

## Doctrine of Apostleship

- I. The Greek word for “apostle” is ἀπόστολος, meaning “an ambassador.” Literally, “one who is sent”; or “a delegated authority.” The word ἀπόστολος was:
  - A. Used for high-ranking naval officers in classical Greek times.
  - B. Used to refer to a person commissioned by one of the gods during Hellenistic times.
  - C. Used to refer to a civil agent transacting official business during the Koine period.
- II. An apostle of Jesus Christ was the highest ranking official in the local churches, 1 Cor. 12:28.
- III. Apostles of Jesus Christ were appointed by God the Father for the purpose of establishing churches and spreading new truth, Eph. 3:1-10.
- IV. There were both the spiritual gift and office of apostleship.
  - A. The spiritual gift of apostle was the divine enabling to function as an apostle, Eph. 4:11, 1 Cor. 28,29. This gift included the temporary gifts of miracles and healing, which—along with other temporary gifts—served as the divine credentials of the apostle, and established their authority.
  - B. The office of apostleship was the authority to function as an apostle, Rom. 1.5, Acts 1:25, Gal. 2:8.
- V. The gift and office of apostle were temporary in the history of the Church. Today there are no apostles.
- VI. There were two classes of apostle in the New Testament:
  - A. The apostles of Jesus Christ to Israel, Luke 6:12-16; 9:1, 2.
  - B. The second category is the apostles of Jesus Christ to the Church.
- VII. The Qualifications of an Apostle
  - A. An apostle had to have the spiritual gift of apostleship. Eph. 4:8-11; 1 Cor. 12:11; Acts 2.
  - B. The apostle received his gift and office by the sovereign decision of God, 1 Cor. 1:1; 12:18; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1.
  - C. The apostle had to have been an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord, Acts 1:22; 1 Cor. 9:1.
- VIII. The Credentials of an Apostle. God endowed apostles with signs that established their authority.
  - A. An apostle was endowed with miraculous powers of miracles, Heb. 2:4; 2 Cor. 12:12.
  - B. An apostle had success in evangelism, 1 Cor. 9:2; 2 Cor. 3:1-3; Gal. 2:7-9.
  - C. An apostle had the capacity to suffer patiently, 2 Cor. 12:7-10

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