Apostolos in the New Testament

James Maynard Bragg

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Thesis title:

APOSTOLOS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Thesis approved in final form:

Date: May 28, 1962

Major Professor: S. Marion Smith
APOSTOLOS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts

Division of Graduate Instruction
Butler University
Indianapolis
1962
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To the teachers, Dr. Toyozo W. Nakarai, Dr. David C. Pellett and Prof. S. Marion Smith, under whom it has been my privilege to study the languages and the message of the Bible, I express appreciation. To my major professor and counselor, Prof. Smith, I am grateful for his guidance, patience and encouragement.

To my wife, I express appreciation for her sacrifice and encouragement which have been so helpful.
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ABBREVIATIONS

A, Codex Alexandrinus
ATR, Anglican Theological Review
aug., augmented
B, Codex Vaticanus
Bs., Baruch
cf., compare
Col., Colossians
comp., compiler, compiled by
I Cor., I Corinthians
II Cor., II Corinthians
Deut., Deuteronomy
Div., division
Eccles., Ecclesiastes
ed., edition
ed., editor, edited by
e.g., for example
Eph., Ephesians
I Esd., I Esdras
Ex., Exodus
Gal., Galatians
Heb., Hebrews
Iw., The Interpreter’s Bible
Ibid.; ibidem, in the same place

ICC, The International Critical Commentary

JBL, Journal of Biblical Literature

Jn., John

LAE, Living Age Books

Lk., Luke

loc. cit.; loco citato, in the place cited

I Macc., I Maccabees

II Macc., II Maccabees

Mt., Mark

Mt., Matthew

n., note

n. d., no date

op. cit.; opera citato, in the work cited

p. (plural, pp.), page

I Pet., I Peter

II Pet., II Peter

Phil., Philippians

Ps., Psalm

Rev., Revelation

rev., revised

Rom., Romans

RSV, Revised Standard Version

I Sam., I Samuel

ST, Studia Theologica

I Thess., I Thessalonians

I Tim., I Timothy
II Tim., II Timothy
Tit., Titus
trans., translator, translated by
Vol. (plural, Vols.), volume
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INTRODUCTION

The origin of the Christian ministry is closely related to Jesus in his earthly ministry. Significant in his ministry and that of the Early Church were those known as "apostles." "Apostle" is the transliteration of a word which has a very peculiar background, but which grew eventually to have a very significant meaning within the Christian vocabulary.

For our understanding of the word as it is used in the New Testament, we must not only discover what the word meant in the vocabulary of that day, but, in addition, we must also learn of the particular uses made of the word by different New Testament writers.

In this study we will attempt to discover the background of ἀπόστολος among its pagan ancestors. In addition to this area, we will also be concerned with the Jewish background which exerted a formative influence on the meaning of the word. Finally, an attempt will be made to see the result of this combination of backgrounds as it came to be reflected in the New Testament. Non-Christian sources will be examined for information concerning this word and its usage in pre-Christian times. In the New Testament the word reflects early Greek meaning and ideas associated with Judaism.
New Testament literature will be the source examined for Christian usage. Brief consideration will be given to some important terms used of the followers of Jesus. A thorough survey of New Testament literature will be made for the use of ἀπόστολος. Attention will be focused on the usage found in different writings. The word seems to be used in three different ways: it was used in a general way, a more specific way and in a restricted sense it was applied to a particular number of persons.

In the final chapter a consideration will be given to the apostle's commission or apostleship by examining the call, function and authority of an apostle. This commission will be considered as having two phases: the first relates to Jesus' earthly ministry with his disciples and the second has reference to the commission following the Resurrection. The Resurrection is recognized as the pivotal point which separates the two phases of the commission. Apostleship will be considered as the apostle's involvement in a task of service rather than an office to which he is appointed to exercise governing and administrative authority.

This study will show that very little help is given to the English reader of the New Testament when this word is transliterated as "apostle." We not only have the problem of determining its meaning for today, but we must also discover the meaning with which it was used by those early Christian writers of the New Testament.

The American Standard Version will be the basic English Bible text used throughout this paper unless otherwise noted.
The writer feels this version is advantageous for purposes of comparison because it follows the basic text quite closely. The Revised Standard Version follows this version in the treatment of ἀπόστολος and ἀποστολή except in one instance where ἀπόστολος appears as "he who is sent,"¹ and on one occasion where ἀποστολή is rendered "mission."² The Greek text used for the Septuagint and Apocrypha is that according to Rahlfs. The Masoretic text and Nestle's text are used for basic Old Testament and New Testament study. Edgar J. Goodspeed's The Apostolic Fathers, An American Translation has been used for the writings of the Apostolic Fathers.

Critical treatment of the problem of authorship of New Testament writings has not been brought into the scope of this paper. For purposes of examination, various New Testament writings being related by similarity of content or by actual or attributed authorship have been considered together.

The words Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension will appear capitalized because of their significance in relationship to Jesus Christ and the Christian. The word Church will be capitalized when considered in its universal aspect, but it will not be when used to mean local congregations.

Occasionally certain designations will be capitalized and enclosed in quotation marks, e.g. "the Twelve"; this is done for a particular emphasis, and will not, therefore, correspond to the English Bible text.

CHAPTER I

NON-CHRISTIAN SOURCES AND USAGE

Any study of ἀνάγκη in the literature of the New Testament must begin with a study of the word and its usage which antedates the time of the New Testament writers and their use of it. Such background study will take one into two different streams of culture and religion. The study of ἀνάγκη, on the one hand, leads one among Greek and pagan sources; while the study of ἀπὸ with one among Hebrew and Jewish sources and usage. This Hebrew word cannot be ignored in a study of ἀνάγκη. Each of these areas makes a contribution to the understanding of the usage found in the New Testament.

Pagan sources will receive first consideration. After examination of these, attention will be turned to the Jewish sources. Although the usage found in the New Testament does not parallel the usage found in either of these sources, it witnesses a relationship to usage and ideas found in both areas of background. It may be said that the contribution from these two areas met in the New Testament where a new and different meaning for the word is called into being. The form of the word comes from its Greek background, and the idea within the word is related to its Hebrew background.
Upon examination of the word ἀπόστολος one finds it coming from the compound ἀποστέλλω, "send off or away from." The proposition ἀπό means "from, off, away from; originally of separation and departure." The verb στέλλω means "dispatch, send." From this background ἀπόστολος comes to mean "messenger, ambassador, envoy." ¹

A survey of particular Greek writers reveals ἀπόστολος to have been used in various ways, though not extensively among those particular writers. Herodotus, writing in the Ionic dialect, which was the oldest literary dialect of Greece, is the first writer found to have used this word to mean "envoy" and "embassy." When Alyattes, the ruler of Lydia, sought a truce with Thrsisybulus, the ruler of Mileius, which would end the war, he sent a herald to Mileius offering to make a truce with Thrsisybulus and the Miletians. This herald is called an ἀπόστολος, "envoy"; Ἀληύατης ἀπόστολος ἐστὶν Μιλησίας ἄνδρα, "so the envoy went to Mileius." ⁵ This occurrence is significant also because it is the only case in all extant profane Greek literature where ἀπόστολος means "messenger." ⁶ To express the

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³Liddell and Scott, op. cit.; II, 1637.  
⁴Ibid.; I, 229.  
⁵Herodotus 1. 21.  
idea of "messenger," the Greeks preferred other words, e.g. ἀγγελός, ἀπόστολος, πλήρως.

On one other occasion, Herodotus used the word; but meaning "embassy." When Aristagoras of Miletus revolted against the Persian, Darius, and put an end to the despotism in all of the cities; αὐτὸς εἰς άναξέλεγον ἄρχοντας ἀνέστρεψεν ἡγέτης, "he went on an embassy in a trireme to Lacedaemon." He went because there was need that he should find a strong ally.

Plato and Demosthenes, writing in the Attic dialect, used the word, but with different meanings. Plato used it as an adjective indicating a freight or transport ship. On his third visit to Sicily, he became angry with Dionysius and considered returning home: εὖ διὰ γὰρ ταῖς ἀποστάσιοι πλατεῖς ἐμπόρους ἐνείπειρεν ἔπειτα, "For I was proposing to embark and sail in the trading-vessels." 2

Demosthenes used the word to mean "squadron" in reference to his opposition to the military advances of Philip of Macedon: μετὰ τούτων δὲ τούς ἀποστάσιοι πλατεῖς ἐπείμερον ἔπειτα, "Subsequently I dispatched all those squadrons." 3

In defending his policies and their effective results, a similar use of the word was made:

During the whole war, while the squadrons ἀνείπειρον were organized under my regulations, no trierarch made petition as aggrieved, or appeared

1. Herodotus v. 33.
2. Plato Epistles VII. 346. A.
3. Demosthenes De Corone 30.
as a supplicant in the dockyard temple, or was imprisoned by the Admiralty, and no ship was either abandoned at sea nor lost to the state, or left in harbour as unseaworthy."

A decline in Athens' production of great writers is marked by the Macedonian conquest. With the spread of Attic culture and the Attic dialect, the Attic purity was lost. The Ionic dialect which developed during the Alexandrian period is characterised by two forms. Its spoken form was of the spoken form of Attic intermingled with Ionic words and words borrowed from other dialects, but possessing Attic orthography; and, its literary form was a compromise between the Attic literary usage and the spoken language resulting in an artificial idiom from which the living speech gradually separated.²

At a later time, this same word came to indicate a ship. A document showing this gives an account of expenses of corn-transport and also shows "that each ἀνάρταρος is known by the name of its owner, e. g. Ἀρεός ἀνάρταρον Τριαδαλφοῦ; 'account—for the ship of Tripodalphus.'³

In most instances where ἀνάρταρος appears, it carries the Attic meaning. However, this classical usage does not continue into the New Testament and is therefore of little help in understanding the usage there. New Testament usage compares more with that found in the Ionic dialect; though there is no real parallel. Because of this likeness it has been suggested that

² Demosthenes De Corona 107. ² See, Th. W. Green, "Oikos cit.; p. 91.
since in early times the non-specialized and etymological meaning is found in Herodotus, and the other only in little writers, we can in the EV are the influence of T Orchard the kara."

For the interpretation of the New Testament it is recognized that "what is decisive is not the derivation of a word or its meaning in the fifth century B.C., but what it meant to the people of the Roman empire in the first century A.D."? The word under consideration did experience a change in meaning and usage since early times. Realizing this helps in the understanding of this word in these times.

A new insight may be acquired by comparing ἀνέστησα with katastaxones: "scout." These words correspond in formation from their respective verbs. The latter word was common in the vocabulary of the Cynico-Stoic philosophers. The true Cynic was conscious that he had been sent by Zeus to save partly as a messenger ἀνέστησα, in order to show that in questions of good and evil they have gone astray, and are seeking the true nature of the good and the evil where it is not, but where it is they never think; and partly, in the words of Diogenes, when he was taken off to Philip, after the battle of Chaeroneia, as a scout katastaxones.

In addition to the Cynic's role as messenger and scout, he is considered a ἀνέρπηκτως θεός, "herald of the gods.""
His role is not only passive in that Zeus has sent him, but the use of katákonos implies the idea of his initiative. He is aware of his difference from ordinary men, not that he feels isolated from them, but he has "a strong sense of duty to the message (veryga), and still more a strong sense of responsibility for men," which "is coupled with an equally strong sense of responsibility towards Zeus." The comparison of these words helps one to see that

the word which combined the two ideas of commission and responsibility is katákonos. This both demands and defines the initiative of the Cynic. It is the only term which offers a real parallel to the U.T. ἀναστήρας. Both words are generally associated with the same terminology, even though the identity is actually limited to form. In any case we may say that the Cynico-Stoic philosopher in his role as katákonos is the contemporary figure which stands nearest to that of the U.T. apostle."

In light of this comparison, the apostles were not an entirely new phenomenon to Greek soil. Rather, they were "the representatives of a particular religion among the numerous missionaries of other forms of worship and belief in this classical age of religious propaganda." Within this variety of religions and philosophies, the world might have considered Paul as "one of the numerous wandering orators who then went up and down the world in the service of some philosophical

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2. Ibid. 3. Ibid. 4. Ibid., p. 7.
or religious cause."¹ This was a missionary age not lacking in religious emissaries. It was marked by "the great migration of pagan deities which transplanted eastern cults to the West and North and Graeco-Roman cults to the East."²

Was it accidental that the term "debtor" (ὀφειλέτης) as used by Paul³ was not used by Epictetus? Some think so, for the idea seems to be implied.⁴ But it may be noted that the Cynic did not figure as a slave because he stood on a higher level with the gods. His relationship to the godhead was more like a partnership. Though he was one sent, he was not in a position of absolute dependence upon the one having sent him.

In these circles a clear thought of God and the consequent conviction of a final revelation of God's will is lacking, and that again provides the reason why the philosophical religiosity of the period never reached, in all its missionary self-consciousness, the clear statement of an absolute claim, which distinguishes all true religion and its messengers.⁵

Pagan sources have failed to present a true parallel to the New Testament usage of ἀνήρτατος. Although some similarities appear in the earlier use of the word itself in the Ionic dialect and with messengers of contemporary philosophers, in none of these does one find the source for the usage reflected in the New Testament.

⁵Ibid., pp. 9-10.
Jewish Sources and Usage

When one turns to Jewish sources and usage for aid in the understanding of the word ἀπόστολος as it is used in the New Testament, he discovers that this word had very little usage among Greek-speaking Jews. One reason for this may have been due to the word's association with sailing when the Jews had little to do with matters pertaining to the sea.

"Those who lived in Palestine had no need of naval expeditions, and those living in Egypt seem to have had very little to do with ships."¹

Philo Judaeus, the Jewish writer and philosopher, did not use the word. The Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, used the word only on one occasion, and it is not found anywhere else in Jewish-Greek literature.²

Here, however, it does not mean ambassador as has been suggested by some scholars, but: despatch of a mission, so. the πρεσβης, which is mentioned in the sentence immediately preceding.³

This means that Josephus did not know the later use of this word. However, in this context, he used the word concerning a body of fifty Jews who had been sent to Rome to "petition for the liberty of living by their own laws."⁴ In going

¹Ibid., p. 11.


³Moshech, loc. cit.

to Rome, it was necessary for them to cross the sea. Thus, in this reference, Attic usage might be reflected since it did have reference to matters pertaining to the sea.

A single occurrence of ἀπόστολος is found in the Septuagint, and there it is used in a way similar to that found in Herodotus, though it is not a complete parallel. Here the Greek translator rendered the Hebrew יְיָה יִשָּׁתָּן as ἐγὼ εἰμί ἀπόστολος πρὸς τὰ σκάπας 'I am a hard messenger to you', that means: I am sent from God to you with an austere message. These are the words of the prophet Ahijah to Jero-boam's wife who had come to make inquiry concerning her son's illness. Since this is part of a passage which is missing in א, some have been led to feel that Aquila may have been the source of א and, therefore, is of a late date. There is not unanimous agreement at this point, however. Agreeing that Aquila may have been used, there is to be considered the suggestion that portions of another text were made to assimilate to it.

The passive participle, ἀπόστολος, could be appropriately translated by ἀπόστολος. It may be noted that this Hebrew participle may be explained "in the sense of being charged

1The Greek text of Josephus' Antiquities XVII was not available to the writer.
2Regnorum III. 14:6. 3Herodotus i. 21.
4I Regum 14:6. 5Mosbech, loc. cit.
with something." This is in agreement with the explanation that "the participle passive... indicates the person or thing in a state which has been brought about by external actions." God's messenger was commissioned with a word of God to Jerobeam's wife. Here, ἡμετηρ describes the authorization of the prophet by God. This participle comes from the root ἱμαται, "send." This shows a relationship between these two Hebrew words which somewhat parallels the relationship of the two corresponding Greek words. With this usage in mind, it may be acknowledged that "the proper meaning of ἀπόσταλμα is an ambassador, who not only carries a message like an ἀγγέλος, but also represents the sender." In the Septuagint the use of ἀγγέλος was preferred over the use of ἀπόσταλμα, with the frequent use of the verb ἀποστέλλω one would have expected ἀπόσταλμα to have been used as the correlative substantive, but this was not the case.

Another area of Jewish usage presents what some feel to be the nearest parallel to the Christian use of ἀπόσταλμα. In the Talmud, the word משל используется. This Aramaic form in the passive participle coming from the verb השל, "sent."
The absence of any usage of the Greek word by the Rabbis is obvious.

So some, "the verb ἀποσταλέω appears to be invested with a specifically technical meaning in the literature of the Persian period." Several factors are given consideration by those holding this view. Since the Jewish religion was the official religion of all Jews in the Persian Empire, its organization was closely related to the state. Xenophon, who carried the Persic epistle to Egypt for Darius II, is thus considered the king’s plenipotentiary, his ἀποστάλτης.

Similarly, Ezra may also be considered a ἀποστάλτης sent by the king and his counsellors with a three-fold authorization and task. Although the word ἀποστάλτης is not used as a noun here, which later came to mean "deputy, agent," the verbal form is used. These cases illustrate the meaning of the word as it was used in the early period. It meant the authorization of a person by one of authority to act as instructed at a distant point from the deputizing party.

Ezra’s authorization and task are expressed in these words:

Furnish as thou art sent ἀποστάλτης of the king and his seven counsellors, to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God...


and to carry the silver and gold; • • 1

And then, Ezra • • appoint magistrates and judges; • • 2

The terminology of this decree 3 is recognized as being Jewish; but there are some problematical questions relative to its origin. 4 Vogelstein writes concerning Ezra’s authority:

Ezra’s authority is clearly described and defined and is in exact conformity with the definition of the concept of the apostolate such as we know it in Judaism, inasmuch as the authorization is not valid for the rest of the commissioning board of authorities—in this case the king—but applies to the definitely limited and described district lying outside of the authorizing authority, and, in addition, assigns to the representative a fixed and definite circle of activities. Ezra’s authority expired with completion of the three-fold task which had been assigned to him. 5

A • • could be appointed to conduct legal matters; letters of divorce could be passed by such appointed persons. An agent may appoint a deputy, but there is no deputy for an illegal act; "the responsibility of an illegal act cannot be shifted to the employer." 6 The designation alone establishes the authorization; it does not emphasize being sent nor the nature of the appointed task. But the commission involves responsibility. "The one commissioned is always the representative of the person who commissions him and as such exercises his right." 7 The • • has a religious significance

1 Ezra 7:14, 15. 2 Ezra 7:25. 3 Ezra 7:12-26.
5 Vogelstein, op. cit., p. 101. 6 Jastrow, loc. cit.
only because he has been entrusted with a religious commission. The conscientiousness of the one who is sent is important because there was nothing to hinder the misuse of delegated authority. This whole idea may be presupposed in the Old Testament where the ambassador fully represents the one sending him. This may be seen in Abigail's favorable treatment of the servants David had sent.\textsuperscript{1} Mistreatment of the ambassador is considered as being done against the one who had sent him. The treatment the ambassador receives has the greater influence upon the one who sent him.

It is felt that during the Persian period the chief function of such an appointed one kind of itinerant religious teaching; such a person would be like a traveling missionary. The Persian state missionaries are thought to have become the model for the missionaries among the Jews for the religious administrative authorities at Jerusalem. These are referred to as apostles by some.\textsuperscript{2} This institution among the Jews is believed to have been transferred spontaneously because of the close relationship which existed between the religious and political administrations. There was no such comparable institution among the Greeks. A reason given why this was not true in Greece is that "in Greece the extent of the individual states of the state system as a whole was not very great."\textsuperscript{3}

Not only could such an appointed person act as a representative of one person, but

\textsuperscript{1} 1 Sam. 25:40-42. \textsuperscript{2}Vogelstein, op. cit., p. 106. \textsuperscript{3}Ibid.
The practice of bringing the annual collections of tribute to Palestine is thought to have been stopped by civil authority about the end of the fourth century.

Many hold the view that this practice may have been imitated by the church in Jerusalem. According to this view, one is able to say that "the Judaistic emissaries who caused such trouble in the churches founded by St. Paul bore the title 'apostles.'" This was the view of Emil Schürer who called them "apostoli." It is easy for one holding this view to feel that Paul was acting as a ἀπόστολος in going to Damascus with letters and authority from the central authorities. Such envoys were usually set apart by the community sending them; their mission was a community act and it got a religious character. These were sent in groups, generally two by two.

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Whether there were Jewish missionaries in the time of Jesus called θησίς is not known. Evidence seems to support the view that there were none. It is felt that the missionaries of that period were without the authorization that would accompany the words ἀπόστολος and ἀποστέλλω; rather, their missionary work was more personal in nature. Therefore, there is opposition to the view that these Jewish representatives were called "apostles" in the time of Jesus.

It is thus impossible to speak of Jewish 'apostles' in the time of Jesus; the only correct term is 'authorized agent'. Where the word 'apostle' occurs, it is taken over mechanically from Christian usage into Judaism, in which there is really nothing to justify the use of the word; it is certain that the older Judaism was already familiar with many different kinds of ἀποστολή, but equally certain that this included no reference to missionary activity.6

It is important to note that it is "only regarding the Greek vocable ἀπόστολος that there may be any doubt whether it has for the first time appeared in Christian or Jewish circles."7 Although the Jews sent out Ἰησοῦ, messengers in charge of specific tasks, in pre-Christian times, it was not necessary that ἀπόστολος be used with reference to them. Hellenistic Jews could have employed the term Ἰησοῦ just as well. Kuschel feels that "somewhere or other a mere accidental circumstance has induced the rendering of Ἰησοῦ by ἀπόστολος."8 It appears that this latter word was not used by the Jews in the New Testament sense prior to its use by the Church.9

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1 Langstorf, op. cit., p. 19.  
2 Ibid., p. 20.  
3 Kuschel, op. cit., p. 169.  
4 Ibid., p. 169.  
5 Langstorf, op. cit., p. 20.
Lamb in frequently applied the term Πρέσβης to a person who had been commissioned and authorized by God. Among those were the entire priesthood and a small number of significant personalities. The prophet was not regarded as a Πρέσβης of God. Among those who were so considered were Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah; and these because through them things happened which are elsewhere reserved for God. "Not lifted these four above the rest of Israel in the ability which God gave them to perform miracles, doing that which at all other times he reserved for himself."

Leaving prophets and missionaries together we can only say that the ultimate reason for avoiding the term is to be found in the fact that they speak of God, in His name, but still do not represent Him, in so far as they perform no action. But the essential meaning of presbyōn is that he represents another in action."

After examining Hebrew and Jewish sources, one must conclude that ἀναστόλος has no real parallel usage among the Jews at the time when the word became significant and meaningful in the Christian vocabulary.

From these two areas of non-Christian sources and usage, it may be observed that this Greek word belongs to the Greek sphere of usage and is related to the verb ἀναστᾶναι. The ideas relating to commission and representation which became incorporated within the word are not con only associated with the word in its Greek meaning. The Jewish background makes this contribution. It is here that these two areas of background make their contribution toward the understanding of the usage.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{7}Thid., p. 22.} \text{\textsuperscript{2}Thid., p. 23.}\]
in the New Testament. In Christian usage, the word takes on a distinct meaning which is not paralleled in other sources, but which reflects elements from each of the two background areas. Since there was no current word which could be applied, it was necessary that a new word be adopted.¹

Non-Christian sources show little use of this word before the Christian era. Among the Greeks, its meaning was quite different from that expressed in the New Testament. It was not in common usage among the Jews, but the ideas which it came to carry were similar to ideas found in Judaism. Those ideas were expressed among the Jews by certain terms, but New Testament writers did not choose the Jewish terminology. There is the possibility that one or some of those writers chose and launched this word which was to become so widely used among Christian writers.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIAN SOURCES AND USAGE

New Testament literature is the source for this study of ἀνέγραφος and its usage. Realizing the variety of writers
and their different uses of the word, it will be necessary to
make this investigation three-fold. Attention will first be
given to some terms and their usage among different writers.
Then a survey of all New Testament writings for the use of
this word will be made. Finally, an attempt will be made to
analyze the various uses in order to discover the meanings
the word may have carried.

Terms to Consider

Prior to the use of ἀνέγραφος in reference to certain
followers of Jesus, the reader's attention is attracted to the
use of λαότης; "a learner, pupil, disciple," as a designa-
tion of followers of Jesus. The relationship of a rabbi and
his disciples was not new; it was common among the Jews.
Although Jesus was considered a rabbi, he presented a contrast
to the traditional role of rabbi, especially in this relation-

Grund NICOLAUS CLAUSIUS NOVI TESTAMENTI, transl. Joseph Henry
chip with his disciples. Traditionally, the relationship of
Abba to his disciples was based on the ground of knowledge;
but "the relationship of Jesus to His disciples is based on
unconditional faith."¹ The disciple was to follow him who
called. Discipleship, as reflected in the Gospels, rests upon
the call and initiative of Jesus rather than upon the spiritual
solicitations of the ones he called.

Those who followed Jesus were disciples. This word has
a varied application among New Testament writers. Only a
brief survey will show its varied usage. "Disciple" does not
appear in the Epistles or Revelation, its place being taken
by 'saints' (αγίων) and 'brethren' (ἀδελφοί)."² In addition
to the general use showing the disciple and master relation-
ship,³ "disciple" may be used in a broad sense referring to
all of the followers of Jesus,⁴ i.e. "his disciples," "my
disciples," or "thy disciples"; and, in a limited sense, the
term was used to designate the inner circle of disciples in
distinguishing them from the larger body,⁵ i.e. "his twelve
disciples" or "the eleven disciples."

From the larger body of his disciples, Jesus chose a small
number which became identified as an inner circle around him.

¹ R. Hooton Pfeil, Jesus and His Church: A Study of the
² Alfred Plummer, "Disciple," Dictionary of the Apcotistic
Church, ed. James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's
SON, 1913), 1, 302.
³ Mt. 10:24. ⁴ Mt. 7:1; 26:18; 27:11.
⁵ Mt. 10:1; 18:16.
the distinction of this small group among the larger body of
disciples is to be noted especially in the Synoptic Gospels.
Thus, "the Twelve" becomes a term applied to this inner circle.

It first the followers of Jesus were called ἄνθρωπος: thus distinguishing them from the
disciples of other rabbis; but as time went on they
began to be described absolutely as ἄνθρωπος: disciples: being a Christian phrase which no one
would mistake. The earlier description is found in
ἐκ., as is natural, much earlier than the later; and
the same habit of phrase is found in Ἰν.

"The Twelve" is thought to have been the oldest designation
given to those of the inner circle. In the listing of these
by the writers, "it is quite possible that the actual names
were lost and that there is confusion in the tradition."
which makes a distinction between these and the larger group. He
gives their names, and after they return from their mission,
he calls them "the Apostles."

The names of these have been preserved in Matthew, Mark,
Luke and Acts. For reasons of comparison, they are here presented in the order they are found listed by the different
writers in form of a table.

1. J. H. Bernard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on
the Gospels according to St. John, ed. A. H. McNeile (N.Y.: New
York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889), I, 72.

Apostolic Ministry: Essays on the History and the Doctrine
of the Church, ed. Kenneth E. Hie (New York: Horace-

3. Missopp Lake, "The Twelve and the Apostles," The
Beginnings of Christianity, Part II: The Acts of the Apostles,
Notes to the Commentary, ed. Missopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Peter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>James</td>
<td>James</td>
<td>James</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Philip</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bartholomew</td>
<td>Philip</td>
<td>Philip</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Matthew</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>James</td>
<td>Thaddeus</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>of Alpheus</td>
<td>of Alpheus</td>
<td>of Alpheus</td>
<td>of Alpheus</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Thaddeus</td>
<td>Thaddeus</td>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>Thaddeus</td>
<td>the Zealot</td>
<td>the Zealot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>the Canaan</td>
<td>Judas Iscariot</td>
<td>Jude Iscariot</td>
<td>Jude Iscariot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Judas Iscariot is now gone, but Matthias is chosen to replace him.
There is especially fond of the term, "the twelve," as a designation of the inner circle. Matthew likewise designates them by "the twelve" as well as a variation of other terms: including "the twelve disciples," "the twelve disciples," "the twelve apostles," and "the Eleven Disciples." John used the designation, "the twelve," very little. Henry has preferred a more inclusive term, i.e. "His Disciples" or "the disciples." This inner circle was designated "the twelve" by Luke. Paul used the same designation on one occasion. There is some question concerning Paul's use of the term. Is he using it along with "all the apostles" or is this latter term used as a more comprehensive term?

There is no reason whatever to doubt that Jesus did, in fact, appoint twelve special disciples out of the inner circle of his followers, in order to emphasize the truth of his teaching that he was there to build a New House of Israel, a new ἄκκλησια Θεου. Only a brief consideration will be given here to the use of ἀπόστολος because it will receive attention later. In the New Testament, this Greek word is used to mean "delegated messenger, one sent forth with orders," and it refers to a man. Of all the technical terms found in the New Testament, some think this word to be "the most markedly and exclusively
Christian. It suffices it to say that this word has little usage in Matthew, Mark and John; but it becomes prominent in the writings of Paul and Luke. Usage is varied among these authors. In a general sense it means "messenger." In a narrower sense it was used to designate those twelve composing the inner circle of disciples around Jesus; and, in a wider sense, it may signify other apostles of Christ in addition to those twelve of the inner circle. "Throughout the New Testament there is no uniformity in the use of the word, and frequently it is impossible to say with confidence how much is covered by it." There is also a variety in the usage of the term as applied to the followers of Jesus. Mark tells how Jesus appointed twelve. Thus, "the Twelve" became a significant term designating certain followers of Jesus. Along with these terms already mentioned, appears as another word which has been used with a diversity of meanings by New Testament writers, all of which are significant in the Christian vocabulary.

In most of its occurrences, translators have transliterated it to read "apostle" rather than giving the word a translation. However, there are exceptions where the word has been translated. Translators of the New English Bible have made some progress in the treatment of this word than any of the recent major translations. In addition to the use

1 John, op. cit., p. 59.
3 Mk. 3:14. 4 Jan. 15:16; II Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:20.
of "apostle" as a word for expressing the Greek, these translators have used a variety of terms including "messengers,"¹ "messenger,"² "missionary,"³ "delegates,"⁴ "commissioned,"⁵ and "envoy."⁶ In its earlier use as an adjective it could be applied to persons or to things, but by the time it came to be used by New Testament writers it had come to be used as a noun and was applied only to a person and with a specific meaning. Perhaps this could be considered as a natural development of the word as it moved from a general to more technical or specific usage.

Survey of Sources

In this survey, attention will be directed to the various occurrences of ἀπόστολος within the New Testament. An attempt will be made to understand the author's use of the word within the context in which it appears. In examining this literature of the New Testament, various groups of writings will be considered together where they are related to one another by authorship or by similarity in content.

The table which follows has been prepared to show all the occurrences of the word and the location of these occurrences throughout the New Testament.

### TABLE 2

**OCCURRENCES OF ἀπόστολος**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
<th>Chapter and Verse</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mt.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6:13; 9:10; 11:49; 17:5; 22:14; 24:16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lk.</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jn.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:2; 13; 26; 2:37; 4:2; 4:3; 4:33; 5:2; 12; 18; 29; 40; 6:6; 8:1; 14; 18; 9:27; 11:1; 14:4; 14; 15:2; 4; 8; 22; 23; 16:4; 1:1; 11:13; 16:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actsa</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1:1; 4:9; 9:1; 2; 5; 12:26; 29; 15:7; 9; 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Cor.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1:1; 8:23; 11:5; 13; 12:11, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Cor.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1:1; 17; 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gal.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1:1; 2:20; 3:5; 4:11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eph.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2:25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Col.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Thess.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2:6</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Tim.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1:1; 2:7</td>
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<tr>
<td>II Tim.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1:1; 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tit.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heb.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Pet.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:1; 3:2</td>
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<tr>
<td>II Pet.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jude</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2:2; 18:20; 21:14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>79</strong></td>
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</table>

*aTwo variant readings which appear at Acts 5:34 and 15:33 are not included in this table.*

**Mark and Matthew**

In each of these Gospels, ἀπόστολος appears only one time. In each case it appears in the plural form and refers to those whom Jesus had chosen numbering twelve. There is a difference of context where the word appears in these Gospels.
The basic meaning of the word is reflected in Mark when he speaks of "the Twelve" returning from a mission. These are those whom Jesus had called and appointed. Previously, he had set them aside for two purposes, to be with him and that he might send them forth. This intended mission seems to have been two-fold: they were to preach and they were to have authority to cast out demons. After they had been instructed, Jesus sent them forth two by two. On their mission they preached and cast out demons. Upon their return they told Jesus what they had done and what they had taught.

Mark makes no further use of this word. However, his only use of the term is important because it indicates the ideas which came to be associated with the title. Thus, it describes the disciples as commissioned and empowered by Jesus for the work of preaching and exorcism. These characteristics belong to the later use of ἀνάτομοι and are connected with the idea that in their missionary work the Apostles represent Jesus Himself (Mt. xvi. 40) and later are witnesses of the Resurrection.

Some see a close association of the expressions used by Mark in telling of the appointment of "the Twelve" and common Jewish usage. Mark's account has been analyzed as reflecting Jewish background and Jewish terms in the following way:

(a) 'He made twelve,' (b) that they should be with him, and that (c) he might send them forth, to (d) preach and (e) have authority. Each of the five is a technical usage: "make," the term for appointing a shaliach, completed logically in (c) where the verb is employed. That they (b) should be with him may be equivalent to the phrase in later rabbinic use, of 'serving the Rabbi,' and both the function (d) and

1 Mk. 3:14-15. 2 Mk. 6:12-15. 3 Mk. 6:30.
the authorization (e) are rabbinic.¹

Certainly, one is able to see a relationship between Mark 3:14 and certain features in Judaism, but this does not indicate that this was a Jewish institution which was brought over into the Church as some feel it to have been.²

Not much information is to be gained from the reference in Matthew. He used the word in the enumeration of "the Twelve." In this context, "the word . . . might with at least as great propriety be translated 'envoys' as 'Apostles.'"³ He does not say they were chosen at this time, rather the existence of "the Twelve" seems to be assumed in his first reference to them.⁴

Luke and Acts

Of all the Evangelists, Luke makes the greatest use of ἀπόστολος. It appears six times in the Gospel, and in Acts it appears twenty-eight times. He used it with its basic meaning as a designation,⁵ in the enumeration of "the Twelve,"⁶ and he used the term where Matthew has "wise men and scribes" as being among the messengers of God.⁷

According to Luke, Jesus designated "the Twelve" as apostles: οἱ οὓς ἐξαναποστάλεσέν με.⁸ He may or may not

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¹Cavin, op. cit., pp. 258-259.
²Vogelstein, op. cit., p. 113.
⁴Mt. 10:1. ⁵Lk. 9:10; 17:5; 24:10. ⁶Lk. 6:13; 22:34. ⁷Lk. 11:49 cf. Mt. 23:34. ⁸Lk. 6:13.
have so designated them at the time he called them. The kal may signify the naming as a separate act.\(^1\) After an elapse of time they were sent out to preach and heal. Upon their return they are designated "the Apostles" by Luke.\(^2\)

Luke is the only Evangelist who speaks of Jesus sending a group numbering seventy.\(^3\) No other information is available concerning this large number who were also sent two by two. They are not called ἀπόστολοι, but a form of the verb ἀποστέλλω is used with reference to them.\(^4\)

Luke's usage of the word in the Gospel is in agreement with that found in Acts. Throughout the Gospel the term is used according to the definition in Luke 6:13. In Acts, however, the word is used in a wider sense signifying messengers sent out by churches as well as by Jesus Christ. The term continues to be used with reference to those whom Jesus had chosen. With the absence of Judas Iscariot the group became "the Eleven Apostles."\(^5\) On one occasion the author uses "the apostles" with Barnabas and Paul in opposition making it read "the apostles; Barnabas and Paul."\(^6\) With the inclusion of these the term becomes wider and less restricted. Some maintain that the author of Acts must have found this wider usage in his sources rather than applying the term to these men himself.\(^7\)

As far as Luke is concerned "the Twelve" are not the only apostles, though they were apostles.


\(^3\) Acts 1:21.

\(^4\) Acts 1:14. \(^5\)vangstorf, op. cit., p. 27.
Pauline Literature

The earliest uses of 'ἀπόστολος' by New Testament writers are to be found among the letters written by Paul. He stands close to Luke in the frequency of usage. His writings hold first place in the discussion of what an 'ἀπόστολος' is. Perhaps it is due to his difficulty in becoming accepted as an "apostle" on a level with "the Twelve" that he presents his views. Though he was not one of "the Twelve," he "considered himself an apostle and jealously defended his right to the title."¹ His letters, therefore, become the chief source of New Testament literature for a study of this word and its various uses.

There is little room for disputing the observation that "Paul and his disciple and fellow-traveller Luke provided four-fifths of the examples and most of the material for studying the meaning of the word."² The word appears at least one time in all the writings associated with Pauline authorship except II Thessalonians and Philemon. He uses the word as a self-designation in the beginning of nine letters.³ This wide usage of this word by Paul and Luke has been one of the factors causing some to feel that it was the idea of the Greek-speaking church at Antioch to use this rare word.⁴

Paul makes reference to himself as "an apostle of Gen-

² Rengstorf, op. cit., p. 25.
³ Rom., I Cor., II Cor., Gal., Eph., Col., I Tim., II Tim., Tit.
⁴ Lake, op. cit., p. 50.
tiles,"\(^1\) and to Andronicus and Junia as being "of note among the apostles."\(^2\) In I Corinthians he speaks of apostles including himself,\(^3\) of "the rest of the apostles,"\(^4\) as workers in the Church,\(^5\) of "all the apostles"\(^6\) and of himself as "the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."\(^7\)

In II Corinthians he speaks of "the very chiefest apostles,"\(^8\) "the signs of an apostle,"\(^9\) and he defends his own apostleship by saying, "... in nothing was I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I am nothing."\(^10\) Only in this letter, of all New Testament literature, does the term \(\text{πλάσαντος} \) "false apostles," appear.\(^11\) Paul applied this term to certain "deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ."\(^12\) This term may be defined as "one who represents himself to be an apostle without the divine commission necessary for the office."\(^13\) This may suggest a Christian origin which may also be true of \(\text{ἀπόστολος} \).\(^14\)

Certain workers are known as \(\text{ἀπόστολος ἐκκλησίων} \), "messengers of the churches."\(^15\) This use also occurs at Philippians 2:25, and it may be compared to \(\text{πίστευέτε} \), meaning that the community commissions such persons. In the former reference the term is applied to those persons who took the gift

\(^{1}\) Rom. 11:13.  \(^{2}\) Rom. 16:7.  \(^{3}\) I Cor. 4:9.  \(^{4}\) I Cor. 9:5.  
\(^{5}\) I Cor. 12:28-29.  \(^{6}\) I Cor. 15:7.  \(^{7}\) I Cor. 15:9.  
\(^{8}\) II Cor. 11:5.  \(^{9}\) II Cor. 12:12.  \(^{10}\) II Cor. 12:11.  
\(^{11}\) II Cor. 11:13.  \(^{12}\) II Cor. 11:13.  
\(^{13}\) Arndt and Gingrich, \text{op. cit.}, p. 899.  
\(^{14}\) Hengstorf, \text{op. cit.}, p. 67.  \(^{15}\) II Cor. 8:23.
from the Christians in the Gentile world to the saints in Jerusalem. In a similar way was Epaphroditus an apostle of the Philippians to Paul. "In these cases 'apostle', having to do with expressions of love, is not only a legal, but also a religious term."¹ In these instances the word takes upon itself the special meaning of the ἀποστόλος wherein the matters of law and religion are blended in the messenger. These persons were "delegated by a church to execute a commission."² It may be worthy to note that

in both cases a journey is involved, the matter to be attended to a financial one, and the person who makes the journey does not simply bear a message, but in a large way represents the church. This may, indeed, be accidental coincidence, rather than decisive indication of the constant usage of the word.³

Paul's Corinthian correspondence was of such a nature that his main views concerning an ἀποστόλος was expressed in it. The term is used to a lesser degree in other letters by him. In Galatians he speaks of those at Jerusalem who were apostles before him;⁴ he seems to include James,⁵ the Lord's brother, among them although there is some question as to the meaning of this reference.

Apostles referred to in the Ephesian letter are considered as being a part of the foundation of the household of God,⁶ as being particular recipients of God's revelation⁷ and

¹Rengstorf, op. cit., p. 27.
³Ibid., n.
⁷Eph. 3:5.
are given a primary place in the listing of workers in the Church. 1

Paul, as an apostle of Christ, claims to have been able to have made some kind of demand upon the Christians at Thessalonica, 2 but he did not choose to do this. The writer affirms his apostleship in the letters to Timothy. 3

Johannine Literature

"A servant is not greater than his Lord; neither one that is sent [ἀπόστολος] greater than he that sent him." 4 In this statement the word has its only appearance in the Gospel of John. However, this is practically a definition of the word in its basic meaning. This usage conforms to the Rabbinic principle that the one who is sent is as the one who sent him. It thus compares with the Jewish nasi. 5 Some feel this statement of John is a paraphrase of Matthew 10:24. 6 John does not mention the call of "the Twelve" in his Gospel. 7

Usage in Revelation is similar to that found in The Didache. 8 It is used to express the idea of missionary. 9 The idea of a false apostle appears, but the Pauline terminology is absent. 10 Once the term is joined with "prophets." 11

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There must be high respect for "the Twelve" reflected in saying that "twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" are written on the twelve foundation stones of the holy city coming out of heaven.

Petrine Literature

On two occasions the word is used as a self-designation in these letters. He introduces himself by saying "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ," and "Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ." Readers are told to remember what they had received through their apostles of an earlier period. The word, as used in this context, may be almost the equivalent to missionary.

Other Writings

This word has little usage elsewhere in the New Testament. It is significant to note that the Hebrew writer called Jesus an "Apostle." This occurrence has caught the attention of W. F. Howard, and in his study of the Gospel of John he is led to make the following remark.

When the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews called Jesus 'the Apostle of our confession,' he expressed in one noun what St. John proclaims in verbal phrase on almost every page. It sums up all the perogatives and functions of prophecy in the unique mission of Him who came from the bosom of the Father to reveal the nature of Him whom no man has seen.

Jude calls the attention of his readers to those words

4II Pet. 3:2.  5Heb. 3:1.
spoken at an earlier time "by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ." It would be impossible to name any particular persons to whom he had reference. He may have had in mind those original missionaries who had brought the gospel to the readers.

No attempt has been made to classify the various uses of the word which are found in the New Testament. There has been no attempt in this survey to discuss the meaning of this word in relation to the Resurrection of Jesus. Our chief purpose in this survey is to call attention to where the word has been used and to note briefly the context in which it was used.

Usage Examined

In modern times there is disagreement as to the use of ἀπόστολος in the New Testament. Basically, there appears to be three uses of the word in New Testament literature. It is used in its etymological sense meaning "messenger"; it is used in a specific, though not a restricted sense meaning only "the Twelve," but including others with "the Twelve." Used in its most restricted sense, the word refers only to "the Twelve" or to "the Eleven" and Matthias. Occasionally, these two latter uses have been thought of as wide and narrow views, respectively.

The question as to why these particular uses arose and how they came into being is at the heart of the problem of the understanding or the misunderstanding of ἀπόστολος in the New

\[\text{1Jude 7.}\]
Having surveyed the literature for the use of the word, an attempt will now be made to present some definite uses which will illustrate some of the different patterns of usage. Such an attempt has its dangers because of the tendency to read into it the understanding of the contemporary reader rather than discovering the meaning expressed by the ancient writer. There are various areas of agreement and disagreement among scholars as to the early usage by the various writers; only some of these suggestions will be examined.

General Usage

This is the least restricted use the word might have. Used in this way, the word carries its etymological meaning. In the New Testament, this meaning appears to be expressed as "one commissioned by another to represent him in some way."1 It may be expressed by "messenger" when the idea of representation is also understood within that word. Used in this sense, the word could be applied to Jesus,2 Epaphroditus3 and others.4 Some feel the term may have been used with reference to John the Baptist.5 The word itself does not appear, but a form of the verb does. "There came a man, sent [ἀπεσταλήσας] from God, whose name was John."6

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2 Heb. 3:1. 3 Phil. 2:25. 4 II Cor. 8:23; Jn. 13:16.
There were several Greek words which could have been used by a writer to express the idea of "sending." Some of these may have been ἀποστέλλω, ἀφίημι, περιπλώ or various compounds. From the various possibilities, ἀποστέλλω which "carries with it the ideas of special purpose, mission or commission, authorization and responsibility" was chosen, and from this verb our word under consideration has come. Forms of this verb are used by the writers to express more than just the act of "sending" because it includes more than that one idea.

This word could be used in a general sense of almost any messenger who was representing the sender whether that sender be a single person or a group of people.

Specific Usage

It may be appropriate to think of this usage as being an early usage in reference to the New Testament writings. Specific, as used here, is not meant to suggest a restricted use of the term. It was used with reference to certain persons, but not to a particular number. How many it may have included is not known, but the names of some of those persons have been preserved.

Of the apostles we know most about Paul, but side by side with him were others bearing the same title, Peter, Barnabas, and many more, for the original use of the term did not limit it, as did later usage.


2Rengstorf, op. cit., p. xii.
to the twelve immediate disciples of Jesus Christ.¹

This view which permits more than "the Twelve" to be included in the term is relatively new in contemporary studies. Much credit must be given to Bishop Lightfoot whose efforts shook long held ideas which were shown to be incompatible with New Testament usage. He called the attention of the world to the fact that within the New Testament this word was applied to more persons than just "the Twelve."² However, not all the world would agree with him in the interpretation of the grammatical constructions which makes it possible for him to apply the word to as many as he does.³ Since Lightfoot made his contribution, many others have directed attention to this important area.

The old view, which was shaken by Lightfoot in 1865, held the apostles to be the disciples chosen by Jesus.⁴ Some differences manifested themselves among those holding this view for many felt that Matthias, chosen by "the Eleven," was not God's choice as a successor to Judas. These would interpret God's call of Paul as the act which provided a successor to Judas and bringing the number to twelve. Paul is considered as an extraordinary apostle to the Gentiles, but equal with "the Eleven." Their duties involved the governing and administration of the Church. Among those holding this view, the idea of infallibility of the apostles developed--in the

²Mosbech, op. cit., p. 176.
churches, both Catholic and Protestant. It was needed in the former to support the idea that the apostles had transferred their authority to their successors, and it was needed in the latter to support the idea of the infallibility of the Scriptures.

Lightfoot's view received additional support with the publication of The Didache in 1883, wherein certain itinerants were called ἀπόστολοι. Usage found there reflects some of the expressions found in Revelation.

About apostles and prophets, follow the rule of the Gospel, which is this: Let every apostle who comes to you be welcomed as the Lord. But he shall not stay more than one day, and if it is necessary, the next day also. But if he stays three days, he is a false prophet. And when an apostle leaves, let him take nothing except bread to last until he finds his next lodging. But if he asks for money, he is a false prophet.

Seuffert advanced the opinion that Jesus did not actually choose twelve. Rather, such a view was invented and circulated by the Jewish congregation at Jerusalem. The number, according to him, was not fixed at twelve until the time of Paul's conflicts with the Judaizers. It was then fixed to exclude Paul.

Harnack later gave new support to Lightfoot's position. He emphasized the apostles within Judaism who were dispatched from Jerusalem to care for certain financial matters. He considered the possibility of Paul being such a Jewish apostle.

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1 Mosbech, op. cit., p. 176.  
2 Ibid., p. 177.  
3 Ibid.  
4 Rev. 2:2; 18:20.  
5 The Didache 11:3-6.  
6 Mosbech, op. cit., p. 178.  
7 Ibid., p. 179.
before his conversion. Paul had certain authority and carried letters.¹ Harnack explained the importance of "the Twelve" as being due to their early appointment. "The primitive church rested their dignity, not on their position as apostles, but as the twelve disciples (chosen by Jesus)."²

It seems that some who hold this wider view of the use of "apostle" place unnecessary emphasis upon the organization and its administrative functions, which they feel to have existed at Jerusalem. Not only do these see the Christian "apostle" as having a background in Judaism, but in matters of administration and finance these are presented as parallels. Harnack does this even though he allows for some differences. He writes,

One can hardly deny a certain connection between these Jewish apostles and the Christian. It was not simply that Paul and others had hostile relations with them; their very organization afforded a sort of type for the Christian apostleship, great as were the differences between the two.³

Writing to the point of the matter of collection of tribute and finances to be brought to Jerusalem, he says,

At the very moment when the primitive apostles recognized Paul as an apostle, they set him also a financial task (Gal. ii. 10); he was to collect money throughout the Diaspora for the church at Jerusalem.⁴

His further explanation takes one closer to the Jewish custom:

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³Ibid., p. 413. ¶Ibid.
The thing becomes intelligible whenever we assume that the church at Jerusalem, together with the primitive apostles, considered themselves the central body of Christendom, and also the representatives of the true Israel. That was the reason why the apostles whom they recognized were intrusted with a duty similar to that imposed on Jewish 'apostles,' viz., the task of collecting the tribute of the Diaspora.¹

There are others who emphasized the organization and possible administrative functions transferred from Judaism, but who have somewhat overlooked the working of the Spirit. Such rigid views need to be made more spiritual by the infusion of views held by persons such as Erich Haupt² who wished to show that this office was not an office for "the Twelve," but a *charisma* and was extended to a greater number. The true apostle would be thus recognized by the working of the Spirit within him.

It appears that Paul made no great use of this word until his experiences with the Judaizers. The term is not used as a part of his title in I and II Thessalonians, but it is in later letters. In the Galatian letter he emphasized the divine origin of his apostleship, "Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)."³ So much is Paul involved in this subject that *ἀνόρθωσις* may be studied in relation to him. To make this approach, consideration would be given to a pre-Pauline, a Pauline and a post-Pauline use in the New Testament.⁴ According to the view of some "it is

Paul who is the decisive factor in the development of the apostolic idea.\footnote{Ibid.} Paul's use of the term seems to be very free when compared to other New Testament usage.

**Restricted Usage**

There may be various terms used to describe this third usage found in the New Testament. It may be considered a narrow, limited or restricted use of \textit{ἀπόστολος}. It may also be considered as post-Pauline usage. Chief texts for this use of the word are those references found in Luke and Acts. Munck feels that this usage is post-Pauline.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 108-110.} It may have application to certain messengers sent out by Christ, but it is mainly applied to the narrow circle of "the Twelve."

Problems arise when the term is restricted to "the Twelve." "The Eleven" felt the need for a successor to Judas,\footnote{Acts 1:15-26.} so they proceeded to fill the vacancy. Paul can speak of "the Twelve," but when the word was added to Paul and Paul became associated with the word which included him among the apostles, some explanation had to be made. To be consistent in keeping the usage restricted, some would disregard Matthias because he was chosen by men.

Perhaps Karl Holl is still a leading influence within this narrow usage today.\footnote{Flew, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 133.} A part of his view may be presented compactly in these sentences:

\begin{quote}
We meet in the Christian community from the beginning onwards, a legalized hierarchy, a divinely ordained order, a divinely sanctioned ecclesiastical law, a
\end{quote}
a Church as an organized institution, into which individuals were received. A strictly circumscribed group of Apostles (i.e., James and the Twelve), possesses a permanent divine prerogative to be obtained by no one else, and is therefore authorized for leadership. The Church stands on their testimony, which is regarded as real testimony, as the rehearsal in the power of the Spirit of that which they had themselves experienced. Every development of spiritual life is conditioned by their testimony. In virtue of this they are called the pillars of the Church.1

Holl thus limits the group to "the Twelve" and James. James is included because the Risen Lord appeared to him. It was James who became head of the community. This view is criticized by Lake2 but he supports the idea of James' primacy in Jerusalem and rank as apostle.

Rengstorf criticizes the view and feels that Holl "seriously misunderstands the primitive idea of the Church, in not recognising the thoroughly 'pneumatic' nature of the apostleship."3 Holl regards this idea of the Church as being much different from that in the Pauline writings.4 Though some of his views may be justified upon examination, there are many criticisms of his over-all view.5

In the Pauline Epistles, though the Church is as important and supernaturally constituted under Apostolic leadership as in Acts i.-v., the Apostles are not the 'Twelve,' and there is no trace of any special limitation to the number of the Apostles.6

This examination of New Testament usage has revealed the

1Ibid., pp. 133-134. 2Lake, op. cit., p. 56.
3Rengstorf, op. cit., p. 47, n. 1.
6Lake, op. cit., p. 40.
term to have been used in reference to Jesus Christ only one time; the word is used of the twelve disciples whom Jesus chose from the larger body of disciples; and, others were included, the most widely known among them was Paul. The total number of persons who may have been thus designated is unknown.

The New Testament offers a rich source of terms used in reference to early followers of Jesus and the writers show a variety of usage. Current views differ on the interpretation of early usage of terms and their significance for that time and this, but contemporary interest continues in these important matters.
CHAPTER III

THE APOSTLESHIP

The function, task or office to which the "apostle" was called is termed ἀποστολή in the New Testament, and it may be translated "apostleship" or "apostolate."

This examination of apostleship shall be pursued in this manner: the etymology of the word will be examined first; the idea of apostleship will then be studied in relation to the historical Jesus by giving particular attention to the call, the task and the authority of an "apostle" during the earthly ministry of Jesus; and, finally the apostleship of the post-Resurrection period will be studied with reference to the call, the task and the authority of an "apostle" in that period.

Etymological Study

As with ἀπόστολος, so ἀποστολή comes from the Greek verb, ἀποστέλλω. In its past, ἀποστολή has had a variety of meanings.¹ It may mean "sending off or away" or "dispatching."²

It appears in usage with reference to ships, ". . . for

¹Rengstorff, op. cit., p. 68.
²Liddell and Scott, op. cit., I, 220.
the despatching of the ships . . . "1 and "their reason for sending these ships. . . ."2

The word appears occasionally in the Septuagint where it is used in translating words coming from the root, ἁγγ., It may mean a "gift"3 or a "sending."4 It is also found in the Apocrypha.5

Aristeas used the word in such a way that it may be translated "mission," " what justification shall we have for our mission. . . ."6 Josephus used the word for "a ceremonial escort at Ant. 20, 50."7 In the papyri it continues to mean "despatch."8

An examination of the New Testament shows the word to appear on only four occasions.9 Here it is used in reference to "the office and dignity of the apostles of Christ."10 This word has been generally rendered "apostleship" by translators. However, once again the translators of The New English Bible

1Thucydides History of the Peloponnesian War VIII. viii. 1.
2Thucydides History of the Peloponnesian War VIII. ix. 3.
31 Kings 9:16.
4Deut. 22:7; Ps. 77 (78):49; Eccles. 8:8. These are the major references to be found in the Septuagint.
51 Esd. 9:51, 54; Ba. 2:25; I Macc. 2:18; II Macc. 3:2. These include most of the occurrences to be found in the Apocrypha. Translators of the RSV have rendered I Macc. 2:18 as "gifts" and II Macc. 3:2 as "presents."
6Aristeas to Philocrates (Letter of Aristeas) 15.
7Rengstorff, op. cit., p. 68.
8Houlton and Milligan, op. cit., p. 70.
9Acts 1:25; Rom. 1:5; I Cor. 9:2; Gal. 2:8.
10Thayer, op. cit., p. 68.
have made marked progress in breaking with the customary past and presenting fresh translations of this word for the reader. These four occurrences have been rendered "apostleship," 1 "commission," 2 "apostolate," 3 and "made . . . an apostle" 4 with reference to Peter and Paul.

Whether considering the apostleship as having reference to an office, a person or a function, one finds views which differ. But Caird's view seems quite consistent with the New Testament view. He writes, "Whenever apostleship is mentioned in the New Testament the emphasis is never on the person or the office, but always on the task to be performed." 5 Richardson's comment may augment this statement; he writes, "Apostleship is principally concerned with the stewardship and the preaching of the Gospel." 6

An interesting observation for the New Testament reader to make is that the word translated "apostleship" does not occur in the New Testament record until after the Resurrection. Even then, it appears only in the writings of Paul and Luke. These, it will be remembered, are the same writers who made such a great use of the word translated "apostle."

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Pre-Resurrection Apostleship

Our concern under this heading will be limited to the concerns of Jesus and those with him during his personal ministry. In the Gospels the apostles are associated with him in that ministry. It was after the Resurrection and Ascension that the apostles were to engage in a task without the earthly presence of Jesus as they had formerly known him. The Resurrection is significant, not only because it stands between two eras of apostleship, but because it greatly influenced the apostles.

In considering their relationship to Jesus as "apostles," attention will be given to their call, their function and their authority.

The Call

Perhaps the first act to involve the apostleship was the call extended by Jesus to be disciples of him.\(^1\) The word "call" (καλέω) is used as a summoning to men to participate in the salvation of God. The demand made on individual men from this call is that they should follow (ἀκολουθεῖν).\(^2\)

The word translated 'to follow', when it occurs in the form 'they followed him', has a far deeper religious meaning in the New Testament than in its common usage to-day. It is more than ethical allegiance, or respectful admiration, or an attempt at imitation of a matchless character by one who is afar off. . . . The word 'follow' is one of those which were baptized into Christ and thereby acquired a meaning completely original and distinctive.\(^3\)

In explaining the new meaning of this word further, Flew adds,

\(^1\)Flew, op. cit., p. 80. \(^2\)Ibid., p. 81. \(^3\)Ibid.
The new meaning is due to the fact that for the early Christians there was only one discipleship possible and therefore only one way of following. Jesus was the Messiah, and His followers shared in the salvation which He brought, shared in His earthly vicissitudes, and shared in the hope of the high calling which was theirs in Him. . . . This is a complete and absolute dedication of all life to One who is bringing the fulfillment of the final purpose of God for human life. It involves entrance into a new fellowship and a new community. 1

Those who responded to the call were "followers" or "disciples" from whom the "apostles" were chosen.

A second act may have been the sending of a number on a tour which involved performance of a task. 2 Both Luke and Mark speak of Jesus choosing twelve from the disciples. 3 His choice of twelve and the appointment of them to the apostleship are not necessarily the same act. The appointment to the apostleship appears to have occurred at a later time according to parallel accounts. 4 John merely makes mention of a choice having been made. 5 Matthew omits the account.

It is proper to assume that they underwent some kind of preparation before they were sent out by Jesus. Finally, before sending them he empowered them and charged them. "He gave them authority [ἐξουσίαν]" 6 he also "gave them power [ἐξουσίας]" 7 This was over demons and to cure diseases. 8

Our information concerning the call of these twelve is not as complete as we might wish it to be. However, information available shows the association which these had with the living

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1Ibid., pp. 80-81. 2Ibid., p. 82. 3

3Lk. 6:12-16; Mk. 3:13-16. 4Mk. 6:7; Lk. 9:1.

5Jn. 6:70. 6Mk. 6:7. 7Lk. 9:1. 8Lk. 9:1.
Jesus. It is this personal relationship with the historical Jesus which gave "the Twelve" a unique place among apostles in a later period. Thus, Hort is able to say,

Chief among the disciples are those Twelve who from certain points of view are called Apostles, but very rarely in the Gospels; sometimes 'The Twelve', more often simply 'The Disciples'. We do the Evangelists wrong if we treat this use of terms as fortuitous or trivial. It is in truth most exact and most instructive. Not only was discipleship the foundation of apostleship, but the Twelve who were Apostles were precisely the men who were most completely disciples.¹

The Function

Function or the idea of a task is the terminology preferred in this study because it is very doubtful that Jesus established an office to function in legal terms, either before or after the Resurrection. The idea of function or commission for a limited time and place concerning the work and not the worker seems to be the more acceptable view.²

To preface this examination of the function, some consideration may be given to these words from Hort which have relevance to this subject:

Discipleship, not apostleship, was the primary active function, so to speak of the Twelve till the Ascension, and, as we shall see, it remained always their fundamental function. The purpose of their being with Him (with the Lord) stands first in that memorable sentence of St Mark, and is sharply distinguished from the Lord's second purpose in forming them into a body, viz. the sending them forth to preach and to work acts of deliverance. But the distinction does not rest on those words alone. A far larger proportion of the Gospels is taken up with records of facts belonging to the apostleship, so far as it is possible to dis-

¹Hort, op. cit., p. 20. ²Rengstorff, op. cit., p. 36.
After Jesus had chosen and prepared them, "he sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal." Cullmann says that "during Jesus' lifetime the content of the commission is the fulfillment of the Messianic function that Jesus himself fulfilled, the function of preaching and healing." The Evangelist's report of those who were sent out reads, "And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them."

In Matthew a limitation was expressed with reference to the people among whom they ought to go. He reports Jesus as saying, "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The number chosen and sent may have been considered representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel. When those sent returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. "And the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught."

On another occasion, Luke reports seventy were sent out in the customary fashion of two by two. The number seventy in this case may have been symbolic for the supposedly number of nations based on Genesis 10. No mention is made of Gentiles.

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1Hort, op. cit., p. 29. 2Lk. 9:2. 3Oscar Cullmann, Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr, trans. Floyd V. Filson (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1953), p. 216. 4Mk. 6:12-13. 5Mt. 10:5-6. 6Nk. 6:30. 7Lk. 10:1-16.
neither does the charge confine them as in Matthew 10:5-6. The charge given to these is similar to that found in Matthew directed to "the Twelve."¹ As in the case of the former, when the seventy returned they reported with joy what they had done: "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in thy name."² Rengstorf writes with reference to this verse that

here we have complete disinterestedness and devotion, producing the joy which prevails when man leaves the field to God and fills his life with service to Him. Luke is here quite certainly not setting forth his own ideal of apostleship; he is simply quoting from his source. This makes it all the more important that the returning messengers give joyful thanks for their success as the success of Jesus and, like all the other returning messengers in the Gospels, say nothing about the difficulties which attended work in the name of Jesus, concerning which Jesus had doubtless spoken.³

This doing was not of their own. They had committed themselves unto Jesus. They had become his representatives. That they relied upon him rather than upon their own initiative has been adequately expressed.

The disciples refrained from taking any initiative, in spite of the circumstances, because they accepted the call to repentance for themselves with resolute sincerity. Thus they learned what obedience is since Jesus showed them God both as the Holy One and as the Father. This is the most important of all clues to the understanding of the innermost meaning of the N.T. apostleship.⁴

The relationship of the disciple to Jesus is further expressed by saying

when a disciple is charged with the proclamation that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, he is thereby associated with Jesus, and so brought under the will of God, which completely destroys his autonomy and

¹Lk. 10:2-16; Mt. 9:37-10:16. ²Lk. 10:17. ³Rengstorf, op. cit., p. 41. ⁴Ibid., p. 32.
autonomy and leaves him simply to render full obedience.\textsuperscript{1}

Thus far our attention has been given to what the disciples and apostles did as they were associated with Jesus in his earthly ministry. After the Resurrection they entered a new phase of service. Much agreement may be found with Hort's conclusion after examining the facts and usage in the Gospels that in its original sense the term Apostle was not intended to describe the habitual relation of the Twelve to our Lord during the days of His ministry, but strictly speaking only that mission among the villages, of which the beginning and the end are recorded for us; just as in Acts, Paul and Barnabas are called Apostles (i.e. of the Church at Antioch) with reference to that special mission which we call St Paul's First Missionary Journey, and to that only. At the same time this limited apostleship was not heterogeneous from the apostleship of later days spoken of in the Acts, but a prelude to it, a preparation for it, and as it were a type of it.\textsuperscript{2}

The Authority

There is generally a readiness to discuss the subject of authority which the early disciples and apostles possessed. It may be, as Nock says, that

Jesus had called twelve followers to whom he had given a rank which raised them above the other disciples. At the consummation of all things, they were to sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.\textsuperscript{3}

One may take issue with the use of the word "rank" as used in this respect by Nock. It must be admitted, however, that Jesus' choice of "the Twelve" gave them a particular identity

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., p. 40. \textsuperscript{2}Hort, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 28-29.

by which they were distinguished from other disciples. In Jesus' reference to them judging the twelve tribes\(^1\) the matter of authority is implied, but it does not give a commission of authority for government.\(^2\)

An alternate view may be to assume the personal association and preparation with Jesus in his earthly ministry as a unique experience which was shared by "the Twelve." "They were given a share in the authority of the Messiah Himself, and partook in the declaration by act and word of the arrival of the Kingdom (Mark vi. 12-13)."\(^3\) It is the commission which gives the authority to the one sent. The authority which Jesus gave to those sent out was of what he possessed. "Both in their preaching of the message and their power to vanquish evil and disease the messengers were as the One who had commissioned them."\(^4\)

Efforts to find the bestowal of authority upon these apostles in the sense of office or officers of a new society do not prove successful. But their experience with Jesus was important. They possessed this when others did not. Thus, it may be said concerning those apostles of the pre-Resurrection period,

Certainly the Twelve possessed one prerogative which was not shared, and which could not be taken from them. They had been 'with him'. They had shared his wanderings, and they had continued with Him in His temptations. This prerogative was incommunicable.\(^5\)

\(^1\)Mt. 19:28.  \(^2\)Flew, op. cit., pp. 86-87.

\(^3\)R. R. Williams, Authority in the Apostolic Age (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1950), pp. 59-60.

\(^4\)Flew, op. cit., p. 83.  \(^5\)Ibid., pp. 85-86.
In later years those who had fellowshiped with Jesus in his ministry acquired new stature simply because they had been with him.

Jesus located the authority when he said, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me."¹ When the disciple receives authority to speak and act as Jesus' representative "that gives him no new rights, but on the contrary binds upon him the duty of service to the one who authorises him."² It may be noted also that the commission to represent him and his work "involves lowliness and not exaltation."³

Those who feel the function of the apostle to have not gone through any radical change between the time of Jesus' ministry and after the Ascension see instruction as being important in the early period with "disciple" as the most significant designation; but, after the Ascension, their mission work or apostleship was important and "apostle" became the favorite designation.⁴

Post-Resurrection Apostleship

Having given attention to the relationship of Jesus with his disciples and apostles in his earthly ministry, attention now is to be focused on the apostleship following the Resurrection. From earliest post-New Testament writings the

¹ Lk. 10:16. ² Rengstorf, op. cit., p. 35.
³ Ibid., p. 36.
origin of the apostleship has been closely associated with Jesus. This can be evidenced by what one reads in I Clement:

The apostles received the gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus the Christ was sent from God. So Christ is from God, and the apostles from Christ. Both came to pass regularly by the will of God. So having received their instructions, and having been reassured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, trusting in the word of God they set forth in the conviction of the holy Spirit, preaching that the kingdom of God was about to come.†

Indeed, the post-Resurrection apostleship is dependent upon the Risen Lord. This study of it shall be conducted in a similar manner as was the study of the pre-Resurrection apostleship. Consideration will be given to their call, their function and their authority. Some special notes will be made in reference to Peter, Matthias and Paul.

The Call

Ideas found in the Gospel accounts of where the Lord appeared after his Resurrection and gave instructions to certain followers are in harmony with his purpose. The Lord's Resurrection drew his scattered followers together.

This new apostleship may be characterized by its universality. Between the time of the Resurrection and the Ascension it had been extended to the utmost. Witness bearing may be considered a second characteristic. All of this was important. The Resurrection renewed the apostleship.

†I Clement 42:1-3.

‡Mt. 28:16-20; Jn. 20:19-23; Lk. 24:36-49.


¶Hort, op. cit., p. 38.
"The apostles were witnesses of the resurrection, though not all the witnesses became apostles."\(^1\) According these New Testament writings

the new stage of Apostleship was inaugurated by no new act of appointment analogous to the original designation of the Twelve on the mountain, these commands and teachings that we hear of being rather like the subsequent charge to the Apostles on their going forth among the villages. On this view it was the Crucifixion (interpreted as always by the Resurrection) which constituted the real inauguration of the renewed apostleship.\(^2\)

Those who had been with Jesus were the first to receive this new commission. Their earlier association with him was their preparation for such a time as this.

These were commissioned to witness not only within the community of believers, but beyond. This appointment is not limited, but life-long. This apostleship is not a permanent office in the Church, but limited to the first generation.

The abiding character of the new commission is the result of this new situation, which involves the disciples' experience of the absoluteness of Jesus. The Risen Lord appoints his representatives, no longer for a definite period, but for the whole time between Easter [the Lord's Resurrection] and his return, a period whose length no man knows; that is why there is now only one appointment, and it follows that the apostolate is limited to the first generation and does not become a permanent office in the Church.\(^3\)

Cullmann feels that Jesus gave Peter a special distinction. He feels that the Risen Lord's commission to Peter has "a greater and more direct significance"\(^4\) attached to it in relation to the foundation of Peter's apostleship. Earliest

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\(^1\) Rengstorf, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 42. \(^2\) Hort, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 40.
\(^3\) Rengstorf, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 45. \(^4\) Cullmann, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 58.
records report Peter as having been the first witness of the Risen Lord. \(^1\) To have been the first one to have seen the Lord "certainly must have contributed greatly to his authoritative position in the Primitive Church." \(^2\) Cullmann feels, however, that Peter's commission was limited "to the period of the foundation of the Church." \(^3\) In a summary statement concerning his position and call, Cullmann writes,

So we reach the conclusion that his position probably rests in the first instance upon a commission from the risen Lord; at the same time, however, the fact that the earthly Jesus gave him the special distinction of the name Cephas, and further the representative role of the former disciple of Jesus, helped to confer authority on him as leader of the Church and as missionary. \(^4\)

In choosing a replacement for Judas in the company of "the Twelve," the qualifications of having been an eye-witness of the Lord and a witness of his Resurrection are required. \(^5\) Of two who met these qualifications, Matthias was chosen. "The Eleven" must have felt it necessary to keep their number fixed to the original twelve. Concerning the qualifications and the choice of this one, Rengstorf writes,

Close contact with Jesus during his earthly life is here the most important point, and this means practically that the Church did not regard the commission of the Risen Lord as something radically new; though definite information is lacking, we shall not go far wrong if we take it that the early Church regarded the new commission as a repetition or continuation of the first. The conclusion follows that the first Christians had not fully understood the fundamental change in the world situation brought about when the Risen Lord made men his representatives; and further, that the

\(^1\) 1 Cor. 15:5.  \(^2\) Cullmann, op. cit., p. 63.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 64.  \(^4\) Ibid.  \(^5\) Acts 1:21-22.
story of Jesus as history gave Christian preaching from the beginning its content and its differentia; the apostle of Jesus is always a witness of historical facts, not a teacher of myths: fully conscious indeed that what he proclaims is a contradiction of all human experience.1

The nature of Paul's call proves to be entirely different from any spoken of before. Whether this change was brought about after Paul had given much thought to matters pertaining to this new "sect" or whether the call was sudden and Paul had no previous preparation, no uniform interpretation appears. Nock calls his experience "a sudden intuition."2 To another extreme is Munck who prefers to believe the Damascus experience came "without any preparation."3 Another has expressed the event in these words: "In Acts the conversion experience of Paul is described romantically as occurring on the Road to Damascus."4

Paul's call was definitely different from the call of "the Twelve." Where others had spent time in active preparation with Jesus, Paul had no such preparation. His call was sudden and his response was immediate. Though there is more information about Paul's conversion and commission than any of the others, Sandmel notes that "nowhere do the Epistles set forth the specific facts of when Paul became a 'Christian,' or precisely where, or, most important, what was the sequence

1Rengstorf, op. cit., p. 52. 2Nock, op. cit., p. 74.


of his reasons why."¹ However Paul's call is interpreted, he felt it to be very significant. His vision of Christ was not a fact unrelated to his entrance into the apostolate. It was the gateway through which he passed in the position which he laid claim. It was a special source of power in teaching, not possessed by those apostles who did not 'see the Lord.' It was one of his apostolic qualifications, as the knowledge which the Twelve had of Jesus' earthly life was one of their apostolic qualifications.²

While "the Twelve" may be considered being apostles to the twelve tribes, with Paul the commission was definitely enlarged. This was not without much tension, however. Paul refers to his call from the Lord in these terms: "And last of all, as to the child unti mely born [ἐκτρομήτων], he appeared to me also."³

This survey shows several differences by which different persons came to share in the "apostleship." It also shows the impossibility of assigning a particular number to those who were included.

**The Function**

During the ministry of Jesus their efforts appear to have been limited to the Jewish people. One of the aspects of this post-Resurrection commission was its non-restriction.

During this era "the Twelve" would be able to guarantee "the continuity between the risen and the historical Jesus."⁴ The apostle's function was one of witnessing.

¹Ibid., pp. 47-48.
³1 Cor. 15:8. ⁴Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
Since after the death of Christ the preaching is first of all witness to the resurrection of Christ, the apostle from then on must be a personal 'witness of the resurrection of Christ' (Acts 1:22).  

When Paul listed the workers in the Church, he listed the apostles in first position. As an apostle, Paul may be considered the man who has been called, who has a unique task to perform in the last great drama of salvation. It is the apostolic task, that of the emissary who is to go to the Gentiles to preach the Gospel, so that this hindrance to the coming of Christ and final salvation shall be cleared away. 

An examination of the Christian apostleship and the functions thereof would be incomplete without giving some attention to the "False apostles" and the "signs" which marked a true apostle of Christ. Those who are referred to as being possible messengers of Satan.

Even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. These were apostles, but their commission was not from Christ.

"It is still the commission that gives the authority to an apostle; but their selfish and covetous behaviour and false teaching demonstrate that they are apostles sent out by Satan." The true apostle is unselfish and carries the death of Jesus in his body; and "the suffering apostle is therefore the true apostle, while the false apostle seeks his own

1Ibid. 2I Cor. 12:28-29; Eph. 4:11.  
3Munck, Paul and the Salvation of Mankind, p. 66.  
4II Cor. 11:14b-15. 5Mosbech, op. cit., p. 198.  
6II Cor. 4:10.
honour in what seems to the worldly and fleshly man to be valuable."¹ Paul speaks of himself in glorifying terms, though he does it reluctantly. He does it for the cause he represented, not for his personal glory.

To the Corinthians he wrote "truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works."² Lightfoot provides some helpful explanation of these signs:

The signs, which he contemplates in these passages, our modern conceptions would lead us to separate into two classes. The one of these includes moral and spiritual gifts—patience, self-denial, effective preaching; the other comprises such powers as we call supernatural, 'signs, wonders, and mighty deeds.' St Paul himself however does not so distinguish them, but with more of reverence regards them rather as different manifestations of 'one and the self-same Spirit.'³

It is not to be overlooked that the various ideas which form the background of the "signs" of an apostle have their roots in the Semitic office of ambassador.⁴ Moses may be considered as one who was a kind of religious ambassador. His divine authority is set forth in a sign (ἐνυμίον) or "token."⁵ His opponents, the Egyptian magicians, were also able to perform some of the very same things.⁶

The chief function of all the apostles of Christ was to bear witness of him. The apostle was characterized by his function. "He had given himself, and that for life, to be a

¹ Munck, Paul and the Salvation of Mankind, p. 184.
² II Cor. 12:12. ³ Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 99.
⁴ Kengstorf, op. cit., p. 47. ⁵ Ex. 3:12.
⁶ Ex. 7:11, 22.
missionary, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of Christ to those who did not know it.\textsuperscript{1}

The Authority

Olof Linton\textsuperscript{2} feels that there is no doubt but that the Book of Acts presents ideals of a later time which show a certain reverence toward the apostles and regarded them as representing a corporate body of opinion. The idea of authority is associated with "the Twelve." This may be explained by the time element; the passage of time had altered the true perspective. They possessed experience and associations with the earthly Jesus which were worthy of respect and admiration. But concerning legal and administrative powers we have little information. Williams expresses this development and the acquisition of certain powers as being due to a decline of their authority in the immediate post-Resurrection era as others were added to the apostleship and came to the foreground and only later, possibly after their deaths, their respected positions were revived because of the felt need to connect the Church with the historic Christ.\textsuperscript{3}

Vincent Taylor's explanation of their authority may be seen in these words:

The Jerusalem Apostles who belonged to the Twelve had

\textsuperscript{1}Thomas M. Lindsay, \textit{The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries} (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1902), p. 75.


\textsuperscript{3}Williams, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 60.
the prestige of those who had been commissioned by Christ for the Galilean Mission, and had been promised seats of authority in the Elect Community of the Son of Man. No one else could make such a claim. They had seen the Risen Lord, but with the exception of Paul, to whom a special revelation had been given, the other Apostles, so far as we know, had seen Him, but were witnesses to the Resurrection as part of the kerygma. Nevertheless, the authority of these Apostles was spontaneously recognized, and, with the exception of that of Paul, appears to have been unchallenged. 1

Hort feels it to be "difficult to see any form the Gospel could take in transmission in which the place of the still living Apostles would not be a primary one." 2 He admits, however, that there is "no trace in Scripture of a formal commission of authority for government from Christ Himself." 3 He feels that the moral authority and "the uniqueness of their position and personal qualifications" 4 were significant in the development of their positions of authority.

It was at the suggestion of "the Twelve" 5 that the seven were chosen, and "the Twelve" laid their hands on them. 6 These were to perform certain duties so that "the Twelve" "should not forsake the word of God." 7

Flew 8 sees the principle of authority in the New Testament to be closely related to the Word of God. Because the apostles were witnesses of the Word, had fellowshipped personally with the living Christ, as well as being witnesses of the Resurrection, their teaching had authority. They were with the Church before the New Testament writings were produced. In fact, most of the writings of the New Testament

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1 Taylor, op. cit., pp. 626-627. 2 Hort, op. cit., p. 84. 3 Ibid. 4 Ibid. 5 Acts 6:2. 6 Acts 6:6. 7 Acts 6:2. 8 Flew, op. cit., p. 182.
are attributed to authors who were apostles. In Cullmann's words, "without apostles we would have no New Testament, no knowledge at all of Jesus the Risen One."¹ In this way the apostles are related to the written record.

The Apostles, by Christ's own commission, had been put in charge of a tradition, and, in the nature of the case, their office could not be transmitted. In so far as they had successors, these were not men but the Four Gospels; for once the Evangelic story had taken shape and been put in writing, the necessity for this special function of keeping alive the detailed memory of a fact had passed away.²

We face the question of Peter's authority among the apostles. "According to the Acts, Peter comes naturally to a position of spiritual leadership in the Church. But the leadership is shared. It is no unlimited authority."³ Of the apostles, he dominates the scene in Acts 1-12. From that point onward attention is focused on Paul, except in Acts 15.

Paul speaks of a time when he stood up to Peter. This would not recognize in Peter much superiority. Rather, Paul seems to consider Peter as an equal except for the difference in the spheres of their work. Peter's apostleship was with reference to the Jews while Paul's was to be among the Gentiles.⁴ Cullmann feels that the one who was given the privilege to be the first witness of the Resurrection was regarded "because of this chronological preferment"⁵ as the one especially commissioned by Christ to hand on this witness. This, of course,

¹Cullmann, op. cit., p. 221.
²Macgregor, op. cit., p. 187. ³Flew, op. cit., p. 94.
⁴Gal. 2:8. ⁵Cullmann, op. cit., p. 63.
must have been Peter. It would appear that if Peter were regarded with special authority, this must be taken into consideration. With reference to the place occupied by Peter, Flew says,

It is probably true that Protestant exegetes and historians have been inclined to underestimate the position of Peter among the Apostles, and in the primitive community. But it is equally true that if we were to call any Apostle 'pope' in a primitive hierarchy, it would be, not Peter, but James.

Upon the examination of Paul's letters, one finds a kind of authority expressed. He lets his readers know that he writes from a point which is superior to them. Part of this authority has its basis in his call to the apostleship -- a call which was "through the will of God." He claimed equal rights with the other apostles. Despite this he often spoke of himself as Christ's 'slave,' a term often translated 'servant' to minimize its harshness to modern ears. Paul used so a designation because he knew that he had been bought with a price and therefore belonged to a new owner.

He considered "the authority of Christ to be exercising itself through his words, spoken and written." Those apostles who had personal knowledge of the historic Jesus had an effect on Paul. Because Paul was not one of the inner circle of disciples nor was he with Jesus during the period between his Resurrection and Ascension, it was

1 I Cor. 15:5. 2Flew, op. cit., p. 133.
3 I Cor. 1:1. 4I Cor. 9:1-27.
6Williams, op. cit., p. 19.
necessary for Paul to face the charge that he was not one of the apostles in the same sense as were "the Twelve." This caused him to emphasize the fact of his call by the Risen Lord. Due to the problem he faced, he perhaps magnifies his call beyond what he would have done otherwise. Paul was indeed an apostle of Jesus Christ, though the charge was technically correct. His efforts testified to this. Though he had not known the historical Jesus, yet he was not working apart from him. The fact that his message was linked with the historical Jesus would be a factor which he and those who had been with Jesus shared in common.

Paul could write, "For Christ also pleased not himself," and

For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye eat it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come.

Being conscious that they were sharing a common message, he could say, "Whether then be I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed." Perhaps Paul did think of himself as "the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." But this same Paul is able to write such glorying words as "I labored

1 Rom. 15:3a.  2 Cor. 11:23-26.  3 Cor. 15:11.  
4 Cor. 15:9.
more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."\(^1\)

Flew summarizes the position of "the Twelve" in these words:

First, they were accorded a certain pre-eminence in the counsels and leadership of the community; second, the exact nature of their authority was undefined. Their general pre-eminence they owed:

(1) to their close companionship with Jesus in the days of His flesh;
(2) to their privilege of witnessing the Resurrection;
(3) to the fact that they had been sent forth to preach by Jesus Himself in His earthly life;
(4) to the fact that Jesus had given them 'authority' to cast out devils.\(^2\)

As a result of examining "apostle" in the New Testament one discovers that the prevailing view of such to be "a delegate with the duty of preaching the gospel, being consequently a missionary."\(^3\) This clearly separates the Christian apostleship from the institution in Judaism which many seem to feel was carried over into the Church. "The missionary element fundamentally differentiates the N.T. apostleship from the Jewish shalithah institution."\(^4\)

Consideration has been given to the commission received by the apostles during the life of Jesus as one aspect which was unique in itself to those who were so appointed. It was characterized by the personal presence of Jesus and their fellowship with him. But this association was broken and his followers were scattered by the fact of his Crucifixion which was unbelievable to them. His Resurrection was as equally un-

\(^1\) I Cor. 15:10b. \(^2\) Flew, op. cit., p. 131.
believable. Whether there were two apostleships with the Resurrection between them or whether there was one apostleship having two aspects we find disagreement. However, the observer cannot but notice something different taking place after the Resurrection. The function of the apostles took on a new dimension; their authority had equally acquired a new dimension.

They found themselves without the presence of the historical Jesus. But they were empowered by the Spirit. Somehow they received mighty assurance that Jesus was still with them, though not in the person of the Galilean. It was now they recognized him as the Risen Christ of God. The authority of the Risen Lord was assuring his envoys; he was standing behind the "wonders and signs" which were being done by the apostles. They were now representing him who had commissioned them.

If 'a man's messenger is as the man himself', and if the N.T. apostleship is based on this principle, [the writer holds to this view] then the absence of miracle would be nothing less than the disproving of the apostolic claim, and the preaching of the Risen Christ would be a piece of human theorising, instead of being the proclamation of an act of God, surpassing all human thought. The signs of an apostle (II Cor. xii, 12) are indispensable, not for the sake of the missionaries themselves, but for the sake of their work, and of Jesus. If any one feels compelled to reject these miracles, he must also explain the miracles of Jesus as legends, or at least try to reduce them to natural terms. That, however, means giving up the apostleship as the central religious institution of the early Church, and leaving it as merely the legal institution of Jesus. But this would not be a true account of the apostleship either in itself or in important features of its development. These considerations do not mean
that we can dispense with critical study of the miracles in Acts; on the contrary they make it absolutely necessary.1

As Jesus had been sent into the world from the Father, these now have been sent as authorized messengers of Jesus. That they have "a mission in the world, involving the same suffering and the same glory,"2 we would not deny.

1Hengstorf, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

CONCLUSION

Results of this study enrich our understanding of the meaning with which the New Testament writers used ἀνάρτητος. By this time, the word had undergone a great change from what it meant in its earliest known usage. It became enlarged in content. By now it could be used of messengers who were authorized to act on behalf of the sender.

It must be remembered, however, that each writer could use this word according to his own style. It was not used the same way by all writers. Though the word had a particular meaning, the writers applied it in different ways. Only by examining the usage by individual writers are we able to discover the various uses of the word in the New Testament.

Used in a general sense the word carried its basic meaning of "messenger." Without changing this basic meaning, it could be made specific applying to certain messengers. Thus, Paul was able to use the word with reference to persons sent out by Jesus Christ or sent by congregations. In another sense, especially in Luke-Acts, the word is used in a way which restricts it referring to "the Twelve" who had been with Jesus in his earthly ministry as if these were the apostles.

Our attention is called to the apostles during the earthly ministry of Jesus. The exact number is not known,
but the Evangelists seem in agreement that there were twelve among all the disciples who were distinct from the larger group. It could be possible, as some feel, that this may be a later idea read back into the early period. These twelve disciples are thought of as "apostles." There may have been more, but this number became significant. Jesus had appointed these so they might have fellowship with him and be sent to preach and heal. The Crucifixion interrupted this.

After the Resurrection, those who had been scattered were reassembled. They were again commissioned either by a new commission or another aspect of the earlier commission. They were to perform a world-wide task.

Following the Ascension, they were especially empowered. They realized the spiritual presence of their Risen Lord, and they went forth courageously to witness for him. In a special revelation Jesus Christ, the Risen One, called Paul to be an apostle of his. Whether there were others called in like manner, we do not know. This one of whom we do know had no little difficulty in proving himself to be a true apostle of Jesus Christ.

The same word which is used of those commissioned by Christ has also been used of persons sent by congregations, but most translators have translated the word when used with reference to one sent by a congregation and transliterated the word when used of one sent by Christ. So, there were "apostles" or "messengers of churches" and "messengers" or "apostles of Christ." In each case, the messenger is authorized to act for those or for the one who commissions him.
Messengers of churches were frequently commissioned to perform certain tasks having a financial nature, but the messengers of Christ were to preach and witness for him. Those commissioned by Christ were given certain authority and power. Their work and influence was not the kind exercised by rulers and judges of the earth. If Jesus demonstrated any great lesson to those around him, it would seem to be the elevation of lowly service.

They were commissioned to serve; they had the assurance of the Risen Lord's presence; and, they went forth unafraid.
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