

Dvd 20 - the Antioch Pattern

by Art Katz

Art Katz emphasizes the need for the church to return to an apostolic model of community and participation to fulfill its mission and impact Israel.

Duration: 2:02:48

Scripture: Acts 13:2, Romans 11:11-12, 1 Corinthians 3:13, Ephesians 5:22-24, 1 Peter 4:12-13

Topics: "Apostolic Ministry", "Spiritual Surrender"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of challenging the issue of history and generations, highlighting the power of uncalculated prayers and trusting God's promptings. It delves into the concept of apostolic sending and the necessity of enduring sacrifice, suffering, and opposition for works with eternal significance. The message also touches on the church's role in relation to Israel's restoration and the call to submission and surrender for God's greater purposes.

Transcript

The issue of history, which is the issue of generations, should be challenged. If you didn't notice, that was a resurrection prayer. What do you mean by that, Art? I mean by that that it was entirely uncalculated.

It's one thing to pray religiously, where you form your prayer in your own mind and thought, so that it will be acceptable, not only to God, but to men. It's another thing simply to open your mouth and trust, and to be surprised by what you hear being expressed through you. So I know that that was not my prayer.

And I pray equally that these are not my words, that what the Lord prompted somewhere around 4 a.m. this morning is indeed His burden, out of Acts chapter 13. The first apostolic sending, that deserves particular attention, because I'm in complete agreement with Watchman Nee on virtually everything, and especially when he says that if you want to understand the things at the end, find their first expression in Scripture, that there's a conjunction between beginnings and ends, and that the first usually contains the paradigm, the pattern that will come to fruition or fulfillment at the end. So we should have a special interest in the very origins of that which is apostolic.

Everybody, of course, knows that the Greek word means send. An apostle is a sent one. But sent by whom, and under what circumstances, and to whom, ought to be of profound interest for us to have an intention beyond that which is evangelical, charismatic, and Pentecostal.

I hope we have that intention. For all of those, however precious their history, and however much God has had opportunity to express Himself through those, fall short of the glory of God. So I was a discontent Jewish believer by the age, by the time I was five years old in the Lord.

I had already passed from a Baptist church. Why that? Because when I came back from Jerusalem, 37 years ago, saved, I was completely wiped out financially, having spent everything for the 14 months of travel, and went to the closest church to which I could walk, which happened to be Baptist. But when I realized that the pastor not only wrote out his sermons, but his prayers, and that he had a Bible study group called the Seekers that were yet looking for some truth outside of the faith, discussing comparative religions, sensed I was in the wrong place.

So I went from Baptist to Assemblies of God. I became in due season a charismatic Jewish darling, which I no longer am. And so I've traversed evangelical, Pentecostal, charismatic, full gospel.

I've gone through the whole spectrum of modern day movements, and at the end of it, still, a deep discontent. A sense that something is yet profoundly absent, maybe even the key. And could it be community? Could it be that all of these Christian forms still are essentially configured in the world's model, and we have only to see the architecture of their churches to recognize that they're set up in auditorium fashion, facing an elevated platform where an overworked and credentialed professional is hard at it, where the people are only too happy to pay the expense that absolves them from the responsibility of their participation.

So far from the pattern of Paul expressed in Corinthians, that when you come together, each one has. Look at the faith of Paul. Each one has.

He knows it. A tongue, an interpretation, a prophecy, a revelation, a hymn. We come, and each one does not have.

Each one has not sought to have. Each one is content to look up to the platform and enjoy the anonymity and escape from responsibility. Such a people are already disposed then to escape.

And so when the rapture theory comes along, only of less than two centuries old, it finds such lodging, such acceptance in Christendom that it becomes virtually sacrosanct and unchallenged. Even to raise a question about the validity of a pre-tribulation rapture, which the Church Fathers never expected and has become so widely understood and received as being the very tenet of the faith, shows how disposed the Church is to escape. I didn't plan to say any of these things.

That's when I'm at my best, when I have no plans. So, can you see that we need to have a particular interest in that which is called apostolic? I knew something was wanting, and until that something is supplied, the Church could not be to Israel what it ought. How shall it move Israel to jealousy if what we have is predictable and something equal or less even than what Jews are able without the Holy Spirit? Their Sabbath services with eloquent rabbis and Hebrew liturgy and the various other things that they enjoy, equal or exceed what Jews do.

So it's not going to be our services, per se, that will move Israel to jealousy. But leave it to Paul to make these astounding comments and give no explanation at all. So we're still looking for what it is that could conceivably move Jews to jealousy, of whom Paul says, they are the enemies of the gospel for your sake.

They're not just indifferent, they are actually hostile. My mother is a wonderful case in point. God bless her.

Thirty-seven years of active hostility against the faith that had transformed her son. Stubborn, unwilling to see, look here, proudly Jewish. She would die a Jew.

Well, she did, but she died a believing Jew only ten days before her death in her 95th year. But what it took to get her to call upon the name of the Lord. That her first prayer after that was, God, if I've done anything wrong, forgive me.

My mother's last year was spent in the Christian community, Ben Israel, in northern Minnesota. We abducted her from Florida in the month of December and brought her to northern Minnesota, which is our winter, which is madness. We could have been sued, thrown in jail, but it was the Lord.

She balked and kicked all the way, but we got her there, we fixed up a place for her, and in the last couple of months of her life living with oxygen, she required around-the-clock care, and the ladies of our community provided it. And I was next door, available at her beck and call at any time. And somewhere between two and four o'clock in the morning, ten days before her death, I was called, and, oh, I come quickly, your mother is almost hysterical, there's a battle on for her soul, she's seeing demons.

I came down, and sure enough she was in that condition, and out of me poured one messianic prophecy after another. I didn't know that I knew all of those verses, all of those scriptures, one after another. My mother was inundated in the word of God about the Messiah.

Until finally, she had no alternative but to call upon His name, and did. And then lived for ten days to give evidence that something very authentic had taken place, because the very next day she said, the way is extremely narrow, what about the others? And then the next day she said to me, do you know how much you're loved by God? And then when I had to make my overseas trip, eight weeks in Europe, Russia, and those places, I went with my mother's blessing for a first time. So I know something personally, I've been a missionary to the Jews, that's how the Lord brought me out of teaching and into full-time ministry at the age of 39, was to be trained as a missionary to the Jews, and became in my fourth year the director of this Baptist mission to the Jews in New York City, today called the Chosen People Ministry.

So in my own home city, I knew what it means to be near and yet far. I knew what it meant to be in the midst of two and a half million Jews, and that New York City is the effectual Jerusalem of world Jewry, and yet not have access, yet to be stopped at the door by the doormen, and that the Jewish community is well insulated, well protected. It's not like the days of old, where an apostle Paul could come into a synagogue and be invited to share.

If ever I have occasion to speak to Jews, it's at universities, and I've been to many of them, including my own, where Jews are always to be found out of proportion to their number in institutions of learning, because we are motivated, if not driven to success, and know that that's the route. And so when they see a speaker advertised by the name of Katz, one of the honored names indicating Levitical origin, priesthood, speaking on the gospel as an ex-Marxist radical, it brings them out. And so I've had a history with my own people.

Do I ever know them? And I have been one, and am one. My first 37 years was the classic prototype of the modern Jew, antagonistic to Christ, not just mildly indifferent, but actively antagonistic. I thought as an

atheist, I ought to be doing something to rid the world of these old wives' tales, and fables, and myths, so that they can face the reality, and know that this is a world in which we have to make it for ourselves and by ourselves.

So, praise God that one of my former students and her mother prayed for this servant with tears, knowing, the mother said, you're an atheist and a radical, and my daughter came home every afternoon from school weeping over you. The woman who had never met me nor seen me prayed in such a way that the hound of heaven pursued me for 14 months with a pack on my back when I had come to a final crisis of a moral and ideological kind where my gods with a small g have failed. Marxism had failed.

The Soviet Union was not, what's the word, utopia, but a prison house. And numbers had been slaughtered in the programs of a Stalin, and all of the revelations that came out of the horror of that system in the early 50s and 60s led to the disillusionment of men like myself ideologically. And then the Lord knows how to bring those Jews down.

He gives you, for example, a German wife who was a member of the Hitler Youth that I met while a GI in Germany who was also schizophrenic, living on the other side of the moon and completely outside the realm of what is rational, what is ordered, that has to do with common sense, goodwill. It was an entirely new phenomenon for me. As intractable as the Islamic world is for Israel, so was my German wife for me.

Goodwill and intelligence was not going to save us. It was a horror of unbelievable conflict because in the frenzy of her schizophrenic disorder occasioned by World War II itself, the way in which she expressed that frustration was against me in the one place I was hard as a rock, in the one place where I was vulnerable, my Jewishness. So I had enacted under my own roof something of the anti-Semitic thing through which my people were a victim of Germans, now taking place under my own roof with a German wife, and I was not able to respond kindly.

There's where my confidence in man and goodwill and reason was destroyed. So here I'm asking all of these students ultimate questions of meaning, and I'm unable myself to answer any. And in that crisis to which world Jewry is being progressively brought, I was brought 37 years ago and forced up and out from California, my profession, my place of comfort and security, and thrust out into the nations with a pack on my back, living for 14 months with what I could carry.

And that opened up a whole dimension of reality that would otherwise have been lost to me. It's one thing to travel first or second or even third class. It's another thing to travel by the side of the road as a beggar, waiting to be picked up by whomsoever will, and carrying with you the last traces of your humanistic assumption about human brotherhood, but where is it when you need it? And waiting in the drizzle and the rain, forlorn, angry at a world that has failed, and is not only not going anywhere, but going toward its doom and its destruction, because you knew that the atomic annihilation, the breakdown of values, the corruption, collapse of society was inevitable, and you had no answer.

Your ideologies, your philosophies were valueless, because if you couldn't solve the paradox of your own marriage, how are you going to save the world? See how far God will go with us, Judas? But I was picked up by you know who? Remarkable saints. And I'm trying to find one in particular now for 37 years from Switzerland, and I've never been able to find anybody who ever heard of him or knows of him. And I gave them all the information that I had, whose address I carried in my wallet, which wallet I lost when I got to Egypt, and was pickpocketed my first day on a bus.

I've never been able to find Edwin. Remarkable man, who knew about the artist Durer, D-U-R-E-R, who was an architect artist. He knew about the psychologist, who was the son of a minister, a Protestant minister, whose name now escapes me.

That is to say, he was not a narrow, cardboard, cut-out Christian. He had an expansive knowledge and breadth of understanding of art, of literature, of the world. Remarkable man, and in conversation with me, at a crisis moment after he had drawn out my entire heart of frustration, futility, and hopelessness, and I looked at this Gentile, who was not in any way impressive to look at, with my arms folded over my chest, coming to a final end of myself, thinking, what can this man say? And he said, Artie said, do you know what it is that the world needs? I thought, well, at least he knows how to ask the questions.

But what can he answer that I have not already seen or dealt with at universities or Marxist institutes? There's nothing new under the sun. So I'm waiting to hear some conventional reply that I would walk away from completely untouched and die. And he said, in that one moment of time, when time stops and a word comes, Art, what the world needs is for men to wash one another's feet.

And down I went. Art, did you literally fall out of your chair? No. I continue to sit there like this, giving no impression that I was in any way affected.

And you need to know that, because in the confrontation you are going to have with Jews, and I'm not speaking about the present nuclear Jewish community here in this city, but those that will come, don't be disappointed if they seem to be unaffected by what you say or even react angrily or in a hostile manner. There's not the evidence that you failed, but that you succeeded. Don't look at their faces.

We Jews are so intimidating. But what the man didn't know was that while I sat there overtly, unmoved, inwardly, my spirit had fallen out of my body and was whimpering and weeping on the floor. Because in a moment of time when he said that, I had a flash of inspiration of all of the arrogant, hot-shot art-cats of the world that are ready to save it and end up by bringing it into rivers of blood.

And at this washing of one another's feet, of which I had never heard, how should I have heard of it? I had never read a New Testament. The fact of the matter is, university graduate teacher, I had never read an Old Testament. You say, well, Art, weren't you a bar mitzvah teacher? Yeah.

At the age of 13. And I chanted my little piece out of the prophets appropriate to that Shabbat selection, but I didn't understand a word of it. We didn't learn something to understand it.

We learned something to perform it. So I'm hearing, wash one another's feet. What a devastating concept.

And I saw somehow by the eye of the inner man, the proud men who are going to save the world, bending and washing the feet of the enemy. At that time, it would have been teachers washing the feet of administrators. Parents, children, their parents.

Today it would be an Israeli washing the feet of a Palestinian. And I realized in one moment that spirit of humility would save the world without any program, without any shedding of blood. And before I could recover from the enormous impact of that one statement, this man went on to speak to me about the gospel of Jesus Christ in German.

So because of the inadequacy of my German and the limitation of his English, the few words were yet more cogent, so powerful that when he finished with me, I wanted to protest and say, hey, that's for the

Gentiles. We have our God, you have your God, we have our book, you have your book. I had no voice.

I could not register complaint. And I knew that I knew I was hearing the words of truth and life. Well, you can buy that book.

And it's soon to be published in Chinese. Why? Because I think there's a whole generation in China who have come now to a place to which I had been brought 37 years ago. Ideological disillusionment.

We're now open to consider an alternative, even the unthinkable alternative, the reality of God himself. And what makes that book so powerful is that it's not a retrospective book where a man thinks, well, 20 years later, 30, I'll write what I remember. It's the actual journal that I carried 37 years ago, making my entries of a man picking me up off the side of the road.

It's an extraordinary book. And the literary quality of that book is so unusual that the publisher in England, Hodden and Stoughton, the three-century-old English publishing house, told me, the editor of the religious books department, when your book came to my desk, Art, I realized that the literary quality of that book was so unusual it would never be a commercial success, but that it required one edition from us. And they published it.

So when I later came to New Zealand, Australia, and other places in the British Commonwealth, the book had preceded me. So I praise God that it will come out in Chinese, which may well be a door of opening for this service to that nation at some future time when they're ready for my kind of work. So bless the Lord.

You love the word apostolic? I say until it evokes saliva. You don't love it sufficiently. You've got to drool over the word.

And I know that you Chinese are too circumspect to be that abandoned to anything, but I'm asking you to cultivate such a love, such a jealousy for this word that lies beyond definition, that is the summation of the glory of the faith itself, that Jesus, being the high priest and the apostle of our confession, bears that designation. Any church that is less or other than what is apostolic necessarily falls short of the glory of God. And until the church that bears his name is apostolic, we will not move Israel to envy, nor defeat the principalities and powers of the air, that still continue, though having suffered an initial setback at the crucifixion of Jesus, still continue to be the usurping false rulers of this world and the gods of this age.

Only a church that has come to apostolic maturity and authority can recognize and discern this invisible spirit reality and have the authority to defeat it. So it's remarkable that the same church that has come to a place that can move Jews to jealousy is by that virtue the same church that can defeat the powers of the air. And in fact, meeting Israel and the Jew in the last days is the defeat of the powers.

For why should a Gentile church extend itself sacrificially for Jews, who have not only not necessarily done anything for the Gentiles, but have been the object of their envy or displeasure or resentment? This is totally to be unexpected. It's unnatural that a Gentile should be willing to bear sacrifice, even the possible loss of life, for a Jew. But when a Gentile will be brought to such a place by the operation of God through the Spirit, the end of the age has come.

Because not only will that Gentile believer be willing for such sacrifice, but bear it ungrudgingly and even rejoice over it as being privileged. If you can understand that and understand me, you're really an impressive congregation. But it's being recorded, and we'll come back to some of these statements that

I'm making.

And I'm just throwing it out as the Lord gives it. So I'm saying all that to say this. Let's roll up our sleeves and get into the text.

Let's become competent exegetes, which means rightly dividing the Word of God, drawing out its meaning, comparing Scripture with Scripture, looking upon every nuance of the Word. Why does God choose this Word rather than another? Why does he take a certain Word and repeat it two or three times? Nothing is haphazard in the Word of God, and we have been reading it much too casually, if we have been reading it at all. As a matter of fact, we have been reading it only as Bible study, and not reading it with the urgency and desperation of a people living on the sharp edge of collision with the world and its opposition and persecution for whom the Scriptures were originally intended.

Those to whom these epistles came or are described in the Book of Acts were not receiving material for Bible study. They were receiving instruction for life under hazard and oppression. And when our circumstances will again be comparable to theirs at the end, as it was at the first, the Scriptures will come into a new dimension of cogency and significance that they do not now have for us.

As we say in Pentecostal circles, can you say amen? Okay. That's about the most elaborate introduction to a message I've ever given. It's so elaborate, it's a half a dozen messages already in itself.

Okay. Acts chapter 13. Now, in the church at Antioch, you can read Singapore.

Because this was the thought with which I was awakened at four this morning. There's a correspondence between Antioch and Singapore. As you'll see as we read on.

Antioch is not Jerusalem. Jerusalem is an exclusively Jewish church. Antioch is cosmopolitan.

Antioch contains a myriad of nationalities, ethnic groups, racial origins. And that's all the more profound. Because it's one thing for Jews as Jews to come to a place of agreement.

But the diversity of races and nationalities and ethnic origins that had been historically at each other's throat in ancient and biblical times for them to constitute a church together is all the more significant. That's why I think there's hope for Singapore. Now, in the church at Antioch, not at the church, in the church, see how a little two-letter word is full of meaning.

These were not casual attendees coming to a place for services. The church was their life. Their professions and occupations and businesses were mere secondary enablement.

Their place in the church was the purpose for their being and their salvation. That's the difference between being at the church and in the church. And until you're in, in that kind of fullness and recognition that this is the purpose for your life and being, you're only at, and therefore Antiochian waits.

They were in the church. Who? Prophets and teachers. Barnabas, Simeon, who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Menaean, a member of the court of Herod the ruler, and Saul.

Wow. What a spectrum. Just look at the nationalities that are represented there.

Barnabas and Saul are Hebrews. Simeon, who was called Niger, is evidently an African, because the word means black. Lucius of Cyrene, one of the Mediterranean ethnic nationalities.

Menaean, a member of the court of Herod, might even have been a Roman or a mixed-bag person. Why does the scripture give us these details? Why is it important that God inspires Luke, who is the careful author of the book of Acts, to let us know the diversity of nationalities, races, ethnic groups that compose the church? Because that's the genius of the church. That's what makes the church an apostolic setting.

That anyone who is sent forth from there represents the reality that is there. And when God says, it's time now to separate unto me, it's men who reflect and bring to the world what has been obtained at Antioch. Namely, an agreement, an unfeigned love, an authentic unity that is not ecumenical or polite.

Why? How do you know that, Art? Because it says, while they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, does not mean singing choruses with the overhead projector. I like that. But here, worshiping has a much deeper significance.

Because if there was unresolved difficulty, if there were yet a residue of animosity and unreconciled racial or ethnic differences or fear, black and white, Jew and Gentile, their worship would have been stunted. It would have been artificial. It would have been synthetic.

It would have been choruses. Worship is a deep statement of agreement with God and with men. That cross has a horizontal member as well as a vertical.

You know the great legend of Columbo, who was the missionary to Scotland, when Scotland was nothing but a pagan jungle of warring factions, and even to this day something of that remains? And Columbo was the missionary from Ireland, long before the Protestant Reformation. And it says, according to legend, he came with a group, a company of believers, and they lived for two years off the coast of Scotland on an island. And at a certain time, evidently, the Lord moved upon him then to come to this mainland, and there was a double thick fortress, a bastion impregnable against any penetration coming from outside.

And according to the legend, Columbo made the sign of the cross. And when he made that sign, the gate fell down or opened by itself. That the key of entry was the authentic sign of the cross, not as a little religious genuflection, but as a statement of the authenticity of what is represented when you point up to the Lord and point this way toward men.

There was something in that band of souls with him that was tempered and true. The horizontal member was as authentic as the vertical, and in fact, the one will drive you to the other. If you're earnest about the relationship with each other as saints, you'll find out in short order that your patience and goodwill, sympathy or other human qualities that are okay for a Sunday service are not sufficient for the kind of depth of relationship that distinguishes the church as the church.

And that we need God for grace, patience, wisdom, long-suffering, for who is more a trial than a fellow believer? My greatest distresses and vexations and opposition and suffering has not come from unbelieving Jews. That's nothing to get kicked in the shins or be spit at. My greatest suffering is in the church, in the naivety, the immaturity, the subjectivity of the saints, each one having their own opinion and scriptures to support it.

It drives you to madness. Where is reality? Where is objective truth? This one sees it this way, that one sees it that way, and you've got to live with that, not just on Sunday, but Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, for those that believe, we're together. Until we are in that kind of relationship, saints, that will take more than Sunday services, more than 10,000 Sunday services to obtain, there'll be

no proper vertical alignment with God, for it's the desperation and need that is provoked by earnest living together that drives us to God and an intensity and depth by which we would not otherwise have sought Him.

Are you following me? I'm enjoying the English language this morning. Every word is precise. There's no fat on this.

There's no flab. This is lean. So I hope that you've been schooled and prepared to follow such communication.

For example, one of the things that was painful for me in my Pentecostal earlier time was the monthly communion in which we were all given a little plastic cup and a little wafer and waited for the signal when we would eat and drink together. Well, we may have gestated and taken in something at the same moment, but it was anything but together. Alongside, yes, but together.

Those that believe we're together is a much deeper statement than the proximity to one another impugns. So there I'm sitting with a stranger on one side, a stranger on the other side, holding my cup and wafer. It was an ordeal, not a blessing.

But when we came to community, it wasn't once a month. It became daily, as in fact is my practice even now. Daily communion.

Why? Because we needed the impartation afresh of the life of God expressed in the bread and in the wine, which are much more than symbols. Symbols will never nourish you. But the life of God in the substance of the bread and the spirit of God in the substance of the wine mediates, brings something for me, as your faith is so beat unto you, that was necessary and vital because we found out that being nice guys was not enough after the first two weeks.

We could be nice guys for the first week or two. After that, we ran out of patience, sympathy, love. We needed all of the attributes of God to be to each other what we must in the intensity of what church is when it becomes community.

And until you become that, you'll not be able to receive the Jews that come. It may well be that the Jews that come is God's provision to compel the church to an apostolic mode of being that it would not otherwise have sought. Because, frankly, we prefer privacy.

We prefer anonymity. We prefer merely to be alongside than to be together. They worship the Lord together with fastings.

Not only were they different in their racial and ethnic origins and their histories that had characteristically divided men, and now they were so unified that they could worship together, but they were also different in their callings. Prophets and teachers. And if you think that those callings are compatible, you don't know.

A teacher has scarce patience for a prophetic man. A prophetic man sees the large picture, the significance, the hidden things, but very careless in terms of line upon line, precept upon precept. And the teacher, so painstaking in his fidelity to the world, can't see beyond his nose.

One is lost in the details, the other in the larger view. And that is the very nature that God himself has created and intended in those callings. So how do these two worship the Lord together is as much the

question of how being Jew or Gentile worship the Lord together.

There needs to be a basis for reconciliation even in the callings of God. ...place at Antioch. Not because of its geographic location, except that being where it was geographically, it reflected and brought in the whole composition of diverse races, ethnic groups, nationalities, that gave the church its genius.

The first apostolic sending is not out of Jerusalem. It's out of Antioch. And so I need to ask, where are we here? This is Singapore.

Is Singapore an Antioch? In the intention of God? I know in the intention of men it should be a great commercial center. But in the intention of God, what does he intend for the diversity that is represented here, ethnically and nationally? Does it have the potential, again, to configure in such a way a reality of authentic union that is not, what's the word, ecumenical, that is not religiously polite, that has not come cheaply nor easily without men first bringing to light and to the surface the deep and hidden things that they have taken in with their mother's milk. I can't believe that Chinese believers have forgiven the Japanese.

Maybe politely, but in the deeps, without some first bringing out even things more deep than you yourself recognize. Do you know that there came a time when I met with Jewish believers, all of whom were in ministry, in Brooklyn, New York, we had a time of seeking the Lord together, and the Lord showed no exception. Every one of us still bore deep-seated resentment and hostility against Christians and against Gentiles.

Be grateful that the Lord brought deliverance in that day. Or the words that I'm speaking to you today would be the same, only they would be barbed. There would be a hook in them.

I would be unconsciously expressing through the words a hostility still resident against Gentiles and against the church. It took a deliverance. I didn't realize how deep was this animosity.

Why should it be otherwise? My mother only spoke about them, the goyim, the Gentiles, them, the enemy. They are different, other. And even though I could shun that off in my liberal view of tolerance for all men, still, the spirit of it, you hear it, you drink it, you take it in with your mother's milk, with the air.

There are deep things. Ecumenicism is a fraud. It's a political religious hoax.

It's altogether superficial and cheap that we're going to hug someone with a turnaround collar and that will affect a real statement of agreement. God's after something much deeper. You know what he's after? He's after the same reality of relationship in the church with each other in their diversity as the Godhead enjoys with each person of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that we should have in ourselves the same quality of relationship, forbearance, love, and deference as the persons of the Godhead have one to another, the Father to the Son, the Son to the Father, the Holy Spirit to the Son.

God wants to see replicated on the earth the genius of what he is in heaven. As someone said, God himself is a sweet company. I want to tell you, dear saints, you don't come from polite religiosity and tolerant acceptance and ecumenical union to this reality without pain, without a suffering, without the cross.

God is the God of truth and not feigned and superficial imitation. The church is the ground and pillar of truth, not only in its doctrine, but what it is in itself. It's a suffering before it's a glory.

That's why we prefer ecumenical. That's why we prefer privatistic lifestyles. That's why we prefer alongside rather than together.

I've even raised the question of whether the spirit that has been celebrated in this charismatic generation is actually the same that was poured out on Pentecost. Because I don't see the corresponding depth of change wrought in contemporary believers by their charismatic experience. It does something for them personally.

It improves perhaps the atmosphere of their meetings. But where are the economic statements where no man thinks that the thing which he has is his own? Those that believe were together in an economic and social quality of life that did not require for society to bring care. There was not one among them that had need.

Those that had sold it and laid their proceeds at the feet of the apostles. There's a generosity, a magnanimity, an ability to be remarkably gracious that came with the baptism in the Holy Spirit that I do not see in a corresponding way in what has been celebrated in this charismatic generation. Because what is the Holy Spirit but God? It's the ruach, breath, ha-kodesh of holiness.

It's what God is in himself. He's an expansive, magnanimous, outpouring, generous, gracious God. So to see a church that is, as we say in America, living close to the vest, watching jealously for its own self-interest, living guarded lives and not open to one another, even in their marriages, let alone to those in the congregation, how is that the expression of his spirit? The quality of life known in the early church was so other than what Jews had ever known that a Greek word had to be employed to describe it, koinonia.

Quality of fellowship, of sharing, of profuse abandonment, of a givingness, of an outpouring that distinguished the church, that even the world around them had to acknowledge, look how they love one another. It was visible. That's what prevailed at Antioch.

And when that prevails, then God can say, separate unto me a piece of this that I can send it out into the world and replicate the reality of Antioch in the places where I send these men, who will then turn the world upside down. Because the world is predicated on entirely other principles and premises, namely selfishness, greed, ambition, take care of number one. If you don't, nobody else will.

See to your own interest. Yes, you can be a Christian, but watch out and be careful how you share what you say, what you do, what you give, dollar-in-the-collection-plate mentality. Turn the world upside down.

Convolute, upset its apple-cot, its wrong values, its false wisdom that has its origin from below rather than above. You, dear saints, shut me off at any time. If I'm going on too long, too intensely, and your mind fades.

But do you understand that the church is set in a drama of a great cosmic proportion? That there are two wisdoms, two value systems, two mentalities vying for rulership, for prevalence to prevail in the world? The wisdom of God and the wisdom of the powers of this present world are in contention. And it seems like the world has all the marvels. It seems it has everything that's impressive.

Credentials, wealth, prosperity, affluence, style. When I read that magazine on the airplane coming in yesterday, my God, you need extraordinary inner resources and deep commitment and consecration not to be seduced by the remarkable subtlety and power of the advertisements, the articles. It sets forth a whole lifestyle, a whole mentality, which I suspect has permeated Singapore through and through.

Pleasure, excitement, skydiving, bungee jumping, looking for thrills. What? Is that what this life is about? That we're so bored we have to manufacture thrills that will jump out of an airplane and float for a certain length of time before pulling the cord or leap with something attached to us and just narrowly be safe from splattering on the ground. And people write whole articles about that.

The woman is an expert because she's made 800 jumps. That's sanity? That's something for us to read on a plane and make sure not to miss this restaurant, this hotel, go to this section, this amusement park? That world needs to be turned upside down. It's a false world.

It's a delusion. It's a pleasure-oriented escape from reality. And it does not even so much as hint that there's an eternity to pay.

Everything is centered in this present life as if this present life is what it's all about. Rather than this present life is preparation for that which is to come, which is eternal. What we call the dark ages, the medieval time, when the mentality was there's a necessary suffering in this life.

This is not a pleasure trip. This is something by which we are instructed, fitted, and prepared for the life to come. And we moderns have dismissed that as the dark ages.

When that mentality is more biblical than our present understanding. Is the world too much with you? Are you caught up with Singapore? We took a ride last night after the meeting. Very impressive.

We're even thinking about our world headquarters. Not so much in the Philippines as Singapore. Lustrous, inviting, but seductive and deceptive.

Can you see through it? Can you see false values? Can you see what's celebrated? Anyone who has a university degree and has his eyes open and an advanced degree knows that the academic world is a jungle. For all of its civility and pretense as the guardians of civilization, I've seen men drenched with sweat giving their first address before an assembly of their academic equals because their acceptance, their career, their tenure is at stake. The powers of this age effectually rule and touch and influence nations and races, though invisible.

They are the lords, the gods of this age. And they look upon the church and say, Jesus we know and Paul we know. So long as you play their game, so long as you are corrupted by their values, so long as you cultivate their ambitions in the religious dimension, that is to say, still success, still promotion, still recognition, still esteem, wanting to be called doctor or senior pastor, you've sold the game away.

It's lost. Better to be known and unknown. Better to be feared and hated by the powers of darkness than to obtain the esteem of men.

That's why we have to be so careful. Touch not the world. For everything that's in the world is of the flesh, the devil, the pride of life, the eyes.

We dare not use their methods in order to obtain hope for spiritual ends. Better obscurity, better hiddenness, better weakness. That's why God has chosen to perfect praise out of the mouth of babes and sucklings than any other place.

In order, it says in Psalm 8, to shut the mouth of the adversary. There is a moral war on. There's a contest between competing wisdoms.

And the Lord, therefore, in order to defeat and shut the mouth of the enemy, goes out of his way to employ that which is foolish and weak. For that which is esteemed in the world is abomination in his sight. The question is, is it abomination in your sight? That's why the Spirit of God, in coming into Antioch, at the moment of God's appointment, can say, separate unto me Paul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have called them.

Because separate is what the church is all about. How do men become separated? Ethnic, racial, national, origins, jealousies, animosities, prides. How do they become separated from their religious ambition to be seen and to be heard of men, to be concerned for their reputation and for their acceptance? If not in the church that is at Antioch, where those things are identified, where those things are dealt with.

If you can safely attend church for a number of years and never be found out, never be challenged, never be corrected, you are not in an apostolic setting that can be called upon to send. What is sent is the expression of the reality that has been obtained through suffering. Don't tell me that Paul did not have deep-seated Jewish pride that was not automatically in one's soul eradicated in his conversion.

Who knows? God is discreet. The shades are drawn. We're not privy to the depths of dealings to which Paul had to pass in order to be a candidate to be sent.

But you can believe he went through something and went through much. What is the formula for a false prophet who may have initially been true? It is to live in isolation from the body and go from holiday inn to holiday inn, being the darling of people who want to be titillated by personal prophecy about them and have a paid staff who will in no wise ever confront the man or bring to his own attention defects in his own character because they will not bite the hand that feeds it. For a prophet to remain safe and who is more susceptible for deception than a prophetic man, he needs to be in an environment in which when he is not functioning in his cause, he is with other brothers, another brother.

Subject to correction, to reproof, to the kinds of things that we invariably need because no man can know the truth about himself. Every one of us has a blind spot that requires another to observe and to finger. And you know what that is? That's love.

I praise God for a people who will not spare me. So I come back from a trip and I said, wow, the place was so crowded that people were hanging from the chandeliers. And someone of a very little mind would say, is that really true art or are you exaggerating? And don't you know that exaggeration is one step removed from a lie? Nope.

Well, they weren't literally hanging. We need the correction of the church. It's very love.

Love to give it because what if it's misunderstood? What if you have a secret ambition and you want to exalt yourself by shooting me down before the body? And men like myself are wonderful opportunities for the elevation of the everyday saint who wants to be exalted at the expense of the public man and see in him some defect that no one else had the depth of insight and discernment to identify. Got the idea? So you take a risk to correct, assuming that your motive is indeed pure because otherwise you will be found out in bringing a supposed correction only for your exaltation and not for the benefit of the man. This is church saints.

Am I describing the environment that you are in? And can it be your environment if it's a congregation of 300, 400, 500, 1,000 where you obscure lost in the pews? When do you turn around and face each other?

When do you have opportunity to see the disclosures and the defects that need to be attended and corrected? Where do you know one another well enough to perform that? Church has got to be community. There's an intimacy that is needed and a heart willing to bear the humiliation that precedes the glory. You're receiving the benefit this morning.

Aren't you glad I'm not false? Or you're not sure yet? It's owed to those people who have struggled, sweated, agonized with me for 25 years or as much as they have been in that community and live in an environment of freedom where they can express such things and take the risk of love and also receive what is needed for themselves. That's the church. And until we attain to it, I'm not expecting we're going to hear the Holy Spirit say, separate unto me because we're not separated.

We're still sitting there with undisclosed depths of pride, envy, jealousy, ghosts in the closet, personal battles, things like that. We have nothing by which we'll turn the world upside down but we are still in some measure enslaved or under the press of these powers ourselves. So long as there's fear, insecurity, intimidation, threat, we are still under their influence.

Only a people who have been freed from their influence can turn the world upside down and free those who are yet captive. Not only by what they say but by what they are in themselves. Do you need a break? Let's take a little break.

Let me pray. Lord, take it easy on these people. Come on, Lord.

They're sweet, lovely, traditional and conventional Christians, well-meaning, but all the stuff that you're laying on them is new and scary. And you know to what degree their culture and their national origin is a factor that militates not for openness but for privacy, for guarding, for keeping one's face. That for them to come into this freedom, this reality, this apostolic thing for which you await, this glory that will turn the world upside down will first require their world being turned upside down.

And who wants that? That's inconvenient, messy, threatening. We like it safe. We like it predictable.

We like it. So long as it's a church that we like it, predicated on what we like, it is not apostolic. There's something more important than what we like.

It's what He likes. The glory of God. The reality of the Godhead in His people, in the earth.

Singapore, not known as the great commercial center of ultimate sophistication with its shops. What is that? Begins with a G. Gucci. I saw it yesterday.

And another one, I mean the most advanced, sophisticated luxury of a kind that makes the western world pale. You've got it all. And you're going to fight your way through that and represent in that an apostolic reality that can even challenge and confront values that motivate and animate the lives of hundreds of thousands all around you and set them free, by your example, before you touch Asia.

I'm praying and I'm getting a little Holy Ghost chill. This is a springboard for Asia ascending out from this Antioch into Asia to set free the captive millions who sweat on their little pedicabs and motorcycle, what do you call it, to eke out a few pesos. Grim, living at the most marginal level of mere survival without even a hint that life has more meaning than that and that there's a kingdom to be sought first and its righteousness and these things else will be added unto you.

You've got all your values reversed. You're making survival the primary factor of your life. You've not considered eternity the God of eternity, the kingdom.

Because who's shown you, who's called you, who's told you? The church in your midst does not display that. So my God, mercy, Lord, mercy, Lord, give these dear saints a sense of urgency that what you have set before them is not a novelty, some idiosyncratic thing of a Jewish character who has this particular perspective but that you have framed a time, a moment whose time has come, a set time to favor Zion in Singapore for Asia's sake, for Israel's sake and that they'll take it to heart and they'll be willing for whatever adjustment. They'll invite the light of God to come in and show the depths to which the world is already too much with them, how much they palpitate for the wrong things, how much they themselves are driven for credentials, success, how much fear and intimidation is already a primary factor in their own life, not free, not trusting, living for number one.

So my God, give them a break. Mercy, Lord, give them a capacity to take this in, to dwell upon it, to speak about it one to another and to invite, my God, such alteration and change as is necessary, seeing that the time is short, very short, and there are things already at the door for which we are yet unprepared. Spiritually, practically, living as if this is the best of all worlds, and in fact, it's not easy, not hard to believe, living in Singapore, that this is not the best of all worlds.

Sure looks like it. There's no sense of any apocalyptic disaster ahead, any judgment for nations or for Israel. The idea is foreign to us.

So bless these children, Lord, and give it to them in measure that they can bear, they can consider, they can receive, take in, internalize, walk out and be. I pray, Lord, for Singapore as the Antioch of Asia. You know, I don't put many petitions like that to you, Lord, but I'm asking it.

I have something in my heart, Lord, that you've put there since my arrival at four o'clock this morning, Singapore as Antioch. A place of sending again into the earth apostolic men that can turn the world upside down because they're sent from, out from, a body that is not of the world, but of heaven. Bless it, my God.

Bring it forth by your word and your spirit. We thank and give you praise for your jealous love that calls us. In your great name we pray.

Amen. Well, 15 minutes, whatever you say, for the work to which I have called them. Isn't that interesting? And that evidently those that are called do not need to know.

They'll find out as they proceed. And it's remarkable that when they proceed, where do they go? They end up first in the synagogue of the Jews so that without some self-conscious necessity, Paul, in his intimate union with God as a sent one, finds himself fulfilling the pattern of God in Scripture. That is to say, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Invariably going to the Jew first, not as a principle, but out of the working of the life of God in him. An apostle is the expression of the life of God. Paul then says, for me to live is Christ.

So I'm bringing Singaporean attention that Paul is not doing something by the principles. He's not a technician who says, oh yes, it says but to the Jew first so now I need to. In the very acting out of the life of God, those principles are being fulfilled, but not by principle.

That is to say, God does not call us to be technicians operating by principle, but out of the life of God that will invariably reflect and express his principles. And I think that, I just suspect, I don't know too much about Asians or the Chinese personality or the Singaporean. I suspect that you're very Jewish and that therefore you have a tendency and a propensity to do things by the numbers.

You're exact and you like to have the security of doing things in an ordered way by principle. You need to know that that's not the way the kingdom comes. The kingdom will be in accordance with the life of God, but not by the principles.

It will not be by your self-conscious attention to principles. It will be by your abandonment to his life that his principles will be fulfilled. Well, it's all recorded.

You can hear that again and contemplate that, but I wanted to draw your attention to that and also to the fact that after they were called, they fasted and prayed and they laid hands on them and sent them out. I'm very keen on the laying on of hands, but not any hands, because when hands are laid on you, whatever is in that person is transmitted for good or for ill. I've had one scary experience where some presumptuous German brother laid hands on me without my bidding him and in his zeal, and I went into a meeting and it was flat.

Something was taken from me by that impartation of what he was in himself, which was not good. So how is it that they allowed the hands to be laid on them as being sent? Because they were in that quality of relationship that they knew the life and the character of those whose hands would be laid upon them. They knew that they were not up the night before twiddling the TV dial to find some X-rated movie or some other kind of dubious pleasure.

They were in that relationship that they knew the life and character and therefore could welcome the hands of that people. But not only did they receive and honor that, but God himself honors the laying on of hands for it says, so they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost went. That God himself entrusted the laying on of the hands of a tested body whose character is in keeping with God as being the same as being sent by the Holy Ghost.

Did you see that? You must see that. You mustn't miss that. That God himself honors, certifies, and recognizes the character of that assembly as being so much in union with himself that their sending is his sending.

That they being sent by the Holy Ghost went. And I'll tell you what, when you go like that, wow, mama mia, that's something much more than some autonomous going being sent by a committee with well-meaning intentions. You are receiving the benefit this morning of a man who has come to you being sent out of an apostolic body in northern Minnesota by the laying on of hands.

Which means that once that is performed they are not freed from the responsibility they have entered into it. That means they are in prayer this morning in intercessions for what is taking place here. And that brings a dimension of depth, penetration, content, weight that would not otherwise be our enjoyment if they were not praying and supplicating thousands of miles away because once having laid hands on this one being sent they are then covenanted and joined in a continuing responsibility to sustain him with their prayers.

That's why I take photographs, slides, and when I get home I can show them on the wall, paying for. That thousands of miles away there's a conjunction, something established in the realm of spirit that is absolutely critical for what is taking place here. Now Art, is all that so necessary? Aren't you a gifted man? Wouldn't we be just as much blessed as you are without such ascending, without such an event? No.

Is it that important? Yes. Because what is taking place here is not just of interest or blessing but of life and death significance. We're speaking things and speaking foundations that will affect the church in ways that will touch eternity itself.

This is apostolic thinking that a meeting is not just a meeting or an enjoyment or a blessing. Eternity itself is at stake every time saints convene and God sets a man like this before them. So that in the Philippines we could say with complete confidence God has not just discussed apostolic foundations He has established them in the Word that is sent by a man who is sent.

It's another kind of proclamation. It's the Word becoming an event. So don't be troubled that you don't understand it all.

It's over your head. It's too difficult. It's strange.

The Word is still going forth and will not return to him void. It has a credibility, a weight, a cogency as a sent word from a sent man that performs the thing for which it is sent. Even above and beyond your own present comprehension it will not return to him void.

I'm laboring but my labors are not in vain. This is much more than a speaker. This is much more than a gifted man or interesting perspective.

It's event. An apostolic sending is an event. It moves the church from faith to faith from glory to glory.

For example in Romans 10 How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? Speaking about the Jews. And how shall they hear except one preach? And how shall one preach except one be sent? Well faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Not the gospel reduced to a cliché or principles or a formula step one, step two, step three but an apostolic proclamation of the gospel that in the hearing of it however hostile and opposed they were prior to that the very hearing of the apostolically proclaimed word through one sent creates the faith to believe it.

My Jewish people are waiting for apostolic proclamation that will issue out of Singapore and other places around the world. Okay. So being sent by the Holy Ghost they went down to Seleucia from there they sailed to Cyprus they arrived to Salamis they proclaimed the Word of God in the synagogue of the Jews.

They had John to assist them and they went on and they encountered a certain magician a Jewish false prophet named by Jesus. He was with the pro-council Sergius Paul is an intelligent man who summoned Barnabas and Saul wanted to hear the Word of God but the magician Elymas but that's the translation of his name opposed them and tried to turn the pro-council away from the faith. Is this a mere happenstance? Or is this indicative of a certain pattern that will likely be true of our experience as it was of Paul's that the first opposition that is experienced is itself Jewish because they are the enemies of the Gospel for our sake.

That somehow from the very beginning because it is apostolic it is going to be contended against in a very powerful way. Why a Jewish man who is also a magician and a sorcerer and contends against the

message but the authority of Paul is invoked against that one Paul being filled with the Holy Spirit looked intently on him and said you son of the devil you enemy of all righteousness full of all deceit and villainy will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord and now listen the hand of the Lord is against you and you will be blind for a while unable to see the sun immediately mist and darkness came over him and he went about groping for someone to lead him by the hand when the pro-council saw what had happened he believed and he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord. This morning somewhere between four and six a.m. I saw this in an entirely new way that this is not some idiosyncratic character that they happen to encounter but that this is representative of the kind of opposition that we can rightly expect that strangely is Jewish in its nature and has been historically opposed to the gospel.

There's a certain vehemence and bitterness that those who have labored with Jews recognize that the most civil Jews the most educated the most polite the most cultured they can talk about any subject with equanimity and with grace but mention Jesus mention the Christ mention the cross mention the faith and it's as if a mask of civility is taken away and it's the devil baring his teeth at you. And here that episode takes place and Paul answers being filled with the Holy Spirit. He's not intimidated not threatened he's not cowering he doesn't retreat in the face of this darkness but being filled with the Spirit is being filled with God and the authority of God and he speaks a judgment and brings blindness to this man after describing him as being a son of the devil an enemy of all righteousness full of deceit and villainy.

I'm sorry to say and I hope you'll not construe this as being anti-Semitic this sounds like a description of our Jewish historic opposition to God and to the faith since time immemorial. We're villainous. We have produced the Karl Marxes.

You know the Karl Marx who he is. Jewish the author of Communism Das Kapital an alternative messianic scheme for the world. God rejecting a program a communism a warped and distorted answer to the need of mankind that eventuates in oppression and bloodshed.

Enemy of all righteousness. You know why? Because we are so filled with our own. Self-righteousness is the name of the game for a Jew.

And if you're going to be concerned with your own righteousness you must therefore ipso facto be an enemy to the righteousness of God. When Israel's redemption finally comes they say God is our righteousness. And when they're able to say that you know that they have really been redeemed.

Why am I saying all this? Because I think that you're susceptible to a certain kind of fascination for things Jewish and even Judaic for which I have great reservation. Somehow when I see a Gentile wearing a prayer shawl and a yarmulke and bobbing and weaving in prayer which we call davening something in my spirit knots. Because I know that there's a soulish valence even a demonic thing that inheres in synagogue practice because the synagogue itself is not a statement of our honor but our shame.

It is a diasporic institution away from the temple away from the priesthood that has elevated a Pharisaical class of rabbis to dictate and to determine the whole concept and mode of Jewish life. Keeping them in darkness and allowing them to think that their Yom Kippur and Day of Atonement in any way has some kind of validity. When God says without the shedding of blood there's no remission for sin these rabbis have determined out of their own skull, their own villainous alternative to God that a day of fasting and a day in the synagogue and good deeds will be an acceptable substitute.

Oh yeah? By what authority? Who are you? Dear saints don't get carried away by the mystique and the intrigue and the attraction of so much that is Judaistic and yet at the same time I encourage you to everything that is Hebraic and Biblical. You need to distinguish between what is Jewish, Judaism, anything that bears that suffix ISM is of man. Whether it's Communism, Socialism, Judaism, ought to be already a grounds for suspicion.

There's a difference between Judaistic practices mediated by men, a rabbinical class that has almost become tyrannical in determining what is acceptable for Jews and terrified and tyrannized my mother. And the first question that a Jew will ask often when you're witnessing is, but what do the rabbis say? What do the great authorities say? And if they have not seen Christ then I'm not under obligation to consider either. I want to cure you or at least put you on record not to be suckered in by a soulish fascination that has a power and to heed the warning by Watchman Nee in a book written in 1926, the latent power of the soul.

And don't think that synagogue appurtenances, the prayer shawl, the tallit and the head covering is somehow cute or attractive. It has a latent power to influence you in the realm of soul and against that of spirit. It's a villainy.

Paul was not in one moment hesitant to curse that, identify that. And this is the way somehow I read it this morning in the early morning hours. Will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? Is Paul speaking to more than an individual? Is he addressing a condition of which that individual is representative? Oh, I know I'm over your head.

So you're in a strange paradox of having an affinity for Jews. Yes, very legitimate. You're called to that, but at the same time being suspect and keeping at a distance a culture that is rabbinically mediated that is villainous, sinister, and opposed to the true faith.

Can you distinguish between the two? Can you still have a love for the Jew and yet not get sucked into their culture and become Judaized? Because there is a movement now in the church about a restoration of Jewish roots. I'd much rather it were the restoration of Hebraic roots, which Jews themselves lack and can only be imparted by communion with the God of Israel. As the psalmist knew him and as the church needs to know him and communicate him.

And so now listen, the hand of the Lord is against you. You will be blind for a while, unable to see the sun. S-O-N I took the liberty of writing that in this early morning time.

Here's the judgment. Because of your villainous opposition, remember it says, not only did they enter the kingdom themselves, but they prevented others from entering. Here also is exactly that same thing.

It's a strange thing to say an anomaly, but not the least of the aspects of the last day's suffering of the remnant church may come from Jewish hands themselves. It may even be that like Stephen, there will be a necessity for a certain martyrdom that we have to bear at their hands because they oppose themselves in their own ignorance. And Jews are increasingly insecure in a world that is growing against them so that they lash out in their defensiveness and in order to protect their waning sense of Jewishness, they will oppose the very thing that is intended for their good.

And we will have to bear it. Would there have been a Paul, the apostle, without first a Stephen? I don't think so. What did it take to convert the most vehemently bitter enemy of the faith who volunteered to root out these heretics, Saul, if not the demonstration of a man who gave his life with such equanimity and

grace and say, Lord, lay this sin not upon them.

They know not what they do. Forgive them that Paul saw a demonstration coming from a busboy who waited on tables of a kind that was more revealing of the nature of God than anything Paul had ever seen rabbinically. And that's why later when the Lord apprehended him, he said, Why do you kick against the Prince? You've never been the same since you were a participant in Stephen's death.

Because you saw in the patient suffering of that man and the sublime way in which he received the death as coming from the hand of God and was without railing and without offense against those who were stoning him to death by inches, you saw a demonstration of the authenticity of God in men. And you are persecuting them. It may well be if the things at the first are a picture and a paradigm of the things at the end, that there might well be the necessity again in the last days for a Stephen body of saints who of necessity not only will have to experience martyrdom, but experience it at Jewish hands in their frustration, in their opposition against themselves, in their ignorance, in their seeming defense of their Jewishness, you'll have to be victim.

But in being victim, you reveal something in the benign, patient way that a suffering coming from those whom you're trying to help and have misconstrued you that will turn them in the end from enemies of the gospel to being its propagators. Because Israel has an apostolate destiny. Paul says, what you see in me is a picture of something before the time.

What you see in me, in my apostolate to the Gentiles is the picture of redeemed Israel to the nations. And one of my favorites is Paul's farewell to the elders of the church at Ephesus. And they met with him at another location and he told them, you know what manner of men I've been with you from the beginning? I never took anything from you, though you know our reputation as Jews.

And from the first to the last, I never withheld anything from you, but the whole counsel of God. Day and night, with tears, in houses, in private places, public places, I conveyed to you the whole counsel of God. And now I know I'm going to my end and you'll see my face no more.

They bowed down and prayed. And they hung on Paul's neck and wept that they would see his Yiddish punim, his Jewish face, no more. Dear saints, the day is coming because of your sacrifice and the conversion that it will bring for nothing less will obtain it.

That Jews who have been like this sorcerer, opposing God in their ignorance and in their own self-righteousness will so bless all the families of the earth, all the Gentile nations, that they will hang on their neck with weeping to think that they would see the face of these Jews no more. Are you prepared for that? Don't be naive. Don't get romantic.

Don't idealize Jews. We are the enemies of the gospel, Paul says. That's an apostle.

He doesn't mince words. Enemy means not just passive, but actively opposing the truth of God. Not only not entering ourselves, preventing others.

And this is the people with whom you have a last day's collision. You'll not meet it on the grounds of naivety or romanticism, but apostolic reality and earnestness and authority, as Paul did, being full of the Holy Spirit. And he went around being blind, groping for someone to lead him by the hand.

Isn't that a picture of Israel? So Netanyahu was not good enough? My God, I could not wish for anything more for America than a Netanyahu. What an exemplary man, eloquent and intelligent. Not good enough to meet the needs of the Christ of Israel.

Okay, Barak, the most decorated hero of Israel and the highest commanding officer in the land with a master's degree from Stanford University and plays classical piano. Could you ask for more than that as a head of state? And how long did it take before he is cast out and he's not good enough? So now they have another guy, Sharon, an old war hawk. A good Arab is a dead Arab.

And you think that this is going to work? They're groping in their blinders for someone, but not for him. This is a beautiful picture. And Paul encounters it at the very inception of his apostolic sending.

And you will also. This is a pattern, and yet the demonstration of Paul's authority is effectual in turning to the Lord, the one from whom this sorcerer was seeking to prevent. Okay.

Any questions? Pastor George, can I invite you since you have to leave to make a response to Art's comment? I'll take just a moment to touch base with some of the things we are hearing this morning. Thank you for sharing what you shared, brother. It was the Apostle John who said these words with us, that he was in Padmas, the island, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

And it brings much joy to my heart that in our day, in our time, we are seeing servants crisscrossing our land who not just have the word of God in their spirit, but who can bring the testimony of Jesus, the spirit of prophecy, as John himself gives interpretation for us in Revelation 19 and verse 10. And when these come together, something explodes in our spirit. And in a very real way, something heavenly was being deposited in our spirits this morning.

And the best I can say is by summing up some thoughts, and then leave it to you for other things. Back in 1978, it was Dr. Billy Graham who is known to most of us, who came to our land when the nation was just becoming a nation. We are almost 36 years as a nation.

We are just 36 years old this year. Comes August, we'll be 36. And as we are just a baby as a nation, back in 1978, Billy Graham came to our land and unlike him, he's not given to prophecy or anything like that, but being a servant of God, he was inspired to call this nation, Singapore, as the Antioch of Asia.

And ever since then, 1978, several priests crossed our land, and with testimony to that very words, that we are the Antioch of Asia. And as Singaporeans, although we never knew the full ramifications of what that meant, we received that name as though we were baptized in that name, and we relished and we cherished it. But as the years were going by, passing by, and as we are growing up, we'll be 36 this year.

Some things are coming to our understanding now, only now. In the beginning, we felt that the gospel was for us as Christians, and it is a very personal, individual journey. Then our understanding grew and we began to embrace that as churches in Singapore, this is our journey as churches in Singapore.

But in recent times, we are just, just beginning to understand that we are a nation, and we are journeying as a nation. And as a nation, what are we? Who are we? And only now we are beginning to understand Antioch of Asia. And I'm glad that the Lord had brought that to the heart of His servant this morning, because that's exactly where we are right now.

Some of you know Love Singapore, I'm part of the Love Singapore movement, and this year, especially the year 2001, we are looking at this year as a year of transition. For the last five, six years, Love Singapore has given itself to Love Singapore. But this year, we are in transition, and next year, we are sensing that God wants Singapore to become Love Singapore to become Love Asia.

And with that, the Antioch of Asia call comes into being. But right smack in this year, 2001, as we are transiting between Love Singapore and Love Asia, this year, the year 2001, we are sensing that there is a pause in Heaven. That Heaven is attempting to say something to us, as Singaporeans, as a nation.

So while we are quite well-gear'd on the horizontal axis, picking up strategies after strategies after strategies in the years past, that has brought much favor from Heaven and favor among men, and we have seen the gospel advance in our land, somehow personally, this is a personal statement, I felt that while the strategies have been laid out, the substance of being the Antioch of Asia was in lack. What I mean is this, you cannot really separate the character and the calling of being the Antioch of Asia. So while we are pursuing on the horizontal axis as the Antioch of Asia strategies, we cannot ignore the vertical axis of it, that with the calling comes the character.

You cannot separate the two. So, we are not just becoming the Antioch of Asia, we have to be the Antioch of Asia. And this morning, as Brother Katz was sharing, I was receiving what he has to say, as giving us substance, as opposed to strategies.

Now strategies is what we have in this land. What we need to hear now is that will add substance to who we are as a nation, the Antioch of Asia. So in the sessions following, I ask you to have your hearts wide open, and allow God's servant to add substance into our being, because this is where we are in our journey right now.

We need to pick up some substance as to who we are, the character part of it. The calling and the commission is there, but the character must be there, because without that launching pad, we are not going anywhere. So I'm asking you fellow Singaporeans that do not separate what you are hearing this morning and say, this is not what we need to hear, this is precisely what we must hear at this time.

So I'm asking of you as fellow Singaporeans to have your hearts wide open, and receive what heaven has to say. Thank you very much. No, I didn't know it.

Would you like to make any response to what Brother George had commented? I appreciate our brother's comment, very encouraging, and I like the way he's phrased it, the substance, the character, that's true. That's the work of the cross. Someone had asked me in the break time, how do we attain to this? I would say to the ministers in the room, this is your primary challenge.

Put before the Lord, how do we move from where we presently are, in the conventional configuration which we know to be as church, the familiar design, to come into this antiarchal, apostolic reality. How do we move from where we are to come to this? And certainly it's not going to be by a stratagem, or step one, step two, we're not going to do this by principle. But God is going to have to unfold and reveal.

I could recommend to you a precious book by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, everybody know the name? You've read *The Cost of Discipleship*, classic, but have you read a book called *Life Together*? It's a very slim volume, you'll have to seek for it, get your bookstore to order it, I hope it's still in print. It's the book that he wrote coming out of living underground at a time when the Nazis were pursuing them in their secret

seminary during that time, and they were compelled to live together in an intensity that Lutherans would not otherwise have sought nor desired. And in that experience, being an underground seminary, avoiding detection, and having been called to an intensity of life together, the Lord opened to Dietrich Bonhoeffer an understanding of a way of perceiving community that is absolutely golden.

We have, I won't say have lived from that book, it's not a manual, but one of the profound quotations that have helped us greatly, because we were called to community. What was my background, what did I know about community 25 years ago when the Lord spoke to me when my foot came over the chain of that property, end-time teaching center, community refuge, that I can say with complete confidence, no community, no refuge. We just came.

And He mediated His wisdom to us in our time together in prayer, morning by morning. Our first and best part of the day was given to God extravagantly. We were not occupied with what should we do? You know, how we can be intimidated, even by Christians.

Well, what are you doing? As if we need to find a program and activity that justifies what we are about. Community is not going to be an overnight phenomenon that we can perform by principles and by doing. It's going to be an organic phenomenon that is formed by the Spirit over a course of time through struggle, through disappointment, through heartache, through a suffering of accommodation, seeing the variable condition of the saints, their immaturities, and all of the things that have to be suffered as we wait one for another to come of age.

So, my recommendation is, seek the Lord, come together in prayer, even in fastings, and put before him, Lord, if this is your intention that we be this antiarchal reality for Asia, and we evidently are not yet, how do we move from where we are to the forms that have been communicated to us, maybe largely by American missionaries, to the design that was the church at the first, where your house was filled with your glory, and where the very shadow of Peter falling on the sick brought healing. It was such a demonstration of power in the reality of the truth in which the early church lived. How do we get from where we are to that? And to be willing to be brought from where you are to that.

So, for example, I'll speak about our daily prayer times. Prayer hardly describes what God gives us every morning for two hours. And someone will come up to me and say, oh, I covet what you're describing, but I'm living on the other side of town, and there's no way that I could, on a daily basis, meet with other saints, because my home is too distant.

Oh, I say, really? Then move. Give up your little nest that you like because it's secluded, and it's what you've always wanted, and it's away from urban congestion, and move into the urban congestion. What are your values? What do you esteem more and desire more? Your privacy and the enjoyment of a setting that you have labored to obtain, or the intimate and frequent relationship with the saints because you're in actual proximity with them? You could even walk from house to house daily, breaking bread.

I gave a message like this in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. I had a half hour before having to fly out, and I was speaking to some elders just along these lines. I came back a year later.

I was picked up at the airport and brought to a building in downtown Kitchener, Ontario, and the entire community had purchased the building and moved into it. Every apartment was occupied by another family of that fellowship, and the basement had a common laundry room, food storage, a nursery for children. They were a community of believers in the heart of Kitchener because they chose the kingdom of

God.

The kingdom of God suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. If we're casual, if we're indifferent, and are not willing for the sacrifice, it will not come. Right within Singapore, there must be a way in which these realities can be obtained.

If there are earnest saints who seek them and are willing for the sacrifice to obtain them. Asia is at stake. Israel is at stake in the obtaining of this reality.

Nothing else will suffice. You'll be standing before God without excuse in the day of His appearing, and in the day of His judgment, about giving answer for what you have done in your body, both good and bad. This is apostolic.

Paul always saw the judge at the door. He always lived in anticipation of a reckoning, a day of reckoning and of judgment, in which he would be held responsible for the way in which he expended his life and his energy. So will we also.

There may be a wailing and a gnashing of teeth, but believers who may find themselves cast out into outer darkness, not into hell, but out and away from the brightness of His glory, for they have not been fitted to live in it. They have not lived in this life, in the light as He is in the light. And somehow it's even a mercy to be at a distance from it eternally.

You need to live now in anticipation of your eternal destiny and reward, where God will give to each man according to his work. Let there be works that will pass through the fire and not be burned up. Let there be something established that has eternal verity of the kind that we have considered this morning.

It will come at sacrifice and at suffering. You'll be misunderstood. You'll be called dangerous, radical.

You're going too far. Your own denomination will shame you. You'll lose your place of preeminence, prestige, and acceptance.

I don't know. Certainly there has got to be this kind of backlash. The world will resist it, and the religious world, for the powers of the air are operative even within, and especially within, the religious structures of which we are part.

You begin to move in an apostolic direction and see how long it takes before you feel a new and uncanny degree of opposition coming from the spirit realm that has not been your experience heretofore. Be willing for that. And the Lord even uses that in your own refinement and in the shaping of his character in you.

For whatever degree you will ever paint it in this life is the degree to which you will bear it eternally. Okay. Another mic on the other side.

Anyone who wants to follow up from the points that have been expressed so far? Yes, could you the other mic please? I'm saying this because if you look around here, there are women here. A lot of us are women. And most of us, I don't know, I'm speaking for myself and some of my friends here.

In our family, the women is the one that's coming, passion for God. Our husbands are not. In a way, you will see the struggle until we can find a way, I don't know how, prayer or what, that the men will take up that headship, okay? To be a covering for the family.

They will work as a unit and we will go together. But how get the men to be passionate for the Lord? This is one thing I've been praying. Next question.

Next question. I can only say 1 Peter 3 gives us a definitive answer that the husband who is not won by the word can be won by the demonstration of a chaste and quiet, a wife with a chaste and quiet spirit which in God's sight is of great price. It may ironically be the fact that we have hounded our husbands and hocked them, as we say in Yiddish, that has been the deterrent to their coming to the kind of spirituality that we desire.

But that when we will demonstrate the very character of God with a chaste and meek spirit in God's sight which is of great price, not being afraid, which is to say that we will trust God for his work in the reluctant husband without our prompting, prodding, leaving scriptures behind in the bathroom and books by the bed that we will see that result. God is after something more profound than we can know. And if we are called together to be the bride of Christ, you women have a remarkable challenge and destiny to model and to exhibit to the entire church what will be the essential and eternal character of the church as the bride of Christ, adorned for the bridegroom, having a quiet and meek spirit, which means faith, trust, which in God's sight is of great price.

So it's not your struggle alone. The entire fellowship should be joining you in prayer for the reluctant, recalcitrant husband and indeed the men must come into their place. Maybe what they have not is that we have not exhibited or put forth for them an understanding of the faith that calls for their manly participation.

I even corrected or made a comment in the Philippines about worship that was for me distasteful and made my spirit recoil because it was altogether romantic. It spoke of the Lord as if you're in some kind of longing. It sounded very emotional, very romantic.

It is the kind of thing that a man would shrink from. It's love as a woman would convey it, but not in a way to which a man could respond. Look at your worship songs and to what degree you have influenced it romantically rather than spiritually, and what we need to put before the men and our own children is a church of such verity and such authenticity and such high seriousness that it even compels them to be part.

I often say our children are the test and the measure of the truth of what we are about. Have we persuaded them that what we are about is not only authentically of God, but deserves their own participation, or are they just coming because they're obliged to and are hanging onto our skirts and will soon enough find greater attraction in the world's culture than anything that they see in the church. So may the whole quality of the church be elevated in the high seriousness that will attract men and our own sons when we move from our present service-oriented, enjoyment-oriented Christianity to the sacrificial kind of thing for which God waits.

So I hope that's the long term thing, but I understand your ache and your desire. You know, the whole church has got to play second fiddle to Israel. There's a way in which the church has taken for itself a role and a function more than and other than what God intends.

The church needs to see itself with regard to Israel as an interim provision after their fall so as eventually to bring them back to the tree from which they have been broken off by the example and the jealousy to which the church moves it. The church is called to a priestly coming under Israel and being a factor in Israel's restoration which is not too far from the picture of a wife called to come under a husband to bring

about his restoration because I've seen any number of gifted women who are enjoying ministry and blessing others, but I wonder if they would be willing to sacrifice that privilege and enjoyment and trust God for its expression through the husband, seeing they are called to be one life in him and more than just a compatibility of two ministries under one roof. There's one life, one ministry, and if we will be willing for the submission and surrender of our own use, I wonder if God will then allow us to see it be expressed to the husband and that we will be so identified with him as the one life that it will be as thoroughly gratifying as if we ourselves have been performing it.

So that is dying. That is dying. And I'm wondering if God himself has not given to women certain gifts and certain abilities not they should relish and function in it, but to relinquish it.

Yes, it's impressive and a blessing, but it's not yours to enjoy or to perform but to relinquish and surrender so that it might find expression in the head of the body who is the husband. That's a proposition and I have to say I have not seen too many examples of women willing. Anyone else? Yes, please.

Brother Karp, last night you spoke about the coming calamity to Israel. You quoted Isaiah 51-53 as a double fulfillment, but during the time of Isaiah and Jeremiah when Israel and Judah were conquered by Assyria and Babylon, wouldn't that be fulfilled during this time? Good. That's a quandary that always comes up in the examination of prophetic scripture because there's a pattern that runs through the whole of Israel's history.

Sin, judgment, expulsion, exile, return. So how do we know that we're speaking of yet another and future expulsion and exile or that the scriptures are not describing something already passed? Isn't it interesting that the subject of Israel rightly understood compels us to be more earnest students of scripture than we would otherwise have been and to read the scriptures intently and to see what is disclosed in the entire context of what we are examining. So for example last night, quoting from Isaiah 51, lie down that we may walk over you.

And so they lay down and made themselves a road for the enemy to tread upon them, which I interpret as something future because it seems to speak so much of this vitriolic hatred of Israel and the Jew that is characteristic of Islam and will not be requited or satisfied except with their humiliation. Prophetic liberty? In giving it this interpretation or am I functioning in an office given for the purpose of interpretation? So one way to understand it is what is the truth of the prophetic calling of the man giving a particular interpretation to prophecies pertaining to Israel? Why do I see Ezekiel 37, the Valley of Dry Bones, not as the statement of the Nazi time, but as the statement of yet something future? Not only because something in my spirit, but the text itself indicates that its future, because a key verse that must take place before the Son of Man is commanded to prophesy to the bones, is the acknowledgement of Israel itself that we are cut off, we are without hope, we are as dry bones. That confession has never yet been made by Israel, even in the Nazi Holocaust.

You say, weren't there dry bones? Yes. It was the statement, what was the national ethos coming out of that time? Not we are cut off, not a statement of absolute dejection and hopelessness which God alone can answer, but rather the statement never again. Never again is another covenant.

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