

APOSTLES ARE FIRST

1 Cor 12:28-29

28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. NKJV

NT:4412 prœton first of all, before all; above all

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- **FIRST IN TIME**

It is most commonly used in the sense of time.

Thus the word first contains a temporal element to the apostle.

Mark 9:11

11 And they asked Him, saying, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" NKJV

Luke 17:25-26

25 But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. NKJV

Luke 21:9

9 But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately." NKJV

The first gifting we see in the Book of Acts post ascension, are the apostles. **THEY ARE THE FIRST ON THE SCENE.** The first to go to the gentiles was Peter the Apostle.

- **FIRST IN THE SENSE OF PRIORITY.**

This emphasizes the order of importance.

Matt 5:24

24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. NKJV

Matt 7:5

5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. NKJV

Matt 6:33-34

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. NKJV

They are first in the order of importance because of the importance of their function – **THEY LAY THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST.**

- **FIRST IN RANK**

Mark 10:44-46

44 And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." NKJV

Acts 28:7-8

7 In that region there was an estate of the leading citizen of the island, whose name was Publius, who received us and entertained us courteously for three days. NKJV

Mark 6:21

21 Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee. NKJV

Acts 13:50-51

50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. NKJV

The Greek word for “chief” and “leading citizen” – protos.

Apostles are first in time, order of importance and rank.

In terms of missions the first on site should be apostles, not intercessors or evangelists.

Paul and Barnabas were the first ones sent from Antioch as apostles. Apostles are skilled in laying the foundations of the doctrines of Christ. They are able to break through fallow ground and sow the seeds of the Word of God. They are the arrow head of the arrow that breaks through difficult terrain opening and establishing the course for others to follow.

In terms of rank, the apostle is not ranked as the world ranks its chiefs.

Matt 18:1-5

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

2 Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, 3 and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. NKJV

Matt 23:11-12

11 But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. NKJV

They are the greatest servants to the Body of Christ. They set the example as chief servants – thus Paul could say imitate me.

1 Cor 9:19-20

19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; NKJV

Jesus the chief apostle demonstrated His rank in His service.

Mark 10:31

31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first." NKJV

“Many who are first in their own eyes will be last in God’s eyes” - Wiersbe