

# True Apostolicity - Part 2

by Art Katz

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*Art Katz explores the profound implications of apostolicity, emphasizing the necessity of personal experience and suffering in the life of the Church and its leaders.*

**Duration:** 59:47

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 1 Corinthians 10:31, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 Corinthians 5:9-11, 2 Corinthians 5:15

**Topics:** "Apostolic"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his personal experience of feeling exhausted and frustrated while teaching in a diverse school setting. He describes the challenge of trying to engage students who are obligated to be there and have no interest in the subject matter. The speaker reflects on the weight and responsibility of preaching the word of God, emphasizing that it is not just a delivery of a message, but an issue of life and death. He encourages believers to live in the dimension of eternity and to speak to others from that perspective. The sermon references the Bible verse 2 Corinthians 5:1, which speaks about the earthly tent being torn down and the believer having a building from God, eternal in the heavens.

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## Transcript

I want to continue on the theme that I began the other night. Apostolicity. I don't know if it's a legitimate word, but I know it's a legitimate thing.

In fact, legitimate is hardly the word. It's the ultimate thing. It's everything.

It's the reality that God is seeking to obtain in His people. It's the character of His Church. And the character of the men who are the foundation of the Church.

The Church built upon the foundation of the Apostles and the Prophets. Jesus Christ Himself being the chief correspondent. I want to underline Jesus Christ Himself.

So that I can underline the Apostles and the Prophets themselves. Not just their teaching. Or even their example, so-called.

Themselves. Himself. Themselves.

What they themselves are, through and through. The man as well as his message. I want to explore that with you this afternoon.

In 2 Chronicles, the 4th and 5th chapters. Just, almost just jumping in arbitrarily. I don't know, I haven't yet decided where.

Corinthians, I'm sorry. And just singling out some observations that Paul makes in passing. That gives us an insight and a clue as to what is this apostolicity.

This manner of being. So, in that I don't know where to begin and it's hard to find a place with Paul. I don't know how the compilers of the Bible ever determined how to find where chapter 4 ends and chapter 5 begins and chapter 6. Because it's just an unbroken and glorious continuum.

As is true of the man himself. Nothing in compartments. Nothing in little categories.

But one unending sublime continuum. That's why it's difficult to find the point of beginning. Without beginning and without ending of days.

Without genealogy. Without father or mother. Is the definition of the Melchizedek priest.

And it's also a definition of Paul. Anyone who ascribes to Paul his greatness on the basis of Jewishness, intellect, natural courage, erudition, rabbinical training has missed it by a million miles. All of these things he counted as dung that he might win Christ.

If you want to see Jesus, examine Paul. If you want to see the high priest and the apostle of our confession, examine Paul. I can't think of another person in whom the resurrected Christ is writ more large than he.

I love Paul with an undying love. Some may run to embrace Jonathan when they reach heaven. I'm going to embrace Paul.

I love Paul. To love Paul is to love Jesus. You can't tell where the one ends and the other begins.

They are an unbroken continuum. May it be so with the church that is like Paul and must be like Paul. Because what Paul was is what we must be.

Because nothing less than that is apostolic. That's the foundation. So precious God, this is holy and precious stuff.

I ask an unction, my God, an anointing appropriate to this thing. Come and raise us up such a vision, such a sense of this. The awesomeness and the weight of this and the glory of this.

My God, that we shall be permanently disabused and freed of any kind of little plastic categories and notions and definitions that heretofore have sufficed. We invite you to destroy all our definitions, all our categories. And raise us up a vision of this palpitating man.

Of what he is and what is wrought in him. As message and man that we ourselves may have a model. And be satisfied with nothing less but the pursuit of the same excellence and the same glory.

Till it shall be formed in us. Bless now this speaking, my God. And we'll thank you and praise you for the glory of such examples.

For Jesus and for his kingdom's sake we ask it. Amen. Well, I'm looking at the top of my page.

Which is yet the fourth chapter of 2 Corinthians. For Jesus' sake that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death works in us but life in you.

Life, life, life is one of Paul's preeminent occupations. And I don't know that anyone can really define or finger all that he means by it. He has such a sense and such a grasp of the quality and the character of this life.

It's far more than anything that we know, biologically. It's another category of being, the life. That the life might be made manifest in you.

And that that life is so important, so vital, so heavenly. That it's worth the suffering of death to communicate it. As a matter of fact, this is an apostolic distinctive.

Hope you're taking notes. Now what an apostle does, and as Charles has spoken and hinted. And I myself have alluded in the first speaking on this subject.

Is the communication of far more than just mere principles, however correct. It's the exuding of something that is brought down from the mount. It's something obtained in deepest communion in that which is fused in the fire of the presence of God.

The life. And there's a strange principle, I don't understand it, I just know that it works. That that quality of life is communicated only in proportion to the willingness of the messenger to suffer the appropriate measure of death.

Don't ask me why. Interesting that I should have a conversation after this morning's session with a brother who met me outside. To ask if I had noticed in my own experience the difficulty in speaking on the message of the cross.

Yes, I have noticed it. In fact, I can't think of another subject more difficult to communicate to God's people. Than the centrality, the meaning, the significance of the cross.

Something happens, they go glassy eyed, they grow dull and insensate. You can titillate them and get any kind of rise out of them with any other subject. The moment you introduce the cross, it's like a veil comes over the consciousness of God's people and they become numb.

Almost takes a crowbar to insert something of this vital subject into their inner being. And yet how precious and how central. And I couldn't help but observe that over the course of my years as a believer, how infrequent do we hear such speakings.

I have often said how wise men are to avoid a subject of which they have little personal knowledge. We may speak on a variety of things, but the cross requires an intimacy in experience. Or else it becomes just a technical setting forth that has no penetrating power whatever.

Often times I'll hear from my wife at a long distance phone call, what's happening where you are? I say, why do you ask that? She said, because I'm suffering. I'm going through a terrible bout with a sickness. Or this has gone wrong with that, or I'm experiencing pains in my body.

As a matter of fact, glorious things are happening where we are. And this pattern has come with such frequency that I cannot help but note. That there's a measure of death that needs to be born, experienced, suffered in proportion to the measure of life that goes forth.

I think that's why I was so penetrated this morning in hearing Charles. Something was experienced by him over the course of years with regard to things that pertain to the theme of Jonathan and David. That made his presentation this morning penetrating.

That's why it is we often hear things that are so true and scriptural and doctrinally sound, but we are left untouched, unmoved, unpenetrated. Because the speaker, however ripe is his grasp of the subject, has not experienced a portion of death that life might go forth. You want to discern false apostles or false prophets from the true? One of the most telling absences will be their lack of experience in suffering and in death.

And I don't know how to detail this. Somehow you know when the speaker has passed through that measure, or someone who is organically joined with him is bearing an appropriate portion of it. And it's at the heart of what Paul understands and what he himself has demonstrated.

Death works in us, but life in you. And life is something more than the presentation of correct principles. It is the life, it is the glory of that which came out of the grave, which the apostle prophet exudes in what he speaks and he does.

Because in the course of his experience he has made himself a willing candidate to receive a like portion of death, of suffering, of humiliation, of unspeakable embarrassment, and all of the other kinds and varieties and forms of death which God's messengers are required to bear. Want to be an apostle? A prophet? An apostolic man? An apostolic church? There's a measure that has to be borne in proportion to the life that shall go forth. But having the same spirit of faith according to what is written, I believe, therefore I spoke, we also believe, therefore also we speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you.

That word knowing is more than just academic knowledge or even theological knowledge. Even in this balance of the fourth chapter and as we go on into the fifth we'll see the frequency of the word knowing. And it punctuates much of Paul's writing.

Know ye not that as many of you who have been baptized into Jesus Christ have been baptized into his death? There's a knowing with Paul by which the word has an apostolic meaning and a ring that is completely unknown in academic councils. It's not cerebral, it's not really theological. There's a knowing.

Knowing this. Paul knows something so well. It's so in-wrought in him.

It's so incorporated in his being. It has been so fashioned in his consciousness. He knows.

And that kind of knowing has got to characterize not only apostles but that which bears the name apostolic in the church. And that's why anything that is brittle, anything that is merely plastic, however correct, is ipso facto disqualified from being apostolic. This is the quality of apostolic knowing.

And I think we can instantly recognize that one is easy to obtain and the other painful. This is a knowing that is of an apostolic kind that isn't obtained lightly and at desks. Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with him.

How does he know it? Because he has had occasion after occasion when he has experienced the phenomenon out of his own humiliation, out of his own suffering, out of his own despair, out of his own death. He has seen the manifestation of the life of resurrection that has come forth in him. Therefore he

knows it.

Do you know the resurrection that well? Are you willing to suffer the mortification and the death of waiting for the expression of that life that you might know the resurrection? Far more than as correct theology. And I feel guilty already in speaking so blithely in passing. I'm not having come to any of my main points except to say this.

I know that I know that the issue of resurrection is the ultimate end time issue. And that which is going to distinguish the true church from the false is not that the one believes in the resurrection and the other does not. They shall both profess to believe.

But one shall only know it technically and theoretically and the other shall know it as abiding and awesome fact and foundation for their life and being. And that knowing has got to begin now. And I can't think of an occasion when I have known the resurrection when that knowing has not first been prefaced by an experience and humiliation of death.

One of my first experiences, if I can just take the time to describe it. I was yet the youngest of believers, only a few months old in the Lord, returning from Jerusalem stunned by the God who saved me for whom I was not looking. To return to my high school teaching career in California where as an atheist I was an impressive tight shot.

Such a winsome personality and such an ability with words. Such a leader with kids I could walk them off a cliff. Eating out of my hand, interracial clubs after school.

A tremendous influence as an atheist upon my students. So naturally what should I think? I should be as a Christian. Watch out Lord, here I come.

And there I came, thud. What a dismal and pathetic failure. Where was my facility for words? And where was my winsome personality? I can remember the most agonizing and tortuous experiences where I could not even make my face to smile.

It's as if rigor mortis had set in in my facial muscles. I was so moribund and bound that I couldn't even operate in my natural dimension let alone anything spiritual. And I was a laughing stock for the kids.

To go to school in the morning was an experience in anguish. Knowing what awaited me there five times a day when kids would snort up their sleeves and snigger as I choked and spluttered and fell over my own mouth and couldn't put a sentence together. Where was the inspiring leader whose intention now was far more than just atheistic idealism but to lead them into the kingdom of heaven through the material of history? And I was just a bunch of knots and exhaustion and frustration.

If you have ever taught school in a metropolitan interracial situation you may have some sense of what I mean. When kids come into your room who have to be there as obligation and were not freely chosen to come. Sitting there with their arms over their chest double daring you to say anything clever or cute or in any way intriguing that will break their standard boredom.

It's an exercise in humiliation. And by the third hour of the day you're so spent, at least I was, that my knees used to buckle. I used to feel the hoarseness every day beginning to well up in my throat.

My mind going numb so much so that I couldn't even remember my name. And I had two full classes yet to go of some of the worst characters in the school who'd come in on me. So one day I decided I was going to trust the resurrection.

That instead of conserving my energy at the third hour I would pull out all the stops. I would give these kids everything I had. I would pull out my last vestige of energy.

I wasn't one of these teachers who put down on the blackboard turn to page 364 and do problems 7 through 9. Our classroom was a give and take, a vital experience that drained me thoroughly. And I came home at night and stretched out on my bed like a dead man. A man who's been a ditch digger and a pipe installer and a merchant seaman in many forms of hard labor.

Never so spent and never so exhausted body, soul, mind and spirit as a day in the classroom. I was going to trust the resurrection. So I remember the third hour coming and there were the usual accompanying symptoms.

My legs were going wobbly. My throat was getting coarse. My brain was going numb.

My tongue was sticking to the roof of my mouth. I was beginning to trip over my tongue. At the time when prudence would say, conserve your energy.

You've got two classes yet to go. Save it up that you'll get by. You know why the world has not seen the glory of God? Because we're getting by.

Because we're conserving. Because we're living minimally. Because we're doling it out by the teaspoons.

Because we're free to be extravagant with our energy, with our substance and with our life. We want to get by. We want to avoid the enormous embarrassment, which is another name for dying.

See, if dying was only the mere cessation of consciousness, why that's a bag. Sometimes you would desire that the switch be flipped and we could be phased out. The real dying and the real suffering is to remain.

So to avoid that embarrassment where you have at least some voice left. Some energy left. Some control over the class left.

Some intelligence left. That you're not the butt of their jeering. That in fact they would not even rise out of their seats to mock you.

As they see you sag and weaken and go down. I never have forgotten an experience that I had as a merchant seaman. As a young kid in Florida.

As we were standing at the back end of the ship. And some character who was with me as a flock of pelicans flew over. Took a heavy nut and bolt that was on the deck.

And just as a lock threw it up into the midst of these birds and hit one. And as these birds had been flying in formation. The one that was hit began to go down like one of those stuka dive bombers.

Into a literal tail spin. And to my utter horror and amazement. All the birds that had been flying peacefully with him until that moment.

Then began to stoop down and come. And peck at this thing in its distress as it was going down. I have never forgotten that sight.

And my great fear as a teacher was that these kids would see me go down. See me weaken. See me lose my control and the authority expressed through voice.

That they would come out of their seats. And peck at me and let me have it. So this was the day of resurrection.

The third hour. My voice was failing. My mind going numb.

And every voice of prudence and reasonableness saying. Conserve your energy. Take it easy.

Save yourself. You've got two more classes. No, I was determined to go for broke.

Do you have that determination? Pull out all the stops. Nothing left. If God be not God.

You of all men are most to be pitied. That's why we've not seen the resurrection glory. We're afraid to be that emptied of ourselves.

To utterly trust in his life. That shall save us again and again and again. And if his life will choose not to.

We're willing to accept the painful consequence of being left to perish. Those are the grounds alone by which the resurrection phenomenon can be made manifest. So there I went.

I was weakening, sagging. Methinks I saw the kids rising up out of their seats and ready to come forward and peck me to pieces. And in the last possible moment.

And that's when it comes. In the last possible moment. In the utter final extremity.

When death has just swallowed you up and there's no hope whatever. In that moment. A surge.

An energy. A life. A strength coming into your bones.

Your legs becoming firm. The hoarseness dissipating. The numbness of your mind vanishing.

The clarity. The force. The power.

And I sailed on through the day. In another dimension that was not my own. You know what my recommendation was to the brother who wondered how one should have an ability to preach the cross? I said, you know brother, when it comes to that subject.

I have to confess to the Lord that there's only one who really has the right to speak about it. It is he who experienced it. And I say, Lord, now.

By your own life. You speak the thing. By which you alone have a right.

Can you trust the life for your speaking? For your ministering? For the totality of all things that are before you? Has any generation been called to so total a challenge as we? So great a calling as we? The consummation of the age. The enormous hour of uncertainty and all of the forces and winds and storms that are to blow. Beyond our wisdom, beyond our ability.

The frustrations within the church and without. Only on one basis alone. His life.

Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus. And will present us with you. Do you know that? Do you know that you know that you know? You better start accumulating an experience in the knowing of that life.

You don't have to go far to find it. Whether you are a teacher or a student. Whatever you are, wherever you are.

There are the opportunities for that life if you will cease from yourself. However lovely your own personality is. However much it can get you by.

Are you willing to desist from it? Pull out that plug and trust that there is a life in you that shall be made manifest. In that measure of death and humiliation. And possible disappointment that is before you.

If he will not come forth again and again and again. For all things in the 15th verse are for your sakes that the grace which is spreading to more and more people. May cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.

I only want to pick two things out of this verse. But they are precious and essential things. They are two things that characterize the totality of the life of Paul himself.

For your sakes and the glory of God. Paul knew only two motives. For your sakes and the glory of God.

He was ruled by only two concerns. For your sakes and the glory of God. He had only two interests.

For your sakes and the glory of God. Unifying for my sake. That's at the heart of the apostle.

A complete disinterest in himself. Ruled by something that is transcendent and beyond himself. The church and the glory of God.

For your sakes and the glory of God. For your sakes and the glory of God. He knew no other considerations.

And any man who does is disqualified from being apostolic. The moment that you insert for my sake also. My reputation also.

My ministry also. It's null and void. Only two things.

Your sakes and the glory of God. If there is one thing that has continued to pain me over the years. And I'm astounded by it.

And I never tire of speaking to it. It is the conspicuous absence in God's people of a jealous regard for God's glory. I know that we occasionally use the phrase.

But I don't think there is one in a thousand. That really has any substantial sense of what the phrase the glory of God really means. And I don't know that I myself could give you a definition.

I don't know that it can be defined. But this I do know. That if what is at the heart of being a saint.

Is a passionate love for him. That must be another expression for what I'm saying now. A jealousy for God's glory.

Somehow we have learned to live without it. Somehow we have learned to keep it as some distant consideration for some future time. If at all.

It's in the category of that which is abstract. And does not require immediate attention. It's part of those fanciful phrases that are to be found in the scriptures.

That somehow are not immediate or practical. That we're not required to earnestly consider. Well that is not an apostolic attitude.

Do you want to know what's at the heart of apostolicity? It's a burning jealousy and regard for God's glory. In a sense that you know what it is. That you wince for its absence.

That you understand that the depraved world. Mindless and corrupt and crippled. Men leaping over bridges or taking drugs or whatever the bizarre and grotesque things that men have done.

Is all a consequence and a symptom and an expression of one thing. The absence of a necessary presence of God's glory in the earth. That we were fashioned to live in the presence of his glory.

And any kind of life that has lived outside of it is substandard. There's going to be an organic reaction. The guts and the stomachs and the nerves and the brains are going to react violently.

Against the absence of that for which they were created. His glory. I'm only speaking of one aspect of it as it affects the lives of men in the earth.

But if it had no consequence for men whatever. But had only to do with God's honor. Isn't that enough? That his name be hallowed in the earth.

That something of the effulgence of his glory. The radiance and the transcendence of God should shine in the earth. And there's only one agency that God created by which it is to be introduced.

The church. Unto him be glory in the church. I'll tell you when this thing becomes a passion in you.

You hear men talking about good meetings. Your stomach knots. When you hear men measuring their church success by numbers or Sunday school enrollments.

You want to vomit. There's only one apostolic measure of success in the church. If you have not that consideration as a central and burning thing.

You have not yet come to the apostolic place. For your sakes and the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart.

Though our outer man is decaying yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory. Far beyond all comparison.

Why we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal. But the things which are not seen are eternal.

Paul Harman. Well we've heard that many times. Thank you.

Lovely. It has a beautiful ring to it. It almost borders on a kind of biblical poetry.

Has a wonderful flair. Doesn't Paul have a facility to just run off that way? I want to tell you that this is the writing of an insane man. This is sheer madness.

And because you have too lightly dismissed it you've not understood it. Nor do you share it. This momentary light affliction has got to be the statement of a man who has tossed every kind of reasonable criteria and rationality to the winds.

This is the guy who was shipwrecked. In fastings off the weight of all the churches. Beatings with rods and left for dead stones.

Momentary light affliction. Come on guy you've lost your marbles. Or you have some kind of standard and measure of things of which we know nothing.

And I want to say with full assurance and authority. You know nothing. I want to say that that which is apostolic sees by a seeing that others do not see.

Measures by a measure that others do not understand. And that sees pain and suffering in this lifetime as momentary and light. The church must come to this seeing.

For this seeing is apostolic. And no other seeing is. What Paul is, is what the church itself must be.

Momentary and light. Producing for us an eternal weight of glory. Far beyond all comparison.

Oh yeah? How do you know Paul? That you can say far beyond all. How can you speak with such absoluteness and such totality? Have you already glimpsed the eternal weight of glory? Amen. Do you know where Paul is? He is in the eternal realm.

This is not poesy. This is not poetry guys. This is a man who comes to us from another dimension.

Namely, the heavenlies. Where he has glimpsed eternal things. In fact where they are so much more real than the things that are temporal.

That they have now become for him the basis of all of his seeing. And all of his reckonings and all of his calculations. So much so, that that which is experienced in the body and the flesh as suffering.

Has now become both momentary and light. I'm not talking about some fancy stuff. I'm talking about the most practical nuts and bolts thing.

That is going to keep us as an apostolic people. For surely we are on a collision course with suffering. Have I lost the volume here? I want to be louder.

If you'll not see the eternal weight of glory. If you'll not see the eternal. Then what is a light affliction shall be for you large.

What is momentary shall be long and continuous. Everything depends on your actual knowing of that which is eternal. And I want to say that if we had to be rated on a standard from one to ten.

Of our knowledge of the eternal. Do you know where we would come out? Maybe one or two, three. The things that are eternal are not present in our conscious understanding or calculation.

We know that it's there. It's distant. It's something that we will attain after we pass this life.

But we have not brought the eternal dimension into the present now. And for that reason we have grievously erred. And to that degree we are not apostolic.

Are you guys hearing me? I tell you, I'm foaming over this one. Because I feel like I've stumbled over the great omission of the church in modern times. Namely, the acknowledgement and taking into our present consideration.

The whole realm of that which is eternal now. And that's why we have not impressed the world. That's why we have not communicated to the world.

The sense of the urgency of that which lies beyond death. Because we are not presently in that dimension that we can communicate except as that which is technically and theologically true. We need to come to them as men who are presently in that dimension.

Where the things that are eternal are brought into our daily and most mundane and ordinary consideration. Then you can say with Paul, I tremble. Who is sufficient for me? Then when you stand before a people, it's not just the delivery of a message.

It's an issue of life or death. Things are hanging in the balance. The consequences are leaning beyond that which you can define.

Eternity has been brought into the now. And the things that are eternal do not just refer to a dimension of time or timelessness. It's the whole dimension in which God himself dwells.

That's why Paul can speak about the eternal weight of glory. Because that's where the realm of glory is to be glimpsed and to be sensed. In the realm and the things which are... I'll tell you, I'll give you a totally different perspective about everything.

You become an old crock like me and somehow the age factor no longer is significant. When you're going through a strenuous dealing with God or you're suffering something and the Lord's dealing with you, you bear it. You know why? Because you see it not in the span of 50, 60 or 70 years.

You see it in the context of eternity. Something is being shaped for eternity. There's an eternal character being wrought that shall eternally and timelessly abide with God in his presence.

Therefore, what you're bearing now is momentary and light. Until the church sees it, until we live in it, until it becomes actual, until we have schooled ourselves in it, until we have consciously brought this into our understanding and into our being, we'll not yet be an apostolic people. This is intrinsic, inherent, central to that which is apostolic.

That's why you can tell the truth from the false. The false apostles with their good mouthfuls and their correct statements were lacking the sense of the eternal. They're men of their age and men of their time.

You don't get the sense of that which lies beyond time. They have not been in that realm and they cannot communicate it. It's not part of their conscious being.

And I don't think it can be attained in a day. It's something fashioned in such a heart of pull. Far beyond all comparison.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. You know what that's another name for? Suffering. You take your gluttonous and voluptuous eyeballs off the things which are everywhere available for you to be seen.

The things that give you assurance and confidence because they can be seen. The things that give you delight because they can be seen. And turn your eyes on the things that are invisible and eternal.

And you know what you're going to get? You're going to get a wrench. It's going to require an exertion. It's going to take a moral energy to divert your eyes from the voluptuous and sensual things that are ever and always before you.

And to learn to school them and to direct them and to fix them on the things which are invisible and eternal. And make that the basis of all your seeing. That's apostolic.

We're not just discussing a little case of what Paul represents as a representative man. This is the quintessential apostle. And these are intrinsic and central profound elements of apostolicity.

Seeing that which is invisible and eternal. Or else your afflictions will neither be momentary nor light. We need now to begin to re-educate our eyeballs.

We need now to school our seeing. It's going to take a willful and calculated chosen policy of beginning to turn our sight and our attention from the things that are before us to the things that cannot be seen. And make the realm of the invisible and the eternal our realm and the foundation of all our being.

Try that as a married man. Try that in your fellowship. Try that in your circumstance.

We've got to try that. We must try that. And we must become... That it becomes the normative condition for... That when we move into a culture, a society, a generation, a time, a place, we are unaffected and unimpressed.

Paul is seeing. Paul is timeless. He'd be a gem in any generation.

He'd be an experience in any generation. He's a heavenly man. That wasn't just a little fortuitous good phrase, I'm a citizen of heaven.

It was a statement of fact. Because that's where he had his effectual being. And where we must have ours also or we are not apostolic.

To be apostolic is to be heavenly. Nothing more. And not just be the parrots of glib phrases that other men have spoken.

It's going to take a calculated shifting from our whole central earthly orbit to break the power of it. And to bring us into another dimension where the weight of glory is. And once we come to it and hold fast and move and live a being in it, we're another kind of people.

We're not going to be the victims of hanky-panky and of fornication or this or that. We cannot be. These are the symptoms of the fact that we're in the wrong place.

That we have not understood what apostolic means however much we have prayed about it. While we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen

are temporal.

But the things which are not seen. Say that and look at the skyline of New York City and its giant tower. And its complex of bridges and rivers and airports and planes and world banks.

And every kind of physical and symbolic statement of the power and the prowess of men. And not be impressed. Sit in the office of the chairman of the department of philosophy of the University of New York City.

Where the man is Jewish and a rabbi and one of the most famous and recognized experts. In his resplendent three-piece suit, pinstriped. With his diplomas and awards and certificates behind him on the wall.

A picture of the world and power and intellect and fame and prestige. And you sit there in your crumpled condition on the other side of his desk. For the beggary thing you are.

And not be impressed by the things which you see. You see right through him. You see him in his BVDs.

You see him in his helplessness. You see him in his futility. You see him in his weakness.

You see him in his contradiction. And he opens up the conversation in a fetching way. Because he has been involved in these ecumenical.

What he says, Art, with which segment of Christianity are you connected? I said, are you with some evangelical organization? I said, no. What he said, are you with the charismatic movement? I said, no. What he said, you must be then with Jews for Jesus.

I said, no. What he said then, with what are you connected? A bit of impatience. I said, well, if you can understand this.

I arch over all of these contemporary phenomena. And I go all the way back to the apostles and the prophets. And I'll tell you what.

Before that conversation was over that day. He knew it. He knew it.

He had sat with many so-called Christian dignitaries and ministers. With turn around collars and theological degrees. But he had never sat with a man whose foundation and being and substance.

And heart and interest and reality. Go all the way back to the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And leaps over and transcends these contemporary phenomena.

But he knew it. Because God had the last word. And God pinned him to the wall.

And God stripped him of his three-piece suit. And God showed him his nakedness and his vanity. Because he heard from another dimension.

He heard from something that is eternal. Beyond the little controversies of Jews versus Christians. He heard something awesome.

Not just the words, the content. But the aura, the manner, the weight. Echoed.

It came from a timeless place. He was confronted by the God of eternity. I think of that line in Hamlet.

Shakespeare's play. When Hamlet comes back from his university education. And in his melancholy trying to ponder how his mother could lie between his incestuous sheets.

He goes out for a walk and he finds the grave digger. Digging the grave for his father. And up comes a skull.

And it was the skull of what was once the Yorick. With inspired lines. He holds the weight of that skull.

And he says, Yorick, where be your jibes and your gambles now? To translate that or paraphrase that in modern language. Where's your wife's allergy stuff now? Where's your cute little pranks now? You skull. You piece of dust.

You didn't recognize it while you leaped and gambled and caused people to ripple with laughter. You had no consideration whatsoever for the things that were eternal. You thought that that moment of time and your satisfaction and gratification of the temple elements were life.

Where are your jibes and gambles now? Hot shot. As it echoes in eternity to haunt you. There's a world that needs to be convinced of eternity.

By a people who are eminently living in that dimension now. And speak to them out of that dimension now. A people who are freed from the temporal now.

We're not the slaves of the things that are immediate and momentary now. Because they have glimpsed and are having their effectual life in a place where there's an eternal wake of glory now. That's epistolic.

Try and produce that in some kind of six month school for apostles. For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down. I'm completely skipping the chapter five designation.

We have a building from God, a house not made with hands. Eternal in the heavens. We know.

There's Paul goes again. We know. Do you know it? For indeed in this house we've grown.

That's what knowing means. You've grown. Knowing isn't something that is filed in your cerebrum as a piece of information.

Apostolic knowing is something that is registered in your guts by which you long and groan because you know. For indeed in this house we've grown longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven. For how many of us is that true? That we feel the weight of our mortality.

That our spirit yearns to be freed of this box and to come into what shall be the ultimate thing given of God by which we shall be eternally clothed. And right now so long as we must endure it, we endure it with groans and not with hair blowers and with pampering and perfuming and fashions and fads. It's just a necessary contrivance and a convenience that houses our spirit.

But we've grown so long as we're boxed in, waiting to be clothed upon with that which is eternal. Listen, this is either a madman raving or this is truest truth. This is ultimate sanity.

And we are the ones that are mad and sick if it's marred and narrow. Indeed while we are in this tent we've grown being burdened because we do not want to be unclothed. But to be clothed in order that what is

mortal may be swallowed up by.

Sixth verse, therefore being always of good courage and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. Are you at home in the body? While you're at home in the body you're absent from the Lord. There's almost a spiritual law here.

This doesn't just pertain to the final moment in which we're going to be translated into something else. But even now to the degree that we're home in the body we're absent from the Lord. To the degree that we've grown in the body we're present with him.

How many of us feel that the earthly, the temple, the natural thing, a confinement. The spirit desiring that full communion with the God who gave it. A groaning.

And I'm not disparaging the body. Paul does not either. But there's something that's expressed here as a longing and as a groan which is at the heart of that which is apostolic.

And can only be expressed by someone who has crossed that threshold and is in the eternal realm and who knows it. I think we're far too much at home in the body. As a people, as Christians, we're far too much at home in the body.

Too much loving the body. Too much pampering the body. Too much body conscious both in appearance, how we clothe it, how we feed it, how it looks.

And not realizing to what degree that kind of body consciousness robs us from a consciousness of God in his presence. The whole world is calculated to make us so. And so long as we're in the realm that is temple and earthly we shall be its victims.

So long as we see the things that are seen and do not fix our eyes on the things that are invisible and eternal, we shall be jerked by strings by the things that pertain to fashion and to bed. I remember how I jerked when I heard a saint say that she prayed that God would give her the privilege of dressing her child, clothing I think was the word. Not dressing, it's something like the English, they don't talk about driving, they talk about motoring.

This was not having to do so much with clothing a child from nakedness but dressing her. That is to say in that which is appropriate, fashionable, impressive, colorful, tasteful. That's a body consciousness for which no one would ever fault us.

But I think robs us of a consciousness of him in a realm that's eternal. To be absent from the body even in our attention and our consciousness to that degree is to be present with the world. It's an apostolic principle against which the world is fighting like a mad dog to keep you.

For we walk by faith not by sight. I know we've made this a little patchy principle but it's so much more than that. This faith that Paul is talking about by which we walk is not just the subscribing to certain scriptural principles.

It's a whole mode of being. It's a Weltanschauung, it's a world view, it's a perspective. It's an attitude of mind and body and soul and spirit.

It's a whole demeanor and posture that is altogether contrary and different from the world in every point and particular and for which you will by the world be faulted and found ridiculous and be criticized and

reproached and worse. To take this posture upon yourself as a mode of life is to invite the censure, the disrespect, the rebuke of the world for we walk by faith. It's a whole mode of being and not just a few little technical principles that we think we understand.

It's an apostolic mode of being and that's all I can do is breathe that out. We are of good courage I say and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. Do you prefer it? Do you make it a choice? That's an apostolic distinctive.

You prefer to be absent from the body. Therefore also we have as our ambition whether at home or absent to be pleasing to him. I don't know about you but I've got to pause just to wipe the dribble off my chin.

Here comes my hyperbole. To be pleasing to him. You want to know what an apostle is? A man who is ruled by one passion.

To be pleasing to him. The just shall live by faith. But what is that faith? Without faith it's impossible to please God.

Do you guys know and has it been pushed into your consciousness that the whole purpose of faith is to please God? That I might be found pleasing to him? He has it as his ambition to be pleasing to him. Can you imagine a church that lives by that one awesome principle? To please him. How many of us make our decisions and contemplate our futures and establish our goings and our comings and our choices are not on that basis at all but rather to please us.

Have we thought to ask whether it pleases him? Whether at home or abroad, present or absent. I'm ruled by one ambition. To please him.

When God will have a church so will heaven have a son. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one might be recompensed for his deeds in the body according to what he has done whether good or bad. Must all appear.

No ifs, no ands, no buts. Paul is so sure of the judgment of God. It is so much a part of his present and continuing consciousness that I invite you to go through the epistles of Paul and you'll not find an occasion in which there's not a reference to the day of the Lord, to the judgment of the Lord, to the day of eternity, to the day of his wrath.

The apostolic church lived in an explicit consciousness of the day of God's judgment which happens to be absent from ours and for which reason we have been the victims of many. This is an apostolic element that needs to be restored to God's people as I mentioned the other night. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body according to what he has done whether good or bad.

Do you live in the consciousness of that? When you undertake something, when you contemplate the doing of something or a choice, is there somehow a consciousness that there will be a day in which you'll stand before the Lord of all glory to be judged for that deed that you performed in your body. Would to God someone had pressed this upon my consciousness when I first came to the faith. Would to God it should come adequately into my consciousness now.

Would to God it should be more than just a little biblical category which happens to be true. Because the very next verse says, Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord, knowing the terror of God, we persuade men. I'll tell you what, if you don't know this, I don't give a rap.

No matter how well informed you are on principles of evangelism, it's going to be a dull flood. It's going to be a plastic operation. It's going to be a kind of sugar candy thing.

What is lacking in our evangelism in my opinion is this. Knowing the terror of God, we persuade men. I want to say that that one who persuades men knowing this is going to be persuasive indeed.

He may not even so much as speak about the terror of God, or necessarily even about the judgment of God, but whatever he does speak will be charged with the knowledge of that fear. Knowing this. This is apostolic knowing.

The terror of the Lord. The fear of God. The day of his judgment.

It has all to do with seeing the things that are invisible and eternal in another dimension which all of these categories are alive and palpitating and real because that's where God is. And not somehow technical, biblical, plastic. So, I've got this stuff.

Maybe the 13th verse. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God. If we are of sound mind, it is for you.

There he goes again. His only two considerations. For God for you.

For the glory of God for your sake. A man ruled by only two things. Really the same thing.

His body. The body of Christ. And not a little technical category with which we play another kind of gamesmanship of submission and authority or some kind of system that we are going to devise because we cleverly found appropriate principles in the scripture.

It's holy, holy, holy. It's the body of Christ. Unto him be glory in the church.

For your sake, for his glory is all one. And it ruled all. If we are beside ourselves, if I'm fanatical, if I foam at the mouth, if I'm carried away, if I'm living in a perspective that renders me mad before secular men, so be it.

But I need to be in that kind of maddening relationship with God that I might be utterly sane with you. Heavenly fanaticism toward God makes for earthly impeccability toward men. I'll tell you already, saints are being incarcerated in Russia and put into mental institutions.

Children are being taken from believing families because the state has ruled that they have abandoned their senses and have abandoned rationality and therefore are not fit to be parents for their children and are brought to mental institutions because they believe in that which is eternal. They believe in that which is invisible and not seen. Not just believing in the category of, well, this is the faith which I must ascribe, because it's true, but the believing in the awesome way that makes you utterly the fool and an offense to men.

I wonder how long it will be as we have become increasingly apostolic before we might have to pay such a price here. So far our faith is quite tame, quite modest, quite sane, quite acceptable, quite respectable in the world's sight. It's a Sunday category.

It's a nice little addendum to the secular life. If you begin to live spiritually and supernaturally and apostolically and take these burning categories into yourself and make them the foundation of your life, your being, your seeing, your calculations, your judgments, your decisions, your recklessness, your spending, your extravagance, you'll find yourself a candidate for what men call insanity. I want to say that what the world calls insanity is uttermost sanity.

It is apostolicity. It's that which is glorious. It's that to which we are called.

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