

COMMUNITY: A Spirit of Understanding is Needed

Moving towards becoming a community of apostolic people requires more than the assent to the reinstatement of apostles in the ekklesia. It requires a heartfelt desire of everyone to be:

- family
- community
- in unity

This process turning into an apostolic people requires a spiritual boost for it to become a reality. That impetus comes when the above three points are in agreement in the group so that a spirit of understanding can be released to bring it about. John Alley explains:

“God is looking throughout the earth for a people upon whom He can pour out His Spirit in a particular way and for a particular purpose. He seeks a people who will allow Him to bring them into unity, enabling Him to give them a gift, the spirit of understanding . Then with one heart and one mind they will arise to do the work of God.

The size of the group is not important. It could be 200 people, or 50, but with deep unity and profound understanding given by the Spirit, there is no limit to what God can do through them. I sensed that God is looking now for such a people, and in the coming days there may be many such groups. But the key is understanding, supernaturally given as an anointing by the Lord to every person in the community, causing them to be of one heart and mind.

At first this idea seemed too idealistic, even though it was strongly impressed upon me. To my own mind it appeared highly improbable that groups of believers could have a unity so deeply pervasive that they would be of one heart and one mind. In the church all we have ever known is independence.”¹

Not only will there be a move towards unity, there will also be a blessing from it which results in the group growing in knowledge. John Alley explains:

“In many local churches there are few who have the spirit of understanding as an anointing which reveals the will of God for them as people.

Consider what happens in churches everywhere. Generally, the pastor will have understanding of the will of God in some measure, because it is part of the call and anointing to preach the word of God to God's people. Therefore, he will preach the need for everyone's prayer life to be effective. He will exhort and encourage every believer to be devoted to prayer, and walk with Christ daily. But usually the following week the people will be no more prayerful than they were the week before.

Another Sunday, he will preach holiness, exhorting the believers to live holy lives for Christ. But during the following week, very few will give any more thought to holiness than they did the week before.

The next Sunday, he will teach the need to win souls, for he who wins souls is wise,² and he will urge devotion to prayer for the lost, as well as boldness in witnessing. But during the following week, there will rarely be more witnessing or prayer for the lost in the lives of the believers.

The truth is, there are many congregations where lives are not moved greatly by the preaching of the word of God. There is a reason for this. Because the church lacks unity, the spirit of understanding is thinly distributed. It is upon the unity of the believers that the command to bless is given, and that commanded blessing is life.³

I saw that God is looking for a people upon whom He can place the spirit of understanding, corporately and individually. Then each will have the same passion for the will of God to be done as the preacher, and together, with one heart and one mind, they will arise and do the will of God.

1 – John Kingsley Alley (2002) “The Apostolic Revelation: The Reformation of the Church” Peace Publishing p:231-232 [free PDF e-book]

2 – Proverbs 11:30

3 – Psalm 133:3

*Understanding is a major key to spiritual advancement.”*⁴

Forgetfulness is a symptom of demonic interference. Here's what John Eldredge wrote about it:

“Right above my bed I think I shall hang a sign that says, GOD EXISTS. You see, I wake most mornings an unbeliever. It seems that during the night, I slip into forgetfulness, and by the time the new day comes, I am lost. The deep and precious truths that God has brought to me over the years and even just yesterday seem a thousand miles away. It doesn't happen every morning, but enough to make it an ongoing reality. And I know I am not alone in this...

Virtually every person I've ever counseled follows a similar pattern. Over the course of our time together, some wonderful things begin to happen. Not necessarily at first, and never on command, but God shows up. The lights turn on for these people; their heart is lifted; grateful tears flow. Suddenly, faith, hope, and love seem the only way to live. And I nearly dread the next session. When they return the following week, it is as though it never happened. The marvelous day is a distant memory. Life is hard, God is distant, and love is foolish. All is forgotten; all is sick-heart vanity. I want to grab them and shake them into sense, shouting, “Don't you remember? Why did you let it slip away?” Wisdom has kept me restrained so far.

*Forgetting is no small problem. Of all the enemies our hearts must face, this may be the worst because it is insidious. Forgetfulness does not come against us like an enemy in full battle formation, banners waving. Nor does it come temptingly, seductively, the lady in red. It works slowly, commonly, unnoticed.”*⁵

Take note of what these men have seen and understood. We need the spirit of understanding and it won't come while we operate in independence.

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4 – John Kingsley Alley (2002) “The Apostolic Revelation: The Reformation of the Church” Peace Publishing p:232-233 [free PDF e-book]

5 – John Eldredge (2000) “Desire: The Journey we must Take to Find the Life God Offers” Thomas Nelson [kindle] p:108-109