

THE CHURCH THAT WOULD NOT SUFFER!

A MESSAGE SHOWING FORTH TRUE APOSTOLIC POWER WITH GOD

Do we want to crown our offering with a tortured bloody martyrdom as they did? Pentecost has a cost. If we are going to have apostolic success we are going to have to have apostolic suffering. Leonard Ravenhill said: "We talk Apostolic doctrine but lack Apostolic deeds. We claim Apostolic faith but lack Apostolic fruit. Some trumpet Apostolic power but lack Apostolic poverty. Some claim Apostolic enduement but lack Apostolic accomplishment." - Greg Gordon

APOSTOLIC POWER

Oh! for a call back to apostolic preaching, apostolic power, apostolic praying. We cry out 'I want apostolic power' but do we really? Do we want to suffer as they did? Do we want to crown our offering with a tortured bloody martyrdom as they did? Pentecost has a cost. If we are going to have apostolic success we are going to have to have apostolic suffering, Leonard Ravenhill said: "We talk Apostolic doctrine but lack Apostolic deeds. We claim Apostolic faith but lack Apostolic fruit. Some trumpet Apostolic power but lack Apostolic poverty. Some claim Apostolic enduement but lack Apostolic accomplishment. We may have Apostolic vocabularies. Do we have Apostolic victories? Many claim Apostolic succession. Few, if any, dare claim Apostolic success!" Let us look at the life's of the apostles and see their summation, see how well they ran and also finished the race that was set before them. Will it shock you to know that every apostle died a violent martyrs death. Should we not except to follow the

same path our master trod? shall we not tread it still? Let us read their stories: The apostle Andrew according to traditional accounts, was crucified by order of the Roman Governor, Aegeas at Patrae in Achaia, Greece on a X-shaped cross. The apostle Bartholomew according to traditional accounts, was flayed alive and crucified, head downward, at Albanopolis, Armenia as punishment for having converted the King of Armenia to the Christian faith. The apostle James was the first apostle to be martyred when he was put to death in Jerusalem by the sword at the command of Herod. The apostle James son of alphaeus was martyred at Jerusalem by being thrown from a pinnacle of the Temple, then stoned and beaten with clubs and fuller's mallets, while praying for his attackers. The apostle John was burned with alive with oil and survived and became the only apostle to die of natural causes. The apostle Judas was beaten to death with a club, then beheaded, in Persia. The apostle Matthias according to traditional accounts, he was stoned to death at Colchis. The apostle Paul was a Roman citizen being exempt from crucifixion, so he was beheaded with a sword in Rome. The apostle Peter was crucified upside down because he claimed he was not worthy to die in the same manner as Christ in Rome. The apostle Philip according to traditional accounts, he was martyred at Hierapolis, Phrygia. The apostle Simon was martyred, but the location is uncertain; some claim that he was crucified in Samaria. The apostle Thomas was pierced through with spears by four soldiers in India. The apostle Barnabus preaching the Gospel was martyred at Salamis. Are you willing to add your name to the list of these true apostles for Christ? Perhaps turn your Bible to Hebrews 11 and read where it says: "others tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain by the sword."

SPINELESS CHRISTIANITY

The apostles were living martyr's for Christ dying daily. If we could share in their sufferings but for one day I am sure many of us would forfeit apostolic power. Leonard Ravenhill: "There is a 'deeper life.' It is as deep as a personal Gethsemane and as costly as a personal Calvary." In our beggared condition in the modern day church we cannot handle the consequences of apostolic power. We need first to have our weak skinned, self-seeking, spineless Christianity purged from us. May God be gracious enough to do this. Then perhaps we will have power with God and once again become the "church militant" on earth. "Apostolic preaching is not marked by its beautiful diction, or literary polish, or Cleverness of expression, but Operates "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." stated Arthur Wallis who longed many years for a true move of God. We need men of renown, those who are willing to count the cost and be amongst the few that do great exploits for God. Hear the heart cry from Samuel M. Zwemer to see these sort of men arise in our day: "A man set on fire is an apostle of his age. And the only one who can kindle the spark of light and fire on the hearth where it has died down is He who has revealed Himself as the God of fire, our Lord Jesus Christ. 'Our God is a consuming fire'...Tell me, is your

ministry a burning and shining light, or a smoking wick, slowly dying out to ashes? ...It is a strange custom that we should supply a minister with a glass of water; if only we could supply him with a bonfire in the pulpit, a spiritual bonfire. We need the dynamic of a flaming ministry that will set the Church on fire."

ANCIENT AND MODERN

To any careful observer of the church in our day we realize there is a great disparity between the modern day example and the apostolic original. Here is anonymous article written in the 1700's depicting some of these disparities very vividly. Oh for a reviving of the true apostolic spirit in the Church is the crying need of our day, or perhaps the only answer for the Church in this day:

"Ancient and modern preachers. The difference between ancient and modern preachers taken from the Scriptures. If any think me to severe to the Clergy, let them study the examples of Christ and his apostles, and compare the picture.

Ancient: CHRIST call'd his preachers to renounce their wealth, And set a glorious pattern in himself, Who, tho' he did possess all things in store, Yet for our sakes, became exceeding poor.

Modern: Some preachers now, large salaries do fix, So that, by preaching, they may now grow rich, So far departing from their blessed Lord, They worship mammon and a golden god.

Ancient: CHRIST told them, to be wise, they must be fools, And that not all the knowledge of the schools, Could ever teach one soul the way to heaven, That this is only by his spirit given.

Modern: But now, some go unto the schools of men, Expecting heavenly wisdom to obtain, And that, by reading books, they may acquire The holy spirit, the baptismal fire.

Ancient: CHRIST charg'd his followers, titles to contemn And, often faithfully, admonish'd them Not to be called RABBI, learned, wise, But all ambitious selfishness despise.

Modern: Now, some are call'd Archbishops and Prelates, Reverend Doctors, learn'd, wise, and great, The reverend parson, and master of arts, Old pharisaick pride, in all its parts.

Ancient: CHRIST told his followers, to be meek and mild, As low and humble as a little child, That they must not aspire to lofty seats, But must come down and wash each others feet.

Modern: Now some, in garments long, do love to stand, With college flourishes, they wave their hands, Read their writings, and then call it preaching, Old orthodox apostolick teaching. Now money, schools and books supply the place, Of humble love, and sanctifying grace, When money fails, these teachers often flee, The reason is, because, they hirelings be. When any now, are call'd of GOD, to teach, And by

his spirit, are sent forth to preach, These learn'd scholars soon, will them degrade, Lest their cheap preaching should spoil their trade.

Ancient: CHRIST told his followers that they must expect, The world would hate them treat them with neglect, That as they hated him without a cause, So they would hate his followers and his laws. Fools in the eastern of the world.

Modern: No, say some modern preachers, 'tis not true, The world will love us and respect too, We are commanded for to live in peace, We will not then disturb their carnal ease.

Ancient: CHRIST told them, a distinction they must make, That they, the sheep and goats, must separate, That, as the sheep were separate from wolves. They must not be by worldly maxims rul'd.

Modern: No, say some teachers, this is a mistake; Therefore, we now will join the church and state. Tho' this is very far from GOD'S design, This jargon union, they attempt to join.

Ancient: CHRIST oft declares, the help of man is vain, And, that except a man be born again, And that except we all converted be, GOD'S kingdom we can never, never see.

Modern: Some hold, that there is yet some power in man, And that by creeds, and modes, and forms he can, Profess, confess, and plead, and, by degrees, The holy, angry, jealous GOD, appease.

Ancient: CHRIST says he is the way, the truth, the life, That, our of him, we have no strength or light. We have no faith, no hope, no might, at all. He is our joy, our hope, our all in all.

Modern: Why then, among the herdsmen, is such strife, When all of them can't bring a flea to life. Striving, both night and day, to proselyte, And yet cannot make one hair black or white!

Ancient: CHRIST'S followers, of old, were of one heart, Did, with their worldly int'rest, freely part; Neither did any say, ought was his own; It all in common stock was freely thrown.

Modern: Some christians now, so selfish they are grown, It is with trouble, we can get our own, And sometimes are obliged to complain, Unto the laws, our rights for to obtain.

Ancient: Christians all took their names from CHRIST, their head, All party names, from them, entirely fled, No Parthians or Medes with them were known, No other names, but christians, they would own.

Modern: Christians are so divided, in our days, The want of true religion it betrays, Presbyterian, Churchmen, Baptist, Quaker, Methodist, Universalist, and Shaker. It makes me almost sick, To see the names Iv'e writ, My pen I now will quit, And will not waste My paper."