

## THE CITY CHURCH

Some of the modern church has been robbed for years by its theology. The expectation for the *now* has been taken away by relegating the fulfillment of some prophesied events until after the return of Christ. Instead, we all should be recognizing that there is a present dimension in which these things can be fulfilled although the full glory must wait until Jesus comes again e.g.:-

**i) End time events** - Many of us were brought up on an eschatology that taught us that a great apostasy would occur in the church with the result that Satan's kingdom would increase and totally dominate the earth until the actual coming of the Lord Jesus. Jesus would then rescue a beaten church by a sudden rapture, and destroy Satan and his forces by the brightness of His coming. This has programmed the church to think defeat, to expect to be beaten into a corner by the devil and to wait passively for the return of the Lord Jesus as our only hope.

The idea of a militant mighty church waging an effective war against the devil in a time of heightened spiritual conflict and reaping a massive harvest in this end time period of great trouble was completely foreign to our thinking. Yet it is much more in keeping with the whole tenet of scripture.

**ii) The Kingdom** ó For centuries, the theology of most of the Church until quite recently has been to look for a Kingdom that would be established after the return of the Lord Jesus. Only then would He begin to establish His government upon the earth. It would only be in the new heaven and the new earth, or possibly the millennium, that His righteousness would be established. Until then we could only expect this present world to lie largely undisturbed in the hands of the evil one.

It is true that the final magnificence of the Kingdom will have to wait for that wonderful day. Only then will all that defiles be taken out of the Kingdom to leave it shining in it's full unpolluted glory (Mat.13:40-43). Nevertheless the Spirit of God has been showing us that Satan was totally defeated at Calvary and his visible downfall need not wait until the second coming of Christ ( John 16:7,8,11). Jesus is eager to destroy all the works of the evil one through the Church in this present age so that the world may be convinced that Satan's judgment has already taken place with the result that many will be saved.

There are differing opinions as to how complete this final work of the Church will become before Jesus' returns and only God knows how far we can get before He suddenly comes to consummate the age.

**iii) The City** - Once again the theology of the Church generally has been to relegate the establishing of the City of God, the New Jerusalem, to a post-return event. The thinking has been by many that the Heavenly City would suddenly come out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband having had no previous existence or relevance.

**God is now showing us that on the day of Pentecost, Heavenly Jerusalem came into existence in the heavens at the same time as the Church was born on Earth.** It became a powerful influence from those first days of the Church. It was the power of this spiritual City which shook the principalities and powers of darkness that had previously ruled over physical Jerusalem and wrested from them the government in the heavenly realm. The result was a massive ingathering of souls into the Kingdom of God with multitudes being added to the church daily.

### **ABRAHAM SAW A CITY.**

We are told in Scripture that Abraham saw a City which had foundations whose builder and maker was God,(HEB 11:8-10; HEB 11:13, 14-16). He saw this City afar off and embraced it although he never ever saw the actual manifestation of it during his lifetime on earth.

Somehow God showed him that this City was vital to the fulfilling of God's promise to him that one day he would inherit the whole earth (Rom.4:13).

Abraham was promised the power to be a great nation and to bless all the families of the earth (Gen.12:1-3).

He lived in the land of promise as an alien (Heb.11:9). He had no desire to return to Ur of the Chaldees (v.15) or settle permanently in Canaan for he had seen another country, a heavenly one. He also saw the whole world was to be the inheritance of him and his seed (Rom.4:13).

Somehow God showed him that the way to take the world was to exercise rule in the heavens and to do this, spiritual Cities were necessary. They alone have the strength and fire power to overcome and cast out the demonic princes, the powers of the air. It is these demonic princes that spread their influence upon the Earth and rule the present darkness from their heavenly vantage point.

Another thing Abraham saw was that the multitude that God had promised him, as numerous as the stars in the heavens for number, would be gathered in once the rule of darkness was smashed and replaced by the rule of the Kingdom. It does not mean that everybody would automatically be saved or that the demonic powers would altogether cease their deceiving tactics, but many more people would be freed to turn from darkness to light once the rule of darkness was lifted.

Again I believe that Abraham saw that the City was crucial to the change of rule and would be the cause of men and women being saved in unprecedented numbers. So Abraham saw:- A Land, A Multitude and A City. It was the City that was the means to possess the land and reap the multitude.

### **JERUSALEM WAS THAT CITY.**

The thinking of some of our theology and hymnology is that we are looking forward to the day when New Jerusalem will be created as the glorious heavenly bride made ready for her husband. We have been programmed to think that she does not come into existence till then. But as we have seen already the Bible teaches us plainly that New Jerusalem already existed while the New Testament was being written, and in fact came into existence the moment the Church was born.

The final glory of that City is yet to be seen when she comes down out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev.21:1,2,9-22).

But that does not mean that she does not already exist. Paul speaks of the present earthly Jerusalem as being in bondage with her children (Gal.4:25). This clearly meant the existing physical city on Earth which represented the legalism and bondage of dead religion. Even to this day physical Jerusalem continues to be the

world center for the legalism and deadness of three of the major world religions.

But Paul also speaks of another Heavenly Jerusalem which is above. She already exists and she is our Mother. For the children of promise, this City now is and it's where we already live.

The writer to the Hebrews in Chapter 12:18-24; also compares the two covenants. On the one hand Mount Sinai, with it's fear, darkness and bondage of religion. On the other hand, Mount Zion with its joy, light and liberty and we are told "you have already come to Heavenly Jerusalem....to the general assembly and church of the firstborn. So where does the Church of born-again believers meet? Clearly in Heavenly Jerusalem which already is!

This was the City that Abraham saw in his spirit and he embraced it afar off although he never entered it in his life time. Abraham saw this City was the means of possessing the land and reaping the multitude.

### **JESUS SEES THE CITY.**

In Matt.5:13-15, Jesus said three things concerning the Church. He said it was to be Salt, Light and a City. Both the Light and the City were to be revealed in such a way that they would be visible to the whole world. Of the City, He said it could not be hidden.

**SALT** - In Bible days, salt was the main means of flavoring the whole dish of food and was also the main means of preserving food and stopping corruption. In the spiritual terms, it means the salt of the kingdom permeating society. In practice this would mean individual Christians, full of the power of the kingdom, infiltrating every strata of secular society and flavoring it with the joy, light and righteousness of the Kingdom and holding back the corruption that would otherwise swamp society.

**LIGHT** - the pure life of the Kingdom shining in an individual Christian, a Christian family, a Christian business, a Christian school, a Christian medical practice or any other institution in such a way that the true light of the Kingdom is shining without adulteration. As a result it stands out as light against the darkness in total contrast to the darkness which is always present in the similar institutions

of this world. This gives a clear manifestation of the Kingdom for all to see.

CITY - The power centers from which the government of the Kingdom is established.

### **BIG TREES AND SMALL BUSHES.**

Among the multitude of local churches which are springing up all over the place, certain churches are destined to grow into powerful Regional Centers with the ability to build spiritual Cities which have the authority to rule in the heavens over the powers of darkness.

As these spring up all over the nation they will grow up like great trees to provide covering across the nation and protect it from the assaults of the powers of darkness that operate from their strongholds in the heavens.

When these spiritual "Mustard trees" have grown up all around the nation and their branches begin to touch each other in the heavens, then the covering will be complete and they will give spiritual shade to the whole nation, protecting it from the demonic rule it previously experienced. Then we can expect times of unprecedented blessing upon earth.

### **DAVID BUILDS THE CITY.**

David's Kingdom - a type of the Kingdom of God.

David's Throne - a type of the Throne on which Jesus sits.

David - often a type of Jesus.

Many principles by which David's Kingdom was established are principles by which the Kingdom of God is established and by which the church realizes its goals. These events are not only historic events but also types and shadows of New Testament realities.

They are written for our instruction especially for those on whom the ends of the

ages have come. (1Cor.10:11).

## **2 SAM.5:1-10.**

**HEBRON** - not the same as Jerusalem

- a place of fellowship
- not the City
- not a place from which the kingdom could be established.

David lived in Hebron for seven and a half years, but did not try to establish the Kingdom from there as it required the City.

When David came to Jerusalem he began to build the City. There were six important principles:

- 1) He dealt with the Jebusites; (Judges 1:8,21; 2 Sam 5:3-5)
- 2) He brought back the Ark; (1Sam 4:1-22; 1Sam 6:19-1Sam7:2; 2 Sam 6:1-23;1Chron Chp.13-16)
- 3) He established his Tabernacle;(Acts 15:15-17; Amos 9:11-15; 1Chron 15 & 16).
  - i) The Center of Praise; (2Sam.6;1Chron.15);
  - ii) A place where David sought the face of God corporately with his leaders.
  - iii) The Center of Government;(Is.9:6,7;Is.16:5). (c.f. Acts.6:4)).
  - iv)His style of government was consultative but he was a clear leader (1 Chr.13:1).
- 4) He built a fortified city; (2Sam.5:7-10).
- 5) The land was made secure and ruled over by strong cities.
- 6) All his enemies were subdued by taking their strong cities and establishing garrisons in them (2Sam.8:1,6,14,15,)

## **CITIES NOT VILLAGES.**

Hundreds of villages could not do what a few strong cities could do.

- i) Exercise rule and government.
- ii) Withstand an invader.

\* No king could effectively rule a land unless he had loyal strong Cities to establish and uphold his rule.

\* No king who was seeking to conquer a land could feel he had succeeded while the Cities of that land held out against him.

\* Whoever had the cities had the land. Whoever lost control of the Cities lost control of the land.

\* The villages were powerless in this matter. They could not rule.

\* From the villages it was possible to carry on a guerrilla war and harass the king who ruled from the Cities. But to wrest government and control, the Cities had to be taken.

I began to see that here was a very important principle which explained to me why, in spite of the great growth through the Charismatic Movement, the enemy continued to hold such sway in society. We had been building village churches and not Cities.

\* **Not all communities in the Old Testament became Cities.** the majority were villages but they relied on the Cities for their protection. They lived in the shadow of the Cities. They were supplied and enriched by them. They paid tribute to them and were subject to their government. Every strong City had a number of villages that were satellite to them.

## **RESTORATION SCRIPTURES.**

God's nation, the Jews, were intended to be His glory and His government in the Earth. When they finally entered the promised land they began gloriously enough but soon tired in their zeal towards God and sinned persistently against Him. They were finally judged and sent into captivity. But even in His judgment God promised that it would be for a limited period of seventy years and that afterwards He would restore them, rebuild the Temple and the City. (Jer.25:12 ;Is.44:24-Is.45:12).

These Scriptures were fulfilled through the prayers of Daniel, the edict of Cyrus the pagan king, and the courageous leadership of Zerubbabel, Joshua, Ezra, Nehemiah and others.





- ii) Its the wrong time.
- iii) Its futile - we'll never make it.
- iv) They were distracted from their main purpose into building more comfortable homes for themselves spiritually or materially.

After four years the building of the Temple ceased at foundation level and nothing more was done for another fourteen years. Then through the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah, the leaders and the people were stirred to work again on the Temple. The circumstances hadn't changed but their spirit had. In another four years the Temple was complete.

The opposition to building the Temple had been severe, but the resistance to building the City was much greater.

The enemy can often see the way God is moving before His own people do. He fights furiously to stop God's purposes being fulfilled before God's people come to understand the implications of what He is doing. (See Ezra.4:1-5,13,16,19,20).

All the different parties were building a part of the whole wall each in front of their own house. (Neh.3:1-32)

They were building the one City under the one governor. There were individual responsibilities and specific parts for each to do.

They were each building, in their own particular style, a house of their own within the City, but there was unity, order and relationships in what they were doing. They recognized Nehemiah had overall Government of the City plan of which they were part.

### **THE BATTLE OF THE WALLS.**

When Nehemiah and the people began to build the walls there was tremendous opposition. The enemy knew that if the walls were completed the City would become secure and the rule of the land by the City would begin. Every means was

used to try to stop this happening. (Neh.4:1;6-8;15,16; Ezra. 4:13,16,19-20).

## **THE ORDER OF BUILDING THE CITY.**

### **1) Temple**

- Set in order - not just a pile of stones. (1Pet.2:5; Eph. 2: 19-22)
- Family - fellowship (Eph.2:20-22)  
relationships
- God's presence - praise (Mat.21:13-16,Luk.19:40).  
prayer  
healing  
Sin dealt with - a salvation center  
Teaching - a teaching center

### **2) Walls**

- Security - protection
- Definite boundaries
- Commitment - in or out

### **3) Gates**

- Eldership established;
- Local rule by local Elders over the community nearest their gate;
- City government implemented;
- Ordered daily life;
- Regulated what came in and out;
- Safety.

There were always some who preferred to live just outside the City walls. They wanted to enjoy some of the benefits of the City without being subject to it's government or committed to it's corporate life. They wanted to use the City without really being part of it. But they were always the first casualties whenever an enemy attacked.

### **4) A Governor**

The King or his delegate was the final head of the City. He governed with a group of advisors or counselors. They administrated the City but did not get involved in

the daily detail. This was left to the local elders who were given general instructions by the king's counselors and were accountable to implement these instructions faithfully.

These City counselors, with the Governor:

- i) Ruled the City for the king;
- ii) Planned a strategy for the region;
- iii) Subdued the region and ruled it for the king.

### **5) A Garrison.**

A resident army to enforce the King's rule over the land. They worked out from the City to patrol the land and maintain the King's authority.

Multitudes of villages could not achieve this. They could not do what a few strong Cities could accomplish. This is because they have:

- i) no power to govern.
- ii) no power to resist an invader.

### **6) Watchmen on the Wall**

These were like prophetic lookouts who warned the King and the City of danger of attack and led the defense of the City from the walls so the City could not be penetrated.

### **A PATTERN FOR THE CHURCH.**

All these principles are applicable to the Church which is the fulfillment of all the types and shadows they illustrate.

### **THE FIRST CHURCH AT JERUSALEM - THE EXAMPLE.**

On the day of Pentecost the Church was first born as a City. It had the structure and numbers of a City and functioned as the first spiritual Jerusalem from the beginning. This explains the authority and power it exercised.

Therefore we see that this "City" teaches us many important principles regarding the establishing of spiritual Cities today.

My understanding of this subject gradually developed over the years out of practical necessity. I had observed big churches in South Korea, U.S.A., various African countries including South Africa, etc. and had appreciated certain powerful good things, but they also had certain lacks. Vast crowds attended them but in some cases proper government had not been established.

People came and went as they pleased without being committed or pastored. In most cases the people were just part of an anonymous crowd who were blest by the worship and power and excellence of the ministry. But many people had no function and missed the caring intimacy of smaller congregational life.

### **SMALL IS INTIMATE BUT NOT POWERFUL.**

In our own situation, as we had grown, we had divided into several smaller autonomous congregations. We had gained in terms of closeness of relationships but had lost in terms of power and impact.

### **THE PROBLEM OF OUR THEOLOGY OF THE CHURCH.**

A second problem was to do with our theology of the Church. We had always believed strongly in the local autonomous Church, so how could we justify a special relationship between the five separate congregations which we had now become? We now regarded them as five self-governing Churches. How could we still retain one government over them all?

Yet that was what we were feeling the Lord was leading us into. Undoubtedly giving absolute local autonomy and authority had diluted the excellence, weakened the thrust and reduced the growth. As the revelation of the City became clearer, I began to see we had been called to be one Church of several congregations. A City of villages under one Ephesians 4:11 government.

### **CAN APOSTLES BE RESIDENT OR ONLY TRAVELING?**

Another question was the relationship of Eph.4:11 ministries to the Local Church. I

had been strongly impacted by the teaching of Watchman Nee in "The Normal Christian Church Life" in which he teaches that Apostles and all Eph.4:11 ministries should move among the Local Churches without being based in any one of them and without being involved in the daily life of any particular one.

### **NOT ALL CHURCHES ARE LOCAL - SOME ARE REGIONAL.**

But we began to feel that God was leading us to form a base for these Eph.4:11 ministries within a new kind of "City Church" comprised of several local congregations joined together in close working relationship. It was essential that the government of that "City Church" was in the hands of Apostles rather than the Local Church Elders.

It was a great joy to me to discover that after about ten years, Watchman Nee spoke again to his leaders on this subject and confessed to the problems that the previous methods of nomadic Apostles and Eph.4:11 ministries had caused. I discovered that these messages had been translated and printed in another lesser known book under the title "Further Talks on Church Life". In this book he says that they had failed to recognize the special function of certain Churches like Jerusalem and Antioch which were clearly "Regional Churches" and not ordinary Local Churches and that these Churches formed a base for Apostles, Prophets and other Eph.4:11 ministries.

I then began to see that God had called us to become a similar Regional Church or more accurately a "City Church" with a sphere of responsibility for the three towns of Hemel Hempstead, St.Albans and Watford. They all lay within a twenty mile diameter circle with a population of approximately five hundred thousand people including all the small towns and villages in-between. Eventually, I could see no reason why each town should not grow it's own City Church and become autonomous in that sense but I felt sure that close ties would remain.

### **ZECHARIAH'S VISION.    Zech 1:11-21; Zech 2:1-5.**

When the Jews returned to rebuild the City, they first concentrated on building the Temple. As we have seen, whilst it was still at foundation level they lost heart to continue.

At this point Haggai prophesied and galvanized the dispirited Jews to start the work again. At the same time Zechariah also began to prophesy. As he began to prophesy to the immediate, in classic prophetic style, he was carried in spirit to see beyond the present small physical reality to a much greater spiritual reality that this whole exercise represents.

He was taken by the angel and began to see four horns which represented four mighty powers that had scattered the people of God so that "no one lifted up his head". Then he lifted up his eyes and he saw four craftsmen who we read "have come to terrorize these horns and destroy them". The horns represented strong satanic forces that had been able to wreak havoc among God's people because they had not been obedient to Him.

As a result there was much discouragement among them because of the way that Satan had been able to scatter them so effectively. God's answer to this terrible destructive work among His people was the raising up of the four craftsmen who had the power to utterly route the enemy and cast them out of the nation. Who are they and what do they do that is so terrifying to these strong horns?

I believe understanding this is vital to defeating the powers of darkness that hold such sway in our land at this time.

There has been a fair amount of debate as to whether the Eph.4:11 ministries are fivefold or fourfold. Some have even suggested that the pastor and teacher are really the one person, and there is a hint in the literal Greek that supports the idea. But what I have begun to see is that there are four ministry skills residing in the five kinds of men who function in Eph.4 ministry. The four ministry skills are:-

prophet  
evangelist  
pastor  
teacher

The Apostle is not really another ministry skill with special God given gifts of leadership. Such a man will have special wisdom in building (1Cor.3:10). He will also have an ability to lead and to put to work the four ministry skills already mentioned. At least one of these skills is always resident in the Apostle. He is also able to draw on these four skills in other men and women and put them to work

with an understanding which is the hallmark of the Apostle.

The ideal Apostle would have all the ministry skills within himself just as Jesus and Paul did. This would enable him to empathize with all these different Eph.4:11 ministries, direct them more effectively and train and develop all of them as someone who has first hand experience of the job.

If these ministry skills do not all reside within the Apostle then it is even more vital that he is in close relationship with well developed Eph.4:11 ministries in all the skills he lacks, otherwise he cannot fulfill his apostolic ministry. The chief purpose of the Apostle is to direct these ministries and not just give advice and counsel to Elders on how to run better "village" churches.

Once the present apostolic ministries see the City and also see their first call is to build this City as a first priority, then we shall be seeing in the Church what Zechariah saw in spirit many years ago, namely the releasing of the four craftsmen to terrorize the strong horns of the demonic prince rulers who control this present world darkness. The means of achieving this is to build strong fortified spiritual cities to wrest the rule of the heavens from these powers of darkness and establish the rule of God in its place.

Immediately after being shown the craftsmen, Zechariah is shown the City for this is what they are called to build. The first thing that he sees is an angel with a measuring rod in his hand. It must be built exactly to the dimensions set by God.

### **THE CITY ZECHARIAH SAW.**

It was made up of many villages without walls because of the multitude of men. It was surrounded by a wall of fire not of stone and the glory of the Lord was in the midst.

What Zechariah saw, when he lifted up his eyes, was a City that was made up of a number of villages without any walls between them that were dwelling together to make one great city because of the multitude of men. The whole City was surrounded by a wall of fire and the glory of the Lord was in the midst.

In reality, at the time he had this vision, he was looking at the foundations of the

Temple that the Jews were building and it was not very impressive in comparison with the Temple that had previously stood there. But in spirit he was not seeing that Temple at all, but his prophetic eyes were seeing the heavenly reality that this Temple typified.

He was seeing the City whose builder and maker was God. We are told that in this there was no Temple there (Rev.21:22,23) and the Glory of The Lamb was in the midst This was the heavenly equivalent of David's tabernacle and was the place where the Eph.4:11 ministries were to seek the face of God just like David's mighty men had done and receive revelation, wisdom and strategy for the establishing and governing the Kingdom.

Each village represented a Local Church with all the qualities of local church life. But each village was also a segment of the City and was without walls. Individually, the villages had all the benefits of the intimacy of the family life of a Local Church but corporately, all the villages joined together had the power, visibility and impact of a mighty City.

### **QUALITIES OF CITY LIFE.**

When the church was born on the day of Pentecost, it rapidly became a great spiritual city of many thousands with all the qualities of city life.

The main qualities can be summarized as follows:-

- i) It is visible and cannot be hidden;
- ii) It is powerful;
- iii) It has a bigger resource for:-
  - prayer;
  - evangelism;
  - gifts and ministries;
  - finance;
- iv) It provides a base for Apostles, Prophets and all Eph.4:11 ministries.
- v) It also provides a suitable platform for visiting Eph.4:11 ministries.
- vi) It has the power to exercise influence and authority in society.
- vii) It can realistically strategize for:
  - a) the whole region;
  - b) the home nation;



- c) the nations.
- viii) It can exercise spiritual rule over the region and clear the heavens of the spiritual wickedness in that realm.

## **GOVERNMENT IN THE CITY.**

Unlike a Local Church, the government of the City Church is not in the hands of Elders but Apostles working together with Eph.4:11 ministries.

When it comes to strategy and foundation laying and building churches they work particularly with prophets (Eph 2:20; Eph.3:5). In major decisions, affecting the life of the people, they consult with the Elders of the City (Acts.15:4,6,22).

A fully formed City Church would have a plurality of Apostles just as a Local Church has a plurality of Elders. In Jerusalem there were initially twelve but others such as James were recognized quickly. Whenever Apostles are mentioned functioning in the New Testament it is always in the plural. (Acts.4:33,37;5:12;6:6;8:14;9:27;16:4;Eph.3:5;2Pet.3:2,etc.)

Although there is plurality of Apostles there is still one consultative, servant head. James clearly emerged as the head of the Church of Jerusalem (Acts.12:17; Acts.15:13,19; Gal.2:9).

The rule of this head is not autocratic but consultative with all the leaders being involved. The head brings judgments not unilateral decisions (1Chr.13:1; Acts.15:6). These judgments will be good to all the leaders and to all the people (Acts.15:22).

The group of villages that make up the City Church will be under one overall City government and there will be no walls between them.

Although each member will have a commitment to his own "village" or Local Church, there will be a clear sense of identity with the whole City and a definite greater commitment to it. The one City Church is bigger in the minds of the people than their own Local Church.

The City Apostles and other City initiatives such as a David's Tabernacle prayer

Center and various evangelistic and compassion ministries would need to be financed by the tithes and offerings given in Local Churches. These must be released joyfully and generously by the Local Churches because they see the benefits and the right godly order of these things.

Physically the whole City Church would try to meet together once in a while and do City things together on a regular basis because the leaders and the people really want it. They really see the whole City as more important than their own part of it.

Such Cities would have the power to impact the whole of society, ( See Acts Chapters 5-9) and bring about a fulfillment of Psalm 2 (Acts.4:24-33). It threatens the existing demonically inspired order and has the power to overcome it.

### **SPIRITUAL CITIES DO NOT NECESSARILY COINCIDE WITH NATURAL CITIES.**

While a significant population is necessary to provide the numbers for a City Church, the physical limits of a spiritual City do not necessarily coincide with the boundaries of an actual physical City. The practical limits of a spiritual city are flexible and depend upon the heart and mind set of the people, their ability to maintain real living relationships and their willingness to travel.

The Hebrew word for "City" included the idea of a company of nomadic tribes traveling together in relationship under one government of leaders, although spread over a wide area and constantly on the move.

### **THE QUALITIES OF VILLAGE LIFE.**

The Local Churches or villages within the City would enrich the overall life of the people with the following qualities:-

- i) A strong sense of family life.
- ii) People are known by name.
- iii) Small things matter-e.g. Jack's new job, Bill's new car; Mary's baby etc.

iv) Daily life ruled over by Local Elders:

- Bring judgments;  
Settle small disputes;  
Supervise pastoral care.

v) Teach - new converts;  
new members;  
family life;  
baptisms;  
foundational doctrine  
practical living  
weddings; etc. etc.

vi) Watch over their Gate.

vii) Work out apostolic and prophetic ministry. The Elders would not be responsible for initiating new teaching or deciding the doctrinal policy of the Church. The doctrine of the church would be set by the Apostles in association with the Prophets and Teachers. The Elders' job would be to adhere to the doctrine of the apostles and teach it faithfully to the people (Acts.2:42;Tit.1:9).

viii) Each congregation or "village" when it is fully formed would have plurality of Elders but one lead Elder as Pastor or head of each community.

ix) At least the Lead Elder (or Pastor) of that congregation would sit in the council of the City.

x) There would be local prayer life centered in the congregation.

xi) Local evangelism would go from each congregation.

xii) In the local meetings there would be opportunity for local gift and ministry to function.

## **THINGS A LOCAL CHURCH SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT.**

- i) It does not have the gift or power to have regional or national impact.
- ii) It is not up to City level of gift expertise or excellence, so that things done at village level will have an amateur quality about them.
- iii) Not all gifts are present at village level.
- iv) A village does not have the financial of gift resources to do certain things which can only be effectively done at city level. e.g.:-
  - Run a Bible School.
  - Leadership Training Program.
  - Crusade Evangelism.
  - Run a Senior Day School.
  - National Outreach.
  - International Outreach.

## **CITY CHURCHES ARE NEEDED TO FULFILL ACTS.1:8.**

This commission was given to the Apostles when they were alone with Jesus. Although it must include the whole body it was their particular responsibility to see that the job was done. Local elders and churches often don't have a world view, and certainly don't have the gifting or the resources to fulfill the commission. However a city church with a plurality of apostolic ministry and the far greater resources of a city can realistically respond to the call.

## **JERUSALEM - THE HOME CITY**

This means planting out new ÷villageö Churches within the region bounded by the sphere of the Spiritual City. These churches would be part of the one City Church. From the beginning, they would receive full support from the resources of the city and would grow without any sense of isolation. These new Churches would be planted out in one of two ways.

- i) From an existing Local Church. A group of believers coming to the existing

church from an adjacent area would be planted back in their own area. The Elders of the existing Church would have a local governmental relationship with the new church during the early days until it reached maturity. After this, the governmental ties would be cut and only the relational ties would remain. This new Church would at all times remain firmly part of the City and continue under the apostolic government of the City.

ii) By direct planting from the center. The apostles and prophets would receive direct revelation from God, possibly concerning an area where at present there was no existing community of believers. They would then direct an evangelistic thrust into the target area from which the new Church would grow. During the growth period Eldership oversight would be provided from a nearby Local Church.

The goal of a City Church would be to have at least one functioning Local Church or "village" in every segment of the community within the region for which it had responsibility.

### **JUDEA - THE HOME NATION.**

This would mean planting out in the nation beyond the region where the City church is situated but within the national frontiers. The aim would be :-

i) To raise up new City churches and provide new bases for apostles and Eph.4:11 ministries. In this way the whole land would be covered with a network of strong cities that could exercise government over the whole land.

Apostolic ministries from existing churches would have government over these embryonic cities during the formative years. But once maturity was reached, once again the governmental ties would be cut to leave only relational ties. Whist the apostolic centers would have strong relationships between them, no one center could exercise any governmental control over another.

ii) To plant out new churches that would not grow into new cities. Not all villages are destined to become Cities. It would be unreal to give that expectation. When new Churches seem destined to remain as villages then they need to be plugged into the nearest City Church so that they can draw city life from that source. All villages need to taste city life if they are not to become parochial in

their outlook.

iii) Established cities need to be prepared to serve the churches of the region and beyond, that are not integrally part of them. In this way the big city churches can give the surrounding village churches the blessing and encouragement of their strong city life. It must be done in a spirit of genuine servanthood, seeking to serve not annex or own. In this way the City churches could run Bible Weeks, Conventions, Bible Schools, Years of Training etc. which could greatly enrich the whole body.

### **SAMARIA - THE SURROUNDING ADJACENT NATIONS.**

The goal would be not only to evangelize the surrounding nations but to produce City Churches which once again would provide suitable bases for apostolic and prophetic ministry.

We would be looking for key men with apostolic potential as well as making converts at large. Once again these apostolic men and the embryonic Cities would remain under the government of mature Apostles and developed City Churches until they had come to maturity. Then once again the governmental ties would be cut and relational ties would remain indefinitely.

### **THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH.**

The strategy for this part of the commission would be exactly the same as for the surrounding nations but would involve traveling to many nations. Some Apostles have a call from God to serve the world in this way.

### **DIFFERENT APOSTLES HAVE DIFFERENT SPHERES.**

Some Apostles have a call to build the regional City Church like James appeared to do with Jerusalem in the early church. There is no record of him traveling widely like Paul. They will be "Jerusalem" apostles and stay at home and build though apostolic in their gift.

Other apostles are called to the nation of their birth and don't travel much beyond

their own national boundaries. Others are called to the surrounding nations such as an American going to Canada or Central or Southern America, or a Briton going to France, Italy or Germany, or a Kenyan going to Zambia or Tanzania.

Yet others are called to the whole world and it becomes their parish. They travel the world and are rarely at home. The City Church provides a base for all these differing apostolic ministries. It gives them a home to belong to, to go out from and to be supported by.

In the company of his peers the Apostle finds encouragement, envisioning, mutual strengthening and also accountability among those who can understand and monitor his ministry. It's not good for any man to walk alone, even if he is an Apostle.

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