

Righteousness Exalts a Nation:

by Art Katz

Art Katz's sermon highlights the critical role of righteousness and faith in transforming nations, particularly in the context of Africa's challenges.

Scripture: Proverbs 14:34, Matthew 6:33, John 16:26

Topics: "Righteousness", "Faith in Adversity"

Description

Art Katz emphasizes the transformative power of the gospel in Africa, urging that true faith and a comprehensive lifestyle rooted in apostolic belief are essential for overcoming the oppressive realities faced by the continent. He highlights that the promise of God is contingent upon knowing His character and nature, which requires a deep trust and alignment with His will. Katz asserts that the church in Africa must focus on glorifying God's name rather than merely alleviating poverty, as this is the true essence of their faith. He calls for a shared abhorrence of iniquity among believers, stressing that righteousness is crucial for the exaltation of nations. Ultimately, Katz encourages the Western church to support their African brethren in faith, learning from their reliance on God amidst adversity.

Transcript

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Some Thoughts Upon The Return From Africa, May 29, 2005

How prohibitive of any faith and hope for change is there in the oppressive realities that prevail in Africa. Yet our encouragement to the saints there was that the gospel is God's answer in the otherwise foreboding conditions of poverty and the omnipresent struggle for subsistence everywhere visible. By that we do not mean the commonly misunderstood reduction of the gospel as a 'program' for salvation, but a comprehensive lifestyle predicated on an apostolic faith believing in God's word and promise despite every appearance to the contrary. It waits a "that day" (John 16:26-27) in which we shall ask in His Name the whatsoever a true faith and relationship with the Lord occasions. This is far from the carnal imagining of lustful men who think that they can arbitrarily summon what they will having seized upon an apparent formula. Rather it waits upon the character of men who by their character can apprehend the character of

God who is not a man that He should lie. It requires an entirety of trust by those who themselves have come to such totality that banks everything on the Word of a God whose character is intimately known and sublimely trusted. So that the "all things that will be added unto us" follows as surely to those "who seek the righteousness of God and His Kingdom"... and in fact, is the only way in which the "all things else" can be obtained! Such an imperative requirement of faith is for us in the West only an option; for the church of Africa (and indeed, all third world nations) the sine qua non of very existence itself.

The "whatsoever you ask in My name" then, is not some mindless formula but rather ultimate spiritual requirement! His name is His nature so that God safeguards His promise by confining it to those few who not only know it but share it and will only ask what is inspired by it! In a word, Africa's destiny waits upon a people who not only know His name, but are in concert with it in their own character and life. Their greater concern therefore is not with the alleviation of poverty per se, but the glorification of His Name that is obtained thereby for "the sovereign character of Jesus Christ is tested by His own statements" (My Utmost for His Highest, May 29) for they are the word of God!

For Africa, "Christ is the answer" not as the lifeless cliché it has become for us here in America, but as the desperate answer of faith for which the Dark Continent itself is constituted! As the Lord will be millennially for redeemed Israel its actual light and glory (Isaiah 60: 19;62: 1), so also, in measure, may He be demonstrated to the unbelieving Israel in the 'highway of holiness'(Isaiah 35:8) to which many of the dispersed will traverse through black Africa in the very strategic purpose of the Lord soon to be occasioned.

" What a challenge! By the Resurrection and Ascension power of Jesus, by the sent-down Holy Ghost, we can be lifted into such a relationship with the Father that we are at one with the perfect sovereign will of God by our free choice even as Jesus was. In that wonder ful position, placed there by Jesus Christ, we can pray to God in His name, in His nature, which is gifted to us by the Holy Ghost, and Jesus says-"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name He will give it to you." The sovereign character of God is tested by His own statements (Ibid, Oswald Chambers, May 29, my emphases)

This is altogether in keeping with the character and anointing of sons who like the Pattern Son before them love righteousness and hate iniquity that they also might be anointed with an oil of gladness above their fellows (Hebrews 1 :9). As Spurgeon reminds us, "There can hardly be goodness in a man if he be not angry with sin; he who loves truth must hate every false way." Only by sharing the Lord's abhorrence of iniquity can we discern when "wickedness arrays itself in fair garments and imitates the language of holiness" (Morning and Evening, May 29, 2005). In a continent abounding in the profuse corruption of unjust governments, intractable dictators and the rule of thugs, where bribery is a way of life, and scheming the mode of survival, this will be no small requirement. May we in the West uphold our black brethren in the trial now before them that they may one day send to us tested missionaries to teach us how to live by faith when our worldly confidences will have been shattered.

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