

Ambassadors of Christ The Preparation of Ambassadors Part 2

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Paul said in II Corinthians 5 verse 20, "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us." Now in this statement, we have been elevated to the status of representing the Lord in the earth. Now that raises quite a number of questions, what exactly are we to say, and what are we to do as representatives of Christ? And can we say and do these things apart from representing the character of the Lord? How exactly do we go about being an ambassador? And, in our embassage, what exactly are we hoping to accomplish? These, and many other questions, are at the heart of what needs to be answered.

In a previous broadcast, we spoke about the fact that this is a new idea for most Christians; most believers have never been introduced to the idea that they are apostolic, they are sent from God, apostolos. Sent from God, like the postman sent to deliver the message, that that is in fact the truth. The church, the historic church, has coopted this function and taken it to itself and made itself both important and wealthy by going in that direction and left the people out of their commissioned calling by God to go and to represent the Lord. It stands to the test that if you do not believe that you are called to represent the Lord, that you have no purpose in representing the Lord; it stands then that you will not anticipate any form of preparation as either being necessary or that will occur to you, so that you might fully represent the Lord and do so appropriately.

Let me indicate something of the difficulty attending our status as ambassadors, I'd like to use an illustration. If the current United States secretary of state, Dr. Rice, goes to let's say the Darfur region of the Sudan and sees in that region literally genocide practiced by black people against black people. And she, being a descendant of Africans brought to the United States through the event of slavery and growing up as a young person experiencing the unpleasantness, far beyond the unpleasantness, the restrictions, the restraints, the horror of a segregated society. And she being the recipient of the brunt of this unrighteous form of social ordering, she has now risen to the very zenith of power in the world, not just in the United States, but because of the standing of the United States in the world as a whole; and she now as a black woman is in the Darfur region and gets

to face the violence of the magnitude of genocide that's being practiced there. Is she free to say to the perpetrators of violence and to the victims, is she free as a black woman to say to black people, "Listen, we have a mandate to get along and show the world that black people can govern themselves in their diversity"? The answer is no, it would be unthinkable for her to engage in such personal rebukes. Why? Because she is the face and the voice of the United States of America, she is there to represent the policy of the United States, not her personal views or feelings or thoughts. Now if she wishes to engage in this very personal accommodation, then she must resign her high office and give up the right to speak from the platform of the United States. Then she may do whatever she wills, and she may speak as freely as she wishes to. The problem with that of course is the leaders of that conflict would not come to the table to meet with someone who is just well educated, highly sophisticated, black woman from the United States. Her ability to address the conflict will be a direct outgrowth of her status as the voice and the face of the United States of America. And however urbane and accomplished she may be, if she is speaking on her own she will have only the authority that her personal presence and her personal accreditation commands. And in this conflict, no one of any serious decision making standing would ever consent to meet with her.

So what am I saying? I'm saying that an ambassador, regardless of his or her personal feelings in the matter before them, must confine himself or herself to the wishes and the policies of the one who has sent them out to represent them. This, applied to the context of being ambassadors of Christ, immediately calls to mind some very, very different scenarios and very stringent qualifications to be an ambassador. So if you're an ambassador of Christ, you're not free to use His standing, His power, His authority, to do what you want to do; you're simply not free. If you attempt to do with what is His what you will, then you will immediately find that He withdraws His presence from you. The withdrawal of His presence comes also the withdrawal of His empowerment. I'm not saying He'll leave you, I'm not saying He'll forsake you, I'm saying He will not agree with you and you will not be anointed to do the work that He's called you to do. His power and His presence will not go before you, open the way, and prepare your coming forth, nor will His glory guard you when you depart; you're on your own.

It's amazing to me that churches send out their missionaries without any thought that they're going to represent the Lord Jesus Christ as ambassadors of Christ; instead they're all sent out with a mandate to replicate the church out of which they've come in that location to which they're going. And as a result of all of that, of course what is needed is that you be fully armed with the doctrines and practices, the polity and the procedures of the church that sent you out. No one sends out people to produce the character of Christ in others, they all send out people to recreate, in a colonial setting, that power that sent them out. So if you're a Baptist when you go out, you're expected to create Baptists; if you're a Methodist when you go out, you're expected to create Methodists. No one thinks that it's any different than that.

Ambassadors of Christ are sent to represent the interests of Christ where they go. Now there are two aspects to the interests of Christ and to the representation of the interest of Christ. One is the substance, and the other is the form. Because in the particular nature of our ambassadorship, we are sent to represent the character of our King, together with the message of our King.

Now in the next broadcast or so, I will speak about the message of our King, what we are sent to do. But in this time, I wish to speak about and to emphasize the coming out, the coming forth, being sent forth, apostolos, to represent the character of our King. You see, there is a direct correlation between the message and the character of the Lord, because His message is in fact the portraying, the setting forth, portending, of His character. Because you are inducing people to come into a relationship with Jesus, the Lord Jesus, the Christ. And what sustains us, what sustains our hope, what sustains our faith, is the knowledge of the character of our King. It's not just a message; it is that you may know Him.

So He takes great effort in preparing those whom He sends. Now when He calls them to Himself, when He saves them, they're in pretty rough shape; they're reflective of all of the years of laboring under the burden of the weight of Adams transgression. And the continuing rolling forward of that with new permutations, new entanglements, new debaucheries, new corruptions, from one age to another to another. Because sin is ripening, just as righteousness is maturing; they both are coming up. Righteousness from glory to glory, and sin from depravity to depravity.

So whenever anyone is saved, they're saved OUT OF the present condition of manipulation and control as a means of determining your own well being. When you come out of that, and you're suddenly given power, you're suddenly given relevance; the temptation to use that power in the way you would've used it in the old days, is an overwhelming temptation. And most people would not be able to sustain the pressure if they were not changed to conform to the stature of Christ.

So there are three ways in which Jesus our Lord changes us, and of course the work of the Holy Spirit is evident in all three ways. And by the way, each of these ways is choreographed to address and to change some aspect of our nature. We have three aspects to our nature; we are spirit, soul, and body. II Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 20 says, "I pray that you will be sanctified through and through, may your whole spirit, soul, and body be presented blameless at the coming of our Lord. And the One who calls you is faithful and He will do it." So there are three aspects to the human being that needs to be shifted, changed, altered, refined if we are going to present the character of God right alongside, or as the foundation of the message of Christ our King.

So an ambassador has to go to school, an ambassador goes to the ambassadorial school of Jesus Christ in which his soul, his spirit, and his flesh are dealt with. The first thing that God deals with is the flesh, the carnal man, the desire in the person to remain intact. And to deal with our carnality, the Lord has assigned us the refining school of suffering. Peter says, "He who has suffered in the flesh ceases from sin." If someone purports to represent Christ, but has not suffered in the flesh, I promise you that whatever power he has been given or she has been given, they will ultimately use to support themselves.

The absence of faith, living by trusting God, is to live by what you can do. The flesh, the desire of the human being to provide for himself and to protect himself, is an overwhelming temptation. And everything that has been entrusted to us will ultimately be coopted to serve those twin interests, provision and protection, unless we have been disciplined in the flesh. We are disciplined in the flesh by suffering. Suffering disabuses of us of any notion that our walk with God is about our comfort, how we are to be comforted and taken full care of. God indeed takes care of us but it's after we seek first the kingdom and He will dethrone the flesh in order to make way for us to seek the kingdom.

What's both amusing and amazing about that reality, is that when God begins to unleash suffering in the flesh, most people want to cut and run at that point, to run away from the purposes of God because they think that when you sign up for service in the Lords kingdom to become ambassadors, that the next thing you know you're on a plane to some high level meeting in some distant resort location. Well I got news for you, that actually may happen, eventually, but it doesn't happen at first. Before you're allowed to represent the Lord, before you're entrusted with the responsibilities of presenting His message into the world, He will discipline your character.

Because, you see, when you represent the Lord an amazing thing happens; the glory that belongs to the Lord will be routinely given to you. And if you do not have the character to hand the glory of the Lord up to the Lord, if your character has not been disciplined and trained to do that, you will take the glory of God for yourself. That is, you will not see that you have been permitted, as a member of the body of Christ, to carry the representation of the Lord and to carry the result of that representation for sometimes a whole day at a time. You will then begin to think that this is all happening because of you, and you'll slip into the role unwittingly and foolishly because the consequences are extreme and honorius. You will begin to think that this is all about your being so great. And God would be obligated to destroy you in order to save you, and He doesn't want to do that because He loves you.

So He will routinely take you to the school of suffering, this is where ambassadors are prepared to divorce themselves from the pull of the flesh in order to be available to represent the interests of Christ. We are comprised of flesh, soul, and spirit. In respect to

the soul, the spirit of wisdom and revelation is given to you because the mind of the soul is carnal and the wisdom of the soul comes from the earth. That is, it comes from the pool of human endeavor; it comes from the place of human experience, and those forms. So the things that seem right to a man, to a person, the ends thereof are routinely the ways of death because it is not in a man who walks to direct his own steps, but the steps of the righteous are ordained by the Lord.

So what is required is a renewing of the mind of the soul. And the way that God renews the mind of the soul, is to impart to the soul the spirit of wisdom and revelation which functions to renew the mind. It renews the understanding of the mind, it renews the wisdom of the mind, it renews the knowledge that the mind has, upon which he makes all forms of decisions regarding his well being. So there's a fundamental shift that occurs when the spirit of wisdom and revelation has imparted to the human soul.

The third change that God affects in us is affected in the realm of our spirits. And there, according to II Corinthians chapter 3, the change that is affected is a change that has to do with how the spirit of man is informed. So in II Corinthians chapter 3, the writer Paul says, "And we who with unveiled faces all behold the Lords glory are being transformed from glory to glory." This is the progression of the human spirit in its response to the Spirit of God. There is a transformation that takes place from glory to glory.

As these things begin to progress in the life of the believer, they progress from the outward man deeply into the inner man; they progress from the flesh, they progress through the soul, and they progress ultimately into the spirit. And each part of the being is renewed in the process; we're renewed in the flesh, as I have said, we're renewed in the flesh through suffering. When you suffer in the flesh, you cease from sinning. Suffering in the flesh means you can no longer maintain the illusion that you're God, you can no longer maintain the illusion everything is just fine.

The church has choreographed an explanation for why you suffer in the flesh, it says, "You suffer in the flesh because God is angry at you." That's rubbish. There is no believer who has come to maturity who has bypassed suffering in the flesh. When you suffer in the flesh, don't call it the devil; when you suffer in the flesh, acknowledge that the Spirit of glory and of Christ rests on you. And rejoice in your suffering, because your sufferings are purchasing for you an eternal weight of glory that far outweighs the sufferings themselves.

Understand that suffering is the fiery trial that disabuses you of the notion that you can live and function in the ways of God on your own strength; it simply doesn't happen. Everyone who handles the authority of Christ will at some time in his or her life have known great suffering. It's not that you're always free from suffering; it's not that you go through it and then everything is fine; suffering often walks with you as a companion on

your journey. It reminds you of the sufficiency of the grace that upholds you. It also tells you that in your flesh you cannot represent the Lord.

The soul also is renewed, the renewal of the soul is from the art of manipulation and control. You can readily see that if God's favor is upon you and you go out into the world and He demonstrates His power and His presence and gives you all kinds of gifts; that the temptation then that will attend you is the desire to use that status to your own benefit, that is a sure way to fall. God will not tolerate the manipulation of His people for the benefit of the leaders; He will not tolerate it indefinitely. And a man or a woman who views this thing of having God's authority as their personal treasure trove is a fool, because the fool does not fear God.

The shocking truth is that today, in the church, there is little that can be seen by way of the fear of the Lord. Fear of the Lord does not mean that you are petrified of God, it means that you've accepted God as the standard of your accountability, and you will give an account. So the renewing of the soul is by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, the wisdom that comes from above, that is pure, that is not carnal, that is not sensual, that is not devilish, and has as its very foundation the fear of the Lord, the beginning of that kind of wisdom.

And finally, to reiterate, a person whose spirit is being renewed experiences the presence of God. And in the presence of God, our spirits are nourished and they take over the leadership of our being and we go from one level of trust, to another level of trust. So the spirit, the soul, and the body are renewed according to the purposes of God BEFORE God will release you to serious representation of the interest of Christ and of His kingdom as an ambassador.

So what I'm saying is that, quite literally, God prepares the ambassador spirit, soul, and body to represent the Lord. So if you're ever going to represent the Lord, you will have suffered at some time in your flesh. If you are ever going to represent the Lord, your mind is at some time going to be renewed from the wisdom that you had, and the manipulative ways that you've had. And if you are going to represent the Lord at some time in your life, you will see God as He really is. You'll begin to understand that you're a creature put in time and space with an eternal purpose, a destiny known in the mind of God from the foundations of the world.

You are therefore Christ's ambassador, not the church, the individual. And corporately, the full expression of Christ.

I'm Sam Soleyn, join me on the website, www.soleyn.com. I'll see you the next time. Bye bye. God bless you.

