

The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit

In our previous study we learned that there is a difference between the *gifted* leaders that God has given to the Church and the *gifts* of the Holy Spirit that He gives to individual believers. While all Christians are given spiritual gifts to bless others (1Cor. 12:11), not all believers are called to leadership in His Church (1Cor. 12:29). Therefore, it's important to understand how to distinguish who is called to leadership, and whether you might be!

1) Ephesians 4:11-12

*"And He Himself gave some to be **apostles**, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."*

1Corinthians 12:28a

*"And God has appointed these in the church: first **apostles**..."*

The first position of leadership in the Church that Paul mentions is the office of an apostle. Look up the word "apostle" using something like Blueletter Bible and write down the meaning of the word:

2) Luke 6:12-16

"Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor."

How did Peter, James, John, and the others become apostles?

How many apostles did Jesus ordain and what are their names?

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3) Read over the verses below and reconcile them

Acts 1:24-26

“And they prayed and said, “You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.” And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”

“But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out...” ~ Acts 14:14

“But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.” ~ Galatians 1:19

“Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” ~ Revelation 21:14

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.” ~ 2Corinthians 11:13

Acts 1 reads like Peter and the other 10 apostles felt compelled to replace Judas so that there would be a total of 12 apostles. Furthermore, in Revelation 21 we're told that there are only 12 apostles named in the foundation of the New Jerusalem. Yet, in Acts 14 and Galatians we read about 3 other men who were called apostles, and in 2Corinthians 11 Paul warns his friends to beware of false apostles, which would have no meaning if there were only 12.

In your opinion how do you reconcile these verses?

In your opinion could anyone today be rightly called an apostle?

If you met someone who claimed to be an apostle how would you discern whether or not they were?