

## **Personal Calling: The Pentagon**

**Square** – four styles of easily identifiable leadership. There may be more but this progressive narrative is the easiest to get our heads around! Jesus' model could be reduced to two words, "Come" and "Go" and in between are these four styles of leadership.

**Pentagon** – central to the life of Jesus, but this emerges first in the New Testament as a description of the life of Christ in his Church.

Let's look at Paul – as Saul, he was a persecutor of the Church, a young man zealous above his peers for the law. He had been party to Stephen's martyrdom, he had heard Stephen speak of salvation history and had seen his face transformed like that of an angel. He heard the rocks break the skull and shatter the body of the young man who most resembled Christ in his death.

He set out to demolish the church in Judea and in Samaria. Thousands are scattered and as they go they tell the good news. Paul breathed out threats to the Church, carrying letters from the Chief Priests that legitimised his work.

Damascus was considered part of the land of Israel. Maybe from here Paul was planning to go to the Jews of the Diaspora, from the Euphrates to the Nile. He would have followed the ancient East - West road to Damascus (the most ancient urban settlement in the world).

Then a bright light flashes around him (he was probably riding a horse).

**<sup>7</sup>I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?'**

**<sup>8</sup>" 'Who are you, Lord?' I asked."**

**'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting,' he replied.  
(Acts 22:7 – 8)**

Saul is blinded and surrenders to the grace of God. Don't forget he had not yet received words and healing from Ananias. It was there that Paul began the journey of his apostolic call.

There is a parallel with the call of Peter at his declaration.

**At his conversion, Paul has a vision for his life and for the Church.** The same thing happens with Peter. He is prepared to confess that Jesus is the Son of the living God.

**<sup>18</sup>And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (Matthew 16:18)**

**At his conversion Peter has a revelation of his future and the Church.**

Peter is the little rock; the statement (Jesus) is the big rock.

**Core DNA of the bible** – Covenant exchange, Jesus gives Peter his identity! The Lord will always give his identity to those he is in covenant relationship with. Abraham has the consonants of JHWH inserted in his very name. (from Abram to Abraham)

On that rock Jesus would build the Church. Peter receives a revelation of Jesus and a revelation of the Church.

The same is true for Paul!

**Key Revelation for Peter?** – The Church comprises living stones that are being put together into the house of God. Where did he get this? At his conversion!

**Key Revelation for Paul?** – The body of Christ, everyone finding their specific role. Where did he get it? From Jesus on the road to Damascus, "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me?"

**When Stephen was being stoned, Jesus was hurt. Paul finally understood that whenever he hurt a Christian they were actually hurting Jesus himself.**

There is a neural pathway between Jesus and the people who follow him.

This was a highly developed biblical metaphor by the time Paul writes to the Ephesians.

**New Testament letters were usually addressed to particular Churches with particular issues.**

Corinth – Order in Worship

Romans – riven with divisions between Jew and Gentile. Between Law and Grace.

Galatians - Judaizers

And at the end of these letters there are personal greetings.

**Yet, even though Ephesians is an important letter there are no personal greetings.**

We have quotes from Ephesians that suggests it was a round robin letter; literally it was mailed merged to all of the Churches in Asia Minor. In Colossians 4 Paul refers to the letter to the Laodiceans. Tertullian refers to the Ephesian and Laodicean letter.

Specific role in New Testament corpus – What is he trying to do?

Paul is writing a letter to the Asia Minor church teaching them the theology of the church. **A letter to the Church about the Church.**

**Ephesians is the only example of a general letter, written to a general audience about a general subject.**

If we want to find out about the Church then Ephesians would seem the best place to start and particularly chapter 4 where Paul refers to the Church as the Body of Christ.

The Church is connected in a real way to Jesus, and is there to represent the life Jesus lived among us and continues to live among us through his people.

Paul begins his exposition of the Church by saying it is a unity, it is one!

Oneness – One body, One Spirit, One hope, One Baptism etc. We don't need a degree in Theology to realise that Paul is saying there is one Church.

**<sup>7</sup>But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. (Ephesians 4:7)**

Occasionally Paul follows the odd rabbit run, having shared this revelation about unity he now wants to speak about diversity within the body.

You can almost see his workings – “I ought to say something about the Ascension first. But if I do the Ascension I will have to do the Incarnation. If I do that I will have to go into Jesus descending in the lower regions below the earth.

In maths, you deal with the stuff in the brackets first – “The way that diversity is released in the Church is by the ascended Christ, and the ascended Christ is the Christ who came Incarnate”.

But to each grace has been apportioned, some to be apostles, some to be evangelists, prophets, teachers, pastors.

**We have looked at this hundreds of times; it has been a core part of our journey as a community.**

Everyone is agreed that we still have Pastors.

Billy Graham - so we must have Evangelists.

We definitely have Teachers.

But what about the more exotic varieties? Are Apostles and Prophets part of the Church today?

Having spoken to other leaders who believed in 5 fold ministry, their view of Apostles seemed to be that they were only men and only the leaders!!

Yet, Paul is clear that we are all one but in the oneness there is diversity.

**Greek text – “To Each One grace has been apportioned” – sum of the whole, rather than sum of the sum.**

Is Paul actually saying – “The 5 fold ministries represent the whole ministry of Jesus and these are represented in every member of the Church”?

**Seminaries everywhere are puzzling over new interpretations.**

Honestly – This is not a new revelation that has been hidden for hundreds of years. **Without filters of academia people have read it this way anyway!**

### **Key Interpretation of this Text**

The Fivefold ministry is for everyone, and you are at least 1 of the 5. The intention of Christ is that everyone has a base ministry from which they receive grace from God to build up other people. And as they function in that grace they receive grace from other people to be built up themselves. So that the whole body as a unity, expressing the diversity of ministry seen in Jesus, grows up to maturity.

When Mike began to teach that everyone is 1 of the 5, St Thomas’ began to soar. It seems the hermeneutic supports the exegesis.

As everyone began to identify their base ministry as one of the five, it led to an incredible sense of self worth. No longer were certain roles only the province of the elite!

**We are all in on this; there is no audience, no spectators in the Kingdom.**

I believe every person in the world is one of the five fold ministries in waiting. They may not have met Christ yet, but they are waiting for grace to complete them.

Branson – Apostle in waiting  
Bob Dylan – Prophet in waiting

I think it’s much more likely that we are all one of the five. When it’s taught people say “this is cool” and they begin to blossom into their full identity in Christ. Hardly the product of false teaching or deception from the enemy.

Exotic theology? Stay with it!

Jesus as he appeared in the fivefold ministries:-

**Jesus as Teacher** – Called Rabbi, people would say, this guy is the most astonishing teacher we have ever heard.

**Teachers in the Church** - Teachers love to grasp truth, get excited by it and they hold out truth for others to take. The truth will set you free. They enjoy studying and reading the scriptures, coaching, enlightening revelation.

**Jesus as Pastor** – Great Shepherd, when the Chief Shepherd appears. Pastor translates to shepherd.

**Pastors in the Church** - Pastors see need, confront as well as encourage, easily empathise with others and love to see them grow into maturity.

**Jesus as Evangelist** – Nicodemus, Woman at the well. Good news of the Kingdom being shared everywhere. The Good News.

**Evangelists in the Church** - Evangelists seek out and love spending time with non-Christians; they provoke other Christians to witness. Encouraging and frustrating in equal measure. Never get them to join in the programs! They drive you nuts but this really is the shape of their lives. You can lead them.

I play golf with them and tell them to go for it.

**Evangelists in the World** – Salesmen, enthusiastic storytellers, stand up comedians. Key influences as a preacher. Good storytellers, able to engage with a post modern culture.

**Jesus as Prophet** – Mark 13 eschatological framework, prophetic talk of own life and path to the cross.

**Prophets in the Church** - One who hears and listens to God. Not just foretelling the future but telling forth the word of God.

Foretelling is only a small percentage of the ministry, same as the great prophets.

They love to run away to their watchtowers, get a passion for what God is sharing and get people into an intimate place where they can hear what God has already told them. Prophets enjoy being alone with God

**Prophet Today** – Visionaries / Futurists / Poets (Eastern European – Street Preacher) / Artists in our day are all often prophets in waiting. People who have painted and sculpted and those who have been performing. Rappers / Film Makers – why all the spiritual stuff right now?

**Jesus as Apostle** – The one sent from God – Key theme in John's Gospel. The word of God comes to us, sent from the Father. In John 3 Jesus speaks of himself as the Apostle of Heaven.

**<sup>17</sup>For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:17)**

**Apostles in the Church / World** – Vision / Pioneering / Provoke others to see new possibilities. Entrepreneurs / Explorers / Business

**Jesus was all 5 of these ministries.** He represents his whole ministry in the whole Church. All of us are now Priests; in the same way the fivefold ministry of Jesus is represented in his whole body, not just in the elite priests.

### **Some Clues**

#### **1) Extrovert / Introvert ---- Pioneer / Settler**

Cross Hairs diagram. Not trying to control you and box you! Just trying to help.

Are you an Extrovert or an Introvert?

Settler or Pioneer? – No value judgements!

Without the pioneers we would never find the new frontier, without the settlers we would never keep it!

Do you eat and sleep for change? Change is God given that everyone should be doing.

Are you a person who wants to conserve what you have already got? Cavalier activity as if the old stuff is no longer needed. What's wrong with the old stuff? Do we really need the new? Then you may be a pioneer.

#### **Mainstream denominations tend to boil off their pioneers!**

Local congregations often become a settler environment.

In newer movements sometimes the settlers feel they are being pushed out. Don't you need me? I don't feel welcome!

Pastor's office scenario – "Don't you want me?" Of course I want you but I don't have any place for you! "Don't you realise how many people are hurting because of the changes? – No, tell me about it!

For Pioneers, pain is part of the process. Part of the principle for getting to the top of the mountain!! Come on, suck it in!

**Pioneers and Settlers need to learn to value each other.** The fact that they don't is one of the fundamental reasons why Churches split.

**Evangelists** - Never met an Evangelist who wasn't a Pioneer / Extrovert?

Have you caught any fish? No but I've influenced them? Evangelists want to catch fish!

**Prophets** – Most are Introverts, lonely hours alone with the Lord. Going up their watchtowers to observe what is happening. Many are also Pioneers because they are constantly looking towards the horizon. Never let Prophets come up with the interpretation!

They 'go up the watchtower' – see things in two dimensions on the horizon. When you get close you realise there are ten miles between them.

**Most prophets don't know distance between now and the horizon!  
They say it all because they see it all!**

Fantastic at giving you a sense of what God is saying, poor at giving the interpretation!

**Pastors** They are always settlers! Often introvert, but because of calling they have to use extrovert behaviour! End 50:50 on the MBTI.

So they see the needs around them that they have to extrovert! They need abiding time and retreat but they don't do it because they are often foolish!

They want to keep everyone together. Like a three legged race, we need to move at this pace so everyone can move together. We need to conserve what we've got!

**Apostles** Definitely pioneering, the odd apostle is an introvert, but by and large they are big brash people who tell everyone what to do! So desperate to get to the new frontier!!

I love the one with 3 legs and the funny hip but we have got to get over there.

**Teachers** Can be extrovert or introverts but are usually introvert. Invariably Settlers – the truth has already been laid down. We have got to hold onto and hold out the truth so that the people can be equipped and sent out.

Key Teaching for the Church

- Not called to be a Pastor but I am called to care!

- Not called to be an Evangelist but I am called to reach people and witness.
- Not called to be a Prophet but I am called to listen to God, the voice of the shepherd.
- Not called to be a Teacher but we are called to declare truth and be able to give testimony to the hope we have within us.
- Not called to be an Apostle but we are all called out to plant and build bridges.

### **Get burnt out?**

We run out of grace! Then we return to our base ministry! The area we have the most energy for!

What do you return to?

How are you impacted by the ministry of other people? A calling/equipping so that you can grow. We all have a base ministry but are called from time to time to a phase ministry.