

Apostolic Architecture

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<http://lifemessenger.org/apostolic-architecture/>

[Apostolic Architecture](#) is a free resource paper developed in 2009 for an apostolic round table in Charlotte, USA.

Building a Prototype Model of City-Church

God is restoring to the church an authentic apostolic Christianity by re-laying the foundations of the apostolic *message*, apostolic *ministry*, and apostolic *mode*. These foundations will provide the spiritual technology to grow a citywide dwelling of God – ‘the one, holy, universal, and apostolic church’ – the church of the city.

Paul – The Prototype Apostle

As the pioneer ‘apostle to the Gentiles’ (Gal 2:8) Paul’s *message*, *ministry*, and *mode* serve as the prototype apostolic model for the nations. His mission was universal – to ALL nations.

Peter, by contrast, was recognised as the ‘apostle to the Jews’. This was according to a divine commission, as was Paul’s apostleship to the Gentiles (see Gal 2:7,8). James and John were also established as ‘pillars’ in Jerusalem – the Hebrew church (see Gal 1:19; 2:9, 12; Acts 15:13; 21:18).

However, Paul was the chosen instrument to take the gospel to the nations (see Acts 9:15; 26:15-18; 13:47; Isa 49:6; Rom 1:1; Gal 1:15). This was primarily an issue of call and revelation:

...God who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to **reveal his Son in me** so that I might preach him among the Gentiles...

Gal 1:15-16

Because of his call to the nations God entrusted a unique revelation to Paul. In fact Paul’s revelation was so unique he could describe it as ‘my gospel’ (Rom 2:16; 16:25; 2 Tim 2:8; 2 Th 2:14; 2 Cor 4:3). He also warned of a ‘different gospel’ in contrast to the gospel that he preached (2 Cor 11:4; Gal 1:6, 8, 9). Paul’s gospel was so distinctive in contrast to that of Peter, James, and John, and so integral to the establishing of the new covenant order that he publicly withstood Peter in Antioch to protect it (Gal 2:11-14). Peter, writing many years later, acknowledged that Paul’s revelation was ‘hard to understand’, but had evidently accepted the rebuke affirming his writings as ‘Scripture’ (2 Pet 3:16).

So, what was the revelation that others found so hard to understand – and what was unique about it?

Paul explains:

Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation... In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that **through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of ONE BODY ...**

Eph 3:2-6 NIV (author’s emphasis)

It is the revelation of the ‘ONE BODY’ in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile (see Eph 2:11- 18; Col 3:11; Gal 3:28; 6:15;

Rom 2:28, 29). Until this revelation the gospel (with the exception of Cornelius's household – Acts 10) was culturally bound, viewed as exclusive to the Jew.

This was a message of *sonship* in contrast to *slavery*:

But when the time had fully come, **God sent his Son**, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, **that we might receive the full rights of sons**. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." **So you are no longer a slave, but a son**; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Gal 4:4-7 NIV (author's emphasis)

because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. **For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship**. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

Rom 8:14-16, 19-21 NIV (author's emphasis)

Apostolic Message

The apostolic *message* was received from Christ and His apostles and is authoritative for every generation. This message is the gospel of the kingdom of God, the good news of the new order in Christ. Through Christ's incarnation, atoning work, resurrection, ascension and session at the right hand of the Father the Kingdom of God has invaded the cosmos, and is progressively restoring and filling it with His glory. As the God-Man – the Son of God and Son of Man – he has restored the new humanity to sonship.

This new cosmic order was uniquely revealed to Paul as salvation by faith in Christ, with the corollary of living in the redeemed community as the corporate Son – the one new man – the body of Christ. Within the first several centuries these flip sides of the same coin, the oneness of Christ and His church, were lost and the church went into spiritual decline. However, God has intervened and they are now being restored. We have a sure foundation that in the climax of history, city by city, Jesus as the one Lord of one faith will preside supernaturally over a fully restored church – the 'one, holy, universal, and apostolic church' – the one church of each city.

Excerpt from: [Apostolic Architecture](#)

See also: [A Statement Concerning the City Church](#)

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