

QUESTION

What is the five (5) fold ministry?

ANSWER

The concept of the five-fold ministry comes from [Ephesians 4:11](#), "It was he who gave some to be (1) apostles, some to be (2) prophets, some to be (3) evangelists, and some to be (4) pastors and (5) teachers." Primarily as a result of this verse, some believe God has restored, or is restoring, the offices of apostle and prophet in the church today. [Ephesians 4:12-13](#) tells us that the purpose of the five-fold ministry is, "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." So, since the body of Christ definitely is not built up to unity in the faith and has not attained to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ, the thinking goes, the offices of apostle and prophet must still be in effect.





However, [Ephesians 2:20](#) informs us that the church is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone." If the apostles and prophets were the foundation of the church, are we still building the foundation? Although Jesus Christ is most definitely active in the church today, His role as the cornerstone of the church was completed with His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. If the work of the cornerstone is, in that sense, complete, so must the work of the apostles and prophets, who were the foundation, be complete.

What was the role of the apostles and prophets? It was to proclaim God's revelation, to teach the new truth the church would need to grow and thrive. The apostles and prophets completed this mission. How? By giving us the Word of God. The Word of God is the completed revelation of God. The Bible contains everything the church needs to know to grow, thrive, and fulfill God's mission ([2 Timothy 3:15-17](#)). The cornerstone work of the apostles and prophets is complete. The ongoing work of the apostles and prophets is manifested in the Holy Spirit speaking through and teaching us God's Word. In that sense, the five-fold ministry is still active.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- [A New Apostolic Reformation?: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement by Geivett & Pivec](#)
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