

Pastors, Apostles, Prophets: Is Our Obsession With Titles Draining Our Anointing?

Over the years, I have heard many people tell of their great calling to be an apostle, prophet or to save gazillions through their ministry. Most of these never pan out. Those who are called to such things don't speak about them or have them emblazoned on their business cards.

Having said that, I saw something recently in 1 Samuel that blew me away. There is the *calling*, and then there is the *commissioning*. David was called when he was a boy, but he didn't become king until much later. Same with King Saul.

Young Saul

How old do you think Saul was when he went looking for his father's donkeys? This is important. If you read the story in 1 Samuel 9, the impression you get is that he was a young man, not married—maybe 20 years old or even younger. But when he is crowned king, he is 30.

After unsuccessfully searching for his donkeys, his servant told him of Samuel the prophet. Saul doesn't even know who Samuel is, and he is the leader of Israel. When Saul approaches him, he doesn't realize that he is talking to Samuel.

Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, "Tell me, please, where is the seer's house?"

Samuel answered Saul, and said, "I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you will eat with me today. And tomorrow I will let you go, and will tell you *then* all that is in your heart (1 Sam. 9:18-19).

He tells him he is going to be king, and Saul is stunned. When Samuel calls all Israel to proclaim Saul as king, what does he do? He hides!

And the Lord answered, "He has hidden himself among the equipment" (1 Sam. 10:22).

This is not a man, but a boy. He is proclaimed king, but he doesn't go and build a palace. What does he do? He goes home. He has no idea what to do as the new teen king. And many did not receive him as king:

Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen. He had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen whom he stationed in the cities for chariots and with the king at Jerusalem. The king made silver to be in Jerusalem as plentiful as stones, and he made cedars to be as plentiful as sycamore trees in the valley (1 Kings 10:26-27).

Saul Receives a Warrior's Anointing

In the next chapter, we find Saul working in his fields. Most people think this was the next day. I think it was years later, because now he is 30 (1 Sam 13:1). Some Israelites were about to be conquered by Nahash, the Ammonite. The Israelites from Jabesh Gilead sent word to the rest of Israel, hoping that someone would help them.

When the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul and reported these terms to the people, they all wept aloud. Just then Saul was returning from the fields, behind his oxen, and he asked, "What is wrong with everyone? Why are they weeping?" Then they repeated to him what the men of Jabesh had said. The Scripture then says, "The Spirit of God came strongly upon Saul when he heard these words, and he became very angry" (1 Sam. 11:6).

Saul received the calling to be king some years ago, but now the anointing to be Israel's leader comes upon him. He takes

charge and leads the rescue, routing the enemy completely. Now, suddenly, everyone in Israel is willing to follow Saul as king.

So it appears that after he was declared king, he just continued to live as a farmer. But suddenly the Spirit of God comes on him and he leads, as a leader should. When the people saw the “fruit of his ministry” they, with one voice, received him as king.

Too many in ministry are concerned with titles. Yeshua is concerned with fruit. Yeshua taught us not to focus on titles.

[Religious leaders love] greetings in the marketplaces, and being called ‘Rabbi’ by men.

“But do not be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have one Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brothers. And call no man on earth your father, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. Nor be called teachers, for you have one Teacher, the Christ (Matt. 23:7-10).

Yeshua often spoke hyperbolically—like when he said to hate your family or gouge out your eye. He exaggerated to make a point. Here, I don’t think He is saying titles are evil, but if you get an ego or pride boost out of your title, then you are not in a healthy place.

“Are You a Prophet?”

Many years ago in Bible college, I asked the great teacher David Pawson, after he preached a message that left me undone, “Are you a prophet?” He responded, “That is not for me to say, but for you.” In other words, let your fruit speak for itself. I submit to Asher Intrater as my apostolic leader, but he doesn’t run around proclaiming to everyone that he is an apostle. It is clear from the fruit—he has birthed several successful ministries, raised up leaders to take over those

ministries, leads a family of ministries and congregations in Tikkun Global, has an amazing prophetic teaching gift—that is an apostle. But no one calls him Apostle Asher, and he would correct him or her if they did.

Your fruit will prove your calling—not your business card, website or Facebook page. The gift of God will open every door. It is not the calling that makes the man, but rather walking it out and bearing fruit. {eoa}

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