

# **apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and your disciple making pathway by rick thompson**

“It was he [Christ] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11).

In Texas, our district assessed and approved a church planter with a Th. M. from Dallas Theological Seminary. After months of seeing him do very little, we questioned him. He explained to us that he now believed in the 5 fold-gifts of Ephesians 4:11. He said that he was an apostle and he was waiting on God to send him the other four gifts. We encouraged him to go and join the Charismatic movement he now embraced.

In Germany, I met an exciting evangelical church plant-“The Hamburg Project.” This church is affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of Germany (FeD) and the City to City Movement from Redeemer Presbyterian Church led by Tim Keller. The church planting team is led by Daniel. I quoted Ephesians 4:11 and asked them, “What is your gifting?” Each member of the team replied clearly. Daniel has apostolic genius and evangelism gifts. Matthias is a teacher. Dominic is a shepherd. They appreciated each other and worked together as a team with a new church of over 200 people.

Robert Foster identifies different Christian traditions in *Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of the Christian Faith*. The “Sacramental Stream,” the “Charismatic Stream” and the “Evangelical Stream” are different streams that understand Ephesians 4:11 in distinctively different ways and “do church” differently. Within each stream, there are many disciple making pathways. The disciple making pathway is how you and will fulfill the Great Commission. We all agree that we are called to make disciples of Jesus Christ, to go to all nations, to baptize disciples in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and to teach them to obey Jesus. But how?

**Lead church starters can know their Ephesians 4:11 gifting, lead on a disciple making pathway that fits them, fits their city and build a complementary team to bring the contributions of each spiritual gift to the work.** Rapidly changing disciple making pathways is disruptive to a church just like rapidly changing majors.

“Changing majors is common among U.S. college freshmen. Recent research suggests that up to 80% of college freshmen will change majors before they graduate, some two or three times, causing 40% of college students to experience a “failure to launch.” “Churches, like college freshmen, often struggle with declaring their major. The consequences of their indecision causes a major dilemma... churches suffer from a failure to launch (new or established) and stay the course. **With no clear sense of purpose, they never set a clear strategy. What they do to fulfill what they think God wants constantly changes.** They languish in seeming shadow-lands where forward momentum always seems one step out of reach.” (Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer, **Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations**, B&H Publishing Group, Nashville)

## Teachers: The Bible Driven Pathway

Teachers *speak and teach God's Word* and the disciple making pathway emphasizes teaching throughout the week. My wife grew up in the Calvary Baptist Church of Covington, KY and her pastor was Dr. Warren Wiersbe. Northern Kentucky had many churches preaching the gospel, but few churches teaching the whole counsel of God. Hungry people flocked to this Bible driven church including my wife's family. This church led by wife to Jesus Christ, baptized her, gave her a heart for missions, and taught her to obey everything Jesus commanded. I am grateful to God for this church.

Confirmed by the signs and wonders of an Apostle (2 Corinthians 12:12), Paul chose to emphasize teaching in the Ephesus church start. "Discussions daily" was the style of teaching that fit the culture. "(Paul) had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.<sup>10</sup> This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Acts 19:9-10).

George Barna gives a useful definition of the gifted pastor who is a "**Teacher.**"

Influences via **ideas and words**

Sees the church as a classroom

Motivates people to think

Needs a teachable audience

Provides intellectual challenge

Seeks individual growth

Loves to study

Courage to teach unpopular truth

(George Barna, *The Second Coming of Church*, 35)

Bible driven churches can struggle when their leader receives a call to another church and the new leader comes with a different gift. People long for the ancient path of Sunday morning, Sunday School, Sunday night, and Wednesday night Bible teaching. When a new pastor leads the church down a different pathway of making disciples, the new wine does not taste good to the old timers who trusted the old path.

Recent linguistic analysis of Ephesians 4:11 is very useful. The Greek construction of "pastors and teachers" in the plural means that every gifted pastor is also a gifted teacher, but not every gifted teacher is also a gifted pastor. I was taught in seminary that pastor-teacher was one gift because of Granville Sharp's rule. But, now we learn that this rule does not apply in the plural. "Pastors are gifted to teach (thus the latter is a subset of the former), but he stops short of saying that all teachers are gifted to be pastors." (Arnold, **Ephesians: Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament**, 260). I teach church planting at TEDS. Many gifted teachers come to a seminary and then want to pastor a church. I encourage them to find a Bible driven church that is praying for a gifted Bible teacher. My example of a gifted teacher who emphasized the Bible driven disciple making pathway is Dr. Warren Wierbe.

# Meet Warren Wiersbe



Distinguished Professor of Preaching at Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary, Warren Wiersbe is the author of more than 100 books. Billy Graham calls him "one of the greatest Bible expositors of our generation."

Warren wrote many articles and guidebooks for Youth For Christ and was eventually hired by Moody Press to write three books. The much-sought-after author then moved on to writing books for Calvary Baptist Church. It was during his ten years at Calvary that Expository Outlines on the New Testament and Expository Outlines on the Old Testament took shape. These two works later became the foundation of Warren's widely popular Bible studies known as the Be series, featuring such titles as Be Loyal (a study on Matthew) and Be Delivered (a study on Exodus). Several of these books have been translated into Spanish.

His next avenue of ministry was Chicago's Moody Memorial Church, where he served for seven years. He wrote nearly 20 books at Moody before moving to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he and his wife, Betty, now live. Prior to relocating, he had been the senior pastor of Moody Church, a teacher at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and a producer of the Back to the Bible radio program. During all these years of ministry, Warren held many more posts and took part in other projects too numerous to mention. His accomplishments are extensive, and his catalog of biblical works is indeed impressive and far-reaching. Most of the information for this profile was drawn from Warren Wiersbe's [Be Myself: The Autobiography of a Bridge Builder](http://www.christianbook.com/html/authors/1466.html), available at CBD. <http://www.christianbook.com/html/authors/1466.html>

## Pastors and Teachers: The Transformation Driven Pathway

The pastor teacher *shepherds God's flock* and sees several vehicles for the disciple making pathway. Good Bible teaching and preaching in the worship services is complemented by small groups (and mid-sized groups), and life on life disciple making.

<b>Life on Life Discipling</b>	<b>Small/Mid-Sized Groups</b>	<b>Worship Services</b>
1:1 or 1:3-7	1:12 or 1:40	20, 200, 2,000 or 20,000
<i>...iron sharpens iron...</i>	<i>...not quickly broken...</i>	<i>...spur one another on...</i>
Proverbs 27:17	Ecclesiastes 4:12	Hebrews 10:24,25
Intimacy & accountability	Involvement & acceptance	Identity & affiliation
Asking hard questions	Asking good questions	Listening and learning
Sense of satisfaction	Sense of safety	Sense of significance
Sensitivity to one another	Affinity with one another	Diversity of one another
Truth telling	Teaching one another	Pastor/teacher
James 5:16	Romans 15:14	Ephesians 4: 11
Developing Leaders	Tested Leaders	Trusted Leaders
Operation Timothy	Sticky Church/ABF	Expository Preaching

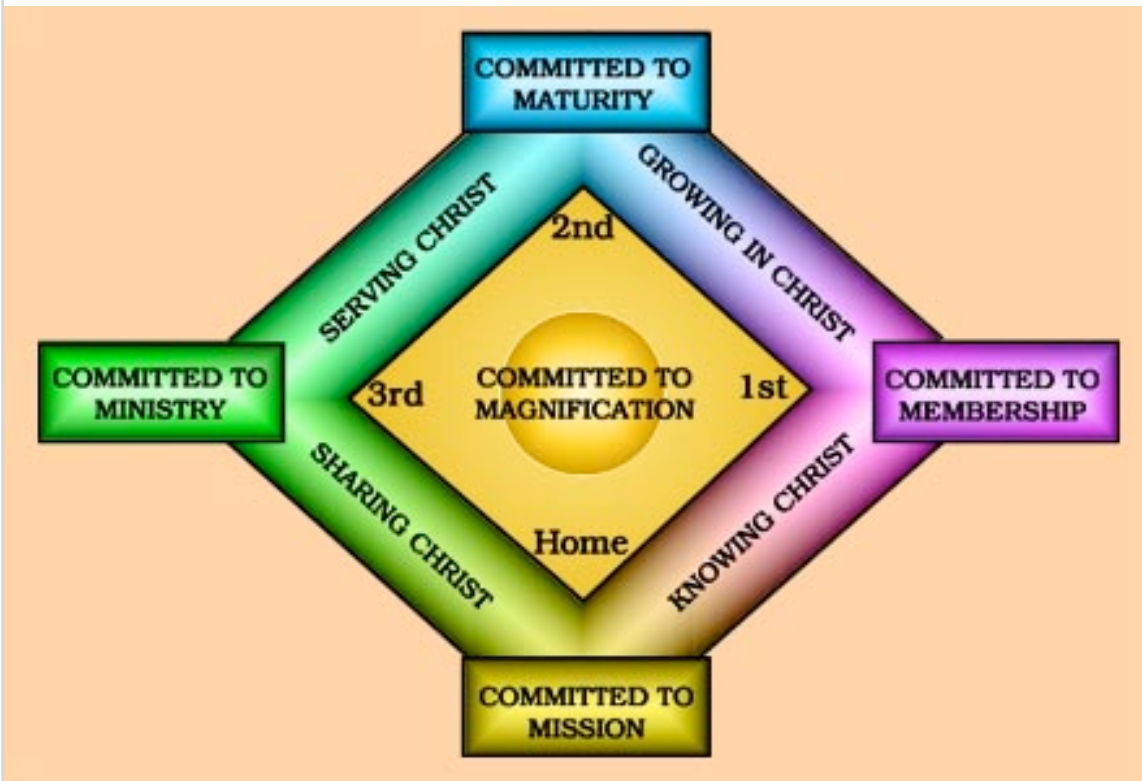
Our first church start was in Dubuque, Iowa. I invested half my week in sermon and small group preparation. I used Operation Timothy published by The Christian Businessman's Committee in one to one disciple making and the Colossians 2:7 Series in small groups that were closed disciple making groups that laid a firm foundation. We changed a traditional Sunday school with one man teaching an audience to Adult Bible Fellowships with a class shepherd, a teacher, and a social captain. Finally, we moved to some sermon-text based small groups that in recent years have been developed and popularized by Larry Osborne's **Sticky Church**. Son Life training added a disciple making perspective that wins the lost, builds believers, and multiplying leaders as transformational. <http://www.sonlifeclassic.com/what-is-disciple-making/>

Circa 2000, the new pastor in Dubuque, Matt Collins, clarified a clear disciple making baseball diamond from Rick Warren's **Purpose Driven Church-Fellowship**, Discipleship, Ministry, Evangelism, and Worship. While serving as a superintendent in Texas, our church taught the Purpose Driven Life on Sunday and my wife and I led a small group in our home and most of our small group members reproduced the material. But, I noticed that after the Purpose Driven material, people did not know what to do and many groups ended. What's next? The answer I now embrace is Osborne's **Sticky Church** with regular rounds of sermon-text based small groups. Finally, Rainer's **Simple Church** gives a good summary of the simple, life transforming church.

One church leader says, "We ask people to do three things a week here. Come to a worship service to fall more in love with God and his Word. Go to a small group to love others in community. Serve in a ministry to impact others. Love God, love others, and serve the world. We really try to keep it that simple. (Rainer, **Simple Church**, 40-41)

**The Purpose Driven Church Disciple Making Model** <http://www.purposemedia.com/archived/pdm4/paradigm/process.htm>

A SIMPLE PROCESS...for moving people from unchurched and uncommitted to mature believers who fulfill their ministry in the church and their life mission in the world. This process is so practical, you can immediately implement it in your church.



The Purpose Driven® Church (PDC) Baseball Diamond is a visual road map to help communicate to your people God's purpose for their lives. This strategy will teach you how to move your people from each "purpose" base.

**FIRST BASE: MEMBERSHIP** Learn the keys to reaching the unchurched for Christ and assimilating them into your congregation.

**SECOND BASE: MATURITY** Learn how to measure spiritual growth in your people, and leave with a process for leading them to maturity.

**THIRD BASE: MINISTRY** Learn how to equip your people for service by helping them identify their S.H.A.P.E. for ministry.

**HOME PLATE: MISSION** Learn how to help your people define and fulfill their life mission in the world.

- o One of the greatest influences on my life as a church planter and founding pastor of the Hope Evangelical Free Church of Dubuque, Iowa was the ministry of Chuck Swindoll. His expository preaching for life transformation and the Bible study guides published by Insight for Living for small groups, and his background in one to one disciple making with the Navigators guided me to the transformational disciple making pathway.



“Two passions have directed the life and ministry of Chuck Swindoll: an unwavering commitment to the practical communication and application of God’s Word and an untiring devotion to seeing lives transformed by God’s grace. Chuck has devoted more than four decades to these goals, and he models the contagious joy that springs from enthusiastically following Jesus Christ.

“For more than forty years, Chuck’s pulpit ministry has emphasized the grace of God alongside an uncompromising commitment to practical, biblical truth and its application. He has served the following congregations in his pastoral ministry:

Grace Bible Church, Dallas, Texas, Assistant Pastor, 1963–1965

Waltham Evangelical Free Church, Waltham, Massachusetts, 1965–1967

Irving Bible Church, Irving, Texas, 1967–1971

First Evangelical Free Church, Fullerton, California, 1971–1994

Stonebriar Community Church, Frisco, Texas. In October of 1998, Chuck founded Stonebriar Community Church, where he continues to serve as senior pastor.”

<http://www.insight.org/about/about-chuck-swindoll.html>

## Evangelists: The Seeker Driven Pathway

I add the Evangelist to Barna's description of the Teacher and the Pastor/teacher.

<b>Evangelist</b>	<b>Pastor Teacher</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
Influences through converts	Influences through vision	Influences by ideas
See the church as a crusade	See the church as army	See as classroom
Motivates people to witness	Motivates people to action	Motivates to think
Needs a core of witnesses	Needs a core of activists	Needs an audience
Preaches the gospel	Provides direction	Provides challenge
Seeks the lost	Seeks transformation	Seeks growth
Loves to share the gospel	Loves to strategize	Loves to study
Has courage to witness	Has courage to take risks	Teaches the truth

Teachers speak on God's Word, pastors and teachers shepherd God's flock, and evangelists spread God's Gospel. Simplistically, southern baptist churches in the Bible belt of America preach the gospel every Sunday to call people to receive Christ. When there are not other opportunities to feed on the meat of the Word, thousands of "Bible" churches, "Purpose Driven Churches" and "Life Transformation" churches sprung up.

In one strong Bible teaching church, Bill Hybels served as a youth pastor (Park Ridge, Illinois in the early 1970s). As a gifted evangelist, scores of youth came to know Christ, but their parents with little Bible background, could not connect with the meat served up in this Bible teaching church. Bill and over 100 youth started a new kind of church. The innovation was a "seeker services" on Sunday where Bill preached Christ and "new community" on Wednesday with Bible teaching by men like John Ortberg. In a Leadership Network publication, Hybels explains why this pathway works.

So, why be involved in this type of ministry? Hybels has five reasons why he is staying with building seeker churches: (1) I have an unmistakable calling on my life, and for me to do anything else would be deceitful and rebellious; (2) I really do believe to the core of my being that lost people matter to God and my personal conviction is that seeker-oriented churches are doing the most effective job at reaching them; (3) our kids deserve to be a part of a prevailing church; (4) all things considered, it is the best reflection of my gifts, passions, and temperament; and (5) I truly believe the church is the hope of the world. We're trustees of the hope of the world. It's not government, it's not education, and it's not business. It's us, under the leadership of Christ. <http://media.leadnet.org/blog-content/leadnet/downloads/archives/NetFax-leadnet-org.pdf>

By Bill's own admission, the seeker driven model matches his gifts (evangelist and leadership). I would add that the model works well when the evangelist leader with humility empowers gifted pastors and teachers to also use their gifts. In reality, every model works best when there is a strong complementary team of gifted leaders who use their gifts and the church does not just become the stage for the senior pastor's gifts.

The seeker driven church needs an evangelist with the gift of leadership. When a lead founding pastor with the gift of teaching tries to use the “Willow Model” it does not work. A teacher cannot just come up with messages that connect primarily with seekers and new Christians just as an evangelist cannot just produce expository preaching that feeds the soul. The disciple making pathway needs to match the lead pastor’s gifting. When the seeker service is so central, building a team of complementary leaders is key.

In a lecture in Chicago in July 2011, Alan Hirsch, founding director of Forge Mission Training Network, proposed that the DNA for all of these gifts is latent in every Christian. “Everyone can get in the game.” In my view, these gifts are given to equip every Christian and every leader is to take on the responsibility of each of these special gifts. Every leader is to teach. Every leader is to shepherd. Every leader is to do the work of an evangelist. Every leader is to shine forth the truth of God. Every leader is sent as the Father sent Jesus. As I serve faithfully, over time, one of these gifts emerges as my special contribution that equips God’s people.

Around 2000 at South Melbourne Restoration Community, we restructured our leadership team... so that we could ensure that all five ministries were represented on the team APEST-Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd, Teacher. So we had an apostolic team that focused on the trans-local, missional, strategic, and experimental issues facing the church. We had a prophetic team that focused on listening to God and discerning his will for us, paying attention to social justice issues, and questioning the status quo of an increasingly middle-class church. We had an evangelistic team whose task it was to oversee and develop evangelism and outreach. The pastoral team’s task was to develop community cell groups, worship, and counseling, and to enhance the love capacity of the church. The teaching team’s task was to create contexts of learning and to develop the wisdom and understanding through Bible study, theological and philosophical discussion groups, etc. All were represented by a key leader on the leadership team. (Hirsch, **The Forgotten Ways**, 174).



Bill Hybels is the founding and senior pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Ill., and chairman of the board for the Willow Creek Association. The bestselling author of more than twenty books, including *Axiom*, *Holy Discontent*, *Just Walk Across the Room*, *The Volunteer Revolution*, *Courageous Leadership*, and classics such as *Too Busy Not to Pray* and *Becoming a Contagious Christian*, Hybels is known worldwide as an expert in training Christian leaders to transform individuals and their communities through the local church. Hybels received a bachelor's degree in Biblical Studies and an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Trinity College in Deerfield, Ill. He and his wife, Lynne, have two adult children and one grandson, Henry. This biography was provided by the author or their representative. (Amazon web site for Bill Hybels)



## prophets: The Experimental Pathways

The core idea of prophecy is “shining forth God’s truth.” Capital “P” Prophets gave us the Word of God and are foundational to the church (Ephesians 2:20). We are speaking of little “p” prophets who shine forth the truth in strong preaching or speaking the truth to people just outside the door to hell on the cutting edge of the darkness.

Two disciple making pathways are very popular with prophets. One is the mega church where great preaching impacts great number of people. John Piper and Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, MN is an excellent example. The term “mega church” now refers to any Protestant congregation with a sustained average weekly attendance of 2,000 persons or more in its worship services (Mega churches 1,250 in 2008). [http://hrr.hartsem.edu/megachurch/megastoday\\_profile.html](http://hrr.hartsem.edu/megachurch/megastoday_profile.html)

Prophets also lead smaller churches that flow along the prophetic edge of the culture. Erwin McManus of Mosaic Church is an example by his own words. “At Mosaic, the community where I serve as lead pastor in Los Angeles, we don’t describe ourselves as a modern church or a postmodern church, a contemporary church or an emerging church. The only description I use is that we are an **experimental** church. We volunteered to be God’s R&D Department... A part of our ethos (the spirit of our congregational culture) is a value for risk, sacrifice, and creativity” (McManus, *The Barbarian Way*, 50,51\*). McManus tells a story that describes the spirit of innovation.

”The Church Communication Network sent me an invitation to do a session on leadership in one of their national conferences... I would follow one of the most credible experts on church leadership... I was honored... Somewhere in his lecture he started to say something that totally threw me. Point-blank he instructed, “Don’t be an innovator; be an early adaptor... the innovator is the guy who eats the poisonous mushroom and dies. The early adaptor is the guy right next to him, who doesn’t have to eat it...” After thanking him for his amazing contribution to the body of Christ and for mentoring me through his books and ministry I went on to thank him for a new metaphor for my life. I am a mushroom eater... Any day now might be my last supper. But without risking the poisonous mushrooms, we never would have discovered the joys of portobellos. The barbarian call is just this simple; we are called to be mushroom eaters. A world without God cannot wait for us to choose the safe path. If we wait for someone else to take the risk, we risk that no one will ever act and that nothing will ever be accomplished. John the Baptist was a mushroom eater, and it cost him his life...\* Erwin Raphael McManus, *The Barbarian Way: Unleash The Tamed Faith Within*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville: TN, 2005, 50,51 (ISBN 13: 978-0-643-3)

- Prophet starters are mushroom eaters who leave safety and gain adventure.
- Prophet starters are outsiders and do not quite fit in the boxes.
- Prophet starters do not domesticate but live dangerously.
- Prophet starters are mushroom eaters are not establishment but are a bit exotic.
- Prophet are mushroom eaters who take great risks and receive great rewards.



Erwin Raphael McManus is an author, speaker, activist, filmmaker and innovator who specializes in the field of developing and unleashing personal and organizational creativity, uniqueness, innovation and diversity. In other words, he gets bored really easily. He is committed to creating environments that expand imagination, unleash creativity, and maximize the creative potential in every individual and organization. Erwin is also the catalyst behind Awaken. Convinced that the world is changed by dreamers and visionaries, Awaken serves the purpose of history by maximizing the divine potential in every human being.

Engaging such issues as culture, creativity, change, and leadership, Erwin is widely known as a thought-provoking communicator. Erwin also serves as the primary communicator and cultural architect of Mosaic in Los Angeles. He is the author of An Unstoppable Force, a Gold Medallion Award finalist; Chasing Daylight; Uprising: A Revolution of the Soul; The Barbarian Way; Stand Against the Wind, Soul Cravings, and Wide Awake. He also serves as a Research Advisor with The Gallup Organization. Erwin is a native of El Salvador, and is a graduate of the University of North Carolina and Southwestern Theological Seminary. He and his wife Kim live in Los Angeles have two children, Aaron and Mariah, and a foster daughter Paty. ([www.erwinmcmanus.com](http://www.erwinmcmanus.com))

Prophets like John Piper grow mega churches. Every generation needs their John the Baptists who call God's people to repentance. Some prophets lead smaller congregations because the prophet is so unique, or they prefer to work alone, or they just do not build a team that can conquer the complexity of the large church.

## **apostles: The Multiplying Pathway**

<sup>1</sup> While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus... He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. <sup>10</sup> This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord(Acts19:1-10)

The word “apostle” means “sent one.” The leader is a “sent one” who in turn send people in their ministry on the mission of God. Sent ones lead to sent ones that lead to sent ones. This gifting is strong in reproduction and multiplication. House church movements and large churches that rapidly multiply are often led by people with apostolic gifting. Our thesis is that the gifting of lead church planters is reflected in the disciple making pathway of these churches that emphasize multiplication at every level. Allan Hirsch calls this “apostolic genius” in **The Forgotten Ways**. One tool that tries to measure apostolic gifting is an on-line test developed by Alan Hirsch. Take his test at: <http://www.theforgottenways.org/index.aspx>

The word “apostle” is used in three ways in the New Testament. First, Jesus chose from all his disciples the Twelve “Sent Ones.” The capital letter “**Apostles**” were to be with him and not just around him. They were given his authority and they did not to act on their own authority. In my view, the last of the capital letter “Apostles” was Paul (1 Corinthians 15:8) who was personally commissioned by the risen Lord Jesus on the Damascus Road (Galatians 1) to be an Apostle. The New Testament is the “Apostolic” teaching (Acts 2:42) that is unique and inerrant. The early church fathers understood there was a categorical difference between the Apostles and themselves. As Ignatius of Antioch said around 110 A.D., “I do not command you like Peter and Paul, they were Apostles; I am a sinful man.” The Apostolic teaching of the original Apostles (and members of their circle like Luke) are foundational for the church (Ephesians 2:20) and authenticated by sign gifts (2 Corinthians 12:12). A foundation is laid once. The Apostles are unique and we do not see them today.

In the New Testament there were also small letter “apostles” sent by the churches to serve as “messengers of the churches” (2 Corinthians 8:23 and Philippians 2:25). Small letter “apostles” serve as representatives from one church to another church as Barnabas did in Acts 11 with the churches of Jerusalem and Antioch. Small letter apostles have a big heart for the “care of the churches” (2 Corinthians 11:28) and church planting (Acts 13-14). Capital A “Apostles” are unique while small letter “apostles” are church planters today sent by the churches and are listed among the spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 and also in Ephesians 4:11.

The third way that “apostle” is used is for every Christian as a “sent one” into this world to represent Jesus Christ as his ambassador. “As the father sent me, so send I you” (John 20:21) applies not just to “Apostles” and “apostles,” but to every Christian. Every member is a missionary sent with the gospel to their world. Every member of the body of Christ can start churches just as we see unnamed Christians start the church of Antioch in Acts 11.

“Dave Ferguson, senior pastor of Community Christian Church in Naperville, Illinois, adds, “People with the apostolic gift see over the horizon. They're able to look at the spiritual landscape and see where God is working.” Ferguson recognizes this drive to extend God's kingdom and initiate new things within himself, but he avoided the term “apostolic” for years. Instead, he described himself as a “**spiritual entrepreneur**”—a term with less theological baggage and more cultural panache.” Apostles Today? Rediscovering the gift that leaves churches and well-connected pastors in its wake, Skye Jethani, 6/13/2008 <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2008/spring/15.37.html>

Dave and Jon Ferguson of Community Christian Church in Chicago evidence the apostolic heart of multiplication (2 Timothy 2:2) at every level.

- Disciples apprentice disciples
- Small Group Leaders apprentice small group leaders
- Creative arts directors apprentice creative arts directors
- Campus pastors apprentice campus pastors
- Pastors apprentice pastors
- Movement leaders apprentice movement leaders



Dave Ferguson is the Lead Pastor of COMMUNITY ([www.communitychristian.org](http://www.communitychristian.org)), an innovative multisite missional community who “help people find their way back to God.” He is the author of The BIG IDEA (2007) and Exponential (2010) and the forthcoming On The Verge (2011). <http://daveferguson.typepad.com/about.html>

The “Hamburg Project” referred to at the beginning of this chapter illustrates a new global commitment to church starts involving a team of these gifted leaders rather than one gifted leader. If I do not do the work of each of these gifts and if I only play to my strength, then an imbalanced and unhealthy church develops. The best way to understand this in my view is to see the concentric circles of a healthy church. All these concentric circles are in every church. A healthy church has a similar number of people in each of the circles. An unhealthy church has very few people in some of the circles. For instance, if the vast majority of people are all committed and core people, the church needs new Christians and people in the crowd who are just seekers. Likewise, a church that is all crowd is a mile wide and an inch deep.

**City (lost)** outside the largest circle

**Crowd (leaners)** the largest concentric circle

**Christians (learners)** next largest concentric circle

**Committed (laborers)** next to the center circle

**Core (leaders)** center circle

**Teachers love to give meat to the core and the committed.** If a teacher works alone over a long time, a core church of committed people develops (the two inner circles). New people are committed Christians coming for “good Bible teaching.” The crowd and new Christians are small in number. The disciple making pathway is often teaching the Bible on Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night.

**Pastor teachers love the core, the committed, and Christians.** If a teacher works alone over a long period of time, **three circles are strong—a strong core and strong, committed Christians.** New people come for “a good church.” The crowd and the new Christians are smaller unless God’s people are equipped for their works of service and sent into the city. The disciple making pathway emphasizes feeding the flock on Sundays, developing committed smaller groups, and good core leaders.

**Evangelists give the gospel to the crowd invited by Christians.** If an evangelist works alone over a long time, the two outer circles of the crowd and new Christians is strong as they are supported by a small core of committed Christians who want to reach the lost. Over the years, core and committed people leave in a maturity migration looking for the meat of the Word. The disciple making pathway focuses on Sunday morning when Christians bring friends unless the team expands.

**Prophets love to work with the crowd shining God’s truth.** If the ground is good a large church will appear or a smaller innovative new model of penetrating the darkness. If a prophet works alone over a long time there can be a large crowd that is a mile wide and an inch deep or there is a church so unique that few can connect. The disciple making pathway Sunday morning when the crowd can become Christians until pastors and shepherds expand the pathway to include small groups and discipling.

**Apostles love to work in the city multiplying at every level and church planting from city to city.** If the ground is good for a church planting movement an apostolic genius can be in one church for many years. If the other gifts are not brought into the church, frustrations will grow and time will probably be short as apostles move on to other cities. Disciple making pathway is in the city (missional communities) or multiplying small groups that spread quickly.

So, the teacher gravitates to the core and the committed, the pastor teacher goes with the core, committed, and Christians, the evangelist seeks to equip the Christians to reach the crowd, and the prophet lives on the edge of the city to reach the crowd, and the apostle builds into the ethos of the church a sense we are sent to the cities. Just as *A healthy church has roughly equal numbers of people moving to the center and back out to the city. If one leader dominates and does not build a team, a two circle church develops that is unhealthy and will not multiply.* Paul told Timothy to not only focus on his anointing but also to do the work of an evangelist, so too a healthy leadership team does the work of all these special gifts as a leadership responsibility. The team needs to keep asking the question: Where is the pathway from each circle into the core and how to do we send the core to the city.

**City (lost)** What is your pathway from city to crowd?

apostolic and prophetic focus on quipping God's people for their works of service

**Examples:** serving in the community

church planting

singles ministry/VBS

missional communities

evangelistic bible studies and evangelistic outreach opportunities

**Crowd (leaners)** What is your pathway from crowd to Christians?

prophetic and evangelist focus on quipping God's people for their works of service

seeker worship services

innovative ways to impact the community with God's truth

equipping for one on one evangelism and friendship evangelism

alpha groups and other ministries that carry the gospel to the city

**Christians (learners)** What pathway from Christians to committed?

pastor teacher focus on quipping God's people for their works of service

apprenticing at every level from elders to every core leadership role

expository sermons

sermon text based small groups, adult Bible fellowships and other accountability groups

**Committed (laborers)** What is your pathway from committed to the core?

teacher focus on quipping God's people for their works of service

expository sermons

elders, deacons, deaconesses, ministry team leaders

leadership community (VHS-Vision, Huddle, Skills)

**Core (leaders)** What is your pathway from the core to the city?

apostolic focus on quipping God's people for their works of service

serving in community service organizations

starting community service opportunities

planting new churches

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