

# Dvd 18: A Call to Apostolicity

by Art Katz

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*Apostolic reality is a deep apprehension of spiritual reality, characterized by a radical anticipation of the end and an unbroken continuum with the true apostolic and prophetic past of the church.*

**Duration:** 1:13:20

**Scripture:** Philippians 3:10

**Topics:** "Apostolic Living", "End Times"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living an apostolic life, centered on the anticipation of the end times and the consummation of God's ultimate plan. It challenges believers to surrender their natural abilities and self-sufficiency to fully embrace the risen and ascended life of Christ, leading to a radical transformation and a deep commitment to God's eternal purposes, including reaching out to the Jewish community. The call is for a church that embodies righteousness, authenticity, and a heavenly mindset, willing to pay the price for a genuine, sacrificial lifestyle that reflects the glory of God.

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## Transcript

Jesus, Son of God. And we see the beauty of their lives and their character and their integrity. And we hear them speak their many languages and see their gift.

And our hearts cometh unto the King of God, that they might be an end-time people of God, proclaiming His salvation throughout the earth. Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, when a man gets tired, he gets foolish. But I have a very serious thing to attempt, which I'm not expecting you to understand.

But it needs to be recorded and to be on file for future use. I feel led to share something that the Lord only rarely on occasion takes out, kind of a magna carta of apostolicity. What are the quintessential elements, what are the constituent elements that comprise apostolic reality? If you can't understand the title, how shall you understand what follows? I have it here on free sheets.

It deserves an entire seminar. And may the Lord give me grace to condense it in one speaking, but to leave it on file and on record, so that later on, when you come of age, you're not there now, you'll be able to appreciate and receive the benefit of a statement that I need to make now, because if I don't make it now, it will not ever be made. You'll not hear it from another man, and I'm not sure that I'll ever be back here, or any place that I'm going in these days.

I have a sense, like, once and for all. And so, Lord, whether or not I will is up to you, but I'd rather believe soberly, wisely, that this is a once-and-for-all occasion that will not be given again. And I see it that way.

I ask you to see it that way. And Lord, you know the difficulty of the topic that's before me. It doesn't lend itself to easy statements.

It makes demand upon the hearer. And I'm supposing that most of what will be shared will be incomprehensible, and the congregation will look at me blankly. But put it on record, Lord.

See to the recording of it, so that later on, when the time is right, they will have access to a statement that was made in time, and that would not have otherwise opportunity to have been expressed, that will be invaluable for the ongoing call of the church that bears your name in this city and this nation. For the word apostolic comprehends everything. And it's a word, like all the great words now presently suffering, not only abuse, but threat, that they might become familiar and have casual meaning that misses the meaning.

So Lord, show us what comprises this word. What are the quintessential elements that constitute apostolicity, the apostolic reality to which we are called, and if we don't attain, we forfeit, the whole identity and calling which is ours, as the church that bears your name in these last days. We're needing a special grace, and we're asking it, Lord, for their sake and for your name's sake.

In Jesus' name, amen. So one of the first things that will denote a church that can be rightly called apostolic is that it enjoys a radical anticipation of the end. It has an anticipation of the end, which is to say that it's a church that is eschatologically minded.

It knows that it's moving not just to a conclusion, but to a consummation of an ultimate kind that had its origins at the very commencement of the redemptive, salvific work of God from the beginning. Because it has in mind and a consciousness that we're moving toward an end, it is aware of what was the beginning and is in connection with that beginning. It sees itself in an unbroken continuum with everything that comprises the true apostolic and prophetic past of the church.

It's not a present now, independent of that past, and it's one that absorbs and takes that past to itself in unbroken communion and continuity and is looking toward the conclusion. Something that is caught up in that statement about the invisible cloud of witnesses that are overhead and are not complete without us, to whom does that make sense? Who cites that? Who expects that? Who anticipates? Who knows that what they are about in God is of such moment and such consequence, like today, right now, that there is in fact an invisible cloud of witnesses overhead in Singapore and overhead in this church? And who are they that comprise it? Those who have suffered, sacrificed, died for the fulfillment, the conclusion, the reality, the consummation of that for which they sacrificed and are not complete without us. So they're looking on with more than a casual interest.

They're looking on because they realize that we are in unbroken communion with them and that somehow that we have received the baton and we are bringing it to the place of completion and finish, which if we don't attain it, they are eternally and perpetually disconnected and shorted of the thing for which they sacrificed. See, it's a certain mentality, saints. It's a certain apprehension of things invisible, eternal, that had an origin and a consummation and we are in process toward that end and the inheritance of that which preceded us.

That's a deep apprehension of spiritual reality, and I'm saying that unless that distinguishes the church, it cannot rightly be called apostolic. Those that are looking down upon us as the invisible cloud of witnesses are more than just observing. They're actually bringing a quotient and a dimension from the other realm, from the heavenly realm, into our proceeding now, without which we could not continue or have the full-bodied intention of God expressed.

You know, when you begin to think like that, it's not long before you'll be saying with Paul, who is sufficient for these things? If what you are about right now is a point of time which God not only knew, from the beginning of creation, but was in his thought as works to walk in that were established before the foundations of the earth were laid and need to be consummated and fulfilled this morning, through the piece of dust that you are, who has had a lousy night's sleep and is shabby and worn out and at odds with himself physically, and yet that requirement has come. The moment is now. It's full of eternal portent.

There's a good word. P-O-R-T-E-N-T. Full of eternal significance, and it has come to rest right now in this moment, and it will not ever be given again.

It's once and for all. How do you like to live like that? Not just because it's this morning, but tomorrow will be exactly the same for tomorrow. That is to say, apostolic view of reality is always sensing the utter significance of what it is about in every moment of time.

There's nothing casual. There's nothing light. Everything is altogether significant because it encapsulates the past, and it points to the future, and it has everything to do with the consummation of the whole salvific history of God, his name, his honor, and his glory.

And it's got to come out of you at a time when you're not at your best, when you're feeling especially weak and fuzzy and out of it. That's when he makes the greatest requirement. This is a lifestyle.

This is a mode of being. This is a certain kind of consciousness that the world would condemn and maybe even take those people who subscribe to it and put them in mental institutions as being out of touch with reality because they have such a heightened sense that the moment that they are about is of ultimate and eternal significance. And yet the remarkable thing is that that is definitive reality and definitive sanity.

And the other thing that thinks that this is just a transient moment, one like another, one Sunday like another, that is irregular. That is insane. That is unhealthy.

That is unapostolic, which is to say unreal. Because the synonym for the word apostolic is authentic or authenticity, what is ultimately real, issues from God as God himself sees it, knows it, and performs it. Authenticity is the name of the game, not play acting, not a facsimile thereof.

And the greatest danger right now is over the two great words, apostolic and prophetic, for there are men who are very adept at creating the facsimile thereof and enjoying widest acceptance who, if they were here today, would not have a cotton-picking notion of what the heck I'm talking about. Nor can they have it because they're not the real thing, because the distinguished mark of prophet and apostle is that they are the thing in themselves. It's not that they've learned to acquire an appropriate and new vocabulary.

They are the thing through and through, the word made flesh. It's truth personified. It's not an affectation or a religious show.

And that kind of reality is not produced in a moment. It's the work of a lifetime when a man is subjected, because he has that call which he has not appointed for himself from the God who has given it, and therefore is required to pass through experiences of a formative kind that have at its heart the cross, having to do with radical separation, the dealings of God, in order to attain this kind of mode and framework of understanding and live and move and have his being in it consistently. So imagine a church of this kind because it has this foundation.

The church is built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, not some glib men who have plagiarized Paul and are able to apply it to present church conditions as problem solvers and are called apostolic, or are franchising whole geographical territories and appointing certain ones to preside as being the apostolic representative of their ministry. And how is their ministry occasioned? Some false prophet prophesied that he who was once a professor in a seminary is now an apostle, and so the assumption is founded on a false prophecy, and they validate one another. I don't want to say more than that.

I'm already getting a little heavy, but I just want to identify for you the kind of critical hour that we're in because the enemy knows more than we how the issue of what is authentically apostolic and prophetic is the issue, and anything that can be done to dissipate, change, alter, warp that understanding and offer some facsimile thereof that is not the thing in itself authentically, the powers of darkness will promote. So I'm pleading with you to be jealous over the two great words and to know that they're not easily understood, let alone demonstrated, and yet it's your call. If you're not that, what are you? If God is giving you an elaborate foundation that can only come exclusively with those who are apostles and prophets, what then are you expected to be? Why would he give that investment, that extravagance of men who have been nurtured and formed at the cross in privacy and hiddenness unless he intended for you to be raised on that foundation and that the superstructure of what you are as church is exactly in keeping with that foundation in character and kind, and that will glorify him forever and fulfill his eternal purposes and the mysteries for which we are called to be the fulfillment.

So I could have begun anywhere. I'm beginning with that. A church that is apostolic has a radical apprehension of the end and an anticipation of it.

It's consciously moving toward that. Therefore, its church services are not a mere succession of Sundays. They are a preparation for that end consciously and willfully, and the pastors and leaders and teachers are not afraid to make requirement of their congregations.

They'll be specific and pointed, and they'll name names, and they'll identify things and call for an obedience and a discipline because we're moving toward something of great magnitude that requires maturity and we want to get away from that man-pleasing Christianity that speaks in generalities to people who are lost in the multitude of the congregation and can hide. So the powers of darkness seeing the congregation with this kind of intention, even before it even comes into that reality, will oppose it. They'll be marked in the consideration of the powers of the air as a dangerous entity who before that time they could safely ignore.

And they could say, Jesus we know and Paul we know, but who are you? The Church of Singapore, who? One thing about the powers of darkness, and by the way, are you aware of the powers of darkness? Or are they some kind of mystical, ephemeral realm that is lost somewhere in the world of spirit and has not any substantive reality, let alone the most formidable reality against which we're called to contend. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but the principalities and powers of the air, the world's rulers of this

darkness, you dear saints. We're having a field day with Singapore because they've not been recognized, because there's not a church yet that has the keenness of discernment to recognize their presence and to see their wiles and their manipulations and to blow the whistle on their fraudulence and save those that are captive by them to be brought to a freedom.

It recognizes there's a spiritual battle and a struggle on, and it's over the issue of what in fact is reality? What in fact are true values? For what should men live? What is the purpose for our being? To be consumers? To have a position in the economy that produces the goods that others might consume them and we ourselves? And that our whole life is given to having and spending, laying waste our powers, and little we find in nature that is ours? An A for the day of anyone here who can recognize the poet from whom I've just quoted. You're not too conversant with poetry? That's your problem. You're not poetic enough.

You're too matter-of-fact. You're too mechanical. You're too legal.

You're too statistical. You're the kind of thing that the system wants that will be efficient because the reason for being in this system is efficacy to produce goods and distribute them and see to a certain prosperity because it has no concern for that which is ultimate or eternal and doesn't realize that this lifetime is a preparation for that same. Is that the idea? No one has told it.

No one has shown it because to persuade the world that this life presently is transient and preparatory for that which is eternal and abiding requires people who come down from that place who are in the world but not of it and exude eternity and not just possess it as a category. They're timeless and they're eternal in the reality of what they are in themselves and therefore they can move through the world and through society and culture and it's water off the duck's back. They never are jerked or manipulated or self-conscious or fearful or intimidated or threatened by any such thing.

Once you are in the realm of eternity and eternal value, that which is in time comes into its proper focus whereas the enemy wants to exaggerate its importance and by that make you captive. A church that is the church sees these things and is so effectually delivered from them that it lives in a kind of remarkable and transcendent freedom that the very observation of such a church makes those that are captive aware for the first time that they are captive. That they are the products of a time and age and they're being jerked and manipulated and their life is being stripped from them for merchandise.

In fact, we know in the book of Revelation that the souls of men will be made merchandise. So we need a presence in the earth of those that are really free from the influence of these powers and are marching by another beat and have a sense of those things that are invisible and eternal and know the eternal weight of glory that makes the present affliction both momentary and light. And in fact, they can expect present affliction because they are that kind of saint.

If they were just ordinary pew occupiers faithful to attend services through a dollar collection plate, they'll never be bothered by the powers of darkness. But once they imbibe and catch vision and have a sense of these things that are eternal and recognize the conflict with the invisible realm of principalities and powers over domination of the earth and who it is that's going to call the shots and define what is reality, when the powers recognize such a one, they will begin to oppose them. And so they'll experience afflictions.

And the remarkable thing is that God allows it. He did not save Paul from the consequence of being Pauline. From the consequence of being an apostle and inviting the devastation of the powers that

opposed him.

Men vowing that they would neither eat nor drink until he was dead because he was not fit to live. What about Paul that was so onerous? Another good word. O-N-E-R-O-U-S.

I'm doing wonders for his vocabulary. That men would vow that Paul was not fit to live. Isn't it remarkable? The man who shows forth more powerfully than any the genius of God.

Because what is an apostle but the expression of what is intrinsic to God himself? Who is the high priest and the apostle of our confession? Paul is only the continuation of Jesus Christ. I say only. Everything that he says and does is what the Lord himself would have performed and expressed had he continued in his own body.

Because when Paul says for me to live as Christ he's not just making a liberal statement of a poetic kind. He's describing the definitive truth of his life. So don't you applaud him for being a Jewish celebrity and that his attributes and the things that distinguish him are his intellect or his courage.

No. That was all dung. His rabbinical inheritance was all dung that he might win Christ and know him in the power of his resurrection.

And that's why he's so much the perpetuation of Christ. And living in the power that raised Jesus from the dead. That's why he said, I've labored more diligently than you all.

So Paul is more than just an object of our curiosity. He is the emblem. He's the personification of the very thing to which we're called.

And the heck of it is, we don't even have Pauline intention. We don't even have apostolic intention. We're content to be charismatic, which isn't bad, but it falls short of the glory.

At its best, it's only a transitional thing, but it does accentuate the issue of the Holy Spirit, baptism of the Spirit, gifts of the Spirit, which in the charismatic context falls short. And that's why it has run out and has lost its currency. God never intended gifts of the Spirit as a mere adornment.

He intended it as nuts and bolts provision for an authentic church fighting for its life against the powers that contend against it and are the key to the salvation both of Israel and its own generation. Gifts of the Spirit are a life and death provision for an earnest people who are on the firing line being opposed by the powers of darkness unto death. When we make of those gifts a kind of denominational distinction, an option of you could or you couldn't, it's not all that important, we're already out of the picture.

So a church of this kind will be distinguished by its acknowledgment and awareness of the struggle, by its necessity to be profoundly established in the realm of Spirit and can trust the expressions of Spirit as not just something to liven services, but a life and death provision of God for wisdom, for situations that cannot be anticipated and for which all previous experience does not fit us. See, I'm saying so much. How can you hear this? How can you receive this? What am I saying? We can anticipate in the last days radical requirements, life and death situations that will affect many that we could not have anticipated nor prepared for and for which any previous experience will not now help us.

So unless we're hearing right now from the Spirit of God, this is the way, walk ye in it, take this direction, do this, do that, anticipate this, we will have lost the moment. The gifts of the Spirit, prophecy, tongues,

interpretation, are critical, life-serving enablements from God and we have trafficked in that whole dimension and made it a kind of charismatic adornment to improve our meetings. If in fact it is even that much today.

It has fallen into such disuse and such a lack of esteem even by those who call themselves Pentecostal. But when we begin to become apostolically minded and see ourselves involved in a remarkable continuum of an unbroken kind moving toward a consummation and conclusion that the powers of darkness dread and are fighting furiously to retain their usurping influence in the earth, we'll need every gift of God and we'll need to hear prophecy from those vessels whose character we know and with whom we can have confidence that they're not speaking out of the flesh, that they could be heard or be admired. That is to say that we have come into a configuration of relationship by which we know one another's character and we're not strangers lost in the obscurity of the congregation of hundreds, but there's face-to-face relationship, there's things that are tested because if we're going to receive the call of the Holy Spirit, separate out unto me this one and that from the congregation that I want to send to Malaysia or where so ever and lay hands on them that they might be sent forth by the Holy Ghost, I want to know whose hands are being laid on me.

What were they doing with those hands the night before the day of my being sent? Were they twiddling the dial of a TV or even giving themselves to worse practices because when you lay hands on someone whatever is in you and composited in you is made manifest into that vessel and yet Paul and Barnabas can receive that prayer in Acts 13 and God says so they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost went. God equates the prayer, fasting, and laying on of the hands of men and women as being equal to ascending of the Holy Ghost. It waited for that Antiochal congregation to come to a maturity and a quality of life and relationship that was so authentic and true that a piece of it could be separated and sent out into the world and sent out by the blessing of those from that sending base by the laying on of their hands that did not confer evil or questionable things but things that were holy and righteous because they lived in a relationship intensive enough and intimate enough to know whose hands were being laid on.

Our modern Christianity has moved away from that model and now we have mega churches where you don't know who the guy is behind you or alongside you and you take communion what you hold a plastic cup and a little piece of waffle and a certain instruction you'll eat and drink when he eats and drinks and the guy is a complete stranger to you? How is that communion? Well once a month is sufficient for that until you come into the configuration of God's intention of earnest saints relating together as the community of God's people, once a month will not be enough. I was sick and tired of my Pentecostal once a month communions. I gulped it down it had no effect whatsoever.

It even made me feel uncomfortable, but when the Lord called us into community and life together in a rugged environment in northern Minnesota and hardship where the saints become trying and the best of the charismatic darlings show another face when they're living together intensely day after day and week after week they become unraveled and it's amazing what they're capable of and how disappointing and disillusioning and that you yourself are the most shocked by the revelation of the truth of yourself that you had not seen until you were brought into that intensity of relationship and I'll tell you what and you're going to be kind and nice and patient and forbearing and loving, maybe the first week, depending how nice a guy you are. You're pretty nice guys. But by the second week you have run out of human well-meaning intention and magnanimity and you need God.

So when you come to that communion table, you're not just sucking up a little grape juice and a piece of flat bread. You're taking the substance and spirit of the living God who has imputed himself into those elements as a covenantal meal for the inner man that we can show forth to one another real patience, real love, real forbearance. We need the provision of God which has been reduced to a triviality because our Christian life has become equally trivial.

You start getting serious with God about your apostolic calling and the necessity to live together with one another in more than just Sunday services and you'll be rushing to the communion table and you're believing for something more than an emblem. By the way, I take communion every morning by myself because I'm up early and have a time of devotion with the Most High or you wouldn't be getting very much now because what a man expresses publicly is what he in fact is privately before God. You're receiving the benefit of all of my unknown and unrecorded daily times with the Lord that are not distinguished by great senses of his presence but by faithful attention to the book of Psalms, the book of Proverbs, other scriptures to which I'll be directed, the remarkable writings of Oswald Chambers, of Spurgeon, morning and evening outstanding devotional material and waiting on the Lord and praying as the Spirit inspires and then I conclude by taking my own communion.

I carry a little sack with me with matzo, with unleavened bread and a little flask of wine and if we don't have wine we'll take water. But every morning I need the fresh impartation of the Most High. I need to be strengthened in the inner man and I have a faith to believe that what I am taking is more than just what it is as natural elements and certainly much more than symbols.

As your faith is so be it unto you. And all of that begins by just recognizing that there's an end toward which we're moving and everything needs to be contribution toward that end and that opens you to the attack of the opposing powers of darkness who will ventilate their spite upon us and brings us to a place where we are in a felt disjuncture with the world. Wow, that is a mouthful.

When you begin on a course of conduct and mentality like that, how long will you be one of the boys? How long will you be good fun and acceptable and a nice guy and a Christian too? You will find yourself in a conscious and growing disjuncture with the world. You're no longer as comfortable in it. In fact, now you're beginning to see through it and those things that purport to be ostensibly good are for you more apparently evil than evil itself.

You have discerned, you have developed discernment because it's easy to discern what is evil, but to recognize that good that often motivates us out of sentiment because it's nice and acceptable and makes people feel good is likely more inherently evil than evil itself if it keeps us away from the obedience to God and truth. You're able to see through what purports to be good and recognize that what the world endorses as good and the church also sanctifies and condones is the most vicious evil of all if it satisfies us with some superficiality by which we get by and lose our apostolic significance. You know, you go on like that, you'll feel like a stranger and a pilgrim and a sojourner in the world.

It's strange to feel strange and there's something in us that is human that wants acceptance, wants a nice pat on the back that we're one of the boys. We're Christians, but you're acceptable also. We don't want to come to a place where we're so abnormal in our attitudes and our perceptions and our eyes are filled with things eternal and we're not motivated and moved by the kinds of things for which others are laboring diligently that we will be looked upon as strange.

One of our Jewish brothers whom we brought to community, his mother not only had him to meet with rabbis, but with psychiatrists because he had lost his Jewish distinctive. He was no longer concerned with his success and she was sure that he was mentally deranged. How could he be a nice Jewish boy and not be concerned with his success? Because he was taken up now with a whole other realm of concern that was transcendent and eternal that in his Jewish mother's eyes was an alarm.

He had changed so that he had to be sent to a psychiatrist. The man was out of his mind. He was walking by another beat.

He had another set of values. What he represented was definitively real and her alarm was predicated on what is essentially false. And I'm asking you, you want to be apostolic? It's not a cutesy little game that you play by taking on a nice vocabulary.

You will be at odds with the world. You will be in disjunction. It will not mean to you what it means to others.

You'll feel uncomfortable and you'll make others uncomfortable just by what you are in yourself. Who want you to confirm them in their relationship with the world but your very indifference to their values and success makes them to be threatened and therefore the way for them to solve the dilemma is to get rid of you. One way or the other.

And the whole history of the true apostolic church, that unbroken continuum, is the history of persecution unto death, not by the world but by religious bodies that cannot stand the apostolic reality because it blows the whistle on its fraudulence and shows it to be synthetic and false and only superficially religious and the way to get rid of that threat is to get rid of them. So the Hutterites and the Mennonites and all of these radical wings of the Reformation, their whole history is filled with violence with rejection, with persecution being cast out and moved to other countries because their presence could not be tolerated by religious bodies who wanted to enjoy a status quo and did not make any requirement of its believers and whose religious leaders were flunkies and public officials who baptized them and gave them certificates of citizenship. But here were earnest believers.

They were called in German die stille im Lande, the quiet ones in the earth. No noise, nothing conspicuous, but the quality of their life. Look how they loved one another.

No man thought that the thing which he had was his own. They had all things common. Those that believed were together in a real togetherness that was more than sitting alongside each other in pews and retreating back to their privacy when their service was over.

They remained. They were in community. They had a lifestyle.

There was a mode of being that was heavenly. And those that are in the earth religiously cannot abide the presence of those people. And the only answer is to get them out or to burn them at the stake or to take the young girls and tie them back to back and dump them into the rivers that flow through the city Zurich and expunge their presence because their presence blows the whistle on the fraudulence of the religious profession that calls itself Christian.

You know what I believe? We're going to see the reiteration of that again in the last days. Are you prepared for martyrdom? Why me? If that's your attitude, you're not prepared. But to count it privilege.

And you don't have to go out and look for it. It will be the logic of a truly believing life. As for me, I'm not expecting to die in bed.

In fact, this may well be my last trip going to Malaysia and Indonesia where a Jewish Christian and American head would be a trophy. And if not there, then somewhere else. But the logic of a life truly lived in God invites martyrdom.

And it's not some masochistic thing over which we become maudlin. M-A-U-D-L-I-N which is falsely sentimental. The remarkable thing is that should that be the conclusion of our life, the logic of a life rightly lived, we count it privilege.

We obtain a crown which we'll be able to lay at the feet of the Lord in eternal honor because we're living in the realm of what is eternal. And the momentary suffering by which our death has come as martyrs is counted privilege and not fate. The true church is a martyr church.

Not that we will necessarily have to suffer such an abrupt extinction, but we're living in a particular way. Martyrdom is a lifestyle by which your life is not your own. Isn't that what it says in Revelation? They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives unto the death.

That's definitive Christianity, you dear saints. How close are you to it today? How close are you willing to come and be fitted to stand in that dimension in the last days and not be among those who dwell in the earth? They'll either be the heavenly minded or the earth dwellers. And the earth dwellers will not be able to stand the prophets, few though they be, whose words torment them, and when these prophets are killed, they give each other gifts because they're rid of the nuisance of such men whose indictment they could not bear.

There's two classes of people at the end of the age, earth dwellers and the heavenly minded. Paul had his citizenship in heaven. What does that mean? That's just not where he was registered.

It's where his thought had its origin, his purpose, his understanding, his inspiration, his values. His life was essentially lived from that place and from that center. Such a heavenly minded man has got to be irrelevant in the earth.

That's how much you know. The fact of the matter is, because he's heavenly minded, he will be the more relevant in the earth. Who is it that gives the church counsel on how to take communion, how to deal with the erring sinner, how to restore such a one back to the faith, what to do with the widows, what to exhort slaves.

Paul is full of practical, immediate counsel, all the more because he has his citizenship in heaven. And I have to say in all love, you guys are not sufficiently heavenly minded. The earth is too much with you.

And I've never seen an environment in my travels all over the world less conducive to heaven than Singapore. This is a tidy little society that you have here. It's nice.

I mean the housing, the sections, even the great apartment buildings, the shopping sections, the apartment stores, the traffic, the cars. Is there so much as one bruised, battered, rusty vessel, a vehicle in the whole of Singapore? Is every vehicle flashy and new and shining and resplendent? My God, is this make-believe? Is this for real? Is there any tragedy around here? Is everything comfortable and cozy and

nice? This is either the best of all worlds or the most deceptive. So brother, what's the alternative? Get your eyeballs into the apostolic scriptures.

Be imbued with that reality that is timeless and be suffused with it so that when you look out on Singapore, it has lost its glow and its radiance. It doesn't seduce you. You can take it, leave it.

You can walk through it as one untouched because your eyes, your being, your thought, your whole purpose for being is caught up and identified and fortified by what is in the holy writ of the things that are yet to come, the things that were. You're connected with that past and you're aiming for that future and that consummation and conclusion and because you are, you're out from this world and you'll look at and people will know it and no one will be more offended than other Christians who think you're going too far now and you're too radical now and you're not the fun that you used to be. You're so serious now and occupied with something that can't quite be expressed or defined but it robs you from being one of the boys, one of the nice guys that used to be counted on as fun and you're willing to pay that price.

Such a people who are not, who are in disjunction with the world and at enmity with the world that is at enmity with God, who know who see its systems as false and whose values are discerned and are consciously repudiated therefore become a statement of the kingdom to come because to the degree that they have broken free from the influence of the world and are marching to another beat and have another anticipation, another set of values and reason for being, they are already exhibiting that kingdom which is to come. The church is more than a place for a succession of services. It already begins to show forth the configuration of a heavenly kingdom.

They have a kingdom orientation, a kingdom consciousness, kingdom expectation which celebrates the king. They're not satisfied with a benevolent political rule through men. They're looking for a kingdom whose authority is God's and righteousness shall dwell in the earth because they love righteousness.

This distinguishes them and it's a word that you can hardly even define. In fact, all of the great words are beyond definition. You can't run to the dictionary.

I'm sure you'll get something but these are the words that need to be intuited and appropriated. You know you have them as I so often say when the juice runs in your mouth when it's sounded. You love righteousness.

You love truth. You understand the glory of God forever. These are things that don't lend themselves to mechanical understanding but rather to appropriation.

To absorption. To taking it into your being. You love righteousness and there's an integrity that is more than just a self-conscious keeping of your nose clean.

You don't become a little stuffed shirt who's afraid to say this or do that. You live in a wonderful freedom because you're freed from the level of rules and regulations that govern the insecure and are afraid of missing it and you're living in a transcendent wonderful freedom that is predicated upon righteousness that is intuited, taken in. You sense it, you know it that what is right in speaking and attitude and thought and conduct and you love the God of righteousness whose righteousness will pervade the earth and therefore anything that is unrighteous, that is manipulative, that is discriminatory, that is self-seeking, makes you to wince, you're chafed by the unrighteousness that is implicit and inherent in the world and will not subscribe to it in the slightest.

Even for your own advantage to get a diploma or finish school or be honored or have a title. When it becomes an issue of integrity before God, you'd rather lose the benefit of the material thing than in any way you should compromise your integrity in the sense of righteousness in order to obtain something for which you lust. Because you resist those earthly lusts, not because they're necessarily sinister but because their origin is out of the earth and not from above.

Anything that calls for your emotion, your participation, your involvement that can be reduced to earthly lust is not because it's grotesque or necessarily profane, vulgar, obscene, or pornographic but because it's earthly. The only desire that is not lust is that which issues from above. The things that the Lord would have you to desire because you're free to receive and move by that having broken the power of earthly lust and seduction.

Titles. Success. You don't automatically go to college or university to obtain a career.

You consult the Lord first. What would you have for me to do? It could be you don't intend that I should have a title, a career. Maybe what I need is the kind of character training that comes by taking up the public garbage.

And if that's your intention for me, that's what I will do. Because my government must be upon your shoulder for the increase and the peace of it is without end. I will not assume anything that you're required to come behind to condone and to authorize as if of course everybody knows you have to make a living, everybody knows you have a profession, everybody knows you have to go to education to get it.

No, not everybody knows. The Lord is not Lord until he has been consulted. Until he's heard.

Because we don't come before him with any predetermination of our own as to what we think appropriate for ourselves. We allow him to give us the disposition of his heart and will that might confound every thought that we thought that was appropriate to ourselves that he would necessarily endorse. And unless we come to him like that and desire the revelation of his will, even if it cheats us of our own ambition and embrace that will and delight ourselves to do it, how is he Lord? And if he's not Lord then what are we doing, playing a game and saying Lord, Lord when he in fact is not and we're arbitrarily and independently making our own choices our own decisions, plotting our own course our own life, our own future and then come on Sunday and sing his praises? Lord, Lord? That's where the powers of the earth can look down and say, Jesus we know and Paul we know but who are you? We see right through you.

We know what is the truth of your life and if you are not true on the issue of his lordship, you're not true in anything. You've made the word Lord a kind of beep a verbalization. It's lost its meaning and if it's lost its meaning there, where is their meaning anywhere? I'm still on page one.

So we know that we're involved in a great moral cosmic drama whose conclusion is felt as imminent. What does that mean? I double M I N E N T It means it's at hand. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

The conclusion of the age is at hand. The judge is at the door. We're moving toward that conclusion and it's not in the far distant future.

It's about to be realized. It's now. There's a certain immediacy and expectation which Paul inculcated in the churches that were raised by him who expected the lord's coming and that he would save them from the day of his wrath.

They lived in the sense of the imminent expectation of the lord's coming who brings with him rewards to distribute to each person according to their works. We have lost that sense you dear saints. And when we say come lord Jesus we don't really mean it, we don't really expect it, and we don't really desire it.

After all our careers are not yet completed. Our purposes and our ambitions are not yet fulfilled. So take it easy lord, don't rush.

There's no jealousy for his coming and his kingdom. We're losing that component which distinguished the church in Paul's time though it was 2,000 years further away from it than we. And they lived in that expectation which is to say it brings a dynamic, a sense of urgency and importance because you're expecting the lord who will come as judge.

Not to have that expectation is to lose that urgency, to lose the fear, to lose the awe, and to settle down into a kind of one day like another, one Sunday like another, hoping that this Sunday in spiritual roulette we'll hear a word that will really give us a momentary flush of excitement. But we're not moving toward a conclusion which we feel is imminent and at the door. All of this constitutes apostolic authenticity and constitutes a serious threat to the powers of darkness who hold the whole world in check, living in bondage to fear, and to present earthly lusts.

We'll know that we have attained this when we can persuade our own children. When our own children are persuaded that what we as adults are about is ultimately real and earnest and sees the degree of our sacrifice in the attainment of it, how shall they withhold themselves? When our children have drifted away and are drawn off to the world and its amusements and its technology and its computer manipulations and all the games and things that excite them, something is amiss in Denmark. We have not attained a reality that we would be expressing not consciously in order to win them, but all the more powerfully because it's unconscious, because it's unintended.

It just comes out. We're about something so earnest and so real that even our children are persuaded not only then to attend but to participate. We can always measure the degree to which we are moving toward this reality to the degree to which our own children have been drawn to share with us in the attainment thereof.

If they are drawn off by the world, then what we are about is not as compelling to them as it is to us. That should be an important index for our consideration and a kind of a reality check. There's so much here.

Corporate prayer, worship, is not a technique, a methodology. It itself is the statement of the truth of those from whom it emanates. Our real intercession, prayer and worship, is not something that we add on.

It's the expression of what we are. I'll show you how foolish we were in our own history as a community. Our worship exceeded the truth and the reality of our life together.

We had gifted musicians and we could get lost in an aura of euphoria that music itself by its nature can generate. Do you know what we did? We covenanted with God and said, Lord, don't allow our worship to exceed the truth of our life. Let it be in constant tandem and be the expression of the measure of reality that we have with each other and with you.

Right after that, if you come into one of our meetings, you put your fingers in your ears. You never heard anything more discordant and off-key and voices because that's where we were. And so, we mustn't allow the worship to deceive us that we ourselves can produce out of our own musicality to give us a euphoric

sense of a spirituality that we have not yet attained.

Better to it be the reflection of the truth because when worship issues out of that truth, it's worship indeed and is more than just affecting the atmosphere of the meeting and the Lord waits for it to be blessed by it. Our praise, our prayer is exactly the counterpart of our worship. True intercession and true prayer will be the reflection of the truth of our life together and not just a mechanical obligation or religious obligation.

And we're going to need true prayer there, saints because we're in a battle. We're in something really earnest now and we need to pray because among the other obligations that we have of which we are conscious even though they be few in number is to move the Jew to jealousy in the locality where we are where there are two synagogues in Singapore none of which have any cognizance of the existence of the church in that city so long as it leaves them alone. Not once have they been challenged by the sense that there's a presence here issuing from Gentiles of a kind that stirs us in a remarkable way because what they exhibit is what we Jews ordinarily ought to be expressing but don't but they seem to be in a more authentic covenant relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob than we.

So Paul answers the question in Romans, Is God finished with the Jew? The Roman church thought so. They had every right to think so. They crucified their own savior.

They stoned their own prophets. Paul said, God forbid you should think that. They have only momentarily stumbled and fall but through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles and leave it to Paul not to end there but to say so as to move them to jealousy.

Listen you dear Chinese and other saints. There's a purpose for your salvation beyond yourself. And if that were not so you would have brought the disposition of egocentrism out from the world and into the church.

Now it's your meetings, your faith, your enjoyment, your spirituality, me, me, me, my. It's just changed its content. It went from carnality to spirituality but it is still powerfully egocentric and the only thing that can break that is the recognition that the purpose for your salvation is beyond yourself and for another.

And it's another whom you never would have chosen or considered. It's the Jew. What have we to do with them, that strange people? God says, they have stumbled and fallen so that salvation should come to the Gentiles so as to move them to jealousy.

And I want to say, you will never be the apostolic entity in this city and in this nation and be ascending place into the world until you take that mandate to your heart seriously. It's not to be measured by the number of Jews available to you but by your consciousness of this mandate and calling that God in his wisdom has ordained for the church. And once you take it to heart, it's amazing the things that will follow.

There will be contact. There will be confrontation. There will be challenge.

Jews will be aware of your presence. Your prayer will want something from you. All the more as they move increasingly into an age of threat and peril as anti-Semitism is sweeping the globe.

And they want something more and they'll need something more than just your evangelical superficial affinity. The issue of the Jew is the issue of the church. And it's an issue that hasn't even begun to, we have not even begun to consider.

And why should you as Gentiles consider the Jew and what is more anomalous, I can't even spell that, than that a Gentile Christian who is Asian and Chinese or Indian or Malaysian should be occupied with the subject of the Jew as if this is not just another ethnic minority who also needs the gospel but as the foremost consideration of God as the chosen people who have a yet unfulfilled destiny and will be brought to it through the salvific role to which the church is called. Thank you Lord, I got that out. I'm not expecting them to understand it but it's on record.

And they will be brought to that understanding because it will transfigure them. It's God's blessing for you to be taken up with a people other than yourself whom you would not have chosen and have them as the object of your deepest concern because being a people who know that we're moving toward an end and to a conclusion and consummation, know they are at the heart of that. Israel's destiny, her fulfillment, her restoration, her return to God is the issue of Zion, is the issue of the theocratic rule of God that must come forth from the holy hill.

The word of the Lord must come forth out of Jerusalem and the law of the Lord out of Zion or it will not come forth at all. And it waits on their return to God and to the land, not the present state, which is a step toward that which must fail before the other succeeds, but that must come into your consciousness because it will do you a world of good. It will enlarge your whole understanding of the mystery to which you are called expressly to fulfill that is beyond any capacity that you have, however well-meaning, however intelligent, however sincere.

That is to say you can only fulfill it on the basis of the everlasting life, on the basis of the supernatural resurrection life and power of God that raised Jesus from the dead. That is to say you'll have no effect upon the Jew and therefore what shall you have for the Greek unless you affect the Jew out of the power of his risen and ascended life. You've got to be vessels for the incarnation.

You've got to have this treasure in your earthen vessel and live from that treasure, which the schools in Singapore have not instructed you to do. They want you to live out of yourself, out of your own brightness, out of your own capacity, your own intelligence, your own humanity. You'll never succeed with the Jew or the eternal purposes of God for them through you on that basis.

We're called to be sons and daughters of the resurrection, more than just those who subscribe to the correct doctrine, but are living eminently out of that power. How else can we be such a church? Well, have I said enough? I have to cut this short. In righteousness and I've hardly gotten into page two about the issue of the cross, the risen and ascended Christ life, which has consciously and willfully been sought and recognized as primary and central.

Well, you know what the catch is about that? You can't have that life and live out of it and abide in it so long as you're retaining your own natural life. One thing or the other has to go. You can't speak two languages through the same mouth.

You can't speak in other tongues if you're not let go of your own language. Something has to go, good though it is, in order to obtain a heavenly alternative. You're going to have to pull the plug on your natural life.

That is to say, not live from your confidence in it and trust that he's in you, willing to do of his good pleasure. And that if you'll be willing to die to your own self-sufficiency and trust him for the enlargement and power of his risen life, you'll experience it. In fact, you're hearing from God, from me, right now on that

basis.

Few Christians know anything about this, but the moment you start to take seriously the intention of God that you should be an apostolic entity in the earth in the last days, you are of necessity brought to the issue of the risen and ascended life of Christ that is only available on the basis of death. Resurrection must be preceded by a death. To the very thing that the world has encouraged you to develop your own natural ability, propensity, talent, and to cast yourself and trust on that that you're Christians who speak the right vocabulary, but the life out of which you live is not his, but your own.

His great works will never be allowed to be attained on that basis. Think on it, believe for it, desire it, and be willing to forfeit your confidence and trust in that which is natural. Try it as a teacher, as I did, who had five classes a day in an interracial community of black militant radicalism that hated whitey, and I had these students in my class because I taught a compulsory subject history, and all they were waiting for is the first opportunity to rise up out of their back seats and to do whitey in because they had no intention of succeeding.

They were failed from the beginning, and they wanted to ventilate their racial enmity and hatred as the man who symbolizes the institution that they despise. So the only way to prevent that is to maintain control by the exercise and the exertion of your own natural ability and power. But I wasn't getting anywhere.

My intention was more than just conducting a class or giving students grades. My intention was to touch them for eternity. I had more access to them than parents if they had parents, or pastors if they were church attending, and if something didn't happen in my classroom, a secular classroom, they were doomed.

Who's sufficient for those things? I was exhausted. After the second or third period, you could pick me up with a blotter. So I said, Lord, I was a young believer.

Lord, I don't have it. I can't. My colleagues are telling me to take it easy and conserve my energy or else I'll be victim.

But I know that I've got to pull out all the stops and trust you because I read in the Bible that there's a resurrection from the dead, and that because you live, we will live also. So I'm going to not conserve my energy. I'm going to pull out the stops.

I'm going to exhaust myself with these students. And I did. By the second, third class, I was reeling.

My tongue was cleaving to the roof of my mouth. My head, my mind, I couldn't think. My eyes were squinting, shutting, and I was just beginning to see these bullies coming up out of the back seat, finding their opportunity in my weakness because the resurrection will not come till the real death, not an approximate death, not the vocabulary of death to self, while self is very much alive and even strengthened by the deceptive vocabulary.

There's a death we need to taste and not fear and submit ourselves unto the end of ourselves because in that moment, just as I was fading, there was no basis for hope in man. In that moment, something began to rise up in my legs and up into my cavity and my chest and my head. My eyes blinked wide.

My tongue was loosed and I began to speak with an authority and a penetration that kept those guys in their seats and subsequently filled the entire youth section of our Pentecostal assembly by conversion in a

secular classroom in the power of God and the wisdom of God that issues with his life when we will pull out the plug of our own confidence and dependency upon ourselves and trust him. So let me pray for such a church here. Lord, my God, Lord, what a high calling we have in Christ Jesus and how pathetically have we fallen short of it and have learned to play church and conduct it admirably and impressively, but we're falling short of the apostolic glory.

The powers of the air are not threatened. They're yawning at us and so we're asking, my God, for a day of new beginnings, for apostolic intention which we know will not be cheap, which will cost us something and we're willing for the cost. Anything that will save us from eternal embarrassment and shame that we have lived entire Christian lives beneath the glory of God.

We've not affected our society. We've not impressed the Jews. We've not moved them to a jealousy.

We're hardly even conscious of their existence in our community and our one Sunday is like the other and we're still rooted in our own selfishness, seeking our own thing, our own pleasure, our own satisfaction, our own enjoyment, only now it's not just carnal, now it's spiritual, but it's still egocentric ourselves. Break that power, Lord. Loose us from that wrong center and give us a center which is your glory, your honor, your eternal purposes by which we cannot conceivably fulfill however well-meaning, but only under power of your life for those things that are of you must be fulfilled through you that to you might be the glory of God forever and if we are not a church who has at its deepest center this one thing, the glory of God forever, how then are we the church that is deserving of your name? Lord, give us even now a repentance, a broken heartedness for our shallowness that we had to wait for you to send a Jewish character to berate us like this before we're conscious of these things that we should have long before understood.

Give us, my God, a spirit of breaking. Show us how essentially selfish we are and that how modest our intentions toward you are. Yes, we were serious and sincere, but not in a way that would threaten our status quo, but in a way that would be comfortable and compatible with our own self-interest and yet be Christians.

Save us from that hypocrisy, that play-acting, that duplicity, that falling short. Communicate to us the high calling of God in Christ Jesus that can only be fulfilled through Christ Jesus, risen and ascended, who is the life of our life, the thought of our thought, the speaking of our speaking, the love of our love, the power of our power that we might say with Paul for us to live as Christ. Come, my God, do something even today in transaction by a people who have a whole fresh and new intention of themselves with you, and know that it will cost something, and are willing and count it all privilege, for we ask that in Jesus' holy name.

And God's people said,

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