

# Shift Conference Making APEST Practical

## Facilitators:

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## What is APEST?

Ephesians 5:11-16 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> And he gave the **apostles**, the **prophets**, the **evangelists**, the **shepherds** and **teachers**, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Purpose—Unity, Maturity, Fullness in Christ, Release Others. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church exists to represent Jesus, to imitate him, to live out every aspect of His message and to extend His kingdom. The authentic Church is measured by the degree to which Jesus is present and revered.

## APEST Function Definitions

**Apostles, Ministry Starters, Pioneers.** Apostles help equip people to launch new and needed ministries to impact communities. **Other Descriptors:** Innovator, architect, agent of change, strategist, visionary, risk-taker, groundbreaker.

**Prophets, Ministry Aligners, Creatives.** Prophets help equip people to discern the Spirit's leading and line up perfectly with God's Word. **Other Descriptors:** advocate, justice-minded, principled, questioning, truth-teller, challenging, reformer, cause-driven, passionate.

**Evangelists, Ministry Expanders, Connectors.** Evangelists help equip people in expanding God's Kingdom to those without Christ, reaching new families and bringing new believers into the church. **Other Descriptors:** catalyzing, mobilizer, marketer, communicator, recruiter, promoter, inviter, infectious personality.

**Shepherds (pastors), Ministry Protectors, Nurturers.** Shepherds help equip people to have caring hearts, making sure no one feels left out or not welcome. **Other Descriptors:** caregiver, peacemaker, soul-healer, reconciler, unifier, tenderhearted, helper.

**Teachers, Ministry Instructors, Guardians.** Teachers help equip people in transforming mindsets and world views from culture to Christ-centered, keeping the church on a solid biblical foundation. **Other Descriptors:** curious, historian, philosopher, organizer, systematizer, legacy-minded, investigator, knowledgeable, wise, guide.

**God's Design:** every local church embodying all five functions (APEST)

- APEST in the very nature and activity of God:

**Apostolic:**

**Prophetic:**

**Evangelistic:**

**Shepherding:**

**Teaching:**

- APEST in the very nature and activity of Jesus:

**Apostolic:**

**Prophetic:**

**Evangelistic:**

**Shepherding:**

**Teaching:**

- APEST in the very nature and activity of Jesus:

**Apostolic:**

**Prophetic:**

**Evangelistic:**

**Shepherding:**

**Teaching:**

The Church is given these functions—and giftings are given to train everyone to minister as the Body of Christ (His presence) in this world. APEST is the Church in the world as God designed it to function.

**The Problem:** Without all five functions/giftings present and active in a local church, the church is inadequate.

Wolfgang Simson observes that church leaders “do exactly the opposite of their true and God-given task: instead of equipping God’s people for the ministry, they perform it for them in front of them. Instead of teaching them how to teach, they just teach. Instead of equipping them to be evangelists, they simply evangelize ... This creates a new caste of clergy and laity, and ultimately fails to prepare God’s people to do their ministry.” (Houses That Change The World)

## **The Solution:**

When all five functions / voices are present and active in a local church there will be fruitfulness, alignment and equipping. This requires training everyone as ministers – teams that focus on the Church’s apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, shepherding and teaching functions!

What if the APEST became more than just a verse in Ephesians that we teach on once in a while. What if it became the organizing principle that guides how your church functions?

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## **What does APEST look like in a local church?**

### **When APEST goes bad**

**Apostle:**

**Prophet:**

**Evangelist:**

**Shepherd:**

**Teacher:**

### **Stages of Understanding APEST**

***Latent:*** is APEST even being considered?

***Open:*** is APEST being explored?

***Emerging:*** is APEST understood?

***Integrating:*** is APEST used to build teams?

***Healthy:*** is APEST working together?

***Transforming:*** is APEST experiencing synergy and leveraging results?

***Transcending:*** is APEST recreating themselves?

## Action Steps to Work Through the Stages

### 1. **Observe:** how do you see God working? How is God working within you?

God is already working all around you in amazing ways. Watch what God is doing...

**Apostolic Functions:**

**Prophetic Functions:**

**Evangelistic Functions:**

**Shepherding Functions:**

**Teaching Functions:**

HOW DO YOU SEE GOD ALREADY WORKING IN YOUR CHURCH?

### 2. **Identify:** which of these behaviors do you see in others?

**Apostle:** who is challenging?

**Prophet:** who is questioning?

**Evangelist:** who inviting?

**Shepherd:** who is relating?

**Teacher:** who is developing?

Starting the Conversation with your Leaders...

### 3. **Cultivate:** what steps will you take to train everyone as ministers?

Consider...

- How will you cultivate your gifting - your God given endowment?
- What would it look like to daily consider how to nurture the endowment that God has given to you?
- How could you explore increased synergy among the five functions within your church family? Your leadership team? Your area of ministry?

- What if you began to daily journal how God used you in your unique voice and function to serve and equip the body as He designed?
- If you aren't seeing ways that God is leading you to function according to APEST, ask Him about this.
- Pray with your leadership team and ask God to give you synergy and congruence as leaders based on your unique functions.
- Look for ways that God is working through you and those around you based on His design. See how results can be traced to each individual function/voice.
- When you gain an insight or learn a principle - write it down. Share it with your leaders. Ask them to share what they are seeing and learning.
- When you sense an inner prompting to act based on your unique voice and you follow it - share your experience. If you ignore it - share and explore with others what was happening within you when you didn't take action.
- Pay attention to the internal guidance of the Spirit in you and in leaders around you. This will strengthen your team's awareness and synergy of these five functions.
- Imagine how your church family will grow as each of your leaders is equipping the Body in these five functions. Don't give in to thinking that things will never change. Use your creative imagination to explore new ways that your church can grow and live out each of these five functions.
  - Imagine starting new outreach to engage with people in your community that are far from God.
  - Imagine aligning more specifically with God's mission and message of freedom and forgiveness as you make disciples who make disciples.
  - Imagine connecting people outside the walls of your church with the message of God's grace.
  - Imagine nurturing and caring intentionally and specifically for everyone God has entrusted to your church family.
  - Imagine deepening everyone's understanding and confidence in God's truth.
- Look for patterns of how God is working through your church family as you start, align, connect, nurture and learn together! Celebrate what God is doing!

### **OBSERVE + IDENTIFY + CULTIVATE!**

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#### **Identifying the missing APEST functions / voices**

- ***Apostle:***
  
- ***Prophet:***

- *Evangelist:*
- *Shepherd:*
- *Teacher:*

## Frequently Asked Questions

Follow up Session with Steve Jones and Dan Riemenschneider and Dave DeVries on July 28:

**Special Session**

A P E S T  
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Wednesday  
July 28  
2:00 pm (edt)

## A Dialogue on APEST

With...

- Steve Jones, *President, Missionary Church*
- Dan Riemenschneider, *Director, Strengthening Local Churches*
- Dave DeVries, *Executive Director, Western Region*