



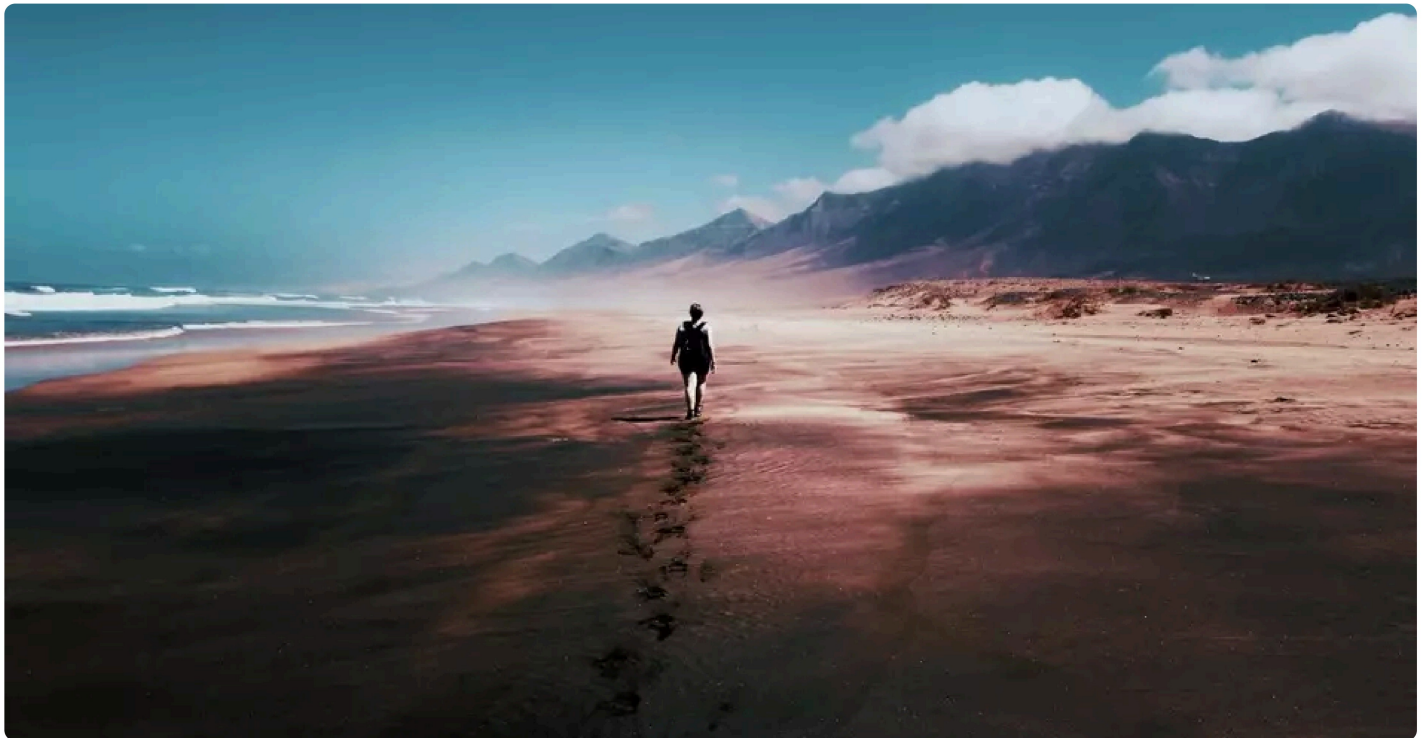
What Is an Apostle? Do Apostles Still Exist?

*In the Christian faith, apostles were those entrusted by Jesus to help organize the church and spread the message of His teachings. The word apostle comes from the Greek word, *apostelló*, meaning a messenger or one sent on a mission.*

LAURA ADAMS |

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What Is the Definition of an Apostle?

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Although not used much in common language today except when speaking of Christian principles, in ancient times the word was used to describe someone who was commissioned by another person to represent him in some way.

How Are Apostles Different from Disciples?

Though the terms are sometimes used interchangeably, there is a difference between a disciple and an apostle.



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A disciple is a devoted student and follower of a teacher. In fact, the Greek word for disciple, *mathētēs*, means a learner or pupil. Essentially, a student. They might be an apprentice under someone, but their main goal as a disciple is to learn as much as possible from their teacher.

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“The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit.” ([Luke 10:1](#) NLT)

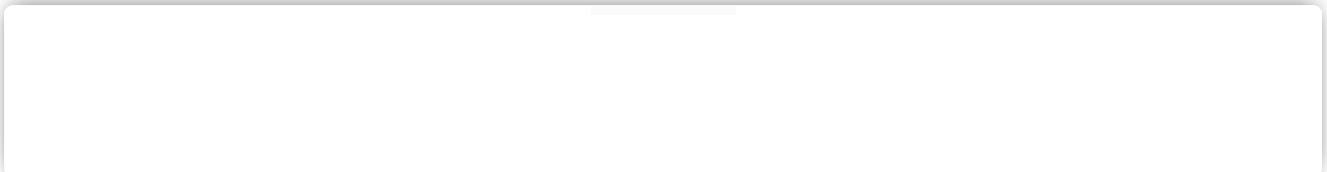
Aren't We All Apostles?

So, what is the difference between the disciples and those who became apostles? The fact that they were chosen from the other disciples and then sent on a mission.

While we all are called to spread the Good News, not everyone is given the gift of apostleship by the Holy Spirit. [1 Corinthians 12:27-31](#) lists the [gifts of the Holy Spirit](#), starting with the apostles. We can assume that all who receive gifts are disciples of Jesus because they are filled with the Holy Spirit as a result of choosing Him. But it is clearly stated in verse 30 that not everyone will receive the same gifts. Therefore, not every disciple will become an apostle.

The Original 12 Apostles

In the case of Jesus' Disciples, many were devoted students and followers of Jesus, but only 12 were initially chosen to go out and spread the word and build the church:



1. Simon (whom he named Peter)
2. James
3. John
4. Andrew
5. Philip
6. Bartholomew
7. Matthew
8. Thomas
9. James
10. Thaddaeus
11. Simon
12. Judas Iscariot (who was later replaced by Matthias)

Being an apostle took an additional gifting, one that Jesus saw and chose from the men who followed Him. And later, were given those gifts through the Holy Spirit after Jesus ascended. Even those who are considered the original 12 seemed to gain fervor and confidence in their roles as apostles after the [Pentecost](#) when the Holy Spirit came alive in them.

What Is an Apostle Today?

Apostles, as defined and explained above, do still exist and are still called by God to carry out the mission of growing the church. “Apostle” is clearly listed as the first in a series of gifts believers can receive from the Holy Spirit.

Just as in Jesus’ day, not everyone will receive this gift. But, as God continues to grow the church, there will always be a need for this gifting.

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Corinthians?**

- A. John
- B. Romans
- C. Galatians
- D. Ephesians

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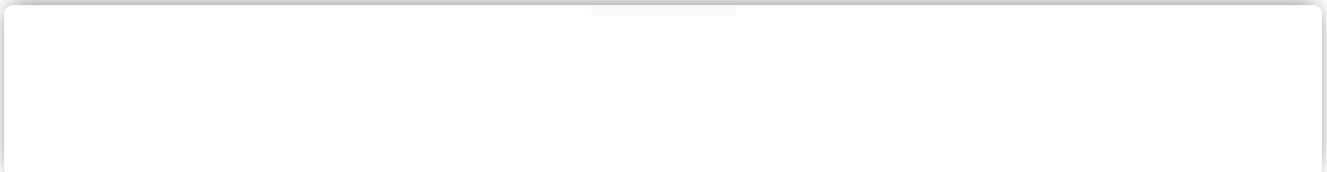




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