

APOSTOLIC ADVICE  
NOVEMBER 2009  
"APOSTOLIC HOLINESS"

This "old" word has a very relevant meaning for us today. Recently I was asking the Lord why America doesn't seem to have a "spirit of evangelism", by this I mean "people being added to the Church daily" through the new birth. Some recent statistics seem to indicate progress such as the ones I read in a major publication which stated that the number of mega churches has increased from 200 to 7500, and the number of multi site ministries from 100 to 2000 over the last 20 years. With all this "growth", Christianity is still in decline in our nation, and the bulk of "church growth" is still from "transfers" and not new converts.

God answered my question from scripture by pointing out John 16:7-11 which tells us the job description of Holy Spirit in the "world". First He will "convince the world of sin". Here is the key phrase, "conviction of sin" which is necessary for repentance and faith to occur. It seems that there is a very low level of "conviction of sin" in our society which can be traced directly back to the low level of "holiness", or "practical righteousness" in the Church. Remember the words of Jesus when He said, "And I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me"? I believe He is not only referring to His death on Calvary, but His Life lived thru the Body of Christ. It must be more than just "preaching Christ" that lifts Him up to the world, it must be "living Christ" so that they see the difference between life with and without Him. Paul said we were to be "living epistles known and read of all men". Jesus Christ brought conviction upon people during His earth walk because He was, "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners". The Church today as His Body must exemplify the same standard of holiness in order to exact the same measure of conviction on the world because the Holy Spirit cannot convict sinners if there is no comparison to be made between "them and us". Jesus said it like this, "If the salt has lost it's savor it is useless for the intended purpose" (my paraphrase). The Psalmist spoke pointedly saying, "Sinners cannot stand in the congregation of the righteous". Why? Because the conviction is too strong where there is a righteous congregation. Sinners in the midst of righteousness will be convicted of sin and repent of their own sins. Today's church doesn't reflect the same standard of holiness to the world that Jesus and the first century followers did, that's why they turned the world upside down, and we haven't.

This sounds harsh, but it is truth. Today's apostles must preach and demonstrate "apostolic holiness" to restore conviction of sin in this world or the lost will continue to fall in to Hell as it ever enlarges itself to contain the eternally damned souls. We must cast off the intimidation that silences the voice of truth, "Without holiness no man shall see God". Sin must be defined again so that people are convinced of right and wrong. The average congregation has every known sin among it's members because there is no conviction to turn from it since God loves us and understands that we are sinners who can't help ourselves from sinning. If the righteousness is strong enough, the conviction will be also and sinners will not be able to stand, or remain in their sins in that atmosphere. Today's church is much like the Corinthian churches which were rife with sin until an "apostle" stood up and reprimanded the ongoing sin being tolerated by the leaders present. I believe that is what it will take again, a valid "apostolic voice of authority" with the signs of an apostle that will bring conviction first upon compromising leaders and consequently upon the

whole Church. The standard of holiness must be lifted in every Christian venue from the pew to the television if conviction is going to hit this world in New Testament fashion where people are crying out, "What must I do to be saved".

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