

Reformat – Apostolic Power (Part 3)

Malachi 3:7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept *them*. **Return unto me, and I will return unto you**, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

Illustration: Computer Reformat

The ministry of the church stands on three pillars – Apostolic preaching, Apostolic pattern, and Apostolic power. Remove any one of them, and the church is ineffective in fulfilling its mandate.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a **threefold cord** is not quickly broken.

Illustration: Three Legged Table

Today we will look at Apostolic POWER ...

REVIVAL means that some spiritual practice that has fallen out of use or become rarely experienced reappears to grip Christians with living force.

REVIVAL is an interruption of the status quo so that ideas and experiences that had fallen out of use can get reintroduced.

REVIVAL begins as people become determined that things will not remain the same!

*Hallelujah! Thine the glory! Hallelujah! Amen!
Hallelujah! Thine the glory! Revive us again!*

The church cannot survive without Apostolic POWER. We need it like we need air to breathe! Look how much Luke wrote about POWER:

Reference	Scripture
Lk 1:17	17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.
Lk 1:35	35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.
Lk 4:6	6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.
Lk 4:14	14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

Lk 4:32	32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power .
Lk 4:36	36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.
Lk 5:17	17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.
Lk 5:24	24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.
Lk 9:1	1 Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.
Lk 9:43	43 And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,
Lk 10:19	19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.
Lk 21:27	27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
Lk 22:53	53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.
Lk 22:69	69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.
Lk 24:49	49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.
Ac 1:7	7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power .
Ac 1:8	8 But ye shall receive power , after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
Ac 3:12	12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?
Ac 4:7	7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power , or by what name, have ye done this?
Ac 4:33	33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.
Ac 6:8	8 And Stephen, full of faith and power , did great wonders and miracles among the people.
Ac 8:10	10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.
Ac 8:19	19 Saying, Give me also this power , that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.
Ac 10:38	38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power : who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.
Ac 26:18	18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Luke prefers these two words for POWER:

- Exousia, which means AUTHORITY
- Dynamis, which means ABILITY

Acts 1:7-8 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power (AUTHORITY). But ye shall receive power (DYNAMIS), after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

THESE ARE “PRAYER WORDS” – both of them are used to apply to Jesus and both of them are used to apply to us – BUT WE ONLY GET THIS KIND OF POWER IN PRAYER!

What is the church NOT to be? When we strip away all the junk that is cluttering up our lives, when we “REFORMAT” back to the original “operating system,” then we find out what church is supposed to be!

Even a slight misalignment in the church’s purpose causes a subtle, gradual shift ... and we begin to depend on man’s power instead of God’s power. Just 5 degrees out can lead a boat far off course!

Psalm 20:7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

THE REASON WE GET TOGETHER TO WORSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS IS SO WE CAN EXPERIENCE GOD’S PRESENCE, BECAUSE ONLY HIS PRESENCE BRINGS APOSTOLIC POWER!

Many churches today have “worship-based prayer.” That is, the only time they pray is when they are in an atmosphere of worship. But Apostolic churches have “prayer-based worship.” That is, their worship is deeper and accomplishes more because it comes out of a life of prayer!

John 4:23-24 (KJV) But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

In Acts 15, nearly 20 years after God poured out His Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, the New Testament Church was still trying to find this balance between Word and Spirit, Jew and Gentile, Law and Grace, Old Covenant and New Covenant. They convened a church council in Jerusalem to discuss the issue, and after everyone had spoken the final word came from the Apostle James, who appealed to the Scripture:

Acts 15:14-17 (KJV) Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

Why would God want to rebuild DAVID’S tabernacle, instead of Moses’ tabernacle or Solomon’s temple? David’s makeshift tent barely qualifies as a Tabernacle! BUT DAVID’S TABERNACLE WAS GOD’S FAVORITE HOUSE (God has wonderful memories of what happened there!)

David’s tabernacle was LESS STRUCTURE AND MORE EVENT; church today is MORE STRUCTURE AND LESS EVENT! What is impressive to God and what is impressive to man are obviously two different things!

Acts 13:22 (KJV) And when he had removed [Saul], he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

The most powerful component of David’s tabernacle began long before it was built, in the heart of a worshipping shepherd boy! DAVID HAD AN UNUSUAL HUNGER FOR GOD, ALWAYS PURSUING GOD’S PRESENCE, CHASING “AFTER” GOD’S HEART! HE HAD A “PASSION FOR THE PRESENCE!”

Years later, when David began to talk about bringing the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem, he wasn’t interested in the gold-covered box with the artifacts inside. He was interested in the BLUE FLAME that hovered between the outstretched wings of the cherubim on top of the ark – the Shekinah presence of God!

In Moses’ Tabernacle and Solomon’s Temple, the Ark resided behind a veil. GOD NEVER DID LIKE THAT VEIL! He had to have it to preserve the life of sinful humanity as they came to worship Him, but He didn’t like it. When Jesus died on Calvary, God ripped the veil from top to bottom in such a way that it could never be rewoven again! God doesn’t want to be separated from us!

This is why God loved David’s Tabernacle – there was no veil or walls of any kind to separate mankind from His presence. The only thing encircling God’s presence was the worshippers! They ministered non-stop to the Lord 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year for nearly 36 years! In David’s Tabernacle, the glory was seen by everyone!

David was so passionate for God's presence that he began to dance as the ark entered Jerusalem. David valued the things that God values, but his wife Michal valued dignity over Deity! God cursed her with barrenness! You can't seek His Deity and maintain your dignity! It is time to abandon spectator services and become a participator! Are we willing to pay the price David paid for God's presence?

Immediately when they set the ark down, David demanded that the Levites begin offering 24-hour-a-day worship to the Lord! The worshippers became the veil around the ark – they had to turn their back on man to worship God in their midst! The world doesn't need better sermons or songs. They need "gap people" who can reach for God with one hand and for the world with the other. We "prop open the heavens" with our upraised hands! David kept heaven open for nearly 36 years ... and God wants to rebuild the tabernacle that fell when they got tired!

When the Ark was in its right place, Israel was blessed. Worship is putting God in His rightful place! **The Bible is filled with sacrificial worship!** We don't apologize for our exuberance in worship. We apologize that more churches are not this way! With so many commands in the Bible to praise God, who in their right mind could call themselves a Christian and not praise God with exuberance?!

In fact, this is one of the crucial differences between the Tabernacle of Moses, where worship consisted of ANIMAL SACRIFICES, and the Tabernacle of David, where worship consisted of SACRIFICES OF PRAISE. David's Tabernacle, according to James in Acts 15, is the pattern for our worship today!

NONE OF THESE FORMS OF WORSHIP WERE PRESENT IN MOSES' TABERNACLE, BUT THEY WERE ALL PREVALENT IN DAVID'S TABERNACLE: Singers & Singing, Instruments of Music, Thanksgiving, Praise, Singing of Psalms, Rejoicing and Joy, Clapping, Shouting, Dancing, Lifting Up Hands.

Spiritually hungry people don't come to church to be EDUCATED about God, but to have an ENCOUNTER with God. Worship, by its very nature, is a bit illogical because it is TOTALLY ABANDONED DEVOTION.

Galatians 3:3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

WE DIDN'T DO THIS THE "SENSIBLE WAY" ANYWAY!

Psalms 124:1-2 If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say; If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: