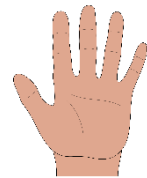


DISCOVERING YOUR DESTINY #5

Introduction:

Ephesians 4:11 *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers...*

- Each one born of the Spirit has been given gifts from the Holy spirit.
 - The question is: what do we do with them and how do we use these gifts?
- The people listed in Ephesians are considered gifts to the church and describes their functions.
- These gifts can be illustrated as the “Five fingers of God”



1. Thumb – represents Apostles

- The Apostle has the Father’s heart.
 - Wants to start a church where no-one else has been.
 - Has a breakthrough ministry.
 - Demonstrates the Father’s heart by great concern for the church, and especially churches he started.



Acts 20:19 *I [Paul] have done the Lord’s work humbly and with many tears. I have endured the trials that came to me from the plots of the Jews.*

- Releases God’s people into their calling.

Hebrews 3:1 *And so, dear brothers and sisters who belong to God and are partners with those called to heaven, think carefully about this Jesus whom we declare to be God’s messenger [apostle] and High Priest.*

- Jesus is called our “apostle”

- Jesus functioned in all the gifts...
 - Apostle
 - Prophet
 - Evangelist
 - Pastor
 - Teacher ... perfectly
- Jesus has placed something of Himself in us.

Questions

- Do you get excited about a church plant or mission work?
- Do you get excited when you see a breakthrough in a community?
- Do you have a desire to see churches grow strong?
- Do you desire to see people released in their calling?

2. Index finger – represents Prophets

- The Index finger points the way.
- Hearing God speak is the privilege of every believer.
 - God primarily speaks through the written Word.
- The Greek word *phe-ro-men-i* (prophet) denotes a ship whose sails are set to catch the wind.
- The difference between prophets and prophecy:



A Prophecy	A Prophet
To minister in prophecy is a gift.	To be a prophet is a calling.
When you minister in prophecy, the ability to prophecy is a gift.	The ability to prophecy is a gift.
The words themselves are a gift.	When a person is a prophet, they are the gift (to the church)

QUESTIONS:

- Have you ever had:
 - a strong impression to pray for someone?
 - A strong impression to encourage someone?
 - Felt something that indicated someone's pain?
 - Had a dream, picture or vision that could point the way in someone's life or situation?

3. Middle finger – represents Evangelists.

- The middle finger is the furthest reaching.
- Who do you know as an evangelist?
 - Billy Graham, Jimmy Swaggart, Carl Butler.
 - Evangelists look for every opportunity to share Jesus.



Acts 8:4-17 (NLT) But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went. Philip, for example, went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah. Crowds listened intently to Philip because they were eager to hear his message and see the miraculous signs he did. Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims. And many who had been paralysed or lame were healed. So there was great joy in that city.

A man named Simon had been a sorcerer there for many years, amazing the people of Samaria and claiming to be someone great. Everyone, from the least to the greatest, often spoke of him as “the Great One—the Power of God.” They listened closely to him because for a long time he had astounded them with his magic.

But now the people believed Philip’s message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. As a result, many men and women were baptized. Then Simon himself believed and was baptized. He began following Philip

wherever he went, and he was amazed by the signs and great miracles Philip performed.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that the people of Samaria had accepted God's message, they sent Peter and John there. As soon as they arrived, they prayed for these new believers to receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them, for they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John laid their hands upon these believers, and they received the Holy Spirit.

- **Context:** The Church was being persecuted.
 - Philip used the opportunity given
 - Racial or cultural barriers did not stop him.
- What is the "Good News" / **Gospel**?
 - Comes from Greek word "*eu-an-ge-lion*"
 - Used to describe a returning force from battle, declaring: "*The battle is won – you are safe.*"
- Philip proclaimed the Good News, and signs followed.
- Simon the Sorcerer:
 - Believed
 - Baptised
 - Still caught in his old lifestyle.
- Philip still needed Peter and John to see people baptised in the Holy Spirit.

ILLUSTRATION: The **middle finger** (**the evangelist**) still needed the thumb (apostle) for both baptism of the spirit and word of knowledge.

Acts 8:18-21 *When Simon saw that the Spirit was given when the apostles laid their hands on people, he offered them money to buy this power. "Let me have this power, too," he exclaimed, "so*

that when I lay my hands on people, they will receive the Holy Spirit!”

But Peter replied, “May your money be destroyed with you for thinking God’s gift can be bought! You can have no part in this, for your heart is not right with God.

QUESTIONS

- Do you get excited about someone finding Jesus
- Do you automatically see opportunities to share Jesus
- Cultural barriers do not stop you from sharing.
- Do you have a strong belief that the battle is won

All three fingers are connected to the one hand which is connected to the one church/body of which Jesus is the head.

