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## The Church's path to its fullness

### Apostles and prophets

The church lives in a reality far removed from God's ideal. From our perspective, there are two risks to avoid:

1. Falling into paralyzing realism because of the harshness with which it strikes at hope.
2. To live an idealism that only has hope in the afterlife.

We cannot and should not deny reality; at the same time, we cannot and should not lose sight of the ultimate goal. Between the real and the ideal, there is a path to travel (a functional attitude). This "journey toward" has two aspects:

1. Being, and
2. The doing.

The Church is moving towards fullness, in a process "like the light of dawn" Proverbs 4. 18. We are then faced with a crucial question: At what point in that process is the Church today?

#### **1. RESTORATION TIMES.**

The Holy Spirit is working in the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21). And He is leading the Church toward its fullness (Pleroma). The meaning of this word not only includes restoration, but also speaks of fullness, completion, and fulfillment.

#### **2. THE MINISTRIES OF EPHESIANS 4. 11 – 13.**

The knowledge of the Son of God, the equipping of the saints, the unity of the faith, and the fullness of Christ (v. 13) relate to the restoration of the apostolic and prophetic ministries. This is a sign of the times, because it relates to:

- 2.1. The preparation of the Church
- 2.2 The evangelization of the world.

Growth and building up toward that fullness is related to the activity of each member of the Body of Christ, who, according to their gifts, contribute in love the richness of God's manifold grace. Ephesians 4:16. The full understanding of the mystery of Christ and of God. Ephesians 3:19; Colossians 1:9; 2:2, 9.

### 3. APOSTLES

It is well known that we teach what we know and reproduce what we are. Therefore, the character of the Christian himself, but especially that of those in leadership positions, must conform to the character of Christ. This pleases God and provides assurance regarding how we reproduce ourselves.

3.1. The Apostle: (Apostolos) He is called and sent by Christ, 1 Corinthians 1:1; an ambassador, 2 Corinthians 5:20; a skilled architect in the work God is doing, 1 Corinthians 3:10. With a father's heart, he is sent to:

3.2. Take the gospel to unreached areas. Romans 15:20.

3.3. To plant the church on the foundation that is Christ and to help established congregations return to the foundation in the Holy Scriptures. Galatians 1:6-10; Revelation 2:15.

3.4. Instructing and training the Lord's new workers in the church. Acts 14:21; Titus 1:5. So that the church may fulfill its life cycle.

3.5. His priority is prayer and the Word. Acts 6:1; 20:26-32. He safeguards doctrine and addresses specific problems, false teachings, or sins. Acts 15:24.

3.6. Promotes unity in the Body of Christ and weaves supportive and conducive networks of communication among workers and churches. Ephesians 4:1-16; Acts 11:27-30; Romans 15:25-27; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9.

3.7. He guides the church in the supernatural. Acts 4:33; 8:4-8; 10:44-46; 19:18-20; 2 Timothy 1:6-7. The signs of his apostolic ministry are evident. 2 Corinthians 12:12. And he is willing to pay the price for his calling. 2 Corinthians 11:23-33.

### 4. PROPHETS.

Neither prophets nor prophecy are brought about by human will. 2 Peter 1:21; No one takes up any ministry unless called. Hebrews 5:4-6.

4.1. The Prophet. (Prophetes) He is called and sent by Christ. Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:29; Acts 11:27; 13:1. Together with the apostle, they are channels of revelation. Ephesians 3:5.

It is appropriate to read 1 Samuel 12:2-5, where we are told of the character of one of the prophets, of whom it is said that none of his words fell to the ground without being fulfilled. 1 Samuel 3:19. The prophet's gifts or tools could affect nature itself, breaking natural laws through manifestations of power, with a knowledge that pierced walls.

4.2. The Role of the Prophet in the Church Today. The prophet works as part of a team in equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11). The prophet brings revelation, exhortation, correction, and comfort, and helps to correct the course of events both within and outside the church. There were resident prophets and itinerant prophets.

4.3. One of the most resisted and even persecuted ministries, that of the prophet, carries a high price to pay. Some prophets we see today are truly pitiful when one tries to discern them within the framework of Scripture. There is a reason we are warned about false apostles (2 Corinthians 11:13; Revelation 2:2). God rigorously required that the prophets be tested (Deuteronomy 13:1, 2, 5; 18:22; Isaiah 9:15).

4.4. Hired Prophets (Deuteronomy 23:4; 2 Peter 2:15). These people minister in order to live; they don't eat because they serve at the altar. They serve at the altar so they can eat; this is part of the curse on corrupt ministry. (1 Samuel 2:36)

#### **CONCLUSION:**

The Church and the ordinary Christian worker (we are speaking of God's standards) are the direct responsibility of the governing ministries. As is known, this task can only be carried out in the power of God's Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6; Acts 1:8) and through the Word of God. The Holy Scriptures provide us with the instructive, corrective, and perfecting elements to present every person *fully equipped for every good work* .

2. Timothy 3. 16, 17.

Just as in biological life, where human beings are born with all the capacities to grow and mature physically and mentally, as well as the capacity to reproduce, the born-again person carries God's genetic makeup to *be in the image of the Son of God , to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*. God's original plan for humanity begins with that conversation from the Divine, "*Let us make him in our image and likeness ,*" from which, despite sin, the journey toward the fullness of the Perfect Man continues.

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