

## Apostolic Labor

April 2010

Paul gives a detailed description of his calling in Colossians 1:24-29. Among the various aspects of his "stewardship" from God, he mentions the twofold "function of the unction" in vs.28, "Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we present everyman perfect in Christ".

Paul says that the end result of the anointing at work would be to "present every man perfect (complete) in Christ." There is something about an apostolic anointing that would not settle for anything less than a mature believer being brought forth. He said, "To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily", vs.29. Notice how passionate he was about his calling, he "labored" and "was striving" by the power of God to see it happen. This is the great need in today's Church, an apostolic anointing that will produce "manifested sons of God", those who actually manifest the "Life of God." Apostle John said that he was an eyewitness of the "Life that was manifested" and that he actually "saw, heard and handled" it in the person of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:1-3). Paul manifested the Life of God in his mortal body (2 Cor.4:11) as a mature believer in Christ, and had a vision to reproduce that Life in the followers of Christ. The Life of God manifested results in salvation to the fullest, healing, deliverance, provision, miracles, signs and wonders, and a great harvest of new births.

The twofold anointing of "preaching and teaching" can be understood as "announcing the facts of the gospel" and "explaining the facts of the gospel." Paul was both a preacher and a teacher as was the Lord Jesus in His earthly ministry. Jesus was "anointed to preach the gospel" (Luke 4:18), but was known as a teacher, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher sent from God" (John 3:2). It only takes one time to "hear the facts", but takes much more time to "understand the facts" of the gospel. This is why we need more teaching than preaching as we see in the apostolic models in the New Testament, mainly Jesus and Paul. Paul's letters to the Churches contain "teaching", or explanation of the facts of the Death, Burial and Resurrection announced in the Book of Acts. Often times the "preaching of the gospel" will produce an experience, as we see in the Book of Acts where people were born again and filled with the Spirit. However, the teaching of the Epistles give the explanation of the experiences they received at Pentecost and afterwards. A truly apostolic ministry will flow back and forth between the two aspects of their gifting, sometimes announcing the facts with strong exhortation, and sometimes explaining the facts with great patience until the most profound truths can be understood by all.

The restoration of Apostles in today's church is the sign that God will bring the Body of Christ to maturity, and that "many sons will come to glory." Those with "ears to hear" will attach themselves to the apostolic anointing as they recognize that it has "miracle grow" potential for them. My mother kept her "green thumb" secret well hidden from those of us who were not inclined to Horticulture. We marveled at how she could take a dying plant and seemingly by "magic", restore it

to life and beauty. When we would ask how she performed these “miracles”, she would say rather sheepishly, “I just have a way with plants.” Later on we found the can of “Miracle Grow” plant food under the sink and discovered the secret. An apostolic anointing will have the same effect on a Christian who will resolutely “sit under” that “power that works mightily” in the servants of God (1 Thess.2:13).

*Dr. John*