

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS



And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets,
some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,
for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry,
for the edifying of the body of Christ,
Ephesians 4:11,12

ASHISH RAICHUR

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INTRODUCTION

This book is a collection of the five messages that I shared at All Peoples Church, Christian Leaders Conference, 2008. This was the very first Christian Leaders Conference that we hosted in Bangalore, India. The theme for this conference was “Equipping the Saints.”

I felt the need to share these messages with pastors and Christian ministers in Bangalore and throughout India. With this intent, these messages have been collated, updated, and was released in print in 2005. We trust that many will benefit through this. While these messages primarily address those in the five-fold ministry, we are positive that these will be of immense value to believers as well and will serve to awaken them to the new move of God that is upon us.

Let us be ready for the new move of God, which several Christian leaders around the world are calling as “The Saints Movement.” The Saints Movement has already begun. We must be prepared and make the transition or else we will be left behind!

Blessings!
Ashish Raichur

1. THE PRESENT MOVE OF GOD

Ephesians 1:9-12

9 Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,

10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

11 In Him also we have obtained an Inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

Ephesians 3:9-11

9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;

10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,

11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God is at work on the earth—unfolding and carrying out His eternal purposes. He releases His purposes through men and women, who execute His will.

God is still at work on the earth. He has not stopped unfolding His plans and purposes. He is working on humanity, taking us where He desires us to be, so that in the fullness of time, He will gather us together, as His completed masterpieces.

Acts 3:19-21

19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

20 and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,

21 whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

The Lord Jesus must be retained in heaven until all things have been restored to order again, in the way God desires it to be.

Since Jesus has not yet returned, we are still in the midst of that restorative work of God.

God is restoring all things to order again, the way He declared it would be.

The Church is at the center of this restorative work of God because God has purposed that through the Church, He will display His manifold wisdom.

A Review Of Church History

Overview of the Restorative Move of the Holy Spirit

- **400-1400 AD** - The Church became a spiritually feeble entity during the Dark Ages.

Revival and Restoration

Beginning with the Reformation in the 15 A.D., that started with a man named Martin Luther, we see that God has progressively taken the Church through several phases or stages of restoration.

There were revivals that affected a certain area and then died out. And then there were some revivals that became a movement and brought the restoration of powerful truth and a release of a fresh move of God, which eventually became a reformation in the Church. A large majority of the Body of Christ, if not the whole Body, was affected by the truth and move of God that was birthed in the revival, making it a definite reformation of the Church.

Man institutionalized what God had started. Many of our present-day denominations were birthed in a genuine move of God. While there is nothing wrong in providing order and structure to what God has released, we must be careful not to idolize the order and structure instead of the restored truth and work of the Spirit. If we end up idolizing the order, structure, and government that was formed to support the truth and move of God, we end up with dead relics (spiritual fossils) of the past. All we are left with then are systems without life and power.

God continues to progressively restore truth and release fresh winds of His Spirit through the Church. Restored truth is not new truth. Rather it is truth that has already been revealed in Scripture, but we just never had the revelation to see it! The fresh winds of the Spirit do not mean that the Holy Spirit is changing; it is just that God is allowing us to experience new dimensions of His infinite Personhood, which we have not experienced before.

Here is a brief outline of the major movements, truths, that were restored and denominations and institutions that were formed as a result.

- **1500s** - The **Protestant Movement** brought the revelation of salvation by grace through faith and the priesthood of all believers.
 - ◆ **Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and congregational denominations were formed.**

- **1600s** - The **Puritan Movement** brought an understanding of the importance of water baptism and separation of Church from the State.
 - ◆ **Mennonite, Baptist, and other fundamental evangelical denominations were formed.**

- **1700s** - The **Holiness Movement** brought an understanding of sanctification and the separation of the Church from the world.
 - ◆ **Methodist, Nazarene, Church of God, Holiness churches/denominations were formed.**

- **1800s** - The **Divine Healing Movement** brought a revelation and demonstration of God's healing power for the physical body.
 - ◆ **Christian Missionary Alliance and soon.**

- **1900s** - The **Pentecostal Movement** brought a revelation of the Holy Spirit baptism and speaking in tongues.
 - ◆ **Pentecostal Movement 1900-1940**
 - Assembly of God, United Pentecostal, Four square, Church of God in Christ.
 - ◆ **Charismatic Movement 1950-1970**
 - Non-denominational churches, Independent churches
Charismatic churches, Faith, and Word churches, ministerial fellowships.
 - ◆ **Prophetic/Apostolic Movement 1980-1990**
 - Prophetic churches and networks, Apostolic churches, and networks.

- **2000s** - Following the Pentecostal Movement, there have been several clearly identifiable moves in the Church that have caused the Body of Christ to arise to higher realms in God. The five-fold ministry of evangelist (in the 1950s), pastor (in the 1960s), teacher (in the 1970s), prophet (in the 1980s), and apostle (in the 1990s) have each been restored to the Body of Christ. We are now in that time in God's calendar where the saints are being equipped and released into the work of the ministry.

Ephesians 4:11-13

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

God has restored each of the five-fold ministry offices in the Body of Christ.

The purpose of the five-fold ministry is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry.

We are in the beginnings of the next move of God:

◆ **The Saints Movement**

In the Saints Movement, every believer (saint) will be equipped with the Word of God, with the power of the Spirit, activated in the gifts of the Spirit, flowing in miracles, signs, and wonders—thus doing the work of the ministry!

The five-fold ministry was given for believers, to serve believers and not the other way around! Today we see in many of our churches and ministries, that we five-fold ministers conduct ourselves in such a way that we expect believers to live to meet our needs, serve our agendas, and fulfill our visions! This will disappear in the Saints Movement!

There will be no more “one-man army.” The army of the Lord will be an army with many multiplied thousands and millions of saints (believers) who have been equipped to do the work of the ministry. While there will be captains and leaders, there will be no more “one-man shows.”

When saints are equipped and released into ministry, we will see the Body of Christ edified—built up like never before!

God will then bring us all to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. We will rise to the full measure of Christlikeness! Looking at Christendom today, some may say that it will be impossible for all the believers to come to the unity of the faith. Well, if we went back in time, into the dark ages and said in those days that a time would come when truth will be restored, that we would experience the work of the Holy Spirit, and so on, it would have seemed impossible. And yet, see where we are! Look at what the Lord has done. So, we must be prepared. What looks impossible today will be a reality very soon! Christ will then return for a Church that is without spot or wrinkle, for a Body where every member is in their rightful place, fitted together, and each one doing their part (Ephesians 5:27).

Recommended Reading

The Day of the Saints, (2002), Dr. Bill Hamon

Apostles, Prophets and the coming moves of God, (1997), Dr. Bill Hamon

The Saints (Believers) Are Important!

We must understand that the saints (believers) are important to God!

God's Inheritance Are the Saints

Ephesians 1:18

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His 'Inheritance' in the saints.

What an awesome thought this is! God sees His "inheritance" in the saints. The saints are His prized possession!

Christ Will Be Glorified in the Saints

2 Thessalonians 1:10

When He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

Saints Will Reign in the Coming Kingdom

In the not-too-distant future, the kingdoms of this world will come under the rule of the Lord Jesus Christ. His Kingdom will have no end (Daniel 2:44b; Revelation 11:15b). The interesting fact is that the Kingdom is going to be given to the saints. Believers will administer and execute God's Kingdom! God has prepared such an important role for His people!

Daniel 7:18,27

18 But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.

27 Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.

1 Corinthians 6:2

Do you not know that the saints will Judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

Saints (believers) Are Important!

As five-fold ministers, we need to get God’s heart for His people—the saints. We must begin to value God’s people the way God values them. We need to invest, empower, and equip the saints to fulfill God’s grand design. We must have a passion and deep love for God’s people—the same kind of love that God has for His people. God’s love is not a pampering love—that condones sin, that does not deal with weaknesses, and so on. Rather God’s love is a “tough kind of love,” the love that endures, the love that knows no limits, the love of a Father that disciplines without destroying (Hebrews 12:5-11). It is a love that is patient, kind, believing all things, and yet does not rejoice in sin (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). This is the love that must motivate us as we minister to the saints (2 Corinthians 5:13-14).

As we continue in our discussion on the topic “Equipping the Saints,” we must understand the role of the saints and the role of the five-fold ministers in the Saints Movement. How can five-fold ministers make the transition into the new move of God? How will the Saints Movement affect the citywide church and city transformation? These are some of the issues we will focus on in the following chapters.

2. ROLE OF THE SAINTS

We need to understand the role of the saints (believers) in the current move of God and the ministry that the saints (believers) will demonstrate.

Every Believer Is A Minister

Ephesians 4:7,11-12

7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Every believer has been given grace and a measure of some gift that the Lord has released into their lives. The five-fold ministers have been assigned the responsibility to equip the saints, so that the saints can do the work of the ministry.

As far as the Bible is concerned, every believer is a minister and must do the work of the ministry. Ministry is not just for five-fold ministers.

Romans 12:4-6a

4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

5 so we, being many, are one body In Christ, and individually members of one another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them.

While it is true that all believers do not have the same function, it is evident that all believers have some function in the Body of Christ. Each one of us has been entrusted with gifts that are in line with the grace of God given to us and in accordance with the specific functions we are to perform in the Body.

Every believer must be awakened to the truth that they do have a ministry. God has already released gifts, grace and has appointed one or more functions for every believer.

Believers Must Be Entrusted With Ministry—Opportunity Within The Local Church

1 Peter 4:10-11

10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

11 If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability

which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The reason God releases gifts and graces to His saints, is so that the gifts can be used for ministering to one another. Therefore, believers must be given the opportunity to exercise their gifts at various levels within the local church. It is true that this must be done in a way that ensures simultaneous character development and maturity, with proper submission to authority and with alignment to the vision and direction of the local church. However, my observation is that most of our churches are packed with people who have not been stirred up to discover and exercise their gifts; or with people who know their gifts and grace, but are unable to use them due to lack of opportunity. Usually, there are only very few who are “in training” or are “on-hold” due to character development, maturity, submission, or related issues, and a large number who are just inactive and non-functioning.

This needs to change. A local church is only as truly functioning (or active) as the percentage of people in that Body who have been activated and released into their ministries. If in a church of 100 people, only 20 people have understood their gifts and place of function and are actively serving, that local church is functioning at 20 and 80 percent of that church consists of a non-functional, inactive, and passive membership.

Ephesians 4:16

From whom the whole body, Joined and knit together by what every Joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of Itself in love.

When every part does its share, it will cause the Body to grow and be built up into Christlike maturity, in love! Wow! This is enough reason to get every believer in the Body activated and released into their ministry!

Some Believers Are Called To Minister In The Marketplace

For some believers, their ministry platform may not be the pulpit in a local church but outside the church in the marketplace—in business, government, education, entertainment, art, media, sport, and so on.

We must understand that ministry happens wherever people are—both inside the local church and outside. Many believers will be gifted and graced to perform their ministries outside the context of the local church. This does not mean that their ministry is not related to or connected to the local church. The local church will be the place where they are equipped and empowered. The local church will be the place where such believers receive nourishment, refreshing, counsel, direction, and so on. However, their primary realm of ministry will be outside the local church—out in the world, in the marketplace.

They may be professionals, businesspeople, politicians, educators, and so on. They may

lead churches, prayer groups, outreaches, and so on, out in the marketplace.

The believers from Jerusalem who were scattered because of persecution went out and preached Christ in regions where the apostles and leaders had not yet entered (Acts 8; Acts 11). New towns and cities were reached with the Gospel; and churches planted by ordinary believers! Once the ground was prepared, the apostles from Jerusalem sent people over to strengthen the work.

This can happen today as well. In the Saints Movement, believers in the marketplace will be used by God to extend His Kingdom in areas where those in "full-time ministry" will not have direct access. However, this will mean that we change our understanding of work and the Christian's role in the marketplace. For more on this, we recommend reading, "Biblical Attitude Towards Work," a free book from All Peoples Church.

Believers Will Begin To Walk In And Manifest The Supernatural Power Of The Holy Spirit

Just as anyone in the five-fold ministry, believers will begin to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit and manifest supernatural power, flow in the gifts of the Spirit and so on.

John 14:12

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

Jesus intended that all believers of all ages do the signs, wonders, and miracles that He did when He was here on earth. Jesus never stated that signs, wonders, and miracles were limited to just the early Church. He fully intended for all believers to do the works of the Father to touch lives, demonstrate the love of God, and glorify Him.

The nine gifts of the Spirit (I Corinthians 12:4-11) are available to all believers, not just to those in five-fold ministry.

In the Saints Movement, we will see believers increasingly doing the works of the Father and manifesting the gifts of the Spirit through signs, wonders, and miracles! This will be the norm for a believer.

Believers who do the works of the Father and manifest the gifts of the Spirit will not be the odd ones out. The odd ones will be those who do not manifest signs, wonders, and miracles!

Some Believers May Walk In A Five-Fold Ministry Function While Still Holding A Place And Function In The "World"

Get ready for this! Nowhere does Scripture state that someone who has been called into a five-fold ministry function (that of apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, or evangelist) must necessarily be in what we refer to as “full-time ministry.”

Paul was an apostle and he engaged in a tent-making business, at least for some part of his life. This did not disqualify him from his five-fold calling.

What we will begin to see in the Saints Movement is the emergence of apostles, prophets, and those with a mix of the five-fold ministry functions who are also actively engaged in the marketplace—business, politics, art, entertainment, education, and so on.

Gender And Age Will Not Be A Barrier To What God Releases Through Individual Believers

Acts 2:17-18

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions. your old men shall dream dreams.

18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit In those days; and they shall prophesy.

The outpouring of the Spirit is for all people, regardless of age or gender. We will see this happen in a greater measure in the Saints Movement. Young people, barely in their teens will preach, prophesy, manifest Christlike character, and demonstrate miracles, signs, and wonders. This will be a common occurrence. What took the older generation years to learn will be learned very quickly by the younger generations. They will build on the foundations of previous generations. Young and old, men and women will pursue the call of God on their lives with zeal, wisdom, and passion.

3. ROLE OF THE FIVE-FOLD MINISTERS

The emergence of the Saints Movement will cause a shift in the role of the five-fold ministers. As five-fold ministers, we will be brought to a place of maturity and released to focus on our primary assignment—of equipping the saints for the work of ministry, so that the Body of Christ can be edified.

Our Role as Five-Fold Ministers

We must understand that the role of the five-fold ministers is to provide the following for believers:

Bring Believers to a Place of Maturity—to Christlikeness

Our goal in ministry is not to entertain or just educate people, but to bring them to a place of maturity into Christlikeness—both in character and ministry.

God's intent is that we be conformed to the image of His Son Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29). We are to grow up to the full measure of being Christlike—being like Him in all things (Ephesians 4:13,15).

Apostle Paul's mission statement went like this: *“Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily”* (Colossians 1:28-29) Our assignment in ministry should be in alignment with this, which is to present people mature in Christ.

Equip Believers in God's Word—Present Truth, Restored Truth

In his closing statements to the elders from Ephesus, Paul said; *“So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified”* (Acts 20:32). God's Word can build people up. God's Word matures little children into sons and daughters who can be entrusted with the inheritance. As five-fold ministers, we must bring believers into their inheritance by building them up in the Word—in all the truth that has been restored to the Body of Christ.

We cannot give any more revelation than what we ourselves have received personally. We

cannot impart truth that we have not experienced. So, the challenge is for us five-fold ministers to be updated in present truth. The blind cannot lead the blind (Luke 6:39). If we do not receive fresh revelation and insight and are blinded to what God is doing on the earth, we will not be able to lead God's people into the current move of God.

Bring Believers to the Understanding of Their Calling, Place and Function in the Body of Christ. Impart Revelation That Every Believer Is a Minister

While it is true that all members do not have the same function, it is essential that we understand that all believers do have some function in the Body (Romans 12:4). Believers must be activated to discover and fulfill their membership function. As five-fold ministers, it is our responsibility to encourage every believer to discover and fulfill their ministry in the Body.

Equip Believers in the Supernatural, to Manifest the of Power God, to do the Works of the Father

The Lord Jesus intends for all believers to manifest the power of God and do the works of the Father—miracles, healings, signs, and wonders (John 14:12; Mark 16:17-18).

The post-modern Church has sidelined the importance of miracles, signs, and wonders and emphasized intellectualism, great organization, and a host of other things, which can be done by the natural man.

We need to get back to the mandate that Jesus gave to the Church—to do the works He did and greater works.

Understand the importance of doing the Father's works (miracles, signs, and wonders):

- Jesus said that the works of the Father were a greater witness than the testimony of the greatest of Old Testament prophets (John 5:36).
- The works of the Father were of greater importance than the message Jesus preached, in authenticating Him being the Messiah. In fact, He said that if He did not do the miracles, we need not believe what He said! (John 10:24-25,37-38).
- To Philip, Jesus once again pointed to the works He was doing, to authenticate that He was indeed from the Father (John 14:8-11).
- When John the Baptist was in doubt about Jesus, the Lord once again pointed to the miracles He was doing as a proof that He was indeed the Messiah (Matthew 11:1-5).

As five-fold ministers, we need to press in to manifest the supernatural ourselves. We will also need to equip the saints to manifest miracles, signs, and wonders.

Transform Churches from Being “Nurseries” to Becoming Equipping and Commissioning Centers

It is sad but true that many of our churches have been Sunday morning "nurseries" where we pamper believers, without building them up in the Spirit and making them strong soldiers of the Cross! It is time our local churches were transformed into places where believers are equipped and released into their God-ordained ministries in the church and in the world. Local churches need to have systems and processes in place to equip believers.

Move Believers up into New Dimensions of the Spirit

The Lord Jesus had the Spirit without measure when He walked the earth (John 3:34).

There are greater measures of the Spirit than what we have experienced till now.

We need to go deeper and further in the Spirit, than where we are now.

It is by the power of the Spirit that the Kingdom of God is advanced on the earth (Zechariah 4:6; Matthew 12:28).

There are anointings and dimensions of the Spirit which believers need for their call in the marketplace and in the world—which we five-fold ministers need to help them tap into (Isaiah 11:1-2).

Providing Structure And Government

In the Saints Movement, the five-fold ministry will be released to do what is really, important—the equipping of the saints for ministry. It must continue to function and operate at its highest best. More people will be needed in five-fold ministry functions. Apostolic leadership and oversight, prophetic insight and directives, pastoral care and correction, teachers to ground and establish, and evangelists to gather and motivate will still be needed.

Apostles

Apostles must receive the blueprint from heaven for the work they are called to do—to lay the foundation, establish the framework, and create the structure according to the heavenly pattern. Apostles will lay down a God-given blueprint for a specific ministry. There will be apostles who will have the keys (strategies) to unlock specific areas of society or geographical areas, for the penetration of the Gospel. There will be apostles who will have vision and God's direction for transformation of their cities or regions.

Prophets

There will emerge prophets who through their prophesying will resurrect dead visions, bring the “now” Word from God, providing strength to execute visions and strategies released by the apostles (Ezra 4:24; Ezra 5:1-2).

Teachers

We will need the continued ministry of strong anointed teachers who will ground, build, mature, and equip the saints.

Pastors

We will see pastors after God’s own heart (Jeremiah 3:15) who will nurture and establish the saints in the house of God, with a deep understanding of the Fatherhood of God and a passion for the family of God.

Evangelists

Anointed evangelists will emerge who will gather in the harvest and equip believers to do likewise.

The local church will continue to be the house of God in a certain place (1 Timothy 3:15). Each believer (saint) will still have to be a committed and responsible member of a local church. They will still have to fulfill their membership in the spiritual Body of Christ by being a vital part of a local body. They will have to continue giving their tithes and offerings in their local church. God will still have order among His people (1 Corinthians 14:33-40). The saints will not become a “lawless bunch,” doing whatever they find right in their own eyes—according to their own visions and dreams (Judges 17:6; Judges 21:25).

Like Joel's army, the saints will need to be taught to march in formation, not break ranks, not push one another, and to march in their own column (Joel 2:7-8).

Making Necessary Adjustments

There are adjustments that the five-fold ministry must make in preparation for the Saints Movement:

A Change in Our Perception of Believers' Place and Function in the Body

We need to stop thinking that only the five-fold ministers are to do ministry and begin to perceive every believer as a minister.

Adjustment of Our Attitudes Toward Believers

We must eliminate feelings of insecurity, inferiority, the desire to control and lord over God's people. We must rise to be strong leaders who will lead by example.

Creating Room and Opportunities for Believers to Minister Alongside Us

We must allow believers to come alongside us and minister with us, just as Paul took the young man Timothy and allowed him to serve with Paul in the Gospel (Philippians 2:19-22).

Establish Team Ministry in Our Local Churches

We need to move from “one man does it all” leadership-style to team ministry, in our local churches. These ministry teams will comprise of five-fold ministers who may be in “full-time” ministry as well as five-fold ministers who may have their primary role in the marketplace.

Guide, Guard, and Govern with Wisdom and Discernment

While we encourage, equip, and release believers into their ministries, we must not abdicate our responsibilities as God appointed leaders. We must continue to guide, guard, and govern with wisdom and discernment. We must lead in such a way as to bring maturity and stability in the lives of believers, as they learn to minister.

Adapt to New Ways of Ministry

There are diversities of ministries and diversities of activities—ways in which God will release His working through His people (1 Corinthians 12:5-6). We cannot limit God in the ways He wants His work to be carried out. God will release fresh and new ways of doing ministry through His saints, inspiring new ideas, new avenues of reaching the lost, and so on. These may be very different from what we are accustomed to as “ministry.” We must learn to welcome this and not become a stumbling block to what God releases through His saints.

4. MAKING THE TRANSITION

The Saints Movement—God's move to see His people equipped to do the work of the ministry is upon us! As five-fold ministers, we must make the transition into this move of God. We cannot allow traditions, or our own insecurities to hinder us from entering into God's purposes and His current move on the earth. Five-fold ministers who fail to make the transition will get left behind as the “cloud and fire” of God’s presence move on.

Getting Rid Of Crippling Traditions

Jesus did not speak kindly to the Pharisees and scribes who held on to their traditions and violated the command of God (Matthew 15:1-9). In fact, they were so deep into their man-made traditions that they taught their traditions instead of the Word of the Lord.

Let us get rid of traditions that have crippled us.

- For some of us, our religious traditions have no place for present-day apostles and prophets (we only accept evangelists, pastors, and teachers). Understand that God has restored the ministries of the apostle and prophet. These are needed for the equipping of the saints.
- Some of us still have the old “clergy” and “laity” mentality. We must understand that every believer is a minister.
- Some of us still see a separation of “spiritual” and “secular.” Any God-ordained activity IS ministry whether it happens inside the Church building or in the world (corporate office, educational institution, sports field, and so on).
- Some of us are unwilling to change our wineskin—the structure and order of our church or ministry. New wine must be contained in new wineskin (Matthew 9:17). The present-day outpouring of the Spirit (new wine) needs new church structure and government (new wineskin). Our church or ministry structure has no room for all the five ministry functions of apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, and evangelist. By our very church structure, we have eliminated the very ministry functions that Christ set in the church—and hence we have no way of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry. Either we change our church structure and order, or else we will become wineskins with no wine of the Spirit!
- Some of us are stuck with certain ways and methodologies. We use methods and strategies that were genuine, given by God, but were meant for a particular season. We have not moved on with what God is doing. What worked yesterday may not necessarily be the way God wishes to work today. Stay in step with God.

Examples:

- ◆ The brass serpent (Numbers 21:8-9; 2 Kings 18:4).
- ◆ Moses and water out of the rock (Exodus 17:6; Numbers 20:8).
- ◆ John the Baptist (John 1:35-37).
- ◆ Apollos (Acts 18:24-26).
- ◆ John the Baptist's followers at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-6).

Breaking Free Of Insecurities

Let us face our insecurities and get rid of them. We need to rise up to become “fathers” and “mothers” to the people of God.

Like Paul we need to be able to nurture our “Timothy’s” and bring them to a place where they can become our co-workers (Romans 16:21) and are able to do the work of the ministry, even as we do (1 Corinthians 16: 10).

Opening Up To The Apostolic And Prophetic

We must change our attitudes towards true apostolic and prophetic ministries. Both at a personal level and at our church ministry level, we need to be open to the five-fold ministries God has placed in the Church.

It is God who has set apostles and prophets in the Church (1 Corinthians 12:28). We have no right to take out what God has set in the Church.

We must learn from those who have gone ahead of us and entered new dimensions of revelation and the things of the Spirit. These are not teachings and experiences that contradict the written Scriptures. Rather they restore and affirm all that God has already intended for His people.

We must receive revelation and impartation from apostolic and prophetic ministers.

It is true that when we open our lives to the apostolic and the prophetic, for some of us, will be a big stretch. We will be challenged to go beyond where we have ever gone before, in God and in His Spirit. Mysteries that were all the while hidden in the Word, which our spiritual eyes have not seen will suddenly come alive to us (Ephesians 3:5). Opening up eyes to spiritual mysteries is characteristic of the apostolic and prophetic ministry.

Another area in which we will be challenged, when we are open to the apostolic and prophetic, is that for many of us, our foundations will be re-laid. We may have thought we had the right theological foundations for ministry, about the local church and so on.

However, we will realize that so much of this was man-made—just wood, hay, and stubble. The apostolic and prophetic will cause the re-laying of our foundations in certain areas to what is truly of the Lord and truly aligned to His Word (1 Corinthians 3:10; Ephesians 2:20-21), so that we can build on it. As a result, our lives and ministries will take on a new look—a fresh look—that which truly portrays and represents our Lord and King, rather than something that is of man.

Practical Keys To Equipping The Saints

Provide Believers with Solid Meat

We cannot expect saints to be equipped for ministry if all we do is feed them with milk or some other diluted message from our pulpits. It is the whole counsel of God that can thoroughly equip the believer for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16).

I understand that babies need the milk of the Word (1 Peter 2:2). But we must encourage babies to grow quickly, so that they are able to receive the solid meat of the Word (Hebrews 5:12-14).

We must proclaim the whole counsel of God, teach, and train believers in the things of the Spirit, activate the gifts of the Holy Spirit, signs, wonders, and miracles. We must emphasize the development of Christlike character and maturity.

Help Believers Discern Their Call

We must help believers to discern their calling, identify their place, and function in the Body of Christ. We must also show them how to live it out in the context of a local church body and in the world.

Too many believers are lying idle in our churches as wasted potential simply because they have not been helped to discern and discover their place and function—their calling.

Five-fold ministers must operate out of the premise that every believer is a minister. Every person in the local church must discover their calling, be equipped to fulfill it, and be released into their calling!

Empower Believers to Tap into the Spirit

Believers must be trained on how to tap into the Holy Spirit to live their lives and to fulfill their ministries on earth.

Encourage Believers to Combine Ministry and Profession

Local churches must begin to equip those called to the marketplace.
Encourage the rise of five-fold ministers in the marketplace.

- The best people to equip saints in the marketplace are five-fold ministers in the marketplace.
- Believers in the marketplace need to be equipped to hear the voice of God in decision-making, for ministering, witnessing. Marketplace believers need to be trained to flow in the gifts of the Spirit and to manifest the supernatural right where they work.
- Believers in the marketplace need to be taught how to apply biblical principles in their work and thus establish Kingdom influence.
- Believers in the marketplace can be trained on how to cause Kingdom advancement by establishing Kingdom outposts (base, fellowship, church) in the marketplace, influence policies that will further the Kingdom, cause wealth-transfer for Kingdom purposes and so on.

Be a Mentor and Create a Mentoring Culture

As five-fold ministers, we need to mentor (to be a father or mother) the saints.

It is true that one person cannot mentor many people. However, we can mentor some, and then create a mentoring culture in our churches and ministries, where mature saints are encouraged to father and mother others in the faith

Delegate Ministry Responsibility

Create new opportunities and delegate ministry responsibilities to faithful and able believers. The concept of delegating ministry responsibilities was seen as far back as Moses' time, when his father-in-law Jethro instructed him to do this (Exodus 18).

Develop a Ministry Team and Create a Team Culture

As mentioned earlier, we must allow others to work alongside us, as part of a ministry team. Create a team culture where there is no competition, rather a deep sense of collaboration, where all on the team are working toward the same goal of equipping the saints and thus glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ.

Become Strategic

We need to think and work strategically and flow with God as He raises His people to be salt and light in the world. For instance, when a believer must relocate to another

geographic area because of a shift in his or her professional life, this could be an opportunity to plant a church, start a home group, and so on in the new area. If believers have been equipped, this will be a strong possibility.

Become Kingdom Minded

It is so important for us five-fold ministers to become Kingdom minded and train saints to be Kingdom minded also. To be Kingdom minded is to place the purposes of the Kingdom of God and the glory of the King above our personal agendas, denominations, and ministries.

Recommended Reading

Kingdom Builder a free book from All Peoples Church & World Outreach, Bangalore. Several of these practical keys are dealt in this book. Chapter 4 of the book deals with how to build people by the Spirit. Chapter 7 deals with raising up the next generation, with an emphasis on mentoring.

What If We Do Not Make The Transition

As five-fold ministers, if we fail to make the transition into the present move of God, the Saints Movement, there are serious consequences.

Loss of Impact

Our influence and impact on the lives of believers will diminish if we fail to make the transition into the present move of God. Those believers who have a sincere desire for spiritual growth, maturity, and usefulness for the Kingdom will move on and connect with churches and ministries who are investing to equip the saints.

Judgment for Failure in God's Assignment

God's assignment for five-fold ministers is for us to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. As five-fold ministers, if we fail to do this, we would be failing in God's assignment for us. When we stand before the Lord to give an account of our life here on earth, we will be found wanting (2 Corinthians 5:9-10).

5. THE CITYWIDE CHURCH

New Dynamics In The citywide church

What will happen to the city (or any geographic region—town or village), when the citywide church is equipped and released?

The church will meet more often in the marketplace than in their regular Sunday meetings. Saints from different local churches will meet five to six days of the week in the marketplace, while they gather in their own local churches once or twice a week. All these saints will be equipped to manifest God in the marketplace. Their common identity is the Lordship of Christ. Local church names, denominations, or ministry affiliations will fade away and no longer be important. God-ordained leaders will rise amidst the church and in the marketplace to lead a combined initiative to bring the glory of God into all the world.

As a result, we will see combined initiatives with complimentary resources across local churches to impact the city. It will no longer be one local church working to do something in the city.

Can you see what impact we will have on our city when citywide initiatives are executed with the combined resources of saints across local churches, with God-ordained apostolic leadership guiding each initiative? Think about worship teams, youth outreaches, street evangelism teams, intercessory prayer groups, other strategic marketplace outreaches, social action—helping street kids, the poor, the homeless, and so on—being executed by saints who have a passion for these specific ministries. The citywide church will then be a strong voice in the society and will have a transforming effect on the city. **When the citywide church is transformed, the city will be transformed!**

Developing A Kingdom Mindset

How do we co-labor to raise a citywide church full of believers, who are equipped and released for ministry in the Church?

As we said earlier, believers from different churches meet in a common arena—the workplace. They must be encouraged to work as a team to impact their workplaces, rather than carrying a sectarian, “my-church-is-better” attitude. If believers are not taught and trained to co-labor with believers from other local churches in the workplace, without violating divine order in the citywide church, then the purposes of God’s Kingdom would

not be advanced.

Apostolic leaders must get ready to provide leadership to citywide initiatives that pool resources (people, time, and money), cross local church barriers with the sole purpose of seeing His Kingdom established in the city. **This must be done without elevating a single man, ministry, or local church.**

When souls are saved and lives transformed through these collaborative efforts, these new believers should be encouraged to become part of a good Bible-believing local church that is most appropriate for them, where they can be discipled and equipped. Which local church they connect with should no longer be important because we are seeking the expansion of His Kingdom in the hearts and lives of people. The growth and expansion of all local churches will be a natural outcome.

The Saints Movement And City Transformation

Jerusalem and Samaria were affected by ordinary believers like Stephen and Philip, who were full of the Holy Spirit, faith, power, signs, and wonders (Acts 6:8; Acts 8:5-8).

Similarly, Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch were invaded with the Gospel by believers who went out from Jerusalem (Acts 11:19-21). These were only regular believers who were pioneering and establishing churches or Kingdom communities through preaching the Gospel with signs and wonders.

Similarly, when we believers are equipped to manifest signs, wonders, and miracles, we will begin to see city transformation starting from the grass root level.

Much of our city transformation efforts have been focused on getting leaders and ministers together. This is important and necessary. However, the Saints Movement will result in city transformation, at the grassroots level. We will see the rising of a nameless and faceless generation of saints who will impact the city.

Recognizing Apostles And Prophets In The City

Apostles in the city are an important key to city transformation. It is not enough to have apostles or apostolic ministries coming and going. We need apostles, resident in the city and committed to the city, who will provide apostolic vision, strategy, and leadership for city transformation. The emergence of apostles and prophets in the city are necessary to seeing the citywide church arise and become a force in the city.

The Body of Christ in the city must begin to recognize genuine apostles and prophets, resident in the city, whether these are functioning in ministry or in the marketplace. We

must recognize apostles and prophets in the church and those in the marketplace.

In large cities like Bangalore, there will obviously be several genuine apostolic and prophetic leaders. These leaders whom the Lord raises up will provide a citywide vision, a blueprint for establishing God's Kingdom in a specific sector of the city, which will be inclusive of believers across churches. They will provide apostolic leadership to invade that sphere/sector/segment of the city or society. We will see rising of several such apostolic leaders whose combined efforts will result in city transformation.

A common problem is that apostolic leaders in a city are unwilling to take up the responsibility of a sustained, ongoing citywide effort to permeate and penetrate a particular sphere of society. Instead we remain comfortable working within our churches and ministries. Either we are too narrow-minded in our thinking and need to be renewed to a Kingdom mindset, or we are afraid of being misunderstood by fellow ministers and hence are unwilling to step up to lead the way. It is true that leading a collaborative citywide effort will not be easy. The challenges are great. It will also demand a lot of time and effort apart from what is spent for our local churches or ministries. But then we need to decide what is more important to build our own local churches and ministries or to see His Kingdom come to our city, so that millions can be saved!

The citywide church must develop a Kingdom mindset and begin to recognize, affirm, and rally around genuine apostolic and prophetic leaders whom the Lord is raising up in the city. Apostolic and prophetic leaders within the city must come together to develop a collaborative strategy to equip the citywide church and pave the way for several collaborative initiatives toward city transformation. The citywide church must move past basic cooperation to hold events/ conferences/meetings and come to a place of unity in the Spirit. Unity in the Spirit does not depend on hosting events/conferences/ meetings. It is a change of heart and mind. It is living in this place of unity that will enable us to take the necessary steps toward city transformation.

If the citywide church can live and function in the unity of the Spirit, and this is combined with what the Saints Movement will produce—an army of believers equipped to do the work of the ministry—we will see our cities being powerfully touched for the Lord Jesus Christ!

Foreseeing Potential Pitfalls

What potential dangers and obstacles can we foresee and how do we circumvent them?

Immature Leadership

- Leaders still being "my-ministry-minded" instead of being Kingdom minded.
- Leaders holding on to religious traditions and using these traditions to have a hold on people.
- Leaders with a desire for recognition, glory, and self-promotion.
- Abuses such as causing people to focus and exalt the apostolic leader, instead of focusing on Christ our Lord. Demanding that people focus only on a single apostolic leader, thus preventing them from receiving from other ministers.
- Leaders unwilling to take the responsibility and risk of leadership for citywide transformation.

Leaders abusing relationships with other leaders in the name of being "kingdom minded" but promoting selfish agendas. It is almost certain that there will be those who will take advantage of the openness of other leaders and try to promote their own interests. However, mature leaders will recognize this and with wisdom and discernment circumvent such efforts, while still maintaining their heart free from offenses.

As leaders we will need to have a lot of understanding, willingness to die to self, and a willingness to exalt the Kingdom, instead of our own church or ministry.

Immature Believers

- Believers becoming a law unto themselves and violating divine order in the citywide church. While we must encourage collaboration and Kingdom mindedness, this does not permit believers to violate biblical responsibility toward spiritual leadership and church government.
- Believers becoming rebellious toward God-ordained leadership, just as Aaron rebelled against Moses or Absalom against David. We need believers who will be like Joshua toward Moses or David toward Saul.
- Believers doing things out of zeal without wisdom and maturity. Improper practices can cause others to reject the truth.

Believers will need a firm grounding in the Word and revelation of the Spirit's working.

Recommended Reading

Divine Order in the citywide church, a free book from All Peoples Church & World Outreach, Bangalore.

6. PRAYER

Prayer For The Saints To Emerge

Dear Father, we pray in the name of Jesus for the Body of Christ in our city. We pray for the rising and the emergence of believers who have been thoroughly equipped for every good work. We pray for believers in our city to arise to be like Jesus in all things. We pray that believers will manifest signs, wonders, and miracles everywhere—in schools, colleges, government offices, on our streets, in corporate offices, and on the sports field—so that people will know that Jesus is real and will believe in Him.

Prayer For Unity And Rising Up Of The Citywide Church

Father, we pray for the unity of the Spirit in the citywide church, in our city. We pray that the Christian leaders in our city will come to a place of strong unity in the Spirit. We pray that this unity will spread among all believers in our city. We pray that the Body of Christ in our city will be strong, will rise in the power of the Holy Spirit to permeate and penetrate our city with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Prayer For The Apostles And Prophets To Emerge In The City

Lord, we pray for the emergence of true apostles and prophets in our city. We pray that you will raise apostles and prophets, with a heart for your Church in the city and with a heart for city transformation. We pray that they will walk with a true spirit of humility and gentleness.

We pray that they will take on the responsibility of providing leadership to collaborative efforts of believers across churches and denominational boundaries with one purpose—to see your Kingdom come and your will be done in our city. We pray for many such apostles and prophets who will penetrate different spheres of activities in our city so that the city will be transformed. We pray that you will give them a true Father's heart toward your people.

Prayer For City Transformation

Lord, we pray for our city to be saved. We desire to see the millions in our city come to the saving faith in Jesus Christ. May our city be transformed in every way—spiritually, morally, and in every other facet of life. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen!

Partner with All Peoples Church

All Peoples Church ministers beyond its own borders as a local church by reaching out all across India, especially North India, with a special focus on (A) Strengthening Leaders, (B) Equipping young people for ministry and (C) Building up the Body of Christ. Several training seminars for young people, and Christian Leaders conferences are held throughout the year. In addition, several thousands of copies of books are distributed free of cost in English and other Indian languages with the purpose of equipping believers in the Word and in the Spirit.

We invite you to partner with us financially by sending either a one-time gift or a monthly financial gift. Any amount that you can send to help us in this work across our nation will be greatly appreciated.

You can send your gift by cheque / bank draft payable to “All Peoples Church” to our office address. Else you can remit your contribution directly by bank transfer using our bank account details.

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Also, please remember to pray for us and our ministry whenever you can.

Thank You and God Bless!

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About All Peoples Church

At All Peoples Church (APC), our vision is to be salt and light in the city of Bangalore and a voice to the nation of India and to the nations of the world.

At APC, we are committed to presenting the complete, uncompromised Word of God in the anointing and demonstration of His Holy Spirit. We believe that good music, creative presentations, brilliant apologetics, contemporary ministry techniques, latest technology, and so on, can never substitute the God-ordained approach of proclaiming the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit with signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:4-5; Hebrews 2:3-4). Our theme is Jesus, our content is the Word, our method is Holy Spirit power, our passion is people, and our goal is Christlike maturity.

With our main base in Bangalore, All Peoples Church has several other church locations in India. To get a current listing and contact information of All Peoples Church locations, please visit our website at www.apcwo.org/locations or send an email to contact@apcwo.org.

DO YOU KNOW THE GOD WHO LOVES YOU?

About 2000 years ago, God came into this world as a man. His name is Jesus. He lived a perfectly sinless life. Since Jesus was God in flesh, everything He said and did revealed God to us. The words He spoke were the very words of God. The things He did were the actions of God. Jesus did many miracles on the Earth. He healed the sick and suffering. He opened blind eyes, unstopped deaf ears, made the lame to walk and healed every kind of sickness and disease. He fed the hungry by miraculously multiplying a few loaves of bread, calmed the storm and did many other wonderful things.

All of these actions reveal to us that God is a good God who wants people to be well, whole, healthy, and happy. God wants to meet the needs of people.

So why then would God decide to become a man and step into our world? Why did Jesus come?

All of us have sinned and done things that are unacceptable before the God who created us. Sin has its consequences. Sin is like a great unsurpassable wall between God and us. Sin separates us from God. It prevents us from knowing and having a meaningful relationship with the One who created us. Therefore, many of us try to fill this void with other things.

Another consequence of our sins is eternal separation from God. In God's court, the penalty for sin is death. Death is eternal separation from God in hell.

But the good news is that we can be free from sin and be restored to God. The Bible says, **"For the wages [payment] of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23)**. Jesus paid for the sins of the whole world when He died on the cross. Then, three days later He rose again, showed Himself alive to many and then went back into heaven.

God is a God of love and mercy. He does not wish that any person be lost in hell. And so He came, to provide a way for the entire human race to be free from sin and its lasting consequences. He came to save sinners—to rescue people like you and me from sin and eternal death.

To receive this free forgiveness of sins, the Bible tells us that we have to do just one thing—accept what the Lord Jesus Christ did on the cross and to believe in Him wholeheartedly.

"... through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive forgiveness of sins" (Acts 10:43).

... “That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

You too can receive forgiveness and cleansing for your sins if you will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The following is a simple prayer to help you make a decision to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and what He has done for you on the cross. This prayer will help you express your acceptance of what Jesus has done for you and receive forgiveness and cleansing for your sins. This prayer is only a guideline. You can also pray in your own words.

Dear Lord Jesus, today, I have understood what You did for me on the cross. You died for me, you shed Your precious blood and paid the penalty for my sins, so that I could be forgiven. The Bible tells me that whoever believes in You will receive forgiveness for their sins.

Today, I make a decision to believe in You and to accept what You did for me, by dying for me on the cross and rising again from the dead. I know I cannot save myself by my own good works, neither can any other human save me. I cannot earn forgiveness for my sins.

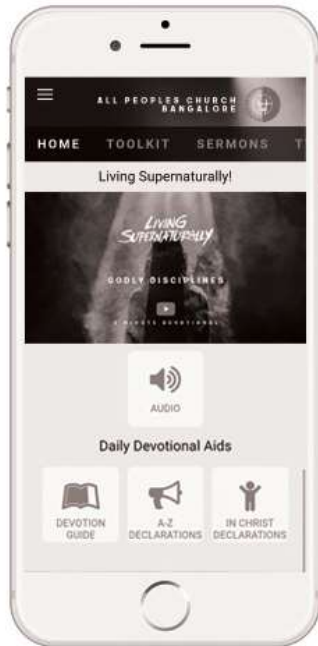
Today, I believe in my heart and say with my mouth that You died for me, You paid the penalty for my sins, You rose again from the dead, and by faith in You, I receive forgiveness and cleansing for my sins..

*Thank You Jesus. Help me to love You, to know You more and to be faithful to You.
Amen.*

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All Peoples Church Bible College and Ministry Training Center (APC-BC), in Bangalore, India, provides Spirit-filled, anointed, hands-on training and equipping for ministering in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit along with doctrinally sound and intellectually stimulating study of God's Word. We believe in developing the whole person for ministry emphasizing godly character, deep roots in the Word of God, and powerful demonstrations of signs, wonders and miracles—all flowing out of an intimate relationship with the Lord.

At APC-BC in addition to sound teaching we emphasize the love of God in demonstration, the anointing and presence of the Holy Spirit and the supernatural work of God. Several young men and women have been trained and sent out to fulfill God's call over their lives.

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To **apply online**, and for more information about the college, curriculum, eligibility criteria, tuition costs and to download the application form, please visit: **apcbiblecollege.org**

APC-BC is accredited by the Nations
Association for Theological
Accreditation (NATA).



We are now at the time when believers have to be equipped and released to go into “all the world”—homes, communities, corporate offices, educational institutions, government establishments—demonstrating the works of Jesus Christ: moving in apostolic power, speaking the prophetic Word of the Lord, healing the sick, casting out devils, working miracles and impacting lives with the Gospel. It is no longer a time for believers to be warming their cushioned seats or just for leaders to be doing the work of the ministry. All God’s people must be empowered to accomplish God’s will on earth.

As Christian ministers, it is our responsibility to make this happen. It is not about us. It is about them—the Saints—God’s people!

Learn how to be in the center of God’s present move on the earth to equip and release every child of God to be a minister of God, so that Christ can return for a Body that is strong, whole and without spot or wrinkle!

Ashish Raichur

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