

Book Recommendations

by Art Katz

Art Katz emphasizes the significance of his books in understanding the church, community, and the search for meaning amidst suffering and truth.

Duration: 13:41

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5

Topics: "Personal Testimony", "Faith Journey"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the profound impact of Apostolic Foundations, True Fellowship, and other books by the speaker, detailing personal experiences and insights that have shaped his understanding of faith, community, and the prophetic call. The speaker shares how his journey from atheism to encountering Jesus transformed his life and perspective, highlighting the importance of seeking truth and meaning even in the face of suffering and challenges.

Transcript

These are two classic books, Apostolic Foundations. I don't know how to speak about these books without sounding as if I'm tooting my own horn, but no one knows the value of these books more than myself or who the author in fact really is. Apostolic Foundations is a landmark.

I've had pastors tell me they can't get past the introduction, they're on their faces. Chapters on the principalities and powers of the air, eternity, the eternal purposes of God, apostolic proclamation, the genius of what apostolic is, is the issue of the church in the last days. All summed up in a book that's a compilation of 30 years of personal history in God, so I can't commend this enough.

I think in time it will find its way into many languages as all of my books have become. True fellowship is a companion piece because what is the apostolic church if it's not a community and a fellowship, and what is the nature of that fellowship, how is it obtained, what kind of suffering? This is out of 30 years of community life, insights and episodes that are a remarkable contribution to the church out of the blood, sweat, and tears of the people who have passed through that kind of history together with me. My first was the journal that I carried as the hitchhiking Jewish atheist 40 years ago.

That's now in about seven languages, Ben Israel, Odyssey of a Modern Jew, which I highly commend because I was rooted and plucked up out from my setting in California as a teacher, a Berkeley University of California UCLA grad, and succeeding in that profession. And then the bottom falls out at the moment

when one thinks they're within a hair's breadth of the success that you have spent your life attaining. That's a picture of Israel.

Just when it thinks it's going to appropriate its success after much struggle and endeavor and trial at the very threshold of what seems to be now fulfillment, the establishment of the state, comes the collapse, comes the expulsion, comes the exile, comes the casting out through the nations, which is exactly what I experienced 40 years ago. I was rooted up, plucked out, not by external persecution, but circumstances of life of a comparable kind sufficient to evict me, not just from my physical setting, but all of the things that attended that make up the security of a man, his assurances, his lifestyle, his culture, the things that are tested true, all are shattered, shaken right to their foundations, and you find yourself with a pack on your back at the age of 35, hitchhiking through the world, as I did for many nations. Not looking for God.

I didn't know there was a God to be found. I was looking for philosophical and ideological resolution for the crisis that had come to me as a modern man, which is exactly the crisis that will come to Jews as being the epitome of modern man. And in fact, the whole issue of the Holocaust book is an attempt to find meaning out of the debacle and confusion of one of the world's most bewildering phenomenon that does not lend itself to an easy understanding, and that even Jewish present day sages testify that we're not even to make the attempt.

It's just not to be understood. It's an enigma. It's one of the unresolved riddles of our Jewish existence.

Well, I'm not satisfied with that, so I'm probing for meaning, and I'm saying that that generation that will not seek the meaning of its own history condemns itself to spawning children that are without direction, without compass, without guide, because we cannot let go. So a life without meaning is the end of our humanity, and then we can descend into savagery. And we have a whole generation that is adrift for the want of meaning, because we've not had the courage to look into the most devastating events of our time, and the church that thinks that it's past and has not examined it is already condemning itself.

So here I'm commending one book and speaking yet of another, the Holocaust book, which is in German, French, Russian, Bulgarian, Portuguese. I went to Brazil, and so they translated and put out an edition of the book in Portuguese. I believe that it deserves global circulation, because the thesis is so radical and needs to be considered.

The prophetic call, and that is as much a gem as apostolic foundations itself. So I think so much of these books that it would be worth my coming just to commend the books and have no other function. If they would only come into your hand and obtain your study, and your internalizing of them and affecting the whole composition, the corporate character of your life together, it would be worth the coming just to make these books known.

So, the book Spirit of Truth, it's in French, German, Russian, Lithuanian, it's in one of the dialects of India. It's remarkable. And you know what? I've never lifted a finger for any foreign edition of any of the books, not even for the English editions.

So I'm saying, you know, that God himself has prompted and gotten these books into circulation and into the languages in which they're to be found, because I believe that the Lord himself has inspired them. Reality? There are people who tell me, we read it once every year, Art. It's an inspirational book.

And there's a message here on Elijah that was given in Jerusalem. I forgot now what year, 1974, 73, the Holy Spirit Conference in Jerusalem. But that message, for which I took 45 minutes, is in this book, and it is a classic statement of God.

It's a little episode in the prophetic life. Spirit of Truth. All of these books, French, German, Russian, Swedish, Lithuanian, this book has just come out in Bulgarian.

I don't know how this happens. I don't lift a finger even for the English editions, let alone the foreign editions. I can only assume that God himself is promoting what he has brought into being for the edification of the church.

This is gorgeous. You can't read this through, I double dare you, from cover to cover and be the same. No way.

And who is celebrating truth these days? Who makes it an issue? Who loves it? Who's jealous for it? Who's willing to suffer reproach and misunderstanding for truth's sake? Truth requires suffering, and it's painful before it's glorious. So I commend this book greatly, which is the title of my first book, Ben Meen's Son, Son of Israel, the journal that I carried as the hitchhiking Jewish atheist and ex-Marxist, disillusioned cynical ex-Marxist, taking a year's leave of absence from the teaching profession in order to seek out some kind of ideological, philosophical answer to a distraught life that collapsed because of a marriage to a German woman who was schizophrenic and a piece of the wreckage of World War II. And in the paroxysms of her, the fury of her condition, she spit it out in a way to antagonize me through anti-Semitism, so under my own roof, I'm having the issues of the Holocaust reenacted.

You know what I found? I didn't have the magnanimity and grace and sweetness of spirit to bear it. It was eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth. Would to God I had been a believer in those days.

That lady would be alive now. So I took that leave of absence for 14 months. I traveled with a pack on my back as a hitchhiker.

That's the way to go. And from the side of the road, dependent on the mercy of those who pick you up, I was introduced to Jesus. Who would stop for a character like me, who's formidable even now? Imagine them.

And so those who picked me up were prompted by the Spirit of God, and I was touched by their courage, by their grace, by the peace that they exhibited. So finally, when I got my hands on a New Testament by a Jewish fellow passenger on a tramp steamer on my way from Italy to Greece, guess what? In the Gospel of John, in the very first reading, the history teacher who commended to my students, go directly to the source, had never gone. And now in the first reading of the source, I'm zapped by one statement out of the mouth of Jesus in an utter predicament that is beyond any human ability to solve, which is where God is bringing us as Jews.

Let him who is without sin cast the first stone. I was cleaved into trembling at the power of that revelation in one statement out of the mouth of Jesus, but I didn't shout hallelujah. My first thought was, what is your mother going to think about this? And she did.

I was just telling my dear Jewish sister here, who was only five years my senior, that my mother in her 96th year, after opposing me for 40 years in the faith, finally surrendered to the Lord and followed me in prayer to call upon his name and live 10 days as a believer and gave full evidence of having passed from

death to life. The very next day she said, the way is narrow. What about the others? And the next day she said to me, if you only knew how much God loves you.

How did she know? Circulation throughout Christendom and this little booklet written for Jewish consideration and advertised in the New York Times for \$10,000, one ad, and only 150 Jews requested it out of a readership of almost 2 million, and we have not heard back a single word from any Jew who requested the booklet. It's because of this booklet that I'm now living in New York, and it's an instruction for the church. It's written for Jews, but it will instruct you on how to speak to them.

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