

TAKE THE FIRST STEP

WATCH WEEK ONE VIDEO

Found online at centralwesleyan.org/groupmaterials

INTRODUCTION

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be shepherds, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ might 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. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow up into him, who is the Head, that is Christ. From him the whole body, joined together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work. —Ephesians 4:11-16

Welcome! Our hope is that over the next six weeks your group will learn, grow, and stretch together. The goal of this series is to assist you as you discern from God your calling, identify your function, and live wholeheartedly into your role for God's kingdom. In other words, our hope is that you recognize and live into the ways you've been shaped and equipped by God to serve Him both inside and outside the walls of the church. As stated in Ephesians, when we fulfill the roles He has designed for each of us individually, we reach unity in the faith and knowledge of God, becoming mature and attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ! This brings us stability as individuals and as the body of Christ, safeguarding us from the deceit of the world around us.

As a church and community of believers, we're going to explore how God has uniquely equipped us to serve Holland and beyond. Let's take the first step, becoming stronger together, and look at the ways Jesus perfectly fulfilled each role.

WEEK 1

THIS WEEK WE FOCUS ON JESUS AS THE PERFECT EXAMPLE



APOSTLE

As Messiah, Jesus himself was sent into the world as the chosen agent of God's eternal mission. He followed the role the Father had set for him. He reframed how God could be experienced and accessed; he extended the boundaries of God's kingdom on earth and initiated a worldwide movement that was to become known as Christianity. He is the Source—all things come from him. He is the Designer—creator and foundation of all. He is missional—the sent and sending God. He is sovereign—King over all creation. *He is the Great Apostle.*



PROPHET

Jesus was fiercely and uncompromisingly prophetic. Almost everything he said related to his covenantal faithfulness to God. He exposed the breakdown of the covenantal relationship with God's chosen people; he named injustice and railed against unrighteousness; he exposed the ungodly toxicity in misguided religion. He cast out demons, spoke truth to power, confronted evil and unrighteousness. *He is God's perfect Prophet.*



EVANGELIST

Jesus proclaimed good news for the poor, forgiveness for all sinners and salvation for the lost. Signs and wonders confirmed his witness. He opened the doors to all those previously excluded through religion and politics. The masses experienced him as genuine good news. Ultimately, he paid for this redemption by sacrificing his life. *He is the greatest Evangelist ever.*



SHEPHERD

He worked to include previously excluded people into the covenant community, and in doing so created a new family, open to all who love Jesus. Everything about him radiated concern for people and for the establishment of true human community and relationships. His healings and miracles demonstrated God's grace, mercy, and concern. *He is the perfect expression of the Shepherd, the Lover of his people.*



TEACHER

He taught more people wherever and whenever he could. He chose, instructed, and guided disciples, teaching them his Way and the Ways of the God of Israel. He actually recast the Torah by fulfilling it. His teachings were accessible to the simplest and the wisest alike. The medium of his life was its message: The Truth and Light. *He is the greatest Teacher ever.*

WEEK 1

Imagine all of the complex roles that go into operating a commercial airline.

A

The apostle is akin to the CEO. Along with a strategic planning team, part of her job is to identify new routes the company can add to their existing destinations to increase revenue. She is the visionary who helps the company dream about expansion.

P

The prophet is the air traffic controller. He doesn't get paid by the airline but his job is critical when it comes to coordinating flight paths, takeoffs, and landings. If any plane is off track by just a few hundred yards or lands a few seconds before it is supposed to, the results could be catastrophic.

E

The evangelist is the VP of sales and marketing. Her job is to tell new and returning customers why APEST Air provides the best customer experience at a great value. She touts stories of satisfied customers who eagerly recommend her airline to others.

S

The shepherds are the flight crew. They attend to their fliers needs, addressing their concerns, answering their questions, checking in to see if someone needs a drink, a meal, or a blanket.

T

The teacher is like the captain. On occasion, the captain and co-captain will get on the intercom with important information for the passengers. They will explain why there might be a delay, how long the flight is expected to take and how to respond in the midst of unforeseen challenges in the air or on the tarmac.

When everyone fills their role, the experience is better for everyone. But what happens when everyone *doesn't* play their role?

- Let's say you have an airport without an air traffic controller. What issues will arise?
- What kind of experience might a traveler have on a flight with no flight crew?
- As an airline, how competitive would you be without a VP of Sales & Marketing? What would that mean for the future of the airline?

WEEK 1

ROLE CALL

Welcome! We're glad to have you with us for our series, Role Call. Take a minute to introduce yourselves and share your answer to one of the following:

- What do you hope to get out of being in this small group?
- What intrigues you about this series?

ROLE PLAY

What fills your cup?

Materials needed: cups, activity card, M&Ms

As the Group Leader reads a list of words and the corresponding number from the activity card provided to leaders, participants will place M&Ms in their cups numbered 1-5 in front of them if the word describes them well. Many words won't describe them at all, and that's fine! The cup that has the most M&Ms at the end is a good indicator of each person's gifting/role in the body of Christ.

After the list of words is read, the Group Leader reveals the corresponding roles that go with each cup, and asks:

1. Does the role indicated in this activity resonate as an area of giftedness in your life?
2. Would a spouse or friend in this group agree or disagree?
3. How do you currently see yourself functioning in this role? Are there ways you'd like to expand this role?

WEEK 1

ROLE OUT

Read Ephesians 4:11-16, then answer the questions that follow.

There is no pressure to answer every question.

1. Where do you see APEST naturally occurring around you each day?
2. Read James 1:17-18. Because Christ lives in you, how does he enable to you live out your function within APEST?
3. What role do you most identify with?

After taking the test (see instructions below in **Keep It Role-ing**) consider how you could take a next step in this role and positively affect our local church body.

ROLE ON

As you close, pray for the person to your left as they discover and lean in to their APEST role.

KEEP IT ROLE-ING

Take the APEST test (at no cost to you) to help determine which of the five-fold functions best describe the way you are wired. After taking the test you will have access to your APEST primary and secondary profile characteristics, functions, and a description of what unhealthy overuse looks like.

Please note, this 10-minute test is only a tool. When you receive your results, we would encourage you to take your results back to your group and others who know you well. We'd also urge you to discern together what applies to you from the results. Having friends and family speak into the results can be an important part of the discernment process.

1. Go online to 5qcentral.com/tests
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4. Put your contact information in for the Billing Info fields.
5. You will get an email with a link to take the test.