle has the right to go into any and every local church and set things in order. Apostles only have authority in churches they have established or churches that have received their ministry. They can pastor a local church, but they don't necessarily have to *be* the pastor.

In other words, they can be a part of a local church and be submitted to the pastor of that church. The apostles Paul and Barnabus were submitted to the church at Antioch. They reported back to that church after their missionary journeys. Ministry gifts are to submit one to another in the fear of God (Ephesians 5:21).

Apostles will set in order churches they establish or pioneer. Their authority is given for edification, not destruction (2 Corinthians 13:10). They are not to be dictators or controllers, but they are to manifest the fruit of the Spirit. This truth of setting in order can also apply to other ministry gifts as well. A pastor can also set things in

order in the local church. The pastor does not necessarily need to call in an apostle to set the church in order.

However, the church will not be perfected through the ministry of the pastor alone. It takes all five ministries to perfect the church. I also believe that many pastors who start and establish churches are either apostles or have ministered to some degree in apostolic anointing. Many would not call themselves an Apostle because of fear and tradition, but many have nonetheless operated in that anointing.

Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

1 Timothy 2:7

The apostolic office is released through preaching and teaching. Paul was an apostle sent to the Gentiles to preach the gospel and teach truth. Apostles are sent to preach the gospel. They are often sent into new areas to pioneer new works through preaching and teaching. New churches are birthed and established through their preaching and teaching.

Some apostles can start more new churches by accident than most people can start by trying. This is because of God's grace and His anointing. Everywhere Paul went and ministered, churches sprang up around his preaching and teaching.

Recently, the Lord impressed upon me the importance of new churches. New churches are needed to reach every new generation. This is one reason why apostles are needed — *to help birth and establish new churches to reach the next generation.* New churches are also carriers of the present truth being released by the Holy Ghost into the Body of Christ.

Measures of Anointing

Jesus had the Spirit without measure (John 3:34). Different ministries have different measures of anointing. Every apostle will not walk in the same measure of anointing. Some will minister in a greater degree of anointing and authority than others. When some people hear the word "apostle", they automatically think in the category of Paul. But there are few men who have ever walked in that degree of the anointing.

Paul wrote most of the New Testament. Paul was what he was by the grace of God (1 Corinthians 15:10). An apostle can only walk in the grace that is given by God. Some operate in more grace than others, just as some pastors operate in more grace than other pastors.

We are unwise to compare and need to understand that there are different administrations within each ministry office. Even though there are characteristics that apply to each ministry office, individuals will administer differently based upon the grace given to them by the Lord.

Apostles are not supermen. They are human just like any other ministry gift. They are not infallible but are subject to make mistakes and get into error like any other.

They must follow the Word of God and develop the fruit of the Spirit like any other believer. They must walk in humility and beware of pride and control like any other ministry gift. Martin Luther was not perfect, and neither was John Alexander Dowie.

Martin Luther ordered the death of the Anabaptists of his day because he disagreed with them on doctrine, and Dowie began to believe that he was Elijah. However, this does not diminish the fact that both walked in apostolic anointing.

The apostle Peter had to be corrected by Paul for his hypocrisy in separating himself from the Gentiles for fear of the Jewish believers (Galatians 2:11-14).

For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet 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 which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

1 Corinthians 15:9-10

There are those who think a person has to be perfect and infallible to walk in the call of an Apostle. But we must realize that all of the ministry gifts are grace gifts. They are given by grace and are not earned. You either have it or you don't. Paul recognized that he was not worthy to be called an apostle and was such only by the grace of God. The apostolic anointing is given by *grace* meaning you don't earn it or work for it. You can't ask for it or walk in it because you want to. Neither can you choose it because you like it.

Let me tell you, apostles can have bad character just like any other ministry gift. But don't throw the baby out with the bath water. Just because you may have had a bad experience with someone who claimed to be an apostle does not mean there are not good apostles. God has sound apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. If you have received a gift from God, it will make room for you (Proverbs 18:16).

You don't have to force yourself on anyone or try to prove to anyone that you have a gift. If you are an Apostle, then as you preach and teach, your gift will be evident. Others in the Body will perceive the grace given unto you

(Galatians 2:9).

Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

Acts 6:3-4

These verses give us three *keys* to strong apostolic ministry: 1) the ministry of the deacon (helps); 2) prayer; and 3) the ministry of the Word.

These three elements will be characteristic of strong apostolic churches in this hour. The ministry of the deacon will be restored fully to minister in a strong anointing of helps. Intercession will be strong in the church. The ministry of the Word will come forth through strong teaching and preaching.

As a result, the Word of God will increase and a great number of people will become obedient to the faith.

The administration of the Apostle is such that they must be free to give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. They draw their strength from prayer, and revelation is released through preaching and teaching the Word. Apostles need to surround themselves with strong deacons and strong intercessors.

The apostle Paul had strong intercessors, like Epaphras, and strong helpers, like Epaphroditus. Phebe was a servant who was with Paul. She is referred to as a deaconess in the church at Cenchrea. There was also the wife and husband team of Priscilla and Aquila referred to as Paul's helpers. Mary bestowed much labour on Paul. This shows us the importance of the ministry of Helps to the ministry of the Apostle. The apostle, as a sent one of the Lord, needs those sent to him in order to fulfill his

ministry.

Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ

But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

1 Thessalonians 2:6-9

Because of the vision and work of the apostles, they must be careful not to be burdensome to the Lord's people. There must be a gentleness manifested, especially with new churches. If we are not careful, the work of the Lord can become burdensome to God's people. Apostles can become dictators and begin to drive God's people, especially in the area of finances.

The apostle Paul was so aware of this that he laboured with his own hands that he would not be chargeable unto any. The Revised Standard version says: "that we might not burden any of you". New works can become a burden because there is always so much to do, and seemingly so little time to do it in. Apostles can become hard and unaware of the limitations of people.

Apostles sometimes are consumed with the overall vision and work of the Lord and may tend to forget the physical and financial limitations of the saints. There must be a concern about the well-being and spiritual growth of

God's people in building the house of the Lord. The people of the Lord are dear and must be treated with gentleness.

But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

2 Corinthians 10:2-4

Apostolic ministry is a ministry of warfare. The word *warfare* in verse four is *strateia* meaning military service. Another meaning of this word is the *apostolic career* (as one of hardship and danger). Paul was talking about the weapons of his apostolic career. Paul was using gentleness to appeal to the church and warning them of his boldness, which he did not want to use unless he had to.

Some viewed him in the flesh, but he responded by telling them that he did not react or war after the flesh. His correction was not fleshly, but what he did was in the spirit.

Apostles deal with much opposition because of the nature of their ministry and anointing. In spite of this, they must walk and respond in the spirit and not in the flesh. There is a tendency to respond to people in the flesh, especially when there is opposition. Thus, the strength of apostolic ministry is the ability to war in the spirit. If they don't live in the spirit, apostles can easily get off track. The warfare they experience must be won in the spirit, or it will be lost in the flesh.

For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh

**had no rest, but we were troubled on every side;
without were fightings, within were fears.**

2 Corinthians 7:5

Paul talked about being troubled on every side.

Martin Luther knew he was in a warfare with many of the established churches of his day. In an open letter to Pope Leo X, he wrote the following words:

"Living among the monsters of this age with whom I am now for the third year waging war, I am compelled occasionally to look up to you, Leo, most blessed father, and to think of you. Indeed, since you are occasionally regarded as the sole cause of my warfare, I cannot help thinking of you."

Martin Luther lived in constant fear for his life. There was an edict issued that declared him an outlaw. Legally, anyone could strike him dead and not be punished for murder. He had to go into exile for a period of his life, hiding for fear of death. He was attacked viciously by theologians of his day calling him a heretic worthy of death.

But Luther used the Scriptures to refute every charge brought against him, and this he did skillfully. He became a prolific writer with the ability to persuade and move the masses. His writings did much to bring reformation to the Church. Although the writings were condemned by many, the truth released through them was sufficient to deliver many from the false teachings of the established church.

Apostles must also discern this anointing and know how some people will react to it. Apostles must not react to opposition in the flesh by becoming bitter or judgmental. Notice Paul's reaction: "being reviled, *we bless*, being persecuted, *we suffer it*, being defamed, *we intreat*." Apostles can easily become bitter and begin to operate in the wrong spirit because of so much persecution.

Confirming, Establishing, Strengthening

And he went through Syria and Cilicia, *confirming* the churches.

Acts 15:41

And so were the churches *established* in the faith, and increased in number daily.

Acts 16:5

And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, *strengthening* all the disciples.

Acts 18:23

Another function of Apostolic ministry is *confirming, establishing* and *strengthening* local churches. Not only do they plant churches but they confirm, establish and strengthen already existing ones. Apostles bring strength to the Church. Of these three words, the word *strength* is the common meaning of all three.

Here are some different translations of the above three verses:

And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

Acts 15:41

Strengthening the churches in the faith.

Acts 15:41 *Twentieth Century New Testament*

Bringing new strength to the congregation

Acts 16:3 *New English Bible*

So the churches were strengthened in the faith.

Acts 16:3 *Revised Standard Version*

In this way the faith of the churches was strengthened.

Acts 18:23 C.H. Rieu Translation

Imparting new strength to...

Acts 18:23 Williams Translation

Strengthening the faith of all the disciples as he went

Acts 18:23

Twentieth Century New Testament

Apostles impart *new* strength to existing churches. Paul longed to see the church at Rome to "*...impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established*" (Romans 1:11). The Revised Standard version says: "to strengthen you".

The Twentieth Century New Testament says: "and so give you *fresh* strength". This is why I believe we need apostolic anointing in order to have strong churches. The preaching and teaching of true apostles will bring fresh strength to the Church. The Lord desires to raise up strong churches.

Strong churches will impact cities, regions, and nations with the gospel. It is not the will of the Lord for local churches to be weak and ineffective. The word of the Lord to the church in Sardis was: "*Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die*" (Revelations 3:2). The Phillips translation says: "Now wake up! Strengthen what you have before it dies." The New English Bible says: "Put some strength into what is left, which must otherwise die!"

Notice that churches that are not strengthened will eventually die! Churches must be continually strengthened so they will remain alive.

When churches die, new ones must be planted. Churches that are planted need strengthening to remain alive and stay strong. Apostles pioneer and plant new works. They exercise spiritual oversight over the churches they plant. They operate in spiritual authority in the

regions they are sent. The anointing upon the Apostles gives them the ability to birth strong churches that are able to influence the cities and nations where they are planted.

This is all done through God's *grace*. There is grace for apostleship that is being released in this hour to plant strong churches in every nation of the earth. Let us pray for Apostles to come forth and receive their ministry. It is necessary for the establishment of the Church in the earth. Remember the Lord is building His church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. In building His church He is using Apostles. They are necessary in the plan of God to fulfill His purposes in the earth.

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Understanding Apostles

There have always been men who have ministered under the mantle of the Apostle throughout the history of the Church, but the Lord is restoring this office in such a way that you will see many raised up in the last days to minister as Apostles.

The Lord is honoring the office of the Apostle by putting His glory upon it in this hour.

As we honor what God honors, we will receive the blessing and fullness of what the Lord has reserved for this last day Church.

About the Author



John Eckhardt is called to impart and activate the gifts of the Spirit in order to raise up strong ministries in the Body of Christ. A gifted man with a true apostolic and prophetic call on his life, his desire is to infiltrate the world with the Word of God. He is dedicated to perfecting the saints and training ministers to fulfill the call of God on their lives. Along with his apostolic and pastoral responsibilities, John Eckhardt produces "Perfecting the Saints", a daily television program, a daily radio broadcast, and ministers throughout the United States.

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