

Why You Need an Apostolic Father to Empower You to Reach the Nations

For generations, the focus within the four walls of the church has been on one person's vision. That person was the one in the pulpit.

Their vision was exalted above everyone else's vision. The congregation existed to serve the vision of the head.

I have heard many, many times during my years when leading a church, "You can only have one vision. If you have two visions you have division or if there are two heads or two visions, then you have a monster." These are words, which by the way, I also used, back in the day. Some leaders speak them to control the congregation into serving their vision only.

Many within the church have been given a vision by the Lord. The vision that they have is one part of a divine plan to see Christ's kingdom on display in the Earth. What if everyone in the church lived their God-given dream? What would happen in your city if each believer was accomplishing the vision the Lord gave them?

I recently heard apostle Barbara Yoder say, "The local church model gathers the community for a Sunday morning service. We have gauged success by how many we can gather. However, the Apostolic Center model sends the believer into the community."

What a vast difference. The Apostolic Center model *empowers* the believer and sends them out to do the work of the ministry.

Prophetic Word

In 1999, I prophesied to two ladies who lived in the Abaco Bahamas. The prophetic word was they were to go into their city and heal the sick, cast out devils and save the lost. This was a Matthew 10 commission.

They received this word from the Lord and launched into their community. Many were being healed, saved and touched by the Lord. After great success for a couple of weeks, their pastor called me. "What have you done?" He asked. "You prophesied to these women and they're going out into the town and praying for people."

I said, "Yes, That's so awesome!" (That didn't help.) He said, "No, they were not authorized by me to do that." I responded, "You're kidding me." "No," he replied. "They need my permission to go out and do this kind of ministry."

I said, "I would think you would be happy that they are going into the community and doing this. They are doing what Jesus called them to do." Needless to say he and I never did see eye to eye on this. However, this was the dream the Lord put in their heart, but now the dream was being controlled and snuffed out by the insecurity of a church leader. By the way, these two ladies were solid believers with a strong foundation.

In this story, the mentality of the pastor was a slave-owner's mentality—his thinking was not kingdom of God, but control. Not all pastors think this way. Many pastor today are empowering the saints to do the work of ministry.

All Believers

Jesus gave the commission for the work of the ministry to *all* believers, not a select few. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I commanded you ..." (Matt. 28:19-20). This is written to all believers. "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel

to every creature ... These signs will accompany those who believe ... " (Mark 16:15, 17). Ephesians 4:11-12 tells us, "He gave some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of service, and for the building up of the body of Christ."

For This Purpose

This is what Jesus said to Saul/Paul during His conversion on his journey to Damascus: "But rise and stand on your feet. For I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and a witness both of what you have seen and of what I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from your people and from the Gentiles to whom I now send you, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me" (Acts 26:16-18). Do not delay—decide today to step into your purpose.

What If?

What if the one in the pulpit, the leader, was to train and empower the vision of each person in the congregation? What would happen if there was an empowerment to do the works of Jesus? If the church leader empowers the congregation then the ekklesia will begin doing the work of the ministry as defined in Ephesians 4:12.

When the commission of a dream occurs (Matthew 10), tremendous authority moves into the life of the believer to achieve Christ's purpose in the Earth. If we empower everyone in the body of Christ, our cities, states and nation will be impacted. We will see cities transformed, lives saved and many works of Christ done.

It's Time to Dream Again

For many believers, their dream of ministry died in the tomb

of hope deferred, or was trampled by insecure leaders and other believers who did not encourage them to pursue their destiny, or was crushed by the trials of this life. However, your story is not over. God wants you to get into His story of redemption that will see the prodigal come home and a lost world saved.

Dutch Sheets conveys a message of dreaming again in his book, *Tell Your Heart to Beat Again*, that should encourage you to live again. "During an open-heart surgery that my brother, Tim, was allowed to witness, the patient's heartbeat had been stopped. However, when it came time to restart it, despite repeated attempts, the medical staff was unable to get the heart to beat again. Finally, although the patient was obviously unconscious, the surgeon leaned over and said into the patient's ear, "We need your help. We cannot get your heart going. Tell your heart to start beating. Immediately, as incredible as it sounds, the patient's heart began to beat again."

It's time for your heart to beat again for the work of ministry the Lord has called you to. Are you ready? Are you ready to take the risk required to see a God-given dream resurrected?

God believes in you. He put His dream within you. He is chasing you today to fulfill His destiny in your life. Begin to declare today: He is my hope, He is my life and He is my source. Tell your heart to beat again.

Apostolic Fathers

Malachi prophesied of a day of empowerment. *"He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse"* (Mal. 4:6).

The whole purpose of spiritual fathers is to see their son and daughter excel even beyond themselves. They prophesy, push,

correct, call forth, affirm, empower and declare a son's and daughter's God-given destiny. True sons and daughters are not offended by the correction of their fathers; they actually embrace it.

Real fathers do not cover or control. They come along side, and align themselves with their children and their children align with their fathers. Covering is not a biblical term, but that's a message for another day.

By the way—the term *father* in this case is gender neutral. This coming along side applies to both men and women. *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus”* (Gal. 3:28).

In my early years of ministry, I longed for a spiritual father to come along side to guide, correct and affirm what God had called me to. I was a son without a father. I asked several leaders to come alongside me but this was a foreign paradigm to them.

The apostolic fathers of today are empowering the believer to do the work of the ministry. They train, empower, tell you what you are doing right and tell you how it went wrong. They do not do the ministry for you nor give you a platform. *“A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men”* (Prov. 18:16).

This empowerment will launch you into your destiny and help fulfill His life in you.

As you are connecting with many leaders in the body of Christ, be sure you connect with apostolic fathers. They will push you into your God-given dream and call forth your destiny. My prayer for you today is that if you are not aligned with an apostolic father, God would send that alignment to you. {eo}

Ken Malone is being used by God to mobilize the body of

Christ throughout Florida and the nation. After being a pastor for 24 years, Ken has recently stepped down from a pastoral position. This has allowed God to launch Ken into his apostolic role within Florida and the nation. He is an ordained minister and serves as the founder of Forerunner Ministries and serves on the board of Dutch Sheets Ministries. Ken also serves as one of the leaders of Network Ekklesia International, an Apostolic Network founded by Dutch Sheets. Ken walks in a governmental apostolic mantle that releases the body of Christ into their destiny. He also ministers with a prophetic, seer anointing which enables him to identify activate and release redemptive gifts in individuals, churches and cities.

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