

True Apostolicity - Part 1

by Art Katz

Art Katz explores the profound significance of true apostolicity and its critical role in the church's foundation and health.

Duration: 56:44

Scripture: Exodus 19:6-24, Matthew 6:33, Acts 20:24, Acts 20:27

Topics: "Apostolic"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of consecration and preparation for an upcoming event. He warns against having a 'business as usual' mentality and urges listeners to set aside all things, even legitimate ones, in order to fully prepare for the visitation of God. The speaker also expresses his reluctance towards large gatherings, as he feels it hinders genuine relationships and prevents deeper connections. He concludes by stating that true apostolic authority requires meekness, and that the speaker he encountered did not possess this essential attribute.

Transcript

If you're a little bit staggered by the fancy word, I think I invented it. It's already a standing joke with the Ben Israel people. Apostolicity.

Because it's much more than just apostle or apostolic. It's an all-inclusive, all-embracing word. And God has been drilling my heart to show me how central it is to everything in His purpose.

Maybe you'll understand a bit as we just quote from a familiar scripture in Ephesians. Now, therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens, which are saints of a household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Not just what apostles and prophets teach, what they bring, what principles they express, but what they themselves are. You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ himself the chief cornerstone. And if it's the cornerstone of Jesus himself, the foundation then is the apostles and prophets themselves.

It's far more than the matter of teaching, far more than the matter of correct principles or correct doctrines. It's correct men. Because what distinguishes the apostolic church is not that it's some kind of organization

that operates according to certain correct and abstract principles, but that it's a living and palpitating organism made up of men.

What they are through and through. And I believe with all my heart that the apostolic church cannot rise above or exceed the condition of its apostles. And therefore the issue of what is true apostle or true apostolicity is an enormous question for us all.

Because I believe already that there is a phenomenon moving in the midst by which there is that which is not true, that which is sane, that which is false and inauthentic. And if there is something inauthentic about our apostolicity, we have had it. By its very nature, if the church is to be glorious and to be apostolic, it must be true.

To be false is a contradiction in terms. That's what makes it glorious. So I want to quote a little bit from a newsletter.

In fact, it's this present issue of a lead article which I wrote in some expression of this theme. I won't read it all. But I begin by expressing something that was sounded on a recent ministry trip to New Zealand where there were two prophetic leadership conferences and a number of believers coming from different parts of that country.

At the beginning of both conferences, they took a poll and sounded out the reason why these people had come to this particular conference. The whole thing was so vague and so ill-defined. What is a prophetic leadership conference? I don't know how the title was even discovered.

But it was interesting that a great many made the same kind of response. We have come to the end of our charismatic tether. We sense that there is a further dimension which eclipses what we have known and had hoped in, but we don't know how to identify or even find it.

We have come hoping that the Lord would reveal it here. I continue by saying, I wonder how much this expresses the heart of God's people today. My impression is of an organic, swelling cry rising up to heaven from the earth for a real, personally transcendent and significant Christianity that is not and cannot be found or experienced in anything less than that which is truly apostolic and prophetic.

Yesterday's charismatic enthusiasm is fading now that the novelty is past and our inner man is increasingly smitten by the hollowness of our once titillating choruses and spiritual catchphrases. But what is that which is authentically apostolic? How can its messengers be identified? How is it to be obtained? This much is certain. If we are to make of that which we have made of the more recent subjects of discipleship, the body of Christ, submission, etc., it will be the cruelest delusion of all.

God save us from yet another word game, from institutionalizing or systematizing that which is apostolic and holy. You understand what is being said here? That we can do with that which is apostolic what we have done with that which is charismatic. We can make of it a fun and games.

We can make of it a new kind of vocabulary. We can be just as glib and facile and hollow with apostolic phrases as we have been with charismatic phrases. And we need to be on our guard because if we produce and lessen that which is apostolic, there are no further alternatives.

That's it. That which is apostolic is true and holy. It's the hope.

It is the authentic thing given of God. And we have to be careful lest we find ourselves merchandising in it as we have merchandised the things that have come before it in our own generation. Already numbers of men who have a penchant for traveling and a brusque ability to quote set things in order are publicly advertising themselves as apostles or prophets.

Many of these are likely self-appointed amateurs, crude apprentices appropriating scriptures and holy things whom the head of the church has not sent. See, this is the heck of it. That anybody can appropriate the phrases.

They're there. Anybody can take them to themselves and begin to develop a kind of facility for the speaking of them. That's exactly the danger.

And we think because we employ the vocabulary that we are it. But I want to tell you that an apostle is a very formidable phenomenon that goes far beyond the ability to speak apostolic catchphrases. And I intend tonight and in the other opportunities that are given me to address myself wholly to the theme that by the end of these days that through me and through others you shall have a very distinct knowledge and impression and understanding of what true apostolicity is.

Surely the things that are apocalyptic are at the door. The church of Jesus Christ shall soon again be commended for having tried them, quote, which say that they are apostles and are not and has found them liars. This is an end time phenomenon and is already current now in the experience of God's people.

What we must pray for, seek and wait upon are apostolic prophetic men whose understanding and commission has come from God and who like Moses, who is the master archetypal builder before them, are the meekest of men upon the face of the earth. I'll just insert something even into my own statement that a phrase came to my attention once where a brother writing about this theme used the phrase apostolic meekness and I was so bowled over by the conjoining of these two words that it has never left me that when I had an occasion once to hear one purported to be an apostle and broke my neck to get at the church to hear this man whose reputation is national who has a penchant for church establishing or maybe I should say franchising more like McDonald's hamburger chain that I came winded and out of breath to sit in and catch at least the last ten minutes of his speaking I wanted myself to see the phenomenon of a true apostle. And hardly two minutes had elapsed in the hearing of him that I nudged the brother who was with me and said to him if this man's an apostle, I'll eat the pulpit.

You say, how can you in two minutes have come to so conclusive an understanding? I'll tell you how. Because whatever he was saying was so touched with bombast was so inflated gave so much the aura of ego and self-conscious authority that he, by the virtue of the expression of that spirit nullified himself as being a candidate for an apostle he simply did not have an essential necessary attribute apostolic meekness. Moses had it and there's a reason why such men must have it and I hope to explain to you why and how.

For what they have, what a true apostle has is received in communion with God upon the mount to which they have been sovereignly summoned and will not presume to ascend themselves. Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth and causeth to approach thee that he might dwell in thy courts. Psalm 65 verse 4 And the Lord said unto Moses Come up to me into the mount and be there and I will give thee tables of stone and the law and commandments which I have written that thou mayest teach them.

My intention is to speak from Exodus and from the verse that I have just quoted and hope by it in an examination of the life of the first great true apostle to show you the quintessential, classic and eternal elements that must be in every apostle and everything that is apostolic including the apostolic church. So precious God, such a task as this requires your enablement and the grace of your spirit. We roll up our sleeves, Lord, with delight for it's a formidable task and a meaningful task and we want to be saved from that which is false both in men and in ourselves and in our own fellowships lest we find ourselves toying with things that are holy and robbing God's people of a last, final and true hope.

My God, may you put something in our hearts of such a burning character, such a kind such a vision, such a sense that we will seek for such men who have met you on the mount and who come down to teach us that which you alone have given and not just a mere banding about of principles and the establishing of franchises. Help us now, my God, because this is in your own great high priestly and apostolic heart and we'll thank you and praise you for the sounding of such a theme in such an hour as this the privilege of hearing and receiving such a word in Jesus' holy name for such a kingdom. Amen.

Well, you can turn with me to the book of Exodus in the 19th chapter we find the first invitation of God to Moses to ascend the mount and the description or the reference to the mount itself of which I think we have been guilty of dismissing as a symbol of the law that somehow Sinai has been replaced by Zion and I want to say that we're already on dangerous ground if we have so glibly put away so enormous a phenomenon as this mount in this wilderness I hope one day to ascend that mount myself at least as a respectful and sensitive tourist if not actually to be summoned up but I think that it's a mistake to summarily dismiss it and not truly understand why it was to this mount that the great apostle and master builder were summoned so in the third month after the sons of Israel had gone

out of the land of Egypt on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai and when they set out from Rephidim they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness and there Israel camped in front of the mountain and Moses went up to God and the Lord called to him from the mountain saying thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel you yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagle's wings and brought you to myself now then if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant then you shall be my own possession among all the peoples for all the earth is mine and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation these are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel so Moses came and called the

elders of the people and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him let's try and make a beginning I think that it's altogether significant that Sinai is a wilderness because that betokens the fact that it is completely unmarred by anything that men can touch or do it is absolutely bleak absolutely barren and there's nothing more or less than that which God himself has given and it's I think altogether significant that that's the setting in which the call comes for the apostolic man to go up because as we'll see from the whole unfolding of this as I plan to go on with it that there's nothing of man that can intrude that the call of God does not come in some million dollar headquarter building or some Jerusalem of men or some religious institution or any such thing

but comes in that which is absolutely unspotted by anything that men can touch or alter or change it's the wilderness as God himself has given it and even a very distinct wilderness a Sinai which means my thorns and maybe it's good that it should be that because that of itself automatically disqualifies great numbers of men who would in their carnal hearts have apostolic ambition but they don't have apostolic character they don't have apostolic mettle they don't have a heart that is willing to come to a wilderness place and to a

thorny place let alone to ascend the mount alone which is there praise God for that and that eliminates in one fell swoop all that are facile, shallow, glib attention seekers, the egotistical, the bombastic and all the other kinds of guys who are making sounds to

be apostolic and who are not there's a pattern here from the very first that demands our deepest attention and I praise God for the genius of it that his call, this high call because the church cannot exceed its apostles it rises and falls with the quality and the condition of these men and these men must be called in this place and in no other the thorny wilderness and they camped in front of the mountain would to God that we had such an opportunity a mountain soon to be wreathed in fire and with thick clouds and thick smoke and with shaking and with quaking so awesome that it will keep us from our fornication and all of the other kinds of debilitating things for which already the statistics are mounting of men who are falling and apostolic leaders and heads of fellowship who are biting

the dust by running off with the organist or a council lead any such thing there simply is not the requisite fear of God in us that is one of the true central and intrinsic characteristics of apostolicity if the fear of God is out it cannot be the church of God we need to be reminded again of that quaking site we who have so goodly dismissed this mountain as the law I'll tell you there's something to be said for the law and the righteousness of the law which God has never forgotten which cannot be obtained by law but only by those who walk in the spirit that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled or made manifest I just want to remind you tonight that God has not forgotten his righteousness and the church that does is no longer apostolic two central necessary ingredients deep,

awesome fear and reverence of God and an abiding and profound awareness of the righteousness of God which somehow adheres in this great mount before we need to camp and fill our eyes with the sight of it or we cannot go on everything which seems to be attached to the word charismatic has already come to mean in our generation that which is contrary to what I'm describing glib, anxious, easy, facile disrespectful divorces and remarryings and all of the kinds of hanky-panky things that betray and reveal an absence of this kind of awesome fear of the mount of God I think it's good for us to be brought back to that mount and I think it's out of that mount that a rock is cut without hands a stone without hands that shall crush and destroy and pulverize all of the kingdoms of this world and

shall be an everlasting kingdom itself it's out of this mount that it's cut the mount of righteousness to which God summons the apostolic men and an apostolic people and we cannot ascend until his voice summoning us calls any man who dares go up himself at his own initiative and at his own time is finished there are bounds and restrictions that need deeply to be acknowledged and any people that have not a stomach to acknowledge the restrictions of God are already disqualified from being apostolic oh I'll tell you there are riches here guys that we have too quickly dismissed and Moses went up to God and the Lord called to him from the mountain saying although it says Moses went up before the Lord called I don't have the slightest hesitation to say that he did not dream to take but a first

step until he heard that voice and I would say a requisite for a man who has a true apostolic calling is a willingness and the ability to wait until he himself hears God's distinct call come up here that's the thing that distinguishes the bombastic amateurs from the true there are too many clawing their way up because they've learned to a certain facility with scriptures and how Paul did it and are able themselves to give the same kind of exhortation and counsel and advice and think themselves to be the same kind of men there's a going up but it waits upon God's own time and any man who will not wait and any church that will not wait is ipso facto no longer apostolic an apostolic man in an apostolic church and you can say it in the

same breath because they are the one and the same the

church and the man is one who waits one has such a sense for the reverence of God's place and the reverence of God's time that he will not exceed or take liberties with either got the idea? thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel you yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagle's wings and brought you to myself and in that one statement the Alpha and the Omega speak both the beginning and the end of all things that's the whole purpose of it all to bring us to himself in truth and apostolic men are those who shall guide God's people that they might be brought to himself as a habitation for God by the Spirit this ultimate and final and true union between God and men is the whole purpose of all apostolic leading a final communion

with God that we might be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation these are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel so Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him taking note add this an apostolic man not only will find his own place or his own time he will not either find his own words he'll only speak that which the Lord has commanded him I marvel to read that such a one as Paul says pray for me that utterance might be given that I might speak the mysteries of Christ as I ought when Paul makes that his prayer request what shall we say who are much lesser men how dare we presume to speak our things so Moses came and set before them all the words which the Lord had commanded him come up it says in Exodus

24 and we'll be seeing that tonight or tomorrow some future time and I will give you the law that you may teach them if he doesn't give it what shall we teach oh we can find it ourselves we have concordances and bible study guides and lots of tapes and if we want we can take some notes and become studious and appropriate ourselves certain apostolic and biblical truths but it's not that which is given and therefore you are rendered invalid to teach them that's why we hear so much prattle that is biblical and yet unimpressive it does not have the ring it does not have the power it doesn't have the penetration and the authority which only comes from that which is given on the mount that you may teach them there's no possibility whatsoever except it be given and I'm one of those stubborn

holdouts that have suffered a long embarrassment because I was not the first in my neighborhood to be able to talk about the body of Christ I'd heard it from Charles Smith and heard well but it was not yet mine by virtue of hearing it through another man it was good to hear it and to receive the instruction but I'm not in any place to teach or communicate holy things from the mount of righteousness until it is given on that mount by a God who summons me up and my heart is to wait to hear from such men and we should hear second hand versions of two things that are somehow not true because they have not gone up because they have not received and therefore they have not qualified to speak oh guys if there should be such a jealousy in you for this that is true that when you hear the word

apostolic you actually salivate the juice forms in your mouth because it's a word so pregnant with meaning it's so charged it's glorious the high priest and the apostle of our confession and if it's not priestly it's not apostolic and if it's not apostolic it's not priestly it needs to be like him who is the high priest and the apostle of our confession I'll tell you if you come out of this camp with nothing more than this the deepest reverence and awe and respect for that which is apostolic you have had good days it is to be jealously guarded because already there are those who say that they are apostles and are not I know a certain young snot knows myself great guy and called of God and talented and precious fellowship and he has an ability to teach and now he has a call from another

fellowship a little bit more distant in the same city and he has been released from his own fellowship to fulfill the apostolic calling to go to this other thing in the same city who are in need of teaching and what I said to his wife let him go but if he dares use the word apostolic about his going I'll kick him in the rump let him merely serve and let him teach but let him not adorn himself with the title already someone has come to lay hands upon him and pray for him from out of town and to confirm his apostolic calling listen guys I'm getting a little itchy that already we're too close to a kind of fun and games thing about that which is holy, holy, holy I don't think that this young brother has yet been in the place of his thorns and has known the place of wilderness let alone been

summoned up to a mount that he dare presume to take that word upon his lips as a description of himself and any man who already wears the label makes me suspicious let alone it should be on our office doors or that we should refer to each other as Apostle John or Prophet so and so they're the meekest of men something more like the spirit of Mary who me? you mean me?

I'm continually staggered about the high priest and the apostle of our confession who knew his calling and who walked in it superbly and yet as you survey the gospel and listen to him speak and get the whole sense of his demeanor and spirit and attitude you get the sense of such an utter mindlessness about himself there's no sense of any inflated consciousness that he is the son of God though indeed he is and even when he's required to say such things it's with such a what shall I say a seemly attitude with such an inoffensiveness such a mindlessness such an absence of vanity of any kind that you're not at all even pricked or adversely affected by it may we have such apostles may we have such prophets who speak only that which is given on the mount the 12th verse well let's read a little

before that all the people answered in the 8th verse together and said all that the Lord has spoken we will do and Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord and the Lord said to Moses behold I shall come to you in a thick cloud in order that the people may hear when I speak with you and may also believe in you forever when Moses told the words then Moses told the words of the people to the Lord and the Lord also said to Moses go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow and let them wash their garments and let them be ready for the third day for on the third day the Lord will come down on mount Sinai in the sight of all the people and you shall set bounds for the people all around saying beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it whoever

touches the mountain shall surely be put to death no hand shall touch him for he shall surely be stoned or shot through whether beast or man he shall not live when the ram's horn sounds a long blast then they shall come up to the mountain another thing for your notebook a function of the apostle is to set bounds right from the beginning you shall set bounds by the bounds that are established by him whom God sends I remember Yugoslavia giving counsel to a young Pentecostal pastor who had stolen the daughter of another Pentecostal preacher and had run off with her and they eloped and the father's heart was so grieved that they had not consulted him and that this young upstart had taken this liberty that though they returned later to the congregation and then later on broke from them and

formed their own congregation there's a schism a split a painful separation right within that same Yugoslavian city between father and son-in-law that goes all the way back to the means by which he obtained his wife and so I just said to him brother I would commend to you a going to your father-in-law and asking his forgiveness for the usurpation of his daughter that you did not seek his blessing and his will and his time and I said if you will not I prophesy that you are going to be haunted with men doing to you and in your fellowship what you have done to him usurpations runnings off and every kind of disobedience

and recklessness if this thing is not healed at its root he said well who are you to tell me that I just went silent who am I to tell him that rather it's a kind of a question

like what are you willing what value are you willing to give this council do you think it's just a matter of opinion in the passing or do you see it as one sense speaking the words of God for you to receive and to do as God is setting bounds and definitions and restrictions and requirements for you to obey it's a matter of choice and because men will choose not to observe the bounds that God imposes through those whom he calls to that degree and for that reason we are yet not an apostolic people I'm developing such a love for restriction freewheeling saints that I have been in times past coming to such a profound respect for the genius and the wisdom of God that hedges us in and sets bounds and in a way that I cannot explain it I already delight for the paradox that the key to true

apostolic liberty in the glorious realm of spirit is to submit to the bounds that God establishes through men there's freedom to be found in the restriction when the ram's horn sounds is another restriction not before then shall you come up it's not a sound to be made by men but it comes on the third day with the thunder with the lightning the flashes the thick cloud and in the 16th verse a very loud trumpet sound ram's horn not even an instrument fashioned by men so that all the people who were in the camp trembled and Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God and they stood at the foot of the mountain and Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace and the whole mountain quaked violently I don't know

that we shall ever be privileged to see such a thing but one thing for which I could devoutly pray that the sense of what people received who had that privilege might also be communicated to us and I cannot tire of repeating often enough the necessity for the restoration if that word is the heart of God in this hour the restoration of all things surely one of the foundational things is the fear and the reverence of God who makes a mountain to quake and to be wreathed in fire and thick smoke by his very presence and his coming it alone shall save us from our fornications and hanky panky from the liberties that we would otherwise take is to be reminded and to have this fear restored by men who can bring down the sense of it who have been up and communed with this God in fire we cannot gain

it abstractly I've broken my head to find out why it is that this is so absent from our experience and I have finally concluded it cannot be abstractly communicated we cannot make it per se a teaching we cannot have a bible study on the fear of God and come away with the fear of God we may come away with a knowledge of the fear of God but not the fear itself what we need is something of the very aura and the very presence of that quaking of that fire of that mountain reed by men who have been up to it and have been in communion with that God in fire and on the rare occasions and the privilege that we have to meet such men we know it and their very presence communicates that fear Finney would be a wonderful example in the illustration that we all know when he came to that textile mill

being shown around the mill and as a woman saw him approaching she began immediately to break out in trembling and as he came closer her trembling was so violent she could barely steady herself and when he came closer still and she beheld his face and his eyes she fell to the floor by her machine and cried out for the mercy of God to save her and he had not yet even opened his mouth to speak a word I think he was a man who had been up to the mount he knew God in his presence he communed with Him in fire wreathed in smoke and brought something of that awesome thing down which is so desperately lacking in our church today when Jacob saw the vision with his head on the rock of the church the Bethel of God the house of God the first word that came out of his mouth was how dreadful is this

place and dreadful doesn't mean biblically and spiritually what it has come to mean secularly dreadful means full of dread full of awe full of fear and the reverence of God or it is not the Bethel of God it's not the house of God it's not the gate to heaven if this is not restored to the degree that it is not we are not apostolic we're chintzy we're glib we're easy going we're facile we speak the right words have the right terminology but we are not authentically apostolic in fact inexperienced because we have not the knowledge of the fear of God who makes mountains to quake when his presence alights upon us the whole tenor of our generation is exactly the opposite Jesus is our pal our buddy buddy we can take his name on our t-shirt it's a kind of a genie lamp to rub when we want

something to happen for our good a convenience a mail order house for boyfriend girlfriend health prosperity or any such thing we have completely lost or have never known the fear of a God who makes the mountains to quake and if you think that you're an apostle or a candidate for such this needs to be eminently in your soul such a knowledge of this God in fear that it can be communicated even to men without your speaking and I don't think you'll come to it no man can except he's first willing to endure the wilderness of thorns and ascend this mountain in God's call and in God's time and not before if you're presumptuous if you're demanding if you're itchy if you're impatient if you want the esteem and the acknowledgement of men if you itch to have the label assigned to you you're

disqualified you know what made Moses meek? was meeting this God in the fire faith fulfilled this presence this awesomeness this dread did something to him that made his faith blanch and drained Moses of anything that he had that was Jewish that was impetuous that was human there's a reason that he was six days in the six clouds before he was summoned up on the seventh day into the fire you don't have to be clever to figure out what the six days require a complete emptying of all that six signifies namely that which pertains to man that which is bumptious that which is presumptuous that which is opinionated that which is hot shot and carnal and self-conscious and super spiritual and all of the other kinds of things that make false apostles false and make the false apostolic church false

for the church cannot exceed its apostasy show me a candidate who is willing to be six days in the six clouds don't think it's marshmallowy and billowy it's smoke from the fire of his presence and if you've never been in smoke you don't even begin to understand what six days in that experience must be some of you may know that Judah building had burned down a couple of years ago and it happened the night that the Katz family was sleeping in it started by some mattresses and pillows that had been stuffed by the wall heaters in a very cold November night when we turned up the heat not recognizing what was alongside those wall heaters and only to wake up by someone shaking me to say ah there's a crackling noise in the living room and I ran out of bed to see the flames already shooting up the

wall and turned on the spigot to get some water and out came the thinnest dribble and all I could do as that fire crackled and took hold was get the family out soon enough before the whole building was going up and the place was filled with a thick smoke my dear wife wanted me to go in and to get her handbag and I had other precious things right on the counter of the kitchen as you guys know that building I had the tapes of all of my ministries the master tapes on the counter which I was bringing up here to have in our cassette room from which we would duplicate and send our copies so I was going to make one quick trip in and get my wife's handbag and maybe these tapes one of those things well I know that building blindfolded I know it by heart I've been in there a thousand times and I

ascended in and I wasn't in but a moment and the thick smoke got me and I was completely and totally disoriented I couldn't tell my left hand from my right I couldn't remember where I'd come in I didn't know

where the door was I didn't know where the counter was I was completely lost to anything that pertained to my human understanding my memory and my knowledge it is a fearful experience and indeed if we had a statistical survey of people who have perished in fire you would know that more have perished from smoke than from flames more people more bodies have been found charred or smoke killed one foot away from freedom and from life than can ever be but did not know that they were one foot away because the smoke engulfed them okay you hushed up still want to be apostles? you want to

ascend up into that wilderness and that mountain into that smoke and abide in that for six days and wait for the seventh day's call and the rest in the Sabbath of God that's the condition and I'll tell you in those six days you won't remember a thing that you think you know all of your pithy sayings and all of your wonderful overviews and systematic knowledge of that which is apostolic will be completely lost in the smoke you'll be bereft of anything that is humanly understood that he might give you afresh from his own hands that which he alone can give that you may teach there's a heart in me to wait for such a man to come down from that mountain there's a heart in you to go up because I don't think that the condition or the requirement is any less in our generation than it was at the

first this is the pattern for all generations and the Lord came down on Mount Sinai to the top of the mountain and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain and Moses went up then the Lord spoke to Moses go down warn the people lest they break the truth of the Lord for days and many of them perish it says in my margin for the word perish fall and I think that many of us have fallen for just this reason we have not received an apostolic exhortation in the authority of the apostle to observe the bounds and the restrictions of God and we've gone up to gaze we've gone up in our curiosity we've gone up in our carnal desire to see or to have a coffee time virtuosity to speak certain things glibly we've wanted just to cease our eyes and fulfill our curiosity that's a no no God is not an

object for being gazed upon you can see but you cannot gaze you cannot fill your curiosity you cannot learn apostolic glorious things merely to have a bag full of catch phrases that you might sound clever or witty or informed that's gazing as a formula for falling and for perishing that's why there are bounds and restrictions to keep us at the foot of the snob until we shall hear God call us by name up and not to ascend before I missed the scripture there the fifteenth verse he said to the people be ready for the third day and do not go near a woman I don't know how to make any comment about that without what shall I say seeming injudicious or disrespectful or prejudice but I just intuit something that I don't know that I can find words I think any guy who enjoyed his wife or vice versa

prior to the advent of the coming of God upon the mount is not a man who deserves such a seeing and such an experience you know what is betoken to me that it's just another meeting that somehow we can enjoy this and that that somehow no special necessity for consecration or setting up of ourselves aside from our pleasure is a necessary preparation for the holy and awesome event of a God who comes and a mount raised in fire and in fact that very spirit is the essence of the charismatic spirit all this and heaven too sleeping with our wives and enjoying our pleasures and a good meeting too because after all what is church anything more than good meetings you understand what I'm saying is there a heart in us so devout so consecrated so understanding so intuiting the holiness of what is about

to break upon us and be revealed before us that we cannot go on with a business as usual mentality that requires a setting side of all things even that which is legitimate and alright and I'll do in a total preparation for an awesome event and because we have not been willing to give this consecration we have not received this experience and we have been satisfied with something less called good meetings rather than

the visitation of a God who comes down you need to hear this by the spirit well the Lord's coming tomorrow but tonight's tonight and you know what's the difference there is a difference somehow the difference of heart that will not set aside a pleasure that can be obtained later a gratification that can be deferred for something that is immediate and holy you better put that

in your notes because I've just given you a definition of what apostolic church is a people that will defer gratification for that which is holy and if it's apostles will not defer how shall the people defer if the so called apostles are running off what shall we expect from the congregation as the priests so also the people as the apostles so also the church which is built upon his foundation we simply cannot afford false apostles or we shall find ourselves being a false people in the 24th chapter of Exodus where again Moses is summoned to the mount the 12th verse the Lord said to Moses come up to me on the mountain and be there and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandments which I have written for their instruction King James says that thou mayest speak to them

I love this speaking of God come up to me on the mount and be there and I will give you I want to tell you that a condition for receiving from God is being there but if you're going just to receive you're not going to get what did he say? what I'm saying is so important I'll repeat it until you get it come up to me not to expediency come up to me not because I'm able to give you but because I'm me come up to me in communion for my own sake and be there totally in body, soul and heart and mind and spirit and I will give you but if you come up merely for the expediency of getting you're not coming up that's not a true coming up and it's not a being there oh guys if I can rub that into your spirit if you can understand what is being said there why it is so necessary that the apostle come up

on that condition alone because if he will not if he is speaking only to come up for what he can receive that he might teach if God is only to him the convenience that gives if he is not himself to come up totally in all that he is in his humanity in fullness of man what then shall he communicate coming down because if the apostolic church is anything it's a people who are total before a total God in mind and soul and body and spirit who can be there it's a people who can hear you and not hear you who are distracted even while you're talking to them whose minds are restlessly considering something of tomorrow while you're speaking to them now if their marriages are commonplace and black dash there's not an intensity of relationship and quality of life between themselves if they're not

there with each other how then is it apostolic they need to know what it means to be there they cannot know it any more than the man who goes up upon whose foundation such a church is built because that's what he brings down that thou mayest teach them is more than just virtuoso ability in communicating the word it's not only proclamation it's demonstration of what it means to be there if an apostle is anything he's a total man so he's not an apostle he knows how to go up and be there I hardly have words to express what I'm trying to get at my heart knows it but it has not yet reached my mind but this I know that we are eminently superficial shallow casual indifferent glib we don't understand that the very heart of our calling is a relationship of a total God calling to total man totally

to be there and if we are not that ourselves in our experience and in our own relationship with each other and with him how then are we apostolic we're just a bunch of plastic charismatics who have a more apostolic vocabulary come up and be there come up to me and be there and I will give but if you come up with a motive of giving it's not a true communion can you understand what true church is it's communion with him there totally for his own sake and if you have any other motive any other qualification any other reason for going or being it's not apostolic it's vain it's selfish it's religious if there's anything that can be

described as apostolic it's a total communion between God and man and it needs to be revealed what that totality is needs to be revealed by apostolic man we need to

see what a living demonstration is of total man now can I just make a confession of an unwilling participant in in camp dominion convocations and why every summer I have a sense of dread before the opening of the first convocation I'll tell you why this summer is better than any previous one by the way and that is because I know the property is going to be flooded with thousands of souls it's because I know by virtue of their very numbers that there's no way that I'm going to be in any kind of real relationship with them by virtue of their numbers and the brief time that we have together I know that of necessity we're just going to be like ships chanting in the night and we're just touched but superficially and I'm not one who can bring myself to nod and to grin and to how you're doing

and to give you a slap on the back I'm just going to look glum I'm going to look pained I'm going to look terribly out of it because I am because what the heart craves is that totality and I don't know how we can do it God is going to have to give us some transcendent way in the brief time we have to find that penetration in relationship with each other that is more than just the casual touching of each other internally because if we will get accustomed to that and that shall be the character of our relationship sweet pleasant friendly nice a pat on the back a little chuck under the chin and a word we shall not be an apostolic people because it is eminently a people who have learned what it means to come up and to be there for its own sake if we have not learned it with God we shall not

be able to express it I don't know of any more profound teaching that an apostle has to give than this because if we cannot communicate that we shall be victims of something less and we shall be a self-seeking church that looks upon meetings and the blessings of God as something given for our pleasure our satisfaction and not understand that it is what it is we need to come to a place that is so disinterested so void of our motives of our seeking that finds its delight merely in being there totally and to come up to that is no easy going up because we have been the product of a shallow civilization that has taught us to get by with just a phrase just a word just a grin just a back slap if you want to come into this kind of authenticity of relationship both with God and men you cannot

accept your sin it's interesting how revealing it is to pray with different men some men whom you've known for years and you say I'm really burdened let's pray before this meeting tonight it's really enormously important oh yes they're quick enough to agree to pray and you go down on your knees with the particular man and as the praying is going on you recognize that he's praying his prayer and you're praying your prayer and somehow there's not a real communion between the two and with God because I don't think that anything more reveals the shallowness of relationship than the quality and the character of prayer that we are able to make rightly the surgeon warned his students that the first evidence of superficiality and loss of relationship with God and truth is the shallowness and the

superficiality of our public prayer we have to learn again what it means to come up and be there not for what we're going to get but just simply because he bid us come unto me and I will give the stone tablets with the law and the commandments which I have written that you may teach them so Moses went up into the mountain in the 15th verse and the cloud covered the mountain and the glory of the cloud the glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai and the cloud covered it for six days and on the seventh day he called to Moses in the midst of the cloud note the conjunction between the word glory and the word rest the moment that rest is not there glory is not there either the moment that striving is there the moment that impatience is there the moment that restlessness is there the glory

departs the glory of the Lord rested and still does and will never come forth in any other condition but the condition of rest good things will come forth and happy meetings and good teachings and all other kinds of good things but the glory of God is eminently and uniquely to be found only in rest whether it's on mountains or upon mountains and on the seventh day he came up hallelujah finished with the six days business in the thick smoke and there he abided for forty days in the presence of God the eyes of the sons of Israel and to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire on a mountain top and Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights something

happened in that intensity something happened in that fire something more than tablets were given something more than a message provided the man and the message were fused the man became the message and the message to man and man wished to God who gives it that when he came down there was a glory on his face that brought a respectful awe and fear to those who saw him and the thing that awaited him below in the very moment that the law was being given men were traducing it by making a golden cap below to come down with the tablets of the law to see this sight of a people rising up to play breaks the heart of an apostolic man and except that you have a heart to bear such breaking and such disappointment you're not going to be God's apostolic man interesting that he commanded that that

golden idol be ground to powder be pulverized and they were compelled to drink it and nowhere do I hear so much as a limper of complaint well who were you to say such a thing because he came down not only in meekness he came down in authority because he had been up to the mount and he was there with a God in fire and his face the aura of his being communicated the authority which he had received and can only be obtained in that place that not so much as a voice was raised in opposition to what he required that apostolic authority that can only be obtained in that place

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