

# Fren-05 Questions Et Rponses (Questions and Answers)

by Art Katz

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*Art Katz emphasizes the urgency of proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and the necessity of authentic community in the church to prepare for the return of the Lord.*

**Duration:** 1:02:58

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:1-2, Matthew 24:14, Acts 13:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 1 Timothy 6:13-14, 2 Peter 3:10, 2 Peter 3:12

**Topics:** "Question Answer"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the question of how to approach being part of an evangelical assembly that rejects the principles discussed in the conference. He emphasizes the importance of being conscious of the end times and the anticipation of the day of the Lord. The speaker believes that the gospel of the kingdom has not yet been fully proclaimed and calls for a demonstration of the gospel through holy conversations and godliness. He challenges the notion that peace is achieved through international negotiations or military power, stating that the condition of the church is what determines the length of days.

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## Transcript

Well, I'll take a question that has just come to us about hastening the return of the Lord. 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 10th 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? And Peter adds, since all this is in the way of disappearance, what manner of persons ought we to be? Waiting and hastening the coming of the day of the Lord.

I'd like to combine this with another scripture in Matthew 24. 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? Seeing these things, what manner of men ought we to be? 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. 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.

There 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 religions.

Men from different racial and ethnic origins. And having different vocations in God. But serving 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. Separate unto me.

Paul and Barnabas to the work to which I have called them. These are separated men. Separate unto God.

And the whole process of separation has already taken place in the inter-religion. And the whole process of separation has already taken place in the inter-religion. Separate unto me.

Is the key to apostolic sending. Men who have found worshiping 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 then he added, thus being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, they depart.

This is the root of the Greek word apostolos. Sent. 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 apostolic proportions.

The vacuum is being filled partially by organizations like Youth with a Mission and other evangelistic organizations. Which serve to fill this void. In the interim.

But their success will be measured on the day when they will no longer be necessary. By encouraging the true church. To function and act in the purpose 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. I'm always suspicious about this allurements of the Jews in Israel. With a complete indifference to the Jews that are at Lausanne.

Ostrospro. Paris. New York.

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 and what do they call it. Where they check each other. Where they can't.

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

It's the whole issue of the length of days that 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 where you are being judged? What do you do when you are 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. A question which touches my heart.

And which I understand very well. Can you comment on our attitude to a place in an evangelical assembly which rejects the kinds of principles set out in this conference? 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. It is a particular kind of suffering.

And it is a 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 to 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 relationships.

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 impatient 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 believers and yet to walk with a becoming modesty and humility and not to exhibit a kind of spiritual superiority I live 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 easier task in the original apostolic age to do again 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, religious and political order which will become the persecutors of those

who go on in the apostolic tradition 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 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've 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 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 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 free from the influence of these powers and we need to be ourselves free 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 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 it's like a lion without teeth it's still able to roar and to make noise and by that to threaten those who do not know that it is toothless 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 beings because their father is the father of lies and they are subjugated by his nature which is a nature of pride of arrogance

trying to be considered themselves as divinities they are the gods of this world that want to win the allegiance and the loyalty and even the worship of men 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 and 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 and of course there is a place for that I am 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 enemy is 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 deliverance of the power 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 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 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 you 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 to the church it's disappointment and frustration but we must pass through this veil 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 of Calvary we are only a small band of souls in Minnesota but I think that we threaten and terrify the principalities and powers which are 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

unmasks 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 has 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 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 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 appearing of the Lord whom we will greet with joy 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 which he occupies and completes in his country I am much more partial to this view the whole of my life experience in God and all that I understand from the tenor of the scripture 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 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 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 of the Church 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 opportunities 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 of those who are joined 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 teams of men like this who are going to start to travel 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 asked them what about the structure of this church at the end of times personally I am only starting to have a little glimpse of what it could 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 ones being official or having a position but an authority which is expressed by 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 the other who knows the other and 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 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 counsel and exhortation and to be sent forth by them as they witness the vocation of the world which means that when we are forced to stand alone nevertheless at that moment we do not speak simply from our individuality or our subjectivity but men who are deeply under authority not organizational neither hierarchical but genuinely

spiritual and God is beginning to work 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 Jersey in 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 had none and with whom are you ordained none well who are you well 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 none the less authentic we are submitted to a very real authority that I'm sent by the laying on of hands and I went on 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 the church they were not only impressed they were jealous God is restoring something and I want your hearts to be encouraged as lonely as you feel I told a 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 so I 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 no comeliness or attractiveness that we should desire and yet it's the real thing the planting of the Lord his salvation maybe that's a good point to end he shall grow up before him as a tender plant he shall grow up before him as a seed coming out of a dry ground this has been historically speaking a dry ground

it's a tender plant but its roots are deep an apostolic succession has no form the comeliness when we shall see it has 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 that is 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 calling in Christ Jesus Amen

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