

“The Missionary” Ephesians 4:11

Context: Context: The term ‘missionary’ is a technical, biblical, ecclesiological (church) term. It has a biblically narrow meaning and describes those gifted, called, and set aside by the Holy Spirit as apostles, who are affirmed and sent out by their local congregation to plant churches throughout the entire world (cf. Ephesians 4:11). The great commission, Matthew 28:19, calls everyone to make disciples. This includes missionaries, as well as evangelists, pastors, and teachers etc.; but that is not the same as the apostolic calling as a missionary or ‘sent one.’

Life Principle: Those sent by God as missionaries are apostles affirmed by the local church and sent elsewhere to bear Christ’s witness and so build His church (cp. Ephesians 4:11).

1. Examples of Apostles/Missionaries – Acts 13:1-3; Acts 14:4, 14
Paul and Barnabus were called on a mission by the Holy Spirit and that calling-mission and sending was affirmed by the local congregation as validated by a laying on of hands. While on their mission they were called apostles, ‘sent ones.’

2. Other Sent Ones – Romans 16:7; Hebrews 3:1
Other examples of ‘sent ones’ (apostles/missionaries) include Silas, Andronicus, and Junias. The greatest example is the One sent by the Father, to whom all are to witness, Jesus Christ. He is the ultimate missionary/sent one/apostle.

For Further Study:

- As a **Bible study method**, look up apostle(s) in your concordance and word dictionary. Why are there apostles that are different from the 12 first recognized? Why do we apply the term ‘missionary’ to the term ‘apostle?’ Are there others who are sent out from the church who are not apostles (cf. Titus 3:12-13; Philippians 2:25; 4:18)?

- How does the notion of missionary/apostle fit into our doctrinal statement (see our **doctrinal statement ‘On the Church’** under **what we believe**, footnote 7 - http://www.gracepointfellowship.org/files/Doc_Stmnt.pdf). What other offices may be recognized as valid in the “regions beyond” (Ephesians 4:11; Philippians 2:19-22)?

Transformation exercise:

Meditate on Hebrews 2:22. Pray for the furtherance of the Gospel through one of the people you read about tonight. Send them a note of encouragement!