

Fren-05 Message for Ywam

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the church's condition and its relationship to the judgment of the world, highlighting the need for the church to come to maturity and proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to all nations.

Duration: 1:06:45

Scripture: Psalm 118:22, Isaiah 53:1, Matthew 24:14, Acts 11:26, Romans 10:15, 1 Peter 2:9, 2 Peter 3:10

Topics: "Prophetic Message"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the cataclysmic event of the earth being burned and consumed, as described in the Bible. The speaker emphasizes the importance of conducting oneself with piety and good behavior in light of this impending event. The sermon also references Matthew 24, where Jesus is asked about the sign of his coming, and highlights the significance of the gospel being preached to all nations before the end comes. The speaker then discusses the role of para-church organizations in filling a void and the importance of the church being a true witness and sending body.

Transcript

It would take another seminar to begin to answer them. But I'm especially happy for the opportunity that comes to them to supplement and to fill in things that need further expression. I'm just trying to see if there's any kind of logical order in which... how we should begin and end.

Well, I'll take a question that has just come to us about hastening the return of the world. I've been asked if there's a scriptural reference for this. And there is in 2 Peter, the third chapter.

It's the chapter that discusses the day of the Lord's judgment. The tenth verse, but the day of the Lord will come. Chapter 3, 2 Peter 3, 10.

And it will come suddenly and as a surprise, as a thief in the night. A cataclysmic event as judgment in which the earth itself will be burned up with a fervent heat. Seeing these things, Peter says, what manner of persons ought we to be? Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of the Lord.

I'd like to combine this with another scripture in Matthew 24. Where Jesus was asked, what is the sign of the coming of the day of the Lord? And in the 14th verse of that chapter, after talking in the 13th verse about enduring unto the end, And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a

witness unto the nations and then shall the end come. We need to become far more conscious of the end.

It's the appreciation and the anticipation of the end that very directly affects our present. Seeing these things, what manner of men ought we to be now? In all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hastening the day of the Lord.

The gospel of the kingdom, in my opinion, has hardly yet begun to be proclaimed. The gospel of the kingdom, in my opinion, has hardly yet begun to be proclaimed. A kind of lesser gospel, an evangelical gospel, the gospel of narrow personal salvation, up till now has been the principal message.

The gospel of the kingdom of heaven is a much larger word. But it has this paradox. It cannot be proclaimed outside of the experience of the kingdom itself.

That's why our gospel has been abstract and unrelated and mechanical. A formula for personal salvation. A prescription of what to believe in order to receive.

What is wanting is the kingdom itself. Remember what the first apostolic generation proclaimed. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

These two things are inextricably bound up. The reality of the kingdom and the message to the unsaved. And when this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed, out of those who demonstrate it, out of the reality of the kingdom experience, any other proclamation is not a proclamation.

Then shall the end come. Why? Because there's nothing further God can do for mankind. If they refuse the testimony of the kingdom, the kingdom which is at hand, visible and demonstrable and proclaimed in authority, they have refused the king.

They cannot be any other witness given. How shall I say this respectfully in the context of Youth with a Mission? We see in our generation para-church organizations filling a kind of void. Some kind of intermediate provision from God for the want of true church.

Which is its own witness and the sending body. That's what we see at the church at Antioch. Now there were in the church at Antioch certain prophets and teachers.

An apostolic body of men of diverse nationalities and races and ethnic origins. And calling to God. But ministering unto the Lord together.

A true body. An apostolic reality. Ready now to reproduce itself.

It has nurtured prophets and teachers in its own bosom. And now God can call forth from them, And now God can call forth from them, saying, Set me aside. Paul and Barnabas for the work to which I have called them.

These are men who have been separated. Set aside. Set aside for God.

And the whole process of separation has already taken place in the interaction of the church. Separate unto me. Is the key to apostolic sending.

Men who have found worshipping God together. Separated even from their own religious ambitions. Their own restless energy to do.

For whom it is all the same to remain as to go. The call comes directly by the Holy Spirit. In the hearing of the entire body.

Because the entire body is together. And they fast and lay hands upon them and send them forth. So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost went.

This is the root of the Greek word apostolos. The scent of God. But by the laying on of the hands of men.

With whom they are organically and authentically joined. So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost went. Only two.

But they turned the world upside down. This is the apostolic model. Which is different from our organizational activities.

So we are in an interim period. And while God is now restoring the church to its Antiochal and Antichrist. And while God is now restoring the church to its Antiochal and Antichrist.

The void that is still there is partially filled. By organizations like Genesis Mission or others. Which serve to fill this void.

They will succeed to the place where they are no longer necessary. By encouraging the true church. To function in the purposes for which God has intended it.

Eternally and immediately. We won't need separate organizations for witnesses to the Jews. The church in every locality will be its own witness.

To the Jew first and also to the Gentile. And he has seen to it that we are sufficiently distributed throughout the world. That you can have your opportunity where you are.

But for some reason you think that Israel is much more attractive. But for some reason you think that Israel is much more attractive. I am always suspicious about this allurements of the Jews in Israel with a complete indifference to the Jews that are in Lausanne or Strasbourg or Paris.

I am always suspicious about this allurements of the Jews in Israel with a complete indifference to the Jews that are in Lausanne or Paris. So just to sum up because we have many other questions. The condition of the church and the judgment of the world are related to each other.

God is withholding his judgment. Waiting for their cup of iniquity to be full. And for the church to come to its maturity.

So that the gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed to all nations. By demonstration as well as by proclamation. Then shall the end come.

We think that the issues of peace have to do with international negotiations. Or atomic arsenals. Where they check each other.

Has nothing to do with it at all. You have to do with it. The church and its condition.

Is the whole issue of the length of days that it is before us. Here's a question which touches my heart. Can you comment on our attitude to a place in an evangelical assembly which rejects the kinds of principles set out in this conference? What do you do when you are located in a church that is conventional, traditional

and institutional.

And has no sense of the things that we have been discussing. And even is hostile to them. Good question.

We are in that present painful predicament. Because we are in a transitional period. We are beginning to glimpse now the apostolic intention of God.

Our hearts are excited for a kingdom to come. But we are religiously stuck in something much less. It is a real trial for your patience.

And it is a particular kind of suffering. And the bearing of your cross. So I can't give an exact answer.

You need to be led by the spirit in these situations. And not just to react dogmatically or mechanically. But just to give you a helpful consideration.

We need to distinguish between two things. What is our mission? And what is our true church? What you have up till now called your church. May well be your mission.

God is wanting your presence there. To radiate a light. But it is not your church in the sense that this is your true fellowship.

This is not where you are experiencing authentic relationship. And even the meaningful sacraments. That might come simultaneously in another place.

In a living room. With a handful of saints. Who have like mind and heart.

With whom you break bread and take the Lord's blood. This is your communion. Your community.

Your source of feeding and fellowship. That enables you to remain in the other place in patience. So as long as we don't confuse the two identities.

We can function in both together. Because the worldly church, the superficial church does not make that much requirement. A Sunday attendance is sufficient.

Therefore you are free with all of the other time to be in the true fellowship of the believers. And yet to walk with a becoming modesty and humility. And not to exhibit a kind of spiritual superiority.

I am in an apostolic dimension. Of which you know nothing. We need to remember that this is an hour of transition.

An hour of restoration. And we have not been this way here before. In a certain sense it was an easy attempt.

In the original apostolic age to begin. They had nothing to undo. They had a blank slate.

We have this whole complexity of institutional and traditional Christianity. But the Lord comprehends it all. We have to move in his patience and love.

Not to violently tear abruptly root up. To be a presence, a witness. And when perhaps that witness is finally and ultimately refused.

God will then separate us altogether into what is being raised up as the true planting of the Lord. The institutional thing will perhaps pass into the orbit of a world church. A kind of ecumenical church.

A kind of religious and political order. And will become the persecutors of those who go on in the apostolic world. Scripture says they will kill us and claim they are doing God a service.

So I am anticipating a future persecution. Not only from the world but those who think themselves religious. Doing God a service.

Another question is how do we deal with the powers of darkness practically? How do we speak to them and how do we commend them? Well there is no method. Or formula. In the name of Jesus.

The name of Jesus is not a slogan or the rubbing of a genie lamp. Something is truly wanting in the name of Jesus. But not just the invoking of this mechanical phrase.

The powers are not impressed with that. But what does the name of Jesus mean? That which is inherently his character and life. It's not a method or a technique or a shortcut.

The author of the book that I have been quoting calls that vulgar exorcism. Do you know why it's vulgar? We only want to be rid of the nuisance of these demonic harassments. Because we only want to be rid of the nuisance of these demonic harassments.

So our own life can go on without interruption. But we have a much larger calling. That's to break the powers themselves.

To loose mankind from their captive influence. And this requires more than just the intoning of a phrase. It cannot be performed individually.

It requires the corporate witness of an entire church together. In terms of its actual maturity and authority. Which is already a testimony to the powers that are above.

And that will only be effectual to the degree that we ourselves are free from the influence of these powers. See what we want? We want an easy answer. To be rid of the nuisance.

But we don't want to give ourselves to the painful process of becoming a mature people together. But we don't want to give ourselves to the painful process of becoming a mature people together. And the authority that is only available corporately.

The authority that Paul exercised was not some individual virtuosity. It was in direct relationship to the body from which he was sent out. His authority was relative to that body.

And ours will be also. So we need to be ourselves freed from the influence of false gods. Money, culture, education, technology, sport.

These are the larger issues of the influence of principalities and powers. And they need to be unmasked and revealed. Because someone has written, well didn't Jesus do that at the cross? I'm looking for Colossians.

It says in 2.15, He spoiled the principalities and powers, making a show of them. He robbed them of their authority. But they were not entirely demolished.

So how do they continue then without authority? By a false intimidation. By lies and by threats. By trying to win the loyalty of mankind to their own values.

Who do not realize that they have been met at the cross and robbed. Humanity that does not understand that these powers have already been stripped of their authority at the cross. It's like a lion without teeth.

It can still roar and make noise. And by doing so, threatening those who do not know that it has no teeth. And this is the task of the Church.

To unmask and to reveal what is the true condition of things. Which happens every time that the message of the cross is preached. And that the reality of being free from the powers is demonstrated by the Church itself.

We need to understand the nature and the wisdom of these demonic presences. Because their Father is the Father of Lies. And they are clothed in His nature, which is pride and arrogance and conceit.

They want to be regarded as deities themselves. They are the gods of this world. That want to win the allegiance and the loyalty and even the worship of men and women.

To themselves. Not by saying we are demon powers or we are principalities and powers. But by working through society itself.

Through its institutions. In the loyalty to the state. In the celebration of culture.

In the fanaticism of sport. In the exaltation of money and power. These are the gods of this world.

That need to be unmasked as false gods. By those who are free of its influence. Cannot be intimidated or threatened.

By these same powers. Instead of the individual deliverance to which we are so accustomed now. And of course there is a place for that.

I'm not trying to deny the value of individual deliverance. We need to see the role of the church in an intercession against the powers. There is no more powerful form of prayer than corporate intercession.

But this is more than just people sitting in a circle each praying their individual prayer. This is a people who are together. Apprehending the mind and the burden of the Lord.

And praying that. That kind of prayer cannot exceed the quality of the relationship of that people themselves. Can you see the genius of this in God? Our prayer cannot exceed what is the condition of our relationship together.

It's not just a casual matter of coming together and praying for a particular need. It's a wrestling. And a corporate wrestling.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood. But against principalities and powers of the air. Two words that we need to emphasize.

We. Not individuals alone. The enemy would like to see that.

But our power is in our relationship together. We wrestle. And wrestling is an agonizing.

That takes something out of you. We will not engage in it unless we are conscious first that this is the real place where our energy is to be directed. We have the spiritual discernment to see where the real energy is to be directed.

And we see it together. And we engage in it together. And there's room for this.

Because it's more than a Sunday service that brings us together. It's the activity of an apostolic community. That will break the power of the principalities over the locality where they are.

To have this kind of discernment. This kind of ability in prayer. This quality of relationship.

Is all what is meant by the word maturity. And it ought to be our first priority. And to the degree that we obtain it.

In the life together. To that same degree we will have the authority. Which the powers are required to acknowledge.

I feel so inadequate in these statements. I'm giving such a thumbnail sketch of things. But you can see that almost every question brings us back again to the question.

The real question. Of what should be the true nature of the church. Which takes me to another question that we received.

Do I think that community is a requirement for everyone? Absolutely. It is not an option. The time is too short.

And the redemptive thing that needs to be worked into our life. The freedom from the powers. The fulfillment of the eternal purpose of ourselves as church.

Cannot be fulfilled in anything less than the community of God's people. And someone said, well, is it possible in an urban situation? Because after all, you're on a farm. That's not by my choosing.

But by His. But I want to encourage your heart. That I'm privileged as I travel in different parts of the world.

To see the plantings of the Lord rising up. In every variety of environment. Urban as in rural.

In Islamic countries as in Jewish. Free Western countries as in communist. Nothing can inhibit the kingdom of God.

But the unwillingness of God's people to pursue it. It cometh not by observation. The violent take it by force.

And it's happening in Zurich. The day of small beginnings. Two or three coming together.

Moving by the Spirit of God. And we're seeing it in many places. But it's sacrificial in cost.

It's the religion of convenience versus the religion of inconvenience. True church, true community costs something. I'm not just talking about finance or privacy or time.

I'm talking about pain and suffering and humiliation. Passing through disillusionment. Through disappointment.

Shocking disappointment at what is the revelation of the true quality of the condition of the saints. That we never dreamed existed. So long as we only saw each other on our Sunday best.

It is the very cross of suffering itself. When your own defects are also revealed. But it's at that place where the grace of God meets us.

Because he's the God of truth. And not of false religious appearances. He'll meet us there.

And bring us from faith to faith. And glory to glory. Are we willing for this kind of pain? There's a particular suffering that we can experience that is given only in the church.

It's a disappointment and a frustration. But we must pass through this barrier. The church and its members pass through every kind of trial and test.

Persecution, reproach. Adversity, sorrow. Loneliness, disappointment.

Physical suffering and frustration. But the grace of God makes them to be through it what they would not otherwise have been. The cross lies at the heart of every disappointment triumphantly born.

Every adversity meekly endured. Even in the church. So that the church has in its inner life the working of the cross.

Which is the same thing that defeated the principalities and powers at Calvary. We are only a small band of souls in Minnesota. But I think that we threaten and terrify the principalities and powers.

Which I'm not impressed with multi-million dollar religious establishments. Where they see the working of the cross. A suffering that is meekly endured.

That very presence unmask those powers. And compels them to release their influence. Everything brings us back to true church.

The community of God's people together. As against a casual Sunday collection of individuals. We must find our way back to it.

Even if it begins in a living room. There's been some response to the previous conference where a reference was made to the rapture. As if I myself don't believe in a rapture.

So just to give a minimal answer only as the time allows. I believe the word of God absolutely. And that we will meet the Lord in the air.

But the critical question is when. Is it before a time of tribulation or after? The evangelical theory that has captured the popularity of the church till now. Which had its origins in the late 19th century.

Which was never believed by the apostolic followers. Which was never considered by the apostolic fathers. Is that the church will be raptured out and be saved from such a time.

And this is called the hope. My own feeling is otherwise. That we will pass through such a time.

Where we will be avenged when the Lord appears. And someone has stated that the Greek meaning of the words to meet him in the air. Is not in the sense that we will then depart with him.

But we greet him as an arriving dignitary. The expected king. And we bring him to the place where his kingdom has been prepared for him.

And where he comes to take his throne to reign. I personally think much more for this point of view. All my life experience in God.

And all that I perceive in the tenor of the scriptures. Seems to me to be more consonant with this view. Whereas rapture as escape.

Which has prevailed till now. And has been considered so sacrosanct as not even to be questioned. Seems to result in the leaving of an unprepared people.

Who have no concern for their condition or their character. Because after all they are going to escape. And a question has come about the Anabaptist theology.

Maybe you want to express that. What is the importance today of present day Anabaptist Mennonite theology. I think it's something that needs to be communicated to the Mennonites themselves.

It's remarkable how desperately in need of revival they are. However glorious their heritage. But my conviction is this.

That these Anabaptist groups that were persecuted and driven from country to country by the Catholics and Protestants. Represent the true line of apostolic succession. And the true reformation.

I would call it the radical reformation. Because they were not just content to see the elimination of certain Catholic evils and practices. But they were not just content to see the elimination of certain Catholic evils and practices.

They had a total biblical view. And sought the restoration of the entire biblical reality. Of everything which I have been speaking in these very days.

So I think that their theology is extremely important. It's the apostolic theology. And it needs to be brought back again to the consideration of the church.

And even to those who are descended from the original Anabaptist groups. Who have forgotten the meaning of their own history. In a word, they are not just a little splinter group.

I think that they represent the unbroken continuum. The main line of the apostolic thought of God from the beginning. You can imagine why the collision took place when it did in the 16th century.

How can you tolerate such an apostolic presence? The very presence of which contradicts your whole state, church, religious, political system. By which an entire nation is Christianized. And the church becomes under the employ of the state.

Which is not in itself the kingdom. I think we have gone through the written questions. Let me see here.

So I just want to say about communities. Do they need to be on farms? No, there are many models. And I've had opportunity to see many of them.

In urban situations. For example, in the east end of London. The former Jewish ghetto and slum.

Now occupied by the Pakistanis and the Africans and others. There a group of believers have moved in. Beginning first with a doctor.

Who bought one of these old houses and refurbished it. And then encouraged and helped another to do so. And the two helped the third.

Until a whole community has grown up. Right in the inner city. By which they can go from house to house daily.

Breaking bread. Exchanging and sharing with one another. Where a few cars provide the need for a number of souls.

And they have the opportunity for the frequency and intensity of relationship that constitutes community. Did you hear that definition? Community is not to be defined spatially. In terms of a locality or a farm.

But what is the authenticity? The quality. The frequency. The intimacy.

The transparency. The reality. Of the relationships between those who are united.

When you are moving in those things. You are a community. Whether you are on a farm or not.

And conversely you can be on a farm. And just be enjoying a rural retreat and vacation. And hiding your privacy there.

And though you have the physical opportunity. You miss the privilege of community altogether. Community is an attitude of heart and mind.

Walked out in actuality. By those who are willing for the cost. My house shall be a house of sacrifice.

If there is no sacrifice it is not his house. Another question is about the relationship between apostolic ministries. What prevents them from being isolated ministries? I think we are going to see again the restoration of apostolic and prophetic bands of men.

It is waiting on Antiochs. From whom God can call to himself prophets and teachers. Paul was a teacher.

But in the being sent from Antioch he became an apostle. And we are going to see again the restoration of apostolic and prophetic bands of men. And I think we are going to see teams of men like this moving together.

And part of the measure of our maturity is our ability to recognize them when they come. And to receive from them the kind of foundational word that they alone bring. And this brother asks them what about the structure of this end time church? I am just beginning to glimpse and get a sense of what might be.

It is not an organization. Nor is it a hierarchical situation established by men. It is exclusively the work of the Spirit.

Based not on hierarchy but on relationship. Men recognizing one another by the Spirit. And submitting and yielding to the authority and by anointing in the men whom they meet.

It is an authority that has not to do with one's being official or having a position. But an authority which is expressed through anointing. In proportion to the call which is given.

To those who are bond slaves. And the least of all men. It is going to be an invisible network.

Not at all a religiously recognized thing. And we are already coming to this place now. Where you meet this one who knows that one who knows that one.

I am already in connection with a number of men from Singapore to Jerusalem. Who know each other. And are in an unofficial relationship together.

As the Lord sends and moves these men at different parts of the world. Each of whom is deeply set into a context of community where he is. And not just solitary men doing their thing.

If they have to stand alone. And to express the authority of God. It is because in the context from which they come.

And out of which they have been sent by the laying on of hands. They are deeply integrated and submitted. You have no idea how examined my life is.

Continually under the scrutiny of men with whom I live daily. I am rather amused to find in Germany and perhaps it exists elsewhere in Europe. Where a man says he has a confessor.

Who is his counselor. But he lives on the other side of Germany. And they see each other like once every three months.

And there privately and secretly he confesses. What a way to retain ego. And never come to the heart of the redemptive solution.

We need to be submitted to men and women where we are daily. Who see us and know us in the true posture of our life. There to receive counseling and exhortation.

And to be sent forth by them. As they witness the Lord's calling. When we do stand alone.

We are not just speaking out of our individuality. Or our subjectivity. But men who are deeply under authority.

Not organizational. Neither hierarchical. But genuinely spiritual.

And God is beginning to bring us together through different communities. Where we discuss and we respond to regional needs. And if this process continues.

By the work of the Spirit. In the relational way. How men joins men by the Spirit.

In the recognition of their calling through the discernment of the Spirit. And the exercise by the anointing of the Spirit. We are going to have a kingdom come.

Over the face of the Spirit. It needs to be waited for. Patiently sought after.

Authentically nurtured. But I'm encouraged that it's coming. When I came to East Germany in Leipzig for a second or third visit.

I had to be interrogated by the heads of the Lutheran Church. Before I could be permitted to minister to their churches. And with which denomination are you, they asked.

I said none. And where did you receive your theological degrees? I said I have none. And with whom are you ordained? None.

Well, who are you? What are you? And I just began to sketch to them. I'm a man whose life is set in the context of an authentic community. Which community is also in a network of relationship with other communities.

Unofficial and unhierarchical. But nonetheless authentic. We are submitted to a very real authority.

That I'm sent by the laying on of hands. And I went on like that. You know what they said? They said this sounds like the very book of Acts.

And they gave me full privilege to speak in their churches. They were not only impressed. They were jealous.

God is restoring something. And I want your hearts to be encouraged. However lonely you feel.

I told the brother in the hallway coming in today. Part of my ministry is to comfort the pilgrims and the strangers and the sojourners of the earth. Who think they're all alone.

And strange. That they have this passion for a kingdom come. This desire for an apostolic reality.

This agonizing while they're yet in the transitional state. Be encouraged. The Lord is working.

Over the face of the earth. And there shall be a root that comes out of a dry rock. But who has believed the report of the Lord? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For it shall not have any comeliness or attractiveness that we should desire it.

And yet it's the real thing. The planting of the Lord. His salvation.

Maybe that's a good point to end for today. He shall grow up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground. This has been christianly speaking historically a dry ground.

It's a tender plant. But it's roots are deep. In apostolic succession.

Has no form the comeliness when we shall see it. There's no beauty that it should be desired. It meets in living rooms.

Just a group of saints that have no distinction. No theological qualification. But it's the planting of the Lord.

And it shall bloom. And bear fruit eternally. I want to pray a blessing upon that.

For those of you who are presently part of this. Or will be drawn into this. Thank you precious God.

For your great work in the earth. For the true thing that is born of you. Thank you for all that has come before us.

Men and women of whom the world was not worthy. They were sought asunder. They were flayed alive.

They hid in dens and in caves. A cloud of invisible witnesses. Even encircling us in these days.

Without whom we are not complete. Thank you Lord. Precious God build your church.

Establish your kingdom. Fulfill your eternal purpose. Proclaim the gospel of this kingdom to all nations.

Then shall the end come. But with it also. A new Jerusalem.

A heavenly city. Coming out of heaven from God. Yet somehow fashioned in obscurity in the earth.

Wherein dwelleth righteousness. We bless that church. That heavenly city.

That precious bride. Renew our vision. Renew our courage.

Our determination. To pursue this. To be part of this.

We thank you and praise you. For the privilege which is ours. In this high call.

In Christ Jesus. It comes out about three times a year. As the Lord allows.

Those of you who have given your names to it previously. Will be getting a copy. I think even before this ends tomorrow.

Those of you who have given your names to it previously. Will be getting a copy. I think even before this ends tomorrow.

Those of you who have given your names to it previously. Will be getting a copy. And you can receive the last issue now.

Our struggles. It will bless and encourage you. It will bless and encourage you.

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