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From the desk of Abner Suarez

The Spirit of Reformation- V Qualities of Apostolic Leadership

(This is the second article in a series of articles concerning the current apostolic reformation)

As the Spirit of reformation is released into the earth, there is a distinct theology that has become part of the core theology of what many refer to as the Apostolic Reformation. Many in the body of Christ who would identify themselves as being a part of the Apostolic Reformation have varying opinions on issues that often divide sincere believers (end times, predestination, baptism, (etc.)). However, a core belief among those who identify with the Apostolic Reformation is the belief that: Apostles exist today and have a prominent role to play in fulfilling God’s purposes on the earth. The purpose of this article is not to argue for the existence of Apostles or even offer a study on the office of the Apostle (I believe that should be left to an entire book or series of books- of which there is much written about in popular books), but rather to discuss five qualities of Apostolic leadership. It is my contention that these qualities should be found in Apostolic leadership. While I concede that a great many in the body of Christ believe that Apostles and Apostolic Government are no longer valid methods of Church leadership, I do believe that in coming days and years ahead the office will gain greater acceptance and honor in the body of Christ, much as the gifts of the Holy Spirit have gained wider acceptance in the body of Christ since the Azusa Street Revival.

Defining the office of an Apostle- It is certainly important for leaders and the body of Christ to recognize the office of the Apostle, but what is even more important is the actual function of the office. Therefore, I have defined the office more in terms of function, rather than a standard definition. These qualities are not meant to be exhaustive but rather qualitative. I see these qualities as follows:

1. One who carries governmental Kingdom authority to breakthrough and establishes the Kingdom of God
2. One who operates in signs, wonders, and miracles
3. One who has prophetic grace to receive heaven's blueprint for Kingdom breakthrough
4. One who has a deep revelation of the Father's heart
5. One who thinks multi-generationally
6. One who has God given authority to help lead in the body of Christ in taking nations

Apostles have governmental authority- The Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians chapter two verse twenty, that we as the people of God "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone." The ministry gifts of the Apostle and the Prophet are given to the Church by Jesus himself. The Holy Spirit is shaking the foundation of the Church to form a new wineskin. This new wineskin will be led by Apostles and Prophets. As God reforms the foundation of the Church, it is imperative that Apostles and Prophets take the lead. In ancient building practices the chief cornerstone was carefully placed.

It was carefully placed because the entire building was lined up with it. The Holy Spirit is raising up a new breed of leadership who are lined up the chief cornerstone- Jesus Christ. Many of us realize that while God is certainly doing a new thing from our perspective, He in fact is just returning us to His original standard. The original standard has always been the ultimate-- standard the word- Jesus Christ. As Apostles and Prophets follow the standard that Jesus has set, they lead the way in the current Apostolic Reformation. Not because they are more gifted or loved by the Father but rather because this is God's ordained Kingdom order.

Apostles have a Father's Heart- Apostles, as foundational gifts to the Church, have a God given grace to build a foundation for the coming generation. They are and should be fathers in the faith. Therefore, a necessary ingredient for one who walks in the office of an Apostle is one who has a revelation of the Fathers' heart. Apostolic fathers will replace current denominational systems to help form a Kingdom wineskin that is based upon a family structure. It's imperative that Apostles be secure in who they are in Jesus Christ, because much of the new wineskin that God is revealing to the Church is based upon the revelation that: Apostles have tremendous God given authority to bless and release those who come under their governmental anointing. The Apostle Paul functioned as an apostolic father to the Church in Corinth that he helped to birth- "...For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the glad tidings (the gospel). So I urge and implore you, be imitators of me. (I Corinthians 4:15-16).

Apostles have a Kingdom Vision- In this outpouring of the Holy Spirit God is challenging the people of God to not just talk about taking cities, but to practically implement a strategy for releasing the knowledge of God in every sector of society. Apostles are the architect in God's plan to disciple nations (Matthew 28). In the book of Acts it was the Apostles who laid the

foundation for the people of God to fill the city of Jerusalem with the doctrine of Christ (Acts 5:28). Apostles, by the virtue of the grace that is upon their lives, help to lead the way in releasing the blue-print to help the people of God fill cities with a knowledge of Jesus Christ. It is important to note, that Apostles are simply the architects in God's plan. Architects by themselves, cannot and do not have the ability to construct a building even if they understand the building process completely. Apostles by themselves, cannot fulfill the task God has given us in this hour.

Apostles value other ministry gifts- The term "Apostolic Reformation" implies that there is a change taking place in the body of Christ with Apostles leading the way. One of the changes that is readily apparent, is that the body of Christ is transitioning from traditional denominational structures to an Apostolic form of government. Many in the body of Christ are desiring, or recognizing their need for Apostolic government. It is imperative that Apostles value the other ministry offices, and walk in complete humility as Jesus Christ did. It is the five-fold ministry that will corporately lead the way for heaven to come to earth and help to make the transitions necessary in this reformation. It was the Apostle Paul who wrote in Ephesians four, verse eleven, "And His gifts were [varied; He Himself appointed and gave men to us] some to be apostles (special messengers), some prophets (inspired preachers and expounders), some evangelists (preachers of the Gospel, traveling missionaries), some pastors (shepherds of His flock) and teachers.

Apostles operate in signs wonders and miracles- Sincere believers can come to different conclusions on qualifications for one who walks in an Apostolic office. However, there is one qualification that in my opinion, there can be no debate. True Apostles have a genuine gift of

miracles and an anointing for signs, wonders, and miracles. Apostles have a grace to bring a Kingdom breakthrough in cities, regions, and nations. One of the ways in which this is most often accomplished is through the release of signs, wonders and miracles. This is certainly does not exclude this gift from the lives of other ministers or believers, but it is imperative for Apostles function to in this gift. A cursory reading of the book of Acts shows us that it was the release of signs and wonders through the hands of the Apostles that helped to quickly expand the early Church into a level of Church growth that has never been repeated in Church history. Jesus, once again our standard, released the original twelve disciples with great authority and implicit instructions to demonstrate the Kingdom with great power “**1**And JESUS summoned to Him His twelve disciples and gave them power and authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out, and to cure all kinds of disease and all kinds of weakness and infirmity. **8**Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons. Freely (without pay) you have received, freely (without charge) give” (Matthew 10:1,8).