

Having the Mind of Christ



Taking Time to Wait on God (Part 3)
by Derek Prince

Peter says, he's the leader, in Acts 1:21:

> "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—beginning from the baptism of John, to that day when Jesus was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

So there are certain basic qualifications. They had to be people who had been present all through the ministry of Jesus from the baptism of John to His resurrection. They had to be people who had witnessed Him after His resurrection until the time of His ascension.

So they checked over the people and they proposed two, verse 23:

> "...Joseph, called Barsabbas (who was also named Justus), and Matthias."

Now, both of those fulfilled all the required qualifications, but only one of them was chosen by God. And what was important by them was to find out whom God had chosen. This would not be considered spiritual in Baptist circles. Actually, I think The Living Bible says they tossed a coin. It says here they drew lots but it's the same thing. Why? Because they'd come to the point where their own understanding could take them no further. They knew it had to be one of the two, they didn't know which. The thing that mattered was God's choice. How to find God's choice? Well, draw straws or toss a coin.

I'm telling you that because I want you to see how totally different the perspective of the early church was on this issue. What mattered was God's choice. Any legitimate way of finding that out was all right. So it says they proposed two.

> "They prayed and said, 'You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two you have chosen to take part in this ministry.' And they cast their lots, and the

> lot fell on Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."

He became the twelfth apostle. But you see, the thrust of everything in the whole area of apostleship from the choice of Jesus to the choice of Matthias was God's choice, because God's choice expresses God's initiative and God's initiative expresses God's headship. And any time we take the initiative out of the hands of God we have shut off the headship of Jesus. We have been actually extremely presumptuous. May God forgive us. Basically, I think the church is going to have to come on its face before God and say, "God, we have been totally presumptuous. We repent and we ask you to forgive us."

I'll take one other pattern from the book of Acts. Acts 13:1–3:

> "Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul."

Five men were named, they were all prophets and teachers.

> "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'"

The NIV says "as they worshiped the Lord and fasted." The Greek says "as they conducted their priestly ministry to the Lord." It could be worship, it could be something else. But while they were waiting on the Lord, they hadn't got any agenda of their own, the Holy Spirit said, "This is my agenda."

How many times does the church come to God with its own agenda and never once ask God, "What is your agenda?" God is not a rubber stamp. You can't make your decisions, write them out in the Minutes and then get the name of God as a rubber stamp because God is not a rubber stamp, He's God.

It says again:

> "Then, having fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they sent them away."

So where did the decision come from? It came from God by whom? By the Holy Spirit, that's right.

Now, before they were sent out by the Holy Spirit they were prophets and teachers. What were they after they were sent out? Apostles, that's right. They're called apostles twice. In Acts 14:4:

> "The multitude of the city was divided; part sided with the Jews and part with the apostles."

And verse 14:

> "But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard this..."

So there is a way for apostolic ministry to emerge if we can acknowledge that there are prophets and teachers. An apostle is one who is sent forth. Anybody who has not been sent forth cannot be an apostle.

Interestingly, although the initiative proceeded from God the Father by Jesus Christ the Son through the Holy Spirit, they were not called apostles before the church had sent them out. God does not bypass the church in appointing ministries.

Now I'd like to read just a final statement about this ministry in Acts 14:26. This is the end of the ministry.

> "From there they sailed to Antioch where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed."

They came together, called the church together and reported. It's very right normally for people who are sent out to do something to report back to the people who sent them out. That is, to be answerable, to be responsible. But what really blessed me years ago when I read this was that they'd been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed or fulfilled. And I said to myself how many of us in the church today can say we have completed the work that we were assigned to. Not just done part of it but done the whole job. And my explanation is because the initiative proceeded from God. Anything else will not produce the same result.

Now let me turn to 1 Corinthians 2. 1 Corinthians 2:16 says:

> "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?"

That's a quotation from the Old Testament. How many of us are in a position to instruct the Lord? To give Him advice? To tell Him how to do things? The answer, I think, is nobody. That's what they call a rhetorical question. We know the

answer. Then it says:

> "But we have the mind of Christ."

Amazing though it may seem, we have the mind of Christ. What I want to say is it's we, it's not I. The mind of Christ is not given to one single individual, it's given to the body by the head. And until the body learns to find the mind of Christ it will go largely undiscovered.

Can you say in your particular fellowship or church "we have the mind of Christ"? Would you even contemplate that question? Does it occur to you that we should be able to say that? If we can't say it, who can? Aren't we the Charismatics? Aren't we the people that are filled with the Holy Spirit—with a few leaks? Where are the people who have the mind of Christ? How can we become that people?

I believe there's a very simple answer and I've begun to see it work. I can't say I've seen it work totally but I've seen enough to feel that I'm on my way to the answer. I'll say there's one key word, a very unpopular word amongst American Christians, the word we least like to hear. Some of you can guess what it is. Wait. Not work but wait. We are so work oriented we work ourselves to death. But that's only half of the gospel.

Let me give you just two scriptures. 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10. Paul is writing to these who are some of the earliest Christians, probably one of the first letters he wrote, and he's speaking about the impact that the gospel had made in Thessalonica. And he says:

> "They themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you in Thessalonica, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven."

Notice they turned to do two things: to serve and to wait. That's the totality of the Christian life. Serving is not all of it. In fact, it's very incomplete if it's not accompanied by waiting.

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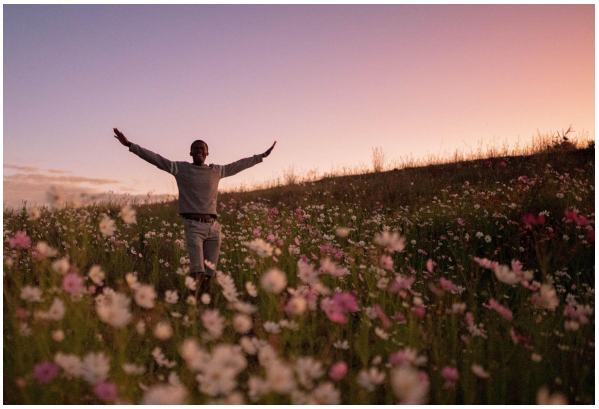

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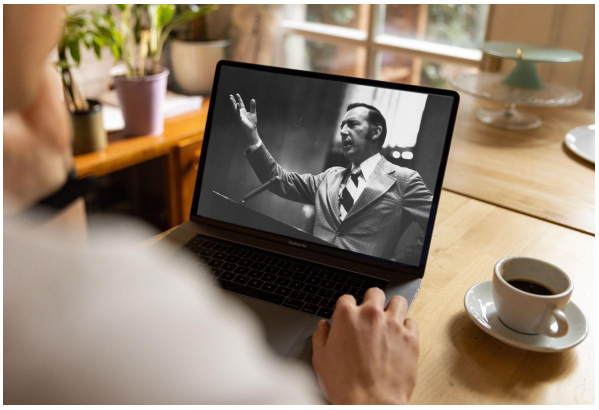

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