

# Five Fold Function in the local church

*Ephesians 4:11-12* It was he who "gave gifts to people"; he appointed some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers. 11 He also gave apostles, prophets, missionaries, as well as pastors and teachers as gifts [to his church].



**JAQUET DUMAS**  
**APOSTOLIC LEADER**

## Understanding the Fivefold Function in the Local Church

The concept of the fivefold function in the local church is an important framework for understanding the diverse roles and ministries within the body of Christ. Rooted in biblical principles, this model recognizes the distinct functions of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in equipping and edifying the church. Each of these ministries serves a unique purpose in advancing God's kingdom, bringing transformation, and fostering spiritual growth. In this article, we will explore the significance of the fivefold function, delve into the specific responsibilities of each ministry, and discuss how they synergize to strengthen the local church. By gaining a deeper understanding of these fivefold ministries, we can better navigate church leadership, foster unity, and empower the body of Christ for effective ministry and impact.

## Defining the Fivefold Function

In the world of superheroes, you have the Avengers with their diverse range of

powers. Similarly, in the local church, you have what we call the Fivefold Function, made up of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These five roles work together to form a dynamic team that equips, encourages, and empowers the church. Think of them as the dream team, but instead of chasing villains, they're helping people grow in their faith.

## Biblical Basis for the Fivefold Ministry

Now, you might be wondering, where did this idea of the Fivefold Function come from? Well, it's not an experiment or something someone made up one day. It's actually rooted in the Bible. In Ephesians 4:11-13, the apostle Paul talks about how these five roles are given to the church to equip God's people for works of service and to help them grow in unity and maturity. So, it's not just a trendy concept; it's a biblical one.

## The Ministry of Apostles: Restoring and Establishing God's Kingdom

**The Role of Apostles in the Early Church**  
 Apostles were like the pioneers of the early church. They were the ones who planted and established new churches, spreading the good news of Jesus wherever they went. They had a pioneering spirit and a vision to see God's kingdom come on earth as it is in

heaven. They were the trailblazers, forging new paths in uncharted territories.

## Restoring Apostolic Ministry in the Modern Church

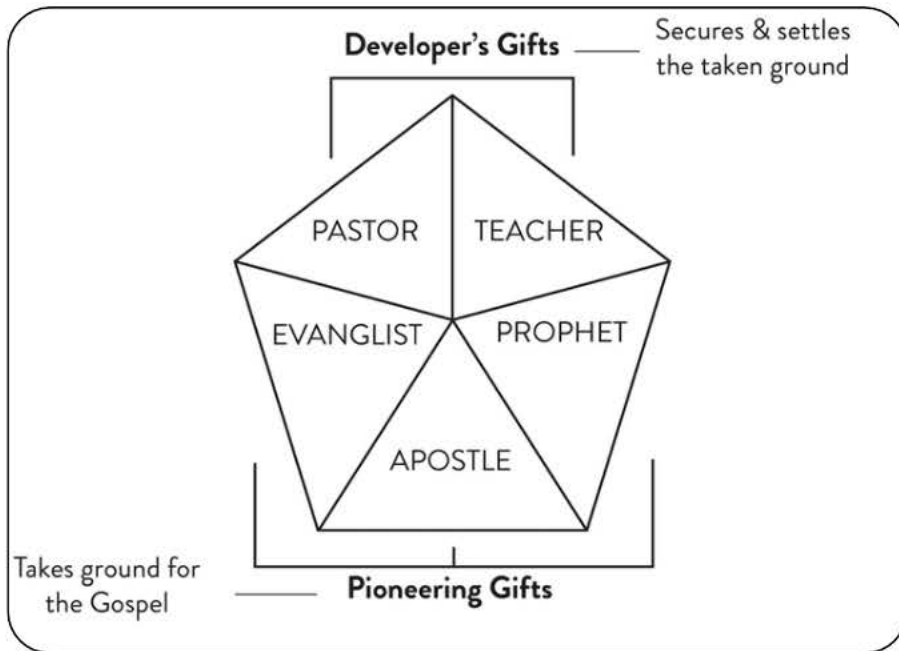
Now, you might be thinking, "Okay, that's great for the early church, but what about today?" Well, the apostolic ministry is still relevant in our modern world. It's all about restoring and establishing God's kingdom here and now. Apostles are the ones who have a vision for new initiatives, who bring fresh perspectives, and who help the church adapt and grow in changing times. They're like the MacGyvers (don't age me) of the church, always finding creative solutions to challenges.

## The Ministry of Prophets: Hearing and Declaring God's Word

Prophets have a special ability to hear and discern God's voice. They're almost like the spiritual weather forecasters,

“Pastors, Apostles, Prophets, Teachers and Evangelist, the five fold ministry is simply the ministry of JESUS CHRIST in five expressions.”

— Kingsley Opuwari Manuel



*APEST is often used to describe the five fold structure. The pentagon model pictured gives a visual representation of each function/office while offering some similarities and differences in how each gift adds to the body of Christ as a whole.*

helping the church navigate through the weathering of life. They bring timely and relevant messages from God, encouraging, correcting, and inspiring God's people. Prophetic ministry is not about what you want to hear and predicting the future for your benefit; it's about speaking the truth in love and leading the church into deeper intimacy with God to hear Him for themselves.

**Cultivating and Discerning Prophetic Gifts in the Church**

You might be thinking, "I'm not a prophet. Can I still be part of this?" Absolutely! While there are those with a specific prophetic calling, we believe that everyone can cultivate and discern prophetic gifts. It's like learning to play a musical instrument. Some might have a natural knack for it, but with practice and training, anyone can learn. So, don't be afraid to step out and explore the prophetic.

**The Ministry of Evangelists: Reaching Out and Bringing in the Lost**

The Great Commission is closely connected to the call to Evangelism. Evangelists are like the friendly tour guides of the church. Their mission is to share the good news of Jesus with those who haven't heard it yet. They're on a mission to bring in the lost sheep and introduce them to the love and grace of God. One of my favorite aspects of a tour guide in a new city is how they highlight the hidden gems. Evangelists

help people discover the beauty and transformative power of a life in Christ.

**Equipping and Mobilizing Evangelists in the Local Church**

But evangelism isn't just for a select few. It's a calling for every believer. We all have a story to tell, and our lives can be a living testimony of God's grace. The role of the local church is to equip and mobilize evangelists, providing training and support to help them confidently share their faith. So, whether you're an introvert or an extrovert, a social lite, or a shy whisperer, there's a place for you in the world of evangelism.

Remember, the Fivefold Function is not about a hierarchy or power struggles within the church. The evangelist function is often least sought after for disdain of the grit involved. It's about a team working together to build up the body of Christ and impact the world for God's kingdom. So, let's honor our unique roles and giftings, work together, and celebrate the diversity that makes the local church an extraordinary place to belong.

**The Ministry of Pastors: Nurturing and Caring for God's Flock**

The heart of a pastor is characterized by love and compassion. When it comes to the ministry of pastors, there's one word that perfectly captures their role: shepherding. Just like a shepherd cares for and tends to his flock, pastors have a heart for nurturing and caring for

God's people. They are driven by sensitivity which postures them to always be ready to lend a listening ear, offer support, and provide guidance to those in need. Whether it's through sermons, counseling sessions, or simply being a comforting presence, pastors play a vital role in helping the members of their congregation grow in their faith and navigate the ups and downs of life.

**Developing Pastoral Skills and Leadership in the Church**

Becoming a pastor is not just about having a heart for people; it also requires developing certain skills and leadership abilities. In the local church, there are opportunities for pastors to provide training and mentorship which works to strengthen their pastoral skills. This includes learning effective communication techniques, honing their counseling abilities, and gaining a deeper understanding of theology and biblical teachings. As pastors grow in their abilities, they are better equipped to lead their congregations and bring about positive change within the church community.

**The Ministry of Teachers: Equipping and Building up the Body of Christ**

The Vital Role of Teaching and discipleship in the church is the last mentioned in the text but not of any less importance. Education is a powerful tool, and within the local church, teachers have the

incredible responsibility of equipping and building up the Body of Christ. Through teaching and discipleship, they help believers understand and apply the Word of God to their lives.

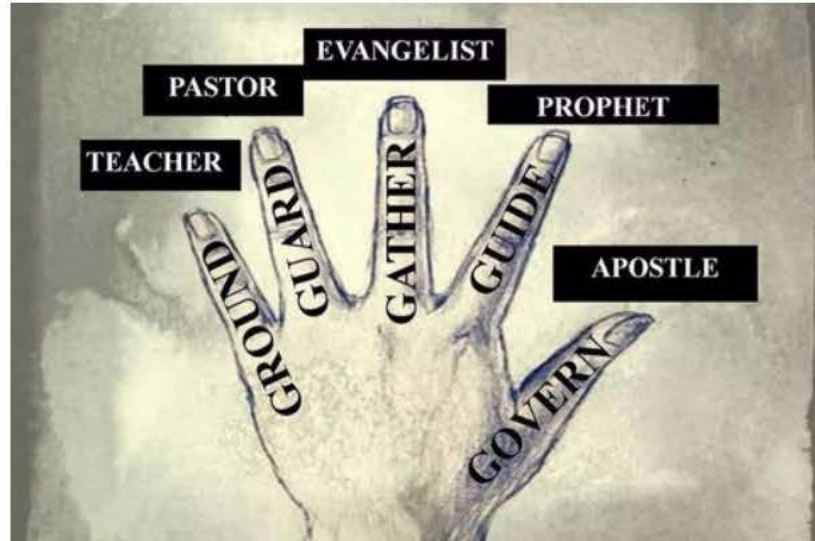
Teachers have the ability to inspire and challenge their students, fostering a deeper understanding of Scripture and encouraging spiritual growth. They are instrumental in creating a solid foundation of faith within the church community, empowering individuals to live out their calling as disciples of Christ.

**Training and Empowering Effective Teachers in the Local Church**

To ensure the ministry of teachers thrives within the local church, it's essential to invest in training and empowering these individuals. Providing opportunities for teachers to develop their teaching skills, deepen their biblical knowledge, and receive mentorship can greatly enhance their effectiveness. Additionally, creating a supportive environment where teachers can exchange ideas, collaborate, and receive feedback helps foster growth and innovation in teaching methods. By valuing and investing in the ministry of teachers, the local church can build a strong and vibrant community of believers.

**The Synergy of the Fivefold Ministry: Collaboration and Unity in Church Leadership**

Recognizing the interdependence and complementarity of the fivefold ministry is key. The beauty of the fivefold ministry lies in its diversity and interdependence. Each ministry - apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers - brings unique strengths and perspectives to the table. By recognizing and embracing the complementary nature of these ministries, church leaders can tap into the full potential of their collective gifts. This synergy fosters a well-rounded approach to leadership and allows for a more comprehensive and holistic ministry within the local church.



The hand model (several variations) is the most popular visual representation used to describe the function/office of the 5 fold in correlation with the function of our natural fingers as well. The G word alliteration is also referenced as 5G.

**Fostering Collaboration and Unity among Ministry Leaders**

For the fivefold ministry to truly flourish, collaboration and unity among ministry leaders are vital. This means setting aside egos, promoting open communication, and working together towards a shared vision. By fostering a culture of collaboration, church leaders can pool their talents and resources, leading to greater effectiveness in serving the congregation and the community. When ministry leaders work hand in hand, the local church becomes a place where the diversity of gifts is celebrated, and the impact of the ministry is multiplied.

**Conclusion: Embracing the Fullness of God's Design for the Local Church**

Embracing the fivefold ministry model has numerous benefits and a significant impact on the local church. In embracing the fullness of God's design for the local church through the fivefold function, we unlock a powerful framework for ministry and growth. By recognizing and valuing the roles of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, we create an environment that encourages collaboration, unity, and holistic development. As we cultivate these ministries within our congregations, we can experience greater effectiveness in fulfilling the Great Commission, equipping believers, and building a strong and vibrant body of Christ.

**Practical Steps to Implement and Sustain the Fivefold Ministry Model**

- Implementing and sustaining the fivefold ministry model requires intentional effort
- Church leaders and partners must acknowledge the value and importance of each ministry role
- Establish and actively foster an environment that supports their growth and collaboration
- Providing training, mentorship, and resources for both leaders and church partners
- Create frequent opportunities for collaboration among ministry leaders
- Consistently evaluate that each function is alive in the church by way of spiritual and natural activity
- Partner with like minded churches to sharpen each other

Growing as you go and being led by the spirit is ultimately the best way to implement and sustain any model or healthy church.

Let us embrace the fullness of the fivefold function, allowing God to work through each ministry to bring about transformation and extend His kingdom on earth.