

## **THE CALL TO MARKET PLACE MISSION – AN APOSTOLIC COLLABORATIVE ASSIGNMENT**

The story of Paul's Macedonian call contains within it a biblical blue print for apostolic mission to the market place. It serves as a profound reminder that the Gospel impacted Europe from Asia by way of the apostolic ministry being released to and connected with the market place!

In Philippi in the region of Macedonia, we note that the market place had a key influence on the community. It is apparent that the Macedonian market place traders and magistrates held the lives of countless individuals in a corrupt stranglehold; we see evidence of this in the way in which the emancipated slave girl's owners and the authorities reacted in hostility to Paul and his colleagues, having them beaten and imprisoned without a trial. God's intention was, and still is, to redeem the marketplace and cause it to be a Kingdom epicentre of apostolic influence and activity. There had to be a shift in the marketplace and the only way that could happen was through apostolic ministry. Today God is still in the business of emancipating communities and using the market place as a tool to do so.

God used a fusion of apostolic church leaders (e.g. Paul and his team) along with market place leaders (e.g. Lydia) to advance the Kingdom in Europe. Lydia's apostolic ministry potential was ignited through her encounter with Paul, no doubt by the laying on of hands. Apostles have the ability to impart spiritual gifts to the church (see Romans 1:11). To impart means to give a share or portion to someone one. In this case, Apostle Paul and his team shared a portion of apostolic grace with Lydia, which became a catalyst for Kingdom change in both Lydia and the community in which she was trading her purple cloth.

### **AN APOSTOLIC MISSION – THE MACEDONIAN CALL**

*"Come over to Macedonia and help us" v9b*

Apostolic mission flows from the Father heart of God. When God speaks and releases such an assignment it carries with it the authority to pioneer, breakthrough and opens up new territory for the Gospel. Apostolic assignments are often released in a revelatory way as in this case when Paul received a vision in the night. We might liken a "Macedonian call" to a "now" word from heaven that gives specific direction and unction from the Holy Spirit to move out on His command into the market place. God gave Paul a "market place burden" when He called him to Macedonia. There was no ready made ministry niche for the apostle and his team, but we recognise and understand that the apostolic ministry creates an opening to establish and advance the Kingdom (in this case in, to and through the market place).

After Paul had understood the mission call, he and his team responded *"we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia (Acts 16:10)*. Apostles and apostolic leaders understand the *kairos* timing of God; and know when to hold back and when to move forward and respond with immediacy. Kairos indicates an appointed divine season for Kingdom activity.

## **LEAD CITY ENCOUNTER**

Paul and his apostolic team travelled out of Asia into Europe whereupon they reached Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia and they stayed there for several days (v12). The Holy Spirit is targeting key geographical locations today (especially cities) to which He desires to send apostolic teams to bring about reformation in the market place.

God had appointed, anointed and authorised Apostle Paul and his team with a mandate for apostolic marketplace mission. Apostolic ministry can be both a ministry that sends and ministry that is sent. The team were commissioned by revelation and “sent” to Macedonia, being prepared in prayer and in submission to His will.

Many apostolic leaders have been prepared for such a time as this, to go and minister the apostolic dimension of Christ’s heart to the market place ministers and in so doing they will be part of the release a new wave of anointed apostolic missionaries in the market place.

## **MARKET PLACE MISSION**

The apostles went out expecting to find a place to pray (v13) but instead they met Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira (*Rev 1:11; Rev 2:18*) Lydia had left her home town and was no doubt actively involved in trading when the team met her. In symbolic terms Lydia is an important figure for this blue print of mission in and to the market place. She was

- A market place leader
- A community influencer
- A worshipper who was yet to experience the full blessing of God

Lydia is described as a worshipper, yet there was something missing from her life and ministry, which she did not fully appropriate until her encounter with Apostle Paul and his team. Lydia needed to have this encounter with Paul in order to step into the full release of the apostolic dimension in her ministry. The Holy Spirit initiated this specific encounter and brought about a shift through apostolic teaching/preaching accompanied by a clear demonstration of God’s power and compassion.

## **APOSTOLIC PREACHING/TEACHING OPENED HER HEART**

*“The Lord opened her heart\* to respond to Paul’s message” (v14b)*

Just as was Lydia’s experience, so also today God is seeding His word by revelation into ministers whom He is sending into the marketplace in a spirit of wisdom and revelation. Apostolic teaching and preaching is needed to establish Gospel truth and to act as a catalyst for present day apostolic movement in the nations via the marketplace. Furthermore it will provide a strong foundation for Kingdom market place strategy to be established and built upon. Apostolic teams will help to open the spiritual eyes of many market place leaders to release emerging apostolic ministers in the market place.

## **APOSTOLIC MINISTRY FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED**

Because of the weight of authority and compassion that Apostle Paul and his team were carrying, they were able to bring breakthrough to the region and to Lydia personally. Lydia and the members of her household received the Lord and were baptised (v5a). Thereafter she invited Paul and his team to her home to stay and they accepted.

We can be encouraged from Lydia's experience that God is identifying key marketplace people in significant geographical cities/locations to whom He is going to send apostles and apostolic teams with teaching/encouragement to release Kingdom destiny and an apostolic dimension in their ministries. It is my conviction that the Lord is releasing a fresh "Macedonian" call to apostolic leaders at this time who are called to impart to and mobilise many market placed based ministers.

## **A FIVE-FOLD ASSIGNMENT**

As important as Lydia's personal encounter was, Acts 16 is much more than just one woman's personal testimony. The apostolic team led by Apostle Paul had a five-fold assignment:

1. To bring the Gospel of Christ to Macedonia in Europe and birth revival
2. To impart apostolic grace to a key market place leader who would then become a catalyst for other Kingdom leaders in the market place
3. To cause a spiritual shift by confronting and subsequently uprooting unrighteous foundations in the community/marketplace of Philippi
4. To establish righteous Kingdom foundations in their place to allow the Kingdom to advance and be built through God-inspired economic principles
5. To bring significant breakthrough to the region under the dynamism of apostolic anointing and thereby establishing new works (e.g. the church that met at Lydia's home)

We know from Paul's later letters that the work that was planted in Macedonia released much good fruit and confirms that righteousness was operating in the spirit of grace and giving. Paul later commends the Macedonian church for their generosity to him and concern for him. The Macedonian church most probably initially comprised the trader Lydia, the slave girl who had been delivered and the gaoler and his household – an interesting but successful mix! The new apostolic wineskins that God is forming in global reformation and transition will not look like what we have seen before. Let's eagerly anticipate fresh expressions of God's grace!

## **MARKETPLACE CONFRONTATION FOLLOWED BY A DEMONSTRATION OF GOD'S POWER AND LOVE**

*"They seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place to face the authorities." (v21)*

After Lydia's encounter with Paul and his team, Paul went on to confront the spirit of divination operating through a young slave girl in the market place. The girls' owners

were furious when they saw their hope of making money was gone and a confrontation of colossal proportions took place. The spiritual 'show down' happened in the marketplace. The presence of the apostles caused a spiritual confrontation and the demonic ruling forces manifested in both the corrupt marketers' and magistrates exposing witchcraft, abuse and corrupt use of people and finances. We can expect to see similar manifestations of God's glory when apostles/apostolic teams begin to collaborate, form divine alliances and exercise their God-given governmental authority in today's market place environment.

Apostolic anointing is spiritually 'aggressive' and the spiritual warfare that accompanies it is costly, hence the reason why apostolic ministers must operate in their assigned sphere with humility and grace and in partnership with like-minded apostolic leaders. Apostolic anointing wasn't made to create comfort zones, rather it is given to cause a shift, be the new paradigm and become a Kingdom epicentre. Apostolic anointing is catalytic.

### **APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY/APOSTOLIC COMPASSION**

The apostles suffer for love of Christ. They were first to breakthrough in the region, first to lay new foundations and pioneer and first to suffer for the gospel. They were falsely accused and publicly beaten without a trial. They were stripped and beaten and after they had been severely flogged they were thrown into jail and their feet fastened in stocks (v22-24)

The warfare for the market place will be fierce and it will take dread champions of Christ's love, authority and faith to win this territory and maintain it for His glory.

### **THE RESPONSE – BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL**

*"At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose."*

Apostolic prayers bathed in sacrificial surrender, along with deep heart-felt worship became the catalyst for God's power to be released from heaven to earth as an earthquake.

God literally shook the foundations. Spiritually we may draw a parallel that the apostles' ambassadorial ministry for Christ had displaced the unrighteous foundations of corrupt people operating in corrupt practises in the market place. The earthquake not only released all the prison doors but was also a sign from heaven to earth that unrighteous foundations were being destroyed! The jail in Philippi had become a Kingdom epicentre for community transformation. An epicentre is the point on the earth's surface vertically above the point of an earthquake. The jail was literally the epicentre in geographical location, but was also a sign of Kingdom shaking! Hallelujah.

The jailor and his entire household were saved and baptised; a beautiful first-fruits offering that speaks of the establishment of a new righteous Kingdom foundation in Philippi that had been ushered in by apostolic collaborative mission between an apostolic team led by Paul and a market place minister, Lydia.

The apostles were first to be vilified and also first to be justified. The magistrates came to appease them and escort Paul and Silas from prison (v39). The apostles experienced righteous vindication.

### **APOSTOLIC ENCOURAGEMENT - SUPPORT, STRENGTHEN, GIVE HOPE, MOTIVATE**

We read that after Paul and Silas were subsequently released from prison, *“they went to Lydia’s house, where they met with the brothers and encouraged them. Then they left.”* (v40)

Lydia’s home and the believers who met there might be described as an apostolic church plant. There is no reason to suppose that Lydia might not have sent teams back to her home town of Thyatira. She was a trader and as such, she would have sold her goods on a trade route, necessitating travel either by herself or those whom she appointed.

### **APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY**

- Uproots unrighteous city foundations
- Breaks through into hostile territory both in the heavenly realms and in the natural environment becoming a Kingdom epicentre for divine re-alignment
- Lays a new righteous foundations for the city upon which the work can be built up
- Identifies key Kingdom individuals in the church and in the market place and imparts breakthrough apostolic anointing to them for service in ministry
- Establishes the work of the Kingdom (through prayer, worship, sacrifice, suffering for Christ, collaboration, relationships)
- Brings apostolic encouragement through preaching and teaching
- Births new vision and divine blue prints
- Models Christ-like authority and compassion
- Causes a shift i.e. re-alignment with God’s redemptive purposes and plans
- Brings reformation in peoples lives and to their business practises thus positively impacting and transforming communities with God’s glory
- Confronts ungodly behaviour and breaks demonic strongholds over cities and regions
- Causes the Kingdom to advance on the earth

### **THE MARKET PLACE IS A KEY TO WINNING THE NATIONS!**

For the church to advance, the market place must be in Kingdom alignment. God is in the business of creating new harvest nets, yet we must comprehend that the focus is not about making nets. The former will precede the latter, but the latter is the priority of the Father heart of God because nets represent divine alliances and strategies to win the multitudes for Christ; Kingdom partnership (one type of ‘net’) are the places where leaders and vision are born in the Father’s rest.

Catherine Brown

Founder/Director, Gatekeepers Global Ministries

Co-Founder, Scottish Apostolic Networking Enterprise

[admin@gatekeepers.org.uk](mailto:admin@gatekeepers.org.uk)

[www.gatekeepers.org.uk](http://www.gatekeepers.org.uk)

September 2009