



Apostolic Notes

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Church Is Like A Sandwich



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Suppose it is lunchtime and you are starving: you enter your favorite sandwich shop and place your order for that super deluxe dagwood special. As your sandwich arrives, you immediately realize something is wrong: the first clue – you are looking down at a pile of lettuce, no apparent bread. Upon closer examination you notice the whole sandwich is structured wrong, something like this: relish on the bottom, butter, a slice of bread, cheese, another slice of bread, the meat, more butter then the lettuce.

Your attempts at returning the sandwich meet with a dumfounded look, the server cannot understand. All the ingredients of the sandwich are there, why would you want to return it? Well the answer is obvious, the structure is not right, how can you even pick it up to eat it?

Much of North American christianity is like this messed up sandwich: we may have the right ingredients, but the structure is incorrect. Looking at the churches of today, we find any number of ministry offices in multiple configurations; bishops, elders, deacons, apostles, prophets, teachers, ministers, evangelists, overseers, missionaries, etc - all arranged based on historical or organizational traditions. Unfortunately, we find that the result is a church body revealing limited dominion or authority of Jesus.

In 1 Cor 12:28, Paul gives us a skeletal structure for the church: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of" I believe in understanding the basics of this text, we can come to a more biblical model that will empower the church.

The following is a very basic breakdown* of this verse and it's significant components:

First notice – "God set" – This structure is His idea. It is His prerogative to place members (ministry gifts) within the body.

Second – the words "first," "secondarily," and "thirdly" mean a place of rank, influence or order. So – God has chosen to set an order in the church: first apostle, second prophet, thirdly teacher.

Third – the words "after that" mean thereafter or then, indicating something was to come or happen after the preceding structure.

*DISCLAIMER: The views expressed in this article is the individual author's opinion's and beliefs and do not necessarily represent Apostolic Missions or any other minister, local church, or any organization. They are intended for information and food for further thought.

Fourth – "miracles" were expected to follow the order. The word here is *dunamis* which in most other places is translated power; it means inherent power, strength or ability. **So the expected consequence of correct structure is to have the inherent power of Jesus IN the body (church).**

Fifth – "then gifts of" is the same word as "after that," meaning there is a natural consequence to having the inherent power; that is "then gifts of..." or the demonstration/manifestation of the ministry gifts.

When the church structure is in order: first apostle, second prophets, thirdly teachers, we can expect the inherent power of Jesus to be present. Since He is now within His correctly structured body, empowering it, we can expect the natural consequence to be the demonstration of ministry gifts. This manifestation then results in the church being the authentic representational image of Jesus.

Food For Thought - Is the lack of miraculous demonstration in our churches because we do not have a correct biblical model?

till next time
Martin

*Obviously space prohibits the full presentation of study here. Much of this material is summarized from our series on re-imaging church (apostolic structure).

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