

THE APOSTLE

Gifted for Expansion

WATCH THE APOSTLE VIDEO

Found online at centralwesleyan.org/groupmaterials

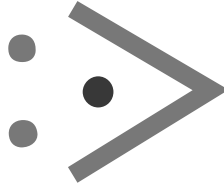
INTRODUCTION

Years ago, Pastor Craig's mom bought all the boys of the family a winter hat with the Welsh flag. When one of Craig's kids would take his hat, Craig would ask, "Who took my hat?" Craig would remind them that that hat was his hat. The response Craig received was that all the hats were the same. Yes, they were the same color, the same material, and they shared the same Welsh design. However, saying that they were all the same wasn't necessarily the case; the hats were also different. Craig's hat was larger, and it also had his unique hair remnants!

When addressing the role of Apostle, we have to keep *similarity and dissimilarity* in mind. Recognizing that the role of Apostle is universal does not diminish the unique vocation of the Twelve disciples. Behind the uniqueness of the Twelve is the common function of all apostles—**to expand the rule and reign of God doing whatever unique task He's called them to do.**

WEEK 2

THIS WEEK WE ARE FOCUSING ON THE ROLE OF APOSTLE



In Greek, the word Apostle literally means sent one. It is a pioneering function of the church, the capacity to extend Christianity as a healthy, integrated, innovative, reproducing movement, ever-expanding into new cultures. It also takes care and responsibility for the ongoing integrity of the core ideas (DNA, organizational principles, or meta-ideas) that generate and maintain systemic health across the organization.

Callings of an Apostle might include: missional elders, church planters, pioneers, organizational designers, networkers, and innovators. Examples of Apostles in real life or in myth include: Jesus, Peter, Paul, John Wesley, Steve Jobs, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Joan of Arc, Lewis & Clark, George Washington, Thomas Edison, Captain Jean Luc Picard (*Star Trek*), Aragorn (*Lord of the Rings*).

ROLE CALL

We are glad to have you join us this week as we discuss the role of Apostle. Let's start by answering one of the following questions:

- Define what APEST is in 3 sentences or less.
- How has the new knowledge of the APEST roles impacted you?
- How have you seen God work through your given role?

WEEK 2

ROLE PLAY

Shipwrecked

Materials needed: scrap paper, pens

Split into two “surviving parties”.

Imagine you’ve just been shipwrecked and stranded on an island. The people with you are in desperate need of leadership and your group has courageously stepped into that role. Using the supplied paper, begin planning your society by answering the following questions:

- What are your priorities?
 - What are your core values? (List 5 to share with the entire group)
1. After sharing, what are some similarities both groups shared? What made your society unique?
 2. Would you change any of your core values after hearing the other group?
 3. Who in your group stepped forward or took the lead?

ROLE OUT

There is no pressure to answer every question.

1. What stands out to you the most from this week’s sermon?
2. Read Ephesians 4:1-16. What word or phrase speaks to you most strongly?
3. Examples of Apostles in real life or in myth include Jesus, Peter, Paul, John Wesley, Steve Jobs, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Joan of Arc, Lewis & Clark, George Washington, Thomas Edison, Captain Jean Luc Picard (*Star Trek*), Aragorn (*Lord of the Rings*). Did any of the people listed surprise you? Did any names resonate with you in a positive way, and if so, how?
4. Are there people in your life that you think have the role of Apostle? In what ways do they function as an Apostle?
5. How would our church look differently if we did not have people functioning well in the role of Apostle?
6. What are some ways you might encourage an Apostle in your life to live more fully into their calling? If given the opportunity, please do so.

ROLE ON

Take a few minutes to pray for one another before your group ends. This week, a volunteer may open prayer time, and another person can close prayer time, allowing space for others to pray aloud if they so desire.

THE PROPHET

Gifted for Alignment

WATCH THE PROPHET VIDEO

Found online at centralwesleyan.org/groupmaterials

INTRODUCTION

A long time ago, Pastor Steve was trying to drive to a Christmas party in the middle of a snow storm. When he turned left onto a boulevard, he overcompensated and drove his car into the median. The car was still operational, but the alignment was off. He had to fight the steering wheel the whole way home to keep the car going straight. Eventually, he got it into the shop and after a few hundred dollars of repairs, the car drove in a straight line again. While alignment may not be something we think about often, when we are out of alignment it can consume more time and energy than necessary to stay on track.

WEEK 3

THIS WEEK WE WILL LOOK AT THE ROLE OF PROPHET



A Prophet is someone who is tasked with maintaining loyalty and faithfulness to God above all. God gives the Church Prophets to identify the gaps between God's heart and the people's posture. Essentially, Prophets are guardians of the covenant relationship that God has with His people. The Prophet is also passionately concerned with living a life morally consistent with the covenant—a simple and authentic life of justice, holiness, and righteousness. The prophet proclaims God's holiness and calls for holiness in God's people.

1 Peter 1:14-16 says, "As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

Jesus was fiercely and uncompromisingly prophetic. Almost everything He said revealed 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, and confronted evil and unrighteousness. *He is God's perfect Prophet.*

Callings of a Prophet might include social activists, artists, incarnational missionaries, and worship leaders. Examples of prophets in real life or in myth include: Jesus, Jeremiah, Martin Luther, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King Jr, Eleanor Roosevelt, Gandalf (*Lord of the Rings*), Morpheus (*The Matrix*).

WEEK 3

ROLE CALL

Welcome! We're glad to have you with us for week three of the series Role Call. Take a minute to welcome any first-time participants, then share your answer to one of the following:

- What additional questions do you have regarding last week's teaching on the role of Apostle?
- What intrigues you about the role of Prophet in the Church and in the world today?

ROLE PLAY

As stated above, one function of Prophet for the body of Christ is to identify the gaps between God's heart and the people's posture.

Leaders, choose ONE of the following three scenarios to read and discuss as a group. Then answer the two questions provided at the end.

Scenario 1: As Caroline sits in her red auditorium seat, she nervously awaits the coach's announcements. She has made it through another year of Varsity soccer, and at the end of every season her coach gives out awards: Best Defender, Most Spirited, Top Gun, and MVP. It was only Caroline's junior year, although she didn't set out to win MVP, she felt she did deserve it. Heart racing, the coach announced the winner. It wasn't her. Devastated, she clapped like everyone else for the actual recipient. As she clapped, she thought, "I'm better than her. How can this be?" As a mixture of guilt, disappointment and anger flooded her insides she began to question why she even bothers playing this game.

Scenario 2: James has a problem and it's really starting to eat away at him. He works at a local department store and he needs next Saturday off. His friends invited him to a football game at the University of Michigan and he really wants to go. At his place of work you need to submit a day off request three weeks in advance. On short notice, he needs someone to cover or switch shifts with him. With no one responding, James finds himself becoming increasingly frustrated. Why is it he is always the one covering other people's shift, but the moment he actually needs one covered, no one will help?

WEEK 3

Scenario 3: Hurray! Jeffrey and Margo are engaged! All seems right in the world...at least it should be, right? Margo loves Jeffrey and said “yes!” without any hesitation, but now, in the recesses of her mind, Margo feels there is something wrong. Remembering each time she visited with Jeffrey’s parents, she left feeling somehow not worthy of their son. Each visit her insecurities doubled—but there wasn’t anything specific they did that she could put her finger on. Jeffrey assured her his parents loved her, but as they drove to tell his family the good news, Margo visited that corner in her heart and found fear was racing through her faster than their Jeep was racing down the road.

1. What emotion or problem is the main character struggling with?
2. Imagine God’s perspective in each scenario. How might He use these events to work in the main character’s life?

ROLE OUT

There is no pressure to answer every question.

1. What stands out to you the most from Sunday’s message?
2. Read Acts 7:30-43. What happened when God’s people didn’t listen to the prophet? How did they come out of alignment with God’s will? What was the result?
3. Examples of prophets in real life or in myth include Jesus, Jeremiah, Martin Luther, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King Jr, Eleanor Roosevelt, Gandalf (*Lord of the Rings*), Morpheus (*The Matrix*). Did any names resonate with you in a positive way, and if so, why?
4. Are there people in your life that you think have the role of Prophet? In what ways do they function as a Prophet? In what ways is this helpful?
5. Review the list of real-life and mythical Prophets in the introduction above and consider the roles they fulfill. What good have you seen that has come from them living into their role?
6. This week, how could you encourage someone you know who genuinely embodies the role of Prophet? How would you want to encourage them? Is a trusted person who embodies the role of Prophet speaking truth that you need to apply?

ROLE ON

Take a few minutes to pray for one another. Because we may pray a little differently when we occasionally separate, if space allows, divide men and women during this particular prayer time. If your group meets off-campus, you could separate into two rooms. If your group meets at Central, you could have women at one end of the table and men at the other.