

MATURING THE CHURCH



A Self Paced Devotional study in 2 Parts

Part 1: Living kingdom

Part 2: The Restoration of the Five-Fold Ministry to the church.

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Part 2: The Restoration of the Five-Fold Ministry to the Church

Week 1: Maturing the Church – The Role of the Five Fold.

Week 2: Participating in Kingdom Mission

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This study booklet has been designed as a self paced devotional guide. Deliberately, it will raise as many questions as it may answer. It's purpose is to stimulate thinking, but more than that, to stimulated dialogue with the Father with the prayer that He will grant you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation so that you might know Him better.

Some of these studies may take more than a day or even three to work through. There is no rush ...work at your own pace. Pause – reflect - allow the Holy Spirit space to work with you in shaping thought and responses.

ENJOY!

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Week 1: Maturing the Church – The Role of the Five Fold.

MONDAY: JESUS - THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE

Read Ephesians 2: 19-22 & consider what it means to be built with Jesus as the chief cornerstone?



Our thinking and practical living needs to line up with Him

Think of some examples that are relevant to who you are and what you are involved with in life.

Now think about this in relation to your local church.

1 Peter 2:4-5 identifies us, (those that come to Him - the Living Stone) as living stones being built into a spiritual house.

In what ways can you see the local churches of the city living out this alignment to the cornerstone as they come together as living stones.

Focus now on Ephesians 2: 21 -22

Picture / consider how the whole building is joined together in Him?

We are used to thinking of ourselves, individually, as being the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20). Apply this now; first to your local church ...

living stones joined together and then think of the whole church of your town / city.

What does this picture tell us about how we are to value one another in the body? Are there any other implications you see?

Now apply this picture to our local church being joined to other churches in the city *to become a holy temple in the city ... a dwelling place in which God lives*

TUESDAY: THE ROLE OF THE 5 FOLD – Gifts to the Body of Christ.**Read Ephesians 4:7-16**

The gifts Paul lists in this passage are actually people who have the role of **preparing the Saints** for **works of service** so that the Body of Christ may be built up...i.e. as an edifice

The Greek word here,- **Katartizo-** *prepare* carries the following nuances

- To mend/ restore
- To lay foundations (Build Faith & establish a base of Knowledge)
- To equip (Skill development ... Anointing)

He lists these as: **Apostles; Prophets; Evangelists; Pastors and Teachers**

Currently we are seeing the restoration of recognition of the importance and value of the Apostolic and Prophetic Ministries for the 21st century church.

Those graced with this 5 fold anointing are assigned as Christ's gifts to the body of Christ and these gifts are released through honour. (Matthew 10:41; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Timothy 5;17) Through honour, our hearts are engaged and our attitudes and mindsets are renewed.

The task of these ministries **is to so mend, establish and prepare each person** in the body so that they are **brought into their place and purpose, functioning in maturity. In this way the church is built up** (i.e. Part of their role is in actually placing us in the right place at the right time.)

Each of us needs to be guided, encouraged, challenged when we go astray, and equipped and placed with purpose to be all that we can be in Christ.

We need to consider developing people from this perspective from the nursery up... The goal is to raise up people into their assignments as part of Kingdom advance.

Of course, we have a responsibility to pursue relationship with Christ ourselves, but those called as five- fold ministry to the body have been commissioned by Christ to the task of preparing God's people for their ministry (service) in Him.

To recap: The gifts, Paul refers to here, **are particular individuals** whose function it is to prepare God's holy people for their works of service.

- They are an expression of the ministry of Jesus who carried each of these functions in His ministry.
- These are servant ministries undertaken for the sake of the people of God.
- They are distinct callings of God who appoints & equips individuals for this work.
 - To prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up*
 - *Until we reach unity in faith*
 - *Until we become Mature*

The restoration of relational Christianity and five – fold ministry, under apostolic leadership, is not based in power and status, but in Servant-hood and Fathering. This is a significant element in the new wineskin towards which the Holy Spirit is leading.

This is what John Alley, among others, brings to the table when speaking of Apostolic Christianity.

Reflect on the statement in bold italics above - would you agree? ...if not why not?

What other elements could you identify?

Note what Jesus said of himself. Luke 4:16-20; Isaiah 61:1-4

He carried the fullness of the 5 Fold Ministry

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| ▪ Preach good news | Evangelistic |
| ▪ Freedom for the prisoners – truth will set you free | Teaching |
| ▪ Recovery of sight to the blind | Prophetic |
| ▪ Release the oppressed – shepherd of our souls | Pastoral |
| ▪ Proclaim year of the Lord's favour | Apostolic |

We each have been designed to carry the presence of the Holy Spirit.... This is called "anointing". (2 Corinthians 3:18 and I John 2:27)

Effective Christian leaders are committed to advancing the mission in ways that also enable others to make their Kingdom contribution.



WEDNESDAY: THE FOUNDATION OF APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

Read again Ephesians 2: 19-22

What does it mean to be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets?

Think of Prophets like Amos/ Micah or Isaiah.

In what way have they laid a foundation?

How is the church built on their foundational work?

Think of Peter or Paul. **How is the church built on their foundational work?**

What role could you see for modern day apostles and prophets in laying foundations for the *ekklesia* ...the Body of Christ and Warrior Bride?

Dialogue with God about this.



THURSDAY: APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

The Gifts of Christ to the church - Apostle, Prophet, Pastor, Teacher and Evangelist are describing particular functions that flow from a particular heart and calling. It is a way of serving...a way built on Servant-hood and Son-ship.

Today the ministry of apostle is being restored to the church. In truth apostles have been present in every age though often not recognized and thus not released to pursue their calling. With the benefit of hindsight, we can recognize those that were successfully able to pursue such ministry often in spite of strong opposition from the church of their day (eg *Francis of Assisi, John Wesley, Francis Xavier, Hudson Taylor, William Carey*) but sadly there will be many others who were held back by those who did not understand the calling.

What exactly is an Apostle?

These are people ...gifts to the body, appointed and sent by Christ to equip the people of God. There is a particular order to enable the establishment and activation of the *church (ekklesia)* in it's purpose to represent the King and give witness to the Kingdom.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 and note particularly verse 28

And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

Consider the following:

The word "**apostolos**" means "**sent one**" - sent by Jesus Christ to proclaim the Kingdom of God, heal the sick and cast out demons. (It has a specific reference to the disciples of Jesus who were with Him over His ministry years and were witnesses to His resurrection.) However, in the New Testament "Apostle" has a wider usage - including Paul & Barnabas and quite a number of others. (Rom 16:7)

To catch the concept behind this word *apostle* **consider Hebrews 3:1-6**

Ponder the characteristics of Jesus identified here

- He was faithful to the one who appointed Him
 - He was faithful not as a servant but as a son over God's house
1. Jesus was sent to represent the Father and to make Him known. (John 1: 18 and John 14: 9-11). Jesus represents the Father perfectly and ultimately in the apostolic sense (Hebrews 1:3)
 2. Jesus was sent by the Father to give birth to the Kingdom of God ... (not just to proclaim a message about the Kingdom of God, but to initiate it) (Mark 1:15 & Luke 4:18-20)

3. Jesus is sent not only to birth the Kingdom on earth, but to bring it to its full consummation. (Which He accomplishes through His redemptive work on the cross; His sending out of the disciples and from His position as High Priest and Intercessor at the right hand of the Father)

Jesus does not come in His own name or even in His own authority. He comes on His Father's mission backed by an authority given him by the Father. He creates a beachhead for the ongoing invasion of the Kingdom of Light into every area of darkness in the earth, This is very clear in John's gospel ...

- John 7:16 ...*My teaching is not my own. It comes from Him who sent me*
- John 5:19 ... *The Son can only do what He sees the Father doing.*
- John 20: 21: *As the Father has sent me so I send You.*

Dr. Don Lynch makes this point: *No other sent one (Apostle) fully represents the Father and no one person completely represents Jesus. Apostles walking as disciples of Jesus reveal only an aspect of His fullness and their individual assignments are simply extensions or expansions of what He has birthed and one further fulfillment of what He finished in His crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension and ongoing Intercession.* (Dr Don Lynch is an apostle with a home base in Jacksonville Florida ...<https://drdonlynch.com>)

The reality is that in the great commission, the Lord sends out His apostles to extend the Kingdom of God into the nations under the covering of His authority. Through the Holy Spirit they are to exercise this authority in His name. (Matthew 28:18-20)

Paul gives us insight into his Apostolic heart in the following statements:

1. *My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ* Colossians 2:2
2. *By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds.*
1 Corinthians 3:10

Priorities of the Apostolic:

- **To see Christ formed in everyone in the body of Christ**
- **To see the body of Christ built up and become mature**

If we consider the example of Paul, an apostle could be seen as a **father figure** who gave birth to a number of churches & who interceded for them & warred for them to see them established on firm foundations. He spoke of himself as an ambassador of Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:20-21) We need to recognize though that Paul is but one example of New Testament Apostles.

There is a sense in which the Apostle is charged in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring the perspective and strategy of heaven to a particular setting on the earth.

For example, Paul writes, *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle and set apart for the Gospel of God... Through Him and for His name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith.* (Romans 1:1-5)

Philip Spence brings out the concept of a particular sphere that is an apostle's assignment in his book, 'The Governance of the Kingdom (C) 2012

In 2 Corinthians 10:13, Paul speaks of the field that God has assigned to him. Spence comments: *"An Apostle's sphere may be geographical; it may be a city, a region, or a nation. An Apostle's sphere may be a people group. The Apostle Paul was primarily called to be an Apostle to the Gentiles, while Peter and others felt they were Apostles to the Jews.*

An Apostle is to exercise the authority and influence of the Kingdom in this sphere.

Spence goes on to say, *"The Apostle Paul stated very clearly that His apostleship wasn't a title, but a function; it wasn't a position, but it meant relational fruitfulness. He was clear about the fact that he wasn't an Apostle to everyone (1 Cor 9:20).*

He was an Apostle to those who received his grace and governance. Paul reinforces this in 2 Corinthians 10:13-15 where he affirms that the Corinthian church was under his spiritual authority because the things of the Kingdom had been birthed in them through Paul's ministry. Apostolic authority is given by the King so Apostles are accountable for the use of that authority."

Apostles see territory. illustration ... Abraham (Hebrews 11:9-10 NKJV)

"By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Consider also William Carey – India; Hudson Taylor- China

The Role of the Prophet;

Prophets see heart: illustration Samuel (I Samuel 16:7 NKJV)

"But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

One who has the **office** of prophet (eg *Agabus - Acts 11:27-30; Acts 21:10*) will give guidance to individuals and the church community and will not only strengthen, exhort and encourage the body, but will bring correction and rebuke. The prophet has an important role in BUILDING the people in their ability to hear God for themselves and their willingness to obey His voice. Prophets are to assist people to catch something of the

Father's heart and His specific calling upon them and to release His creativity through them.

Prophecy is speaking out the mind of the Holy Spirit. It can be expressed in a number of contexts include preaching, counseling, normal conversation and even business meetings. The prophet also has a role working with an apostle to bring revelation of God's heart & ways into a particular kingdom advance. The apostle then, in wisdom, applies the revelation into strategic pathways, correct order, & timing.

Jeremiah Johnson writes:

"Prophets are committed to consistently evaluating and critiquing man-made structures and religious traditions out of a deep love for God and for His church. A true prophet's ministry will appear at times very confrontational and critical of existing church structures that have become or are becoming obsolete, irrelevant, and a great hindrance to the Spirit of God.

Prophets are a tremendous asset to pastors and apostles because they help them from becoming rigid, legalistic, controlling, and authoritarian. Prophets are protectors of the church from unhealthy and unbiblical control that will constrict the movement of the Holy Spirit.

Prophets are the eyes of the body of Christ. Prophets help the church "see" what is coming and feel deeply moved to prepare themselves and others for the days ahead. True prophets live ahead of their time and are plagued by constant frustration that the people around them have not partnered with the revelation they are releasing."

Prophets and Apostles are meant to work in Tandem

Without prophets at the foundational level working in tandem with apostles, we have a faulty foundation for construction. Dr Don Lynch

FRIDAY: THE ROLE OF TEACHERS, PASTORS AND EVANGELISTS

The Gift of Evangelist The Gift of PastorThe Gift of Teacher.

Evangelists:

All of us are called to “bear witness” to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord - but an evangelist has a special anointing (*measure of grace*) enabling effectiveness in bringing unbelievers to Christ. Their task is not only geared to proclaiming the gospel and leading people to Christ, but in **equipping the body** to be effective witnesses to the King (Jesus) and the presence of His Kingdom.

Pastors / Teachers:

The scriptures indicate the early church pastor was appointed to teach.

(*1 Timothy 3:2*) They were expected to have sound doctrine and be diligent in studying the scriptures. (*Titus 1:9 & 1 Timothy 5:17-18*)

The role of pastor / teacher is to be that of shepherd and like the Good Shepherd of John 10, their focus is to be on the welfare of the flock rather than on wages or working conditions. (*1 Peter 5:1-4*)

Pastors:

Their ministry is to see the wounded made whole and the saints established in their identity as sons and daughters of the Living God. The task is to encourage and challenge the saints to discover for themselves that God is our refuge and strength ...a very present help in trouble. They are to assist the saints in learning to access the refuge, abundance, strength and security that is available in Christ.

Teachers:

Paul and Barnabas taught the new followers of the Way in Antioch for a year, establishing them in the faith. (*Acts 11:25-26*) The Church in Antioch had a leadership group composed of prophets and teachers. (*Acts 13: 1-3*)

The **teacher** has the task of equipping people to rightly interpret the scriptures and to build their lives in the foundations laid by Jesus Christ. They have the task of encouraging and enabling people to build their lives from a Kingdom of God perspective.

Such ministry comes with heavy responsibility before God.

(*Note James 3:1 –“not many of you should presume to be teachers.... and 1 Tim 5:22 which suggests leaders need to be cautious before ordaining people to ministry.*)

We cannot choose to be an apostle, pastor, teacher etc. We dare not and in reality cannot appoint ourselves to such a task.

While each of these offices will have a distinct sense of God's call to that ministry – that call needs to be affirmed by recognized apostolic and prophetic leaders in the body and confirmed by God's special guidance (*Acts 14:1.*)

SATURDAY: THE BUILDING UP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST – INTO CHRIST –

Read again and consider Ephesians 4: 12-16

*So the church might be **built** into the dwelling place of God (Ephesians 2:20-22.)*

This building up is speaking of spiritual growth more than physical expansion.
'Until' – conveys more than duration ... it includes purpose.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE !***Until we all might attain:***

- *Unity in **the** faith* – unity that binds together those that share the common faith in Christ as redeemer and Lord.
- *In the **knowledge** of the Son of God* – a knowing of Jesus in intimate relationship. This will knowing His ways as well as His will.
- The church becomes fully developed – **mature** – walking in the fullness of the **character, ways and the authority & power of Jesus Christ.**
- **No longer infants** tossed to and fro, no longer deceived by false teachers. We are able to discern truth when we hear it and identify the heart behind it. We are well established, like the tree in **Psalm 1.**

From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Ephesians 4:16)

The following is taken from “A Technical Commentary on Ephesians 4:7-16” by Jason Dulle. “*Jesus Christ, the head of the church (v 15), is the **point of joining** for the rest of the body. **Christ is the source** from which all the other members are tightly framed and united together.....This joined and compacted body is able to grow through the contribution of each individual joint. ... The entire body must work together. Every part is necessary for the body to be complete, and every part has something to contribute to the workings of the body.*”

Each member of the body is able to contribute according to the varying degrees of grace given to each member of the body (Ephesians 4:7) By being bound together in love, the church will be built up, & will further it's growth toward the full measure of Christ's fullness.

Meditate on the following:

Can you identify the service Christ is asking of you?

Don't just think of this as a particular role in the structure and mission of your local church.
– We need to think wider from a Kingdom of God perspective ...

This will involve the roles we play in our family, workplace and leisure and hobby activities. Each of these has a calling attached to it in giving expression to the presence of the Kingdom of God within us.

In what ways do you need mending / restoring to enable you to do the work / service that Christ is asking of you?

In what ways do you need equipping or better foundations to enable you to do the work / service that Christ is asking of you?

Is there someone in the Faith, a father or mother who could work with you in these areas?

WEEK 2: PARTICIPATING IN KINGDOM MISSION**MONDAY: THE PROMISE OF JESUS – BUILDING THE EKKLESIA****Read Matthew 16: 13-19**

Peter has divine insight into who Jesus is, ... *You are the Messiah, The Son of the Living God.* (ie the promised King coming to establish the reign of God as per Isaiah 9:7 and other O.T. prophecies)

In response, Jesus makes a startling prophetic promise. ... ***On this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overcome it....***

The Greek word translated church is the word *ekklesia*. It means assembly of called out ones. It had a particular technical meaning in Greek culture as the assembly called out by a herald in a city to make decisions and rulings for the city. They elected officials, and came together to form policy for the operation of a city. It is term that has governmental overtones.

We could apply it to mean the assembly of those called out of the culture of the world to represent the King and to release into the cities and villages a different culture ...the culture of the Kingdom.

When the Bible translator translates *ekklesia* as *church* it adds to the confusion that limits *church* to a building or a particular religious service (going to church) rather than the idea in *ekklesia* of an assembly called out with a particular purpose in mind. The “called out” are actually “called into being the representatives of Christ in the world ... carrying His presence into every sphere of the cultural life of the city and nation.” (the prefix, ek, can mean “out,” it can also mean “into” or “unto.”)

Jesus asks us to seek first His Kingdom (Matthew 6:33) and He will build His *Ekklesia* on the basis of our Faith in Him as Messiah.

The promise of Jesus is that the Gates of Hades ...even death itself will not be able to overthrow the *ekklesia* as it lives out the Kingdom of God on the earth.

Isaiah 2:2-4 will be fulfilled.

The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. (Isa 11:9)

TUESDAY: A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD – A HOLY NATION

Read 1 Peter 2: 4 – 10

This passage talks about being living stones being built into a spiritual house.to be a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices

Let's consider these spiritual sacrifices:

- A life lived to bring glory to God ...(what does this look like in practical terms?)
- A life showing the heart of God in our actions and thoughts (Living the attitudes and values of the Kingdom of God)
- A life of worship - lived giving honour & praise & thanksgiving to God

Are there others you would add:

Identify 1 or 2 things where you bringing a spiritual sacrifice to God.

Is there anything else God is asking of you here?

Take some time to praise the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

WEDNESDAY: EACH MEMBER HAS A PART TO PLAY

Read 1 Corinthians 12: 12-27

Paul uses the metaphor of the human body to bring out both the inter-relationship and the different functions of each part of the *Ekklesia*.

Before bringing out the particular role to be played by those carrying a 5 fold responsibility (Ephesians 4: 11-13) Paul makes this statement.

Eph. 4:7 To each one grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

The Grace here refers to an anointing (empowering) that comes from Christ **that we all receive in different measure as Christ has determined**. This anointing carries something of the heart of Christ

Mark Virkler identifies the following 5 ministry functions in his study on Eph.4:11. These functions are governed by key underlying heart motivations listed here in bold type. We each carry a measure of each of these, according to the call & purpose of God on our lives. This does not make us an apostle or a pastor but generally we find that some people are more pastoral than others, others are more prophetic etc. As we sit under the ministry of those who carry a five fold responsibility, the anointing within us is stirred, encouraged and activated.

Apostles:	Architects who establish the Foundations ..	A heart for the whole
Prophets:	Seers who communicate Divine Inspiration.	Insight into God's heart
Evangelists:	Soul winners who proclaim good news ...	A Heart for the unsaved
Pastors:	Shepherds who love the sheep ...	A heart for the sheep
Teachers:	Disciplers who train others	A heart for the truth

In the list above in bold type, which of the 5 would be the strongest for you.
As an exercise before the Father rate them in yourself from 1- 5, with 1 being the strongest.

Building on Mark Virkler's concept, Mark Tubbs an apostle from Harvest International Ministries identifies the following traits that capture the heart of each of these 5 heart motivations.

Read through the following lists of traits ticking those which strongly represent your heart or action.

There are no right or more holy answers here. Each person is wired differently and we carry different aspects of the heart of Christ more strongly than others.

Traits of Pastoral Ministry ... heart & action... shared by those with a pastoral anointing but not necessarily called to the Role of a 5 fold Pastor.

- Has a genuine concern for others (really care about people)
- Desire to listen and discern real needs of people
- Follows up by asking questions at a later time
- Notices when others are missing from groups and contact them
- Sought out for support by people in need
- A difficulty in caring for people is how to draw 'boundaries' when called upon.

Traits of Teaching Anointing

- Loves truth and the word of God
- Committed to building a firm foundation
- Communicates principles for godly living effectively
- Helps others stay true to their stated purpose
- Hungers for a deeper understanding and revelation
- Can be judgmental when facing injustice or dishonesty

Traits of Prophetic Anointing

- Desires to hear the voice of God
- Seeks revelation from the Spirit through visions and dreams
- Discerns God's heart and purpose
- Speaks words from the Lord to strengthen and encourage others
- Interprets life events and people through the seeing/ sensing in the spirit
- There may be a tendency to discount the importance of things in every day life. Others may say you are 'out of touch'

Traits of Evangelistic Anointing

- Has a genuine concern for those who don't know Jesus
- Shares eagerly what is important to themselves and others
- Likes to meet new people and be in new situations
- Loves the gospel and seeks opportunities to share it
- Has compassion for those who are imprisoned by their sin
- Can feel rejected or misunderstood by others

Traits of Apostolic Anointing

- Desire to see people work together efficiently and closely
- Yearn for the unity of the body of Christ
- Sees the larger picture and how everyone can play a part
- Move in spiritual authority that people are willing to respond to
- Brings people from various groups together for one common purpose
- Can be controlling or overbearing

THURSDAY: INTRINSIC GIFTS

Text: *To each one grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.*

Each of us has been gifted by Christ in particular ways ...

Consider first of all how we have been shaped in the womb (Ps.139:13 -16)

- Temperament
- Intrinsic Gifting

Meditate here on Romans 12: 4-8

(Eg Some are born teachers, encouragers or mercy people irrespective of whether they know Christ. ie it is intrinsic to who they are ...built in the womb and shaped by experiences of life)

What about you ?.... How has God shaped you in the womb?

Consider the list in Romans 12:6-8 and identify the 2 that most strongly have been expressed in your life even before you were a Christian.

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FRIDAY: KEYS TO IDENTIFYING OUR UNIQUE ASSIGNMENT

To each one grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. (Eph. 4:7)

Each of us has a different assignment in God. There are a number of significant features that when they come together enable us to clearly identify the particular field that God has assigned us.

1. **Our Passion** ... Is there something set in our imagination / desire .. for a particular nation / people / task?
Is it still present a year later even when you have been involved elsewhere?
This is a passion that will not go away (a consuming passion). Not just there in the moment we heard an inspiring sermon or saw a powerful *Youtube* clip.
Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel, writes Paul. 1 Corinthians 9:16
2. **The Sense of Burden.**
What injustices stir your heart? Are there issues you find yourself saying: *Someone should do something about this!*
What makes you angry? Is there an issue in society or the church or the local community?. See 1 Corinthians 9:16 & 1 Samuel 17:36-37
3. **The aspect of Call** A sense of task to be undertaken

There are keys in our personal history that reveal our future destiny.

- Where have you had favour?
- Where have you exercised Authority? ... had opportunity
- Where have you sensed a flow of God's empowering Grace?
- Where have you seen fruit?
- Where have you been attacked or hindered / distracted?
(Where we have faced opposition may indicate where Satan has tried to get us off track & where God has allowed testing to refine us) 2 Cor 1: 3-4

Joseph had favour in the home of Potiphar and in prison, but neither of these are ultimately his destiny, rather his administrative excellence and his faithful servant heart determines his positioning for destiny.

4. **Overlay this with any words of prophecy over you** that seem to carry a sense of power/ destiny.(ie Confirming wordsor scriptures that have been highlighted in the past which have triggered a sense of purpose in you.)
In the example above, Joseph had a dream where his family bowed down to him.
eg. Gideon (Judges 6:12) or the words of Ananias to Saul in Acts 9:15

Write out your heart's desires about what you would like to be part of as your service for Christ.

SATURDAY: KEYS TO IDENTIFYING ASSIGNMENT (2)**Consider also the role played by God's creative work ...**

The fishermen on the shoreline had no idea they could be shaped through walking with Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit to be *fishers of men*. Mark 1: 16-20

Note too: Jeremiah 1: 4-10 and Ephesians 2:10

Other pointers that help identify our assignment:

- **The Identification of our Intrinsic gifts. (We have been shaped in the womb)**
(See Tuesday's Study)
- **Flash forwards** ... our spirit leaps as we watch someone in their activation of their ministry. We tend to be drawn to people in ministries that align with what we ourselves carry even if it is in us in embryo or a more limited way.

Note:

- We often talk ourselves out of it ... eg. Moses Exodus 3:10. Jeremiah 1:6
- The enemy has often stolen these words and as a result we have not stepped into the destiny because of fear of man, or the labels we have put on ourselves.
- The Lord speaks directly into our spirit. ... Matt 16:18 ... Peter.
- **Our questions/thought life and struggles often flow out of the anointing we carry.**

The Lord has designed us to carry a mantle of glory. The enemy wants to obscure this with a mantle of shame or through attitudes rooted in frustration or critical spirit.

We need to break off all the junk- be that words, curses coming from the lips of others (*You'll never amount to anything ... what a poor apology for a Christian you are*) or lies we have believed about ourselves. (eg *I'm hopeless or I can't hear God*) **For this we may need the help of trusted Christian leaders to pray through these with us**



WEEK 3: Blueprints for Kingdom Mission

MONDAY: DEFINING YOUR FIELD

What are your present boundaries with respect to grace and authority?

How do we determine the limitations / extent of our assigned field?

- By our vision ??? ... *if I can dream it it's mine*. ... NO WAY!!!
We can be driven by insecurity or the desire to make for ourselves a name etc that will lead us completely astray.

The Holy Spirit determines the extent of the Field

- Paul is blocked by the Spirit from entering Bithynia ... Acts 16:7
- Circumstance guides his decision to travel on to Macedonia.
(Acts 20:3 and 2 Corinthians 2:12)

The Basic principle is that our field expands as the fruit is produced.
The one faithful in a little is given greater responsibility. Matthew 25:21

Our assignment is confirmed by faithful fruitfulness and the confirmation of those around us in the mission. For Example Paul in Antioch (Acts 11: 22-30 & Acts 13: 1-3 , Acts 15)

Consider what place of authority and influence you have in the spheres below:

- **Home & Family**
- **Workplace**
- **Leisure activities**
- **Community groups**
- **Congregational life**

Authority is linked to heart engagement. (love - 1 Cor 13) ... Servanthood (John 13)

Where are you really engaged?

Where are you really ready to serve?

To what extent is your calling a matter of individual ministry or an expression of the corporate calling of your local congregation or the church (*ekklesia*) of the city?

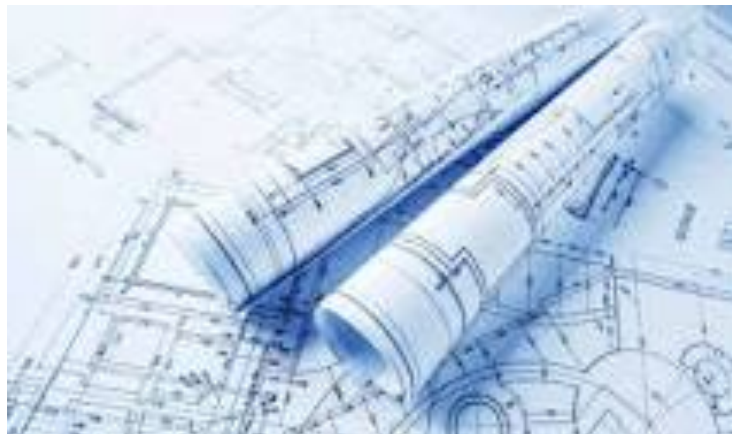
Listening Prayer

Take time with some prayer being still and worshipping in the Lord's presence. Write down any revelation, arising during this listening prayer on the next steps to take in your calling.

Write out a personal vision of your calling and purpose.

Read 2 Timothy 1: 6

Share what you have identified as your assignment with a trusted Christian leader who could *father* you as you work through engaging with your assignment



TUESDAY: A BLUEPRINT FOR MISSION**Read: Luke 10: 1-11**

Again this passage is specific to a particular group ... (the 72) in a particular moment in time However, the instructions have a wider application as we apply the principles behind the instructions in our 21st century setting.

Consider, then, the instructions given to the 72 and particularly their application to our being sent today into our workplaces, families and communities.

- Sent out two by two
- Go I am sending you like lambs among wolves
- Do not take a bag / purse / sandals
- Do not greet anyone on the road
- On entering a house say, *peace to this house*
- Do not move around house to house
- Eat what is set before you
- Heal the sick who are there
- Tell them the kingdom of God is near you.
(This clearly involved healing the sick & casting out demons - vs17)
- When not welcomed wipe the dust from your feet.

Twenty-first Century Application: Something to think about.

- We begin in prayer preparing the ground
- We go knowing we are going into a clash of Kingdoms ...this is hostile territory.
- We go with purpose ... not trusting our resources but the resources of our King and not allowing ourselves to be distracted.
- We go looking for a person of peace, an ally who will assist in releasing peace into the setting.
- Take hold of the opportunities that present themselves. (Pray for the Holy Spirit to set up divine appointments) Genesis 24: 12-21
- If you are not received ... maintain the witness ... don't compromise.

In your workplace this week seek to apply something of this blueprint.

WEDNESDAY: THE GREAT COMMISSION – SENT ON MISSION

Read Matthew 28: 18-20

What is the task to which the disciples are sent.

-
-
-

What is required if a convert to Jesus is to be disciple?

Jesus here calls us to make disciples **of all the nations**.

Note this is not just individual disciples within every nation, but something far greater that fits the vision of Isaiah 2:2-4 or Isaiah 9:6-7 or Habakkuk 2:14.

How can Nations be disciplined? The only way this commission could be carried out is for the culture of nations to be infused with the culture of the Kingdom just as yeast brings transformation into the bread making process.

This means in every area of life within the nation Christian witness is needed to play a part in shaping the way life is expressed in the culture.

What would be the effect if every Christian went into their workplaces and leisure activities with a sense of being commissioned to carry Kingdom culture in their words and actions? With a sense of mission being commissioned to go. With a sense of “this is my assignment from the Lord”.

This is an apostolic church ... Sent to be salt and light ... to be yeast ... People of God living Kingdom Values and changing the Spiritual Climate through prayer and action.

What if?

Read & Reflect on John 20:21

Jesus had a unique mission when we consider the sealing of the new covenant in His blood.

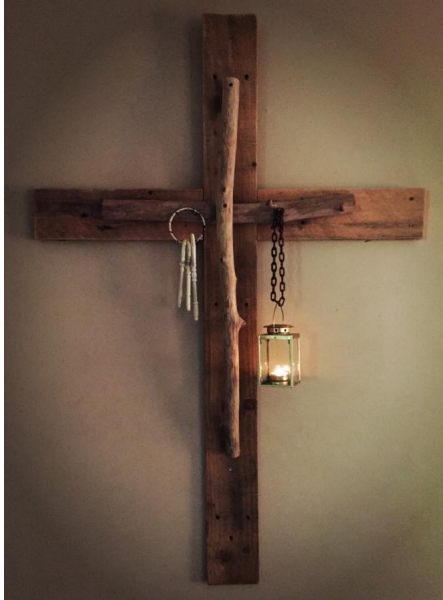
But what does it mean to be sent as Jesus was sent ...in what ways is our call similar?

Note what Jesus says about Discipleship in Mark 8:34-35

THURSDAY: EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT

We are to carry out this mission dependent upon **the empowering of the Holy Spirit**. **(Acts 1:8)** This will include healing & prophetic ministry as signs of the presence and the reality of the kingdom of God.

Read again John 20:21-23



This photo of artwork by Matty Russell posted on facebook invites us to lay down our lives as He did and in doing so we have the keys to the kingdom and become the light of the world as He shines through us.

We need to learn to discern and obey the Holy Spirit's promptings.

Ananias is not put forward in the New Testament as a key leader ... he is simply a faithful disciple But He hears clearly God's voice and in spite of his natural fears obeys He brings a prophetic word to Saul and is instrumental in his healing and baptism.

Read Acts 9: 10-19

As we pursue God and take time to be still in His presence - simply enjoying Him and being available. Our ability to hear increases as we take such times..

Ask Him to help you on such a journey.

Pray for God to set up encounters for you where you can share something of the love of Christ.

FRIDAY: THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST

We are to carry out this mission sent out in the authority of Christ.

To walk in Authority requires that we are people willing to be under authority ...not just to Christ as King, but also to those to whom Christ has delegated authority over us:

- our leaders in the workplace (Colossians 3:22-25)

- in our family Ephesians 5: 21-6:3)

- Governmental leaders/ police etc – in our community / city / nation (Romans 13: 1-2)

- The leadership in our local church fellowships (Hebrews 13: 17)

Read and reflect on Luke 7:1-10

SATURDAY: SENT OUT AS SHEEP AMONGST WOLVES

Read and reflect on Matthew 10:16

What does being shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves look like in practical terms in your setting?

-
-

Jesus is surely warning his disciples that they are venturing into hostile territory.

The Necessity of Intercession:

As we go out remember we are on Kingdom mission.

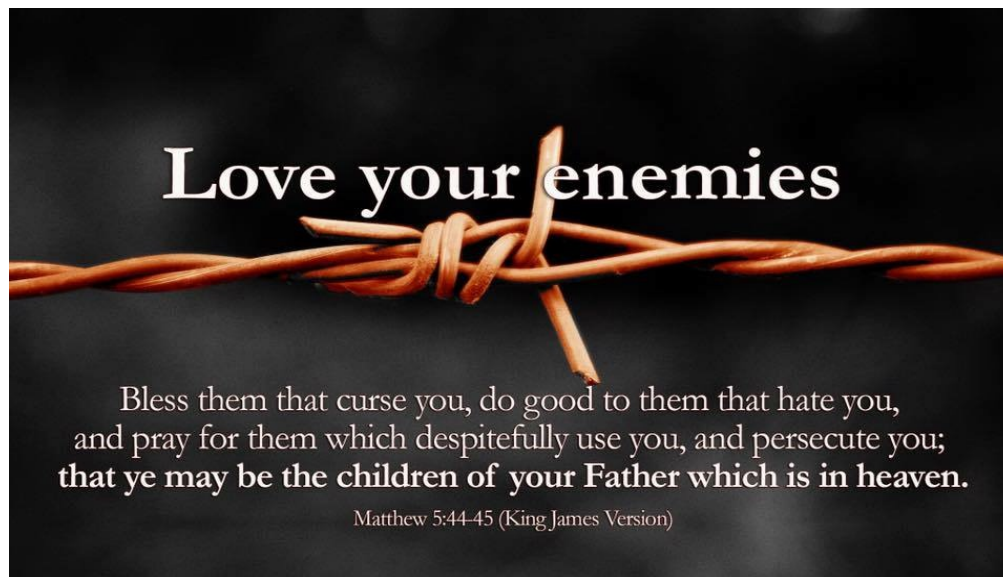
Take time to pray the Kingdom prayer and release blessing through your workplace.

(Matthew 6: 9-15 and Numbers 6:22-27)

The Spiritual Atmosphere needs to be impacted by His Peace.

To take ground our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities and Powers. Ephesians 6: 12

OUR PATHWAY IS LIVING & RESPONDING IN THE OPPOSITE SPIRIT.



SUNDAY: A VISION FOR OUR DAY.

I see a people who are sold out to the Kingavailable to serve Him and able to trust Him enough to be obedient to whatever He calls them to do.

Each person has a personal mission from the King ...as a servant to others, flowing out of the particular heart anointing and passion that they carry. They exercise this ministry as an expression of the Kingdom of God in their family, workplace & community. However, It's not simply a case of each believer *feeling led* to do this or that....

We never operate just as an individual ... **the role is undertaken as part of the local church family** and as a family, we are finding ways to support each believer to encourage, challenge and equip them in that mission so that it is as fruitful and effective as possible. Our hearts are bound together in love. We have each others backs
Prayer & pastoral care is a central part of the support provided by the family

Remember the disciples were sent out on mission in two's.

In addition, as a family each local church has a corporate call and destiny as it takes it's place in the wider body of the Church of the City.

We lift up the name of Jesus in worship and prayer when we gather together. In our oneness and in our love for one another AS WE EXALT HIM, we influence the Spiritual climate over the City. Darkness must give way to Light.

We have opportunity together to impact our city under the leadership of the King

***To see His Name hallowed,
His Kingdom come ,
His will done on earth ...***

***AS IT IS IN HEAVEN!
here on the Gold Coast and beyond***

Lord, bind us together in Love and in Mission.... Amen

APPENDIX A FURTHER NOTES ON APOSTLES & PROPHETS TODAY.**The Role of the Apostle and Prophet (David MacDonald)**

In 1 Corinthians 12:28 Apostles are listed first among those who have been appointed by God. I believe that this is because apostles set the tone and lay the foundation for the attitudes and instructions of the church. It is important to understand the qualities God is looking for in apostles and has purposed for the foundation of the church.

Layers that make up the platform that enable the Kingdom of God to manifest, creating a prophetic launching pad are:-

- 1. Relationships** – Apostles are patriarchs. They are fathers and mothers. They grow sons and daughters not slaves and servants. When you are around apostles you will always see successes. As a son or daughter of the house you will always have a sense of your inheritance.
- 2. Servant's heart** - The job description of the five-fold ministry is that they are bond slaves. Bond slaves cannot be bought or corrupted - they are sons and daughters in the bloodline of the King. They are not an elite or privileged group. They are driven by love and have a heart to serve. They are servant kings.
- 3. Kingdom builders** – All true apostles have an intimate, strong alliance with and to the Kingdom purpose of God. They are not apostles to one network. They make themselves available to the whole body.
- 4. Passion for transformation** – They want to see heaven come to earth and want to release mature people in the Spirit so they can project the heartbeat of the Father here on the earth. When apostolic platforms are in place, prophetic words will have increased power to transform with greater impact. Prophetic ministry that is spoken in an atmosphere of authority and government yield more fruit.
- 5. Christ centred** – The apostles want you to see yourself as the Lord sees you and help you to walk into all that God has destined for your life – and to become that. The goal of the apostle is for the church to see Christ – for Christ to inhabit us so it drives anything out that does not belong. We become consumed by His fullness and abundance versus measure and mediocrity. Apostles are concerned about what we look like to heaven.
- 6. Equippers and Releasers** – Apostles release oversight. They don't maintain and manage oversight. They develop and mature all those who are available. They are grace-based and not legalistic. They seek empowering and new covenant-based relationships of honour modelled by the Trinity.

If we examine the **Graeco-Roman Background to this word *Apostle*** we find a concept that may help us to grasp the significance of the apostles task as a foundation ministry gift to the church.

The Admiral of a Fleet of Ships

In Greek culture, the word apostolos was a naval term that described an admiral, the fleet of ships that traveled with him, and the specialized crew who accompanied and assisted the admiral.

The fleet would be sent out to sea on a mission to locate territories where civilization was nonexistent. Once an uncivilized region was identified, the admiral (called the apostolos) — along with his specialized crew and all their cargo and belongings — would disembark, settle down, and work as a team to establish a new community. Then they would begin the process of transforming a strange land into a replica of life as they believed it should be. Their purpose was total colonization of the uncivilized territory.

When that fleet pulled up to shore, it contained workers trained to build roads, construct buildings, and teach uncivilized natives how to read, write, and function in a new kind of social order. Thus, the admiral became the team leader for the construction of a new society.

You can easily see how this definition had application to a New Testament apostle, whose primary task was to travel with an apostolic team to establish the Church in places where the Church was non-existent. This is one historical usage of the word apostolos that has bearing on its meaning in the New Testament.

An Ambassador or Envoy

The word "apostle" also described a person who had the authority to act much the same way an ambassador represents his government to another government. This classical and secular meaning of the word apostolos meant an envoy sent to do business on behalf of the one who sent him. Thus, a governmental apostle served as a personal representative, emissary, messenger, agent, diplomat, ambassador, or charge d'affaires.

This person officially possessed the clout and influence to speak and act in the place of the one who sent him on his assignment. So when the ambassador — apostolos — spoke, his words were counted as the words of his sender

This reveals the New Testament apostle's position to speak and act on behalf of the Lord. This is a governmental position within the Body of Christ, and as such, an apostolic ministry gift should be received as one with great spiritual clout and the backing of Heaven.

<https://renner.org/the-historical-meaning-of-the-word-apostle/> accessed 25th November 2018

While it could be debated that this usage would not have been in the mind of Jesus, but given the strong influence of this culture in the Galilee it is not impossible for it to have some relevance. - certainly it would have done so as the apostles fanned out across the Roman world.

Paul identifies the marks of an apostle in 2 Corinthians 12:12 as signs, wonders and miracles and thus they stir in the people a faith in the God of the impossible. He does this in the context where his apostleship is under question when compared to others who are boasting in their revelations and spiritual experiences. However Paul is not wanting to boast in these, but rather, sets out a list of his trials and sufferings as a demonstration of his credentials. (2 Corinthians 11: 16-33)

The notes below are from notes from a presentation to a Queensland gathering of pastors from the Southern Cross Association of Churches by David Balestri in 2017

An apostolic culture prioritizes building over blessing

The English word *build* used in Matthew 16:18 and also in Ephesians 4:12 is the Greek word "oikodome"; it means to construct something according to a blueprint or a specific design. It also means to increase the potential of someone with a focus on the process involved. God has a design for the body of Christ and He has a specific blueprint for every city and human life!

Haggai 1:2-8 NKJV

"Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, saying: 'This people says, "The time has not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built." ' " Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?" Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider your ways! "You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes." Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider your ways! Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified," says the LORD."

The apostolic commission isn't just to build local churches, but rather to disciple nations.

The dominant culture in the early church was apostolic.

Outworking of the restoration of apostolic culture in the saints:

- 1) Kingdom minded believers in their sphere of vocations ... Monday to Saturday
- 2) Maturing image of Christ built inside the hearts of believers
- 3) A people who are apostolically sighted towards their kingdom assignment and prophetically led and equipped to build their lives on the voice of God.

Each ascension gift ministry (5 fold ministry) is graced to express and equip the body of Christ with a dimension of the Christos.

There is equality in expression and yet functional order within these dynamics.

Apostles are first: 1 Corinthians 12:28 Think of the Apostle as an activator

Apostles are also last see I Corinthians 4:9-13

City church dynamics: John 17 “oneness is different to unity”

- Unity is a decision to get along
- Oneness is a supernatural grace that we are to access. It is about heart being bound to heart in spite of differences of approach, perception and biblical interpretation.

“There is an anointing by which community is built” John Alley

This was part of what the Holy Spirit brought at Pentecost. (Acts 2:42-47)

APPENDIX B: FEATURES OF A KINGDOM CENTRE TRAINING THE EKKLESIA

ESTABLISHING KINGDOM CENTRES: Local 'Schools of Tyrannus'

The Goal: Foundational Apostolic Teaching/Activation/Multiplication

Foundational Apostolic Teaching is the essential focus of an Equipping Centre. In Ephesus, Paul taught 'The Kingdom of God' to leaders in Asia Minor over a 2 ½ year period. As apostles and prophets offer foundational teaching, the equipping team expands to include other five-fold graces of evangelists, pastors and teachers.

A. The Biblical Worldview

- 1) Understanding God's Creation Mandate. (Genesis 1:28)
- 2) Knowing our identity and authority in Christ.
- 3) Knowing and obedience to the Moral Law of God: the 10 Commandments and Jesus re-definition of the Moral Law: Matthew Chapters 5-7, 23
- 4) Recognizing and countering distortions to the Biblical Worldview (humanism, relativism, hedonism, individualism, consumerism)

B. Developing Skills Commensurate to Assignment Areas (Business, Family, Education, Politics, Sport, Media, The Arts , Justice , Health etc)

C. Developing Basic Disciple Making Skills

D. Deployment of Kingdom Mission Teams across the city, nation and nations in the different spheres

Reflection:

There are major mindset shifts that must occur in our churches as we respond to new ministry opportunities in this millennium:

- The shift to a more apostolic leadership model for church leaders...here there is an emphasis on 'fathering' and equipping and releasing for ministry rather than pursuing *my* vision.
- The shift from thinking of the church as a fortress amidst a hostile world to a mission orientated advancing the Kingdom of God approach.
- The shift to a kingdom focus away from 'building our church'
- The shift from a 'consumer' to a 'contributor' mentality
- The adoption of a culture where people are eager to train & be equipped for their particular ministry in the world.
- To develop a culture where people are supported in their ministry in the world.

Can you identify your part in this ...where/ what is your mission field?

Meditate on this with the Father.

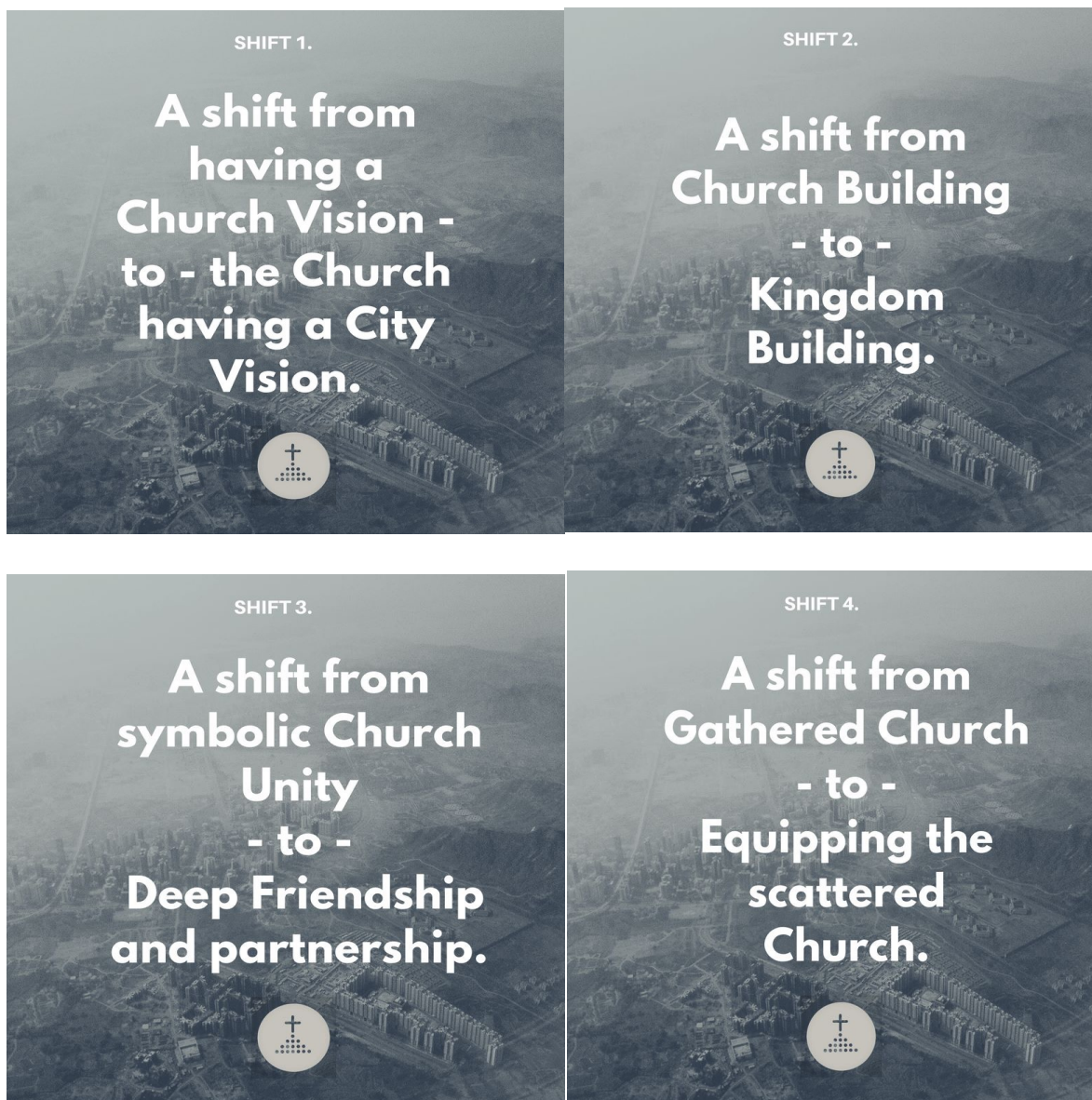
TRANSITIONING TO A NEW MODEL

This Apostolic model is not simply a cosmetic makeover of the church. It is a radical change in the way we think about and shape congregational life.

What is beginning to take place across the world in our time is that the former 'pastoral centre' model of church (which has existed in various forms since at least 320AD) is being replaced with a more biblical apostolic model.

In the transition from 'the pastoral centre' to 'the apostolic centre' there are significant mindset changes that need to be embraced and built into our lives.

Note the MINDSET transitions set out in below:



- How open are you to thinking about church in this new way?
- Is there anything here that you don’t really understand or find difficult to accept? Make note of your questions.

PASTORAL CENTRE	APOSTOLIC CENTRE
<p>People of God Divided into 2 classes ... Clergy / Laity Corporate Ministry flows from the Pastor’s vision with the Pastor overseeing the tasks being done to serve the church & the vision.</p>	<p>People of God ... all are ministers with the 5 fold leaders having an equipping and commissioning role. The ministry extends into workplaces, family and leisure centres.</p>
<p>The focus is on attending church (Sunday) and other church meetings/events</p>	<p>The focus is on being <i>church</i> (24/7) ... each has a calling/destiny into the world, encouraged and strengthened through the weekly church gathering</p>
<p>Prayer is often limited to asking God to do what we have been called to do.</p>	<p>Prayer engagement includes warring prayer to break open the way. It involves listening for His strategies and catching His heart for the assignment we are pursuing.</p>
<p>Community ministry is focused on serving and providing action to meet particular needs.</p>	<p>Community ministry while serving and meeting needs is geared towards transforming / redeeming the community including impacting mindsets & structures to change the underlying problems.</p>
<p>Doing mission is just one program among many in congregational life... the job of the mission committee.</p>	<p>Being on mission is the attitude / awareness in hearts of all the people ... it is our life!</p>
<p>There is a tendency to have an ‘us’ and ‘them’ attitude towards the people of the city. This can be patronizing and judgmental in expression.</p>	<p>We see ourselves as part of the city. Blessing the city & praying for it</p>

- Is there anything here on the **apostolic centre** column that you don’t really understand? Or that you find difficult to accept?
- How would such a mindset change how you are involved in your local church?

Transitioning from *Church-ianity* to a Kingdom Culture and Mission

A new way of seeing Church ... a new mindset .. biblically based

- In this Apostolic model the focus is on the people of God expressing their apostolic identity, as a sent and commissioned people, in their relationship with the world.
- All believers are in 'full time' ministry ... The role of apostles, prophets , teachers , pastors and evangelists is to mend, restore, equip and release everyday members of the body of Christ into their assignments in their workplaces, homes and communities.
- The distinction between 'sacred' and 'secular' does not exist – All of life comes under the Kingdom of God
- The church meeting is viewed and reshaped as an 'apostolic centre.' - a mission centre where *the sent ones* gather together.
- The church building is not the central focus for the people of God – (the place where they traditionally gather on Sunday and build their lives around.) The central focus of the apostolic centre is the equipping of the people of God for works of service in the world – ie their primary mission context.
- Within the people of God, God has gifted and established the five-fold ministries, to equip, empower and release the people of God into their missional calling.
- The apostolic centre is planted within its mission context. Both the church gathered (Sunday) and the church scattered (Monday – Saturday) are in mission. Mission shapes their reason for existence, their ministry training and their lifestyle through the week 24/7.
- Ministries of church members, outside the Sunday meeting and Corporate expressions, are recognized (in the market- place) and people commissioned into their callings and destiny.
- The emphasis on 'building our church' has been replaced with a focus on proclaiming the Kingdom of God in word and deed (the declaration and establishment of the King and His kingdom in the world – the ever present mission context – through the commissioned people of God.)

APPENDIX C: "APOSTOLIC TEAMS A Group of People Who Carry the Family Mission"

(An article by Bill Johnson – Bethel Redding California)

For centuries the people of God have gathered together around specific truths. Denominations and organizations have been formed to unite these groups of Believers. Having common belief systems (see footnote 1 at bottom) has helped to build unity within particular groups and define their purpose. Historically these groups were formed from people who were usually newly saved, or were asked to leave whatever denomination they were previously a part of.

Unity based on common doctrines has a measure of success. But there is an inherent problem with this approach - **unity of this nature is based upon uniformity**. When God is bringing something new (see footnote 2 at bottom), those who are listening are usually asked by their leaders to leave the group they were a part of (see footnote 3 at bottom). Their newfound convictions and beliefs are considered threatening and divisive.

If the whole group doesn't move in step with what God is saying, there will be a break in fellowship. When agreement in nonessential beliefs are considered necessary for fellowship, then division is natural and to be expected. While doctrine is vitally important it is not a strong enough foundation to bear the weight of His glory that is about to be revealed through true unity.

Change is in the Air

There are major changes in the "wind" right now. For the last several years **people have started to gather around fathers instead of doctrine**. In the natural, it would be easy to imagine a father with two very different children - one politically liberal and the other conservative. While discussions would probably be quite lively at the evening meal, **they would not bring an end to the family**.

Gathering around fathers gives a stability that enables people to endure differences in opinion **without falling under the influence of the spirit of offense**. Fathers bring an element of peace that is impossible without them.

Spiritual Fathers

Apostles are first and foremost fathers by nature. True fathers continually make choices for the well-being of their children with little thought to personal sacrifice. They are not jealous when their children succeed, but instead are overjoyed because of those successes. It is normal for a father to desire his children to surpass him in every way. **Brothers compete ...but fathers do not compete with their sons**.

In the same way that a father and mother are to bring stability to a home, so the apostles and prophets are the stability of the Church. The Apostle Paul calls them the Church's foundation (see Ephesians 2:20). Good foundations bring stability. The concept of team ministry starts with these two. Stability is the primary fruit of the ministry of the apostolic team.

Team Makeup

Apostolic teams are not necessarily made up of just apostles and prophets. **They are a group of people that carry the "family mission" without selfish agendas.** They are sent by their leadership, and entrusted with delegated authority to establish God's rule in their realm of experience and expertise. When they go with that heart, they carry an apostolic anointing because they function under the umbrella of the apostle's authority. **We can't be co-missioned until we're in sub-mission to the primary mission.** This is true of every believer before God. But it is especially true of apostolic teams. Setting aside personal agendas is a big part of the success of team ministry. **Many teams have failed in their mission because of an individual who wanted his/her gift or opinion to be recognized.**

The Need for Others

God never gives the whole picture of His plan for the Church to one father/apostle, or even to one tribe. Scriptures declare that "we" have the mind of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 2:6), not "I." Dependence upon the whole is essential for us to grow up in a way that pleases Christ. As the various "tribes" learn to work together we will see a more complete picture of the Father's intent for planet Earth.

The revelation carried by Apostles and the five-fold ministry will result in a Church coming to a common knowledge of the Son of God (see Ephesians 4). Much division presently exists in this area. He is our common focus. A study of the Scriptures without the Holy Spirit giving understanding creates much religious conflict. Division exists because people are committed to different levels of truth that appear contradictory.

Fathers are necessary to sort these things out. Variety without uniformity is important. These teams carry revelation to help the Church to live out of a common revelation of Jesus - who He is and who we are because of Him.

God's aim is to fulfill His word in 1 John 4:17 - "As He is, so are we in this world." We are to become like the Jesus revealed in Revelation, Chapter 1 - resurrected and glorified. **We are not headed for the Cross - we live "from" the Cross.** Apostolic revelation has that in mind.

The Day of Power

One of the more notable prophets of our day recently told me that he wouldn't be able to come into all that God had created him for until the apostles came forth to their appointed place. The apostles help release the prophets into their destiny, and vice versa. In a sense they complete each other.

Apostolic order without apostolic power is to be questioned. Order based on Biblical principle that is lacking Biblical power is tragic at best and deceptive at worst. Order does

not exist unto itself. The wineskin exists for the wine. The wine is the focus. All order exists to house God Himself - not to restrict Him, but to accurately express Him.

Wineskins need to flex in order to be useful, because of the expanding nature of the wine in the fermenting process. The Holy Spirit brings constant change and to house Him means to **embrace flexibility as a way of life. The goal is not to create a perfect structure or government. It is to create one that recognizes Him, and flexes with His changes.**

All of this serves one purpose - Jesus is returning for a Bride. For this to happen, the harvest must be brought in and must be "cleaned." He's not returning for a Bride that He has to heal up and put together like a puzzle in Heaven. He is returning for a Bride whose body is in equal proportion to her head, and whose parts work together in coordination. It's called a "glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle" (see Ephesians 5:27) in Scripture. Anything less is an illegitimate vision.

The Bride is to make herself ready for that day (see Revelation 19:7). As Larry Randolph puts it, "It is a perversion to think that Jesus will dress the Bride before the wedding." Our assignment is clear, and the gifts are in place. And they are all expressions of Jesus Himself. But they are simple in purpose. Represent Jesus to the world!

The fire of God must rest in the souls of men. Christians without passion are almost as great a mystery as Christians without purpose. Apostolic teams carry fresh fire with divine purpose. They enlist men and women to God's dream, and in the process the Church steps into her destiny.

Footnotes:

1. There are three basic levels of Biblical doctrine.
 - There are doctrines that are essential to the Christian faith _ eg, Jesus is the eternal Son of God.
 - There are doctrines that are important, but not essential _ eg., how we use the gifts of the Spirit in a church service.
 - And finally, there are doctrines that are good but not essential _ eg, the exact nature and timing of Christ's return.
2. This is never in addition to Scriptures, instead He unveils what is already there.
3. This is far from an absolute rule, as many leaders are in tune to what God is saying. However, some are more concerned with preserving past accomplishments over and above the advancement of the Kingdom. This creates a weakness that tends to miss God's present word.

Write out any thoughts or comments that flow from what Bill Johnson writes:

FOR FURTHER READING: A great introduction and easy to read is **Joseph Mattera's Book RULING IN THE GATES** Creation House 2003

THE APOSTOLIC REVELATION John Alley Peace Publishing 2002

SPIRIT OF SONSHIP John Alley Peace Publishing 2008

HOLY COMMUNITY John Alley Peace Publishing 2010

THE DIVINE CONNECTION Paul Botha Print hall 2016

THE GIFT OF APOSTLE David Cannistraci Regal Books 1996

MOVING IN THE APOSTOLIC John Eckhardt Regal Books 1999

INVADING THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS WITH INTERCESSION Tommi Femrite
Creation House 2011

CHANGE AGENT Os Hillman Charisma House 2011

THE REFORMATION MANIFESTO Cindy Jacobs Bethany House 2008

INVADING BABYLON Lance Wallnau & Bill Johnson Destiny Image 2013

APOSTLE Dr Don Lynch Ministry Matrix 2016

KINGDOM REVOLUTION Joseph Mattera Destiny Image 2009

KINGDOM AWAKENING Joseph Mattera Destiny Image 2010

PRAYER EVANGELISM Ed Silvano Regal Books 2000

TRANSFORMED Ed Silvano Regal Books 2007

EKKLESIA: Rediscovering God's instrument for Global Transformation
Ed Silvano Chosen 2017

A GATHERING MOMENTUM (Ed.) Roger Sutton Instant Apostle 2017

Most of these are available through the Refiner's Fire Library at the Gold Coast House of Prayer City Link Resource Centre 148 Eastlake St Carrara.