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APOSTOLIC MINISTRY

The word “missionary” comes from a Latin word meaning the same as the Greek word “apostolos,” one sent forth, representing the one who has sent them forth, having all authority of the sender, accomplishing what the sender would have accomplished should he had gone Himself.

The Function of and Apostle In the First Century Churches:

1. Taking the gospel to unreached area. (Romans 15:20)

2. Laying a firm foundation (Christ Himself) for the churches being established. (1 Cor. 3:10,11)

3. Training the initial leaders and appointing elders. (Acts 14:21-23)

4. Dealing with specific problems, false doctrines or sins in the churches that had been established. (Corinthians)

5. Promoting unity in the Body of Christ. (1 Cor., Eph., John)

6. Demonstrating and imparting the supernatural dimension of the Kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 2:4, 5)

Are the functions still relevant today?

Unreached Areas – Although the gospel has gone out to some degree to every nation of the earth, there are still an estimated 16,000 “people groups” that are geographically or linguistically isolated and have never even heard of Jesus Christ.

Foundation Laying – Many churches in America and all over the world have never really been established on a solid

biblical foundation. They have been built upon human traditions and human opinions, but not upon Christ Himself and His eternal Word.

Training Leaders – Today the apostolic function of training leaders has been largely replaced by seminaries and Bible schools. Appointing the leaders of local churches has been made a matter of congregational voting, selection by a denominational hierarchy, or ambitious aspiring young preachers simply starting their own churches and appointing themselves the pastors. The result has often been that leaders are put in places of responsibility that they are not really called to by God, and are not adequately equipped to fulfill. They may have been good students at the seminary, but are likely to miss the kind of personal training and character development that Timothy received from Paul.

Problem Solving – It is clear that local churches frequently encounter problems that they have difficulty solving without outside assistance. Pastors are often without any personal accountability and often have no one to give them input regarding church problems. Sometimes local leaders have blind spots and cannot even see the shortcomings that exist.

Unity- The disunity of the Body of Christ is still a scandal that robs us of the full blessing of God and undercuts our testimony to the lost. Men of genuine apostolic heart have a burden to see God’s people come together as a united family and a united army. They see an overview of the universal church around the world and can sense the heartbeat of what the Lord is speaking. The vision is sorely needed in the church today, and only men of apostolic insight and authority can bring it about in a significant way.

Supernatural – For too long we have relied upon our intellect, human wisdom, and persuasive words – the very things Paul put no confidence in: “My message and my

preaching were not in wise and persuasive words, but with demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power (1 Corinthians 2:4, 5).