WORD AT WORK

VOLUME XIX NUMBER IX

Recognizing Apostolic Christianity I

WEDNESDAY, September 1
Scripture: Matthew 10:1

Matthew 10:1 records the call of twelve disciples soon to be empowered to minister deliverance and freedom. As we approach the emergence of the apostolic ministry whose job is to set the Church in order so it can receive the full measure of God's anointing for deliverance and freedom, how do we recognize true apostles so we can receive their impact? Long before men were sent as apostles they qualified as disciples. The question then means what kind of discipleship qualifies for apostolic ministry? The Greek word used in Matthew 10:1 for disciples is **math-ay-tes**. It is from the root **man-than-o. Man-than-o** is the corollary part of **di-das-ko. Di-das-ko** means to teach while **man-than-o** is to impart more than just words, to impart a lifestyle. **Man-than-o** means to fully receive and integrate that which comes from the teacher. To learn with the intent of totally transforming and changing a life is far different than just gathering head knowledge. **Man-than-o** forms an excellent understanding for the basis of **Math-ay-tes** which means more in the New Testament than being a pupil or a learner. The Word Study Dictionary defines **math-ay-tes** as, "an adherent who accepts the instruction given to him and makes it his rule or conduct." In John 9:28 the Pharisees are rebuking the blind man who is trying to explain how he got his healing. They say, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples." The Pharisees inherent manner of conduct is based on the law, but Jesus obviously produced a much different disciple – one who discerned and valued moving in the Spirit. The first step in recognizing an apostolic anointing is adherence to the Lord for learning thus a manifested attitude which is open for input and accepts correction.

THURSDAY, September 2
Scripture: Matthew 10:1-4

In verse 2 the twelve disciples now become apostles because in verse 5 they're being sent. The Greek word for apostle is a direct transliteration of the Greek word into English **ap-os-tol-os** which comes from the verb **ap-os-tel-lo** meaning to send. In Classical Greek it comes from a fleet of ships which are sent or commanded by the authority of an Admiral. Therefore we can assume the platform for the full level of authority is best learned in the Navy and we extend only the deepest sympathy for those with Army and Air Force backgrounds! The second mark of an apostolic call is divine authority or a spiritual militancy concerning specific truths.

FRIDAY, September 3
Scripture: Matthew 10:1-5

Verse 5 marks a very important transition in the training and preparation of apostolic ministry. It can even be a recognition mark when we are looking at those who appear to have the apostolic call. Sometimes verse 5 can take decades to form in the life of an individual because the principle constrains desires of the heart, desires of the mind and the flesh. When we look at the composition of the twelve we see the diversity of the culture. Each individual's temptation would obviously be in going to the area of their comfort, so the first thing the twelve had to learn before they were sent, or in the process of being sent, was where ***not*** to go, and what ***not*** to do. The harness of the Holy Spirit is one which forces us, at times, to deny the path of least resistance and to take the path

definitely most difficult. Before they were ever told what to do and where to go – they were first tested by being told where ***not*** to go. Have we embraced the harness of the Spirit to the degree that we are willing to let God outline what we cannot do before we ever get a clarity about what to do. Plowing the ground precedes planting the soil. Preparational failure often grows presumption. When you've had a long season of not hearing what to do – its very easy to presume and just start doing something. The discipline is to wait until we're told what ***to do*** – this is the third mark of apostolic anointing.

SATURDAY, September 4
Scripture: Matthew 10:1-6

In verse 6 Jesus tells them where they can go, "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Go to all the covenant people who were lost and turned off by what the religious world has done. Go find the people who have been wounded by the Pharisaism of the Church and bring life to them. Go find those who could never measure up to the law that was preached and who are so discouraged they don't ever think they could qualify and take them the anointing for restoration. Jesus knew He was sending them to a tough crowd, but He also knew it was God's purpose for the moment. Apostolic ministry has a definite harness. We need to look for each strap of it including the bit and bridle which is the fourth mark of apostolic ministry. They go where God directs even though it means prison and death (Paul to Jerusalem).

SUNDAY, September 5
Scripture: Matthew 10:7-8

Jesus told them exactly what they were to preach. They had to preach the kingdom is here. Then in verse 8 they were to demonstrate it, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give." I've often wondered about those who resist the message of the kingdom. What are they maddest about? Is verse 8 the key because they have no power of the Holy Spirit to do the works of Jesus so they have to discredit what He told us to do? Verse 8 also has another layer of crucifixion in the challenge: "Freely you have received, freely give." Verse 8 says from this point on because of the anointing to "…heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils…", your time is no longer your own. This anointing is going to bring people to you day and night. You're going to have to walk it out. You must be available at times you don't want to be available. You're going to have to give yourself, at times, when all you want to do is kick back and rest. From this moment on, because of this anointing, your life is not your own. How many do you know who volunteer to forfeit all their free time? The fifth mark is actually living the truth, "we are not our own"!

MONDAY, September 6 HAPPY LABOR DAY
Scripture: Matthew 10:9-10

Another piece of this bit and bridle by which we recognize apostolic ministry is verses 9 and 10 which says, "Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food." True apostolic ministry does not have to manipulate people, they don't have to horde up, they don't have to sell everything in sight. Because they are sent by the Lord – the Lord is responsible for their care. When we send ourselves we have to figure out how to pay for what we are doing. But when God sends us, He says we don't have to do any of that "**stuff**." We don't have to pay for our seminars by selling our seats for $50, $60, $90, and $120. Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits." I haven't found the apostolic marching orders to change in 2000 years! Can you find a revision for Matthew 10:8? Maybe Jesus didn't mean what He said by "freely"! "Freely" is number six.

TUESDAY, September 7
Scripture: Mathew 10:11-15

When we embrace the bit and bridle of true discipleship, it is training for receiving apostolic authority. When divine authority comes to an individual or ministry it comes for the people ordained to be trained and delivered by

it. When such a ministry is sent by God it becomes an Abrahamic test for the church. We need to understand this is a test of Abrahamic proportions. The test is diminished by the degree that any one of the seven major components of the bridle of the Lord are missing in the life or preparation of the ministry. When all nine preparational components are functional and operational, we find ourselves in a major test which determines the level of blessing our future holds. I hope we pass the test.

WEDNESDAY, September 8
Scripture: Matthew 10:16-18

The magnitude of the Abrahamic test the apostolic ministry presents when it is sent forth to accomplish God's purpose is clearly stated in verses 16-18. These verses say, "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. And you will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles." God told Abraham, through covenant, that those who blessed him God would bless – and those who cursed him God would curse. The covenant of obedience caused Abraham to be an agent of blessing or judgment depending on whether he was received or rejected. To reject one sent by God is to mandate that God, in one form or another, will reject us. Our refusal to recognize one sent by God mandates a judgment of a refusal of recommendation for us when Jesus says in verse 18 the action will result in a ***testimony against***. The parallel passage is Luke 9:1-5 where the twelve are sent out, empowered and divinely directed. Verse 5 says, "And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a ***testimony against*** them." What if God sends His people and we don't recognize the purpose for which they are sent? It becomes a judgment against us and when it is time for us to go and be sent by God we have already sown the seed of not being received in our own actions. We desperately need the true apostolic anointing resident in the Church.

THURSDAY, September 9
Scripture: Matthew 10:19-25

It is very important that the emerging apostolic ministry adopt an attitude of grace toward the guaranteed persecution and rejection they are about to receive. Verse 19 did ***not*** say "…**if** they deliver you up…." He said, "But **when** they deliver you up…." This presumes that the individual who has accepted this anointing and is walking out the obedience in leadership of the Holy Spirit that the anointing demands, have already resigned themselves to the fact that adversity is their lot in life. Criticism, rejection are all part of the package and they are empowered to walk it with a grace that overcomes reactionary personal judgments against the perpetrators. These are individuals who have a mindset that persecution will not stop the purpose or work of God and they are determined, even in the midst of persecution and rejection, not to be fuel for the fire. In the same way Jesus could cry out and ask the Father to forgive the very ones who crucified Him, this measure of grace apparently rests upon the true apostolic minister. If you're really called to an apostolic anointing, you find the grace operational in your life to endure what the Church throws at you without becoming embittered and hostile. That in itself is a sign and wonder which makes number seven in discerning apostolic marks.

FRIDAY, September 10
Scripture: Matthew 10:26-31

One of the true signs of apostolic authority is they are not afraid to pull the lid off what is covered, secret and out of order. God has a commitment to the Church that we need to understand. His commitment is that He builds in the light. Because He is light and builds in the light, His commitment then is to uncover every area of darkness and address it. Unfortunately the apostolic ministry seems to be called to lift the lid and during the process of lifting the lid there are many in the Body of Christ, and some in leadership, which rather than face the reality of what they see when God shows them their own heart would rather deny their condition, dodge reality and discredit the messenger. Look at the ministries who specialize in one thing today – discrediting the messengers. It is the

spirit of the age and shows the magnitude of the spirit of anti-Christ at work in the Church. Mark number eight is confrontational in purity.

SATURDAY, September 11
Scripture: Matthew 10:30-36

Carrying an apostolic authority means we often run into opposition within our own families. One of the major tests of apostolic authority comes in our willingness to adhere to the call and endure the warfare within the family and the rejection that often comes. It is amazing how, in church mentality, we demand everything be in complete order in the family and yet Jesus taught that one of the main signs of apostolic anointing and authority was disharmony in the family. How do we reconcile our ministry mentality with the words of the Master? I've had ministers tell me they did not want the healing miracle anointing because everyone they knew who walked in it ended up losing their family. Did Jesus know something about apostolic authority that we're still trying to understand? How do we reconcile our demand for order and harmony in the home with the words of Jesus? Have we allowed a measure of Pharisaism in the Church or are we infected with it ourselves? Could sign 9 be adversity at home challenging the call to bring order to the Body?

SUNDAY, September 12
Scripture: Matthew 10:37-39

Is it possible the final test of carrying apostolic authority often comes through family issues, parent-children issues, or husband-wife issues? Perhaps it's God's way of reducing the individual to absolute and utter dependence, and then again perhaps it's a test for the congregation or those of us who encounter God's apostolic anointing in our receiving or rejecting their message. Is it possible God will leave, in the life of an individual, enough rope for us to reject them based on chapter and verse while giving them chapter and verse for conducting their ministry? There is one thing we know about Pharisees – they always argue about the law and they have chapter and verse to back up their position. We can find chapter and verse in Timothy for how leadership needs to be in harmony at home and yet we find chapter and verse out of the mouth of Jesus that tells us to carry apostolic authority means to endure disharmony at home. Where is the answer? Must we resolve this conflict or is it there as a test?

MONDAY, September 13
Scripture: Matthew 10:39-41

Will we ever grow to the point we have embraced what Jesus teaches here concerning apostolic authority? Can we receive the message and the anointing while enduring the weaknesses of the vessel in his family? Do we demand those who minister to us walk in a place most of us haven't attained? There is no doubt about the fact God has a high standard for ministry! But does He leave areas of life in His vessels that give us room to reject the message based on the condition of the bearer and the situation turn out to be a judgment against us in the end? Perhaps we need to look at the condition of the men Jesus chose in their strengths and in their weaknesses to answer that question. Peter was used mightily on the day of Pentecost. What were his strengths and what were his weaknesses?

TUESDAY, September 14
Scripture: Matthew 10:42

Verse 42 says, "And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward." Can we receive the apostolic anointing in such a way as to be a giver and supporter of God's purpose in the individual and not kill and crucify them by putting nails in their hands because of the weaknesses they carry about in their life. The uneducated fishermen Jesus chose to anoint were an absolute offense to the educated Pharisees who ruled the Church of Jesus day. The educated upper

crust could not receive from the blue collar workers. They were absolutely convinced these men who had never prepared themselves educationally were not fit to be able ministers of the New Covenant. Can we give enough grace to the emerging apostolic vessels to find the reward verse 42 promises without disqualifying ourselves through criticism and judgments of their weaknesses? The Church leadership of Jesus day failed this test and every time there is a new move of the Spirit this test is presented all over again. Can we grow up enough to pass the foundational test in a season where God is obviously restoring apostolic authority.

WEDNESDAY, September 15
Scripture: Matthew 6:19-21

One of the first major issues the Lord dealt with in the Church after sending out His apostles was the issue of dual lordship. In Matthew 6:19-21 Jesus deals first and foremost with the issues of the heart. He says whatever is first place in our heart is what we are going to serve. That which we place the most value on becomes the focus of our life. If we focus on being successful financially versus relationship with the Lord, the pursuit of success begins to dominate the heart relationship which God values most. We must choose to value what God values and to limit what He says is strictly secondary. The issue becomes – where is our treasure?

THURSDAY, September 16
Scripture: Matthew 6:22-24

Jesus shows us there is a continual war over our motives and our goals! Our heart will be captive to what we choose to value. In verse 22, if we value what the Lord values our eye will be clear and our body full of light. If we devalue what God values we open the door to the darkness of the enemy and the promise darkness will eventually overtake and control our life. There are two masters in the earth. We will either be loyal to one and despise the other or we will yield to one and desert the other. One of the strong points of the apostolic anointing is individuals who bear it must have passed the mammon test. Where are we in that process and are we looking for those individuals?

FRIDAY, September 17
Scripture: Matthew 6:25-26

The promise is to those of us who choose the Lordship of Christ over the spirit of mammon. We gain a peace for future provision that God will honor. We can walk in the blessing of God and the peace that comes with adhering to the true Lord of the universe. In a season where God is restoring the apostolic authority to the Church, we must be prepared for the inevitable mammon test that comes with such a restoration. Jesus taught it clearly and we see the same pattern in the early Church in the book of Acts. The true Lordship of Christ must be established in the Church as opposed to the obvious inroads made by the spirit of mammon. God wants to be Lord of every aspect of our life especially over the issue of finances.

SATURDAY, September 18
Scripture: Luke 16:1-2

We know Jesus taught money can be a master, **koo-ree-os**, – gain a dimension of lordship in our life displacing submission to God Himself. The Greek word for Lord is **koo-ree-os**. It is from **koo-ros** and means supreme in authority as the controller, lord or master over decision and direction. If God is the "rich man" in Luke 16 and we are the "stewards", how do we forfeit our stewardship? The issue in verse 1 is we begin to waste the master's goods. The Greek word here is **dia-skor-pid-zo. Dia** means to channel. **Skor-pid-zo** means to fly in every direction spending on self. To waste God's goods is to walk in the earth without the Lordship in place over our choices financially. Is Jesus Lord on a daily basis?

SUNDAY, September 19
Scripture: Luke 16:3-7

The steward has found a plan and it is a plan of manipulation and the motivation is financial gain. The man who owed a hundred measures of oil rewrote the contract and only had to pay fifty. The man who owed a hundred measures of wheat rewrote the agreement so he only had to pay eighty. This scheme was 100% mammon motivated, but it speaks to us about a ministry mentality. Can we call a ministry truly apostolic if it preaches far less than the Master requires in order to fill the seats and bring people in? To what degree are we seeing this strategy used in the Church today to build congregations? Is there a spiritual price tag for being seeker sensitive?

MONDAY, September 20 HAPPY YOM KIPPUR
Scripture: Luke 16:8-9

Jesus said very clearly, when we take the approach that is mammon friendly for the purpose of building that which is successful in attaining the resulting financial benefit, we have made friends by a spirit of mammon. This is the other god in the universe and compromise guarantees eternal failure. The issue was never in Jesus' mind ***"if"*** you fail. The future was always guaranteed for adherents to mammon. Jesus did not say "if you fail" but "***when"*** you fail. Can we call apostolic what Jesus guaranteed would fail?

TUESDAY, September 21
Scripture: Luke 16:10-13

The mammon test bring us into a decision concerning which way we choose to operate and function based on the conflict of integrity presented by Scripture versus the necessity of financial need that inevitably comes with ministry. Will we compromise integrity and step into manipulation in order to gain relief in financial famine? This test is no different than the one Abraham and Isaac faced. Abraham in a season of famine chose to go to Egypt. When he went, it brought problems to his house and his family – not once but the test kept coming until the second generation passed it. God dramatically intervened for Isaac telling him not to go to Egypt in a season of famine but to sow in the land and God brought the hundred fold return. Are we not walking out the same process today? Let us recognize that with the emergence of apostolic anointing comes a decided standard over the issue of mammon. If the standard is not there, we can safely say this may be an emerging apostolic ministry without the foundation being fully laid.

WEDNESDAY, September 22
Scripture: Luke 16:13-14

The chief issue that brought Jesus into conflict with the Pharisees was the issue of money. Verse 14 shows the conflict in its truest sense, "Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him." Jesus earned the wrath of the Pharisees. Can we say we recognize the emerging apostolic ministry if it stirs no Pharisaical wrath? Is it possible the level of God's approval on emerging apostolic authority comes in direct proportion to the adversity it generates within certain segments of the Church?

THURSDAY, September 23
Scripture: Luke 16:15-17

How do we judge a ministry being successful? Jesus made it obvious it has nothing to do with material provision or magnitude of operation. He said in verse 15, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." If we have a church of 25,000 that we've built by requiring less than the Master does because the motivation of the heart is success and mammon, then we have to say what we built will not stand the fire of testing. Do we see the way God sees? Do we highly esteem what in God's eyes is abomination? Do we think the way God thinks? Do we

view the way He views, or is our view skewed by what is esteemed by men? Apostolic ministries have these issues already sorted out and they bring a clear trumpet to the Church because they have been with the LORD.

FRIDAY, September 24
Scripture: Luke 16:16-18

When money is lord, spiritual adultery is present and infects everyone who interacts with the altar. Spiritual adultery happens when money dictates spiritual decisions. If we fellowship at an altar where money influences the spiritual decisions, spiritual adultery can capture us by financial participation. The emerging apostolic ministry is coming with the authority to set things straight in this dimension. It's a deliverance the Church must have and one few want!

SATURDAY, September 25
Scripture: Genesis 37:1-11

The call is often great and glorious but there is also usually no clue to the price. How does God deliver us from the lordship of wealth, especially if He has called us to the anointing to spoil? We find it all begins with the vision imparted and an active embracing of it. We sign on – we say "Yes, Lord, we are in this to the conclusion." "We will walk it out" and we fully agree with the call of God. Once we're hooked and say "yes" then the preparational process begins. The process is usually intense enough many never finish the training.

SUNDAY, September 26
Scripture: Genesis 37:18-36

The preparational process of God always begins with acceptance of the vision and then the stripping of the individual. When God called Abraham He stripped him of the country he grew up in and then of his family and friends. When Saul of Tarsus was called into ministry he was stripped of everything he had. Every identifying mark of our past is stripped away – our multicolored coat – all our provision – our position – and often times our country. How can we accept an individual claiming apostolic ministry and authority if they do not have the mark of being stripped in their life?

MONDAY, September 27
Scripture: Genesis 37, 36, 39

When slaves were auctioned or taken to the auctioned block, they were totally stripped of all clothing, so for whatever purpose the purchaser was buying he could see every aspect of what he was getting. It was the ultimate in humiliation. Stripping follows a cycle in which some ground is gained, you see the presence of God, but one tragedy yields to another. Joseph may be in Egypt but he still has his integrity in tact. The integrity is stripped away in Potipher's house with the lie and the accusation and the judgment of being thrown into prison. He is stripped of stewardship over lies and is thrown once again into a deeper prison and captivity. Is apostolic authority being formed in the fire? You better b-e-l-i-e-v-e it is!

TUESDAY, September 28
Scripture: Genesis 40

Once again Joseph finds the Lord is with him. He climbs the ladder of responsibility and then when the "chief helps" ministry of the land finds himself incarcerated Joseph ministers the word of the Lord – the gifts are still flowing. God is present. He is doing signs and wonders. Just as Joseph interprets, so each dream comes to pass – with the butler restored into Pharaoh's presence and the baker hanged. This cycle of events continues with one bringing hope, another bringing discouragement. Until the individual is totally delivered from looking to events

and occurrences as being a measure of success or failure. God knows how to baptize us in preparation that is eternal in every dimension. Are we looking for these marks in the emerging apostolic ministries?

WEDNESDAY, September 29
Scripture: Genesis 41:37-51

We discover in God that only restoration and exaltation can heal the pain of preparation. When the time came and the authority was released then and only then do we see verse 51, "Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: 'For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house.'" In the emergence of apostolic authority the pain of the preparational process will be washed away. What happens when we too quickly promote our apostolic ministries and their pain of preparation is not yet healed? They sow into the lives of all who receive the preparational pain and the view is once again skewed as the warfare continues. If we were making keys and our original was warped, we would know the copy would also be warped. God is walking leadership through a process. May we seek the Lord for His wisdom to stay in the process until it is complete. Emerging too quickly can be dangerous for all to whom we minister.

THURSDAY, September 30
Scripture: Genesis 45:1-5

In Genesis 45 we see three previous major strippings of Joseph's life have prepared him for the voluntary stripping he now does in revealing himself to his family. Joseph himself strips away the title, the authority, and the position and shows he has learned to be a servant to his family and he has accepted the preparational plan of God as a necessary process. The first three were beyond his control, but the fourth is a choice and brings restoration, closure, and provision to his family. To be a father in the faith means not only to be a founder, author, nourisher, master, but one who brings the sovereignty of Master to bear on the situation. To be a ruler is the Hebrew word **maw-shal.** That means to judge or give sentence. To occupy that position and walk in that anointing we have to embrace the stripping process. Let us look for the emerging apostolic authority with the bit and bridle which God provides in the process from which only God can graduate. Emerging to soon often produces more harm than good. Let the process continue toward completion.

©1999 Al Houghton\ "Word at Work" Ministries, Inc. P O Box 366, Placentia, CA 92871-0366.
Reproduction in whole or part is encouraged to share with others. IMPORTANT NOTE: Please keep us informed of your current address. The Post Office only forwards the "Word at Work" by grace through faith.

ITINERARY
Al Houghton

September 16-18	**16th** 7PM, **17th** 2:30PM & 7PM, **18th** 9:30AM & 2:30PM Prophetic Ministries e.V Christliches Zentrum Weilimdorf Rennstrabe 6 D-70499 Stuttgart-Weilimdorf Germany	**Contact** Brian Williamson Tel 49-7152-997084 E Mail: b.williamson@t-online.de
September 22-26	Pastor Pierre Cranga Church at Macon 139 Rue Du Concours Macon, France Phone: 011-333-85-393928	