

Perspective on fruit of the Spirit and gifts of the Spirit

First and foremost, the fruit of the Spirit, and especially love are more essential, more important, and more basic than the APEST gifts. Love is a necessary foundation and fabric for the expression of the APEST gifts (1 Cor. 12:31 to 13:13). Gifts can be counterfeited but love cannot be imitated. The gifts without love are pointless or destructive while love without gifts is still impactful. Do not allow focus on the gifts to distract you from the fruit of the Spirit.

One way to think of it is with the analogy of wine and wineskins. The fruit of the Spirit is the wine and the APEST gifts are the wineskin. Both are necessary. The wineskin is important so that the wine will not be wasted. It is how we steward the wine. The main point, however, is the wine itself.

Another way to think of it is that the fruit of the Spirit is what we desire to multiply, and the APEST gifts are how we multiply it. It is possible to multiply lesser things or even bad things. APEST gifts can be misused to do just that. We must ensure that we are using APEST gifts to multiply the life of Christ Himself.

Jesus as the model of APEST

Jesus is the perfect expression and balance of the APEST gifts. Our exercise of these gifts both individually and corporately is for the end of us growing in the completeness of our maturity in Christ and expressing His character and nature to the world (Eph. 4:7-13).

We are all to express aspects of each of the APEST gifts and grow in them. This should be a life-long endeavor. The Lord, in His wisdom however, does give each person special grace in particular gifts. That means we will all have relative strengths and weaknesses. This is partly to increase our dependence on the Lord and interdependence with one another, both of which promote unity with the body of Christ. We need one another and should appreciate one another more because of these differences in gifting.

Just as we are to pursue a mature balance of all the APEST gifts individually, we are also to do so corporately, as the body of Christ, His representatives in this world. Just as we are to individually equip others in the APEST ministries, we are also to do that corporately as His body. In God's Kingdom, all are meant to be ministers. There are no spectators, only participants. We are blessed to be a blessing.

Interaction among various gifts of the Spirit

There is a place for "siloing" among the gifts in order for the deeper development of people with a particular gift, or in some particular ministry effort. We also need, however, to make intentional efforts to integrate with people having each of the various gifts in order that the entire image of Christ can be demonstrated in the church and to the world.

We are to grow up into the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ. Part of that is growing in the maturity of expression of the APEST gifts. It is possible to be immature in one's expression of the gifts. That can be a matter of character through demonstrating the fruit of the flesh rather than the fruit of the Spirit. That can also be a matter of competence or skill. Finally, it can be a matter of incompleteness in fulfilling one's purpose, particularly in regard to merely ministering oneself and failing to equip others to do so. This is short-sighted and unfortunately is a very common failure.

Focus of APEST being equipping gifts

Broadly speaking, the field of pedagogy (training) is universally important in order for the APEST gifts to have their full impact. While it most fully falls into the gift of teaching (and secondarily to the gift of apostling), it is extremely relevant for all the gifts. We can indicate that with the notation apesT. Through the rest of this document we will use a similar notation to indicate primary and secondary relevance of different skills, tools, and concepts for each of the APEST gifts.

Each gift has as a necessary component, the equipping of others and thus everyone needs to grow in their ability to train others. I prefer to use the word “train” rather than “teach” in order to indicate that the goal is to equip people to actually apply and share with others what they are learning. Education or learning in the Kingdom of God is not merely theoretical or philosophical, but is to impact our lives and ministries, our words and our actions.

Brief description of APEST gifts

Apostles generally address issues related to the extension of the Kingdom into new places and people groups or segments of society. They tend to think strategically. They also lay basic foundations and patterns related to growth and reproduction for all of the APEST gifts. They also are intended to have particular interaction with the prophets.

Prophets generally address issues related to worship, hearing from the Lord, acting according to His will and standards, and seeing justice done. They often gravitate toward worship and prayer. They also tend to be drawn to ministries related to community development and ministry to the poor, the suffering, and the disenfranchised. They have a particular role in informing the work of the apostles as a pioneering partnership. They provide direction for the action of the apostles.

Evangelists are concerned for the growth of the body of Christ. They delight in sharing the good news of the Kingdom and drawing as many people as possible to join our spiritual family.

Shepherds are concerned with the unity and encouragement within the church and the Kingdom family in general. They long to build up the body and deepen relationships. They are about health and well-being.

Teachers are concerned with disciples having a fuller and deeper understanding of God and His will and ways and word.

The apostles and prophets lay a foundation and set patterns and culture and establish DNA. The evangelists, shepherds, and teachers (with participation of the prophets as well) then build on the foundation, growing the body in both breadth and depth, in size and maturity, in outreach and in-reach.

Overview of sample areas for equipping

It can be helpful to consider various tools, skills, and concepts in making disciples as either at the basic or introductory level or at a more advanced and specialized level. **All disciples should be equipped at the basic level.** This level is within the purview of the apostles as they set the patterns for the Kingdom in new places or people groups. **Topics that are more specialized may be appropriate for people with a certain gifting or serving in certain types of environments or situations.** I will list some sample topics below. **These are illustrative and not exhaustive.** The gifts I list as relevant for the topics could certainly be up for discussion as well. I want to note input on this especially from Jim McKnight.

Basic/Introductory Skills/Tools/Concepts**Primary/secondary APEST**

Relationship list (<i>oikos</i> map)	Es
Personal testimony	Ea
Gospel presentation	Ea
Preparation to suffer well (benefits and proper response)	Pa
Accountability to learn/obey/share	Pt
Church understanding (levels, functions, and forms)	St
Stewarding time and resources	Pt
Multiplication strategy introduction (pace, non-seq. etc.)	Ae
Training cycle implementation	Ast
LTG/CHAT/accountability group	Ps
Basic hermeneutics (SOAPS, etc.)	Tp
Facilitating simple church	Pa
Prayerwalking	Ae
Prayer Wheel (or other prayer patterns)	Ps
Person of peace	Ea
“Duckling” discipleship	At
Being in a church while starting a church	Ap
Seeing where the Kingdom isn’t	Ap
Body life basics (“one anothers” and spiritual gifts)	St
Church discipline	Ps
Consuming large amounts of Scripture	Tp

Advanced/Specialized Skills/Tools/Concepts

Various cross-cultural gospel presentations	Ae
Four fields or other strategy evaluation tool	At
Peer mentoring groups	At
1-3-9 or 5-5-5 pattern	As
Scripture memory	Tp
Trauma healing training	Sp
Understand elders/deacons/APEST	Sa
Conflict resolution	Sp
Hermeneutics (multiple topics)	Tp
Partnering and collaboration (multiple topics)	Sa
Marriage and family relationships (multiple topics)	S
Counseling and member care	S
Crisis response (multiple topics)	Pse
Financial/business (multiple topics)	Ap
Farming/other sustainability topics	S
Community development (multiple topics)	Pat
Disaster response and preparedness	See
Security training	As
Oral communications (multiple topics)	Eta
Large group evangelistic speaking	Epa
Advanced strategy (multiple topics)	A
Pedagogy	Ta
Biblical background and history topics	Tp
Reporting and tracking (multiple topics)	Sa
Advanced communications topics	Et
Grouping strategies	Ea

Research topics	A
Apologetics	TE
Advanced prayer strategies and tools (multiple)	P
Meta-narrative training	Tpe
Spiritual warfare (multiple topics)	Pas
Deliverance, healing, and miracles	Pa
Interpreting dreams, visions, and prophecies	Pat
Use of other gifts (words of knowledge/wisdom, etc.)	Pa
Public policy (and related topics)	P
Health and wellness (multiple topics)	S
Bible translation and access	At
Children's work	Se
Women's work	Sp
Media and communications	Eap
Giving and generosity	Sap

How to use these lists

At an individual level, you can look at the Basic/Introductory list and see if there might be gaps in your own development. Once you determine your own gift mix, you can also look at the Advanced/Specialized list and see if there are topics in which it would be helpful for you to pursue additional training. You also could look for topics that it would be helpful for you to train others in who are in your network or city/regional church.

At the city/regional church or larger network level, you can evaluate how well you are doing at that larger level in equipping people in the Basic/Introductory list. You can also look through the Advanced/Specialized list and consider if there are any topics which would be appropriate to seek trainers in at this point in your network's development. You can also note which topics you already have equippers serving in and make their training known to others within the network. Finally, you can make intentional efforts at identifying the APEST gifting of leaders within city/regional church or network, and having them evaluate if there are areas in which they should be equipping others or be equipped in.

How to identify APEST gifts

You can either pursue an organic approach, or take an inventory. Here is an organic approach, outlined by Neil Cole. Consider:

1. God's calling (Acts 26:12-18)
2. Internal drive (Rom. 15:14-29; 1 Cor. 9:16-18)
3. Church's testimony (Gal. 2:6-10)
4. Price paid for the sake of the role (Gal. 6:17; 2 Cor. 11:1-33)
5. Fruitfulness of ministry (1 Cor. 9:1-3; 2 Cor. 3:1-3; 12:11-13)

You can find some inventories online. Some are free and some are paid. I took several to see how accurate they are and got varied results. In my opinion, the most accurate free test was at <https://designdiscovery.com> and the best paid one was at <https://5qcentral.com/tests/>.

Recommended books and resources

- [Primal Fire](#) by Neil Cole.
- [5Q](#) by Alan Hirsch.
- [The Permanent Revolution](#) by Alan Hirsch (on the apostolic gift).
- Neil Cole will soon be releasing a book on the co-laboring of apostles and prophets.

- [The Wheel Model](#) by Frank Schattner (does not use APEST terminology but is very much on topic).
- [Mission Frontiers article on APEST expressions in movements](#) (free) by Curtis Sergeant.
- [Mission Frontiers article on APEST in crisis response by movements](#) (free) by Mary Roberts and Guy Caskey.
- [The Normal Christian Church Life](#) (free) by Watchman Nee is an old book (1939) that focuses mainly on the apostolic role when it addresses APEST leadership.
- I also recommend articles on **elders** (by Trevor Larsen) and **deacons** (by Tim Jore) and a powerpoint on **coaching for APEST in movements** (by Trevor Larsen). You can email me at curtis@2414now.net and I can send those.
- I will be sending out a short document on the types of input to request from prophets, with a special section on input for apostles. Email me at curtis@2414now.net to request that.
- For examples of “packages” of the Basic/Introductory topics in multiple languages you can view [Zúme training](#) (free in 43 languages) or [The Only One](#) (free in a dozen languages soon).
- For an example of movement-friendly advanced studies, see the free Master’s level program at [Fidelis Project](#).

=====

General guidance and advice from a few of the leaders I queried regarding APEST

Respondent X

A key leader sent this very helpful chart that is similar to and an extension of my lists above.

GIFT	SKILLS, TOOLS, OR CONCEPTS IN WHICH TO EQUIP PEOPLE
Apostle	Keep first things first: seek God’s kingdom, love God, love people, and engage in
	Think about an entire people or population segment
	Sense God’s desire for that people or population segment
	Know about the movements that contribute to a CPM
	Embrace the importance of a prayer movement
	Spark a sending movement that raises the right kinds of people and resources
	Look for people of peace
	Spark a Gospel movement
	Practice precision harvesting
	Contribute to a disciple making movement
	Establish a training movement
	Contribute to a church planting movement
	Ensure that local leaders are identified, equipped, and coached
	Develop culturally-appropriate networks of churches and leaders

	Pass on the missions DNA so that an indigenous missions movement is also
	Be aware of the changing role of an outsider-apostle over time
	Use the Model, Assist, Watch, and Leave reproduction cycle
	Use outside money wisely
Prophet	Preach the Word in and out of season
	Identify social issues that the Gospel will address
Evangelist	Ensure that many people are being exposed to the Gospel
	Use the three story method including creation to Christ stories
	Write contextually appropriate creation to Christ stories
	Form Bible discussion groups
	Facilitate Bible discussion groups
	Prepare sets of Bible stories and simple questions for evangelistic Bible discussion groups
	Use digital tools to share the Gospel
Shepherd	Understand what a church is and does
	Understand what church leaders are and do
Teacher	Practice and model good hermeneutics
	Contribute to a training movement
	Prepare sets of Bible stories and simple questions for discipleship Bible discussion groups
	Prepare lessons that God can use to renew believers' minds
	Prepare lessons that God can use to shape believers' character
	Prepare lessons that God can use to train believers in core ministry skills (equip the saints to do the works of ministry)
	Prepare lessons that God can use to help believers develop healthy relationships

Frank Schattner

1. From the beginning, I've thought that only emphasizing movements/multiplication with out thought and planning going into sustainability was going to lead to other problems in the development of the churches. I've shared that with the Jonathan Exec in the past though I've tried not to be very vocal about it because I thought it would come up naturally, which it

obviously has. My writing my book, The Wheel Model followed by starting Fidelis, were my quiet efforts of dealing with the issues that you're currently raising.

2. How did I arrive at my convictions? During my missionary career of 40+ years and while working and living closely with the local people and church leaders, I could see with my own eyes that CPM's without proper discipleship can get very ugly. Not only that, but the locals would complain about the pastoral needs and no one was equipped to deal with it. This type of situation resulted in local leaders no longer wanting to evangelize and multiply because they already had their hands full. Not only that but local unbelievers and officials would point out that Christianity is 'ugly'. And if the local church leaders didn't arrive to do weddings, funerals etc, the people, both christian and non christian would be very upset.

3. As I pointed out in my book, we need to engage in all 5 fruitful practices in order to have any chance at all of building a healthy church and movement. You probably know this already.

4. I see great benefit from starting the Fidelis seminary because it gives me extended time with those I'm discipling. Instead of short and quick trainings, we also need to have a more disciplined approach as well that still emphasizes CPM and obedience BUT also deals with other pastoral and theological issues.

In short, I'll glad you and your team is addressing these issues because they are vital. I also always keep reminding myself of the admonition of scripture, Col. 1:28-29 and 2 Tim. 4:1-5.

William J. Dubois

RE: our work... There is good news.. lots of principles, learnings, and stories to share. But the content is all Scripture, and delivered through mentoring relationships, so we don't have nice, neat print ready training tools to share. We have found, in the past, that in our groups, this style of "print ready" materials always appears as being from "outside" or Western, so we try not to promulgate that. Our leadership process is based on values, principles, and character... so the, content all flows from there.

Essentially the design of our house-based CPMs has two leadership structures. The local leader is THE authority in that fellowship, and when a visiting leader comes he/she must submit their comments under the leadership of the local leader. This is evident in Paul's role and letter requests.

In spiritual formation and leadership development, our baseline is very OIKOS-based, and we generally look for encounters to happen in a Cornelius manner rather than DBS or other more rational approaches that work very well elsewhere. Once a head of household/sphere of influence leader is working well to disciple their extended relationships into the kingdom, the next step is helping them to learn to multiply through their groups.. All very standard stuff. I am attaching a simple document that briefly outlines the baseline leadership steps.

The difference is twofold... We have been at this for 30 years...so we have built-in leaders, trainers, and mentors for every language language group and by district, province, and country to the regional level. Once a leader proves proficient at multiplying he his "streamed" based on his/her gift mix, skills and relational connections into APEST tracks of leadership development (we also have other tracks within the P category - men's, women's, children's, home-school co-ops, deliverance, etc).

The APEST leadership is organized by house church cluster within a movement and checks in on the local leaders. They travel, mentor, coach, and are also accountable to their own district, region, and country leadership. We then also have an executive council made up of country leaders who encourage one another in the APEST development track.

Lee (last name omitted by request)

Lee sent the following points related to shepherding as an apostle.

1. Must have a growing strategy in your back yard. Starting things is easy growing is hard.
2. Depth and emergence of organic leadership of shepherds and teachers will take years in your back yard. Apostles must care for their backyard.
3. As an outside catalyst you can multiply your backyard in other places. If you don't have it, you can't multiply it.
4. Need shepherd tools for DMM/CPM not apostolic ones. Shepherd tools include but are not limited to the following Trauma Healing as outreach to find persons of peace, depending on context hospice care, marital groups where you have disciples and simple churches already. Story sets for these, outreach events to discover needs educationally, language, jobs etc. Shepherds can use discovery Bible studies or trauma healing questions to get to relationships with people in communities. We do those things as community transformation. It takes time, not just training. You have to stay in the place that welcomes you with those people. Appoint Elders rather forming organizations.
5. If apostles and prophets are the foundation, the emphasis from micro to macro needs to be on disciples, leaders, and churches rather than on parachurches, foundations, etc. We must model an Acts 2 model. Lack of models at city and regional levels is a massive issue. #1-4 is part of the reason for #5.

Mary Ruuri

Cultures and traditions of people whom we are reaching remains a big challenge to the transformation of believers. I suggest that a thorough discipleship with models be put in place along with prayers to the Holy Spirit whose work is to transform lives. Otherwise, we will keep producing generations of ungodly cultures and traditions in the name of multiplication.

If I'm asked to suggest a plan which would help movements grow with much lasting fruit, I would advocate for apostolic and prophetic voices with more supernatural demonstration. For me, this is a missing piece of the puzzle in the body which needs to be addressed. This type of service needs to be recognized by movements and be used in the fields to do Jeremiah 1:10 sort of work so that church planters who are teachers, evangelists and pastors can do the rest by God's grace. This will help missionaries not to labor for many years without converts. I believe they need APEST and not only DMM principles. Unbelievers need to see the power of God. Ministers being unwilling to pay the price is part of the problem. Walking without discerning the times is a factor. Living in sin is part of it, along with ignorance through not understanding dominion. APEST can equip the body with this and more.

Jean Coles

Jean sent multiple resources relevant to equipping people to a more advanced level in prayer:

- S(TP) - Wholeness Prayer: [Freedom for the Captives Ministries | wholeness prayer and other resources \(freemin.org\)](#), [Becoming Whole | Freedom for the Captives Ministries \(freemin.org\)](#), [Discovery Bible Studies | Freedom for the Captives Ministries \(freemin.org\)](#). God is setting spiritual and emotional captives free as people receive His perspective at their points of need. This helps bring breakthroughs at every point in the CPM/DMM continuum / Heart and Four Fields (e.g. evangelism, discipleship, leadership training, trauma healing, overcoming strongholds and stuck places, relational dynamics, marriage issues, family and group dynamics, forgiveness, unhealthy anger and fear issues).
- P(ST) - Hearing God and Listening Prayer: [Hearing God | Freedom for the Captives Ministries \(freemin.org\)](#). Also discerning God's will together.
- P(TS) - Prayer Strategy - strongholds and Kingdom opposites: [Prayer Strategy | Freedom for the Captives Ministries \(freemin.org\)](#). Helping individuals and teams identify, develop and evaluate prayer strategies.
- ATP(S) - Equipping others in prayer strategy. [Reproducible Prayer Resources](#).

Jenny Oliphant

[Jenny gave a lengthy and helpful example and then summarized her practice as a prophet (1&2) and an apostle (3&4):]

...in summary, 1) Corporate Listening Prayer 2) Clarity of vision and sharing of that vision 3) Formation of teams to run with it 4) Multiplication globally.

Second [apostolic] example- people spotting...[followed by an example of her identifying, calling out, and appointing a key leader.]

Third example which again illustrates opening of doors for others to walk through and flourish. [This is another apostolic example of asking someone to lead in a particular situation that led to long-term fruitful ministry.] Summary of that example: The transformation through reconciliation and representational repentance.

Many of the tools that we use in the Ethne team are to be found here which you already know and have been written in a DBS format by Liz. She wrote them with the intention that they would serve CPMs.

I suppose I am working the Apostle gift through the Prophetic gift as the examples and my world is the prayer world. I think the driver in my gifts comes from the Evangelist because the reason we pray is for people to be saved and is all about God's Kingdom and the Great Commission. I am at heart a mission worker and like to be out door knocking, disciple making and street evangelism.

Kang Hee Ahn

We should reconsider the statement of Jesus that all believers would do what Jesus was doing and would do greater than Jesus. According to our Lord Jesus, all believers should do what Jesus did, not just APEST.

Jesus seemed to make all His believers as His APEST workers. The ultimate goal of APEST is to equip all believers to become like Jesus who is the model of APEST. It means that the main objective of APEST is to make all believers APEST workers like Him (1 Corinthians 11:1).

In order to finish the task of covering all nations with the glory of God, we need to follow the our Lord Jesus' vision that all believers should live as Jesus live and work like Jesus. APEST should not be understood as positions nor tiers of leadership in the church. Rather they should be considered as more mature workers who should equip all believers to work like them.

To fully implement and to expand the role and function of the APEST includes equipping others. The best way to do that in the beginning of the work is to equip every believer. But to finish the work we must pursue the end vision of equipping all believers to reproduce APEST in others as Jesus promised in John 14:12.

Guy Caskey

Our Leadership Communities and City Teams are delivery systems for APEST functions. We have monthly rhythms to Learn, Reflect, Practice and Process in community.

The reading plan helps leaders connect the go team or foundation laying in Acts (APE functions) to the grow team (ST) functions in the epistles. The graphic helps show how the functions work together.

[To get a copy of the documents he mentions or learn about their teams and communities, you can contact Guy at <https://m4network.com/>.]