



STUDY GUIDE

Unmasking Myths: The Truth Behind the Five-Fold Ministry

“It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter.” (Proverbs 25:2)

I. Discerning the Truth in a Sea of Endless Voices

- A. Among so many voices, even social media has influencers in theology.
- B. In ancient navigation, sailors measured the depth of water:
 - 1. Shallow waters can damage a ship or even sink it.
 - 2. Deeper waters pose far fewer hazards concealed beneath the surface.
- C. **Purpose of this class:** To drop the sounding line and plumb the depths of Biblical truth, unmask commonly accepted myths and hidden hazards surrounding five-fold ministry. (Ephesians 4:11)
- D. **Definitions:**
 - 1. **“To search out”** (Proverbs 25:2) means “to examine intimately. Find out, seek (out), investigate, explore.”
 - 2. **“Unmask”** means “to reveal *the true nature of*, expose.”
 - 3. **“Myth”** means “a popular belief or tradition that has grown up around something or someone; an unfounded or false notion.”
 - 4. **“Notions”** means “an individual’s conceptions or impressions of something known, experienced, or imagined.”

- E. We may be inclined to follow myths or unfounded notions simply because they're widespread or generally accepted (conventional wisdom).
 - 1. We must choose to search out, investigate, and thoroughly examine what the Bible says about five-fold gifts. (2 Timothy 4:3–4)
 - 2. The best way to identify counterfeits is to closely study and become intimately familiar with that which is authentic. We must test them against the inerrant Word of God!

II. Examining Some Commonly Held Myths

- A. **Myth #1:** The five-fold ministries listed in Ephesians 4:11 are headship ministries given to govern or rule over the Church.
 - 1. The broader context of Ephesians 4 portrays these gifts as *developmental* and *nurturing* in nature.
 - 2. They are *foundational*, given to *undergird*, to *serve for the development of others*, to *equip and activate every member of the Body* (every joint) in order to supply their part for the building up of the whole. (Ephesians 4:16)
 - 3. An institutional perspective can cause us to overlook other fundamental Scriptural truths regarding the Church Jesus said He would build:
 - a. The priesthood of every believer
 - b. The diversity and value of the many-membered Body of Christ with its varied callings, gifts, and ministry expressions
 - c. The principles of humility and servant leadership (not lording it over others)
 - d. Mutual submission. (1 Peter 2:9, 5:5; Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Philipians 2:3–8; Mark 10:42–45; Ephesians 5:21)
 - 4. **Over-arching intention and purpose of Christ for giving us the five-fold** (Ephesians 4): To equip and to edify. All five ministries are to engage in “building”—building up, developing, and maturing the Body of Christ.

- B. **Myth #2:** The Bible does not give us clear guidance (a blueprint) on how the five-fold ministry gifts are to function in the local and universal Church.
1. This myth gives license to rely upon institutional, cultural, philosophical, traditional, and/or business models for how these gifts should have expression in the Church (or not at all, in some places). (Colossians 2:8–9)
 2. **God was faithful to give us the details.** This may involve giving up building in ways that seem right in our own eyes. (Deuteronomy 12:8)
 - a. God revealed to Moses the details for the Tabernacle. (Exodus 25:9,40; 26:30; Numbers 8:4; Acts 7:44; Hebrews 8:5)
 - b. David received the details for the Temple. (1 Chronicles 28:11–19)
 - c. Jesus Himself builds His Church. (Matthew 16:18)
 - d. The Holy Spirit takes all that is His and makes it known to us. (John 16:13–15)
 3. Press into the Written Word and into prayer. He will divinely instruct us and our pathway will get brighter and brighter, helping us move with clarity and precision. (Hebrews 8:5; Proverbs 4:18).
 4. **We can know** how to partner with Jesus as He builds His Church!
- C. **Myth #3:** If I frequently operate in the gift of prophecy and see things in the Spirit, I am therefore a prophet.
1. Spiritual manifestations alone do not necessarily confirm one as a New Testament prophet.
 2. **All believers** can operate in the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7–11 as the Holy Spirit leads them, including gifts of prophecy, the word of knowledge, and other revelation gifts.
 3. **A distinction must be made** between a gift of prophecy for edification, exhortation and comfort others, and the five-fold equipping ministry of a prophet.
 4. **Example:** Tony Fournier gives a testimony about the process.
- D. **Other questions to be addressed:**

1. Are all apostolic commissions permanent or can they be temporary in nature? What was the Hebraic perspective on this?
2. Should evangelists be supported by the local church? What is their role as equippers and builders?
3. Were pastors intended to be the primary ministry gift and leaders in the local church, or have we misapplied the intention for this grace?
4. Why did Paul say that teachers are appointed *third* in the *ekklesia*? (1 Corinthians 12:28)
5. Did you know that five-fold teachers play a key role in the outpouring of the latter rain?

III. The Need for the Church to Awaken

- A. In this hour of Church history, there is a great emphasis on the need to awaken and fully grasp our identity and the role and function to which we are called, individually, as a corporate Body, and as the Church universally.
- B. We must awaken to the greater level of responsibility and authority we have been called to walk in.
 1. Understanding this leads to further equipping and fortifying us to fulfill Matthew 16:18–19, where we become the Church the gates of hell cannot prevail against!
 2. Restoring Biblical truth concerning the critical need for all five gift ministries helps to accomplish this.
 3. One of the Lord's benefits to the Church (Psalm 103:1–2) is the five-fold ascension gift ministries. If we can receive them, our best days are ahead!
- C. **Testimony:** How the fuller expression of the five-fold ministry impacted our personal development and preparation for the work of ministry, after an apostolic-prophetic couple came into our lives:
 1. Expanded "Kingdom" perspective.
 2. Increased levels of faith and boldness to pursue and accomplish the work of the ministry. (We were edified and built up/equipped and activated.)
 3. Deeper desire for and pursuit of unity in the Body.

4. Greater appreciation for every member of the Body.
5. Modeling servant-leadership and mutual submission.
6. Clearer understanding of God's blueprint/pattern.
7. Impartation and activation in gifts of the Holy Spirit.
8. Recognition of our calling, development of our character, laying on of hands, and commissioning into focused Kingdom service.
9. Fear of the LORD, and trembling at His Word.

IV. The Process

A. Jesus Himself went through a 30-year process of development, preparation, and confirmation prior to His commissioning. (Luke 2:52)

1. A servant is not greater than his master. We too must submit to a similar process to be fully equipped and developed.
2. Jesus provided a ministry through the five-fold gifts to assist with our development.

B. **Find those further ahead of you in their development:**

1. Who are the ones involved with your growth?
2. What are the components of your development?
3. What is your personal commitment to the Word of God?
4. Are you developing in hearing from the Spirit of the LORD?
5. Who are you accountable to?
6. Are you practiced in self-examination that you might walk worthy of your calling?

V. A Word from the Lord (8/28/2023)

A. **"I will rebirth My Church; and this time, she will get it right!"** (Note: "build" in Matthew 16:18 can be translated as "to rebuild, repair.")

1. **The glory of the latter house shall be greater than the former!** (Haggai 2:9)
2. **Greater works than these shall you do!** (John 5:20, 14:12-14)

3. **There will be a “glorious church,” a Bride without spot or wrinkle or any such thing!** (Ephesians 5:27)
4. **There will be a church against whom the gates of hell cannot prevail!** (Matthew 16:18–19)

B. If Jesus Himself gave five gift ministries but we do not have all five operational in this rebirthing time of the *ekklesia*, we are not positioned to receive the fullness of what He has provided—the full benefits. Let’s press in for greater understanding of these five-fold ministry gifts in this hour!