

## GIFT OF APOSTLE

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### THE GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

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I want to speak to you now on the ministry, the gift of apostles.

This is a key verse in understanding the gifts in terms of how the order of authority exercised in 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).

It's the only place in the Bible where you see the order in terms of the exercised authority within the church in order, first, second, third and the first one listed is apostles. Do you know that Jesus only ordained one ministry and that was the ministry of apostles. Jesus Himself in His earthly ministry only ordained apostles. He didn't ordain pastors, evangelists, teachers, prophets. He only ordained apostles. From that ministry then, all the others were able to be ordained by Him working in them. The Christian church was able to be birthed and brought in on the day of Pentecost. I want to point out though in terms of understanding that, it is the order of the authority exercised in the church, don't confuse that with the order of exercised authority over the church in terms of leadership. See the gifts are working within the church. When you talk in terms of authority exercised over the church, you're talking about rulership or eldership. That's another type of ordination. That's another type of office. It's bishops, deacons, elders, overseers. Those are an office that you earn the right to move into, whereas when we are talking about the gifts, you don't earn the right to have a gift. The Lord chooses that. Many are called, but few are chosen. You are called, as Paul said, to be an apostle, you are called to whatever the Lord has called you to. So we need to make that distinction. It's the order of authority exercised within the church and understanding that first the apostles... That doesn't mean that they have more authority, necessarily. What it's talking about is the order. For instance when God brings something new to the church, He comes in this order generally. First the apostles, then it's established or founded with the apostles, then the prophets will receive it and have it confirmed, even like Paul's gospel was given to him as an apostle, but then other apostles received it and it was confirmed by prophets and then teachers received it and then they propounded that and taught that and expounded upon that wisdom, that authority, that was given to the church and as it went down that line. That's the way that God sets it up in the church.

Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's (2 Corinthians 10:7). For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed... (v.8) See that authority was given through Christ Jesus. The Lord gave it to them. That authority then as it is given is exercised within the church.

This is the distinction that we need to make in terms of gifts that are within us. If you have the gift of a teacher, that's the Lord the Teacher choosing to continue His ministry of a teacher through your life and giving you to the church. So what we need to understand is that teacher then teaches in the church wherever the Lord leads them, wherever the opportunity is in obedience to Him. That does not mean that he needs the position of what we call a pastor, or an elder, or a head-elder over a church. That does not mean that teacher has to wait until he gets into that position. He may never get in that position. He may not be called to that position. He may not want that position, but if he thinks that he needs that position in order to exercise his gifts, then he will have buried his talent.

We need to release the gifts in all the people in our churches and teach people how to walk in their giftings and not let those giftings be contingent upon a position. Now certainly if you have that position, if God has called you and placed you in a position of rulership, then do it well. A man who desires the office of a bishop, desires a good work. But the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance. Comes from the word charis which is the word "grace." These are gifts of God's grace, apostles, prophets...there's a big difference of a gift of God's grace than a good work that you desire and then receive because you earn that right. That's a whole other subject that we cover in the ministries working within the church.

The giftings and calling of God are without repentance (Romans 11:29), but a position can change. I can do it for a while and decide the Lord wants me to do something else. I can do it for awhile and you might as a church decide I should be doing something else. But the gifts and the calling of God that are grace within me are without repentance. I have that and now it's just a choice of whether I want to walk in obedience and bless and give to the church. We within the church need to teach people that if they have a gifting then certainly walk in love, but let's bring out the best in one another and let's covet earnestly the best gifts and within the church. Just so you understand when I say that this is the order of authority exercised in the church, I'm not saying, "Over the church." Over the church is exercised by elders and overseers. Now if an elder has the ministry of, or the gifting of, an apostle, then fine. Isn't he going to use that? Certainly. If he has the gifting of a pastor or the gifting of a teacher, certainly he's not going to bury that, he's going to use that just like you use your gifting wherever you happen to be working. Let's understand that, within the church we need to draw out the giftings within each and every person in the church.

I want to start looking at some of the attributes of apostles. One of the things, one of the attributes of an apostles and the apostolic ministry is to bring into being that which has never been and to do for the first time that which has never been done. That's why first,

apostles... because if you have those in operation properly, then you can continue on and do things that have never been done and bring into existence new things. That's why when Jesus left twelve apostles to start the church, then from those twelve apostles all things could be put in order that need to be done continuing even to this day.

If ye have heard of the dispensation (or the administration) of the grace of God which is given me to you ward (Ephesians 3:2): How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words (v.3), Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) (v.4), 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 (v.5). It was given unto Paul through his gifting of an apostle and it was something that had not been made known unto man in other ages. Now if you keep reading you'll see that it was given to other apostles and then prophets to confirm what was given to the apostles, but you see this attribute of this ministry to bring into being that which was not known.

You see where Philip went to Samaria as an evangelist and he evangelized and he did great wonders there and people were healed and they received, there was great joy in that city. That's what happens when evangelists do their job. Great joy comes because whenever the gospel's preached, great joy comes in. So there's Philip doing his job. But one thing that we'll see later is that apostles can establish churches, but evangelists go to individuals. They may even bring individuals into discipleship, but they don't go to the next step of actual churches, at least not in the purest sense of that ministry. But here you had a situation where Philip went up to Samaria and he brought men and women into the Kingdom of God and they received Jesus as their Savior after they heard his preaching and they saw the miracles which he did, but they didn't receive the Holy Spirit. This is the first time since the day of Pentecost where somebody received Jesus, but did not receive in a manifestation, the Holy Ghost, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John (Acts 8:14). Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost (v.15). In other words there were some things happening in Samaria that hadn't happened before. One of them was they were getting saved, but they didn't receive the Holy Ghost.

The other thing was that the Jews down here in Jerusalem were never quite so sure about those Samaritans up there. The people up in Samaria, they were kind of like half-Jews because they were corrupted in their pure race, gentiles had mingled with them when they were captured. So they were always a little suspect and pretty much looked down on by the more "pure" race. There were two things they needed to check into and so what did they do? They sent apostles up there. Peter and John went up there and checked into the thing, received the revelation from God, therefore by the laying on of hands they received the Holy Ghost, took care of the situation there and brought that church along to the place where it should be where they all received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

This is an example of where you have gentiles for the first time. Now beginning on the day of Pentecost it was available for gentiles to receive the Holy Spirit. But they were a little slow in catching on. Jesus told them to go to all the world. It took them about seventeen years before they started getting out of Jerusalem. But here Peter had a vision because Cornelius was a just man and he was praying. God sent an angel to Cornelius and said, "You send down to Joppa and get a man called Simon Peter and you have him come up here." Peter gets the vision about the sheet coming down so therefore because of this vision he finds out there are going to be men coming for him. He goes with the men up to Cornelius. He preaches Jesus, they receive the Holy Spirit. They confess Jesus as Lord and they receive the Holy Spirit in the manifestation. Why did God send Peter up there? Because Peter was an apostle and even though this had been available since the day of Pentecost it was still the first time it had occurred. He also took witnesses, Peter did, but anyway. The witnesses didn't do anything that hadn't been done before, though. They just witness it.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34); But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him (v.35). The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) (v.36). Peter was even surprised, but he realized that what had just occurred had not occurred before, but yet this was God's grace to all men. He realized what the Scriptures had said that they'd overlooked. That the Spirit was going to be available to all in the age of grace. Anyplace in the world where men would confess Jesus as Lord, whatever nationality, whatever nation, whatever race, if they confessed Jesus as Lord that they were going to receive eternal life and have available the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God (Acts 11:1).

When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life (Acts 11:18). You see when Philip went up there and was doing some things and he was holding forth the word there were a few things that didn't occur that probably they felt should have. They sent up the apostles to set that straight. When Cornelius, who was so just and devout, prayed to God and God said, "We have to get Cornelius in the Kingdom." Who did He send up there? An apostle. He had to give him a vision to obey and he went up there and by him speaking the word something occurred that hadn't happened ever. He brought into this world something that had never occurred before. That's one of the attributes of this ministry. Then when he went back to Jerusalem and expounded to those guys and said, "Look they received Jesus then they received the Holy Ghost, they are children of God just like we are." They scratched their heads and said, "Well, hey, praise the Lord."

You know in Missoula, in Montana, we are very motivated. There is quite a number of us that are very highly motivated to see unity amongst the churches in Missoula and really to see a city-wide church. This is something we'd like to see and not have a division that has been there for so many years and to go for what we see is really biblical. We may

have many congregations, but that there would be one church in Missoula. Not that we would be uniform, but that we would be united. We can each have our differences, but that Jesus would be one Shepherd over the city. We've been praying for this. We come together and we work together and do different things together and even as the city we do things. We are working, I believe that it is pleasing to God what we are doing. One day I was praying, in fact I was getting ready to go on the road the following day. That morning I got up with the feeling that I had so much to do. But what hit me were the words of Martin Luther when he said, "I have so much to do today, that if I don't spend the first three hours in prayer the devil will get an advantage of me." It just so happened on that particular day I had available to me four different hours of prayer that I could avail myself of so I thought, "Good. I'm going to do that." So I went to the first hour of prayer which was my weekly prayer group. Normally when I leave there after we've prayed for that hour, I'm just so light hearted and all the burdens are gone and it's just a wonderful time. This particular day I prayed and the Lord brought some things to me specifically concerning our pastors' group and the elders coming together and I really left with a burden and I came an hour later to the next prayer group which was with the elders of the church in Missoula, like we like to call it. After we prayed for a while I spoke and I said, "You know there are some things that the Lord showed me today and I feel like I need to bring them up." I said, "What we are doing here in Missoula is a good thing. What we are trying to do here is a good thing. We are trying to do a great work. I think we're trying to do the will of the Lord. By bringing the churches together and by having unity within the church so that we can reach the entire city for Christ. I think that's a good work and I think it's pleasing to the Lord. But what I saw today was actually something we've overlooked. I can't believe it never occurred to me before." I said, "What we're trying to do is something that has never been done before. We've never had this in this city. It's never been done before. What that is, is an attribute of the ministry of an apostle. What we are trying to do is a good thing. But we're going to fail if we don't do it according to the rules that are in the Bible. In other words what I saw was that if we want to accomplish something that has never been done then we're going to have to do it according to the Lord's will and have His wisdom to know what to do and when to do it. That is an attribute of the ministry of an apostle so therefore if we want to succeed, then we need to pray that He'll give us an apostolic anointing." People were scratching their notes real quick and everything and it was really received real well and what do we do with that information? One thing I think is pray for an apostolic anointing. Whether we have the ministry of an apostle in operation in that city or whether he anoints somebody with that working is fine. But what we need though is we need that apostolic anointing which is able to bring into being in that city that which has never been and that is one church.

Actually since that day there have been some wonderful changes and some prayers and fastings have just gone off for that reason. I think that we're once again continuing on. I think it was another step. I think that was given that day, was because before that day, it probably couldn't have been handled. But on that day it was given; it was spoken; it was believed and now we continue on and I believe the Lord will give us the information as we need it. So we can continue to do His work. But that is an attribute of that ministry, to do something or to bring into being something that has never been in the past.

Another attribute is an apostle must be a servant first. He must be a servant before all else. Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God (Romans 1:1). He is a servant first, then called to be an apostle. Humility.

Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1). First and foremost a servant, then an apostle.

So the last shall be first, and the first last; for many be called, but few chosen (Matthew 20:16). So in a sense, the apostles coming first has to put himself last by making himself a servant, by humbling himself to the Lord. If he truly wants to walk in the fullness of that gifting and be in a position to receive that authority and utilize it correctly, then he, personally has to make himself first a servant to all. Jesus has to be the example, because as "the" apostle made Himself a servant of all.

Here's what Paul says about the apostles: For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last (in 1 Corinthians 12:28 he says first the apostles....but here he puts 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). We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised (v.10). Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place (v.11); And labor, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it (v.12); Being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day (v.13). I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you... (v.14).

I always like to ask when I read this, "What was he warning them?" He was warning them to not become apostles. When you grow up, ladies, tell your babies "Don't grow up to be apostles." You see he's talking to those guys because remember at Corinth at this time, they were getting tempted by false apostles who had come in there and these apostles that had come in there after Paul had left were saying, "Well, you know Paul, he can't really be an apostle. I mean because look at all the sufferings he always goes through and look at us, we have nice chariots, we're living off all of your offerings. I mean we are the true apostles. Look at Paul out there ship-wrecked and getting beat all the time, I mean if he really had the power of God, he'd have a nice new toga like me because after all the blessings of God are shown because look at the prosperity that we have from living off of the abundance that you guys give us. While Paul is out there..."

So Paul writes this letter and says, "Oh, you know what? I think God has made the apostles last, because look at all these terrible things that we have to go through." What is he saying? He's saying that in the world's eyes a true apostle is really the lowest life form in the world's eyes. But in God's eyes, 1 Corinthians 12:28 says, "First apostles..." The reason that they seem to be so lowly is because if they are truly walking in their office, they are servants. He wants to be a servant first.

For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel (1 Corinthians 4:15). Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me (v.16).

Which leads me to my third attribute, that is that apostles have a father's example. The reason Paul could say, "Be followers of me as dear children" is because he told them, "I'm your father." He said, "I'm a father to you." He had the example of a father. When you as a parent say to your children, "Be followers of me." It's because you're sure of your example. Paul was not boasting. What he was doing was trying to give them an example that they could look up to. After he just warned them about this lifestyle, he says, "Follow me." He says, "You don't have many fathers. You have these guys coming in here, but you don't have somebody that has begotten you after the word. You don't have somebody that has brought this information to you and has been like a father to you, that has given his life for you so that you wouldn't have to go through what I'm going through. That's what a father does." Therefore, his example was so strong that he could say, "Be followers of me."

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children (Ephesians 5:1). How do you follow God? As a child of the Father. It's in terms of a father-child relationship so when Paul said to be followers of me it was in the context of a father-child relationship. Apostles have to have the example of a father so that somebody can follow their example.

The next example of an attribute of an apostle is that they have care and commitment to serve.

He's talking about those false apostles that have come in there after he is absent and they are living off the fruit of his labor and by speaking knowledgeable things and impressing things they have kind of moved in and are taking over the oversight here within the Corinthian church.

Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, (he says, "I've had so many beatings I can't count them anymore) in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft (2 Corinthians 11:23). Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one (v.24). Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep (v.25). The same thing that these false teachers were saying, "He can't be an apostle because he has all this bad stuff happening to him." Paul is glorying in it, "Look at all this I have been through for the gospel."

In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren (2 Corinthians 11:26). You know you could say, "Paul, quit dwelling on the negative. Quit thinking about yourself and give God the glory." The things that people reprove each other for now a days, if they had to deal with the apostles, if they would read the Bible, maybe they would change their

criticisms. I don't believe I would be the one that would want to criticize Paul for writing it, because he is writing this by the unction of the Holy Spirit.

In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness (2 Corinthians 11:27). I mean is this the kind of stuff you want to tell people that you are interested in bringing into the ministry? Is this the kind of thing you want to witness to people about so that they know about the joy that there is in receiving Christ Jesus? Look he is just boasting this before them in what he's gone through for the name of the gospel.

Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches (2 Corinthians 11:28). Besides all this, even to the point that he is willing to serve the church even when he has to do it by laboring with his own hands, suffering through all this, having physical beatings, and besides all that, to take care of all the churches. I mean he has that heart that he just wants to care and it's not that he wants anything in return, but his heart is just that he wants to show care and serve in the care that he has and the compassion that he has for the church.

Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? (2 Corinthians 11:29). If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities (v.30). The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not (v.31). Look at his heart. After all this stuff he says, "Listen, and besides all that I really care for you guys. I'm watching out for you guys."

I want you to know about another attribute of that apostle office. Really this is the same for any of the giftings is that there is limit to the authority and the bounds set by the Lord to any of the giftings. It is the same with an apostolic ministry. There is a limit put upon the authority that is given and the bounds are set by the Lord.

And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance (Acts 22:17); And saw him saying unto me, make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem (this is Jesus he saw) for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me (v.18). And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee (v.19); And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him (v.20). And he said unto me, Depart for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles (v.21).

So Paul, the great apostle, the Lord put limits on his ministry, didn't He? He said, "Get away from the Jews and go to the gentiles." So the limits of Paul's apostolic authority were to be utilized within the gentile nations. Now when Paul came back to Jerusalem, if he came back as a messenger, meaning that he brought the money. One time when Barnabas and Paul came and they brought money which was a gift from the churches, and they brought that to Jerusalem, they didn't get in trouble at all. James and all those guys were happy to have it. Because they didn't come in their apostolic authority. They came as servants of God, messengers to bring this gift to help the church. But when Paul

came back years later, and tried to influence them with his apostolic authority, his heart was to help to unify the church, but when he came back in disobedience to the limit of this apostolic authority he got in deep trouble, didn't he? He almost lost his life. The authority of his office was limited. If he had come back that time, let's say as a teacher, he might have been able to get away or even as an evangelist or as a pastor. I don't know, but when he came in as an apostle, he said, "No you don't have limits here. You are exceeding your limits." The Lord had set that limit for him and said, "Go to the gentiles."

But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter (Galatians 2:7); (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) (v.8). It's not that Paul couldn't teach, etc. back in Israel but it's that his apostleship was to the gentiles and it's not that Peter couldn't go and teach among the gentiles, because he did that, but that his apostleship was to the circumcision. As long as they understood the limits of that office, and both of them had other offices or giftings that they walked in, but they had to understand the limits of that particular office and as long as they understood those limits and walked within God's grace in those areas, they didn't get any trouble from going over and overstepping their authority in areas where they were not given authority.

And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision (Galatians 2:9). Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do (v.10). But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed (v.11). For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision (v.12). And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation (v.13).

In other words even though Paul realized Peter and James and John were pillars of the church, when he saw Peter doing something he shouldn't have done, he withstood them to the face, right in front of everybody. You realize also that Peter didn't reprove him, but he received it. But they realized back there in Jerusalem that the ministry of the apostle working within Paul was to the gentiles. The ministry of the apostle in Peter, James and John was to the circumcision. Once again like I said Peter could go and minister to gentiles, and Paul could minister to the Jew, but that when he did minister it was not in that office. If he tried to walk in that office then he wasn't walking in the will of God.

I made reference to this. I'd like to read it, And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar (Acts 11:28). Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea (v.29). See I really believe that is an important verse for everybody because so many times we think that our abilities aren't big enough to make a difference so we don't utilize them and that is really a shame that the devil could talk God's people

into burying their talent. Because it says right here...Then the disciples, every man according to his ability... That's all God asks of us. If you think your abilities are so little that you keep them hidden then that's a shame because all God requires of you is that you do what you are able. If you do what you are able, you'll have a full reward. Well anyway, they determined every man according and was able they determined to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judea. Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul (v.30).

At this point and time there was no problem with Barnabas and Saul coming because they didn't come as apostles in the sense that they came to exercise their apostolic authority. But they came as messengers or apostles sent, but to bring this money. Not to exercise authority, but to bring this. They were apostles from Antioch and so therefore they were received. They weren't treated badly because they were still within the obedience of not trying to exercise that authority over the Jews.

We however will not boast beyond our proper limits (You see there are proper limits put on any ministry just like there are on the apostles' ministry. There are proper limits set by God. How do you know what they are? You're not going to know unless God shows you or unless the apostle was to tell you, but the thing is it was obvious to those in Jerusalem that Peter had this ministry to the circumcision and Paul had this ministry to the gentile. That doesn't mean they were the head honcho over every Jew or every gentile in the world. But it meant that their authority as an apostle could be operated within those limits and they would be in God's will. They were sent to those parts of the body.)

...we will not boast beyond our proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the field God has assigned us to. So Paul was saying that he had been assigned to a certain field. As long as he walked in his authority in that area he would receive the blessings of God. A field that reaches even unto you. So you are part of my field. You're part of a place where I have limits, where I can exercise my authority. We are not going too far in our boasting as would be the case if we had not come to you for we did get as far as you with the gospel of Christ. Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand so that we can preach the gospel in regions beyond you for we do not want to boast about work already done in another man's territory (2 Corinthians 10:13-16 NIV).

They were saying, "Look, we have authority and it goes to you. And it goes beyond you and we want to get there once we get you settled and get you firmly established", which is an apostle's job to do. Paul said, "Look we have proper limits and God has assigned us a certain field to operate within that ministry."

An apostle may have, if he has more than one ministry, let's say he may have apostolic authority in one area, but only teaching authority in another area. Or authority from another gift. He must be honest and cautious not to confuse the two or the people of God will be misled and confused.

In fact you even put up with anyone who enslaves you or exploits you or takes advantage of you or pushes himself forward or slaps you in the face (2 Corinthians 11:20 NIV). He's talking to the Corinthian church and saying, "You guys are putting up with leaders like this. And you are allowing this to happen." Don't you think those leaders were over-extending their authority by doing those things? And those people didn't necessarily have to take it. They certainly did not and Paul was reproofing them for receiving this from leadership within the church.

So we need to understand that even though the apostle's ministry may come first, there are limits and that limit is put there by God and each apostle, just like any gifting, is required by God to know where his limits are. If the Lord wants to change those, He certainly has the ability. The Lord is the head of the church. He is the head of the gifting so He can expand it or shrink it. It can be a geographic limit or it can be a limit of understanding or bringing of information or completing of a task to the church. But nevertheless a limit which that person will know because the Lord will teach them and will endeavor to enforce that. If they overstep that they are going to receive judgment.

The anointing, also, and the authority given may change or be removed due to, for instance, disobedience. It could be changed, also, in accordance with obedience and expanded or changed. But look at an example here where it was removed due to disobedience: For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein, and his bishopric let another take (Acts 1:20). That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place (v.25). See the gifts and the calling of God are given without repentance. The gifting would still be there but you can fall from the limit, in other words God can give you these limits and by disobedience you can lose all those limits. You still would have the gifting, but God's just not going to let you have a place where you have the authority to operate it because you're not doing it in accordance with Him.

Judas had a personal agenda. He fell into a category where you might say that he knew more than God did. Because he had something he needed to do that was so important that he was willing to disobey and abuse his ministry in order to accomplish that. More apostles have gone astray due to placing a personal agenda before the Lord's. Personal ambition has destroyed more apostolic ministries than anything else and pride shields them from reproof and correction which could have changed their direction. Obedience is better than sacrifice.

And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the lord, and see how they do (Acts 15:36). And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark (v.37). Do you see the point there? Barnabas determined. That could mean that Barnabas had his own personal agenda which superseded the Lord's will. Well anyway... But Paul thought it not good to take him with them who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work (v.38). In other words they had, had John Mark on an earlier trip and he left for whatever reason before they were done with the job and Paul was saying, "Look he's just not prepared yet. We need to hold off a little bit."

But it says, And the contention was so sharp between them (And this wasn't good. We're supposed to have unity and purpose, right? We're supposed to have unity within the church, so it's unfortunate that we have this contention, but it was so sharp) between them, that they departed asunder one from the other and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus (v.39), And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God (v.40). And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches (v.41).

We don't know what happened after that to Barnabas, because the canon of the word continues to follow Paul. But it is very possible that because Barnabas had a personal agenda, not that his intents were necessarily evil, but it is very possible that because of his personal agenda that this contention came in here and therefore he went on and went a different direction. Possibly he changed and repented, but do you see how you can overstep by having a personal agenda? By the senses Barnabas had every right to pull rank, because Barnabas was the one that stood up for Paul when Paul was just hanging out in Tarsus, Barnabas was the one who went down and got him and brought him up to Antioch and thereby put him in a position where he could show to the Christian church that he was proven that the Lord had worked with him and teach about the gospel given unto him and thereby being in a position where the Holy Ghost could separate him out.

Well, be that as it may. One of the dangers in any of the ministries and the giftings especially in this ministry of an apostle is to have a personal agenda because with that authority there is also needs to be more responsibility because to whom much is given much will be required.

Well, another attribute of the apostle is that they are founders and master-builders.

For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9). 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 (v.10). For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ (v.11). See Paul as an apostle was a founder, he laid the foundation. He was a master builder. The apostles are the ones that sit down with the ruler and the tape and figure out how the house is going to go, always lining up with the cornerstone where all measurements are made from, which is Christ Jesus. This is an attribute and a necessary ability that needs to be contained within this gifting. To continue on with that understanding with the Father to exhort them to build carefully so that the house is build strongly upon the Rock.

Another attribute that they may receive doctrinal revelation.

If ye have heard of the dispensation (or the administration) of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward (Ephesians 3:2). How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery: (as I wrote afore in few words (v.3) Doctrinal revelation was given unto Paul. This was new light, new information, new doctrine was given unto Paul the apostle,

but if you look down in verse 5 which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men (it's new), as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. In accordance with 1 Corinthians 12:28, first apostles, secondarily prophets, etc. You see, prophets also receive new light. Teachers can receive new light. Prophets can receive new information. The difference is not the information, but the order in which it is given. It is given to the apostles to found. It is given to the prophets to confirm. It is given to the teachers to expound. So understanding that, and also understanding the danger that comes with the ministry of the teacher, in that they deal with knowledge. Can a teacher receive information, which has not been known heretofore, they've got it in the order, one, two, three, but they receive it. Now they, with the knowledge of another office, can they take that information now and act as if they had an office that they don't? Because knowledge puffeth up. With knowledge you can sometimes deceive. And, I'm not picking on that office, I'm just using that as an example. But they can take that information which was given to them, which was given to them in order to expound, but they can also use it in such a way to deceive and overstep their limits of their ministry as a teacher or prophet or whatever.

We need to understand the limits put on each of the giftings. And the order in which things are given. The same thing can be given to one as to another, but the reason it's given in that order, is so that there is strength in the church and that there is not confusion in evil work.

But it was given unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. It was given by revelation by the prophet, just like it was to the apostle, but when the prophet received it, it may have been just as much revelation and just as glorious to that prophet as it was to the apostle, but in terms of to the church, God's order was to found or establish with the apostle, but then to the prophet to confirm as secondly. So in terms of the overall picture, the prophet received it, but it was to confirm what had been given to the apostles. So that the people of God can understand this is true.

No place in the Bible does Paul ever imply he was the only one that got the revelation of the mystery. God never would limit Himself to one apostle. Just like He would never limit Himself to one man except in areas where He has to. One place where He had to was on the Cross. There was only one Man that could bear that burden, but after that now we are in the church and the church is to show forth the manifold wisdom of God. So Paul when he said, "I received the revelation of the mystery," he was telling the truth, but other apostles received it and after the apostles received it then some prophets received it and it confirmed. Because God wants the people of God to be able to be sure in what they are receiving from the ministries and from the leadership and from those with authority in the church. He doesn't want us to be deceived.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:42). And fear came upon every soul and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles (v.43). Whose doctrine was it? The apostles' doctrine. How was the doctrine received? It was received by the apostles. And what was the fruit? The fruit was fear on every soul and many wonders and signs were done by the

apostles. See if we have true doctrine from heaven there is going to be good profit. There is going to be good fruit in operation. Isn't that great?

Once again I'll repeat it: apostles set the doctrine. Prophets confirm the doctrine. Teachers expound and explain the doctrine. Now you can have one person that has those three ministries, if you like. If the Lord likes. There's nothing wrong with that, but when it is the office of the apostles in operation, it's going to found it and bring it into being. When it's the prophet, he's going to bring into being in order to confirm, and once the teacher is in operation, then he is going to expound and explain. Paul himself had all three of those ministries but you can tell which ministry is in operation by seeing what he's doing at that time.

Another attribute of an apostle, and this is not only of the apostle, but this certainly must be of the apostle, that is they must have a close relationship with the Lord and a personally disciplined by Him.

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). See it was Peter and the other apostles, this was their attitude. We're going to obey God rather than men and this I think is a foundational verse for anybody, really I think for any Christian, but certainly for an apostle, any person who is called to that ministry of an apostle is they have got to have the attitude they're going to obey God to the death rather than men.

Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord? (1 Corinthians 9:1). If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord (v.2). Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? He saw the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, I believe that shows a very close relationship with the Lord Jesus that He appeared unto Him. Now Timothy for instance and Silas and there are other apostles listed in the Bible and it doesn't indicate that they saw a vision of the Lord Jesus. But yet when the Lord appeared unto Samuel it was through revealing Himself through His word. The point is that the apostle has got to have a vision of the Lord Jesus and has got to know His heart. He's got to be close. And I believe that there may come a time in every apostle's life when the Lord personally appears to them, but that's the Lord's choice. But what we need to understand is that every apostle, if he will allow the Lord to lead him into that ministry, then he will have a very close relationship and he will be disciplined by the Lord Jesus. I don't care if it is 1999 or if it is the year 34 A.D. the Lord Jesus is able to disciple now just like He was when He was on earth, actually even better now because He can disciple more than twelve.

If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you, for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord (1 Corinthians 9:2). You see the seal of Paul's apostleship was that church in Corinth. I believe, you know we don't use that term "apostle", but we're beginning to use it more than we used to, but for many years the word we used instead was "missionary", somebody that went on a mission, because that's what an apostle does. He gets sent on a mission. Now apostles are sent. See the word apostle

comes from the Greek word that means "sent one or to be sent" it comes from the Greek word *apostolos*.

But not only apostles are sent, because prophets are also sent. The difference is what are they sent to do? A prophet is sent to deliver a message. But an apostle is sent to complete a task. When an apostle is sent in, let's say, to begin or to found a church, so he goes into Madagascar and he starts a new church, well, we call him a missionary. We sent him there, okay? And he got sent there by the church and he begins a new work and he begins a church there. Now whether he has the gift of the apostle or whether he's just got the job of an apostle, the point is that he's doing that job. We call him a missionary and we sent him in there. That's not the only thing that they do, but there he goes and he starts a church. But I really believe, even in this sense of the understanding, we have fallen short in what the seal of a true apostle is. See because Paul was talking to a city-wide church. He wasn't writing a letter to the denomination of the Corinthian church, but he was writing to one church. And the true seal of an apostle, and I think in this day and time we need to see this even bigger and I think we will see this come to pass, is the true seal of an apostle is an established city-wide church. Not only is it just that they go into an area and they start their own church and now you have a new denomination of... or church of... right? But that we now have a city-wide church. When Paul was saying this he said, "You're the seal of my apostleship." It's an established church. Yes we understand that, but what we stop short of is we think that we have an apostle with a completed job when we have a church on the corner of you know 5th and Main. No, no, no. We have the fullness of that seal when we have apostles working to the point that they have a city-wide church completed and I think in this day and time we're going to see the expansion of this part of the definition of the apostolic office to the point where we have city-wide churches once again. I'm not saying that we don't have differences and that we don't have denominations. I'm not saying that everybody has to pull down their sign in front of "their congregation in the church of that city." But the point is that the Lord can look down and He can say, "There's a city-wide church there and each one of those congregations has an elder and when they come together that's the elders in the church of... that city." That would be the seal of an apostle in our day and time as it was with Paul.

Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? (1 Corinthians 9:3-6). Are we the only ones of all the apostles that have to work for a living? All these other apostles can live off the abundance and the tithes and the tribute that's given to the church, but all those guys can do that but Barnabas and I have to work, because we're lesser apostles.

Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? (1 Corinthians 9:7).

For some reason that reminded me of the story of Naboth, remember he was the man that had a vineyard outside of where Ahab was king and he wanted Naboth's vineyard and he

went and offered Naboth some money and he said, "No, I'm not going to sell." So Ahab went and whined to Jezebel, "I can't believe it. I'm the king and Naboth won't give me that vineyard." So what happened? She said, "Don't worry about it. I'll get it for you." So she sends down some of her liars and they falsely accuse him of breaking the first commandment and blaspheming against God and things that she was guilty of, but she pays these guys to falsely accuse him and she has the people stone him. Then she confiscates the land and gives it to her husband. You know what? He's happy, "Oh, goody, goody."

So anyway, who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? The only ones that plant a vineyard and don't eat of it are the ones that have it stolen from them. Actually as Paul was talking to the Corinthian churches, that is exactly what was happening. He had planted the church. He'd moved on and now some other guys moved in and they're living off the tithes of the church while he's out there working with his hands, continuing to move the gospel. Well anyway.

Say I these things as a man? Or saith not the law the same also? (1 Corinthians 9:8). Am I saying this just because of my own personal need or am I just saying them because it's in the Bible, it's in God's Word? For it is written in the law of Moses. Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? (v.9). Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope (v.10). If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? (11). If we've given you spiritual things that tend towards eternal life and tend towards eternal reward, shouldn't we be able to reap some of your carnal things that you can't take with you anyway?

If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? (shouldn't we also be able to?) Nevertheless we have not used this power, but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:12). We didn't want to offend you guys so we've let you go ahead and do this. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? And they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? (v.13). Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel (v.14). But I have used none of these things; neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me, for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void (v.15). For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! (v.16). For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me (v.18), What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel (v.19).

If I go ahead and do this, but I don't do it by the right motivation, I have a gospel committed unto me, but I'm just doing it because it's been committed unto me, but I'm not going to have a reward because I'm not doing it with the right heart. So I would rather do it with the right heart and suffer need and want and have eternal rewards than to get all

bent out of shape because you guys aren't doing your job in supplying my need. So therefore I would rather have the eternal reward, but can't we get a balance and do both, guys?

For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more (1 Corinthians 9:19). And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law (v.20): to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law (v.21). He just wants to reach everybody.

To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some (1 Corinthians 9:22). And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you (v.23). Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain (v.24). And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible (v.25). I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air (v.26) (not shadow-boxing, not just practicing); But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (v.27).

If you're going to keep under your body, then you'll have to control your soul. And if you want to control your soul then your spirit has to be running things. So in order for him to say, "I keep under my body" it's so that he can say that he's in control of the things in the flesh so that he's not going to lose those things which he has gained in the spirit which are eternal rewards.

The tenth attribute that I have is perseverance, signs and wonders.

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong (2 Corinthians 12:10). I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me for I ought to have been commended of you; for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing (v.11). Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience (perseverance) in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds (v.12). You know in the listing of all the things that Paul went through, looking at perseverance, I mean that was a man that could persevere. He could stand firm.

Here he give three attributes, actually, here: patience or perseverance, signs and wonders, and mighty deeds. But, look what he lists first. The perseverance. When you think of an apostle, you think of signs and wonders. You think of mighty deeds that are done. And rightly so because those are attributes of an apostle. But Paul listed as the signs of an apostle, first and foremost he is able to stand regardless of what was thrown at him, regardless of what came up against him, he still stood. Regardless, he was faithful, regardless of what the devil came against him with, regardless of the tribulation of his own countrymen. Regardless of the fact that many times nobody came to his aid.

Regardless of the many times that others came in unawares and took away those things which were meant for him to help him move the gospel. Regardless of confrontations that went within the apostolic ministries there that still the first sign of an apostle is that he persevered. That he stood faithful.

That relates us back to the first one is that they ought to obey God rather than men. That first and foremost the sign, the first sign that Paul called the sign of an apostle was to persevere. But we will see and we need to see in this office continually as we come more and more to the fullness of this office being put into its fullness now in these days the signs and wonders and mighty deeds of the first century will continue to happen. They're happening now. Whether they make it in the front page of your paper or not, the point is that you will more and more continue to see this as this ministry is once again put back in its fullness. First through perseverance and patience will you see the signs of the apostle.

For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong (2 Corinthians 12:13). In other words he said, "I didn't want to be a burden unto you so I went ahead and took care of myself" and then now he's repenting. He's saying, "Forgive me of this wrong." Because he wasn't a burden to them because he didn't enforce his authority and say, "Listen you guys you ought to be helping me out so that I can move the gospel." He is now asking them to forgive him because when you truly understand the grace of God that what he was doing by not allowing them to support him in his ministry was they were being cut off from the rewards of that ministry that they would have received by support. By receiving that ministry in accordance with Matthew 10:40. "Forgive me this wrong" he says.

Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you; for I seek not yours, but you (I'm not looking for what you have, but I'm after you. I want you.); for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children (2 Corinthians 12:14). He has a Father with that example. He ought to be working harder for them. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved (v.15). Even if I love you more and more and you love me less and less, I'm still going to spend myself for you because I love you. But be it so, I did not burden you; nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile (v.16). Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you? (v.17). I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? Walked we not in the same spirit? Walked we not in the same steps? (v.18). Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? We speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying (v.19). Do you see his attitude? Do you see his heart? As the example that they could follow as a father over them and as a wise masterbuilder as he continued to coach them and try to strengthen them and bring them along with very much patience and perseverance towards them, but also in all the things that Paul did he showed forth the attributes of the apostle in all that he did.

Let me just go through those real quick again. These are just some things that I have put down. They are certainly not all-inclusive, but.

1. To bring into being that which has never been and to do for the first time which has never been done.
2. Must be a servant before all else.
3. Apostles have a father's example.
4. Care and commitment to serve.
5. Apostolic authority has limits and bounds set by the Lord.
6. The anointing may change or be removed due to disobedience or be expanded due to the Lord's will.
7. They are founders and master builders.
8. May receive doctrinal revelation.
9. Have a close relationship with the Lord and are disciplined by Him.
10. Perseverance, signs, wonders and mighty deeds.

I think I've made the statement that the only ministry that Jesus in His earthly walk ordained anyone to is the ministry of an apostle. By that ministry then He was able to bring into being His church of which He said He would build and the gates of hell would not prevail against it. That ministry then brought into being the prophets of this age and the teachers and the evangelists and the pastors.

As the church grew then you saw each of these ministries coming into their own and each of these giftings being operated within the church. But then we saw as time went by these ministries then not be utilized to their fullest and not being utilizing in accordance to the word. Then we saw them actually all come into disuse in that you had first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, evangelists, pastors. That's basically where we stayed for centuries is with that ministry of the pastor. That's what we had.

But then you began to see with the reformation, I believe, was then the Lord really restored that ministry, more to its fullest of the pastor. Then as time went by the evangelistic ministry and then when more time went by we saw the teachers really coming into their own in this century. Then towards the end of this century we saw and are continuing to see the restoration of its fullness of the prophet and the ministry of the prophet and lastly we see the Lord presently restoring to His fullness the ministry of the apostle. I believe that ministry which brought in this age, is also the ministry that the Lord is going to use to take this age out and to end this age. Even now as we see the ministry of the apostle being restored to its fullness, it's because we are approaching the end of the age. As we come into a time when we more and more are going to see those things which have never been, coming into being, it's going to be done through this

ministry and through this gifting because the Lord is closing out this age as He approaches His coming. As He approaches what will be the unity of the church and what we will see in terms of the Holy Spirit unifying the church and bringing all Christians together and preparing the bride for the coming Bridegroom and preparing the way for the Lord. We're going to see all these ministries once again coming into a working order within the church and understanding that within the church we need to draw out the giftings one to another. A man's gift makes room for him and we need to allow for that in the church that everyone of us with our giftings having room to utilize those giftings and thereby really we then finally see the great mystery of the joint-heirship that we share with one another coming into its fullness in the operation within the church.

So praise God for what the Lord Jesus is doing and I really believe that as we see the end of the age we're going to see a culmination of the greatest harvest that has ever been. Even as with twelve apostles in charge of the movement of the Holy Spirit there on the day of Pentecost and with the twelve apostles and then the total of one-hundred-twenty, including those twelve apostles, then they were able then on that day to service five-thousand people. Even as we sometimes right now look for revival and we see revival here and there in little spots, what we need to understand is that when the Lord said that we should pray the Lord of the Harvest to send laborers because the harvest is plenteous the laborers are few, we need to understand that in terms of this day that we live. In preparation of the last harvest, if He were to give us the last harvest on this day that we live, today in 1996, we would not be able to handle it. Because that harvest is going to be so big. So as He restores this ministry and brings the church into a working order and builds the Kingdom of God like as unto a net in that last few minutes before the close of the age we're going to see the greatest harvest that has ever been. Since from the day of Pentecost until this century, they say that seventy percent of all Christians that were ever born again were born in this century. Out of two-thousand years, seventy percent of them were born again in this century and within this century seventy percent of those that were born again were born again in the last twenty years. And within the last twenty years, seventy percent of those that were born again were born again in the last five years. You can see the culmination as it rolls and as the snow ball gets bigger.

Now I don't know who figured all that out. I forget where I read it. But I believe it because what the Lord showed me, that I believe came from the Lord was even as Sampson took out more of the enemy in his death than he had in his lifetime, but even the Lord Jesus will bring more into the Kingdom in the last few minutes before He comes at the end of the age, than have been brought into the Kingdom since the day of Pentecost unto that day. I believe that we live in a day and time that if we will wake up and listen to what the Spirit has to say to the churches and see what the Spirit is doing, and then walk in faith by allowing Him to prepare us, now for what we need to be prepared for tomorrow. In other words, if we will walk by faith and let Him train us by faith, not by what the need is today, but what we believe the need will be tomorrow, then I think we will be prepared. I believe that's what the Lord is doing by restoring the ministry of the apostle. I think that maybe this is a little guideline for people as to what this ministry is and what to look for. In terms of all the other ministries knowing that, that authority is exercised within the church, not necessarily over the church, but that within the church

we have to see this ministry and we have to see the servants again, like Paul was, like Peter was, those that are willing to die to be spent, that are willing to go out and to give even though they have the care of all the churches on their shoulders. Once again to see this ministry of the true Servant and the Masterbuilder of the Father and His example. Those that can have an example for others to follow that will stand firm because I believe what we're going to see once again is that we are going to see the Lord continuing His ministry of the apostle through those men and women in our day and time that are called to that ministry and thereby see the church coordinated, even as we saw in the first century and once again we'll see unity of purpose and singleness of mind.

I say, "It's time." I'm glad to be alive in this day and time when we can once again see this and we will see this, I believe as we continue to see the church coming together in unity and we will see those signs of the apostles again and we're going to see the church founded and established and completed as the building with the living stones is placed finally in completion and we can see the roof be put on. So praise the Lord anyway.