



APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

BENITA FRANCIS CHEMNITZ



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By

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Benita Francis Chemnitz

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FOREWORD

God is desperately seeking apostles and prophets to heal and save the nations (Ac.9:15; 13:47; 26:16-18; Ge.20:2-18; 2.Ki.2:19-22; Jer.1:5-10).

Not all can be apostles, but all can be apostolic people. Apostle is an office, a divine calling into one of the five ministry gifts (Eph.4:11-14). The Greek “apostolos” means “a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders”.

I would say, in the broadest sense, every believer is supposed to be a messenger, since Jesus’ last command sent all of us out into all the world (Mt.28:18-20; Mk.16:15-20). What this “all the world” and “every creature” means to every believer personally must be inquired of from God in prayer.

What are apostolic people, and are you one of them? In this book, you will find out. This book is for different groups of people:

- ▶ You may not have even imagined that there is an apostolic calling on your life, but you will recognize yourself in many of the characteristics explained here. If this is you, I would suggest you submit to true apostolic leadership to be trained into your calling.
- ▶ You may have felt an apostolic push in you, but you didn’t know how to deal with it. This book will help you understand yourself better and appreciate what God has laid into your spirit.
- ▶ You may already be on the way into your calling, an apostle-to-be, and apostle-in-training. You will be able to find and fine-tune many of the attributes and virtues that are already in you and enhance them toward an apostolic ministry.

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- ▶ You may be already an apostle, in apostolic ministry, leading many people. By God's grace I am sure the Holy Spirit will use these pages to minister to you, refresh you, strengthen you and equip you for future victorious battles.
- ▶ You may lead an apostolic ministry, but without considering that your task is two-fold: Winning the lost and making your believers into apostles themselves. One of the main functions of an apostle is to train believers into apostolic people.
- ▶ You may be a believer in an apostolic ministry. Don't only enjoy the miracles your apostle performs. Understand that as a sheep of his flock, you are supposed to be apostolic people with the ability to grow into true apostles.
- ▶ You may find out that you are not called into an apostolic ministry. If so, please do pray fervently for God to raise up His apostles. Encourage and teach people in whom you see apostolic traits, and thus build God's Kingdom.

I have intentionally printed out many Scriptures. The reason is my concern about the watering-down of God's powerful Word, His living two-edged Sword, in many modern translations. Please do compare your Bible with the NKJV version used here, and then decide whether to keep your translation or switch to a more accurate one.

I personally came to India for the first time as a translator for Argentinean ministers. I had brought a beautiful leather-bound Thomson-chain-reference Bible, but it was an NIV translation. When I read the passage from Ephesians 6 they wanted to teach on, I saw the power and sharpness of God's Word missing. Even the meaning was changed!

I requested a break, RAN to the bookshop and bought an NKJV. It is a deep concern to me that nowadays many pastors use the NIV and tell their people to use this translation which was done by not even born again professionals.

Please let God's Word from these pages work deeply in your spirit.

Foreword

Don't skip over the Scriptures in this book. If possible, read them even in KJV, the King James Version, which is still more loyal to the original text.

Of course, the maximum benefit for your spiritual life would be reached by using an interlinear translation where you can directly compare the KJV with the Hebrew or Greek original.

15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth (2.Ti.2:15)

May God bless you and lead you straight into your calling through these pages

APOSTOLIC PEOPLE



Apostles are special people. Apostles are God's very unique creations. Apostles are different. Apostles are sometimes difficult to understand, difficult to handle. Apostles are intense. Apostles are strong-willed, even to the point of being opinionated. And most importantly:

Apostles are extremely needed for our world today!

I understood this fact through my exposure to Christian ministry in Latin-America. What I had read in my Bible, what I had longed for and asked about in my supposedly Christian nation Germany, was lived out in cities and villages of that beautiful, poverty-stricken continent. In spite of their difficult life circumstances, believers were vibrant, excited about Jesus and very active in their prayer and Christian witness.

Healings, signs, wonders and even violent deliverances from demonic powers were a normal part of daily Church life. What a difference to our cool, perfectly organized and well-regulated Christianity in Western nations, and sadly, even in most of the Spirit-filled churches!

I sought the Lord about this question for a long time and found various reasons for this huge discrepancy. Most important, however, was the amount of active apostles I found in Latin-America, as well as in Africa and Asia, compared to Western nations. Wherever there were apostles, God's Kingdom was established with power manifestations. Believers were activated, society was impacted, and social evils were addressed. It was amazing!!!

I started praying and pondering. Definitely, God would have called many more people into this precious ministry and endowed them with His miracle power?!?

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Having understood the tremendous need for the apostolic ministry in today's world, I started praying fervently for God to raise apostles for Europe. Who would have thought that He would answer my prayers by giving me an "apostle-maker", a prophet, as husband!!!

In my years of marriage, I met countless servants of God who told me they had not known their real calling until they attended one of our seminars. They had been working for God, many of them even full-time, but felt frustrated, defeated, unfulfilled. The only reason was that they had been working without true knowledge of God's plan and purpose for their life and ministry.

Are you one of them? In this book, you may find out that you actually are called to be an apostle - and if not, you will understand the need for this powerful ministry and start interceding for apostles to arise!

I pray this book may help you find and fulfill your destiny in Christ!

For decades, maybe even for centuries, God gave visions to His choice servants on different continents. The visions are somewhat similar, although expressed in different languages, and they all refer to the End of Days, the End Times we are now living in. They showed a huge, giant-like body, motionless, seemingly dead. At closer observance, some movement started coming to that supposed corpse, and it kept moving until it finally stood upright.

All who saw such visions coincided that God was showing them His Body, the Bride of Christ, the Church. It had been in deep sleep, almost dead, for far too long. Now, however, it came to life and started to arise.

In some of these visions, the Body was seen as comprised of millions of individual cells, each of them a person, a believer. Each of them had been activated; each of them had started fulfilling his function. This activation of each individual was the secret that had given life, strength and motility to God's Giant, the worldwide Body of Christ.

What could be needed for this miracle of activation to occur? The

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answer is clearly given by God's Old Testament prophet Ezekiel (Eze.37) and especially by God's New Testament apostle Paul (Eph.4:11-16). In the Old Testament, God showed to His prophet Ezekiel the much needed preparation for this miracle of life from the dead: Prophecy! Prophesying and inviting God's Holy Ghost to move over the dry bones was the wonder God showed to His Old Testament prophet.

The fulfillment of this prophetic strategy will be seen in our times as God's "five-fold ministry gifts" arise and operate in increasing measure all over the world. In fact, what is their God-given task? It is talking, prophesying, speaking God's Word over the spiritually dry or dead hearers, teaching them their zoe-life power, their position in Christ, and their place in the Body of Christ.

As each member thus gets activated by God's Word and God's Spirit through God's servants, the dry bones join together, get covered with flesh and sinews, and finally arise, a mighty army, a powerful, glorious Body of Christ all over the world! Wow! What a wonder!!!

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ,

13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ –

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working

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*by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body
for the edifying of itself in love (Eph.4:11-16)*

APOSTOLIC PREEMINENCE



God Himself puts special emphasis on the ministry of apostles:

28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues (1.Co.12:28)

Does this mean apostles are better than other ministries? Some people think God's Word means that and try their best to 'be apostles'. How sad to see people on conferences handing out business cards advertising themselves as 'apostles', often with the aim of getting funding for their projects.

How different was the attitude of our great example, the mighty Apostle Paul:

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient -

19 in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ.

20 And so I have made it my aim to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation,

21 but as it is written: "To whom He was not announced, they shall see; and those who have not heard shall understand"

Apostolic Preeminence

(Ro.15:18-21)

The preeminence of the apostolic ministry refers to the pioneering push, the ‘bulldozer anointing’, the zeal to go to new places, the ability to lay foundations...

In short, it refers to the specific set of gifts and tools needed FIRST in the building of God’s Kingdom. It refers to the hardest work, the digging and laying of foundations, not necessarily to the best place or highest honor.

APOSTOLIC PROXIMITY



There is, however, a very special blessing bestowed on the ministry of both apostles and prophets:

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord (Eph.2:20-21)

The Apostle Paul calls the apostles and prophets, the human beings entrusted with this spiritual function, the **foundation**. What a tremendous responsibility! Imagine! If the foundation has only a tiny little crack, at any given time the entire building built upon it can collapse!

No wonder the foundation is the most important and most expensive part in any building. Of course, it is not seen from outside, and nobody would consider praising or admiring a foundation; and yet, it is the hidden structure that carries the entire weight of whatever is built upon it!

In my personal life, I am extremely grateful to my Lord Jesus for showing me at the very beginning of my ministry how damaged my foundation was! When people praised the translation ministry I was doing, I didn't know how to handle their appreciation. So I used to politely divert their praises immediately to God who had given me the gift and ability and ease of learning different languages.

Deep down inside, however, I started getting almost addicted to the praises! If one day nobody would come to thank me for my wonderful translation, I would fall into a pit of self-questioning and even

God-questioning. Didn't I do a good job today? Had I sinned in any way? Had God taken His Spirit, His anointing, away from me? It was a truly torturing experience to go through, from pride-producing praises to self-searching silence from the hearers.

Praise God, the Holy Spirit immediately showed me the tremendous danger of such lifestyle. Instead of asking the One who had sent me whether He was happy with my ministry, I expected people to judge my performance.

It was a sobering revelation to understand how much damage an unhealthy foundation can do, and how much danger it can mean for the future of a ministry!

So I asked the Lord to hide me until He had done a thorough repair of my entire life foundation - the rejection, the insecurity, the self-condemnation, the fear of men, and anything else He would see in me. The result of this prayer was two years of injustices, rejections and tears. However, I would never want to miss these two years of foundation-healing!

More than ever before, I was thrown into the arms of Jesus, the true Lover of my soul, who will never leave me nor forsake me. I learned in these two years to have only one desire: to make Him happy! And to expect only one appreciation: His smiling face!

9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it (1.Co.3:9-10)

Apostolic people are the foundation of the building, the Body God is raising, and yet, they are also the builders as God's co-workers. Being so close to the eternal Cornerstone Jesus, they walk in His wisdom to lay the foundation for every church, every ministry, actually for ev-

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ery life in Christ (1.Co.4:15).

O yes, apostles and prophets are the foundation, and they are most closely connected with The Cornerstone, Jesus Christ! Even though their ministry may be very public, their deepest and fondest secret is their profound Oneness with Jesus Christ, The Cornerstone!

APOSTOLIC PREROGATIVE



Apostolic people also have another tremendous privilege. See how boldly the Apostle Paul could call himself ‘God’s fellow worker’! What an intimacy and what an authority shine forth from his words:

9 For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building.

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1.Co.3:9-11)

The special and specific purpose of the apostolic ministry is expressed in these few words from the early years of Paul’s apostolic ministry. Apostles lay the foundation, not only in the natural, but especially in the spiritual sense. Apostles lay the foundation, and then apostles go on to new challenges. Others build on the foundation apostles laid.

Are apostles proud people? We could come to such a conclusion by reading Paul’s words and also by watching some modern-day apostles. If you dig a little deeper into a true apostolic minister, however, you will hopefully find the humility of true apostles, the humility of our Lord Jesus who said, “**I can of Myself do nothing...**” (Jn.5:30)!

See this Scripture a little deeper. The Apostle Paul didn’t even dare to judge according to his own mind! As he hears, he judges! Because he trusts so completely both in his God and in his own ability to hear Him, he can be confident that his judgment is righteous! There is not a trace

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of pride or arrogance in truly apostolic people.

30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me (Jn.5:30)

Apostolic people have a clear sense of being sent, sent by the Father, sent into a suffering world. Old-Testament Apostle Moses could only do the miracles he did by this clear conviction: God sent me (Ex.3:10). Old-Testament Apostle Abraham knew and happily accepted his commission which needed a daily seeking and doing God's will (Ge.12:1-3).

Apostolic people have only one prerogative: Never to seek their own will, but only the will of the Father.

Note that the Apostle Paul didn't brag about his wisdom or his accomplishments. He very clearly stated, "**According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation...**" (1.Co.3:10).

Purely relying on and acknowledging the grace of God which made him wise, he lived his life and fulfilled his ministry. What a challenge! What an example to follow!!!

APOSTOLIC PERSONALITY



Is there such a thing as an apostolic personality? I would say yes, after taking a good look at both the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Peter, the most prominent apostles in the New Testament. Both of them were men of strength, men of action, men of strong drive, men who didn't count their own lives dear to themselves (Ac.20:24). Both came from totally different backgrounds, one scholarly, the other one a business man from the working class, but both had worked hard and excelled in their area.

Interestingly, both had their names changed for the tremendous task they were supposed to do for God's Kingdom. The 'shaky reed Simon' had his name changed into the 'rock Peter' by Jesus himself (Mt.16:18). Saul who was 'also called Paul' traveled extensively and overcame tremendous odds by his apostolic push (Ac.13:9).

Even before his salvation and name change, the Apostle Paul was willing to fight for what he considered right. See his high emotions and strong determination:

1 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest

2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem (Ac.9:1-2)

We don't know much about the Apostle Peter before his deep, life-transforming encounter with Jesus and before he became His disciple. We see, however, his pushy, impulsive character during his years with Jesus. He automatically ascended to leader of the team, quick to

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speak, quick to act, quick to give his opinion, and very convinced of himself.

Strong reins had to be put on Peter although Jesus attested his request to come to Him by walking on water. When he started sinking, he was saved immediately but rebuked for his unstable attitude of fear and his consideration of the circumstances, the storm and the waves. He had to be broken, shown his own wretched heart that even allowed him to deny and betray his Lord Jesus. He needed that experience not only once, but twice (Lk.5; Mt.26:69-75).

But yes, such strong, forward pushing character is truly apostolic and a great blessing once it is tamed, sanctified and brought under the control of God's Holy Ghost.

APOSTOLIC PROTOTYPE



There are various ‘apostolic prototypes’ in the Bible, both in the Old and the New Testament. Maybe the clearest OT apostolic calling was given to Moses by God Himself.

When the cry of God’s people had reached God’s ears and when His heart could no longer bear it, He kindled the curiosity of Moses, a man frustrated, a man broken in his ego by forty years in Midian. Praise God, Moses followed step by step God’s instructions and finally could receive his calling:

10 Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt (Ex.3:10)

Nehemiah, being sent first by God’s burden and then even by a heathen king, can be considered another apostolic prototype. Nehemiah was unable to bear the reproach of God’s people. He fasted, prayed, and then proceeded. He succeeded in delivering God’s fearful, sinful and scattered people. He built the city wall, and he reestablished God’s law and order in God’s House. He was sent with a heavenly mission, and he accomplished it.

A true apostle burns with anger at oppression and has a burning compassion for the suffering. A true apostle draws near to God and receives His heart burden. A true apostle steps forward fearlessly to defend the helpless and deliver the hopeless. A true apostle doesn’t shun leaving comfort, security, position recognition, paycheck or anything else that might hold back more feeble characters. A true apostle steps up to the challenge of suffering humanity. A true apostle allows himself to be sent forth as an arrow of salvation, salvation from the Lord.

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This is clearly portrayed in our Lord Jesus, our greatest Apostolic Prototype:

38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me (Jn.6:38)

1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,

2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house (Heb.3:1-2)

Utter faithfulness to God's appointment, a mind to suffer and the readiness to lay down their own life for God's cause is a hallmark of apostolic people. Please take some time to study in depth the following Scriptures that show character, calling, capacity and crowning of a sent one, a true apostle:

1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,

2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:1-11)

In a broader sense, also God's Holy Spirit could be considered an apostolic prototype, since He was sent to strengthen our Lord Jesus for His mission and His ultimate sacrifice (Heb.9:14). After His resurrection and ascension, the Holy Ghost was also sent to dwell in every believer and seal believers as God's purchased possession for eternity (Ac.2:17-18; Eph.1:13-14). We can therefore safely state that God's Holy Spirit is the Sent One who gives you the apostolic ability to bear hardship and fulfill your ministry.

Since God's Holy Spirit was sent to dwell in you, and since you were also sent into this world just like Jesus was sent, you can definitely draw from His apostolic authority. The more you hate your life in this world, the more you can keep it for eternal life (Jn.12:25). The more you die to yourself, the more you live for Christ and with Christ (Ro.14:8; Ga.2:20). The more you concentrate on Him, the more He can use you for His purpose. What is His purpose? It is to send you just as He was sent by the Father. It is to send you to destroy the works of the devil (Jn.20:21-22; 1.Jn.3:8)!

The more you study God's apostolic prototypes, the stronger and purer your apostolic ministry will be. Even though you may not be

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called into the five-fold ministry gift of an apostle, you ARE a sent one, just like the disciples were sent out by Jesus with His same authority (Mt.28:18-20; Mk.16:20; Jn.20:21).

APOSTOLIC PROGRAM



God's apostolic program is clear, simple and glorious. Please study deeply the apostolic strategies deployed by our great Master Apostle, the Lord Jesus:

35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

1 And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

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4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as you go, preach, saying, 'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

9 Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts,

10 nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.

11 Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out.

12 And when you go into a household, greet it.

13 If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.

15 Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

16 Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves.

***Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves”
(Mt.9:35-10:16)***

Notice how His apostolic spirit pushed Jesus to tirelessly go about **all** the cities and villages, teaching, preaching, and healing **every** sickness and **every** disease among the people. The burden received from God’s heart didn’t allow Him to rest or be lazy. This burden consumed Him with the desire to teach and preach so that **all** may experience “sozo”, that is, be saved, healed and delivered from the grip of satan.

Notice that He didn’t just preach any Gospel; He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, the Gospel of God’s Kingship, the Gospel of submission under the glorious King of all Creation! Neither Jesus nor His true followers ever allowed, much less accepted, the veneration of men. Apostolic people always insist on glorifying the King of all kings, the Lord of all lords.

Notice how Jesus saw and noticed the miserable state of the multitudes and had compassion with them. A true apostle never loses sight of the people. He sees people with God’s eyes, with God’s heart. A true apostle ministers out of burden for the oppressed, never out of any self-ish desire for name or fame.

Notice how Jesus ascribed the weariness and confusion of the crowd to the absence of a leader, and not just any kind of leader, but a shepherd. He knew the character and disposition of sheep and their utter need for a good shepherd who would lead them to green pastures and still waters.

Notice how Jesus immediately turned the perceived need into a prophetic prayer. Notice how He raised awareness about the sullen circumstances in those close to Him and imparted the burden from God’s heart to them.

Notice how only now we see the obvious, one of the strongest strategies of the apostolic: Jesus was not alone. He was traveling with a team, a team of disciples, a team which He was training on-the-go.

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Notice how Jesus put a powerful foundation into His future apostles: Keep your eyes on people's needs and condition. Discern the reason for the dismal state of affairs, but don't despair. **See** the great opportunity, **see** the open door, **see** the tremendous need! **PRAY** for God to move!!! Then **you** be ready to move, to be sent into the harvest as an answer to your own prayers.

Notice how Jesus entrusted the apostolic authority and power to His disciples only **after** training them into the right attitude, the reason for the power, the heart cry of God for the weary and scattered.

Notice how the apostolic sending included authority to cast out unclean spirits and healing power for **all** kinds of sickness and disease!

Notice how Jesus now instructed His budding apostles in program, ethics and procedures.

In short: God's apostolic program consists in close fellowship, on-the-job-training, power demonstration, call to prayer, power impartation, character teaching and training, and finally sending them out with God's heart attitude into God's harvest field.

Of course, our Lord Jesus called His disciples many times 'apostles' (Mt.10:2; Mk.6:30; Lk.6:13; 17:5; 22:14; 24:10). In each one of these instances, the disciples were being sent out or had just come back from an assignment the Lord Jesus had given them.

Did these disciples qualify as apostles? O yes! The word 'apostle' comes from the Greek word 'apostolos' which means 'sent one', 'sent away one'. All of these apostles had been sent out on a mission, the mission to build God's Kingdom in the nations.

All of these disciples had given up everything to follow God's call and to labor with Jesus. All had given up any worldly ambitions and even family ties. All had given themselves fully to God and to His purposes. All had been willing to join the apostolic program. All had followed His call to Him so He could train and eventually send them:

Apostolic Program

13 And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him.

14 Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach,

15 and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons (Mk.3:13-14)

APOSTOLIC PHENOMENON



Truly apostolic people unleash a mighty phenomenon. Wherever they go, the powers of heaven are stirred up, both angelic and demonic. Apostolic people live out both God's promise and God's commission, just as the Apostle Paul experienced:

17 I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you,

18 to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me (Ac.26:17-18)

Both Jews and Gentiles would be instigated by satan against God's apostles, but God would deploy His angelic host to deliver them. Apostolic people press into new territories, propelled by God's heart burden for those whose eyes the god of this world has blinded (2.Co.4:3-4).

The apostolic phenomenon is an extraordinary, unusual ability to preach and teach in demonstration of God's Spirit and God's power:

4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God (1.Co.2:4)

The apostolic phenomenon also is an exceptional character, a true understanding of Galatians 2:20, a very deep death to any trace of ego

or self-gratification in life or ministry. A true apostle doesn't seek to produce followers or members. A true apostle doesn't draw people to himself. A true apostle steps back into the shadows and always puts Jesus Christ into the limelight. A true apostle sticks to the determination that founded his ministry in the very beginning:

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1.Co.2:2)

Apostolic people know that in order to produce lasting fruit, people must be continuously fed God's Word. After the initial power encounter that opened their eyes, turned them from darkness to light and propelled them from satan's kingdom right into the Kingdom of God, people must be taught God's Word (Col.1:13-14). Apostolic people know that only those who abide in God's Word can truly be His disciples and keep living in spiritual liberty (Jn.8:31-32).

Apostolic people don't produce converts, they produce spiritual children. They don't drop them into someone else's lap and run away to enjoy the next challenge, the next adrenaline hype. By the guidance of God's Spirit, they labor in birth pains, in travailing prayers, even long after having left the disciples in others' care.

19 My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you (Ga.4:19)

What is the apostolic phenomenon? It is the ability to not only birth, but also establish believers. A true apostle won't rest until his believers receive and extend to others full forgiveness of sins, attain full sanctification by faith in God's Word, and receive their inheritance, both in this world and in the world to come (Ac.26:17-18).

For that purpose, and not for his name and fame, not for money or number games, a true apostle will seek to appoint elders and leaders. He will seek to establish churches in order to establish the believers in continuous Word teaching.

The apostle himself may go on to other shores as God may guide

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him, but his heart and prayers will always be with those he won and established.

Study the Apostle Paul's interaction with the elders of Ephesus to get a deeper revelation of the apostolic character, the apostolic burden, the apostolic phenomenon (Ac.20:17-28).

APOSTOLIC PREPARATION



Apostles come from all walks of life and all kinds of different backgrounds, but one thing is certain: God Himself makes sure they get the proper preparation and training for the field He is planning to send them to. Also certain is that He reveals Himself to them in a very convincing, often spectacular way.

To receive his calling, Old Covenant Moses had to go through a thorough preparation. He had to be broken in his human glory, strength and endeavor, although it was actually his apostolic calling, his righteous indignation, that made him burn with anger at Egyptian oppression of his countrymen, the Israelites.

The apostolic calling to deliver the captives almost cost him his life and thrust him from Pharaoh's palace into the life of a fugitive in the wilderness. All these happenings formed in him the character that would make him able to confront Pharaoh and lead God's people out of their slavery.

10 Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt (Ex.3:10)

The rough-and-tough fisherman Peter acquired through his job the stamina and audacity to work hard and travel extensively. His often dangerous outdoor life made him quick-tempered and demanded quick decisions and immediate action.

Peter pushed his way to the top by his energy and determination. Yet even as a successful businessman, he had a form of godliness that made him lend his boat to the travelling teacher, Jesus. He had a sen-

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sitivity to recognize the supernatural hand of God interfering in the natural. And he had enough sense to recognize that before a holy God, he was a sinner.

He would not have expected the powerful, life-transforming encounter from his polite gesture. He would not have expected any recompense for his time and effort. He would not have expected the tremendous blessing Jesus poured out on him for lending Him his boat as a pulpit. He would not have expected the living God to recruit him right there, in midst of his daily life. He would not have expected that his small step of obedience would open the door for him to enter his apostolic calling!

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, o Lord!"

9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken;

10 and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men."

11 So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him (Lk.5:8-11)

Things were very different with affluent, highly intelligent, perfectly educated, proud religious scholar Saul of Tarsus. Trained under the top religious leaders of his time, he excelled to the point of becoming the youngest member of the Sanhedrin. He advanced in Judaism beyond many of his contemporaries, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of his fathers. This zeal pushed him to persecute and destroy the Church beyond measure and with extreme cruelty (Ga.1:13-14).

On his way to one of his self-appointed missions, fully convinced that he was doing the will of God by persecuting Christians even to foreign cities, Saul of Tarsus had his own encounter with Jesus.

12 While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,

13 at midday, o king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me.

14 And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’

15 So I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

16 But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you’ (Ac.26:12-16)

This religious zealot needed a very different encounter with God. His pride had to be broken, and his misguided godliness exposed. Then only, Saul of Tarsus could become Paul, God’s great apostle.

APOSTOLIC PAST



After Paul's strong encounter and commission, he never looked back. He never felt any temptation to go back to his old name and fame.

Like Moses, he was willing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin. Like Moses, he chose to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of mainline religion (Heb.11:24-26). Like Moses, he decided to press forward:

13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil.3:13-14)

God's apostle Peter, however, had his moments of weakness, his moments of sifting, his moments of hopelessness, and even his moments of compromise. His cowardice made him even deny that he knew Jesus! Seeing his Lord Jesus seemingly defeated, he lost all hope of reigning with him in an earthly kingdom.

Impulsive and quick-tempered as he was, his disappointment and hopelessness made him decide to "forget the whole Jesus-thing" and go back to business. Being a strong apostolic leader and influencer, those around him decided to follow him without even being invited (Jn.21:3)!

What a lesson! What a danger! Apostolic people can, by their God-given power to influence others, destroy not only their own lives but pull many with them into destruction! Notice that though "Peter

& Co” immediately got into the boat, that night they caught nothing! Why? Well, because they followed an apostolic leader who succumbed to his flesh! He still had a soft corner for his past! He had not yet come to the deep revelation and dedication of God’s true Apostle Paul:

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ (Phil.3:7-8)

Of course, Peter’s blunders happened before Pentecost, before he received the tongues of fire and the mighty rushing wind of God’s Holy Spirit (Ac.2). Nevertheless, our Lord Jesus took Peter’s betrayal so serious that He made him reconfirm his love and loyalty thrice since Peter had denied Him thrice (Jn.21:15-17)!

Oh yes, apostolic people must relinquish their past and any desire to turn back to it! They must consciously cut any connection with their past in an effort to prevent any temptation to go back to their old life.

Apostolic people who backslide pull many with them into destruction. How many churches were split or even destroyed by that one charismatic personality, that apostolic person, who decided to leave and took others with him!

Lucifer, the shining covering cherub, fell and drew one third of God’s angels with him into perdition (Isa.14:12; Rev.12:3-4)! Beware!

APOSTOLIC PROGRESS



As with any calling, there is a definite progress, a progression, in the apostolic. See how God's Apostle Paul puts it:

1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the Gospel of God (Ro.1:1)

13 For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry (Ro.11:13)

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother (1.Co.1:11)

1 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? (1.Co.9:1)

Even though he was already in active apostolic ministry, Paul began these epistles emphasizing that he was **called to be** an apostle. When did that calling actually happen? Well, the same Apostle Paul explains that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that we all are created in Christ Jesus for good works which God has prepared beforehand that we should walk in them (Eph.1:4; 2:10).

As God showed His OT prophet Jeremiah, we are sanctified and ordained into our ministry before we even come forth from our mother's womb (Jer.1:5)!

So our gifts and callings are waiting for us to walk right into them, but alas! How many even among born-again believers never take the time to find out what they were actually created for! What a loss to the

world! Every believer who fails to occupy his position in the Body of Christ hampers its functioning. It's like a missing organ, a paralyzed limb.

Apostolic people have the power to open even these kind of blind eyes and to turn even these dry bones from darkness to light (Eze.37; Ac.26:18; Eph.4:11). How important is the apostolic! How much you must strive to find and fulfill your calling, whatever it may be!

10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2.Pe.1:10-11)

See the serious admonition of God's Apostle Peter. Calling, election, even eternal salvation is not automatic. Study 2nd Peter chapter 1 from the beginning. You see the Apostle Peter emphasizing God's nature, God's character, and our ability and necessity to walk in it in order to fulfill our calling.

Apostolic people must make sure they hold nothing back that is helpful for God's people but declare to them the whole counsel of God (Ac.20:20,27).

Every apostle's doctrine must contain a challenge to make our calling the top priority, the pressing passion of our lives. Development of character and godly relationship principles are top priority in the progress of any ministry. This is the case even more in the apostolic, since the apostolic in particular has the responsibility to raise and train believers and ministers into their calling.

1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,

2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering,

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bearing with one another in love,

3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph.4:1-3)

As an apostle progresses in his calling, his authority to rebuke all ungodliness increases together with his fatherly love. As he matures, he challenges many others into the peaceful maturity of unity and love walk.

APOSTOLIC PUSH



A prominent feature of the apostolic is the drive forward, the push to excel. Apostolic people are usually perfectionists who challenge everyone in their surroundings to come up higher, to improve, to excel. A stagnant apostle is a contradiction in itself.

12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me (Phil.3:12)

Apostolic people are visionaries. They see abilities and possibilities where others see only hopelessness. They know that there is more to discover, more to attain, more they are called to achieve.

This ‘pressing on’ which the Apostle Paul describes works both in the spiritual and in the natural. This apostolic push is a major reason why true apostles are fathers, not tyrannical rulers. Apostles may seem rough and tough, but their intention and heart desire is to see God’s Kingdom built and his spiritual children established in the full potential of their calling.

Apostolic people know that the only way to excel and fulfill God’s full plan is seeing Him, looking onto Him, catching His heart, being transformed into His image and likeness by His Holy Spirit (2.Co.3:18).

Apostolic people know the pain in God’s heart as He has to hear the groaning and moaning of His people. Apostolic people know that only interaction with God Himself can produce God’s nature and God’s endurance in God’s people and make them powerful deliverers.

1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a

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cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls (Heb.12:1-3)

16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

1 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart (2.Co.3:16 – 4:1)

That is why apostolic people lay much emphasis on true worship. A truly apostolic ministry will not allow shallow singing or man-pleasing performance in the pulpit, especially in praise and worship. A truly apostolic ministry will create an atmosphere in which God Himself can interact with each one of His children.

A truly apostolic ministry will deal very strongly with sin in the church, and much more so in the pulpit (1.Co.5:1-5; 1.Tim.3:1-13; Tit.1:5-11).

5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every

city as I commanded you...

See the push forward! Paul commanded his true son Titus to appoint elders in every city! What vision! What amplitude! Then follows a long checklist for Titus to discern pure, faithful people who shall be able to be elders (2.Ti.2:2). Why the long checklist? The reason is again the apostolic push for perfection, the push for purity, the push for multitudes to know the Risen Savior.

10 For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain (Tit.1:10-11)

Can you see the push for purity and perfection? There are **many** whose mouths must be stopped, says Paul, the Father Apostle, to his true son Titus. Their mouths must be stopped from talking and deceiving for money things that subvert entire households!

Oh, how painful it is when we hear of such cases! ‘Traveling ministers’ without any spiritual covering, without anyone they are accountable to, visit believers in their houses and plant seeds of doubt against their leaders. Some may ask money or even sexually tempt women (2.Pe.2:10-22).

How difficult it is to bring such hurt believers back to trust God and trust God’s true leaders. Oh yes, a brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle (Pr.18:19).

Apostolic people will push with all their might to weed out such blemishes from their area of influence.

APOSTOLIC PRIVILEGE



One of the great privileges of apostles and also a sign of their true apostleship is that they have seen their Lord Jesus. In the biographies of real apostles you will definitely find encounters with the risen Savior and resulting eternal fruit for God's Kingdom.

The Apostle Peter had his strong, life-transforming encounter on his own boat which he had lent as a pulpit with 'sea-surface-amplifier-system' to the traveling rabbi Jesus.

Simon Peter was a rough and tough man, but godly enough to accept some inconvenience for a religious teacher. So he obliged Jesus and heard Him teach from his boat to the multitudes ashore.

The real touch of his life, however, happened only by God's miracle power, demonstrated in a miraculous catch of fish:

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, o Lord!"

9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken;

10 and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men" (Lk.5:8-10)

With Simon Peter's sin-conviction and repentance came immediately his apostolic calling: "You will catch men"!

The Apostle Paul needed an even stronger treatment to rock him

out of his hatred against Christianity. He did not get a nice sermon and a financial reward like Peter. He was thrown from his high horse and nailed to the ground. His encounter was so strong that he immediately called Jesus “Lord”! He heard His voice and received instructions to follow. He was made blind for three days. He had to be led by some of his underlings, humbly walking on his own feet into the same city where he had planned to destroy Christianity. And then he had to receive the prayer of a reluctant disciple who had heard of his hatred against Christians (Ac.9:1-17).

This rough treatment, administered by Jesus Himself, however, bore immediate fruit:

18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.

19 So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

20 Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.

21 Then all who heard were amazed, and said, “Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?”

22 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this Jesus is the Christ (Ac.9:18-22)

Being interrupted by Jesus Himself while on a wrong way, hearing Him, seeing Him, having dreams, visions and angelic visitations gave this former persecutor Saul of Tarsus the boldness to proclaim:

1 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?

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*2 If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you.
For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord (1.Co.9:1-2)*

Oh, how much the world needs such apostles, such fishers of men!
How much we need miracle-workers who themselves have experienced miracles!

APOSTOLIC PROOF



The same Apostle Paul who could so boldly and clearly introduce himself as an apostle also brings his credentials to the table of discussion. Enraged by the accusations and doubts planted into the hearts of his beloved Church by some false apostles, Paul describes at length his lifestyle and ministry (2.Co.11:12-33).

Notice how he struggles having to boast about himself and his accomplishments, and contrast his humility with the arrogance and exaggeration of many contemporary ministers. How much was the Apostle Paul used by God! How much did he sacrifice on a personal level in honor, position and relationships in his Jewish traditions... and how humbly did he attribute all his exploits to the grace of God (2.Co.12:9-10)!

Finally, his defense of his ministry and right over the Corinthian church culminates in this statement:

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds (2.Co.12:12)

How is it possible that God's great apostle has to stamp his declaration with the assertion, "Truly!"? Had the cunning serpent been so well able to erase from the believers' minds all the marvelous miracles done by Paul? These same signs, wonders and mighty deeds only had convinced them of the power and reality of Jesus Christ, isn't it?

Remember, these churches all consisted of first generation Christians, of people who had been won for the Gospel not by words of human wisdom or eloquence, but only by the demonstration of the mighty

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power of God (1.Co.2:1-5)! How were the Gentiles won for Christ, and what are these signs of an apostle? Well, the Acts of the Apostles will give you all the answers you may desire!

How then could they doubt Paul's fatherhood and apostleship over them? How could they be led astray to other preachers, forsaking the servant of God who had fathered them with many tears?

Each time I read this passage I feel so sad, seeing such a great man of God like the Apostle Paul having to defend himself instead of being defended, honored and appreciated with fiery words of love and gratitude by those who found the Gospel through him. How sad that such a father of faith has to unwillingly boast to convince those who actually are the seal of his apostleship in the Lord (1.Co.9:2).

So dear apostle, take heart. God Himself will stand for you and stamp your ministry with great signs, wonders and mighty deeds, with the clear signs of an apostle! Notice, however, that faith, patience and perseverance are needed to inherit the promises of a successful life and ministry (Heb.6:11-12).

I have seen families of apostles going through great turmoil by the accusations of enemies or false brethren. I have also seen, however, how such situations drew all of them deeper into prayer and closer to God's comforting Father heart, thereby increasing their own anointing! And I have always seen God standing for His apostles, smashing the enemies' lies in His perfect time by powerful apostolic proof.

Apostolic people prove their calling again and again, not only by the signs following their ministry, but also by their heart and hunger for God. Apostolic people are willing to lose anything and everything for Christ because they are drawn by the Spirit into the deeper things of God, which in turn produce more miracles.

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence

of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil.3:7-14)

Apostolic people have this deep urge and call into deeper fellowship with Christ. Apostolic people don't bother losing earthly things for heavenly blessings. Apostolic people prove their ministry by their intimate walk with Christ.

APOSTOLIC PROPHETIC



Any true apostle will have not only the first touch of God, the first face-to-face encounter with the Living Lord; he will also live his life in the prophetic realm, in the flow of God's Spirit. Right after talking about his persecutions and hardships, the Apostle Paul remembers and reminds his readers of his visions and revelations received of the Lord:

1 It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord:

2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago - whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows - such a one was caught up to the third heaven.

3 And I know such a man - whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows -

4 how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

5 Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities (2.Co.12:1-5)

After fourteen years, still Paul is not sure whether his visit to Paradise had been in the body or totally in the spiritual realm. After fourteen years, he clearly remembers the inexpressible words he was not allowed to utter. And most importantly: A true apostle will never boast of anything God does in him or through him. He will never take any credit, knowing that any human being is as dust and as the grass that withers easily (Ps.103:13-16).

Apostolic Prophetic

It is a very noble and astonishing combination, the buffalo-like strength and determination of an apostle, and at the same time the meekness and humility of boasting only in his weakness. More than any other ministry gift, a true apostle knows that the excellence of the power is of God and not of himself (2.Co.4:7).

Apostolic people also see prophetically into the future. This prophetic foresight applies to the nation, to the Body of Christ and also to individuals.

In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul has to address a severe case of sexual immorality, and more importantly, the wrong attitude of the believers. Was it by his apostolic discernment that he could so clearly know that they were puffed up instead of mourning and praying for God's dealing with such blatant sin?

See how this mighty apostle operated in the spiritual realm, in the prophetic authority:

3 For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed.

4 In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ

5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us (1.Co.5:3-7)

In truly apostolic manner, the Apostle Paul takes authority in the

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spirit, judges and decrees the judgment with the purpose of eternal salvation for the sinning soul. At the same time, he rebukes the carnality and lack of spiritual understanding of the church, stressing the seriousness and contagious nature of sin. Finally, he instructs them to purge out any old leaven, any sinful thoughts and attitudes.

Gloriously, a true apostle will not just condemn, command and demand. A true apostle always points toward the finished work of Christ on the Cross, thus encouraging and enabling the believers to walk in the victory Christ already bought for them!

How could the Apostle Paul so clearly discern their different struggles? Prophetic discernment is a strong endowment that comes with an apostolic calling and ministry.

APOSTOLIC POSITION



The apostolic position is truly marvelous. The household of God, the Church, is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. As foundation stones, apostles are very close to the chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ. The building growing on such foundation becomes a dwelling place of God in the Spirit:

19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit (Eph.2:19-22)

Apostles and prophets, working together and carrying the Church together, facilitate God's Presence among men. I have seen this collaboration often. With their Kingdom-push forward, apostles are in danger of exhausting themselves, their families and even their entire ministries. The battles of taking territory back from satan, winning new souls for Jesus while strengthening the existing believers can take their toll even on the strongest.

I have seen apostolic ministries working extremely hard, fasting and praying and laboring faithfully. I have admired the strength and zeal that kept them going in midst of relentless attacks, one after the

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other, without any break to even take a breath. I have marveled at the love and dedication to Jesus that kept the believers in unity of heart, mind and spirit, striving together for the faith of the Gospel. But yes, I have seen them exhausted, battle-weary.

What surprise it was for me when at some visits, all members were bubbling with joy and enthusiasm, their eyes shining with the life of God. All weariness was gone. New energy propelled them into new, victorious battles. What had happened? Each time, the answer was the same: "A prophet visited our ministry. We had very powerful meetings! We are soooooo refreshed!"

This was an apostolic ministry that never closed their doors. Seven days a week, meetings were going on. At least counselors would be there, praying, available to minister to any tortured soul. There was enough word, worship, outreach, prayer and prophecy at any given time.

And yet, the prophet effortlessly added a dimension of glory and victory which the apostle alone with all his anointing could not maintain. How wonderful when we work together as a real Body, availing one another's ministries and anointings!

28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues (1.Co.12:28)

Apostles do have a special position and revelation of the victory of Jesus. Their revelation of the reality of the spiritual world and our ascended position in the heavenlies in Christ secures victory to anyone who heeds them. Vital insights into the spiritual world were given to the Apostle Paul to reveal them to the Church. Study the Book of Ephesians, especially the following Scriptures: Ephesians 1:21; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12 and also Philippians 3:20.

True apostles not only know about a believer's true position in the heavenlies, far above any demonic interference. They not only enjoy

Apostolic Position

this heavenly position and authority for themselves; they also do their best to impart this revelation to their hearers. That is the reason why you see so many successful people growing up under a true apostle, both in the spiritual and also in the natural realm.

Like the Apostle Paul, a true apostle can boldly claim that he has been

19 serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

20 how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house

26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men.

27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God (Ac.20:19-20, 26-27)

Keeping back nothing helpful but sharing God's full counsel with all believers is a mark of a true apostle. That nobility may be one of the reasons why God Himself saw His apostles as so special, so important, so fundamental, that even in the New Jerusalem, the twelve foundations of the wall carry the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, don't you think?

14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb (Rev.21:14)

APOSTOLIC PASSION



Apostolic people burn with God's very own passion: None should perish!!! Apostolic people hear God's heart cry like Moses did, and apostolic people take action to soothe God's pain. Apostolic people understand God's deep desire to bring everyone to the knowledge of the truth. Apostolic people would never entertain accusations against God but rather defend His goodness:

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance
(2.Pe.3:9)

Often people argue, "How could a loving God allow wars, accidents, child abuse or other horrors?" To some, this is a genuine question that can keep them back from receiving salvation. Others, however, use this argument as an excuse for not wanting to commit their lives to God.

The reply Jesus showed me to this question was, "God never wanted us to even know evil, that's why He told Adam not to eat from that tree in the Garden of Eden. After disaster happened and humanity was estranged from God, He commanded His disciples to share His love and peace, but did they obey? Did we obey God's great commission?" (Ge.2:17; Mt.28:18-20; Mk.16:15-20). Did we? Did YOU?

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has

committed to us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God (2.Co.5:18-20)

Many quote Paul's words as an exciting privilege: "Wow, we are ambassadors! What a privilege! What a position!" But see a true apostle's heart cry, pleading and imploring, knowing he was nothing but a channel for God's heart, God's love, God's compassion and God's offer of eternal salvation to flow through him!

O yes, a true apostle doesn't count his own life dear to himself! All that counts for an apostle is to finish his race with joy, and the ministry received from the Lord Jesus (Ac.20:24).

7 For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

8 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's (Ro.14:7-8)

This is true apostolic passion, a passion every true apostle burns to impart to his followers.

APOSTOLIC PROPULSION



Someone said, “Apostles seem to have wheels instead of feet!”, referring to the incessant push toward new horizons apostles feel. Just as their apostolic prototype, the Lord Jesus, true apostles have signs, wonders, miracles, healings and deliverances wherever they go:

40 When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

41 And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, “You are the Christ, the Son of God!” And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.

42 Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them;

43 but He said to them, “I must preach the Kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.”

44 And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee (Lk.4:40-44)

Like their apostolic prototype Jesus, true apostles know when to move on. True apostles are not carried away by the enormous need nor by the praises or petitions of people. True apostles always keep their priorities right. Even after the most spectacular miracle meetings, true apostles don't lose their focus. Like King David of old, they can say,

8 I have set the LORD always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved (Ps.16:8)

True apostles run to pray and seek His face. That is how they keep their calling and commission perfect, without stumbling, without scams, without scandals! True apostles know they **must** preach the Gospel, and not just any Gospel; they **must preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.**

True apostles have no problem in leaving a well-established place with all its recognition and privileges. Just like their apostolic prototype, the Lord Jesus, they are willing to go to new places, open up new areas, and preach where none had proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom of God yet.

There is, however, a marked difference between our Lord Jesus, the Great Apostle and High Priest of our confession, and today's apostles (Heb.3:1). Today's apostles have a privilege that was not yet possible before the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus. It was not possible before that glorious day of Pentecost, which is when the Church was born through the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit (Ac.2).

Today's apostles have the privilege of planting churches, living cells of the global Body of Christ, wherever they go! True apostles have the discernment and fatherhood to find and fix leaders in each church. They ordain elders, and just like our wonderful Apostle Paul, they keep guarding, guiding and fathering those fledgling apostles growing up under them.

Through such true sons in the faith, through such disciples and fledgling apostles, the apostolic propulsion is being satisfied:

4 To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every

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city as I commanded you (Tit.1:4-5)

The Gospel of the Kingdom had been preached by Paul with signs following. Now the new souls had to be established in the faith. Elders had to be appointed, and that in every city. Titus, the fledgling apostle, could not simply appoint whomever he thought fit. He had to appoint as his senior apostle Paul had commanded him!

This obedience, this submission is key to the apostolic ministry. Somehow, by his fatherly love, a true apostle wins the heart and the trust of his spiritual children. He has the God-given ability and authority to lead his followers to dedicate themselves very deeply, fully, without reserves, first to the Lord, and then to the apostolic leader:

5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

6 So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well (2.Co.8:5-6)

See how apostolic propulsion pushed Paul from place to place. See how he took and placed people. See how he invoked God's willingness in his tremendous push.

18 So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila were with him. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow.

19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

20 When they asked him to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent,

21 but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus (Ac.18:18-

21)

Do you think traveling was easy in these times? Yet we never see any apostle demand any special treatment, any first class ticket, any seven star hotel... Paul, God's true apostle, followed the propulsion of his apostolic spirit with all the dangers and inconveniences of his day (2.Co.11:23-28).

22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,

23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.

24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the Gospel of the grace of God (Ac.20:22-24)

True apostles don't count their lives dear to themselves. True apostles go, bound in the spirit, propelled by their calling. True apostles are willing to lay down their lives like their Master did (1.Jn.3:16). True apostles have only one goal: Fulfilling His calling.

APOSTOLIC PERSPECTIVE



Apostolic people have a different perspective than most other believers, even most ministry gifts. Their perspective tends to be a more spiritual one, a more heavenly one, maybe because of the clear God-encounter that usually launches an apostolic ministry.

Satan, who loves to scheme in darkness and hates being exposed, launches every possible kind of attack against apostles and their ministries.

Remember the tremendous uproar the Apostle Paul caused in Ephesus? Acts 19 starts very politely with Paul finding just twelve disciples and introducing them to the Holy Spirit. Public preaching and discussions followed for three months, until some got hardened and Paul withdrew with the disciples for a training school.

In these two years, diverse power encounters occurred, and all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks (Ac.19:10).

When Paul felt that his ministry in Ephesus was accomplished, he purposed in the Spirit to go Jerusalem through Macedonia. Then literally all hell broke loose! Greed disguised as religious fervor, instigated by only one businessman who feared for his income, caused the entire city to riot!

What was this apostle's desire? He wanted to jump right into the uproar! Can you imagine that some friendly officers sent word to Paul, pleading that he would not venture into the theater (Ac.19:31)?

This is the spirit of an apostle, always ready to confront the devil

wherever he tries to cause chaos and havoc. What was Paul's view of the situation?

32 If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!" (1.Co.15:32)

He didn't see the uproar as human. He saw beasts, spiritual beings, as he teaches the Church in his Epistle to the Ephesians:

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand (Eph.6:12-13)

Oh yes, the apostolic perspective is quite different than that of passive, comfortable mainstream Christianity...

APOSTOLIC PRAYER



Apostolic people also have a special way of praying. Yes, apostles do attend “the hour of prayer” at the temple, or at least they attempt to do so. Since apostles are living, walking prayers, however, they might just be interrupted by God Himself. They might just miss the prayer meeting because they have some heavenly business to attend to on the way:

1 Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple;

3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms.

4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, “Look at us.”

5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

6 Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them - walking, leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God (Ac.3:1-9)

How could Peter be so sensitive to know that today was the day of salvation for this man? He would have been begging in the same place for years; probably even our Master Apostle Jesus would have seen him but not healed him. Why? Probably because God wanted to keep that joy, that excitement, that advertisement for His fledgling apostles!

How could Peter and John know what God wanted to do through them? Well, Peter had learned to watch and pray with the Savior. The Apostle Paul, who thanks his God that he speaks in tongues “more than they all”, exhorts the Thessalonians to “pray without ceasing” (1.Co.14:18; 1.Thes.5:17),

The miracle was done. Persecution arose. What is the response of apostolic people? Of course: prayer! And see what kind of prayer! There was nothing of self-pity, nothing of “please protect me”. They prayed a truly apostolic prayer:

29 “Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your Word,

30 by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus”

31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness (Ac.4:29-31)

So... did the apostles plan to bow to persecution? No way. They asked for miracles, they got them sanctioned, and they went out to DO them! That’s true apostolic prayer.

APOSTOLIC POWER



Of course, such apostolic prayer cannot fail to release apostolic power. One thing satan doesn't seem to take into account is the fact that persecution produces prayer, and prayer produces power.

Church history and the status of Christianity in different nations consistently prove that powerful believers are produced in persecution, not in the complacency of peace and freedom of assembly. Even though churches may have to go underground, they never fail to be full of fire and passion in midst of all oppression.

It is almost comical and can make you feel even a kind of pity for the devil. Whatever he tries to do, Jesus wins! If he allows churches to freely function, God's Word is freely spread abroad and will find fruitful soil in troubled hearts, even if society as a whole doesn't show much interest in God or Christianity.

If he brings persecution, the pressure produces passion in the hearts of those who received the Gospel. Even though God's Word may be less freely available, God's people tend to walk in much closer fellowship with God's Spirit. Such Spirit-life leads them to share God's Word and God's power with those who eagerly desire it, and each evangelistic effort bears fruit for eternity, since it is totally Spirit-led.

Another benefit of persecution is that the church is purified, since only true believers are willing to forego worldly benefits for the sake of heavenly bliss. We see this purified love and unity in midst of persecution right here in the Early Church, immediately after apostolic prayer:

32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the

things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.

33 And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all (Ac.4:32-33)

Surely, pastors and spiritual leaders will agree that such degree of love and unity which leads people to give up even any personal possessions is a mighty miracle, only possible by God's power and God's grace. Such grace, such peace inside the church and among the believers is paramount for apostles to freely teach, preach and perform miracles.

Apostolic people have special power in their words. How else could three thousand people have believed and been baptized at Apostle Peter's very first public sermon? Persecution made him a shivering reed, but the power of the Holy Spirit made him a roaring lion.

Apostolic people take dangerous challenges not by their own ideas, but by the guidance of visions, God's voice and the Spirit's voice. As they step out in faith, they see unusual power released through their mere words:

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the Word.

45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered,

47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of

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the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days (Ac.10:44-48)

Apostolic people have as one of their power manifestations the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those who patiently hear their preaching.

Apostolic people recognize new tongues as the gift of the Holy Spirit and God's approval even for water baptism! Apostolic people have a confirmation of their anointing by the mighty miracles that happen to people even during their sermons, without any prayer.

Apostolic people normally lay hands on people to receive the Holy Spirit, but they know that the power of apostolic preaching can impart the Holy Spirit even through the preaching of God's Word (Ac.10:44).

17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit (Ac.8:17)

6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied (Ac.19:6)

Apostolic people have unusual miracles, signs, wonders and mighty deeds in their lives. How beautiful it is when the fire of God burns in believers through the teaching and preaching of God's Word, as through Apostle Jesus (Lk.24:32)!

How glorious when entire continents hear and see God's Word, preached with the manifestation of the Spirit and of power (1.Co.2:4)! How wonderful when apostles like Paul who invest their entire life in winning souls and strengthening them in the faith are attested by God Himself with unusual miracles!

11 Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul,

12 so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil

spirits went out of them (Ac.19:11-12)

Are you aware of how much God yearns for His people to be so busy, so diligent, so involved in the ministry of His Word that He can use them as powerfully as He used His Apostle Paul?

Never forget that you are an ambassador from heaven to this earth, a sent one, an ‘apostolos’, even if you don’t stand in the office of an apostle.

According to your faith it shall be done to you, and the more you apply yourself to God and His Word, the more powerfully He can manifest Himself through you!

So yes, persecution brings prayer, and prayer brings power, even the unusual miracle-power of true apostles, the sent-ones from heaven!

APOSTOLIC POWER SECRET



The secret to apostolic power is the proximity to the Corner Stone, Jesus (Eph.2:20). As the very position as foundation shows, a true apostle draws his power directly from the Source of all creation, the Living God.

The miraculous healing of the man lame from his mother's womb created tremendous uproar in Jerusalem. This was the first recorded healing after the Pentecost outpouring of God's Holy Spirit and Apostle Peter's powerful repentance message.

When all marveled at the apostles' miracle power, Peter immediately pointed away from himself and to the true Source of all power:

16 And His Name, through faith in His Name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all (Ac.3:16)

Apostolic people make no secret of the Source of their power, nor do they accept any praises for themselves. Apostolic people don't fear being dragged before earthly authorities. They know they are sent by a higher power, the heavenly authority. Apostolic people boldly use each and every opportunity to rebuke wrong and to testify of the Risen Savior:

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?"

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:

9 If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well,

10 let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

11 This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’

12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Ac.4:12)

Such bold words and such eloquence must have come as a shock to the rulers of Jerusalem. They could find only one explanation to such miracle transformation:

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus (Ac.4:13)

Not only miracle power, also life power, labor power, power to endure, power to push on comes by the apostolic nearness and thereby deep trust in the Living God:

10 For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe (1.Ti.4:10)

The secret of apostolic power is complete death to all ego, all self-reliance. The secret of apostolic power is found in Paul’s epistles again and again:

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly

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than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me (1.Co.15:10)

A true apostle knows that in his flesh nothing good dwells (Ro.7:18). A true apostle knows that any emphasis, any reliance on the flesh, leads only to temptation, sin and ultimately death (Ro.6). A true apostle lives by miracles, does miracles, and is himself a miracle:

20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me (Ga.2:20)

APOSTOLIC PEACE



Apostolic people live in supernatural peace in midst of even the most challenging circumstances. Just like his role model, the apostolic prototype Jesus, they sleep peacefully in the greatest storm.

Just like their Master, apostolic people get angry at fear and rebuke the fear and unbelief of their followers:

37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.

38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”

39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

40 But He said to them, “Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?” (Mk.4:37-40)

What is the reason that apostolic people can be so calm and cool in such adversities? Again, it is their closeness to the Prince of Life, the Source of all creation. Apostolic people know that their life is hidden with Christ in God (Col.3:3).

Apostolic people know that they, like all believers, are God’s special treasure, the apple of God’s eye. Apostolic people know that their God is the possessor of heaven and earth and completely entrust themselves to His protection (Ex.19:5; Deut.7:6; 14:2; 32:10; Zec.2:8).

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This apostolic revelation and understanding makes apostolic people invincible. Nothing can shake them; nothing can cause them sleepless nights.

Even in jail, chained between soldiers and awaiting their execution the next morning, apostolic people trust and sleep. They know their life is in God's hands, the safest hands in the universe. They know both their life and their death will glorify their God (Phil. 1:20-26). What was the outcome of Peter's apostolic peace and trust in his God?

5 Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.

6 And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison.

7 Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands.

8 Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me."

9 So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.

10 When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and

Apostolic Peace

has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people” Ac.12:5-11)

Apostolic people live the peace that passes understanding because they live the instructions the Apostle Paul could write from jail:

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things.

9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you (Phil.4:4-9)

What a challenge, straight from the deepest pit in the dirtiest jail! The supernatural peace apostolic people exhibit is an example for all to follow.

APOSTOLIC PERSECUTION



Now, how did these apostles end up in jail? What crime had they committed? Their “crime” was none other than casting a disturbing demon out of a slave girl.

Unfortunately, the owners of that slave girl used her supernatural abilities to make lots of money, promoting her as an oracle, a prophetess, a fortuneteller. And of course, they didn’t like their income to be disturbed.

Do you think this is an oddity, some rare old story? You would be shocked if you searched a little bit deeper into the secrets of celebrities, into the lifestyle and worship of musicians, Hollywood stars, actors and even politicians. Many of them are “owned”, many of them have to function to make money for their masters; many of them are truly slaves, even sex slaves, often treated very cruelly by their agents.

Think about the many actresses who fall into anorexia and bulimia, destroying their bodies just to keep the shape demanded by their role in some cinema production! O yes, they are owned, they are slaves, and o yes, their masters make lots of money through the demons inhabiting them!

Just like that slave girl in Philippi, such demonized “trophies” prophesy to individuals or to multitudes what they hear from the spirits possessing them. Just like in Philippi, owners in the background make money with the misery of the celebrity. Just like in Philippi, destinies are shaped by the words, songs and actions of such possessed individuals!

Oh, how much does this world need true apostles like Paul who

Apostolic Persecution

discern and fearlessly deliver the captives by God's Spirit! Of course, apostolic people know that slave masters will not like their possession to be freed. Apostolic people know that such power encounters will bring forth persecution, but their compassion compels them to deliver the captives and expect the Great Deliverer to deliver them from the backlash of the enemy.

Apostolic people don't underestimate the power and influence of greedy slave-owners. They understand the mind magic such agents can exert over masses, almost hypnotizing them into doing their bidding:

22 Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods (Ac.16:22)

The demon was gone from the slave girl, but now the higher powers in the slave owners manifested and manipulated the masses. This severe persecution was getting out of hand, and it really ended up by throwing God's messengers into prison.

How can apostolic people like Paul go so peacefully through such turmoil? How can they press on, even though they may know by God's Spirit that chains and tribulations await them (Ac.20:23)? I believe apostolic people receive this strength from their love to their Savior. I believe they understand that even in the murder and persecution of some of God's prophets and apostles, God's wisdom is revealed:

49 Therefore the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute' (Lk.11:49)

Apostolic people know the Cornerstone. They know the Father. They know the Spirit. They know nothing escapes the wisdom of the Creator of the universe. They know they can safely entrust their souls to their loving Lord. They know they can peacefully sleep in a boat on stormy waters or in a jail full of hungry rats.

They know, persecution is part of the package of apostolic power.

APOSTOLIC PRISONS



After accomplishing a powerful deliverance from a demon of great influence, Paul and Silas were apprehended, cruelly beaten in great wrath, and locked up in the most inaccessible part of a cruel prison.

23 And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely.

24 Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks (Ac.16:23-24)

Just as prophet Elijah experienced, after a great victory, there can be a great attack. After challenging Jezebel and slaying the prophets of Baal and Ashera, the prophet Elijah must have been exhausted, both spiritually and physically.

At that weak moment, a small threat from Jezebel made him despair of life and run deep into the wilderness to die. Praise God, God sent His angel, not only once but even twice, to strengthen His weary warrior (1.Ki.19).

Note, however, that the food and drink the angel provided was not only to recover him; it had the purpose of sending Elijah to a renewed encounter with his God!

Sadly, apostolic prisons may not be only physical prisons, but also spiritual prisons. After great victories, when the body is tired, cell phone, TV or internet can pose a great threat to purity and holiness.

A hefty meal after a powerful service can pose a threat to health

and peaceful sleep, especially when accompanied by some alcohol “for better digestion”.

Many attacks and temptations await a weary warrior after a wonderful victory. I have heard of naked prostitutes waiting for the man of God in his hotel room, sometimes even with a cameraman present to document the scene and prepare the perfect blackmail.

Physical tiredness lowers spiritual watchfulness, and even in normal conversations, words can fall that create great problems in the future. One such pitfall is criticism of other servants of God, touching the Lord’s anointed (Ps.105:15; Pr.18:21).

As we can see with Paul and Silas, satan gives specific instructions to secure deliverance ministers in the darkest inner prison, their feet fastened in stocks to hinder them from running for Jesus. Many apostles are caught up in all kinds of spiritual prisons, but the One who called them is faithful and will definitely deliver them speedily!

Sleeping deeply in jail just before his scheduled execution, the Apostle Peter thought he saw a vision when God’s angel came to deliver him (Ac.12:4-11). Praying and singing hymns to God, the apostles Paul and Silas attracted another angelic manifestation in form of an earthquake (Ac.16:25-26).

Apostolic people know: Any prisons they may face will result not only in their rescue, but in mass deliverance, salvation, rejoicing and great progress of faith in all who hear and pray about their captivity.

APOSTOLIC PRAISE



Apostolic people never lose heart, even in the darkest dungeon. Apostolic people turn the night into day by their heartfelt prayer and worship. Apostolic people don't hide their faith. Apostolic people don't fall into satan's trap of keeping quiet until the deliverance has come.

Apostolic people loudly proclaim the praises of their God, no matter what may be their present situation. Apostolic people are never ashamed of the Gospel or of the One who called them. Apostolic people aim at the salvation of those around them, even when they are just as bound and paralyzed as the ones around them.

Imagine the pain and frustration of Paul and Silas. Cruelly beaten for doing God's work and God's will, heavily chained for delivering a suffering soul, uncertain if they would ever see the light of day again.

Think about it! How many human skeletons have been found stacked up in ancient prison places! There was no certainty of ever being released out of that deep dark dungeon, except their trust in the Living God. Did they doubt? Did they beg? Did they despair? See for yourself:

25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed (Ac.16:25-26)

Apostolic people firmly believe in the truthfulness of the Apostle

Apostolic Praise

Paul's words to the Roman church:

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose (Ro.8:28)

Apostolic people know that whatever happens to them must work together for their good as well as for the furtherance of the Gospel:

12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the Gospel,

13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;

14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the Word without fear (Phil.1:12-14)

Apostolic people never cover up their struggles, afflictions and persecutions. Apostolic people don't hide in fear and shame when they get attacked for their bold witness concerning their heavenly assignment.

Apostolic people make the high praises of the highest God resound even in the deepest dungeon of despair. Why? Well, because apostolic people carry the heart and burden of Him who called them, the burden for the salvation of nations! And since nations are made up of people, apostolic people care for each and every being on the planet, be it free or slave, praised or prisoner.

Apostolic praise proclaims the praises of Him who rose from the rocky grave, the One who broke every bondage, even the chains of death! Apostolic praise is not the praise after the victory. Apostolic praise is the praise before the victory. Apostolic praise doesn't wait for the victory to manifest.

Apostolic praise is the praise that produces the victory!

APOSTOLIC PREACHING



All apostolic ministries I had the privilege of knowing intimately have one thing in common: Before preaching, praise! Many times, after the worship team had finished, the apostle himself would worship with his keyboard and take the congregation deeper into chain-breaking, mind-freeing worship.

Once all concentration is set on Jesus and His power, salvation is automatic, as happened to the Philippian jailor:

27 And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself.

28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, “Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.”

29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.

30 And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

31 So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

32 Then they spoke the Word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house (Ac.16:27-32)

Just now, this Gentile jailor wanted to commit suicide, thinking his prisoners had escaped, and fearing reprisal from his authorities. Seeing

everyone inside, he was totally shocked and easily convinced by the power of the Living God. At Paul's reaffirming words, he had only one option: Surrender to the love and power of God!

See the wisdom of apostolic preaching. First a very simple salvation message; then, as the jailor had gathered all his people, "they spoke the Word of the Lord", immediately followed by baptism of the entire household.

How different, however, was the Apostle Peter's first message to a deeply devout Jewish audience. They had come to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost without the slightest idea of the heavenly spectacle they would witness. To this audience, Peter had to give a long sermon, deeply expounding numerous Old Testament Scriptures (Ac.2:14-41).

Isn't it interesting how God distributes his callings? The simple fisherman Peter was called by God for the complicated, brainy, Old-Testament-loving and -believing Jews, while the highly educated, trained under the best rabbis and well versed in all the Scriptures Paul was sent to the Gentiles:

7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the Gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the Gospel for the circumcised was to Peter

8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles) (Ga.2:7-8)

I believe that here we see the key to apostolic preaching: "He who worked effectively in..."! Both apostles didn't speak their own, pre-planned, pinned down, beautifully arranged and decorated sermons. Both were caught by surprise, suddenly thrown into an opportunity to glorify the One they loved, the One who had bought them with His own Blood. Both were so full of God's love and presence that God's soul-saving words just bubbled from their hearts and tongues.

Isn't it interesting that both the highly educated Paul as well as

APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

the simple fisherman Peter were humble enough to forfeit their own words and wisdom, ideas and interpretations!? Isn't it interesting how both lived up to the occasion and used the opportunity without any hesitation? Isn't it wonderful how both had an instant, plentiful harvest of souls?

This simplicity, this willingness to fully trust their God for their next breath, for their next word, for their next move, is in my opinion one of the meanings of "foolish things", "weak things". Why else should a studied scholar like Paul say words like these:

27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,

29 that no flesh should glory in His presence God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty (1.Co.1:27-29).

Don't you think the Apostle Paul was wise and mighty in the flesh, in his human upbringing? What then does he mean by the foolish, weak and base things of the world? What are the wise, mighty things that are?

Well, the Apostle Paul speaks from experience, both from his own as well as from his fellow Jews. He knows very well the high pride and human opinion of the religious world.

Today, just as in Bible times, there are countless religions, traditions, superstitions, sciences, objects of worship and spiritual beings. Nowadays, even science, technology and knowledge are worshiped like religion.

Each worshipper, and especially each priest and propagator, is

Apostolic Preaching

highly convinced of his knowledge and mastery of his religion. Only a real encounter with the mighty power of the true God can convince them otherwise. That's why apostolic preaching is so desperately needed for our time.

Apostolic preaching is so powerful because it doesn't rely on human wisdom, training, studies or strength. Apostolic preaching relies merely on God and on His supernatural power and ability.

Apostolic preaching fully points all attention toward God and expects Him to display His power and glory.

Apostolic preaching turns the hearers from darkness to light, from demons to the Living God.

Apostolic preaching is potent, vibrant and vital.

APOSTOLIC PRACTICE



Apostolic people don't waste time. Being vindicated and cared for, Paul and Silas immediately went on with Kingdom business: They made sure the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus was followed by "baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt.28:19):

33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.

34 Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household (Ac.16:33-34)

Straight out of jail, apostolic people don't slow down. Trusting their miracle-working God, they boldly testify even to the hardest-looking torturer. Even before thinking about their physical needs, their wounds, their pain or their desire for food, they testify, teach, preach and even baptize an entire household!

Apostolic people never mix up their priorities. No matter which continent they were born on and what family background they come from, their lives show one common denominator: Kingdom first!!! Understanding this precious Word of God is paramount and the foundation not only for apostles, but for any successful, fulfilled Christian life:

33 But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you (Mt.6:33)

Do you remember our Great Apostle, our Lord Jesus, there at that

well in Samaria? He clearly stated that He “needed to go through Samaria”, indicating that He was sent on a mission by His Heavenly Father (Jn.4:4; 5:19).

About the sixth hour, wearied from His journey, Jesus sat by Jacob’s well while His disciples went into the city to buy food. The heavenly wisdom He applied in His discourse with the woman who came to fetch water is simply remarkable!

What she found in her short interaction with Him was so precious that she simply forgot what she had come for! She left her waterpot and went to the city. See what happened next:

31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”

32 But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.”

33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?”

34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.”

35 Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

36 And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together” (Jn.4:31-36)

See the apostolic practice, the apostolic determination! Jesus knew His task had not been completed. He knew the time to relax, the time to cater to His own very legitimate needs had not yet come. He knew He couldn’t disturb His prophetic and apostolic focus by filling His belly yet. He knew there was a greater harvest waiting for Him!

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Not only that - He immediately used the opportunity to teach and train His team of disciples that was traveling with Him. What did He teach them?

He taught them the true riches, the real need, the pressing demand which God's heart desire for a great harvest of souls puts on a true apostle. He made very clear that the harvest is ripe, even over-ripe to the point of falling on the ground and perishing, while God's people think there is still much time, the harvest has not even begun.

Jesus, our Great Apostle, clearly points their eyes, hearts and minds toward eternity, gathering fruit for eternity, and the great joy and rejoicing such sowers and harvesters experience together. He even promises wages, not in heaven but here on earth, as they go and reap. Could He be any clearer as to the purpose of our lives on this earth?!? Remember:

36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

1 And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease (Mt.9:36-38, 10:1)

Do you really want an exciting, fulfilled, powerful life? Well, here you got the instructions how to find it. And yet, how many believers live a defeated, frustrated and frustrating life, showing a pathetic picture of Christ and Christianity, simply because they don't apply this one apostolic principle: Kingdom first!

How many miracles, how many miraculous harvests, how many

miraculous provisions are never experienced by such believers, simply because they don't apply this apostolic practice of Kingdom first!

Think about it! If Peter had not lent his boat to Jesus, even though he was very tired after a futile night of toil, he would never have experienced who this rabbi, this traveling teacher, really was.

He would have missed his opportunity for a revelation of Christ, his opportunity for a true repentance, his opportunity for showing obedience to God's Word, his opportunity for a miracle catch, and even his opportunity for receiving his own apostolic calling (Lk.5:1-11)!!!

Oh yes, apostolic people don't waste time. They are "on-the-job" people, dedicated to their task, not willing to be distracted until they have fulfilled it. If you need an earthly example, just observe some businessmen in their endeavor to earn money.

How much more should God's apostles, God's ambassadors, be like our Lord Jesus who at the tender age of twelve rebuked and reminded His earthly parents:

49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Lk.2:49)

Apostolic practice is exactly this: Being about God's business, busy in God's Kingdom work, putting God's Kingdom first, grateful and excited to be counted worthy of His Name, His salvation, His ministry, His Kingdom (Lk.21:36; Ac.5:41; 2.Thes.1:5)!

APOSTOLIC PROMOTION



Apostolic people understand and experience in daily life the reality of the Apostle Paul's wise words to the believers in Rome:

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Ro.8:28)

That is why, after being so viciously beaten and thrown into the deepest dungeon, Paul and Silas were not willing to just silently run away when the authorities released them. They knew their God had done a mighty miracle of deliverance for them. They knew that as long as they would stand for Jesus, He would stand for them. They knew their God wanted them to leave as victors, not as victims. And they knew their God wanted His Name to be glorified and His testimony to be given even before these cruel magistrates.

Isn't it wonderful how all things, including Paul's Roman birth, were used for God's glory? How wisely Paul followed God's guidance to make sure not only the lowly jailor, but also the high-fi magistrates had to bow before God's power? Oh yes, whoever touches God's people touches the apple of God's eye (Zec.2:8)!

35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the officers, saying, "Let those men go."

36 So the keeper of the prison reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Now therefore depart, and go in peace."

37 But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us openly,

uncondemned Romans, and have thrown us into prison. And now do they put us out secretly? No indeed! Let them come themselves and get us out.”

38 And the officers told these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans.

39 Then they came and pleaded with them and brought them out, and asked them to depart from the city.

40 So they went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they encouraged them and departed (Ac.16:35-40)

Apostolic people understand that whatever happens to them, as negative as it might seem at that moment, always must work together for good because they know and love their God (Ro.8:28).

Apostolic people keep their spiritual eyes and ears wide open to discern God’s solution. How easy it is for us today since we have these precious words written for us by God’s Apostle Paul:

13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it (1.Co.10:13)

Remember, what you read in your Bible today had to be lived out and experienced by God’s servants throughout the centuries. Will you cave in? Will you whine, grumble and complain? Or will you remember that every test should become a testimony for God’s glory?

Apostolic people know that the path of the righteous shines brighter and brighter until the perfect day (Pr.4:18). They know their life grows from glory to glory, strength to strength and victory to victory. This is exactly what happened to God’s Apostle Peter at the very beginning of his ministry.

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Three thousand souls saved through his very first sermon! A man lame from birth healed! People thronging to hear him speak! And then, also some not so happily welcomed people started thronging:

1 Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,

2 being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

4 However, many of those who heard the Word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand (Ac.4:1-4)

God's apostolic ministry in the New Testament started with a boom, with a mighty wind and tongues of fire from heaven, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, with overwhelming praises of the goodness of God. It started with mass salvation, mass baptism and mighty miracles.

It started gloriously - so much that satan and his minions took notice and were greatly disturbed. What were they disturbed about? It was the resurrection message preached that stirred up their spirits and disturbed their quiet, safe positions.

Apostolic people will not be surprised. They use every opportunity to glorify their risen Savior. Jail is a rest for them while they rejoice in the thousands won by their testimony.

Apostolic promotion happened in the size of the crowds coming to hear and be saved. Apostolic promotion also happened in the level and status of people coming to question them:

5 And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes,

6 as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, “By what power or by what name have you done this?” (Ac.4:5-7)

Truly apostolic people won't cringe. Beginning his speech by boldly addressing his high ranking audience, God's Apostle Peter thunders his Bible-based testimony with the full power of God's Holy Ghost:

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders of Israel...” (Ac.4:8)

After giving clear witness to God's power and the Name of Jesus, apostolic people refuse to bow to intimidation, even in front of an entire council.

18 And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge.

20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Ac.4:18-20)

Apostolic people know that obeying God more than men always brings promotion, although this promotion may seem to first lead to public shame. Note that the rulers could not find anything to accuse them of, and that they even were afraid to lay hands on them because all the people were on their side (Ac.4:21-22)!

Oh yes, apostolic promotion is real, and it normally comes through apostolic commotion! Being the prince of the power of the air and the god of this world, satan has established his rulership well and secure.

APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

Only true apostolic power encounters can shake the age-old structures he erected and relies on. Apostolic people are not easily shaken. They put their trust in their risen Savior, seek His Face and His Hand in prayer, and go on boldly with the next level of apostolic authority:

33 And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all (Ac.5:33)

Do apostolic people shrink back at intimidation? No way. Apostolic people know that every attack is an opportunity to testify, a stone to step on, a bridge to higher levels of grace and glory.

Apostolic people thoroughly enjoy tribulations because each one is an open invitation for their God to show His overcoming power (Jn.16:33).

41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name (Ac.5:41)

APOSTOLIC PERSUASION



Why is a truly apostolic ministry so powerful, so life-changing? The reason can be found in the words of our greatest human example of a true apostle, Paul:

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God (1.Co.2:1-5)

Apostolic people know the Source of their teaching and preaching. Just like the Great Apostle Jesus, apostolic people know that they can of themselves do nothing. As they hear the Father say, they do and judge. Apostolic people never seek their own will but only the will and the glory of Him who sent them (Jn.5:30).

Apostolic people have no fear or shame to show their human frailty. They don't need to put up a big show and present themselves as 'God's man of power for the hour'. Such ministers easily fall into temptation and sin when they get too exhausted to keep up the façade.

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A true apostle is accessible, a father, a genuine person who has learned to step back and let God work in him and through him.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,

16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood...

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days (Ga.1:15-16,18)

Apostolic people understand that their separation and sanctification is from their mother's womb, and their calling was established before the foundation of the earth (Eph.1:4). They understand God's timings and attribute to Him what happens in their lives.

Apostolic people establish a very close relationship with their heavenly Father, and they go forth, compelled by God's heavenly love and burden. Since they throw themselves fully on God's grace, their guidance is very personal and clear.

1 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain (Ga.2:1-2)

Apostolic people do seek the confirmation of other apostles whenever God guides them so. Apostolic teamwork is rooted in mutual respect and can only be dissolved by carnal, emotional decisions (Ga.2:7-9).

Paul, the strong apostle, was not willing to take on a missionary journey a brother who had once failed and gone back, not able to bear

Apostolic Persuasion

the pressures of apostolic ministry (Ac.15:36-40). Barnabas, the “son of comfort”, however, took the young man and trained him into a strong, stable person whom Paul would later call “useful to me for ministry” (2.Ti.4:11).

Although they are loving and nurturing like real parents to new believers, apostolic people demand utter self denial from those working closely with them. Only after John Mark had been trained by another minister and proven his faithfulness there, Paul was willing to receive him back.

Ministry is not a play, not something to be taken lightly, to apostolic people. Their convictions and persuasions are so strong and clearly God-given that they can boldly say with God’s Apostle Paul:

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed (Ga.1:8)

APOSTOLIC POVERTY



There is much discrepancy in the Christian world about money, possessions, and prosperity in general.

Till date, there are denominations that insist in poverty, meaning the absence of all physical possessions. Some forbid the wearing of jewels which may pose another threshold to salvation in nations where jewelry is considered a life insurance for women.

Sadly, till today, love failures and broken relationships, not a true calling, are often the factor that pushes people into monasteries. Of course, much good social work is done by nuns and priests, and their dedicated community life based on the lifestyle of the Early Church should be deemed commendable (Ac.2:44; 4:32).

On the other hand, we see more and more apostolic ministries rising up with tremendous wealth, own airplanes, huge buildings, businesses etc.

Again sadly, many Christians attack and condemn the riches and luxurious lifestyle of such ministers. Is there a solution to this huge gap in preaching and practice? What should the stand of truly apostolic people be?

When Jesus, our Great Apostle, sent out His disciples, His apostles-in-training, He gave them clear instructions:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as you go, preach, saying, 'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

9 provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts,

10 nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food (Mt.10:6-10)

Isn't this interesting? The verb "provide", in Greek "ktaomai", means "to acquire, get, or procure a thing for one's self, to possess". When Jesus sends out His apostles, they don't need to provide anything for themselves. They don't even need to carry along what they may have already provided for themselves earlier! Wow!!!

In my opinion, every apostolic person has to go through this training, a training to totally trust their Heavenly Provider. I could fill volumes with my experiences of such a "sent" lifestyle. Actually, I still prefer to live by heavenly manna, having my needs and my wants fulfilled by the One who knows me better than I know myself, the One who speaks to and works through His hearing people.

Yes, the manna stopped when Israel entered the Promised Land, but also there, after they learned to trust Him in their wilderness journey, their God had already provided for them much better than they could have done for themselves (Dt.6:10-14; Neh.9:25)!

After the Last Supper, we see a very interesting development between Jesus and His budding apostles. After prophesying His betrayal and warning Peter about satan's sifting, Jesus makes sure they all remember and acknowledge His heavenly provision during their ministry trips:

35 And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?" So they said, "Nothing."

36 Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money

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bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

37 For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end."

38 So they said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough" (Lk.22:35-38)

While Jesus was with them, even as they went out two by two, they lacked nothing. Why then suddenly Jesus changes His instructions? Well, He is preparing them for the time of persecution, but notice: Even here, two swords were enough for all of them!

Actually, even the one sword was used wrongly and the cut-off ear of Malchus was healed by Jesus! Till the very end, Jesus wanted His disciples to live in His character, loving their enemies and fully trusting Him.

Coming from the nomadic life, traveling with Jesus as His disciple, the Apostle Peter had gone through the prophesied sifting, and he had come back and met the Risen Savior. Even after being taught by the resurrected Lord Jesus for forty days, Peter and the other apostles-in-the-making were still hiding in the upper room for fear of the Jews.

Everything changed, however, when God's Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost. Gloriously, the Church was born and met daily in the temple and in the houses. The church was growing organically, using for their meetings the buildings and structures that were already present. This was the situation in which Peter and John met and healed the man lame from birth:

6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Ac.3:9)

At the very beginning of the Early Church, the Apostle Peter could

Apostolic Poverty

boldly make such proclamation. How different today, as possessions abound but spiritual power is largely absent from great parts of Christendom.

I still remember with pain a mighty apostle from Africa, a man who had raised several dead and had a gift of planting churches wherever he went. Sadly, he got connections with Western believers and started getting invitations to minister in the West.

When I visited his ministry, I found huge, beautiful buildings in different places, but very few, weak-spirited believers. The apostle had labored abroad, faithfully brought back the money and built church buildings, but in the absence of his spiritual touch, the flock he had won was scattered by lack of his apostolic doctrine.

Sadly, there are many more cases like this, if not with the apostle himself, then with the next generation who wants to enjoy the material blessings without the very much needed godly character foundation.

So should apostolic people be poor, or should they be rich? See here God's great Apostle Paul again emphasizing poverty:

10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things (2.Co.6:10)

To me, our Great Apostle Jesus provides the answer through His Apostle Paul:

9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich (2.Co.8:9)

Apostolic poverty willingly gives up riches and honor for the sake of making others rich. This is how apostle Moses willingly gave up his position as son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward (Heb.11:24-29).

APOSTOLIC PROSPERITY



So again the question: Should apostolic people be rich or poor? I believe a truly apostolic ministry automatically draws riches, simply by the gratitude of those who received miracles, healings, salvation and guidance through God's vessel, His apostle.

We see this in King David, an Old-Testament picture of a true apostle who loves and follows his God and takes territory for His glory:

10 then Toi sent Joram his son to King David, to greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him (for Hadadezer had been at war with Toi); and Joram brought with him articles of silver, articles of gold, and articles of bronze.

11 King David also dedicated these to the LORD, along with the silver and gold that he had dedicated from all the nations which he had subdued (2.Sa.8:10-11)

Apostolic people automatically attract riches, plus they gain riches by spoiling God's enemies in spiritual warfare. The question is: Do they have the heart attitude of God and God's true servants? I have experienced God's heart test repeatedly, actually every time God increased my anointing or gave me another challenge or position.

Passing the test of laying down everything, dedicating everything to God, being willing at any time to give away what He just gave is paramount for a lasting ministry. See how serious our Great Apostle Jesus takes mammon, money, riches:

24 No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the

one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (Mt.6:24)

Note well: No one CAN, not no one WILL. Unless we are very careful, our heart, our loyalty will be slowly drawn away from trusting the Living God (Jer.17:5). That is why our Lord Jesus so strongly commended the widow who gave her entire livelihood, fully trusting her God for her survival (Mk.12:41-44).

Many who visited heaven and came back to testify saw with amazement such true, trusting believers closer to Jesus, in bigger mansions than world-renowned preachers. Oh yes, God does test our hearts, especially concerning covetousness (1.Thes.2:4-5)!

Apostolic people experience a unique phenomenon which places on them a very heavy burden of responsibility:

34 Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold,

35 and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

36 And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus,

37 having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet (Ac.4:34-37)

Apostolic people have a fatherly demeanor that makes people trust them. Apostolic people have God's heart burden to see people prosper. Apostolic people understand that only by following God's spiritual principles of giving and receiving, true prosperity can be achieved (Lk.6:38; Ac.20:35). Apostolic people therefore allow or even challenge people to give into God's Kingdom work. And like King David,

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apostolic people rejoice seeing God pouring out His love and joy on His cheerful givers (2.Co.9:7; 1.Chr.29).

I had a funny experience quite at the beginning of my Christian life. I had been struggling with my weight and with healthy eating habits for many years, and now as a new believer, I had found two deserts which could pass as almost healthy. I was sitting on our balcony, listening to my audio Bible and cutting apples for the cake, when this Scripture hit me like a brick:

27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him (Jn.6:27)

The message was crystal clear to me. Labor to feed your spirit! Jesus will feed you with revelation for everlasting life, both for you and for those who hear you. God was telling me that I didn't need to labor to produce anything. I had to labor to feed my spirit, and a well-fed spirit would provide everlasting life for me and for multitudes! Wow!

10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things (2.Co.6:10)

Oh yes, apostolic people understand what counts for life and eternity. Apostolic people understand that all attempts of gathering earthly riches will utterly fail unless the purpose is building God's Kingdom first (Mt.6:33; Hag.1:4-11).

Apostolic people rejoice in their calling, their mission, even in all the struggles involved (2.Co.11). Apostolic people refuse to be burdened down with earthly pressures, worries and sorrows which would only choke the life-giving Word of God in them (Mt.13:22).

Apostolic people aim at being free to run for His Kingdom, fully trusting His provision. Apostolic people are detached from earthly affairs, knowing that truly, all things are theirs:

21 Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours:

22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come - all are yours (1.Co.3:21-22)

Apostolic people understand this truth very deeply. Apostolic people know their authority and power to get wealth (Dt.8:18). Apostolic people can easily raise funds for the most ambitious building projects. However, apostolic people prefer to build God's living building, God's holy temple (Eph.2:19-22).

Apostolic people invest not only their earthly possessions, but their very lives, to build and edify this most precious Body of Christ, made out of living stones (1.Thes.2:8):

4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,

5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1.Pe.2:4-5)

In conclusion: Apostolic people can and should have riches and display apostolic prosperity. However, prosperity should never have apostolic people.

Their heart loyalty and deep love to the One who called them must always be expressed by dedicating everything they may obtain to Him, to His service, ready to be given at His smallest bidding.

APOSTOLIC PRINCIPLES



Apostolic people have learned the spiritual principles of giving and receiving, sharing God’s love and provisions among one another. Bound in a dirty prison, the Apostle Paul greatly rejoiced when he received the Philippians’ love gift to him. Like always, there is no notion of reproach, he even excuses their delay in saying, you lacked opportunity (Phil.3:10)!

11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil.4:11-13)

How often we claim and proclaim this Scripture, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”... Apostolic people, however, really live it! Apostolic people have gone with their God through situations of utter lack as well as utter abundance. They have learned to be content in any circumstance, and to trust in the strength God provides. To me, this is one of the main secrets of apostolic power.

17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.

18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Phil.4:17-19)

Apostolic people reveal in every situation their selfless heart attitude. They seek “fruit that abounds to YOUR account”, and they understand and teach their believers how pleasing this sweet aroma and acceptable sacrifice is to God! Apostolic people immediately and wholeheartedly bless and prophecy God’s blessings over those who bless them.

I can testify to this blessing. Receiving a gift, especially from poor people, is very difficult for me humanly. But praise God, through His Word I learned that Jesus taught His disciples that ***“it is more blessed to give than to receive”*** (Ac.20:35). So whenever someone gives me a gift, I do what apostolic people like Paul do: I proclaim God’s blessing and provision over them! The testimonies of blessings God poured out on such loving givers often bring tears to our eyes.

17 Did I take advantage of you by any of those whom I sent to you?

18 I urged Titus, and sent our brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps? (2.Co.12:17-18)

Apostolic people have as their life principle never to take advantage of anyone, and they impart this principle to their followers. Apostolic people have no apprehensions to ask the churches whether those sent by them walk in the same integrity as they do. Like OT-apostle Abraham, apostolic people know they are blessed to be a blessing, and in them all the nations and families of the earth shall be blessed (Ge.12:2-3).

Apostolic people don’t need to seek blessings for themselves. They have always all sufficiency in all things, plus they have an abundance for every good work (2.Co.9:8). In short: Apostolic people are givers, not receivers by principle.

APOSTOLIC PRESENCE



The presence of apostolic people brings a change in the spiritual atmosphere. Evangelist Philip brought salvation and great joy to the city of Samaria by the miracles, healings and deliverances he did. Many were saved and baptized, including the sorcerer Simon, who had dominated the entire city with his demonic powers for years (Ac.8:5-13).

However, this mighty revival was not all that God wanted to do in Samaria. He therefore impressed on the hearts of the apostles in Jerusalem the need to send the apostles Peter and John to complete the work of the Holy Spirit.

These apostles immediately saw the need of a greater fullness of the Holy Spirit for these new disciples. They laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost (Ac.8:14-17). Isn't it interesting that after all the signs, wonders, healings and deliverances Simon witnessed with great excitement, now only his true heart attitude, his greed and his money-mindedness came to the surface as he offered money for God's anointing?

It took truly apostolic people to expose, convict and rebuke this converted sorcerer and to pinpoint his wrong heart attitude! The strong words, so typical for apostolic people, brought Simon to repentance as he was warned of the danger of hellfire because of his intended misuse of God's power for personal gain (Ac.8:17-24).

Apostolic people know how to use God's Word as a hammer, a fire, a two-edged sword (Jer.23:29; Eph.6:17; Heb.4:12). There is no wishy-washy, no fake love, no hypocrisy. The presence of apostolic people brings such divine power that it automatically divides the spirits. Darkness cannot hide in the light of this mighty, stalwart apostolic spirit.

Hearing of sexual immorality in the Corinthian church, the Apostle Paul calls the believers to repentance and a clear, uncompromising stand against sin.

Apostolic people always challenge believers to expose sin, to avoid fellowship with people who call themselves Christians but keep sinning (1.Co.5:9-12; Eph.5:11).

Apostolic people know that if we judge ourselves, we will not be judged with the world (1.Co.11:31-32). Apostolic people raise believers into maturity by giving them options, thus making clear that none other than they themselves are responsible for the way both God and God's servants treat them:

21 What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness? (1.Co.4:21)

Of course, apostolic people imitate the Great Apostle, sent from heaven, our Lord Jesus Christ. See how the prophet Isaiah announced Him centuries ago:

1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

3 His delight is in the fear of the LORD, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears;

4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.

5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness

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the belt of His waist (Isa. 11:1-5)

Apostolic people carry on their heart God's burden for righteousness, equity, truth and the fear of God. Apostolic people know and seek the constant supply of the Spirit of God for everything they do. Apostolic people delight in the fear of the Lord, and they fully rely on God's report, not on their own five senses or on people's testimony.

That is why and how apostolic people transform the places they touch. I have experienced this blessing a few times in my life. The spiritual atmosphere is bright, free, sparkling and shining after meetings of such truly dedicated servants of God. It is as though demonic principalities and powers had been dislocated and freedom offered to those who desire to be free. It is like a piece of heaven, a sample to create hunger in those sensitive enough to discern the difference.

It is like God's will being done on earth as it is in heaven, at least for some time while the apostle remains in the place, and a little longer also. It is a tremendous privilege and opportunity to witness such "open heavens".

It is also a great challenge to see that the dedicated prayer, preaching and Presence-life of a human carrying God can make such a difference, casting away demons and opening the spiritual realm for easier salvation of multitudes.

And it is a monumental responsibility to keep this atmosphere even after the apostle goes on to his next heavenly assignment.

APOSTOLIC PROPHECY



Apostolic people operate in prophecy, and apostolic people enjoy God's precious gift of direct spirit communication with Him, called 'new tongues' (Ac.2:1-4; 1.Co.14).

Very often, tongues open the door for prophetic utterances. Whenever I pray for people, I first pray in tongues and then in the language required for the person. Countless times I heard people saying in deep surprise words like, "wow, you just took an x-ray of my life!"

Only through my dear husband's teachings I understood that I was actually operating in the gifts of tongues and interpretation which often resulted in healings also.

Apostolic people operate in all the gifts, according to the need of the receivers. Actually, the apostolic office encompasses all the other offices among the five-fold ministry gifts.

Apostles can operate as miracle evangelists to win souls and establish new churches. Apostles can operate as prophets, prophesying over people, nations as well as over the Body of Christ under Holy Ghost inspiration. Apostles can operate as pastors until they can establish elders and move on to their next task. Apostles can operate as teachers, rooting and grounding their new believers in God's Word.

Apostolic people operate in prophecy as all our Bible apostles did. Apostle Jesus called His disciples by the gifts of word of knowledge and prophecy (Jn.1:47-50; Mt.4:19; 16:17-19). Apostle Jesus was recognized even by a Samaritan woman as a prophet (Jn.4:9). Apostle Jesus predicted the end of the age, the destruction of the temple, the coming persecutions etc. (Mt.24).

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Apostle Peter's first message at Pentecost was fully prophetic, that's why it brought such mighty results (Ac.2:14-41). Apostle Peter was also a man of visions and revelations. He clearly discerned angels, the voice of God and the voice of the Holy Spirit (Ac.10:9-20; 12:7-11).

Apostle Paul prophesied the perilous times we now start experiencing worldwide (2.Ti.3:1-5). He had dreams, heavenly visions and appearances of Jesus and of angels (Ac.9:1-7,27; 16:6-9; 2.Co.12:2-4). Apostle Paul prophesied what Jesus or His angels told him (Ac.27:21-26).

Apostle John saw prophetically the entire book of Revelation and prophesied it to the world in writing. All Bible apostles were men of revelation, which is prophetic. John the Revelator was an apostle, yet the vision he received shows him also as a prophet (Nu.12:6).

Apostolic people will never despise prophecy; they desire, teach, preach und strongly encourage prophecy among the people. Apostle Paul wrote more about prophecy than any other ministry.

1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

5 I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification (1.Co.14:1-5)

Apostolic Prophecy

Apostolic people honor prophets and the prophetic very highly. They make sure that God's precious Holy Spirit, this sensitive part of the Trinity, doesn't get grieved.

Apostolic people make sure their people are well taught and trained in cooperating with God's Holy Ghost to prophesy over individuals, cities and nations. Apostolic people know that God's Word never comes back void but accomplishes what it was sent for (Isa.55:11; Jer.1:10; Pr.11:11).

19 Do not quench the Spirit.

20 Do not despise prophecies.

21 Test all things; hold fast what is good (1.Thes.5:19-21)

Apostolic people know that despising or forbidding prophecies would mean quenching the Spirit. Apostolic people know that quenching the Spirit would deprive them of the true Source of their apostolic power.

Apostolic people also know that prophecies are given according to the person's faith (Ro.12:6). Apostolic people know it is necessary to test all things and keep the good.

Apostolic people therefore train their believers into strong biblical discernment. Since they are spiritual people, apostolic people can judge all things without being judged by anyone (1.Co.2:15).

APOSTOLIC PLANNING



Apostolic people have an insatiable thirst for God's Presence to touch and transform nations. They have seen and experienced the power of God, and their consuming desire is to spread the knowledge of the glory of the Lord just like the waters cover the sea (Isa.11:9; Hab.2:14).

Apostolic people are prone to planning, putting dates and deadlines, setting goals and pushing toward them. I have seen ministries that have planning meetings in which they discuss and review weekly reports, numeric targets, financial targets and the like. People are promoted on the basis of numbers of people they can bring in. Strategies are discussed and put in place to attract a maximum number of people. Great care is taken to make sure nobody leaves once they came in. Addresses are taken, calls are made, house visits are organized, all in an effort to keep the person tightly connected to that ministry.

Some ministries have even gone so far as to invite secular consultants to teach their leaders management skills aimed at maximizing membership. While all these efforts are definitely admirable, there is also a grave danger involved in all this planning and strategizing. Sadly, such ministries easily tend to lose the element of the miraculous, the touch from heaven, the Presence of God.

Boundaries are set ever broader in order to accommodate more people. Sinful behavior is first condoned, explained away, and then finally accepted as "culturally adequate". Worldly standards are implemented in the guise of attracting multitudes. Slowly but surely, sin creeps in, ultimately destroying ministries that once started out so gloriously.

Remember, it all began with the definitely God-given burden and thrust to reach as many people as possible with God's message of sal-

vation.

And yet, the more worldly counsel is invited and accepted in a ministry, the more God's guidance and the still small voice of God's gentle Holy Spirit is pushed to the background. Crowds are attracted no longer by God's miraculous power, healing, Spirit take-over or anointed preaching, but by competing with the world, often with worldly rock groups, in stage setup, lighting, musical perfection, even poisonous artificial smoke.

Please slowly study this revealing passage of Scripture depicting the Apostle Paul's endeavor to spread the Gospel. Ask yourself if you would still be spiritually sensitive enough to discern when the Holy Spirit forbids you to preach, a task your Lord Jesus Himself clearly gave to you and to all His followers.

Would you change route, change strategies, change advisors, change your path? Would you change the course of your ministry, as the Apostle Paul changed the trajectory of his team? Would you still be willing to kill even your God-given Isaac?

Would you discern God's Spirit, or would you automatically rebuke satan for hindering you from going where you think you should go (1.Thes.2:18)? Are you still sensitive enough to discern who is the one blocking, hindering, forbidding you to run?

If so, would you discern and obey even a second prohibition by God's Spirit? Would you stop and stand still, happy to have an excuse for stopping ministry? Or would you keep ministering wherever doors open while you wait for God's clear guidance into the next phase of your ministry? Would you still be pliable in God's hands as God's great Apostle Paul teaches us to be by his very own lifestyle?

6 Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the Word in Asia.

7 After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia,

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but the Spirit did not permit them.

8 So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the Gospel to them (Ac.16:6-10)

Many apostolic ministries take the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus, His last words in his human body on earth, as a ticket to go anywhere and preach the Gospel anytime, anywhere, everywhere.

Remember, however, that Paul’s missionary journeys occurred after the Cross, after the Resurrection, after the Great Commission, and yet they were fully sent and led by God’s Holy Ghost.

Apostolic planning can be a great blessing, but also a great danger. Remember Paul’s rebuke and warning to the Galatians?

1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?

2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? (Ga.3:1-3)

Sadly, this warning is very important and in my opinion a constant heart searching point for apostolic people. You have begun in the Spirit. You received the Spirit by the hearing of faith. You saw Christ crucified. Can you now plan and build God’s Kingdom with man’s methods? The apostle Paul, by divine inspiration, calls such attempts “foolish”!

Apostolic Planning

Apostolic people should never settle in any kind of routine. Planning? Yes, definitely. Put your planning above God's guidance? No, never.

You can rest assured: God's thoughts are always higher than your thoughts, His ways are always better than your ways. As the Apostle Paul yielded to the nudging of God's Holy Ghost and accepted the apparent setback in his plans, God opened up a whole new continent for his ministry!

APOSTOLIC PARTNERSHIP



What about the personal life of apostolic people - is it very lonely and withdrawn? Is an apostolic person living a life like our Great Apostle Jesus, never marrying, living only for God and His Kingdom, only interested and only investing his time in training the team around him?

Well, I think the celibacy doctrine of the Catholic Church worldwide has caused a lot of human suffering, and many may have joined the church out of such suffering, not out of a real calling.

I have seen both men and women who found refuge in monasteries when their parents wanted to forcefully marry them to people they didn't want to spend their lives with. I have also seen people who got hurt and rejected in a failed love relationship and therefore wanted to turn their back on humanity and hide in a monastery.

I know also many well-meaning people who had genuine encounters with God and heard a calling to serve Him. Sadly, for many people, the only way that gives them a chance to study the Bible and serve God and humanity seems to be as a priest or a nun, which means to take an oath of celibacy.

I personally highly appreciate and honor such people, but I also have great compassion with them. In their great desire to please God, they try in their own strength to live a life humans simply were not designed to live!

Remember, only after Eve was created and brought to Adam, God could happily say that His creation was "very good", as opposed to the six "good" certificates He Himself had been giving to His creation all along (Ge.1:31).

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Remember, the blessing and commandment to be like God, to rule and reign, was given to both of them together, not alone:

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Ge.1:26-28)

In the Book of Proverbs, we find another interesting statement from God:

22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD (Pr.18:22)

I have seen apostolic leaders of big ministries refuse to even pray for single young men. Their point was: Find a wife, and God's favor is automatically on you! Hmmmmm... I hope this was a joke? So let's hear God's serious truth from His apostles:

5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? (1.Co.9:5)

All the defenses the Apostle Paul had to give even for eating as he traveled and ministered is heart rending. But see: Oh YES, Paul and Barnabas DO have the right to take along their wives, as do also the other apostles, Peter and even the brothers of the Lord!

So don't you think apostolic people should live in glorious,

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God-created partnership, taking wife and even children with them to the mission field? You feel an apostolic calling? Don't practice celibacy. Practice home-schooling!

Make sure you marry a like-minded person! And then train your children in the way - WAY! - they should go - GO!!! (Pr.22:6)! They will not depart from it when they grow old - that means, you produced another generation of apostles, sent ones, going ones!

The second aspect of apostolic partnership is the team. Both our Apostle Jesus and the Apostle Paul had women traveling with them, ministering to them from their substance (Lk.8:3; Phil.4:3).

Apostolic teams must be well trained, on the job, like a top level army battalion! Yes, you do train them as you go, but you never allow soul or flesh to dominate their decisions. Remember how Paul and Barnabas split their wonderful ministry team and went into different directions because of John Mark (Ac.15:36-41)?

Why is that? The Apostle Paul knew he couldn't fully rely to the point of entrusting his life to the one who had gone back home, unable to bear the unavoidable pressures of ministry. Barnabas, however, being a Son of Comfort, saw the apostolic calling in the young, weak vessel, and being a trainer, he kept him with himself to forge him further.

Are such decisions and separations ok? Well, they are always painful, but you need to know the level of your ministry. A nation-touching, demon-disturbing ministry would be greatly endangered by a weak, fleshly team member. The solution Paul and Barnabas found seems excellent to me, especially since later on, Paul specifically called John Mark back as being useful for him in the ministry (2.Tim.4:11). Good job, Barnabas!

The third aspect of apostolic partnership is prayer. Study in your Bible how many times God's servants, both in OT and NT, asked for prayer! After explaining the powerful Armor of God, God's mighty apostle Paul asks the Ephesian Church for prayer that he may have utterance (Eph.6:10-20).

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Oh yes, the Great Apostle Paul definitely trained His prayer warriors well!

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God (Col.4:12)

This partnership in prayer is paramount for any apostolic ministry. As an apostle, I sure hope you trained your partners to labor fervently in prayers, not just to murmur a few words before biting into a juicy meal.

Apostolic partnership requires deep dedication and a willingness to be awakened by God's Spirit anytime, day or night, to intercede as our Apostle Jesus did (Heb.5:7-8)

Maybe you are not yet sure about your calling, or maybe you are called to be an apostle but not yet active in your apostleship. Please do partner in prayer and provision with an apostolic ministry.

Remember how our Apostle Jesus told His disciples to pray for laborers, and as they did, He sent THEM into the harvest (Mt.9:3 - 10:1)!?!

APOSTOLIC PACT



Apostolic partnership can and should develop into an apostolic pact, a pact of brotherhood and mutual responsibility for each other's life.

An apostolic ministry is no joke. The forces of darkness arise and gather to stop the mighty move of God an apostolic person or ministry automatically creates. Trusting one another and being accountable to one another is an integral part of any apostolic ministry:

12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's Gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord,

13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia (2.Co.2:12-13)

This Scripture should change the perspective and performance of many in the apostolic ministry. A door was opened to Paul! Not just a simple door opened by a human being, but a door opened specifically to the Apostle Paul by the Lord Himself! What a blessing! What an excitement! What an opportunity! Which apostle would not jump right into the work and probably even forget about his coworkers in another place...

Not so the Apostle Paul. Even in midst of such tremendous opportunity, he kept his apostolic pact with Titus in the first place! Calling Titus his brother, he simply couldn't forget about him.

The care and concern about his apostolic pact brother made him abandon such a powerful, God-given ministry opportunity, and leave

in search of Titus.

Especially in the Western World, sadly often performance and productivity are placed above relationship. It seems to me that our greatest example, our Apostle Jesus, put different priorities when He stated toward the end of His earthly ministry:

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled (Jn.17:12)

Keeping those entrusted to us is a mayor challenge in any ministry, maybe even more so in a fast moving apostolic ministry. While the apostle is still working on grounding and establishing believers into leadership positions, new promising people join the movement, maybe with more experience, more anointing, more charisma and more ambition. Sincere, good people can be pushed to a side while wavering reeds may take over positions of too much responsibility for their spiritual growth.

True apostles are very careful to build, train, confirm and strengthen their core team by keeping them very close to themselves. A failure to follow our Lord's example can severely damage and rock any apostolic ministry.

True apostles confirm an apostolic pact with their core team. There must be a specific calling, like Jesus called His disciples and future apostles, not just a wandering in and taking positions as they like. The apostolic pact is so strong that it may mean having to abandon God-given ministry opportunities for the benefit of the brother in need.

I always remember John G. Lake's tremendous apostolic ministry in South Africa. There was a time when by some play of satan and his people, their financial support from the West had stopped. They had no money, and in spite of the mighty move of God in soul salvation, persecution was cruel. They had already lost some of their team to sickness, starvation and persecution, and the time had come for them to decide

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whether to give up or go on.

John G. Lake faced the hard situation of explaining to his team which consisted also of families that he could no longer support them financially. He gave them the freedom to decide whether they wanted to go back home or stay in Africa, trusting in God and God alone.

They worshiped, prayed, read the Word together and searched their hearts before God. Finally, the time had come to ask each one about his decision. By God's grace, all decided to stay and keep serving God, well knowing it might mean their death and the death of their family.

They took communion together and sealed the apostolic pact. After this meeting, they all went back to their areas of work with a new understanding of the seriousness of a truly apostolic ministry.

Many of them laid down their lives in that dry South-African soil. Some never came back; others were found and could be buried. The survivors carried on the mighty revival work that shook the continent. This apostolic pact of staying and serving together - no matter what - is the true seed of apostolic revival.

How sad when some seek only their benefits and their convenience and maybe some name and fame by joining an apostolic ministry.

The tragic state of society in many nations can be fully attributed to the lack of apostolic pact, apostolic patience, and apostolic perseverance.

APOSTOLIC PERSEVERANCE



Apostolic people will often be brought to the very limits of their ability to endure, but God’s mercy upholds them and encourages them to press on. Many times, apostolic people will hear the stunned question of other believers, “How could you endure? How were you able to bear and go through such a horrible situation? And how could you even keep up your smile?”

Immature believers may be in danger of accepting the praise and touching God’s glory, but truly apostolic people will immediately point to the true source of their strength and their ability to endure:

1 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.

2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God (2.Co.4:1-2)

Apostolic people also understand that the only way to persevere against satan’s onslaughts and people’s fury is to walk hundred percent in the light, keeping nothing hidden, constantly monitoring their own heart attitude against any deceitful desires. Apostolic people know that only by walking in perfect truthfulness, in the Truth Himself, Jesus Christ, they can endure and persevere (1.Jn.1:7-9; Jn.14:6).

7 And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation.

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8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life.

9 Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead,

10 who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us,

11 you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many (2.Co.1:7-11)

Apostolic people persevere and then share both their struggles and their God-given victories with their apostolic partners. Apostolic people have no problem with personal pride. They don't need to keep up some hero image for personal gain. They can freely share what they experience and learn in their walk with God.

The pressures of apostolic ministry can make even strong stalwarts of faith like our Apostle Paul despair of life because of the burden of spiritual and physical onslaught. The spiritual battle is very real, and apostolic people know and acknowledge it. That's why apostolic people value and ask for prayer and intercession at every given opportunity.

Read again verses 9 and 10. After admitting his struggles, the Apostle Paul teaches his baby church, not only his apostolic partners, the lesson he learned: "We should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead..."!

What an important lesson! What humility to confess his struggles! What a tremendous living testimony for others to behold and imitate (1.Co.4:16; 11:1)! And on goes Paul's victory shout: "...who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us..."! Gloryyy!!!

Yet apostolic people don't end here. They immediately confirm

Apostolic Perseverance

and proclaim their faith for any future danger: “In whom we trust that He will still deliver us”!

Even in budding apostles you can see this training. They must learn not to trust in themselves but in God. They must be willing to persevere through any battle. They must prove to God their willingness to walk with Him. They must show to God and man their humility by admitting their struggles.

They must prove to God that whatever they go through, they will see it as a test that will become a testimony! Watch out for believers with such attitude. You have an apostle in the making before you.

I myself actually prayed very early in my Christian life a dangerous prayer: “Lord, I want to experience Your power and Your miracles. I don’t want to live a life where miracles are not needed. I want to be frontline. I want to live in situations where only Your power can uphold and deliver me.”

Praise God, I experienced many such situations, and He carried me through each and every one of them! Today, my former struggles strengthen younger believers. Hallelujah!

What a blessing apostolic people are! What a safety for those under an apostolic ministry as they can learn and partake in both their battles and their bliss!

APOSTOLIC PREVAILING



Apostolic people are able to prevail and to prosper in any situation because they know their God and His ability to sustain, deliver and lead them.

In this particular incident, the Apostle Paul left a ripe ministry field, a door opened to him by the Lord Himself, because he couldn't find rest in his spirit, being distressed by his worries about Titus' whereabouts. Knowing God's heart, he went on his journey to find his brother. See his jubilant exclamation:

14 Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things? (2.Co.2:14-16)

In all jubilation about God's guidance, apostolic people never forget the weight of responsibility they carry. How awesome is it that unbelievers can be brought to salvation by our mere presence, by the pure aroma of the life of God emanating from us!?!

Apostolic people never become proud, arrogant or self-sufficient. You never see any such trait in Paul's epistles. The awe and wonder of God's selection and calling is always paramount in true apostles' minds.

17 For we are not, as so many, peddling the Word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ (2.Co.2:17)

Like our Old Testament apostle Joseph, apostolic people know that whatever they do or say is done in the sight of God in Christ (Ge.39:7-9). In midst of all triumph and joy, apostolic people keep their sincerity and purity before their God and before men.

Apostolic people know they must obey God rather than men, and God gives His Holy Spirit to those who obey Him (Ac.5:29,32). Knowing they can only live a fruitful life by God's Spirit, and only He can save them from any trial and tribulation, they rest in their confidence that all things must work together for good (Ro.8:28).

Apostolic people prevail knowing and trusting God's protection and promises. For those who obey the last command of our Great Apostle Jesus and accepted being sent into the harvest as His laborers, to those who believe, these promises apply:

15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.

16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;

***18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover"* (Mk.16:15-18)**

Apostolic people can prevail without any panic in gravest danger because they guard God's Word in their hearts. This satanic attack was, like everything in the lives of apostolic people, turned into God's glory:

3 But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid

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them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

4 So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, “No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live.”

5 But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm.

6 However, they were expecting that he would swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had looked for a long time and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god (Ac.28:3-6)

After this miracle, Paul and all those with him received a warm welcome by the leading citizen of the island, stayed there for three days, healed his father of fever and dysentery, and ended their visit with a glorious healing revival!

Remember, this was not only the Apostle Paul, it was two hundred and seventy-six persons - sailors, soldiers, a commander and prisoners - who had just survived a shipwreck.

Apostolic people like Paul don't live for themselves. Paul perceived the danger in the journey, but his words were not heeded. For Paul's sake, God sent an angel with a message of hope when all hope of survival was gone.

Apostolic people like Paul have special authority to encourage the hopeless and downtrodden with the comfort and encouragement they themselves receive from God. And the most beautiful thing:

Apostolic people must fulfill God's purpose for their lives. Elements and circumstances must bow to the will and plan of God for apostolic people. And anyone around apostolic people - even hardened sailors, soldiers and prisoners! - comes under their umbrella and bene-

fits from God's special care for His apostles!

21 But after long abstinence from food, then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss.

22 And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.

23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve,

24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'

25 Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me"

Apostolic people prevail in each and every circumstance and situation by their faith proven by many fiery circumstances.

Apostolic people know the power of prayer for remote deliverance, just as God's Apostle Peter experienced even twice (Ac.5:17-20; 12:4-11).

Therefore apostolic people can rest, sleep, worship, sing and praise even in the darkest dungeon or stormiest waves and always prevail victoriously (Ac.16:22-34; Mk.4:36-40).

APOSTOLIC PURSUIT



When we think about the push and pursuit of apostolic people, we usually think about the vision of planting churches, reaching the unreached, showing God's power and manifesting God's glory to those who have not heard and experienced.

As you see your concordance, however, it is very interesting to see the targets apostolic people like our Apostles Paul and Peter encourage their believers to pursue. Let us study some examples of this clearly apostolic doctrine.

10 For He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit.

11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.

12 For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil (1.Pe.3:10-12)

A strong warning for unity and against cursing precedes Peter's instruction to pursue peace, even for the sake of their prayers being heard and answered! Wow!

11 But you, o man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness (1.Ti.6:11)

Flee which things? Please read the elaborate warning against pride

of false teachings, obsession with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, mind corruption and all kinds of temptations.

Paul continues explaining the danger and damage of love of money which is a root of all kinds of evil, foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition (1.Ti.6:3-12). Can you see the apostolic heart striving to protect his spiritual children and budding apostles?

22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (2.Ti.2:22)

Paul's next warnings again fill an entire chapter, but notice how wonderfully he encourages his children to be diligent, to shun, to avoid and to cleanse themselves. How does he do it, by condemning them as evil, hopeless sinners? No, he does it by encouraging them to become vessels of honor and enjoy fellowship with all those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (2.Ti.2:15-26).

14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord (Heb.12:14)

Peace with ALL people!!! Paul's apostolic pursuits are becoming more and more challenging, isn't it? Praise God, he also makes clear that we are to do our part: "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Ro.12:18).

Your heart should never condemn you if there is a relationship that just doesn't come into God's peace. You must be able to stand before God and man and testify: "I did what I could, but all my peace offers were rejected". Apostolic people are peace makers, peace speakers, peace carriers since they carry in them the very Prince of Peace Himself (Isa.9:6).

Apostolic people are very strong on holiness. True apostles understand that without holiness, no one will see the Lord. In my opinion,

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apostles or anyone who calls himself a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner will have a hard time to attend the Marriage of the Lamb of God. Remember, even here on earth, our Holy God commanded us not even to eat with such a person, so how much more in heaven (1.Co.5:11; Rev.21:7-8; 22:14-15)!

15 See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all (1.Thes.5:15)

See the wonderful heart attitude of apostolic people like Paul! Again, the entire chapter consists in warnings, admonitions, lifestyle guidance and encouragements (1.Thes.5:1-28). Then a huge challenge: Instead of paying back with evil any evil done to them, apostolic people are to ALWAYS pursue what is good not only for themselves, but for all! Our Great Apostle Jesus did, and it cost Him the highest price (Phil.2:1-7)!

19 Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another (Ro.14:19)

Truly apostolic people can never be selfish because they carry the heart of the Greatest Lover, the Greatest Giver of the universe! Remember Romans 8:32? Apostolic people understand and experience in real life that “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” Hallelujah! Not only giving, but they even pursue anything that helps in edifying one another! What a blessing are apostolic people!!!

1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy (1.Co.14:1)

The ultimate pursuit of apostolic people is love, the true heart of God! Their pursuit of LOVE is what makes them desire spiritual gifts, especially the ones that edify others and build the Body of Christ. Apostolic people pursue the gifts for GOD’s glory and humanity’s benefit, never for any own profit.

Apostolic Pursuit

Why do you think apostolic people teach and strongly admonish their followers to pursue these kinds of things? If you look a little closer, all actually are attitudes, heart attitudes. Once these virtues have become deep rooted attitudes in our hearts, they become habits and finally a deeply engrained lifestyle.

True, seasoned apostles like Peter and Paul would have learned many lessons of humility and brokenness in their walk with God before they came into public ministry and limelight.

Being apostles, fathers in the faith who want their spiritual children to excel, they try to install into the churches the same attitudes that allowed them to pass the many heart tests on the way to ministry.

To tell you the truth: These attitudes only enabled the apostles to survive the anger, hatred and counterattack of satan and his armies who see their kingdom destroyed and their souls snatched from their kingdom into God's Kingdom of Love and Light (Col.1:13-14; 2:13-15).

APOSTOLIC PURPOSE



Apostolic people are known for their push and zeal for new frontiers and new horizons, which is definitely their specialty and main thrust:

16 to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment (2.Co.10:16)

However, truly apostolic people don't only run from place to place, planting new churches and forgetting the former. Apostolic people carry a deep burden for the Body of Christ and for every individual believer, even for those they never met personally.

1 For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh,

2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,

3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col.2:1-3)

Apostolic people have revelation knowledge of the spiritual world and therefore desire nothing more than for their believers to grasp the riches of Christ, the unfathomable blessing of the Gospel, and the immense privilege of being born again as a child of God. They therefore do not cease to pray fervently

Apostolic Purpose

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,

18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power

20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come (Eph.1:17-21)

Apostolic people like Kenneth E. Hagin, the founder of the “Word of Faith” movement, are often instructed by Jesus Himself in visions to keep praying the prayers of the Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians.

Kenneth E. Hagin diligently kept praying these prayers and “watering” them by praying in tongues (Ac.2:1-11; 1.Co.14:1-19). He testifies how he got a breakthrough into the spiritual world by practicing for hours in his personal prayer time this precious, often feared or misunderstood gift of God’s Holy Spirit.

Apostolic people know that the Church and the apostolic movement were born when God’s Holy Ghost broke through fear and propelled the hiding disciples into the streets to magnify God with new tongues! Apostolic people understand that by talking in the spirit, they can easily be walking in the spirit.

Apostolic people practice and preach this priceless gift of direct

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communication, of speaking mysteries with God in the spirit. All apostles spoke in tongues, and Paul, the apostle who was entrusted by God with writing two thirds of the New Testament, praises God for speaking in tongues more than all others!

18 I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;

19 yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue (1.Co.14:18-19)

Apostolic people have a burden and desire for all to speak in tongues, but more that they should prophesy. Why? It's because apostolic people always have as their main purpose the edification of others, never their own.

Apostolic people are gifts to the Body of Christ. To them, even self-edification through tongues prayer has the purpose of being more anointed and receiving more revelation to strengthen the Body of Christ (Eph.3:3-5).

See Paul's second Ephesians-prayer:

16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height -

19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that

works in us,

21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen (Eph.3:16-21)

Apostolic people know the power of meditating and proclaiming these powerful prayers. For me personally, this practice was and is definitely a step into the spiritual world of revelation knowledge. Only by spiritual revelation, you can grasp Paul's powerful apostolic truths like for example this one:

22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,

23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all (Eph.1:22-23)

Apostolic people grasp, digest and feed to their believers the deep spiritual truths expressed by senior apostles like Paul. Their apostolic purpose is to bring even the simplest believers into their glorious inheritance in Christ by teaching them His exceedingly great and precious promises (2.Pe.1:2-4).

APOSTOLIC PRESSURE



In addition to satan's buffeting messenger who tries to arouse persecution and tribulation wherever apostolic people go, the father heart of apostolic people adds another pressure to their already heavy lifestyle: Their deep concern for all the churches.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? - I speak as a fool - I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often.

24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one.

25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness -

28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches (2.Co.11:23-28)

The above list would be enough or too much for anyone, and it is by no means complete. Apostolic people, however, seem to have really supernatural strength and ability to push through all the barriers, and to

even enjoy it! Apostolic people tend to be adventurous, forward looking, and a normal office lifestyle would be a horrible prison for them.

There is a burden, however, which can weigh them down more than the physical distress: Their deep concern for all the churches. Apostolic people often consciously select the hardest places where there is most resistance to the Gospel for planting new churches. Even though they may move on to plant new churches elsewhere, their apostolic father-heart doesn't simply let go of their spiritual offspring.

Apostolic people never forget those whom they begot in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. They know, ten thousand instructors might come to take over their church, people without a father's heart who could hurt their spiritual babies. Plus there is the fear of harm by persecution, and the worry about their stability against deception and temptation... See Paul's cry:

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? (2.Co.11:29)

In Bible times, messengers had to travel to bring news, and apostles had to be weeks, months or longer without the comfort of knowing about the churches. Imagine the tension and prayer burden! Today, all info is at our fingertips, but does this really alleviate pressure?

Apostolic people must pay much attention not to lose their spiritual peace. Such constant underlying pressure is very detrimental for health. Apostolic people need to make it a daily habit to cast all their care upon Him, for He cares for them and for those under their care.

APOSTOLIC PASTIME



Apostolic people have interesting hobbies. Apostolic people don't waste their time, just as God doesn't waste His time or anyone else's time. Nowhere do we read about our Lord Jesus or any of His apostles just wandering around aimlessly. Every second was used to the maximum. Teaching, preaching, healing, delivering, training, traveling, having fellowship, praying, sleeping or eating and drinking - these are the activities we see in these generals of God.

Even today, decades later, I chuckle when I remember trying to celebrate the birthday of a true nation-shaker, an apostle of God who kicked open "the graveyard of the Gospel", a nation where no ministry had ever managed to blossom.

As a friend of the family, I was invited to join the celebration. With his wife and two daughters, we went to a new shopping center and walked around trying to find a gift that would excite him. The problem was that his God had already given him everything he could ever need for life and godliness, and his real excitement was his Jesus.

Since none of us felt attracted by all the things displayed there, we went to a restaurant and tried to order something special, unknown. The general consent was to never again waste such money, since our home-made food was so much tastier. So we tried to watch a movie in a cinema since doctors had advised us to "make him relax, he is always so intense in the ministry". All of the movie ads repelled us, so we finally rented some comedy movie and went back home. As we tried to watch the boring thing, we were all full of praises and gratitude to our God:

"Hallelujah! Tomorrow we can go to church! Poor unbelievers! What emptiness! What boredom! Praise God we don't need to try to

relax or try to have fun. Praise God we have a ministry, a place to worship God, a place to bless people, a place to preach and pray, a place to enjoy Jesus!”

Sadly, many teach nowadays that you should expose yourself or even worse, your children, to worldly entertainment and worldly pleasures. Some may worry the young girls might suffer psychological damage by being raised “only in church”.

Let me relax you. Both daughters of that apostle married - as perfect virgins, let me add! - young men who had been saved and trained in their own ministry. Both lead important areas of the ever expanding ministry together with their husbands and their own children. Both are happy, healthy, fruitful mothers and a real blessing to society.

The apostolic anointing upon their father also rests on them and their families, and countless lives are restored and brought into their calling through them. They and their disciples lead self-sustaining Christian communities all over the nation. Their TV- and radio ministry keeps expanding, and they still feel no need for any worldly entertainment.

What about our Bible apostles? When Peter became hungry during his prayer, he didn't go down into the house. He didn't hang around in the kitchen talking nonsense. He didn't go to check when his food would be ready. Praise God he didn't! Had he stopped talking to God and started talking to people, he would have missed God's vision and voice that opened his ministry to the Gentiles!!!

9 The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour.

10 Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance

11 and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down

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to the earth (Ac.10:9-11)

Our Apostle Paul made it even clearer. He could boldly say,

18 I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all (1.Co.14:18)

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me (1.Co.15:10)

His pastime was speaking mysteries with God in the Spirit, thanking his God for enabling him to do it more than anyone else. His pastime was God's labor, while fully crediting God's grace for the tremendous energy he had (2.Co.11:23-33).

Both apostles, just like their example, the Great Apostle Jesus, spent their time pursuing the things of heaven, never the things of the earth (Col.3:1-3).

APOSTOLIC PRIDE



Apostolic people actually do have a kind of pride, just not the pride that goes before destruction and not the haughty spirit that goes before a fall (Pr.16:18).

If you perceive that kind of pride in any believer, especially in miracle workers or so-called apostles, run for your very life! Don't allow them to lay hands on you, and don't accept any impartation from them. Notice, it's not a haughty mind or character, it's a haughty SPIRIT!

Often, the Body of Christ mistakes human pride with Godly zeal and assurance. In many Christian circles, apostles are not well received. Our beloved apostolic evangelist Reinhard Bonnke struggled much in his birth nation Germany. He was too excited about Jesus, too much in love with his Heavenly Father, and therefore sometimes too loud for German ears. Many considered him proud, although he never failed to give God all the glory.

How sad when a nation at large rejects such a tremendous gift of God, but happily accepts slimy weaklings who constantly repeat how unworthy and how unable they are! Actually, all believers are called to carry God's glory as light of the world and salt of the earth (Mt.5:13-16).

As New Creations, we all have received the ministry of reconciliation between God and man, and we have been made ambassadors for Christ (2.Co.5:17-21)!!! Could there be any higher post, any greater pride than to be ambassadors speaking for the God of the entire earth? Oh yes, we believers are called His coworkers (2.Co.6:1-2). Shouldn't every believer stand tall and walk like a king since we carry the King of kings in us!?!

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So what is the difference between fleshly, human pride and godly pride? Let us see.

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established (Ro.1:11)

Apostolic people know what they carry. They have believed and obeyed God's Word, and therefore they have seen God's mighty power moving through them (M.16:15-20). They have stepped out in faith and seen God's faithfulness. They don't trust themselves; they trust the Living God to move through them to impart the Holy Spirit and His gifts.

29 But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ (Ro.15:29)

Apostolic people live a blessed life. They have come to know their God so closely that they need not fear that He may ever leave them or forsake them. With this assurance, they go into new territories or visit already established churches.

I have traveled with many apostles and seen them minister to people on the phone, sing worship songs along with the car audio system, take a nap, discuss Kingdom matters with me, and then walk into an auditorium where praise and worship is already going on.

The moment the apostle takes the microphone, sometimes even when he just enters the room, deaf ears open; tumors disappear; blind eyes see; cripples walk... a Holy Ghost commotion is created in the spiritual atmosphere.

How can this be? I believe it is because apostolic people walk and talk very closely with Jesus. They keep their Bible study and prayer times very diligently, but then they are on the go, toward new horizons, new opportunities, new miracles.

I believe that the God who commanded us all to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature is pouring out His love and even His gratitude on those few who actually obeyed and became

apostles, sent ones.

1 Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved (Phil.4:1)

Here you see the earthly pride of apostolic people. Their greatest pride and object of bragging is the eternal Lord God, their loving Father, and His smile on their lives.

Their second pride, just like parents feel about their children, is their love, joy and excitement about their spiritual children.

Oh yes, apostolic people do have pride, but it's a heavenly pride, based on the things that make their God happy.

APOSTOLIC PRESTIGE



Apostolic people don't only have a healthy kind of pride, but also a healthy prestige. This again can be misunderstood and judged by believers who don't walk in apostolic privilege.

Refusing to accept any worldly pay or human help is nothing new. Our great Old Testament apostle Abram shows a wonderful example.

Having brought back Lot and all the goods and people that had been raided, Abram received the visit and blessing of Melchizedek king of Salem, priest of the Most High God.

In this first picture of Holy Communion and tithe giving, Melchizedek (King of Righteousness), king of Salem (king of Peace) brings out bread and wine and blesses Abram:

19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;

20 And blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

21 Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself."

22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth,

23 that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should

say, 'I have made Abram rich' -

24 except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion" (Ge.14:19-24)

Apostolic people happily give their tithe, the tithe of all their exploits, to God through His servants. And then, apostolic people keep up their prestige and God's prestige by rightfully and wisely distributing what is due to everyone, but not keeping anything for themselves.

Praise God for the clear, ethic, righteous attitude of apostolic people!!!

14 Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should live from the Gospel.

15 But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void (1.Co.9:14-15)

Apostolic people have their pride and prestige in their God and His provision. Just as apostolic people will never touch God's glory, they also will never touch God's honor of providing for His people.

Apostolic people know their God and understand how much He enjoys and rejoices in giving both big and small surprise provisions to His beloved children!

Apostolic people know they need nothing from any human source. Apostolic people live their lives closest to the Cornerstone, Great Apostle Jesus, the Source of all life and all blessings.

This apostolic prestige made Paul, God's mighty apostle, even to go back to work in his trade together with Aquila and Priscila in Corinth (Ac.18:1-3). His prestige, his testimony that he kept himself from being burdensome to anyone was paramount to him.

APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

How sad when we hear of supposed “servants of God” going around, staying in other peoples’ houses, lazily demanding that others serve them and even asking money! How different the lifestyle of truly apostolic people like our beloved Apostle Paul:

7 Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the Gospel of God to you free of charge?

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you.

9 And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep myself.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia (2.Co.11:10)

Apostolic prestige pressed a humble man like Paul to boast - not in himself, but in what God had accomplished through him by his obedient walk in God’s commandments.

11 I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing (2.Co.12:11)

Sadly, apostolic people are often not commended but confronted and complained about (2.Co.10:8-11). Their special ministry style may raise contempt, but true apostles don’t bother. They simply keep running their race and glorifying God in all things, knowing that “not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends”:

14 For we are not overextending ourselves (as though our authority did not extend to you), for it was to you that we came with the Gospel of Christ;

Apostolic Prestige

15 not boasting of things beyond measure, that is, in other men's labors, but having hope, that as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere,

16 to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment.

17 But "he who glories, let him glory in the LORD."

18 For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends (2.Co.10:14-18)

Apostolic people teach and live a faith life, knowing that they and their ministry will be greatly enlarged through their disciples once these grow into apostolic people themselves. How else could all of Asia have heard God's Word in just two years, if not through Paul's students and disciples from the school of Tyrannus (Ac.19:9-10)!?!

Apostolic people make sure they always glory in the Lord, not in any of their own accomplishments. They seek their commendation from the Lord alone and keep their prestige before men.

APOSTOLIC PURITY



Apostolic people have great clarity of conviction and a forceful way of bringing their point across. Talking about idolatry and Holy Communion, the Apostle Paul asks:

19 What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything?

20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.

21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.

22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? (1.Co.10:19-22)

Strong words, no? “I do not want you to ... You cannot...” and a stern warning not to play with God’s goodness. Apostolic people strictly demand not only physical purity, but also spiritual purity.

Apostolic people know the spiritual world, since their trail-blazing calling and ministry often provokes heavy power encounters. Apostolic people know that playing with God or playing with satan can easily destroy a person or even an entire ministry.

All over the world, satan is attacking Christianity with his weapon of impurity and spiritual mixture. Believers want to be friends with the world and thereby make themselves enemies of God (Jam.4:4). Sad-

ly, many churches and denominations don't make clear distinctions in their teaching. In their desire to win souls, they send their people into the world to befriend sinners.

That would be okay as long as Paul's clear apostolic warning is heeded: "You cannot..." practice spiritual mixture, spiritual adultery! Or as our Great Apostle Jesus explains it: "***They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world***" (Jn.17:16).

How critically important is the clear apostolic voice that demarks this distinction! The Apostle John explains the same question with different words:

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world.

17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever (1.Jn.2:15-17)

Apostolic people understand what it means to be in the world, but not of the world. Apostolic people don't love the world or its temptations, not even its innocent looking things like culture, literature, art etc. Apostolic people understand that "***we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one***" (1.Jn.5:19).

Apostolic people discern that much of what is highly praised in the world actually has satan's fingerprint and inspiration behind it, and they simply don't feel any desire to participate.

More than that, apostolic people know in their spirit that this world is not their home. They wait for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Heb.11:10,16).

Apostolic people are not earthly minded. They understand the spir-

APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

itual implications of their existence on this planet. Apostolic people strive to do the will of God, knowing they will abide forever and shine like the stars of heaven (Da.12:3).

For that eternal purpose, apostolic people are willing to bear inconveniences like never again to eat meat or to abstain from alcohol, so that the weaker brother in Christ is not made to stumble (Ro.14:21; 1.Co.8:13):

29 “Conscience,” I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man’s conscience?

30 But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for the food over which I give thanks? (1.Co.10:29-30)

Apostolic people don’t insist on their legitimate rights. They may feel hurt, they may ask why this unnecessary persecution, but they will always come to the same conclusion. And as always, apostolic people share what they learned with their believers, commanding them to come up to the same spiritual level:

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

32 Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God,

33 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved (1.Co.10:31-33)

I Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ (1.Co.11:1)

What should all imitate from the lifestyle of apostolic people? All should imitate the fixed look at Christ and the desire to imitate Him in all things. All should understand the difference between pleasing all men for personal benefit, or pleasing all men in order to avoid offending them and thus turning them away from Christ. All should imitate the

apostolic heart attitude of never seeking their own profit, but the profit of many for salvation!

23 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify.

24 Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being (1.Co.10:23-24)

Apostolic people don't play around in grey areas, asking, "Is it sin, or can I do it?" Apostolic people don't waste their life in self-seeking.

Apostolic people know they have great freedom to enjoy what they want, but they put a restraint on their own lives: they will do only what is helpful, only what edifies, only what blesses their lives so they can bless others.

APOSTOLIC PENALTY



Apostolic people have a special cross to bear. Somehow it seems that satan fears and hates them so much that he sends his special messengers to harass them. Wherever they go, satan tries to stir up turmoil and persecution. Slander, false accusations and even physical attacks - any weapon seems to be welcome in satan's arsenal. Study for yourself the lists of Paul's sufferings in his apostolic journeys, and you will understand.

Talking about his spiritual revelations, including being caught up to the Third Heaven and into Paradise and hearing inexpressible words, the Apostle Paul concludes that this thorn in the flesh, this messenger of satan, was given to him to keep him humble.

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure (2.Co.12:7)

Many believe this thorn in the flesh to be a sickness or disease, quoting Galatians 6:11: "See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand!" Others say, this writing difficulty may have been a temporary or permanent result of the stoning Paul received in Lystra (Ac.14:19-20).

In all of Paul's tedious journeys, we don't see any sign of sickness, but an iron health and staunch determination to push on in his mission to make Christ known.

On the other hand, we see constant harassment by persecution following him or even awaiting him wherever he went. I therefore tend

Apostolic Penalty

to believe the interpretation of Paul's "thorn in the flesh" as demonic powers or curses, maybe invited through disobedience to God's Word, not as some disease (Ge.3:18; Nu.33:55; Jos.23:13; Jdg.2:3).

8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong (2.Co.12:7-10)

Apostolic people inquire of the Lord and get answers. Their relationship is so close that they can ask the same petition thrice without any ill feeling.

See how the Apostle Paul took God's refusal to remove that buffeting messenger of satan, that disturbing demon. He was excited about God's assurance of His grace and His perfect strength during times of weakness, fear and tribulation.

Apostolic people are willing, even excited, to endure any troubles as long as God gets glorified and they can experience His power. So whatever satan planned to be a penalty, a punishment for being so bold heralds of the Gospel, it backfired!!!

Apostolic people understand and experience extra grace, extra anointing, extra strength and extra power of Christ resting upon them in persecutions (1.Pe.4:14).

Apostolic people endure "infirmities", which Strong's Concordance defines as "want of strength, weakness, infirmity - of the body - or of the soul". Apostolic people happily endure reproaches, needs, persecutions and distresses for Christ's sake (2.Co.12:10).

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All these words don't sound like that thorn was a disease, don't you think? Another good example is Paul's explanation of his tribulations for Christ in Asia that made him despair even of life (2.Co.1:3-11).

Apostolic people turn satan's planned penalty into greater power manifestation! Hallelujah! There is one penalty, however, that must be taken seriously:

16 For if I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the Gospel!

17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.

18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the Gospel, I may present the Gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the Gospel.

19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more (1.Co.9:16-19)

Apostolic people know there is a yoke, a necessity laid upon them: ***“Woe is me if I do not preach the Gospel!”*** The word “woe” indicates a strong curse, a punishment, a penalty. Allowing all of satan's attacks to stop apostolic people from preaching the Gospel would bring serious punishment from the One who called them.

Praise God, apostolic people understand spiritual realities and turn every attack into greater glory and victory!

APOSTOLIC PURGE



Apostolic people have a special authority and mandate to purge the Body of Christ. Since they themselves have learned to live in purity and holiness, they can exercise spiritual authority over any work of satan that is trying to infiltrate the Church.

Being a master deceiver, satan will use any weak or fleshly Christian he can get access to (1.Pe.5:8). Never forget: Even Peter, the apostle-in-the-making, could be used by satan to try to stop Master Apostle Jesus from fulfilling His mission (Mt.16:23)!

What was the action Apostle Jesus took? He exposed and rebuked satan, and He explained to Peter how satan had taken advantage of him: “Get behind Me, satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

See here a perfect example of being mindful of the things of men, desiring position and recognition, gratitude and praise, while not being truthful but faking true trust in God:

1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?”

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4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.

5 Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things.

6 And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him (Ac.5:1-6)

Apostolic people see the spiritual world and take strong authority. Just like Apostle Jesus, they explain to the wayward believers how satan deceived them, even giving them an opportunity to repent and speak truth. Sadly, both conspirators stuck to their lie, and both perished immediately.

7 Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

8 And Peter answered her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?” She said, “Yes, for so much.”

9 Then Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.”

10 Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband.

11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things (Ac.5:7-11)

Apostolic people bring the fear of God back to the Body of Christ and to the world around. Apostolic people discern attitudes that could

Apostolic Purge

keep God's Presence away from God's people. Apostolic people have insatiable hunger for God's Presence and God's manifestation.

Apostolic people have the boldness necessary to confront sin even publicly. By their uncompromising stand for truth and holiness, apostolic people purify the Church and create a suitable, comfortable, attractive atmosphere for God's Holy Spirit. Once God's Holy Spirit feels welcome and free to move, the results are impressive:

12 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch.

13 Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.

14 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,

15 so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them.

16 Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed (Ac.5:1-16)

Apostolic purge is a critically important ingredient in the Body of Christ.

Sadly, some apostles were deceived into believing that in their role as fathers, they should be loving and lenient with sin. Such misunderstanding of the apostolic anointing brings unnecessary pain and confusion and allows satan to work havoc in the Church.

APOSTOLIC PUNISHMENT



Apostolic people carry God's heart, a heart that hates sin but loves the sinner. Apostolic people can't bear even to hear of such atrocities, and they strongly rebuke those who take sin lightly and keep fellowship with such blatantly unrepentant sinners (1.Co.5:11).

Apostolic people expose the pride and self-righteousness of believers and point them to mourning and prayer in order to restore or remove such black sheep from God's herd.

1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles - that a man has his father's wife!

2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you (1.Co.5:1-2)

Apostolic people never remove their spiritual children from their spirit. No matter how far away they may be in the physical, in the spirit they are present, discerning what is happening there and protecting them by their prayer.

Since apostolic people, just like prophets, are intimately involved in the spiritual welfare of those under their care, apostolic people discern in the spirit and know deep inside whether a person is willing to repent or not. Accordingly, they counsel their leaders how to guide the churches and how to deal difficult situations even from afar.

3 For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so

done this deed.

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 deliver such a one to satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (1.Co.5:3-5)

Such a dramatic step should hopefully be rare, but sadly, it may be necessary. Here again, see the heart of apostolic people. Since they know the spiritual world, eternal salvation of the spirit is their main objective in anything they do. Apostolic people won't fall prey to doctrines like 'universal salvation without repentance' or 'hell is just a scare technique to keep people subject to the Church or any other ruling power'.

Apostolic people know the reality of eternal heaven or eternal hell. Actually, most apostles have seen visions of Jesus and also visions of hell as part of their salvation or calling experience. The urgency of preaching the Gospel is burned into their minds and spirits and propels them lifelong.

Apostolic people tend to get angry or even judge believers and ministers who don't have the same strong convictions and therefore live a more worldly life. Apostolic people want their churches to never lose track of their purpose on earth: Going into all the world and preaching the Gospel to every creature (Mt.28:19-20; Mk.16:15-20).

6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? (1.Co.5:6)

Apostolic people won't accept or praise self-righteous finger-pointing. They demand holiness for wholesome life, purity for victory. Apostolic people are no-compromise people. Black is black, white is white, nothing in between. This strong stand against sin they strive to impart to their churches.

APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1. Co.5:7-8)

Apostolic people use every circumstance and opportunity to highlight a spiritual truth. Allowing an unrepentant, willful sinner in the fellowship will corrode the fear of God and spread the demonic influence in the entire congregation. Therefore, sin and old leaven must be purged out.

What old leaven? Malice and wickedness, works of the flesh and human effort. What should we live instead of the old attitudes? Sincerity and truth. Hallelujah!

Apostolic people beautifully encourage believers with the truth of redemption, reminding them that they are already truly unleavened by the sacrifice of Christ. Apostolic people teach that they can live holy because they are already sanctified! “You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you” is their constant battle cry (Phil.4:13).

APOSTOLIC PITY



Apostolic people don't just drop a sinner. Apostolic people follow up the spiritual progress of the person, no matter how severe the punishment inflicted may have been. See the continuation of this strong apostolic punishment.

There seems to have been repentance brought forth by cutting the sinner off from the fellowship of believers and even giving him over to satan for the destruction of the flesh and salvation of the spirit. Now, preceding his next visit, Paul explains that he wrote his strong counsel in order to avoid further sorrow (2.Co.2:1-3).

Apostolic people get very deeply affected when hearing of the sin committed by a believer. Apostolic people want their followers to know the deep love and care they have for them.

4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you (2.Co.2:4)

Apostolic people know the grief and pain sin causes in true followers of Christ, and are therefore very intent on smashing any budding sign of developing sin from the very beginning.

Praise God, the church was obedient and executed the punishment prescribed by their apostle. The result? Repentance! Apostolic pity reveals the true father heart of God, forgiving, accepting and even comforting the truly repentant sinner.

Apostolic people never show pity for sin nor for willful sinners.

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Keeping in mind their eternal salvation, they strongly rebuke and act against sin. The moment true repentance is shown, however, they switch treatments to once again loving, encouraging, and strengthening the person back into God's fold and God's future for his life.

6 This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man,

7 so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow.

8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.

9 For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things (2.Co.2:6-9)

Did you notice? This punishment is sufficient for SUCH a man! Apostolic people know and discern in the spirit the general character and also the present condition of people, and they adjust the necessary corrections and encouragement accordingly.

Apostolic people always pursue multiple purposes with any action they take. Purging out sin, protecting God's flock from contamination, saving the eternal soul of the person who had been deceived by sin, teaching a clear spiritual lesson to all, testing their obedience and finally restoring love and fellowship within the church. Wow! Apostolic people are simply amazing!

APOSTOLIC PARENTHOOD



Apostolic people are not just glamorous pulpit personalities. Apostolic people don't demand anything and don't seek any glory. They seek to walk worthy of the Lord and of His calling so that they can challenge others also to walk as they walk. Truly apostolic people always strive to be examples to the flock (Eph.4:1; Col.1:10; 1.Thes.2:12; 1.Pe.5:3).

6 Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.

8 So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the Gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.

9 For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the Gospel of God.

10 You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe;

11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children,

12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own Kingdom and glory (1.Thes.2:6-12)

APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

Apostolic people are true parents. Apostolic people encompass both male and female qualities and characteristics, not in a sexual, but in a spiritual sense. Apostolic people are able to give the loving care and comfort of a mother as well as the strong challenge and exhortation of a father.

Apostolic people do nothing for their own benefit. Their purpose always remains the same: that YOU should walk worthy of God! The entire life of truly apostolic people is consumed by this one desire: To present those under their care as a chaste virgin to Christ, holy and blameless, and above reproach in His sight, faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy (2.Co.11:2; Col.1:22; Jude 24).

Apostolic people love those under their care so deeply that they just overflow with blessing words:

2 To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord (1.Ti.1:2)

4 To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior (Tit.1:4)

Apostolic people bless not only their specially trained and appointed leaders, but entire churches with this overflowing parental love.

14 Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

16 But be that as it may, I did not burden you. Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you by cunning (2.Co.12:14-16)

Apostolic people are never a burden, but always a blessing, joy and

Apostolic Parenthood

encouragement to their people. Oh, that believers might learn to receive and honor them as fathers in the Lord. How much God's heart would rejoice at the comfort shown to His beloved, hard-working, battle-approved apostles!

APOSTOLIC POSTERITY



Apostolic people are very aware of the greatness of the task of world evangelism and the need for signs, wonders and miracles. Apostolic people don't only concentrate on their own ministry. Apostolic people know they need to reproduce according to their own kind (Ge.1:11,12,21,24,25,26).

Apostolic people know that teaching alone is not enough. They must share their supernatural lives with their spiritual posterity in order to really impart God's vision and power to them.

Apostolic people are not only parents; they are on-the-job-trainers like their great example, our Apostle Jesus:

10 And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida (Lk.9:10)

The budding apostles had just come back, and their apostolic trainer tried to get some private time with them. Apostolic people, however, can never really be hidden, and God's heart and compassion compels them to minister to those hungry souls. Having just come back from exciting ministry, the disciples had opportunity to hear another message about the Kingdom of God and witness the mighty healings done by their Great Apostle, Jesus (Lk.9:11).

Sadly, after witnessing so many miracles, these apostles-in-the-making once again came to Jesus with their human, earthly thoughts: ***“Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a de-***

serted place here” (Lk.9:12).

Praise God, Jesus didn’t expose their unbelief. He simply challenged them: **“You give them something to eat”!** Overpowering their reasoning and excuses, He simply commanded and guided them into a major miracle (Lk.9:13-17).

Apostolic people are both trainers and trainees. Apostolic people select those willing to be trained and sent, and they back them up in the eyes of others. Apostolic people rejoice in the joy of others. They are co-workers for others’ joy, and they produce joy-givers (2.Co.1:24). See the Apostle Paul praise his “true son” Titus and also his spiritual children in Corinth:

13 Therefore we have been comforted in your comfort. And we rejoiced exceedingly more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

14 For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I am not ashamed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting to Titus was found true.

15 And his affections are greater for you as he remembers the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him.

16 Therefore I rejoice that I have confidence in you in everything (2.Co.7:13-16)

Apostolic people produce people they can fully trust and rely on. They rejoice in the dedication of those under their care. Apostolic people know that any allegiance always must be first to the Lord, then only to any human trainer.

5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

6 So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also

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complete this grace in you as well (2.Co.8:5-6)

Apostolic people share their lives with those who so give themselves and entrust them with more and more authority and responsibility (1.Thes.2:8). See Paul's instruction to this "true son Titus". The crucial task of appointing elders could be entrusted to a young apostle-in-the-making - of course, only under the direction of the senior "apostle-maker" Paul.

5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you -

6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.

7 For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,

8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,

9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict (Tit.1:5-9)

This apostle-in-the-making must have travelled extensively with Paul and his team. We see him in Antioch, Jerusalem, Ephesus, Macedonia, Corinth, Crete and finally with Paul at Rome during his second imprisonment. From Rome he was sent into Dalmatia as Paul's messenger to carry on the apostolic work he had learnt in his years with the Apostle Paul.

Apostolic people make sure their work doesn't end with their home-going. Apostolic people create church-planters who establish young believers in the faith, appoint elders and raise an apostolic posterity that will keep on blessing many generations.

APOSTOLIC PROTÉGÉS



Apostolic people train their God-given disciples, guarding them jealously like real-world protégés. Apostolic people follow the blueprint given by their Master Apostle, Jesus Himself.

After glorious days of healing ministry, the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him from Jerusalem. They came all the way to attack Jesus, but the first thing they did was question Him about His disciples!

Apostolic people understand the apostolic pact, the deep commitment and relationship between the mature apostle and his budding apostolic team. More than in any worldly sports team, the mistakes of any team member reflect back on the apostle and his ministry.

Apostolic people therefore protect those under them like a mother bear would protect her young.

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?”

6 He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.

7 And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men’” (Mk. 7:5-7)

This situation could have turned into a heated theological discussion, but our Master Apostle Jesus stopped it in its track. Immediate-

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ly, He exposed the vanity of outward religion, sharply rebuking those who pride themselves in it. The question about His disciples was totally forgotten in this strong doctrinal rebuke that left no room for any argument.

Yet apostolic people go even further. Making sure that our liberty in Christ can't be judged and innocent people can't get confused, Jesus called all the multitude to Himself and explained: ***“There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man”*** (Mk.7:14-15).

Such a strong, public stand for His disciples! WOW! Yes, there is nothing like being a heavenly protégé, an apostle-in-the-making, a true disciple of Christ!

Apostolic people take the brunt of the battle and hide their protégés under their wings. See again our great model Apostle Jesus. When Judas Ischariot, having received a detachment of troops and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came with lanterns, torches, and weapons to arrest Jesus, Jesus went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?”

5 They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am He.” And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them.

6 Now when He said to them, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

7 Then He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

8 Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way.”

9 that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none” (Jn.18:5-9)

Apostolic Protégés

Apostolic people protect their protégés with their own life, to the point of bloodshed. Apostolic people don't glory in their own victory, but in fulfilling God's mandate to protect those entrusted to them. Wow!

Apostolic people don't reject people for their weaknesses. Even when satan asks for sifting, and even if some proud attitude may have opened a door for satan to gain access, apostolic people pray and believe in a comeback of the wayward believer.

31 And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.

32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

33 But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death."

34 Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me" (Lk.22:31-34)

Apostolic people know both the strengths and the weaknesses of those entrusted to them by Father God Himself. Apostolic people may hint and try to warn them of coming danger, but there are deep heart attitudes that cannot be recognized by the protégé himself. Only coming into pressing situations can reveal the true inner strength of a person.

Apostolic people know therefore that they may have to allow their protégés some rude awakenings in order to expose their heart for them to see.

Apostolic people are very aware of the danger for those who "follow from a distance", as Peter did after the arrest of his Master Apostle Jesus (Mt.26:58; Mk.14:54; Lk.22:54). This following from a distance or "standing at the door outside" (Jn.18:16) was so important to God that He wrote it in all the four Gospels!

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When apostolic leaders are under attack, their followers may be shaken. Peter at least tried to stay close to know what would happen to his leader, while we read nothing about all the other disciples. When one of the slave girls recognized him and others started insisting that he knew Jesus, Peter denied thrice, even cursing and swearing (Mt.26:58-75; Mk.14:54-72; Lk.22:54-62; Jn.18:16-27)!

Oh yes, satan had come to sift Peter like wheat, and he was found lacking. As Jesus had prophesied, Peter denied Him three times in a short timespan. Yet how did our Master Apostle react to such blatant denial and betrayal?

56 And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, “This man was also with Him.”

57 But he denied Him, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.”

58 And after a little while another saw him and said, “You also are of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!”

59 Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, “Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean.”

60 But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are saying!” Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.

61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”

62 So Peter went out and wept bitterly (Lk.22:56-62)

Apostolic people never betray their protégés. They may need to correct and convict them, but they never publicly expose their weaknesses. Apostolic people trust in the power of God’s Holy Spirit to bring to remembrance the words they had spoken and to bring deep convic-

Apostolic Protégés

tion as their protégés see their own weakness and depravity. This apostolic training is indispensable for the formation of true, trustworthy, mature apostles.

Apostolic people rely on those who don't count their lives dear unto themselves, and they entrust their own lives into the hands of such protégés. Just as they protect the younger ones, these in turn protect the ageing apostles.

APOSTOLIC PROTECTION



Apostolic people have special protection. You doubt it? Well, just see Paul's lists of sufferings and onslaughts he happily survived! Definitely, ***"The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them"*** (Ps.34:7). How else than by a very deep rooted fear of God and love to God would anyone be willing to go through such trouble?

Apostolic people arouse spiritual conflict expressed in physical turmoil. Without special protection, many would have perished long ago.

After our Great Apostle Jesus defeated satan's temptations in the wilderness, He returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee and became immediately famous. He was glorified in all the synagogues where He taught, until He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up.

After reading the Scriptures, He proclaimed their fulfillment in Him. When they murmured, He prophesied that no prophet is accepted in his own country and reminded them how many miracles were done to foreigners while Israel suffered (Lk.4:1-27). This infuriated the Jews from His own hometown, at the very beginning of His ministry!

28 So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.

30 Then passing through the midst of them, He went His

way (Lk.4:28-30)

20 These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come (Jn.8:20)

Apostolic people go through hardships, even from their own people, from the very beginning of their ministry - but miraculously, they are saved out of all of them, like Peter and the apostles or like Paul and Barnabas were supernaturally rescued from jail (Ac.5:17-20; 12:1-11; 16:22-39).

Apostle Paul, still being called Saul, also experienced persecution and miraculous escape at the very beginning of his public testimony. This time the protection was not fully supernatural, but the fact that the Jews' plot became known to Saul was a miracle in itself.

Apostolic people experience protection in different ways, but each and every one is orchestrated by their Heavenly Father, the Great Apostle-Maker.

24 But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him.

25 Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket.

26 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple (Ac.9:24-26)

Saul's persecutions came not only from his old friends, the Jews, but also from his new family, the Christians. They were too afraid of him to receive him. God had to open Barnabas' heart to take Saul to the apostles who heard his testimony and discerned that his conversion was genuine. Yet the persecution didn't end with Jerusalem's acceptance.

Paul's bold disputing with the Hellenists made them attempt to

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kill him. This time, the brethren found out and sent him out to Tarsus (Ac.9:27-30). Another miraculous apostolic protection so early in his ministry!

As apostolic people push on through all these persecutions, their apostolic protection becomes more and more obvious. When God worked unusual miracles through the hands of Paul and even handkerchiefs and aprons from his body emitted power to cast out demons and heal diseases, great fear and conviction fell on the people. Yet a silversmith, worried about his income, stirred up the religious sentiment of the crowd.

29 So the whole city was filled with confusion, and rushed into the theater with one accord, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, Paul's travel companions.

30 And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him.

31 Then some of the officials of Asia, who were his friends, sent to him pleading that he would not venture into the theater (Ac.19:29-31)

Apostolic people are provided by God with wise, caring friends in the highest positions. When their apostolic zeal menaces to put them into life-threatening situations, these friends interfere and protect them. Satan may instigate murderous hatred towards apostolic people, but God has already positioned His deliverers, even in the form of officials and commanders, or in the form of citizenship or legal matters.

Apostolic people, just by their crystal clear testimony and teaching, really irritate satan and his underlings.

22 And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!"

23 Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and

threw dust into the air,

24 the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, and said that he should be examined under scourging, so that he might know why they shouted so against him.

25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, “Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?”

26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, “Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman” (Ac.19:22-26)

Apostolic people go through troubles and tribulations, but when the burden becomes too hard, the Lord Himself appears to comfort, strengthen and again commission them for their next task!

10 Now when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks.

11 But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome” (Ac.23:10-11)

Apostolic people have their lives led by the Divine Hand all through. Paul’s next protector was his own nephew, who warned the commander of an oath to kill Paul. This incident sent him to Governor Felix and finally to Rome. On the way, more troubles and more miraculous deliverances expected Paul, including a poisonous snake bite and a ship wreck (Ac.27 and 28).

Praise God, like always with apostolic people, the tests became testimonies for God’s apostolic protection!

APOSTOLIC PROVISION



Apostolic people experience and share God's very special provision. Apostle Peter's very calling was a miracle provision, like a promise from God that He will take care of His workers (Lk.5:1-11).

14 Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should live from the Gospel (1.Co.9:14)

Apostolic people are COMMANDED by the Lord Himself to live from the Gospel if they preach the Gospel! Of course, apostolic people can decide like the Apostle Paul not to be burdensome to anyone, even to work with their own hands in their old job if needed. This can be done to silence evil tongues who try to discredit the ministry (2.Co.11:6-11).

Apostolic people challenge the poor to give to God, because the Great Apostle Jesus taught that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Ac.20:35). How many times have we seen the widow's mite and the little boy's lunch multiplied to multitudes and multiplied also back to them!

Toward the end of His earthly time with them, Master Apostle Jesus asked His disciples, His apostles-to-be, an important question:

35 And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?" So they said, "Nothing" (Lk.22:35)

Apostolic people take care of their team, not necessarily with money, but with miracles. Apostle-to-be Peter experienced various miracle catches of fish. When he worried about how to pay the temple tax, Apostle Jesus handled the situation by teaching future apostles a pow-

erful spiritual lesson.

24 When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, “Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?”

25 He said, “Yes.” And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?”

26 Peter said to Him, “From strangers.” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free.

27 Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you” (Mt.17:24-27)

Apostolic people have a deep revelation of their heavenly citizenship (Phil.3:20). Apostolic people understand that they are not subject to earthly laws, not even to natural laws since heaven’s powers can very easily override them at God’s command (Isa.38:8).

Apostolic people are miracle workers who don’t depend on earthly provisions or supplies. Apostolic people follow the guidance of their Great Apostle Jesus into victorious life and ministry.

Apostolic people understand that they are transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of light, love, God’s Son (Col.1:13-14). They understand that the sons are free, yet they also understand that offending worldly authorities is not necessary. God’s miraculous provision is there for those who serve Him instead of serving the world’s system.

Apostolic people are trained by their Master Apostle Jesus to expect miracles of multiplication. How else would they even obey to make people sit in groups of fifty? How would they even obey to start

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distributing two fish and five breads to five thousand men, without counting the women (Lk.9:13-17)?

Apostolic people have learned to give their all, to give themselves, to their Savior. They have learned to be broken in His hands and distributed among the multitudes.

Apostolic people feed nations by their obedience, faith, preaching, teaching, lifestyle - by their mere presence!

APOSTOLIC PRIESTHOOD



The Early Apostles decided not to serve tables, but to give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word (Ac.6:4). Isn't it interesting that right after declaring the LORD Jahweh "greater than all the gods" and bringing sacrifices to Him, Moses' father-in-law Jethro received God's wisdom to counsel Moses, an Old-Testament type of apostle:

19 Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God.

20 And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do (Ex.18:19-20)

The priesthood of apostles should never be forgotten in the hectic of apostolic life and ministry. Sitting with people, judging between them and trying to solve their problems was "not good"! It would only wear out both the apostle and those with him, even the very people he tries to minister to (Ex.18:17-18)!

God through this "new believer" Jethro gives His wise counsel: Apostolic people should stand before God for the people and bring their difficulties to God. Why, what for? Well, to hear God's solution to all these problems, of course! And then, what was Moses supposed to do with the solutions? He was to teach his people from God's statutes and laws how they should walk and how they should work.

Apostolic people need to be at the pulse of the people, knowing their struggles and sorrows; but can an apostle sit with everyone and

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solve individual problems? Jethro's counsel was that only the most difficult cases should come to Moses, only what could not be handled by the rulers over thousands, the rulers of hundreds, the rulers of fifties, and the rulers of tens. In this way, the apostle would know the most serious situations and circumstances his people were facing; he could intercede and then teach God's solution to the entire congregation.

Apostolic people can save cities and nations by their apostolic priesthood. Old Testament apostle Abraham pleaded and bargained with God for Sodom, and he could get God's promise not to destroy the city if even only ten righteous people would be found in it.

Alas, not even Lot's own married daughters could be saved since their husbands were from that wicked, morally and spiritually polluted place that had rebelled against God for years. No ten righteous could be found, and Sodom and Gomorra were destroyed (Ge.18 and 19).

Apostolic people in the New Testament have that same authority to intercede for humanity, plus they have the tremendous benefit of having words of eternal life to give to those bound in sin and depravity!

Apostolic people have the privilege of training budding apostles and sending them out to preach everywhere the Kingdom message:

2 ...Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Mt.3:2b)

Hallelujah! Let me show you some New Testament apostolic priesthood prayers straight from the heart of our dear Apostle Paul:

16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,

18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the

riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power

20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come (Eph.1:16-21)

Why would the Holy Spirit record Paul's apostolic prayers in the Bible? Definitely because He wants us to know and to imitate these prayers from God's heart. He wants us to feel the apostolic urgency for God's people to grasp the revelation of life in Christ and its tremendous authority.

Just before this second prayer, Paul revels in the unsearchable riches of Christ, the mystery of the ages and the manifold wisdom of God which should be made known by the Church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

For this reason he prays this prayer for the Ephesian believers:

14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that

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you, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height -

19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph.3:14-19)

Apostolic people should never forget and never neglect their priestly ministry of intercession for God's people!

Apostolic people create through apostolic intercession and apostolic teaching a brand of apostolic people who go out to destroy the works of the devil, just like their Master Apostle Jesus did (1.Jn.3:8)!

APOSTOLIC PRIORITIES



Apostolic people have priorities others may not have. Apostolic people do not live for themselves, nor do they die for themselves. Apostolic people are extremely aware of the responsibility they carry. They know that their life counts as an example, positive or negative, to multitudes, both of believers and of unbelievers.

19 For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.

21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Phil.1:19-21)

Apostolic people consider God's glory above any personal desire, even to the point of not knowing whether to desire life or death. Heaven is so real to apostolic people that death is nothing to be afraid of, but even gain! Apostolic people know their God and their God-given authority so well that they even know they can choose - choose whether to live or to die!!!

22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.

23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

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24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.

25 And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,

26 that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again (Phil.1:22-26)

Apostolic people don't need to fret and worry. They have given themselves to their God, and He has given Himself to them. They have given Him full control over their lives. They live for Him, not for themselves.

Therefore, apostolic people don't need to beg and cry and worry for their lives. If God does a miracle and saves them from distress, praise God! If God allows them to die a martyr's death, praise God!

But knowing the tremendous need for God's Word and God's work in the world, apostolic people know that as long as they are willing to serve Him, they can be confident that they shall live on for His glory and the joy of His people.

Even in jail, apostolic people seek the glory of God, Christ to be magnified. How different from most believers who may not even ask God's will for their lives, talk what they want, live wherever they want, work whatever they want, and consider or even commit suicide.

Apostolic people's priorities are God and His glory, no matter what.

In short, apostolic people's attitude is: Heaven is great, but there is tooooooo much work for God to be done down here, so let's stay and go for it!

APOSTOLIC PIETY



Apostolic people may seem rough and tough, but they have a deep piety and fear of God. This fear of God manifests itself in self-restraint for the sake of others who may have a weaker conscience.

Apostolic piety would do anything to avoid hurting God or hurting others.

Please patiently read how much time and effort the Apostle Paul takes to explain the issue of food offered to idols. He could just command or shrug his shoulders, despising the weaker brothers, but he didn't!

Apostolic people truly carry God's heart, the heart of the Good Shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine in search of the one lost sheep (Jn.10:11; Lk.15:4-7).

1 Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

2 And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

4 Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.

5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords),

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6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.

7 However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

8 But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

9 But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.

10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols?

11 And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble (1.Co.8:1-13)

Apostolic people have one goal in life: To know Jesus and to make Him known to others. For that purpose, apostolic people are willing to lay down their desires, their pleasures, their ambitions, yes, their very lives.

Apostolic people live their piety like their Great Apostle Jesus, who gave Himself not only partially, but totally for the salvation of the world (Phil.2:8; 1.Jn.3:16).

APOSTOLIC PROPRIETY



Apostolic people are deliverers of God's people and of unbelievers and must therefore show great propriety in their behavior.

Apostolic people move with great prudence, wisdom and care in order not to shun anyone away from the Gospel.

And yet, apostolic people make spiritual matters very clear, without hypocrisy or man-pleasing. Let's see how our Apostle Paul handled a delicate situation:

11 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed;

12 for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision.

13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?" (Ga.2:11-14)

Apostolic people are born leaders, and their actions will automatically be followed and imitated by many. Wise decisions and careful walk in the light are apostles' daily bread. Seeing new believers pollut-

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ed by hypocrisy, apostolic people don't hold back. They expose openly the wrong done. However, they do it very prudently, not attacking or accusing, not blaming one another in front of others.

Apostolic people protect the purity of the Gospel among new believers as well as among the apostolic team from hypocrisy, man-pleasing and eye-service.

Apostolic people walk with propriety among the most diverse people groups. Being free, they willingly make themselves servants to all.

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

20 and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;

21 to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law;

22 to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

23 Now this I do for the Gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you (1.Co.9:19-23)

Apostolic people have truly died to themselves. Apostolic people truly live for the Gospel and the Gospel alone.

APOSTOLIC PROJECTIONS



Apostolic people are vexed by anything hindering or even blocking their outward and forward projections

The Early Apostles felt much frustrated with the daily chores and puny contentions in the Early Church. They felt they were wasting their lives, wasting their God-given commission, wasting their potential in menial administrative works. They therefore took a strong decision:

2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables.

3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word” (Ac.6:2-4)

As a ministry grows, the counsel Moses received from his father-in-law Jethro should be heeded (Ex.18:13-26). I remember pastors asking me to pray against “the spiritual barrier in the heavenlies” that would not allow the church to grow beyond 200 members, 500 members or any number where church growth seemed to be stunted.

Interestingly, at times the solution was simply heeding Jethro’s advice and putting some administrative structure in place.

Your ministry can grow! Your ministry should grow! The only accusation brought forth against apostolic people should be the one

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brought against the Early Apostles: “Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine...” (Ac.5:28)!

Apostolic projections aim at the whole world, true to the Great Commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus (Mt.28:18-20; Mk.16:15-20). Apostolic people receive a visitation and commission with a specific task, often to bring a forgotten or not yet discovered truth from God’s Word into the Body of Christ.

Apostolic people are anointed with God’s Holy Ghost to be His witnesses, His martyrs, demonstrating His power beginning in their own Jerusalem (which means, their family, their neighbors, their city...), Judea, all Samaria and finally to the ends of the earth (Ac.1:8).

Apostolic people set their heart fully on their heavenly, God-given life mission. There is no wavering, no wasting, no wondering, no worrying. God’s playing field is open before them, and they are like horses, impatient to run into the battle.

And yet, apostolic people have a clear sense of ethics. Like Israel after the fall of the Jericho wall, true apostles go to take territory from satan’s hands, every man straight before him, without pushing or disturbing others in their divine commission. Apostolic people don’t know jealousy, only a godly kind of competition (Jos.6:20; Heb.10:24).

Sadly, I had to see people who called themselves apostles, without any fruit of their labor, without any followers, without even a church under their leadership. One book written by such a person made him famous worldwide, and he rode the wave of this fame like surfers ride the ocean waves.

He travelled from nation to nation and asked good, established, truly apostolic ministries to come “under his covering” by paying their tithes to him. By this practice, he could brag that he was an apostle with churches in so many nations, so many continents.

I still remember how grieved I was in my spirit, even though I was

a very young believer. I just felt something was terribly wrong with this supposed “apostle”, and I begged my apostle friend who had established his ministry with sweat and tears not to accept that “covering”.

And surely, after that self-appointed “apostle” left the nation, the hotel presented to us the passport copies of young girls he had called to his room “for a massage” and the bills for the most expensive champagne available in the nation. Later on, I heard similar stories from his visits in other nations also. What a horrible abuse of God’s precious ministry!

How different is the true apostolic ministry and heart attitude God’s great Apostle Paul shows us:

13 We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us - a sphere which especially includes you.

14 For we are not overextending ourselves (as though our authority did not extend to you), for it was to you that we came with the Gospel of Christ;

15 not boasting of things beyond measure, that is, in other men’s labors, but having hope, that as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere,

16 to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man’s sphere of accomplishment (2.Co.10:13-16)

Apostolic people pour their heart into those under their care. They especially impart their burden for the salvation of souls.

Apostolic people simply cannot tolerate lukewarm Christianity, selfish prayers and a comfortable, self-seeking lifestyle.

Apostolic people set their projections on the “regions beyond” with one single aim:

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20 And so I have made it my aim to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation (Ro.15:20)

8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing (2.Ti.4:8)

Apostolic people don't seek any human approval. There is no insecurity, no self-seeking, no self-defense. As they fulfill God's heart burden of soul salvation, they know and look forward to the eternal reward their God has in store for them.

APOSTOLIC PRESENTATION



Apostolic people have a unique way of presenting Bible truths. It is very interesting to see the different kinds of presentation of the same Bible truth presented by the different ministry gifts.

While an evangelist mostly preaches about the healings Jesus did in the Gospels and calls his hearers to meet this healing Jesus at the Cross, and while a teacher happily explains the different venues of healing, a true apostle sees, hates and hits the demonic powers behind the sickness. While a pastor may cover his sheep in love and compassion and a prophet may expose and demand repentance from the root sin that opened the door for sickness and satan to set in, a true apostle goes into straight spiritual confrontation with the demons causing and perpetuating the disease.

Think about God's "apostles of healing", that is, people like John Alexander Dowie and Smith Wigglesworth. Were they sweet, soft-spoken people? Oh no! British plumber Smith Wigglesworth was known for hitting cancers out of bodies with his fists and even kicking dying babies like footballs!

What was his motivation for such atrocities? It was his enormous hatred against satan's works manifested in these bodies, temples of God's Spirit, created in the image and likeness of God (Ac.10:38; 1.Jn.3:8; Ge.1:26; 1.Co.3:16-17).

Apostolic people present healing differently than for example an evangelist would do. Apostolic people are not only teachers, they are trainers who can function in each of the five-fold ministry gifts. Some explain the special mission and position of an apostle with that of a thumb in a human hand. The thumb can easily touch all the other four

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fingers and safely cover them when a fist is made.

Apostolic people can operate in the other giftings, a specialty very needed for them as they venture into new territories to plant churches, outposts and mission stations.

Apostolic people always challenge believers into exercising their own authority and taking responsibility for their own lives. See how God's Apostle Paul describes the healing, life-giving resurrection power of Christ flowing through the body of every true believer:

11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you (Ro.8:11)

Apostolic people place a strong challenge before the believers. There is no "I will pray for you". There is no "Oh, you poor sick little thing, let me comfort you."

Apostolic people give a strong assertion of Bible truth and a challenge to apply this truth to holy living, guilt-free living and even healthy living.

Another typically apostolic presentation of God's healing power is found in Acts 10:

38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him (Ac.10:38)

In my own life, this Scripture was the Holy Ghost atom bomb exploding in my spirit, showing me the true origin of sickness: not bacteria, not viruses, not genetics, not environment - it was the devil!

Actually, it was the devil oppressing people! So sickness had to be seen as oppression from satan, and healing was to be done by the

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anointing and power of the Holy Spirit, because God is with us. What a life-transforming revelation for a scientist like me!

The strong apostolic punch behind this Scripture first taught and empowered me to kick different kinds of ailments, sicknesses and diseases out of my own body. Many of them had been present in me since my childhood, but this one Scripture enabled to me resist satan's oppression and go free - mostly all alone at home, without even anyone to lay hands on me!

A few years later, God's Holy Spirit instructed me to read this well-known Scripture again. When I did so, He pointed out to me that now, after living sickness-free for some years, it was my time to arise and do what our Lord Jesus had done: Go around, do good and heal all who are oppressed by the devil, for God is with me (Ac.10:38)!

Apostolic presentation, be it through a mature apostle, an apostolic person or God's Word alone, definitely carries a special anointing to train, equip and send God's people into victory.

APOSTOLIC PITFALLS



Apostolic people need to be aware of specific pitfalls along their way into apostolic maturity. Tragically, only heaven will tell how many were called to be apostles but could not be chosen by God, simply because they neglected or stubbornly refused to follow God's training program. Always remember the sobering words of our Great Apostle Jesus:

16 So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen (Mt.20:16)

14 For many are called, but few are chosen (Mt.22:14)

Study the context of both Scriptures. Jesus warns about jealousy in ministry and about lack of repentance, not wearing the robe of righteousness, somehow sneaking in, even of the danger of hellfire! Shocking, isn't it?

Doesn't this explain the tragic state of our world today? How many people are in spiritual darkness, simply because nobody went to turn them from darkness to light (Ac.26:18; Ro.10:13-15)?!?

How many accuse God of cruelty, simply because nobody accepted His challenge to live as a son of peace or to go and preach the Gospel of reconciliation with God (Lk.6:1-11; 2.Co.5:18-21)?!?

5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

6 So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well (2.Co.8:5-6)

Apostolic people need to have their allegiance clear: First God, then their God-given leader. Diligently completing their responsibility for lives entrusted to them is a hallmark of apostolic people and a possible pitfall if neglected (Heb.13:17).

Apostolic people need to avoid greed and lust of money at any cost. The temptation is great since money may be laid at their feet spontaneously, as happened to Apostle Peter in the Early Church (Ac.4:34 - 5:2).

18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money.

19 saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

20 But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!"

21 You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God.

22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.

23 For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity" (Ac.8:18-23)

Apostolic people need to keep their clear vision of the damage money can do to servants of God (2.Ki.5:20-27). Miracles attract money, and apostolic miracles are mighty and many. So especially apostolic people need to keep their heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life (Pr.4:23).

Apostolic people need to make sure they never fall into the trap of following human war strategies instead of seeking God's input. Had

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Old Testament apostle David failed here, he would never have been as successful as he was in leading God's people to victory. His love songs to his God and his choice to fall into God's hands, not man's hands show why God Himself called him a man after His own heart (1.Sa.13:14; 2.Sa.23:1; 24:14; Ac.13:22).

Apostolic people conquer any Goliath, find God's strategies and hear the armies of heaven advance in mulberry trees (1.Sa.17; 1.Sa.23:2; 2.Sa.5:23-24).

Apostolic people must have special angelic protection for their special missions. God may at times allow them to see or hear them, just as an encouragement for their faith to know they are ALWAYS with them as apostolic people diligently seek and follow God's war strategies!

Apostolic people need to keep up a lifestyle of fasting and prayer (Mk.9:14-29). As they go into uncharted territory, they confront unchallenged principalities and powers in the heavenlies by their Gospel preaching. Witches, warlocks and even normal people living in such dark spiritual atmosphere may be possessed with strong regional demons, and many of those won't go out without fasting and prayer (Mt.17:21).

Apostolic people smash controversy by God's miracle power (Mk.2:1-12). Powerless ministry gives opportunity to the critics of the Gospel to discuss and dispute. Apostolic power ends arguments in no time. Apostolic people must guard their zeal for God's glory and keep God's honor as their main objective till their last breath.

Apostolic people need to guard their hearts against routine ministry and prayerlessness. Accustomed to traveling with their Apostle Jesus, the closest apostles-in-training slept deeply even after their master pleaded with them thrice in deep anguish (Mk.14:32-42). See the distressed heart cry of Jesus, and yet his main apostles failed to share His burden!!!

33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He

began to be troubled and deeply distressed.

34 Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch” (Mk.14:33-34)

Apostolic people must be careful to never lose the soul burden straight from God’s heart. They must keep the price Jesus paid for the salvation of humanity burning in their spirit.

Apostolic people must be careful not to lose their ministry burden when they face disappointments. Apostle-to-be Peter was willing to go back to his old job, and others followed this born leader into still more frustration and loss (Jn.21:3). Many people’s callings can be aborted by a discouraged apostle, so better do like Apostle David: Strengthen yourself in your God in times of distress (1.Sa.30:6).

Apostolic people need to constantly control and subdue their basic human nature that seeks position and recognition (Lk.9:46-48; 14:7-11; 22:24-27). The more their apostolic miracles elevate them in people’s eyes, the more they must keep learning from their Great Apostle Jesus:

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls (Mt.11:29)

Apostolic people desperately need to make sure they constantly live in the rest of faith (Heb.4). Finding rest for their souls is paramount for stressful ministries like the apostolic. Praise God, our Great Apostle Jesus showed us the way!

Apostolic people are achievers, administrators, active people. They love to do administration and put their fingers into every detail of the ministry. There comes, however, a point where they need to decide their future, their anointing, even their real usefulness in apostolic ministry:

I Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the

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daily distribution.

2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables.

3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word” (Ac.6:1-4)

Apostolic people must make sure they keep up their Prayer and Word lifestyle. Anything else will exhaust them to the point where any disappointment or defeat threatens to send them back “fishing”, back to their old life.

Sadly, I have seen powerful apostles allowing hurt in their lives and falling back into old sins from before their conversion. The most horrible thing is that some just go on ministering, playing the great, holy apostle, deceiving multitudes and bringing them under the same demonic spirit that took hold of them! God will warn and rebuke, first privately, then even publicly, but if such “apostles” don’t confess and change, destruction of their lives and ministries is sure.

What about women? Well, do you find any problem with women in any of the apostolic people we studied? Yes, out of fear, Abram told a half-lie about his half-sister-wife, but God intervened powerfully and no sin was committed (Ge.12:11-20; 20:2-18).

Yes, David did fall into sin with Bathsheba when he left his apostolic responsibilities and indulged in a fleshly lifestyle (2.Sa.11 and 12; Ga.5:16). Horrible curses followed his family line after this sin. Anyone else? Old Testament? New Testament?

Apostolic people are simply too busy for God and His Kingdom, prayer and the Word, to even think about women or illegal affairs. Any-

Apostolic Pitfalls

one calling himself “apostle” and abusing his power with women is a public shame, a false apostle, and will not go undetected for a long time (2.Ti.3:6-9).

Keeping the hunger for God’s Presence and Glory and keeping busy in His Kingdom is the main protection from falling into any of the many apostolic pitfalls.

APOSTOLIC PREJUDICE



Apostolic people with their strong character are in acute danger of allowing prejudice against people, doctrines, belief systems, nationalities and anything imaginable. Think about it! The salvation of the Gentiles was at stake even twice because of Peter's strong apostolic convictions. When Peter tried to save his leader, Apostle Jesus, from suffering and death, Jesus had to rebuke the demonic influence behind his loving words!

21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

22 Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men" (Mt.16:21-23)

Even though Apostle Jesus declared God's Word and God's plan to him, apostle-in-the-making Peter's opinion was so strong that he dared REBUKE his master! Oh yes, apostolic people are very strong personalities!

A second time the salvation of the Gentiles was at stake, this time through a full-fledged Apostle Peter. God's Father heart was already communicating with heathen centurion Cornelius, "a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously

to the people, and prayed to God always". God sent an angel to reveal Peter's whereabouts, and Cornelius took action sending men to Joppa (Ac.10:1-8).

9 The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour.

10 Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance

11 and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth.

12 In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air.

13 And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."

14 But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."

15 And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common."

16 This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again (Ac.10:9-16)

When God wanted to send His Apostle Peter to God-fearing and God-seeking Cornelius, He knew He had to break through layers of Jewish prejudice. Somehow, satan had convinced the apostles and the disciples that salvation was only for the Jews, although the entire Old Testament speaks about salvation for the Gentiles! See how much God had to do to break through Peter's apostolic prejudice!

19 While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you.

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20 Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them.

21 Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, “Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?”

22 And they said, “Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you” (Ac.10:19-22)

Praise God, after all these supernatural dealings of God, Peter and some brethren went with them to Caesarea. Seeing many gathered to hear God’s Word from him, Peter told them,

28 ... “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

29 Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?” (Ac.10:28-29)

Finally, after hearing from Cornelius himself about the visit of the angel and his message, Peter’s prejudice was broken:

34 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.

35 But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him” (Ac.10:34-35)

Apostolic people must be careful not to reject others or create divisions in the Body of Christ over doctrines. Apostolic people should always endeavor unity of faith, unity for territory. Apostolic people don’t

Apostolic Prejudice

allow their personal revelations to create a rift in the Church. They patiently and humbly explain God's guidance and thus enable others also to rejoice in God's gift of salvation (Ac.11:1-18).

Apostolic people open new areas of ministry for others also as they follow God's guidance. Their courage propels others to follow them into new, formerly feared or rejected harvest fields like prostitution areas, leprosy colonies, business or cinema world, etc. Breaking stigma and prejudice is paramount for world evangelism, and apostolic people are predestined to do it!

Apostolic people must be willing to give up even reasonable prejudices, as the Apostle Paul had to do concerning John Mark. His mistrust in the ability of the young man who had returned home right at the beginning of a missionary journey was so severe that he parted from Barnabas, his closest companion for years (Ac.15:36-40)! Later on, however, we see Paul's prejudice broken in his command to his apostle-in-the-making Timothy:

11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry (2.Ti.4:11)

Apostolic people must beware of doctrinal prejudice also in another area. Some have been deceived by satan into thinking, "We apostles must run and work; it's the prophets job to sit on some mountain top and pray". This misconception has stolen much of the power of a genuine apostolic ministry as the Early Church experienced. See again the decision the Early Apostles took:

4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word" (Ac.6:4)

See the outcome:

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds (2.Co.12:12)

APOSTOLIC PERJURY



Apostolic perjury? Does such a thing even exist? Oh yes, and in a way you may not recognize.

Do you remember our dear disciple Peter, the Rock-and-no-longer-Reed Simon? Do you remember his boisterous, flamboyant, noisy and self-confident apostolic character? The traits of an apostle could clearly be seen at this stage, but he had quite a way to go toward true apostleship.

At the Last Supper, when Jesus declared to His disciples that one of them would betray Him, all questioned Him, “Lord, is it I?” And yet, when Jesus announced that in that very night, all would be made to stumble, Peter couldn’t accept it (Mt.27:17-32):

33 Peter answered and said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.”

34 Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”

35 Peter said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And so said all the disciples (Mt.26:34-3)

See the sad progression from there. Once disaster broke out and his life seemed in danger, Peter’s bold assertions were forgotten. After such powerful words and promises, Peter first followed Jesus at a distance to see the end (Mt.26:58). Later, as Peter sat outside in the courtyard, a servant girl recognized him, but he denied before the entire crowd that he even knew Jesus. He then went out even further, to the gateway, where another servant girl recognized him. This time, Peter even de-

Apostolic Perjury

nied with an oath that he knew Jesus! See what happened when finally a whole crowd approached him:

74 Then he began to curse and swear, saying, “I do not know the Man!” Immediately a rooster crowed.

75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” So he went out and wept bitterly (Mt.26:74-75)

Apostolic perjury! “I don’t know the man!” What a blatant lie, repeated even thrice in all its different expressions! Luckily, this boisterous Peter could cry when he saw his utter frailty, his inability to keep the promises he had so confidently made. His loud but weak character had let him down, and he recognized it.

Praise God, none of this was of any surprise to Father God and Son Jesus. See the same account described by evangelist Luke:

31 And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.

32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.

33 But he said to Him, “Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.”

34 Then He said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me” (Lk.22:31-34)

What a comfort! Your God knows your weaknesses even when you don’t, and He has His ways to show you and change you! Only when Peter could see his own utter depravity, he could cry and repent. Feeling useless and unworthy, he decided to go back to his old profession, fishing.

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Sadly, being a born leader, others followed even his wrong decision (Jn.21:3).

Please read the entire chapter 21 of John's Gospel. It is part and parcel of the making of an apostle. Leaving an apostolic calling and training makes your life useless, frustrating, and fruitless. The entire night of toil couldn't earn these run-away apostles-in-training even a dime. Gladly, Peter's heart still pulled him toward Jesus as soon as he recognized Him by His miracle power (Jn.21:7).

Jesus, however, didn't allow the story to end there. He made very sure that Peter pledged his love and allegiance to Jesus thrice, just as he had denied Him thrice. And Jesus taught Peter not to look at others, not to compare himself with others, but to follow Him on his own behalf (Jn.21:15-17, 20-22).

I believe that many business people are actually called to be apostles. Their character is just so strikingly similar to our dear disciple Peter before he was polished as a disciple of Jesus. Their energy, their push to expand, their desire to get their product marketed to a maximum amount of people, all of these are apostolic traits.

Just like Simon Peter, many business people would have made great promises, maybe even of eternal allegiance and service, to Jesus. At least they would have promised to support God's work with their finances. And then, catastrophe hit! Their public testimony of Jesus threatened to kill their contacts, their contracts, maybe even their business future. What a temptation to resort to apostolic perjury!

Are you such a "market place apostle"? Are you called maybe even into spiritually active apostolic ministry? Your God knows your strengths and your weaknesses. Even a perjury like, "I don't know the man!" doesn't shock Him. Let me tell you: Nothing you do while running from His calling can ever succeed, so better surrender like our dear Apostle Peter:

15 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than

these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.”

16 He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My sheep.”

17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep” (Jn.21:15-17)

Cancel any perjury right now by aggressively declaring your love and eternal loyalty to the Great I Am, the sweet Lover of your soul, and receive His calling into your apostolic duty!

Wherever your God has placed you, tend and feed those He has placed under your care, be it your family, your co-workers, your employees, your church members or your community. Shepherd them with a truly apostolic heart, given to you by your Heavenly Father.

APOSTOLIC PRUDENCE



Apostolic people know their life counts, their life is precious, their life cannot be wasted. Apostolic people carefully cut any ties that could keep them from fulfilling their heavenly mission. These ties can be manifold. People can miss their calling because of relationships, family, friends, money, health concerns, fears, bad counsels, studies, jobs, houses, lands, affinity to people or places... there are countless ways satan tries to hold people back from their destiny in God.

Apostolic people are no exception, but their spirit may be more aggressive against the works of satan. Apostolic people desire God and His supernatural world more than the natural world. Apostolic people live in prayer, especially in tongues prayer, and are therefore more able to discern supernatural attacks.

Apostolic people do not allow family ties, position or property to hold them back from God's calling. Apostle Moses left everything and everyone and became the deliverer of God's people. Apostle Abram left everything and everyone and became the father of faith for the whole world (Ge.12:1-3). Apostle Jesus even completely redefined family connections:

32 And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You."

33 But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?"

34 And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!"

35 For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother” (Mk.3:32-35)

Apostolic people know there is only one father, the Heavenly Father, but all those who do God’s will are immediate family! What a glorious life to have immediate family all over the world, in any language, dialect, skin color, social group - all one Body in Christ!

In my travels to over fifty nations, it has always been my great delight to connect with totally different looking people who enjoy the same character school and spiritual training by the same Father and same Blood Brother like me! Gloryyyy!

Apostolic people like Gideon can go from a fearful, hiding weakling to a successful army commander simply by prudently destroying at God’s command any demonic hold, family hold or society hold (Jdg.6:11-32).

Apostolic people like Paul know they have the full right to take along on their journeys a believing wife like other apostles do, but some prefer not to marry so they can put their full attention and energy into Kingdom work (1.Co.9:5; Mt.19:12; 1.Co.7:26-31).

Apostolic people are extremely prudent not to allow any distraction or entanglement for their monumental task.

32 But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord - how he may please the Lord.

33 But he who is married cares about the things of the world - how he may please his wife (1.Co.7:32-33)

23 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify (1.Co.10:23)

Apostolic people are extremely prudent in their daily walk. As they

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teach the Body of Christ, they practice, by the power of the Holy Spirit interacting with their human spirit, putting to death the deeds of the body.

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live (Ro.8:13)

Apostolic people know they don't need any worldly riches or honor. They are prudent not to be entangled by having to care for property, lands, houses... How can they be so free from care and worry? Well, apostolic people know, they have a crown of righteousness and an eternal mansion in heaven waiting for them!

8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing (2.Ti.4:8)

4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you (1.Pe.1:4)

2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you (Jn.14:2)

Apostolic people run for the eternal reward and are very prudent not to be slowed down by any sin that so easily entangles (Heb.12:1-2).

APOSTOLIC PAIN



Apostolic people carry a deep pain in their heart. They can't bear seeing the lost, knowing they are aimlessly wandering around, being pulled and pushed according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.

Apostolic people know the unsaved keep fulfilling the lusts and desires of the flesh and of the mind and are enemies of God in their minds.

Apostolic people know they are dead in trespasses and sins, and eternal damnation awaits them (Eph.2:1-3).

Apostolic people can never escape the pressing pain of responsibility, knowing they carry the Words of Life. They know people, and even believers and disciples, have no other place to go than to the ones who carry and represent God Father, the Judge of the whole world (Jn.6:68; 14:9; Ge.18:2).

Apostolic people continually bear the weight of their God-given task to preach to those who have not heard, and turn them from idols to the Living, Loving Father God (Ro.10:14; 15:21; Eze.14:6; 1.Thes.1:9).

1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.

3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh (Ro.9:1-3)

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The burden for soul salvation is so strong in apostolic people that they may even wish or pray for God to blot them out of the Book of Life like Moses did when Israel made and worshiped the golden calf (Ex.32:31-33).

Apostolic people understand the heart beat of the God who yearns for all His creation to spend eternity in fellowship with Him. They know that, as they have dedicated their lives to be used for His glory, anything that happens in their lives must serve for the comfort and salvation of others.

Apostolic people experience God's loving character and mercy, and as they go through troubles and tribulations, they rejoice, knowing the outcome will be blessing and salvation for others.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.

6 Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

7 And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation (2.Co.1:3-7)

Just like their Old Testament Apostle Moses, they esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. How could he have such an attitude? He looked to the reward, the earthly and especially the eternal (Heb.11:26).

Apostolic Pain

Just like their Great Apostle Jesus, apostolic people are able to bear any pain, cross or shame. For what? For the joy set before them, the joy of seeing others saved, consoled and comforted (Heb.12:1-2).

Apostolic people happily endure this God-given pain, knowing that as they share in the sufferings of Christ, they will also be partakers of the glory that will be revealed (1.Pe.1:11; 5:1).

APOSTOLIC PEAK



Apostolic people, and actually every believer, reach their peak when they understand the fundamental truth of the Gospel:

20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me (Ga.2:20)

This truth makes them rest from own efforts, and miraculously, greater works are done through them as they take their hands off and let God work through them. This lifestyle demands a constant walk in the Spirit which automatically results in the fruit of the Spirit:

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Ga.5:16)

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit (Ga.5:22-25)

Apostolic people have died to the lusts of the flesh. They have crucified the flesh with its desires (Ga.5:24). They walk in the Spirit and automatically display the fruit of the Spirit. Struggling with sin

and temptation is for truly apostolic people a thing of the past, even unthinkable. They consciously partake of the life and death of their Great Apostle Jesus, always keeping Him before their eyes, and shall therefore not be moved or shaken (Ps.16:8).

10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Heb.2:10)

1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God (1.Pe.4:1-2)

Mature apostolic people have no plans or desires of their own. They have come to trust their Heavenly Father so completely that they know deep inside: God's will is always the best, both for them and for others. They have truly given themselves as living sacrifices and reap the benefits of God's guidance (Ro.12:1-2).

22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,

23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.

24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the Gospel of the grace of God (Ac.20:22-24)

Apostolic people can peacefully walk toward their own cross, just like their Great Apostle Jesus walked like a lamb before the shearer, carrying his own Cross (Ac.8:31; Jn.19:17). Apostolic people can sleep in any storm or in any jail. Apostolic people know - not by head knowl-

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edge but by life-transforming revelation knowledge - that they are in the world, but not of the world (Jn.17:14-16).

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself (Phil.3:20)

Apostolic people, just like their Great Apostle Jesus, work while it is day, knowing the night is coming when no-one can work (Jn.9:4). Apostolic people are not attached to the world or its pleasures.

Apostolic people are ready to leave earth for their heavenly home anytime, but that doesn't make them lazy. Their apostolic zeal propels them until their last breath to fulfill their calling. They run for the eternal price of souls snatched from satan.

Apostolic people do compete, but not with one another. They compete for the imperishable crown and their eternal reward in heaven.

25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown (1.Co.9:25)

APOSTOLIC PERFECTION



As apostolic people grow in their walk with God, they gain more and more authority to train upcoming leaders. They always encourage by pointing towards the coming glory, while never leaving out their strong exhortation towards holy life and righteous, selfless leadership:

1 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:

2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away (1.Pe.5:1-4)

Just like the Apostle Peter, the Apostle Paul, knowing that his home-going was near, warned, encouraged and strengthened his next leaders (2.Ti.4:1-5).

Apostolic people are diligent in feeding their flocks. They are faithful and wise servants, feeding them the right spiritual food in due season.

Apostolic people know the coming of the Lord is at hand, and they are too busy preparing the Bride of Christ to engage in beating their fellow servants or drinking with the drunkards (Mt.24:44-51). See Paul's

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encouragement and challenge to his elders from Ephesus.

18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you,

19 serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

20 how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,

21 testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,

23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.

24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the Gospel of the grace of God.

25 And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more.

26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men.

27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to

shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood (Ac.20:18-28)

Apostolic people live a life above reproach. They truly have died to themselves and are alive only to God for His purposes (Ro.6:4-12).

Apostolic people take every opportunity to testify to anyone. Although Paul knew that he had been entrusted with the Gospel to the Gentiles, he never stopped trying to win the Jews also!

Apostolic people don't keep back anything helpful. Apostolic people never shun to declare the whole counsel of God, not only their favorite subjects or doctrines. That's why apostolic people can boldly testify: "***I am innocent of the blood of all men***" (Ac.20:26)! What a perfection of life, ministry and testimony!

Apostolic people have one burning passion: Seeing Christ live and move in each and every one under their care. They labor to bring the entire Body of Christ into doing the work of the ministry. They strive to make them grow into the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect man, into the fullness of Christ.

Apostolic people tirelessly minister to bring believers from unstable childhood into their position and task in the Body of Christ (Eph.4:13-17).

19 My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you (Ga.4:19)

Apostolic people live like their home-going could happen anytime. Therefore, they always make sure they walk righteously and blamelessly before God and men. Toward the end of his earthly life, the Apostle Paul could confidently state:

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I

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have kept the faith.

8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing (2.Ti.4:8)

As always, apostolic people think about others, not just about themselves. Not only they receive the crown of righteousness for all their ardent labor, but all who loved His appearing do!

12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him (Jam.1:12)

Apostolic people definitely qualify for this crown of life! Apostolic people prove their love to their Lord a million times by enduring temptations, trials and hardships others cannot even imagine.

Oh yes, in all their struggles, apostolic people are blessed and brought to perfection!

APOSTOLIC PROBLEM-SOLVING



Apostolic people have interesting ways of solving problems. With sharp discernment and situational awareness, they make use of anything that may distract satan's plans.

Seeing opposing parties represented, the Apostle Paul made sure with one single sentence that no judgment against him could be agreed on. This one wise sentence turned the attention away from him toward doctrinal issues, and finally secular authorities rescued Paul from the wrath of the Jews.

6 But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!"

7 And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided.

8 For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection - and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.

9 Then there arose a loud outcry. And the scribes of the Pharisees' party arose and protested, saying, "We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God."

10 Now when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks (Ac.23:6-

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9)

Apostolic people do their best to be left out of dissensions, fights and misunderstandings. Their anointing is too precious to be wasted in unnecessary quarrels.

Apostolic people do not run away from problems, however. They wisely make sure any danger to the unity of God's people gets resolved, but with minimal interference from their side.

Apostolic people delegate tasks and the authority to do them. For example, they commission their disciples with the responsible job of finding among them "seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Ac.6:3).

Apostolic people are able to get the cooperation of their believers by explaining the spiritual implications of the problem.

2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables.

3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word."

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude (Ac.6:2-5a)

Apostolic people have the ability to convince entire multitudes. Apostolic people can excite crowds with their gifting, wisdom and authority.

Apostolic people can easily solve problems when they address these problems in unity, on spiritual grounds and for the spiritual benefit of those under their care.

APOSTOLIC PEACE-MAKING



Apostolic people have known the Prince of Peace face to face (Isa.9:6). Apostolic people live in the spiritual realm, and often, even their conversion experiences are highly supernatural.

Apostolic people understand the extreme importance of peace for survival in the spiritual warfare every believer is engaged in, with or without their knowledge.

Apostolic people have, through their deep consciousness of the Prince of Peace living in them, the ability to reconcile even the most ardent enemies.

The separation and enmity between Jews and Gentiles was complete, but our Great Apostle Jesus was able to break it. Was it easy? No. It actually cost Him His very life.

*14 For **He Himself is our peace**, who has **made both one**, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,*

*15 having **abolished in His flesh the enmity**, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, **so as to create in Himself one new man from the two**, thus making peace,*

*16 and **that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross**, thereby putting to death the enmity*
(Eph.2:14-16)

Apostolic people have not only their own interest in mind when they seek peace. They know that only reconciliation with God is the true, eternal peace. That is the reason why the Apostle Paul compared

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the mystery of marriage with Christ and the Church: Two becoming one, Head and Body deeply intertwined in one. Creating this peace and oneness with God in every believer is the life purpose of true apostles.

17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.

18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit (Eph.2:17-22)

Apostolic people understand the deep implications of peace. Preaching peace creates access to Father God and turns people from strangers into God's own family members! It builds a dwelling place for God in the Spirit, a holy temple comprised of myriads of believers. It joins the Body of Christ on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Cornerstone Jesus. Wow!

Apostolic people don't take peace for granted. When contentions arise, they take swift action. They don't shun tedious journeys, long meetings and heated discussions to make sure they achieve peace (Ac.15:1-2; 6-21).

Paul and Barnabas, top leaders, traveled to the apostles in Jerusalem, explained, discussed at length and finally could say: "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us..." (Ac.15:28).

Apostolic Peace-making

24 Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, “You must be circumcised and keep the law” - to whom we gave no such commandment -

25 it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ac.15:24-26)

Apostolic people take the troubled souls of others so serious that they pray, discuss, write letters of divine instructions and even send chosen men with the leaders who had brought the problem to their attention. They send not just anyone - they send battle-proven stalwarts to bring joy and encouragement to the distressed believers (Ac.15:28-33).

Shockingly, just after such major effort to make peace, the apostles Paul and Barnabas got into contention themselves! Paul refused to take John Mark, Barnabas' nephew, on their next journey because he had abandoned the ministry last time. No agreement could be reached, and the trusted friends parted ways (Ac.15:39).

And yet, later on the Apostle Paul himself asks to bring John Mark as a help in the ministry. So, somehow along the way, they must have made peace (2.Ti.4:11)!?!

Apostolic people treasure and value peace very highly and literally go out of their way to obtain and maintain peace.

APOSTOLIC POLITICS



Abram, our Old Testament picture of an apostolic person, was sent out by God into new territories. Sadly, he did not fully obey God's command to leave his country, his family and his father's house, but took with him his nephew Lot. Among the two surged a problem which could be called "apostolic politics". As both started growing and multiplying under God's blessing hand, soon the problems became evident:

5 Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents.

6 Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together.

7 And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.

8 So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren.

9 Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left" (Ge.13:5-9)

Apostolic people like Abram show a truly apostolic heart attitude. Abram trusted in his God for whom he used to build altars at every new location he reached. He saw the danger of the Canaanites and Perizzites who dwelt in the land. He understood that in enemy territory, strife

between brothers could not be allowed, not even among their staff. And he magnanimously invited Lot to choose the best land. Without any ill feeling, Abram, the heir of the promise, accepted being put in second place.

Apostolic people, even in the Old Testament, could come into such trust relationship with their God. Apostolic people understand that they don't need to fight for themselves. They know there is a God who fights for them. Therefore, Abram could freely forgive Lot's selfishness and rush to Lot's rescue in his time of need.

Truly apostolic people abolish all such "apostolic politics" like "sheep stealing", name spoiling, reputation marring and other ugly things. Apostolic people see the utter need for unity among all believers in a hostile world dominated by satan and his herds.

Apostolic people are able to be like the Great Apostle Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith who for the joy of seeing us saved some day endured the Cross and despised the shame of apparent defeat (Heb.12:2). Apostolic people can humble themselves before others because they feel safe and secure in God's love like Jesus:

3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,

4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.

5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded (Jn.13:3-5)

Apostolic people need no other positions or possessions than those given to them by their Heavenly Father.

Apostolic people trust in His love and have no need of playing blame games, power games or "apostolic politics".

APOSTOLIC POLITENESS



Apostolic people are lovers of God and therefore also lovers of God's creation. Apostolic people are harsh against sin, but God's love in their hearts makes them strive for the salvation of the sinner. Even in situations of great distress and injustice, apostolic people keep their politeness.

Apostolic people take no revenge on their torturers. All the contrary, they seek the salvation of their eternal souls and therefore refrain from anger. After the praise-induced earthquake that opened all prison doors and released all chains, the jailor was about to commit suicide. See Apostle Paul's polite reactions toward those who had happily hurt him:

28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here" (Ac.16:28)

So much was Paul's apostolic politeness and concern that he was invited into the jailor's house, washed and refreshed from his wounds and fed a strengthening meal. Not only that, he was also allowed to preach the Gospel and baptize the entire household! None of this would have been possible if Paul had angrily accused and rebuked the jailor.

Many years ago, I traveled with a Gospel group. I never forget how my roommate got upset about imperfections in the hotel room, and how angrily she shouted at the poor employees who tried to fix the problem. I felt extremely embarrassed and tried to give them some money to comfort them in their hurt. The moment they were gone, I told my friend: "Please never tell anyone that you are a Christian. Don't spoil their respect for Christianity. You traveled all the way to show them the love of God, and this is how you treat these precious souls!?!?!?"

Apostolic people cherish others and bear with them in the love of Christ. The Apostle Paul had every reason to be upset with people, seeing all the persecution they stirred up against him and God's Word.

He clearly recognized that the reason for all their opposition was envy at Paul's popularity. And yet, how politely Paul handled the dangerous situation! "You judge yourselves unworthy", not "We had enough of you, we go"!

44 On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the Word of God.

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul.

46 Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the Word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

48 Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the Word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

49 And the Word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region.

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

51 But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium.

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52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit (Ac.13:44-52)

No accusations! The Gentiles were glad and glorified the Word of the Lord! Many believed! God's Word was spread throughout all the region! Wow, what a blessing in return for a little apostolic politeness! Did it stop the persecution? No. Did the apostles get angry? No. They simply shook off the dust from their feet against their oppressors who tried to destroy God's work, and went on to new horizons.

Apostolic people don't allow personal grievances to hurt Kingdom work. Even though these Jews hindered God's work, the apostles kept showing a character and attitude that filled the disciples with joy and with the Holy Spirit, although the apostles had to leave.

Apostolic people never abuse of their power or position. Study how humbly and politely the great Apostle Paul explained to the Ephesians his revelation and knowledge in the mystery of Christ. The Gentiles should be fellow heirs and partakers of God's promise in Christ (Eph.3:1-7)!

Instead of bragging and gloating, this great man of God humbly points to the grace of God and his calling. There is no pushing to accept Paul's apostolic doctrine, only polite explanations.

8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ (Eph.3:8-9)

Apostolic people have tremendous revelation and privileges, but they never forget to attribute all their achievements to God and His grace. Apostolic people marvel in the unsearchable riches in Christ and in their privilege of preaching them. Apostolic politeness never offends people but draws them into the family of God.

APOSTOLIC PRICE



Apostolic people are well aware that there is a price to pay as well as a price to gain as they walk in their apostolic privilege. Of course, the real price, the price for our salvation and the salvation of the world has already been paid by our Master Apostle Jesus on the cross of Calvary. Many teach that therefore there is no more price to be paid from our side. I politely disagree.

Apostolic people understand that though salvation is free, there is a working out, a walk in obedience, a drawing near to God, a taking heed to fulfilling the ministry God entrusted to them (Heb.10:22; Jam.4:8; Ac.20:28; Col.4:17). This is true for every believer, but apostolic people tend to take God's commission more serious.

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil.2:12)

16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you (1.Ti.4:16)

Apostolic people understand that they cannot just live as they like. They must take heed to themselves, to maintaining a healthy spirit, healthy soul and healthy body for God's noble work. Especially, they must take heed to the doctrine they live and teach. Apostolic people are born influencers, and they need to be very careful how they use their influence.

- ▶ Price to pay? A very careful lifestyle, a very dedicated life before God (Ge.17:1).

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- ▶ Price to gain? Saving both themselves and those who will hear them (1.Ti.4:16).

Apostolic people encounter apostolic challenges all through, and there may be messengers of satan sent against them to buffet them and to raise persecution everywhere (2.Co.12:7). A peaceful sedentary life in the same place for years is a practically impossible for truly apostolic people.

- ▶ Price to pay? Persecution and discomfort (2.Ti.3:12; Ac.27:14 - 28:4; 2.Co.11:22 - 13:13).
- ▶ Price to gain? God's interventions, miracles and angelic protection (Ps.34:7; Ac.5; 12; 28:5-10).

Apostolic people give up what used to be their pride, to the point of counting it all rubbish for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus (Phil.3:7-14). Apostolic people know there is nothing they can contribute to their salvation, and nothing can compare to the glory God has prepared for them in the resurrection from the dead (Phil.3:8-11).

- ▶ Price to pay? Total death to self, giving all to follow Jesus (Ga.2:20; Mk.10:21; Mt.13:45-46)
- ▶ Price to gain? Heavenly visions and revelations, joy unspeakable and full of glory (2.Co.12:2-4; 1.Pe.1:8)

Apostolic people are wanderers, travelers, always on the go to plant new churches or to visit the ones previously established. Like their Master Apostle Jesus, they can often say that they have nowhere to lay their head (Mt.8:20; 2.Co.11:26).

- ▶ Price to pay? Homelessness and loneliness, often missing the family left behind (Phil.2:20; 2.Ti.4:10-11).
- ▶ Price to gain? Hundredfold for everything sacrificed for the calling, houses, families and all, plus the eternal reward in heaven (Mt.19:29; Mk.10:30).

Apostolic Price

Apostolic people voluntarily laid down their lives to follow the Lamb of God wherever He goes. Apostolic people understood and agreed that their life is not their own. Apostolic people count it a privilege to die as a martyr for the One who died for them and rose again. Out of the twelve apostles of Jesus, eleven died as martyrs.

- ▶ Price to pay? Possible prison up to martyrdom (Ac.1:8; 16:22-24; 7:54-60).
- ▶ Price to gain? Seeing open heavens, Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father to receive His martyrs. Ruling and reigning for eternity with their Risen Savior (Mt.19:28; Ac.7:54; 1.Jn.3:1; Book of Revelation).

Apostolic people have agreed to pay a price for the glorious privilege of partaking in apostolic power.

Apostolic people are wise pearl merchants (Mt.13:44-45). Apostolic people have sold all they had and bought the Pearl of great price, their priced possession, Jesus.

Apostolic people are wise master builders who lay the right foundation: Kingdom first (1.Co.3:10; Mt.6:33).

APOSTOLIC PROMISE



Apostolic people know they are Christ's, they are Abraham's seed, and they are heirs according to the promise (Ga.3:29). What was this promise given to Abraham?

1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.

2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Ge.12:1-3)

See the clearly apostolic promise! It is like God saying, "Get out of everything you are used to, everything that might tie you down, everyone that might influence you. Get out, not knowing where I will lead you. Get out, fully trusting Me for your next step, your next resting place, your next meal, your next provision. Get out and learn a lifestyle trusting Me so that later on, you can lead an entire nation into such lifestyle! Get out as a true apostle!"

Apostolic people are able to take and obey God's command to "Get out!" because they understand the blessings that follow this obedience. Being made a great nation with a blessed great name! Being a blessing and extending that blessing to all who bless them! Having any cursing satan, demon or human cursed by God Himself! All the families of the earth blessed in them! Wow!!! Apostolic people have only one question: How NOT to accept God's calling and reap God's promise?!?!?

Apostolic people are those who accepted God's call into discipleship, trusting and following Him into often unknown territories. Apostolic people are those who in their prayer receive words like "***Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession***" (Ps.2:8). Apostolic people somehow are able to take Messianic promises like this one for themselves by faith.

Apostolic people excel in their desire for God's Word. Right after salvation, they devour their Bibles with insatiable spiritual hunger. That is why apostolic people are able to receive into their spirit and appropriate for their own lives even the New-Testament upgrade to Abraham's promise:

13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith (Ro.4:13)

Apostolic people are a blessing to the whole world, and they are able to believe that they are heirs of the world as heirs of God. That's why apostles break open nations closed to the Gospel, buy lands impossible to get, build ministries impossible to build... all by this faith. Apostolic people know it is not by might, not by power, but by God's Holy Spirit (Zec.4:6).

Apostolic people know they can never prove themselves worthy of such promises, and they don't even try. While others may fall into Satan's trap of condemnation and attempts of self-improvement, apostolic people rely purely on the grace of God so freely offered to all believers (Lam.3:22-23; Jn.1:14,17).

Miraculously, as apostolic people get busy in God's Kingdom work, sin and temptations are pushed back and forgotten. Someone said very fittingly: "A lazy mind is a workshop of the devil"!

Apostolic people know and experience that "***sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace***" (Ro.6:14).

APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

Apostolic people believe and therefore experience all the promises of God, especially the apostolic promises.

Apostolic people know they are heirs of the world, commissioned to go into all the world to preach the Gospel to all nations and every creature (Jos.1:3; Ro.4:13; Mt.28:18-20; Mk.16:15-20).

Apostolic people go, trusting God's Word and God's Spirit to guide them (Ac.16:6-12). As they go, they see God's hand upon their ministry in specific regions or people-groups:

7 But on the contrary, when they saw that *the Gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the Gospel for the circumcised was to Peter*

8 (for *He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles*)

9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised (Ga.2:7-9)

Apostolic people understand and acknowledge the effective working of God's power in them which is the true miracle of the apostolic. It is the power that raised Jesus from the dead, the power that imparted the apostolic ministry to Paul - it is God's Holy Ghost (Ro.8:11; Eph.1:19-21; 3:7)! Apostolic people acknowledge, know and love very deeply this precious Third Person of the Trinity (1.Thes.5:19).

Apostolic people patiently convince spiritual leaders to perceive the grace of apostolic ministry to the Gentiles.

Apostolic people work to maintain good fellowship with others and help them thereby accept and embrace God's promise of salvation till the ends of the earth (Isa.49:6; Ac.13:47).

13 We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us - a sphere which especially includes you (2.Co.10:13)

15 not boasting of things beyond measure, that is, in other men's labors, but having hope, that as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere
(2.Co.10:15)

Apostolic people know by revelation and experience the sphere appointed to them by God, and they faithfully labor there. As they teach and train their new converts into apostolic people and raise their faith, even the apostles' sphere can be enlarged through their trained and sent-out apostolic people! Hallelujah!

What a wonder, what a miracle of God are apostles and their trainees, apostolic people!

What a glory would shine all over the world if every believer would become a disciple, and every disciple an apostolic person!

Apostles and their divine colleagues, the prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers must urgently train all believers for the work of the ministry (Eph.4:11-12)!

The Body of Christ must arise!

**The works of the devil must be
destroyed!**

NOW is the time!!!

**Take your place in the Body of Christ,
be trained and go!**

Go!

GOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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23. Health – Your Most Precious Asset
24. Health – Attain it! Maintain it!
25. Apostolic People

APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

WHO ARE THEY?

Apostolic People are God's urgent need for this hour of world events

Apostolic People use boldness and access with confidence God's Throne

Apostolic People live in the heavenlies but work tirelessly in the earthly realm!

Apostolic People live a victorious lifestyle, defeating satan's vicious onslaughts

Apostolic People break through the darkness and shine God's light upon continents

Apostolic People train the Church to show God's wisdom to principalities and powers

Apostolic People manifest God's signs, wonders and mighty deeds with perseverance

Apostolic People exhibit characteristics that show if they are called to apostolic office

Apostolic People are hidden within the Body of Christ and must urgently be activated

Apostolic People - and every believer - can be trained into their full spiritual potential

Apostolic People love God's Word and God's Spirit and seek God's training for life

ARE YOU ONE OF THEM?

Take your place in the Body of Christ, be trained and go! Go! GOOOOOO!!!!!!!!!!!!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR Benita Francis Chemnitz

Carries a strong burden for the healing and deliverance of individuals and nations. Her consuming passion is to help people find and fulfill their God-given potential and purpose. Her Biology studies and her training in Rhema Bible School, Youth With A Mission and different high-impact ministries worldwide gave her a broader world view and took her to almost 50 nations. Her language gift made her to minister with many world-renowned revival preachers from around the globe. Her ministry is attested with miracles, signs and wonders. She speaks in conferences, training programs and international TV channels and

Together with her husband, Prophet Ezekiah Francis, she leads
"Berachah Prophetic Ministries" in Chennai, India.



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www.ezekiahfrancis.org