

Ephesians 4:11 Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher

This morning we will finish up with verse 11 as we come to the last three gifts in this text: Evangelist, Pastor and teacher.

The term evangelist means, one who announces good news and it comes from the Greek verb *euggellion* which means good news or gospel. This Greek word *euggellion* is where we get our English word evangelize.

And so each person who has the gift of evangelizing would be referred to as an evangelist. However, like the prophet we saw last week, the evangelist does not hold an office of authority in the church. Rather, his or her gift simply describes a function in the church for the building up of the Body of Christ, often times as they teach the proper biblical elements of the gospel as did Priscilla and Aquilla with Apollos in Acts 18:26.

Acts 18:26 ²⁶ and he [Apollos] began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

As we come to the Scriptures we find only three references to the word evangelist. The first one is found in ACT 21:8 "Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of **Philip the evangelist**, one of the Seven."

The second reference is found right here in our text, EPH 4:11 "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, **some to be evangelists**....."

And the third is found in 2TI 4:5 where Paul is instructing Pastor Timothy, "But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, **do the work of an evangelist**, discharge all the duties of your ministry."

We're not given much detail as to what the specific functions of an evangelist are. Today, when we refer to evangelists they're usually cast in the role of traveling preachers of the Gospel who set their tents up in any local city. And though that may certainly be part of what an evangelist does there is no scriptural precedent that precludes that all evangelists must always be on the road.

In fact, we see them in both roles of traveling and also of being planted in a particular area. And it would make sense that God would use evangelists in either role. The most well known

evangelists were the apostles, especially Paul, who traveled the world over with the specific task of bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to both Jews and Gentiles.

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, evangelized groups of Jews from different parts of the world who gathered in Jerusalem and 3,000 came to the Lord that day. And yet Peter's later ministry didn't seem to take him on the road all that often. In fact, a number of the apostles don't seem to go out of the region of Jerusalem, including James.

We also look to Philip, who was one of the original 7 chosen in Jerusalem to serve in a deacon's role, and we find that after he shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with the Ethiopian Eunuch the Lord miraculously translated him to Azotus.

We read in ACT 8:39-40 "When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. 40 Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, ***preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.***"

Here we see Philip going from town to town preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, until he comes to Caesarea. And it would seem that he settled down and spent a number of years in Caesarea. We go from Acts chapter 8, where Philip arrives in Caesarea, all the way to Acts chapter 21 and we still find Philip in Caesarea where he was raising a family.

ACT 21:8 "Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven."

Many years after traveling around sharing the gospel Philip is still referred to as an evangelist despite the fact that he no longer seems to be traveling as he once did. And so we must assume that he still had, and was still using, the gift of evangelist in a special way right there in Caesarea, and possibly near-by towns.

And then we come to 2TI 4:5 "But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, ***do the work of an evangelist,*** discharge all the duties of your ministry."

Here Timothy is Pastoring the church in Ephesus and would not have been in a position to travel very far at all as he ministered to these people. And yet he was to do the work of an evangelist. And so we don't want to limit or define evangelists as people who are always traveling about sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You can be an evangelist wherever you are planted, in whatever community God has placed you. But, how does one know if they have the gift of evangelist? A variety of things come to mind from just the verses we've looked at.

As in Peter's case in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost it seems quite apparent that God had given Peter a burning desire for the lost to come to know Christ. Peter was willing to do whatever it took to bring the good news to these people. And so this would be one indication: a willingness, as well as a strong desire, to share the gospel.

But more than that, the boldness to actually give people this great news. But this also means being bold enough to love people with the truth even when that truth involves discussing the sin that all men must confront and repent of to be able to find forgiveness of those sins.

Acts 2:36-38 ³⁶ "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified." ³⁷ Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" ³⁸ Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

BROOD OF VIPERS?

It also appears that when Christ gifts someone as an evangelist He is the One who also opens doors and provides the opportunity to share this good news.

The evangelist seems to have an abundance of opportunities, partly because with this gift his love for the lost and his boldness is always looking for and taking advantage of such opportunities. Christians with this gift take great delight in sharing the gospel whenever and wherever they may happen to be and the Lord uses that as He brings people and the evangelist together.

We see where the Lord gives Peter an audience of thousands. The Holy Spirit directs Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch and then miraculously transports him to his next task in Azotus. And then Timothy is given the instruction to do the work of an evangelist right there in Ephesus.

And so, when someone is given the gift of evangelist he or she will have that desire, but together with that their evangelistic ministry will be proved with the fruit of seeing people come to Christ through the gospel via repentance and faith.

And so we see, in just these 3 passages, where evangelists can be apostles, deacons, pastors and really any person whom Christ decides to gift. And yet, not all deacons are evangelists, nor all pastors or elders. And yet we all need to be willing to do the work of an evangelist when the Lord calls upon us to be that witness for our Lord and Savior.

Evangelism is not meant to be left only to evangelists any more than mercy is to be left only to those with the gift of mercy, or hospitality is left only to those with the gift of hospitality. Peter addresses every member of the church when he gives this exhortation in his first epistle.

1PE 3:15-16 "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander."

We must all be prepared to be evangelists even if we don't have the gift of evangelism.

We now come to the last two gifts in our text. EPH 4:11 It was he who gave some to be.... pastors and teachers..."

This phrase is identical to the Greek phrase we talked about two weeks ago where two functions identify one person. We saw this in EPH 2:20 "built on the foundation of the *apostles and prophets*, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone."

We saw how this foundation was not built on two groups consisting of apostles and the prophets, but rather one group of apostles who are also prophets. And here in our text we have the same structure where Christ gave some to be pastors and teachers. Or to put it another way, he gave some to be pastors who are also teachers. In fact, many commentators translate it pastor/teachers.

This doesn't mean that there aren't Pastors in the church and a separate group called teachers, but in the context of Eph.4:11 it would seem that the Pastor is the one being keyed in on here with the emphasis on his teaching.

Not everyone who has the gift of teaching necessarily has the gift of Pastor. And yet everyone with the gift of Pastor must necessarily be able to teach, and more often than not has the gift of teaching. The gift of Pastor is one of the most humbling gifts that Christ can give to someone because our Lord is basically entrusting that man with the care of the flock for which He personally died.

The gift of Pastor is essentially a gift of shepherding and everything that entails shepherding. Tending the sheep, feeding the sheep, guiding the sheep, being responsible for the spiritual welfare of the sheep and ultimately being personally responsible to Jesus Christ for the care of His sheep.

This is essentially what the writer of Hebrews conveys in HEB 13:17 "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over [your souls] as *men who must give an account*. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you."

This would not exclude elders, but it certainly keys in on Pastors who are responsible even for the elders as he is instructed to choose them, according to the Pastoral letters to Timothy and Titus.

Someone who has the gift of Pastor is someone who has been tested and shown approved as well as equipped to handle such a high privilege. Every Pastor will have been, in some capacity, an acting elder who is able to teach. We see this of Timothy as well as Titus who were both men who ministered with Paul and proved themselves in that capacity.

Those with the gift of Pastor will be men who have compassion for the sheep and a desire to see each one grow in their faith as he instructs, comes along side, comforts, counsels, and is willing to pour his life out for the sheep, even when the road is rough and the pastures seem to be trodden down.

Charles Spurgeon, a stellar example in the 19th century of what a pastor is, once wrote this concerning another man entrusted to care for the sheep of Jesus Christ.

"[Jesus] could not give to Peter a more effecting proof of His confidence than by committing to his care the dearest object of His love. It is only those who truly love Christ that are fitted to minister to His flock. The work is so laborious, the appreciation is

often so small, the response so discouraging, the criticisms so harsh, the attacks of Satan so fierce, that only the "love of Christ", His for us -- ours for Him, can constrain to such work. Hirelings will feed the goats, but only those who love Christ can feed His sheep."

We see on different occasions Paul's pastoral attitude toward those he felt responsible to care for. We read in PHI 2:22 "But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because *as a son with his father* he has served with me in the work of the gospel."

Paul was not Timothy's biological father, nor did he treat him as a child, and yet he cared for Timothy with a love that a father might have for his children. We see this same attitude when Paul wrote the Thessalonian church.

1TH 2:6=8, 11-12 "We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, 7 but we were gentle among you, <U>like a mother</U> caring for her little children. 8 We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. 11 For you know that we dealt with each of you *as a father* deals with his own children, 12 encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

Paul uses a very identifiable characteristic found in a fatherly and motherly love and he then transcends that thought and places it upon the church there in Thessalonica. His point was obvious. As a father, or mother who would give their lives for their children, Paul here gives them the assurance that he would do anything to help them grow whether it was convenient for him or not.

That's the sign of a person who cares for the flock of Jesus Christ under any and all circumstances. That's a sign of a true Pastor. And so one of the best indicators of one who has the gift of Pastor is one who would be like a shepherd willing to lay down his life for the sheep as He follows the Great Shepherd, Jesus Christ, wherever He may lead.

But, this shepherd must be able to feed these sheep as he follows Christ. And this is one important reason for the connection in Eph.4:11 of Pastor/teacher. And as I said earlier, though not everyone who has the gift of teaching necessarily has the gift of Pastor. And yet, everyone with the gift of Pastor necessarily must

be able to teach as Paul points out in 1Tim.3:2. "Every overseer must be able to teach."

The gift of teaching is one of those gifts which is vital to the equipping of the saints. Now as with any gift, this gift is to be used for the purpose God has set forth in His word. But simply because someone does not have the gift of teaching does not mean that all of God's people shouldn't be willing to teach or instruct.

The Random House College Dictionary defines teach as: "to impart knowledge of, or skill in."

You don't need the gift of teaching to impart knowledge, to give someone information about something. For example, whenever we give the gospel of Jesus Christ we are imparting knowledge about our Savior to someone who needs such knowledge.

The apostle Peter mentions this in 1Pe 3:15 "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,"

In sharing the gospel, we are teaching in the strict sense of the word. If someone comes to you and is struggling with an area of life which has them confused then any believer must be prepared to take them to the word of God and encourage them with the promises and assurance that God gives through His word.

It could be something as simple as a young Christian man or woman wondering if it's O.K. to date or pursue an unbeliever. And you gently, but firmly, encourage them to consider what God says on this matter.

Paul said in 2Co 6:14 "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?"

Now you may not be able to quote chapter and verse but often times the Lord will bring to mind the intent of the verse and you can paraphrase it. That is teaching or instructing with the purpose of building up that individual so they may be conformed into the image of Christ.

By the way, that's why it's always a good idea to be in the word constantly so that you can give people good counsel according to God's word. The more you're in the word, the more confident

you'll be concerning His word and the more accurately you will give people His word for instruction.

But the gift of teaching is a gift from God which is designed to be used with the specific purpose of instructing in a way that helps people see clearly what God is speaking through His word.

The gift of teaching that the Spirit gives to His people is able to take the hard and sometimes complicated passages and make them clear and plain and simple. The gift of teaching will also be able to take the simple passages and bring in profound insights that may otherwise go unnoticed.

And so, it's a very encouraging gift. In fact, when we look at the word of God we find that teaching is an activity which was a major part of Christ's ministry. Yes, He healed the sick and gave sight to the blind. But in comparison to Him teaching, those things were not the main part of His time ministering.

If you were to go to a concordance of the Bible you would find that in the four gospels Jesus is called Teacher no less than 41 times. And that doesn't even include the myriads of times it is recorded that He was in the Temple teaching or on the mountain side teaching.

That distinction comes only because He was continually teaching the people. Though Jesus healed many, He is never referred to in the gospels as Healer.

They would come to Him and say things like: 'Teacher, we want to see a sign from You'.... 'Teacher, what good thing shall I do to obtain eternal life?' 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment?'..... Etc.

They never came and said, 'Good Healer, what thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus was always teaching and instructing concerning the Kingdom of God and the gospel found in Himself.

Teaching is a wonderful gift that Christ gives to His people, but it's a gift with great responsibility.

Jam 3:1 "Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly."

This is not meant to scare people away from being teachers, it's simply meant teach us to approach such a gift and ministry with

the sobering reality that whom God gifts He requires that we be faithful with such gifts.

On the flip-side of that we should not be lax or lazy or carnal about pursuing our responsibilities in this area. The writer of Hebrews rebuked his readers because they had done precisely this very thing.

Heb 5:11-12 "We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. 12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!

Teaching in the church must never be relegated to some back seat as though it were unimportant. I've heard it said by people who claim to be Christians that the church should get away from emphasizing doctrine and just love.

To that I say, that is a teaching from the pit of hell. You see teaching is always going on. We need to distinguish between good teaching and false teaching. Not to emphasize doctrine is wrong and unbiblical.

Here's what Paul say's about it.

2Ti 4:3-4 "For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths."

That time has come and many have turned aside to myths and are chasing their tails, and then wonder why the church is in such a mess. The word doctrine is literally translated instruction.

That's what Jesus spent His entire earthly ministry doing before accomplishing the ultimate task which was to give His life as a ransom a for many. He was always instructing people in love. And sometimes His instruction was very firm.

And so, for the one who has the gift of teaching he or she must use it in a way that instructs without compromise, not tickling the ears of people but helping them to see what God is instructing His church, and doing it in love, seeking the best for each person as they encourage them in Christ according to His word.

Tit 2:1 "You must teach what is in accord with *sound doctrine*."

How does someone know if they have the gift of teaching? Let me give you some things to look for. First, if one has the gift of teaching they will always have a desire to be teachable. If you're not willing to be taught of God and to be taught and submit as you sit under a teacher then the chances are pretty good that the gift of teaching is something you're either fighting or simply don't have.

Of course being teachable doesn't always guarantee that one will have the gift of teaching, but one with the gift must be teachable, willing to walk in the teachings of God's word.

Another thing to look for is the desire for the word of God. And though this must never be limited to the one with the gift of teaching it must be central as that gift is employed.

The apostle Peter's epistle was to the entire church but it must be central to the life of a teacher in the church.

1Pet.2:1... "Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to your salvation."

The one with the gift of teaching will have very strong desires to dig deep into the word for himself and also for the building up of the Body. Like David they can say: "I rejoice in your (Word) promise like one who finds great spoil." (Psa 119:162)

The gift of teaching excites the student of the word like one finding great spoil. But the gift of teaching will always prompt that one to teach, to instruct. It's not enough to gain knowledge for personal edification. Those with the gift of teaching will be prompted by the Spirit to share with the Body in some capacity. Again, like David, the one with the gift of teaching will desire to share his gift.

Psa 119:172 "May my tongue sing of your word, for all your commands are righteous."

The gift of teaching is one of those gifts which must be pursued diligently. It is an exercise of discipline to be able to use that gift effectively. Paul instructed Timothy in 1Tim.4:16.... "Pay close attention to yourself and to your *teaching*."

1Tim.5:17 "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who *work hard at preaching and teaching*."

And of course, as with any gift from the Spirit which is designed to lift up the name of Jesus Christ, so too with the gift of teaching. The word of God is the word given by Christ through the

inspiration of the Holy Spirit, with Jesus Himself being the living Word.

And we must never forget what Jesus said in Mat 28:19-20
"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and **teaching** them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

One last thing about this gift of teaching. Like any gift it is to be used in the Body of Christ. If we are not using the gifts in the Body no one will recognize that you have such a gift and cannot encourage you towards that gift.

To say you have the gift of hospitality and yet it's never practiced in the Body, one has to wonder. If you say you have the gift of exhortation and yet it's not being practiced in the Body, then we are being denied a real asset.

In like manner, if one has the gift of teaching and is not showing the fruits of it in the Body no one will know and be blessed by their gift.

If you do not have the strong desires and commitment and discipline in the word that I've mentioned don't fret that you don't have the gift of teaching. Paul was certainly aware that not all would have the same gifts.

1CO 12:29-30 "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? <U>Are all teachers</U>? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

The implied answer is no. Not everyone has all these gifts. But I would add to that, please don't use that as an excuse to be lax in the seeking of God in His word or of seeking to know the things of the word as you personally study it.

Always be teachable and always call on the Holy Spirit to lead you and guide you into all truth, and rely on the Spirit's power to walk in that truth to the honor and glory of God as Jesus Christ is magnified in and through us.