

Apostle John Dean

I would like to draw your attention to the bulletin for just a minute. You will notice on the cover that I have noted that our message today will be given by Apostle John Dean. This is against John's wishes. John does not like titles. John, you will have to put up with me. I have put in your title with your name for a few reasons.

1. The first reason for the title is that it is a statement. It is a statement of doctrine of what we believe at the East Mountain Vineyard. Many churches and denominations do not believe in apostles today. What little teaching that people have received has been in error. They believe and teach that the apostles disappeared once the canon of Scripture was completed. However, there are no supporting Scriptures that I have found that back up their doctrinal position. On the contrary, Scripture teaches us that the Lord appointed in the church first apostles. In the Greek, the word first is *proton*, which means first in time, place, rank, or position. The work of an apostle is obviously very important to God, as He wrote down that it was to be *proton*. It goes on to say that we are to desire the greater gifts. What are the greater gifts? These greater gifts are the apostles, prophets, teachers, etc. These gifts are vital to the church. They help lay foundations in the church. They build the church. They are necessary and Scripture tells us to earnestly desire them. We are not commanded to diminish the need, or eliminate the office. Instead, we are taught to earnestly desire apostles. The word earnest in Greek is *zeloo*, which means to have a hot, passionate desire for. The root word means heat, to be boiling over, or jealous for. It is a passion that does not go away easily. It is a strong, intense desire for. God, not Bill, tells you and I that we are to have a passion and zeal for apostolic ministry in our churches. So, the first reason that I have John listed as an apostle is because it is a statement of doctrine of what we believe at the East Mountain Vineyard.

(1 Corinthians 12:28-31) "And God has appointed in the church, first (*proton*) apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. {29} All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? {30} All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? {31} But earnestly (*zeloo*) desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way."

2. The second reason that I wrote Apostle John Dean is because it is what John does. John teaches that an apostle is not a job promotion or title, it is simply a job description. It is what John does. John oversees AIM, which stands for Alliance International Ministries. AIM is a alliance of apostles who relate to pastors all over the world. They have three divisions: Australia, Africa, and the USA. These three districts work with pastors all over the world. Even though John is part of the USA team, he ministers in Africa, Europe, Australia, Asia, South America, and North America. What is the work of an apostle? What are the things that an apostle does? I have a full teaching that includes over ten specific things that apostles do. But, very briefly, here are some of the things that apostles do. Apostles plant churches. Apostles help lay foundations in churches. They help

recognize, develop, and set in leadership in the local church. They help equip the local church for the work of service. They are fathers to leaders. You will notice that I have written some things about spiritual fathers in our bulletin today. That was intentional because John is a spiritual father. It is what he does.

3. The third reason that I have put Apostle John Dean in your bulletin is we need the full expression of Jesus Christ. In our study of Ephesians, our text says that he gave some as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints for the work of service. We will get more into this text next week, when I teach on it. But, you and I need the full expression of Jesus Christ in our church. Jesus was the Chief Apostle. Jesus was the Prophet. Jesus was the Evangelist. Jesus was the Teacher. Jesus was the Shepherd (or Pastor). We need the full expression of Jesus in our church in order to be properly equipped. I believe the apostle is listed first because he flows in prophetic, evangelism, and teaching. An apostle has a shepherd's heart. An apostle can help a church be more balanced than merely having a teacher as the Senior Pastor. But, the truth is that God gave gifts to men and we need all these gifts and expressions in our churches. Many churches become teaching centers because the pastor is a teacher. Some churches become prophetic centers because the pastor is a prophet. Some churches lean towards benevolent ministry because their pastor has a gift of mercy. They are also usually disorganized and micro-managed, because of the downside of the gifting of the leader.

(Ephesians 4:11-12) "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, {12} for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;"

I have been to many chiropractors in the past for lower back issues. Since I stopped eating peanuts and taking allergy medicine, I have had very little back issues. Anyway, the first thing that every new chiropractor has done is check the length of my legs. Some people have one leg longer than the other. One may be half inch longer than the other, but the consequences are devastating. (In my case, both my legs are the same length. My problem was too many golf shots in difficult positions for the body to be in.) When one leg is longer than the other, it forces one side to be higher than the other side of the body and the spine gets out of alignment. This puts stress and pressure on certain disks and nerves, which results in pain.

We have churches today with one limb much longer than the other. We have churches today with chiropractic needs. They need to get their spine adjusted and back in alignment. But, the only way that this is going to happen is through a more balanced ministry from the pulpit. When God gave these various gifts to the church to equip the church for the work of service, there was a reason. The reason was so that we would be the full expression of Jesus Christ to a world that desperately needs Christ.

I make no apologies for using the term Apostle John Dean. It is with great joy that I introduce to you Apostle John Dean. It is an honor to have my friend John come and minister to us this morning. It is with much appreciation that I bring John forward.

Father, thank You for John Dean. Thank You for His willingness to come and speak to a small church plant in Tijeras, New Mexico. Thank You for this gift to the body of Christ. Thank You for how You have used John on Friday night in our body. Thank You for how You used John to minister to pastors in our area last night. Father, thank You for John Dean. Father, I ask You to bless our time of ministry this morning. I ask You to open up our hearts to hear what You have laid on John's heart to teach this morning. Give us attentive and receptive hearts. May we hear what You want us to hear this morning. Bless our time in Your word this morning. Amen.

1. It is a statement of _____. (1 Cor 12:28-31)

First: _____ – G4412; firstly (in time, place, order, or importance):--before, at the beginning, chiefly, (at, at the) first (of all).

Earnestly desire: _____ – G2206; from G2205 (zelos); to have warmth of feeling for or against:--affect, covet (earnestly), (have) desire, (move with) envy, be jealous over, (be) zealous (-ly affect).

2. It is what John _____.

A short list of the work of an apostle:

- Apostles _____ churches.
- Apostles help lay _____ in churches.
- Apostles help recognize, develop, and set in _____ in the local church.
- Apostles _____ the local church for the work of service.
- Apostles are spiritual _____.

3. We need the full _____ of Jesus Christ in our churches. (Eph 4:11-12)

- Jesus is the Apostle.
- Jesus is the Prophet.
- Jesus is the Evangelist.
- Jesus is the Pastor.
- Jesus is the Teacher.

Because of the current wineskin, many churches have _____. The shape of the church becomes disproportionate according to the _____ of the Senior Pastor.

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