

The word *προφήται* probably refers to men "who are able to expound the Word"⁹ and not to future tellers such as Agabus. Five men are named whose work was evidently "preaching and teaching." There is no evidence in regard to the number of congregations they served or how the work was divided between the various men. It is clear that these five formed a multiple teaching staff under a single governing unit. It also appears that they were all gathered in one place when the Holy Spirit directed them to ordain Barnabas and Saul for missionary service.

On this occasion, those sent out formed a three-man team made up of men with differences in age, experience, and spiritual gifts. Throughout his ministry, the Apostle Paul was surrounded with associates who worked and suffered with him in extending Christ's Kingdom (see chart on p. 19).

It is not difficult to find examples of plural ministries in the New Testament. The searcher would be hard pressed to find even one example of a man who was responsible to lead a church or evangelize a city single-handedly.

b. The New Testament pattern is based upon a proper understanding and use of spiritual gifts. There are six passages where spiritual gifts are listed:

⁹: C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles, (Columbus: The Wartburg Press, 1944), p. 492.