

## **The KINGDOM of GOD Part 1: “LIVING ON PURPOSE – JESUS’ PURPOSE”**

I have been really stirred up and excited in my heart and spirit over the last three weeks and I’m to blame because I asked for it. I have felt a little like the Prophet who felt as if he would explode if he didn’t deliver the message.

You see I went away (up to Auckland – Manifest Presence 09) and made some pretty big demands on God.

I required of Him, not just asked but virtually demanded a message to bring back to us as a Church – a message for the shape and direction of what He wants to build into us and our lives for His purposes in our Community.

I believe He gave me that message and it has totally taken my thinking captive, to the point that everything I think of and everything I want to do is now infused with it.

It is not a ‘new message’ – or a startling new revelation. It is the message of The Kingdom of God. In fact it is the central message of Jesus’ entire ministry while He walked the earth. It was the central message, theme and point of everything Jesus taught.

I have come home and have talked this over with fellow Pastors and Leaders and it seems that God is doing something in the hearts of many that no longer allows them to be mediocre in their thinking or mediocre in their relationship with God.

### HERE’S A QUESTION - or SERIES OF QUESTIONS....

- ∞ What makes us different to the World?
  - ∞ What makes us different to the Rotary Club or the Lions Club?
- They work with the broken and lost, the widow and the homeless, the corporate and the community.
- ∞ What is it that makes the Church stand-out with difference?
  - ∞ What separates us from the World and ‘their good works’ and makes us different?
  - ∞ Is it motivation, vision, good heartedness, purpose, accolades, media attention?

What is it that causes us to be MATTHEW 5:14-15 (NKJV) ?

“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

V 14 (NLT) You are the light of the world—like a city on a mountain, glowing in the night for all to see.

I believe it is only ONE THING and that has to be the MANIFEST PRESENCE OF GOD that sets us apart from the world.

MANIFEST: revealed, plainly apparent, displayed, bare, clear, distinct, evident, glaring, open, obvious, overt, palpable, unmistakable, undeniable, visible.

There are many humanitarian works and projects that are incredible and successful in dealing with the ‘human’ and ‘do-able’. I believe these are as successful as they are because without realising it, those involved are working out of their God given gifts.

ROMANS 11:29 (NLT)

For God’s gifts and His call can never be withdrawn.

(KJV) – The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

That means they will function in and through your life because that is how God designed you to function!

Is it OK to celebrate doing something that is *HUMANLY POSSIBLE* *absolutely* – but you don’t have to be saved and empowered by God to do that!

The high point of celebration should be that we have broken through *INTO THE REALM OF IMPOSSIBILITY!*

WE HAVE BEEN CALLED TO PRODUCE FRUIT OF THE IMPOSSIBLE!

We are so used to functioning and reverting back to our God Given Gifts – that many become confused or even offended when HIS Glory shows up!

We must learn to recognise and yield to God’s Glory – HIS MANIFEST PRESENCE.

Let’s look at perhaps two of the saddest events in Biblical History that took place firstly in the Old Testament and latterly in the New Testament:

JOSHUA 24:31(NLT)

Israel served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the Leaders who outlived him—those who had personally experienced all that the Lord had done for Israel.

JUDGES 2:10-11 (read it out!)

WHAT HAPPENED?!

Joshua and all the Elders; all of their generation had been exposed to and lived with the miraculous manifestations of God. The next generation HAD NOT!

Why? Because, I believe, the Israelites had got comfortable in their new land and lifestyle and had chosen that they did not need God anymore.

When we stop being exposed to the POWER of God we will backslide!

When we stop recognising the absolute need we have of the Power of God in our lives we will backslide!

If we don't see, don't speak about, lose consciousness of - the Manifest Presence of God we will become no different than the world.

When it comes to HUNGERING AFTER GOD –

A LACK SHOULD BE OF MORE CONCERN THAN EXCESS!

Now in the New Testament:

**LUKE 4:16-22**

Here is potentially one of the largest warnings we can receive as a current day Church.

- ∞ Jesus comes to his own home village and enters the Synagogue.
- ∞ He reads out the scripture that these people had been waiting for generations to hear being read out by 'THE ONE' –The Messiah. (Bible Scholars have said He sits in the Messiah's Chair)
- ∞ ALL were astonished (Mark 6), they were FIXED on him.
- ∞ ALL identified with the GRACE and WISDOM by which he spoke
- ∞ THEN ... they labeled Jesus into powerlessness!

His words were filled with Grace – ‘Grace is the empowering of God to do’ – and all heard them and were moved by them.

What was wrong here?

### **MARK 6:5 (NLT)**

And because of their unbelief, he couldn't do any mighty miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them.

I propose that those who received a healing there in Nazareth were the few believers who made themselves available to Jesus and recognised their need of Him!

What is not often thought of is that The Church of Nazareth is as *famous for its UNBELIEF* as Sodom and Gomorrah are for their immorality!

Q. “Have we become a Nazareth Church?”

### **WHAT IS NEEDED?**

God is looking for a ‘THOSE’!

### **MARK 16:17-18 (NKJV)**

And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

### **ARE YOU A ‘THOSE’?**

The Bible teaches us that “in the last days He will pour out His Spirit on ALL ...” (the Prophet Joel’s prophecy – Acts 2:17-21)

This declaration is not gender based – it is not generation based – it is not even social status based. ALL Means ALL.

So again I ask ... what is needed? Actually – more accurately I should ask WHO is needed.

There was a study done on a murder that took place in a city in the USA. It became famous because of how many people saw it take place. It turned out that of every person interviewed ALL saw the brutal assault and murder occur but not a single one of them either called 911 or stepped into help. WHY? Because they all believed someone else had or would.

The study's evidence was later called the 'Crowd Syndrome'

The Crowd Syndrome is this:

- ∞ If 1 person witnesses a crime – 97% chance they will intervene.
- ∞ If 2 – 80%
- ∞ If 5 – 70%
- ∞ If a crowd – 17%

GOD DOES NOT NEED A CROWD – HE JUST NEEDS ONE! YOU ARE THAT ONE! I literally mean 'EACH OF YOU'! God made you on purpose for a purpose!

As a Follower of Jesus, as a Christian, you cannot get a greater anointing without a greater personal encounter with the Anointed One – Jesus!

In the Old Testament we read more than once where God received an offering with the evidence of Fire falling from Heaven and consuming that Offering.

I propose to you today that if we do not see God moving it means that no-one is prepared to be that complete sacrifice.

You see - what God used to do Sovereignly – He now chooses to do in Partnership.

What does that mean? What He used to do TO you – He now chooses to do THROUGH you.

What is needed for this to happen ... complete unhindered and irrevocable Lordship of your life, deep intimacy and covenant relationship!

This may potentially offend some who have a long standing relationship with Jesus – but I am becoming more and more convinced that the Church of today is filled with Christians who are operating out of a JUDAS SPIRIT.

Judas was near to Jesus, sat with Jesus, ate with Jesus, was taught by Jesus, cared for Jesus ... all of this is good ...but Judas wanted intimacy without covenant.

We cannot have a defacto cohabitant relationship with Jesus!

THE DIFFERENCE?

Covenant = I will lay my life down for you

Defacto Cohabitant = I want you to meet my needs!

The modern Church has become like the Prodigal Son described in **LUKE 15:11-21**. (*Paraphrase the parable*)

This selfish son started out by coming to the Father saying ... GIVE ME, GIVE ME!

It wasn't until he was at the bottom of his life, desperate beyond decency, looking longingly at the pig food as though it was palatable before he 'came to his senses' ... the Bible describes it as "*he came to himself*" and ran home to his Father and instead of saying GIVE ME – GIVE ME, his new humility was "Father MAKE ME your servant!"

I was asked by a South African who had recently arrived to New Zealand, "Why are there not more Christians in NZ? Why do they not come to Church?"

I did not have an answer for him immediately. It disturbed me so I spent some serious time meditating on it. I came back to him two weeks later with this answer ...

*"Where you come from, you live with the very real chance of being killed at any given moment and thus you recognise and realise your need for God. In NZ we do not. We can live a very comfortable and safe life without God and thus we do not believe or recognise our need of Him!"*

Church Family, friends ... I have laid out some pretty serious thoughts today and I have done it all as a curtain raiser – a for-runner of what I want to preach next week.

You see I believe God is calling us into a greater understanding of His Kingship and Lordship. I believe He desires that we would place ourselves in such a way that we can 'HOST' His manifest presence and be very different to the world around us.

**Jesus has placed the Church here to be the Hope of the World ... not because of us ... BUT BECAUSE OF HIM!**

Next Week: **'THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS PRESENCE'**