



Apostolic Notes

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HOW TRADITIONAL ARE WE? (part 2)

In our last *Apostolic Notes* (Vol 1, No 7), we began a list of some traditions of men that have become prevalent in modern Christianity. These traditions deprive the commandments of God of their power (Mark 7:13). By presenting various traditions, we have an opportunity to determine what might be hindering us from walking in apostolic authority. With this in mind, let's revisit our list and continue to look at some additional issues.

Last *Apostolic Notes* we listed the following characteristic of a traditional church;

- Preaches a "bless me" gospel
- Has its predominant goal for each individual, salvation or heaven, instead of the image of Jesus.

Now let's continue examining the characteristics of a traditional church.

A traditional church is one that...

...continues a division between a professional clergy and laity resulting in a one man show

This attitude fosters a control issue, focusing power in the hands of a select few and does not promote a priesthood of believers.

...does not actively seek an empowerment of the believers

Due to the division of the clergy and laity, there is minimal effort placed on developing the spiritual giftings of the believer. The average believer is seen as a labor force for the programs of the church. Little is expected from them, so little is what they give.

...has most of its ministries inward focused

Due to the "bless me" gospel, most of the resources must be allocated to programs that make the individual feel good about themselves. This focus does not promote a transformation of the believer. There is a constant need to change the program to deliver the necessary stimulus to the people.

...is built upon man's ideas, structure and programs

Therefore, the result is only what man/flesh can produce. If a program is successful in attracting a crowd, it's duplication is attempted by others hoping for the same results, producing the latest "fad" of church growth. Unfortunately, the success is not always duplicated, and frustration results.

The apostolic church is one that...

...recognizes that we are all one body, with different giftings

The purpose of the ascension gift ministries is to equip or fully perfect the saints for the work of service (Ephesians 4:11 NASU). NOT to do all the work of service themselves.

...empowers each believer in their spiritual gifting

The saints are to be equipped for the work of service or ministry. Each member is gifted and placed in the body as God chooses (1 Corinthians 12). The body should function effectively as each member is working in their gifting.

...focus on outward ministries

Our focus should not be on self, but on others. Jesus commanded His church to go and make disciples – followers. (Matthew 28:19 AMP, Darby, NKJV). The focus of the church should be outside the four walls of the building.

...is built based on the spiritual gifting in the body

The church should be structured around the giftings that the Lord has placed in the body. This would be the outcome of the ascension gifts (governing gifts) identifying, instructing, empowering and supporting the individual member's gifts.

These last two *Apostolic Notes* have been presented to challenge our paradigm of church, not to condemn. As a pastor, I am addressing these issues, seeking the Lord's direction as to how to lead this local assembly in a paradigm shift. The Lord will do this, because the church is His chosen vessel today. As we seek to align ourselves with the way He wants to build the church, we will find a flow of apostolic authority to accomplish His purpose.

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