

## APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION

The apostolic ministry is a ministry of exhortation. Exhort means to encourage.

Apostles and apostolic leaders are able to bring great encouragement to believers and to churches.

*Apostolos* - Greek word meaning a sent one; an ambassador representing the sending authority, i.e. those who are authorised as Christ's ambassadors, to be witnesses to His resurrection, who are appointed by Christ, anointed by the Holy Spirit to fulfil the Great Commission i.e. to make Christ known and to make disciples. Apostles plant, pioneer, establish, build, nurture, father, are foundation stones.

### THE PURPOSE OF APOSTOLIC ENCOURAGEMENT:

- To strengthen
- To motivate
- To be a lifestyle model to emulate - the church needs apostolic exhortation!

### WHO NEEDS APOSTOLIC ENCOURAGEMENT

- Everyone ... but especially ...
- New churches
- New believers
- Believers/churches who are suffering and being persecuted for their faith

### HOW DO APOSTLES/APOSTOLIC LEADERS ENCOURAGE THE CHURCH?

Apostles encourage the church in a number of ways including:

- Prayer (1 Tim 2:1-6) By exhorting the church to pray, but also by praying
- Holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:1-7)
- Unity (1 Corinthians 3)
- Love (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10)
- Prophecy (1 Corinthians 14 + 1 Thess 5)
- Giving (2 Corinthians 8-9)
- Gifts (**impartment and activation** through the laying on of hands, and also prophecy. (1 Timothy 4:14; Romans 1:11);
- Apostles and prophets are also foundational gifts to the church (Eph 2:20). A foundation provides support for the framework so that churches can be built properly (Jesus is the chief cornerstone)
- Sound doctrine
- Breakthrough i.e. a significant or sudden advance or development; apostles/apostolic leaders carry a **breakthrough anointing to pioneer and penetrate** new territory with the Gospel. Peter broke through with the Gospel in the home of Cornelius (Acts 10)
- **Miracles** are part of breakthrough.
- Grace - apostles have the ability to release grace to the church (1 Cor 1:3 "*Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*")

## **BARNABAS AN APOSTOLIC EXAMPLE – ENCOURAGEMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT**

Barnabas represents an encouraging apostle. He was the apostle who assured the early leaders in Jerusalem about Paul's conversion and ministry (Acts 9:27)

- Barnabas was a leading apostle in the early church (Acts 14:14 "*But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this they tore their clothes ...*")
- His name means "son of encouragement" or "son of prophecy" (some versions say "son of conciliation")
- Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem to Antioch to encourage/teach the new believers/young church. (Acts 11:23)
- He brought Saul from Tarsus and they taught for a whole year encouraging AND establishing the church
- He was a good man and filled with the Holy Spirit
- He was part of the first apostolic team released from Antioch along with Paul to plant new churches
- He later disagreed with Paul over John Mark and separated from him. He and John Mark went to Cyprus, while Paul took Silas and revisited the churches that he and Barnabas had established.

## **PAUL'S ENCOURAGING WORDS TO THE THESSALONIANS**

**Encouragement/instruction to live holy lives** (1 Thessalonians 4:1-7) = understanding, personal application, transformation

**Encouragement to receive a father's love** (1 Thessalonians 2:11)

*"For you know that we dealt with each of you **as a father** deals with his own children, **encouraging**, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory." 1 Thess 2: 11*

**Encouragement during times of trials that faith won't fail**

*"We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, so that no one would be unsettled by these trials." 1 Thess 3:3*

**The Apostles were personally encouraged by the faith and love of the Thessalonians', brought by Timothy's report**

*"Therefore, brothers, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith. For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord. How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you. Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith." 1 Thess 3:*

**Encouragement to love**

*"May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you." 1 Thess 3:12*

*"Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more." 1 Thess 4:9-10*

**Encouragement about the return of Jesus Christ and the promise of Eternal life with Him**

*"Therefore brothers encourage each other with these words." 1 Thess 4:18*

**Encourage Unity and peaceful living**

*"Live in peace with each other,. And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else."*

**Encouragement to pray**

*"Be joyful always, pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thess 5:16-18*

**Encouragement to prophesy**

*"Do not put out the Spirits fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil." 1 Thess 5:19-22*

*"Encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone ....*

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