

The Role of the Apostles in Revealing the Mind of Christ.

S.R. 1 Cor. 4:16 – 17

2 – 2 - 2020

Intro. The Biblical Case for Apostolic Authority

“The Apostles were chosen by Jesus to be the revealers of his will. Their actions and teachings were not arbitrary or incidental; they were intentional and authoritative. The practices they ordained were in accord with Divine will. It was on this foundation that the church was built. This image is both a symbolic and a practical description of how New Testament churches developed in history. They were ‘ordered’ by apostolic authority. Thus, the directions given by the apostles to local churches were uniform and they were binding. This being the case, every instruction given to local churches, and every example of their conduct, was a matter of apostolic precedent.”

I. John 14: 25 – 26

- A. (Please note context – to whom is Jesus speaking in John 13:1? - cf. Matthew 26:20; Luke 22:14)
- B. Acts 1:1 -2 - “commandments unto the apostles”

II. The apostles were “credentialed” for the work of revealing the mind of Christ.

- A. Apostle defined – “A delegate, specifically an *ambassador* of the Gospel, Officially a *commissioner* of Christ. (James Strong, *Greek Dictionary*).
- B. Acts 1:13, 21,22; 2:7
- C. Paul – 1 Cor. 9:1; 2 Cor. 12:11- 12

III. Revelation is given to apostles and prophets (cf. Mark, Luke, James and Jude)

- A. Eph. 2:20
- B. Eph. 3:2 – 6
- C. 2 Peter 3:1 – 4
- D. Acts 2:41 – 42

IV. The church was built on the foundation of apostolic authority.

- A. Matthew 18:18 “Truly I say to you, **Whatever you shall bind on earth shall occur, having been bound in Heaven;** and whatever you shall loose on earth shall occur, having been loosed in Heaven. (Modern King James Version)
- B. Acts 2:42 “continued in the apostles doctrine – teaching”
- C. Eph 2:19 – 22
 - 1. 2 Thessalonians 2:15 “Therefore brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have been taught, whether by word, or letter from us.”

V. Local churches were “ordered” by the instructions of the apostles.

- A. 1 Cor. 7:17 **ordain** – (Gk. diatasso – to arrange thoroughly – imitate – prescribe, appoint command - ordain - Strong *Greek Dictionary*)
- B. 1 Cor. 4:16 – 17 ... my ways which are in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.
- C. 1 Cor. 11:16 – ...no such custom, **nor the churches of God.**
- D. 1 Cor. 11:33 – 34 ... and the rest **I will set in order when I come.**
- E. 1 Cor. 16:1 ...given order to the churches...
- F. 1 Tim. 3:14 – 16 ...how to behave...
- G. Titus 1:2 – 5 ...set in order the things that are wanting...
- H. How did the early church view the letters from the apostles?
 - 1. God showed the importance of the Apostle’s work.
(1 Cor 12:28; 1 Thess 2:6; 1 Pt 3:2)
 - 2. Satan tried to attack genuine apostles while providing counterfeits of his own making.
(2 Cor 11:5, 13; Rev 2:2)
 - 3. If Satan can close the writings of the Apostles to the minds of Christians then he has successfully defeated God’s plan. How we view their writings is critical!
- I. The entirety of the teachings and practices of the early church came from the apostles.
 - 1. The Apostles simply “handed down” what they had received from Jesus. When the apostles used the words “tradition, delivered and received” they are speaking of God’s will being delivered. **(1 Cor 11:2, 23; 15:3)**
 - 2. To fail to obey the “tradition” delivered from the apostles is to forsake Jesus Christ Himself. **(2 Thess 3:6, 12, 15)**
 - 3. When the Holy Spirit gave an epistle given to one church, it could be given to other churches and to other generations with the full expectation of being understood. **(Col 4:16; 1 Thess 5:27; 2 Pt 3:1-2)**
 - 4. When the Holy Spirit gave an epistle given to one church, it could be given to other churches and to other generations with the full expectation of being understood. **(Col 4:16; 1 Thess 5:27; 2 Pt 3:1-2)**
- J. An apostolic ancient order given in the first century. – applies in 21st century

VI. Conclusion:

- A. The will of Christ is found exclusively and completely in the writings of the New Testament apostles and prophets.
 - 1. Eph. 2:20
- B. We can read and understand this unveiled mystery.
 - 1. Eph. 3:1 – 5