

# Discovering Your Destiny #3<sup>1</sup>

**Introduction:** Ephesians can be divided into three sections:

Section:	Topic:
Ephesians 1-3	Our wealth in Christ.
Ephesians 4-6:9	Our walk as followers of Christ.
Ephesians 6:10-22	Our warfare.

- Last week we saw:
  - Grace for Salvation
  - Grace for living
  - Grace given to each one as Christ apportioned it.
  - Grace gift of people.

**Ephesians 4:11-16** *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to **equip** his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be **built up** until we all reach **unity in the faith** and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become **mature**, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

*Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and **builds itself up** in love, as **each part does its work**.*

## 1. What's in a Name?

- A name describes a person or a function.
- We were in God the Father's mind before creation.
  - Remember Moses last week, where God says

**Exodus 33:17** *And the Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."*

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<sup>1</sup> This study is a combination of research, mostly from 3 sources:

Rick Renner "Apostles and Prophets"; Mark Tubbs "The Five fingers of God"; Dr Gary Linton "The Five-Fold Ministry"

- What were the names given to leaders in the early church?

**Ephesians 4:11** *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service...*

- Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor / teachers
- The terms “elder”, “bishop” and “pastor” are often used interchangeably in the NT. However, there are subtle differences:
  - Elder – refers to the person and emphasises maturity and wisdom
  - Bishop/ Overseer – focuses on the function of overseeing the church
  - Shepherd /Pastor – describes the method or process by which the leader guides the people of God.
- The term “priest” for a leader was not used until well into the second century, and by the fourth century became part of the pomp and ceremony of the Roman and Orthodox churches.
- The important thing is that God the Father knows MY name!

## **2. God’s Gifted People.**

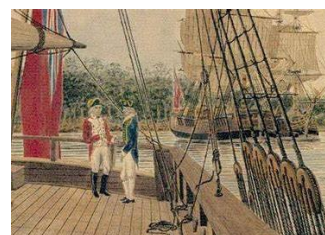
- (a) Respond to God’s call in their life
- (b) Prepared to learn and grow in their relationship with Jesus and to use the gifts given to them.
- How long was Paul learning to follow Jesus before he was sent out as an apostle?
  - At least 17 years! (Galatians 1:18; 2:1)
  - He was preaching; ministering at Tarsus and Antioch before he was recognised and sent out as an apostle.
- Questions:
  - Am I growing in my relationship with Jesus?
  - Am I developing the gifts Jesus has given me?

### 3. What is an Apostle?

- Most churches recognise pastors, teachers and evangelists.
- The belief that the spiritual gifts ceased when the 12 apostles died held sway for centuries (“cessationists”)
- The 12 disciples were not the only ones called “apostles” in the NT.
  - There are at least another 12 – including Jesus and Paul – listed in the NT as “apostles”.
  - “apostle” = one who is sent away – a sent messenger.

#### (a) How did the original hearers understand the term “apostle”

- “Apostolos”= one who was sent away – occurs 80 times in NT.
- Greek Writers:
  - Euripides and Thucydides used “apostle” to describe important packages that were sent – special packages sent by powerful people that contained powerful and important contents.
  - Aristotle: the seeing off or sending away of important individuals.
  - Herodotus: used “apostle” to describe a high-powered ambassador who had to be sent to represent a government or king.
  - Plutarch: a Greek historian, philosopher, magistrate and ambassador, used the word to depict the sending away of a trade ship filled with cargo.
  - Many others: to depict a fully equipped large fleet that was sent on an expedition to a new territory.



#### (b) What does an apostle’s heart look like?

- Paul’s farewell charge:

**Acts 20:31** *So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.*

- To see the gospel advance and churches established.
- Some describe it as a “father’s heart”.

- Many have a heart for the gospel and his church, but that alone does not make an apostle.
- Apostle is described as:
  - Special package / passport sent by important and powerful authorities.
  - High powered ambassadors sent to represent a king.

Rick Renner:

- a. Pictured in a maritime sense: to depict an admiral and his specialized crew who were sent off with all the cargo that was needed to sustain them and to establish a civilization that was non-existent. (These were colonists).
- b. Paul always travelled with a group: Barnabas, Silas, John Mark, Timothy Erastus, Sophater, Aristrachux, Secundus, Gaius, Aquila and Priscilla, Tychus, Trophimus, Luke.

- Paul always had a team.
- Questions:
  - What is my love for the church like?
  - Do I sense a stirring to be part of a team?

#### **4. Signs of an Apostle.**

##### **(a) Seen the resurrected Lord in flesh or a vision:**

*Acts 1:21-22 ...it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."*

- Paul:

*Galatians 1:11-12 I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.*

- Revelation = pictures an obstructive covering that has been suddenly and supernaturally removed, and what was on that side of that obstruction is now uncovered.

(b) Heart to plant churches:

**Romans 15:15-20** *I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done— by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else’s foundation.*

(c) Patience, signs and wonders

**2 Corinthians 12:12 [ESV]** *The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works.*

- Patience – Greek: “Hupomene” = to stay, remain in one’s spot;
  - to keep in position; to resolve to maintain territory gained;
  - In a military sense, it pictures soldiers ordered to maintain their positions even in the face of opposition;
  - To defiantly stick it out, regardless of pressure mounted against it.
- Supernatural Signs:
  - Acts 14:8-10 – lame man restored.
  - Acts 16:16-18 – Demon cast out.
  - Acts 19:11-12 – “extraordinary miracles” eg with handkerchief...
  - Acts 20:9-12 – raised the dead.
  - Acts 28:8-9 – many healed.
- Supernatural wonders:
  - Wonders that leave one baffled, bewildered or astonished.  
Events that were contrary to the normal course of nature.
  - Acts 28:3 – snake story

- Mighty deeds / Miracles (Dunamis):
  - Denoting event that like a spiritual hurricane, tornado or earthquake, really shakes people up and leaves them reeling in their minds.
  - Acts 16:24 – jail in Phillipi.
    - Forcing of power against the powers of darkness.

## Conclusion:

**Ephesians 4:11-16** *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to **equip** his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be **built up** until we all reach **unity in the faith** and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become **mature**, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

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- Prepare
- Build up
- Unity in the faith
- Mature; no longer be infants tossed back and forth; grow up
- Builds itself up
- Each part does its work.