

KZN Gate Global Family Online Conference via Zoom, March 17, 2021

The Emerging Church in Perilous Times

Speaker: **Thamo Naidoo** - Session 2

Thank you to the Gate Global Family for being present in setting up this platform, and more specifically Gate KZN for taking the steps of faith in hosting this beautiful conference. It is a great privilege to greet each one of you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is a humble honor to share God's Word again with you. I want to get straight into the Word.

Yesterday I introduced my thoughts to you. Much of what I said has been presented to you in a provocative way. I played the adversarial role of posing questions so that each one of us could address those questions, and obviously address them firstly introspectively and then to allow those questions also to become a measure for the state of the church, the condition of the church, the location of the church, the position of the church at this present time in the church's history. It is my great privilege to continue to unpack some of the statements that will be made today. In doing so, again, I just need to premise what I want to say to you. It is of great importance that you understand the approach that I have adopted for this particular conference.

Three sessions are not sufficient to go through some of my thoughts, the thoughts that have been impregnated in my spirit, in the way that I would like to. And that would be to do it slowly, systematically, take you from one Scripture to another, exegete it, use hermeneutical tools, and expose to you some of the things that are resident in the Scriptures. Regrettably, I cannot do that. So, I employed a strategy, a methodology, which is the first of seven parables, and it is the strategy (methodology) that Jesus introduced to us. And He said that in understanding that parable, we would then be able to understand the secrets of the Kingdom. That parable is about the sower and the seed.

Yesterday, what I actually did was not consider myself as a preacher but as a planter of seed. I have presented to you 'seed thought', seminal thought, and some of these

thoughts have come in the form of asking questions. Yes, Satan asked a question to Adam, but God also asked questions to Adam and subsequently to Eve. Satan said, “Did God say?” God asked questions like: Where are you? Who told you? Have you? and subsequent questions attached. They are very powerful because it seeks to reset, recalibrate, or adjust our focus so that we would understand things from an eternal perspective.

- I have used seed thoughts and sometimes questions in those seed thoughts to provoke us to review where the church is.
- Secondly, I have also chosen to use a narrative; this is a historical story recorded for us in the Scriptures in Matthew 21. But I have used it in a parabolic way to extract from the story, and I have used this story to frame the concepts that I am trying to communicate to us.
- Thirdly, I have chosen in seeding these thoughts to you, I have approached the context of my address to church leaders.

That does not mean that those of you who are attending and are not church leaders, that these teachings are irrelevant. Basically what I am saying is every leader and every person that is deeply in love with the body of Christ and concerned for the church’s welfare should consider some of the provocative statements that are being made and consider their ways whether it is in compliance with heavenly standards. That is the primary purpose for what I am saying.

I would like to have given more attention to matters like the aspect of judgement, but I am so thankful to people like Ralph, who so succinctly captured why God judges the earth. And judgement is an integral part of God’s weaponry in dealing with gross issues in the church. That is why one of the metaphors for the Word of God is that it is a two-edged sword. And it has in it the ability to surgically remove any element that could cause contamination, corruption, or serious infection that would lead to the demise of a given situation. And so, God’s Word is deeply therapeutic, but also surgical; it is incisive, it can deal with things that are irrelevant to the way we have functioned in the earth.

But I cannot give as much attention to the situation of God's judgement, and I do not want to draw too much attention to COVID-19, while I understand that it has been used, or permitted by God, to cause such catastrophe, such chaos, such devastations, such sadness in the earth. And believe me when I tell you, I am deeply sympathetic. In fact, I have been grieved and hurt and pained by seeing so many people being taken out by the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of my dear colleagues, people that I have a historical relationship with have been snatched away. Some sincere and good people we have lost in this. So I am not saying that every casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic has been complicit to inaccurate ways. I am not saying that. All I am saying is that when there is a judgement there can be casualties. Good and not so good people can become victims of a judgement, the sun shines on the righteous and the unrighteous.

But there is such a thing called compliance, and this is where I am going. And this is where I want to start to launch my thoughts today. The first thing I want to say to you is we must critically review our understanding of faith. I am exploring every church leader, and that includes myself, to re-read the Scriptures and to read it with eyes that will expose us to the way of God. We must re-read the Scriptures, critically, analytically, we have to read it as if we are interrogating it, we have to break down the Scriptures like how you would break a loaf of bread to eat it - we have to sift the Scriptures! We have to wrestle with the Scriptures. We cannot let the status quo of that which has been orally transmitted to us become the measure and the standard for the way we are living, because there are a lot of things being redefined through this present crisis that we are faced with.

And some of these things are forcing us to ask questions like: how is it that if we are in the new covenant that has been sealed with the precious blood of the Lamb, that has given us promises to great immunity, security, and prosperity, how is it that if such a new covenant people could be living in a crisis like the one we are facing, how is it that we have had so many casualties? And for example, in South Africa, we have had (I think) to a large degree more casualties in church circles than in circles outside of the church. How is it possible? It is not that faith, as an absolute standard, needs to be altered and modified, but that faith as it has been defined in our thinking, may have to be reviewed,

go through the filter of being understood by putting on new spectacles that will help us to understand the holy Scriptures.

That is what I am saying today. I want you to understand, as leaders, that God's Word is inherent, it is infallible, it is absolute, you cannot add or subtract from it, it is the canon, the reed, the measure by which we conduct our lives, standardize our operations, and so forth. But if we have caused for God's Word to be edited, redacted, modified, if we have allowed for it to be syncretically used in our lives, in other words, if we have cut and pasted, we have borrowed Ideas from a world order and then married it to a few Scriptures and hoped that we would produce the perfect church in the earth, then God will not share His glory with some of the ideas that we have adapted to the church. Those are the biggest challenges I have. My problem is not to give you a nice set of sermons. My challenge is to present to you thoughts that will incubate in your spirit and force for the manifestation of God's glory to take place in our lives.

So it is in that context that I present to you this narrative from Matthew 21, and the narrative is a story of how Jesus in the penultimate week before He would hang on that cross and shed His life, His blood, for each one of us, how He would enter the city of Jerusalem, and in the context of Matthew enter the temple. There are two scenarios, two settings that you have to situate within this narrative, and both the scenarios are extremely compounded, they are loaded with deep spiritual truths. The first is that Jesus would enter a city. And we need to understand that these are not just Him entering a certain demography in a historical setting, but He was entering a context that the Bible is filled with deep references to.

The city of Jerusalem is one of the most popular cities in the whole of Scripture. As you study the Jerusalem temple, the Jerusalem blueprint, you will realize it was not just another city. And the penultimate chapter of the Bible which is Revelation 21, gives us a brief, very summarized insight into that city. And it tells us this is a city which comes from heaven out of God, and it is coming down into the earth. Some of us are very familiar with computer language, about how we download stuff from the cloud, how we extract stuff

from online servers, and so forth, and how we become custodians of such data, such information.

Similarly today, there is a download that needs to be installed in the earth, and it is a city template. Hopefully, I will have time to chat again and provoke you to think about how to build the city of God in the cities of men, the two cities scenario; the Augustinian theological proposal of how two cities operate in parallel in conjunction in the earth. And Jesus is riding into the city of Jerusalem which is called the City of Truth, the absolute standard; there is no lie in it.

[inserted: Zechariah 8:3: *“Thus says the Lord: ‘I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. **Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, the Mountain of the Lord of hosts, the Holy Mountain.**’*]

According to Ezekiel 48:35, it is said that when that city is built, that heavenly city is built in the earth within the cities of man, then, God is there [*the name of the city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE*’]. So we have to understand: what does it mean for Emanuel, for God, to be amongst us? How is He with us? How does His presence tangibly manifest in a glorious way in the earth. These are very important questions for leaders to understand.

The second thing that we have to look at which I have already started discussing in my first session with you, is that when Jesus went into the city, He went into a city that received Him with cries of *“Hosanna to the Son of David,”* which simply means, “Save, Save, Oh Son of David.” And the imagery, the wording, here is very important because it is the Son of David. When I talk about corporate anointing, you have to unpack what it means to be a Son of David. And mark the familiar language, Son of David - it is a very powerful statement. These are not just empty phrases used in Scripture. God’s Word is punctuated and impregnated with great, great meaning.

So He enters with cries, He is received with cries by the crowds, by the mobs in the city, saying, “Save us, we are in trouble.” And the word save is talking about salvation in every aspect, not just being saved to go to heaven as you would understand it in Pentecostal

references. But when we are talking about saved here, we are talking about economic, political, social, cultural, it is a wholesome reference to salvation. Then Jesus also goes into the temple, and when He goes into the temple, there is another cry of “Save, Save, Oh Son of David, Hosanna to the Son of David!” In both contexts [city and temple] there is a cry for an accurate positioning of God’s people within a location and within a temple setting, which is a sacrosanct setting.

So when we are talking about the times that we are living in, God is now about to ride into domains in the earth and ride into His house. The word **temple** in the Old Testament, largely is the Hebrew word **bayith** which also means **house**. We have created institutional definitions to very beautiful Hebrew and Greek words, and sometimes we have so inoculated these words that have been robbed of their meanings. The word temple simply means, *I want to ride into My family*. I want to ride into My family, but when I ride into My family, I do not want to see it being corrupt, chaotic, or in a state of existence that has not been designed by Me Myself.

So, church leaders, please hear some of the things that I want to say to you here today. Obviously, you would have to ask yourselves the questions: am I located correctly? Where am I? Who have I been listening to? Have those voices corrupted me? Unfortunately, for Adam, he attended to the voice of his wife in the context of that setting and compromised his position that also introduced a whole host of problems into his life, and eventually he was robbed of his position in the Garden and his covering with God. So there has to be a major shift! Yesterday I started to talk to you about **a major shift**. And I want to invert the process by firstly talking about what it means to be the temple of God.

What it means to be the temple of God. Here, again, I will seed my thoughts to you. Firstly, God never intended to build a religious system in the earth. I need to say that. The way we have institutionalized religion, and to a large degree allowed it to mutate into a commercial financial system, is not the way God designed the church to function. God did not design the church to function as a house of fig leaves, a tree of leaves. God

designed the church to function as a family. What I am going to say in this context is not new to most of us because in some of our circles it has been emphasized repetitiously.

Basically, what I am saying is that God designed the church to function as a family. The word family must not be understood residentially or domestically. We must not have a parochial view. We have to see the universal, the eternal, the timeless view of family. The whole concept of family can be interpreted microscopically or on the macrocosm of things. When I talk about family, firstly, I am talking about seeing family as a macro unit. And when we talk about the macro, I am basically saying that God designed for His Church to function as a global family in the earth - as a global family.

God designed for His Church to function as a global family in the earth

It is a very important statement that I want to make to all church leaders here, and those of you that are very actively involved in church circles. Let me tell you why. Because we think about church today, individualistically. When I say individualistically, it is an egotistical view of church. It is a self-centered, rather narrow view of church, in general. When we think about church, we think about I, me, and myself. We think about my people, my congregation, my local house, my church. We do not think about it in terms of how God has universally assembled a people to function as a holy nation. When I talk about **God is building family**, I am basically saying God is into nation building. Not building South Africa or one of the countries that you represent; God is not into those nations. God is into nation building as He is building one holy nation, made up of all ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and people groups.

God is building one holy nation.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, male nor female, rich nor poor, educated or uneducated. There is only one new Man in Christ. God is into nation building. Please, every leader must understand this. The days of, "I am going to church," the days of (you know), "I am going to have my church time, my religious time, my liturgical time," those days have to be radically revolutionized in our thinking. I am not asking you to window dress your thoughts. I am asking for a shut down and a restart. I am asking for building things firmly

on understanding the family, the household, the people of God. That is what I am asking for.

In other words, I am asking church leaders to shift their thinking in terms of how they view the church hierarchically. In other words, church leaders have to start understanding the hierarchy of the church, but to understand that you cannot think domestically and pastorally. When I say pastorally, I am not against the office of the pastor, I am not against the principle of shepherding. I love shepherding. So I am not anti-pastor, anti-shepherd. What I am saying is, sometimes we can become so parochial, we can have such a limited neighborhood mentality, a village mentality, that our hierarchy of church is so stuck in the mud that we do not understand how complex the hierarchical structure of church is.

Remember the words of Jesus, “*I will build [oikodomeo] My church [ekklésia].*”

[Inserted : oikodomeo [oy-kod-om-eh'-o]; oikia [oy-kee'-ah] comes from the word oikos [oy'-kos] which means **family** [a dwelling, home, household, temple - Strong's 3624]; doma [do'-mah] means a domain or a **structure** [an edifice, a roof: housetop - Strong's 1430].

“I will build a superstructure called family,” and that family will be called ekklésia:

- ek means to be extracted, to be taken out
- klesia means to be called or invited

[inserted: **Matthew 16:13:** *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, **the Son of Man**, am?” 14 So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered and said, “**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**” 17 Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and **on this rock I***

will build [oikodomeo] **My church** [ekklésia], *and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”]*

Borrowed from Greek terminology, *ekklésia*, which is highly political and philosophical, very simply means, God will extract people by inviting them from every people group on the earth, every language, every culture, to join a new family called the holy nation. Start thinking with a hierarchical structure in mind:

- God builds systems.
- God builds structures.
- God builds His purposes in the earth.

So it is of great importance that you firstly rearrange, readdress, the whole philosophy, the heavenly philosophy of how the church functions. The church was never intended to be this religious center where we go on a certain day for somebody to put on a little performance, and eventually put some oil, or lay their hands upon our heads, and share a great message by wiping the perspiration off their foreheads, and we say, “Wow! What a great service we had!” And we go home. And I am so thankful that God has incarcerated, forced us into shutdown - I am not thankful for the losses and the deaths and the tragedies, but I am thankful that God had to deliver us - for me (for example) from travelling, from speaking in conferences the way I used to do it, from standing every Sunday and preaching to the church, even though I am longing for the day that we can go back to those gatherings, because I think it will be different.

I am thankful that God has delivered me from all of those things, and He has brought me to understand the communion in the body of Christ, the covenantal joinings that can take place if you build a family, and understanding how you can be remotely disconnected but covenantally connected, and joined in the Spirit. So the first thing I want to say is there has to be a hierarchical shift, a major paradigm shift in the way we are thinking about the church, and start to view the church as family.

If you want to understand the microcosm to family, then study a domestic unit like your family or my family. In my family, my wife does not call me apostle [as a title], and my children do not call me by some great title. My children call me Dad, and I am a husband to my wife, and that relationship is deeply grounded in a fellowship, a koinonia, in which we share in each other's love and fellowship so that we can break bread together and enjoy the presence of the Lord in our home. And that is how church took place.

The early church, if you really study it, never employed Greek and secular forms of engagement; they used the heavenly culture of sitting around tables and fellowshiping around a physical meal. And through that meal they shared in the body and the life, the blood of Christ, and they broke the Word of life as they fellowship, and the church grew astronomically. We have lost something huge in church circles today. And one of the shifts that must take place in your lives (if this is going to take place), one of the shifts that should take place is that we need to shift our thinking from seeing the one who leads our churches as a pastor. The pastoral headship leadership hegemonic view of church was not in the Bible; it is a modern invention that came in the last one to two hundred years of church history.

The hegemonic hierarchical structure of the early church was that elders led households, and elders functioned as representative fathers, these were elderly seniors. When I say senior, I do not mean in age, but in experience, in maturity, individuals who were considered to represent the father in the Godhead to a household of people. They embrace the patriarchal definition of fathering, not from historical examples, because we have very negative examples of patriarchy in secular society: male dominated societies, the gender called female being subdued to a subordinate position to that of the gender called male. So I am not talking about patriarchy in a historical slavish and very narrow view. I am talking about patriarchy as in Christology.

In Christology, the name of God, His eternal name is not Creator, it is not YHWH [Yahweh], it is not all the beautiful names that we have in the nomenclature of Scripture that describes God. But the name of God in the new covenant is Father. You can read that in the prayer that Jesus taught us, the model prayer in Matthew 6, you can read it in

John 17; whenever Jesus prayed, He prayed to Father and He showed us how to talk to God as a Father. So that is the model of leadership that we need to bring to the church presently.

I am asking us to shift in our thinking, from pastor to elder. And all this titular culture that has come into the church, all this baggage, this name tag projecting of self. God is literally confronting that. That does not mean there is no place for the office of a pastor in the ministry of an elder. I am not in any way suggesting that pastors become redundant. I am saying that we need to situate it correctly. Time will not permit me to go into the details of that. There has to be a major shift to patriarchy as has been said to us in Christology. And we need to start understanding how God operates in families upon the earth.

Secondly, I would like to speak to all of those who are members of congregations. You cannot anymore see yourselves just simply as believers and followers of Jesus, and members of a church institution or a certain group of people. You have to see yourself constitutionally, legally, and in the most practical of ways as an integral part of a family. In our home, I have three sons, a daughter who is married to one of my sons, and now a grandchild, and they are integrally members of our family and share in coequal privileges even though there is functional diversity in the governance of our home. There is no dictatorialness, there is no manipulation, there is no autocracy; the headship of the home is almost a seamless headship and there is no dominance, where the man pulls rank on the woman. And I am not in any way talking about paternalism. True patriarchy is a distant friend of paternalism. In fact, patriarchy disdains paternalism. Paternalism is an “ism”. When fathering becomes an “ism”, it is controlling, it is manipulative; it is dangerous. It is extremely dangerous!

When I am talking about eldership here, I am not talking about, “You are my son, you send your tithe, and your firstfruits to me.” That is a commercialization, a shopping mall view that Jesus whipped the people that were practicing it in the temple, and He turned tables upside-down. I am not talking about that. I am talking about us moving to building families because if you study the context of Matthew 21, you will find that Jesus does not walk into a city, He rides on a father/son donkey, and the dyad is a family imagery. Do

not think father/son here in a shallow way. This is an imagery of how God will ride into a city through a family.

I hear people, especially latter rain thinkers and many South Africans who have cut-and-paste their kingdom theology by extracting it from Western philosophical interpretations of kingdom. And it saddens me when they tell you, "It is about the kingdom, my brother, it is about the kingdom." They say, "It is the kingdom," and what they do is they put the cart in front of the horse. They think it is all about the kingdom. So they make the kingdom the object. What they do not understand is that you cannot have an object without a subject. You cannot have something happening, an effect without a cause. What they do not understand is that you cannot speak kingdom if you do not understand that there has to be a king before you can have dominion. The whole idea of kingdom is to effect rule. But you cannot have rule without a subject, or somebody who becomes the vanguard for the kingdom to come.

So when we talk about families, I am not seeing it as an end in itself, but I am seeing it as a means to an end, as the principle by which God establishes His purposes. For example, the Bible tells us clearly that the kingdom does not come by observation, but the kingdom comes first within you - the kingdom is in you! What does that mean? It means that the right to rule is subject to the environment that has been created for rule to be effected. So if you do not have a king, you cannot have dominion. If you do not have a vehicle, you cannot have the king ride into a certain city, into a certain location.

In the context of this, God has chosen the medium, the vanguard, the principle of family - family! Built on the idea of father and son; when I use the word son, I use it in a gender-free context that is both male and female. I am not talking about the male gender. I am talking about how God uses the wineskin of family to ride into a city, to move into a region, to establish His purposes. And here are two donkeys that God uses, and you can ask the question today: why did God use this imagery? Yes, we can argue that it is a fulfillment of a Scripture in **Zechariah 9:9**: ***"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.*** We can quote that and just tick the

box and say, "Scripture fulfilled, prophecy fulfilled, let's not go any further." But remember, all prophecy has within it the principle of edification. [*But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men - 1 Corinthians 14:3*] All prophecy is given to edify, to exalt, to comfort, or to encourage. The word edification there means there is an architecture to prophecy.

When we talk about prophecy we are talking about architecture.

We must ask the question:

- What is the architecture?
- What is the blueprint?
- Why did God use this methodology?
- Why did He not use institutionalized forms of religion?

The principle is that God is deeply interested in family. COVID-19 and the present judgement is forcing us to reset the church hierarchically, structurally, to start thinking as family. And to start thinking as family, you have to make a paradigm shift. I did it! Towards the tail end of my ministry in Pietermaritzburg before I moved over to Sandton to plant the church here, God asked me to stop thinking in terms of the office of five-fold ministry, but start thinking as a father, and that when I come to Sandton I must plant a church that will become a family. Not plant a church, but plant a family that will be an integral part of the church of Jesus Christ. And so, I started to view my congregation as my family. I started to view myself no more as a travelling speaker, as an apostolic ministry, or whatever descriptor - well, you call me an apostle, that is how I was described here, I do not call myself that. I stopped thinking in terms of titles. I started thinking in terms of the nature of God in the Godhead. I am a father, raising a family to produce sons in the image of God that will represent Him in every aspect of society, and that is how Emmanuel is amongst us. [Emmanuel = "God with us"]

When you build this, which is a loaded concept, believe me, we will stop having all this performance, this theatrical behavior in the church, all the foolishness that takes place in churches, we will stop having these problems. So each believer needs to start thinking of yourselves as integral members of a household. And when we get this right, we will not

have this unrooted position where people can just do what they want. When they do not like the music they go to the next church. Because when you belong to a family, you cannot change your position. When you are born into a family, that is family for life, whether you like your father or mother, you are stuck with that reality. They cannot deny your birth into their family, even though you can deny your membership in that house. You must choose, and this has got to do with divine election. And this is how it is, that God cannot deny us, even though we can deny Him in our lives.

I want us to move into this idea of understanding the complexity of family, and to change it structurally, and obviously, to do that you are going to need connectivity. Connectivity to a cluster of people, and that is another complex subject. You have to belong to a cluster of families, and that cluster, there has to be oversight given by a lead elder, in biblical language it is called a presiding elder. That is why you have two words for **elder** in the New Testament, the words **presbuteros** [*pres-boo'-ter-os*] and **episkopos** [*ep-is'-kop-os*]. Even though they are used interchangeably, they have very distinctive meanings to it. One is that you are an elder of a local house; not the way Pentecostals have defined elders. I am an elder to my congregation here in Sandton, called Gate Ministries Sandton. I am an elder. When I go there, I am an elder functioning as a father. But when I am functioning in my Gate Global Family, I am an overseeing elder, which in institutional language is called a bishop, I am a bishop of that. But when I am giving oversight or advising a cluster of different networks (family groupings) in the earth that I do not give specific fathering to, then I may be viewed as an apostle.

These are very complex hierarchies that have to be structurally readapted. And obviously, this conference cannot deal with those issues, because the emerging Church is going to be a Church that will emerge as a very complex compounded family in the earth. This is a family that will constitute the holy nation. And when it is arranged right, you will see the presence of God come into those houses and that family, and the glory of God will fill those houses, and that is how the knowledge of the glory of God will cover the earth. You will see the manifestation of God's presence like I cannot even describe it to you. It is going to be a very very powerful manifestation of God's people.

There is a hierarchy, and it demands a structural readjustment.

But if you are parochial, domestic, and rather narrow in your view, you are going to be so caught up with individualism and the local church concept that we are not going to realize that God comes in the cluster. Isaiah 65:8 tells us very clearly that the new wine is found in the cluster; it is not found in one grape. See your local congregation as one grape, and unless you belong to a cluster, you cannot take new wine and put it into an old wineskin. The new wine is coming in a cluster. You have to be covenantally joined to a cluster; that is called a clan. And that cluster must be connected to a branch. In technical language, that will be called a tribe (for want of a better descriptor). And when you bring the twelve tribes together, you are connected to the vine itself, and that is how we are going to produce the new wine in the earth - the new wine, God is looking for this now.

There is an ecclesial migration to a divine hierarchy that has been part of the architecture of God Himself.

This is not something that comes from man. Like for example, the city of God does not come from heaven; it comes from God, transmitted through the heavens. And anything that comes from God is pre-existent, timeless, it cannot be contextualized, and it makes you realize then, that if everything has happened before the foundations of the earth, or before creation started, anything that is timeless is not subject to sociological, anthropological, psychological, and contextual modification. The church is not the creation of some people on the earth. The church is not a cultural construct. The church may have been cradled in Judaism, but the church is not Judaist. The church is a heavenly pre-existent construct, and God has executed His purposes on the earth, but it comes from Him.

Jesus said, "I will build My church." And He used egotistical language, "I", the word is **egō**, will build **My**, egō again; two English words that mean egō in the Greek, out of which we get the English word ego. It is a very subjective, narrow, possessive, jealous, almost autocratic use of a word. And Jesus used it, even though He never sought to bring attention to Himself because He was showing us the design of the heavens.

So I want to say to you today that you need to review your wineskins. Please review your wineskins. Leaders must meet around tables and start to analyze what they are building. Because, let me tell you, we have imported inaccurate structures and systems into our churches. And as a result, our people have been exposed to dangers, and I personally think we have become victims to death, to sadness, to tears, because we have not learnt how to build systems, communities, that will be immunized by the heavenly standards, so that pestilence and famine and sword and all of the things that Ralph described would not be able to penetrate our households. And because we have built systems that are not sealed like Noah's Ark, we have seen the floods penetrate our systems because they are not built by divine design.

So I am asking us today to analyze, evaluate your operational systems. You need to understand how to roll away a scroll and change a garment. Jesus said that even the heavens will be rolled away like a scroll. And the garments that we are mantled with, the garments that clothe us need to be changed. This is not just clothing. When I talk about anointing tomorrow, I will highlight for you how important it is to understand the structural side to anointings. God is changing the way we read Scriptures. When a scroll is rolled away, God is telling you that I am going to give you a new dimension to the same text. I am not going to take you to the context and the pretext, but to the eternal purview of a given matter.

And so, it is very important today that we build the structures, and the structures that we build must be favorable for our people. There must be the spirit where we ameliorate what we do, where whatever we build is for the better of our people. You know, not so that I can have the right environment to move under the wind of God's Spirit, and we do it in rather narrow and parochial terminology. Let me tell you, I am a man of the Spirit and I love to move in the Spirit, but the performance cultures that we have employed are embarrassing even the Holy Spirit. And so, we need to start to review things.

Your wineskins must be analyzed. Wineskins are structures, operational systems; what are we building upon? These things need to be understood because everything that happens, happens in a system. If you study the earth the way God designed the earth.

He took six days, six epochs of time; how long they were, I do not know. What I do know is that these six epochs of time built the system before He put the man and the woman into the system. We need to understand how to build environment, and build containers; and God always happens in context, in a situation. While God is Spirit, He is everywhere, He is omnipresent, He does not work through omnipresence, He works through contextual presence.

Hear me carefully. God always looks for a Man. God always prepares a Body. It is called the corporeal principle. And when God wants to come into a city, He does not come through omnipresence. He comes through a very structured presence. He looks for a Man that represents a house of peace, who will become a son of peace. He looks for a house, and through that house He does His business. He is always looking for, "Whom shall I send?" "Who will go for us?" Jesus, in riding through into Jerusalem, He did not just say, "We will walk," or "just find any vehicle." He said, "Go to a certain place. You will find the animals tied to the door." It is the corporeal principle. The principle of representation through mediums. Unfortunately, in the world order today, we have created idols. We have created images to try to capture God in that given context.

I am asking us today, very humbly asking ourselves to understand the visitations of God. Whether it is through theophanies, epiphanies, through visitations like a stranger, through an alien, or however way God wants to come to us, however way will be through structures, through systems. And if you build a family structure, I can tell you, it is part of the heavenly pre-existent design of God. Building family is very important. I do not believe that God intended for us to build networks. I do not believe that networking is a divine order. Building families that work in conjunction with fellow families is the way God designed it. There is no model for networking in the Bible. Study genealogies from Genesis 4, study the books of Chronicles and Numbers, the genealogical list in Matthew chapter one, you will find God is more interested in how He can raise families to work with other families in transgenerational building.

I am asking you today to review your wineskin. Jesus said it like this in Matthew 9:17, He said you cannot take an old garment and patch it with a new patch. In other words, you

cannot take an old mantle, if you come from a Pentecostal season like I did, you cannot hope that in your Pentecostal covering you can now cut a new patch called apostolic, and fill all the gaps in your deficient Pentecostal covering and hope it will be okay. When I talk about the corporate anointing I will explain that tomorrow.

What God is saying is, “Yes, I clothed you like Moses with the Levitical anointing. But if you want to move to a Joshua anointing, then I will have to remove the Levitical anointing and bring upon Joshua the anointing of Joseph (Ephraim more specifically) so that he can operate more effectively in that anointing. And if I want to move to the next phase where it will be a Judah people that will conquer the land, I cannot dress Judah with the armory of Joshua who was from a different tribe, I have to clothe him in the tribal anointing that is mantled to effectively fulfill the purpose of conquering the land.

So similarly I want to say to each one of us. I am not asking you to dress yourself with an apostolic anointing, because I am claiming from a rather narrow and elitist view that this is the superior anointing. What I am telling you is that God is the God of the Way. God is a God of Pilgrimage. God is a God that moves from one rung to another, from one level to another. What God did 120 odd years ago through Azusa Street that gave birth to Pentecostalism was great! But when the 1940s and 1950s came and God ushered in the Charismatic season, then there was something new. You had to put away the old to embrace the new. And I think we are moving to the next rung of the ladder which is now being described as the apostolic season. And this is not claiming that this is the elitist, sectarian, the new fashion in town. This is where God is! Start to get the things that God is saying and start moving into the way that God wants us to operate. I wish I could spend much much more time here, but unfortunately we cannot.

What I would rather say to every church here that seeks to build a fathering wineskin, more specifically the family wineskin, is if you are a local church functioning in isolation, I am going to say something rather controversial. I may be very unpopular for this and it is not my intention to be. I want to be likable, but unfortunately sometimes you have to say things that may not be so likeable. If you are an independent church, not connected to a cluster, I can tell you that you are in an illegal position today. Study the Bible.

When the nation of Israel came out of slavery and Egyptian bondage and they had sent their spies from the wilderness to study the Promised Land and came back with a negative report, and voted democratically to stay, to not cross over and possess the land, and God accepted their decision, God then instituted an order very clearly, where He said, "Every man twenty years and above must find his father's house. And he must find his standard, his banner, and the place that will position him accurately in the wilderness." And what God did when He did that, He first instituted the principle of family through a reconstitution and resocialization of the entire group of slaves; 6000 men, besides women and children, were reorganized as families. And every man had to arrange himself into a family unit: he had to ask questions like: Who is my father? Where do I belong? What is the name of my clan? What is the position of that clan in terms of the tribe?

And that is how God, in the wilderness, arranged these people at the foot of Mount Sinai as a city, a foursquare city that Ezekiel and John in the book of Revelation speak about - a foursquare city. The people did not just camp as nomads, as sojourners, as homeless, landless people. The people camped in the wilderness, in families, but arranged as the city of God. God was their walls of fire, and their shade in the form of a cloud. And God blessed the people in an isolated, uninhabitable region for forty years because He arranged them, firstly into families, and then families were arranged into a city context. If you study the city context, you will find that the city of God is a foursquare city, and that foursquare city has all sides equal to themselves. On each side of the city (of the square), three families (tribes) were arranged. You could not just live where you wanted to. You had to live by the order of how God arranged the tribes in collaboration.

When I talk about families living in clusters, and clusters living in tribal units, and patriarchal tribal fathers learning how to connect to fellow tribal fathers in bringing about the constitution of the city state context, that is what Jerusalem is, a city state model of living. When the church starts to understand these principles, then you will start to see how immunity, prosperity, security, long life, and peace comes into a city.

I wish we had time to go into Zachariah. And if you would like to get the more pastoral side of the series, then go and study my teachings on [The Emerging Church in Perilous](#)

Times as I taught it from the book of Zechariah. Zechariah means God remembers. God has not forgotten His people. Zechariah also tells us that God is very interested in completing a half-built city and a half-built temple, an incomplete. Remember, in Matthew 21:1, God comes to Bethphage, a house that produces unripe (half-ripe) figs. In other words, the figs are not ready to be eaten; it is incomplete. It still has to be sweetened. It still needs to reach maturation. The church is now half-built, and sometimes in a desolate state. And God wants to now use the technology of rebuilding walls and gates.

I am throwing a lot at you in this session, but when we talk about building families, the imagery is about gates. Families are connected to gates; if you belong to a family, you belong to a gate, which is a governmental principle. When you know which gate you belong to, you know your position in the family of God and in the Spirit of God:

- you belong to a family that is connected to a cluster,
- and a cluster connected to a tribe,
- and a tribe is connected to fellow apostles who are leading whole tribes (patriarchs leading tribes).

Please, catch the gist, I am not trying to encourage tribalism here, or clannish living. That is not my aim.

When you get all of this right, we are going to start to position a Church in the earth that is going to see heaven open. We are going to see that we would not anymore need the sun and the moon to give us light. This Church will be effervescent. It will always be relevant, it will be present in the Spirit. There will be no night in this Church, even though we will have evening, and we will have sleep, and we will have rest. Our doors will be open because **gates** are always an imagery of **fathers**. When you sit in gates you are sitting in the seat of parliament, in the senate of God's governmental order. And **walls** according to Revelation 21 are **apostles**.

When we are talking about hierarchy, structure, we are literally talking about how the city of God and the temple of God is arranged in such a way where they are connected, where apostles and elders (fathers) work hand in glove. And that is how spiritual covering comes

in. Tomorrow I will talk about covering when I talk about the corporate anointing. And you will see governmental order coming back to the church.

Listen. Please understand me when I tell you that God uses human instruments to establish His purposes. Things like the communication of grace, the establishment of covenant, the provision of spiritual covering, while God covers all things, while all anointings emanate from Christ, but God uses reservoirs, He uses storehouses, He uses mediums, He uses deputies, He uses representatives. Everything God does, He does it in a Body Corporate. And that Body is the bank, is the custodian of all of the resources of heaven. Some of these things I will talk to you a little further in my session with you tomorrow.

Please, leave here understanding two things. One is that God is raising up families, and those families, if they are arranged correctly, will produce cities in our regions in the earth. There will be a major recalibration, a mighty movement of churches no more to function in isolation, but work in community. And it is going to be incumbent upon leaders to understand this. The culture of malfeasance is over. When I say malfeasance, we can draw parallels from civic leaders who are so irresponsible in following the laws of the management of civic societies. The culture of malfeasance is now in the church, where each leader does what is right in his own eyes. And that is why in the book of Judges, God could not produce patriarchy, but He had to place judges over people, temporarily, until order came back, until the seat of executive power was established in the church of the Old Testament again, the nation of Israel.

I want to say to us today, **the days of just doing your own thing is over!** And I place emphasis on the word “thing”, it may be a pun, but I want to emphasize it. This is a culture of acquiescence. The spirit of learning how to rest in being submitted to the will of God is fundamental. I was looking at the words *lowly and sitting on a donkey* in Matthew 21:5, the word donkey there speaks about a senior donkey, a father, an ass. But *the foal of a donkey*, the second word for donkey means a beast under the yoke; they are two different Greek words borrowed from the Hebrew. One [onos] just means the senior of two donkeys. But the second word for donkey [hupozugion] means one who has chosen to

submit his life, his family, to the way of God; he has chosen to let God ride upon him. And humble and meek is not just a picture of Jesus on the donkeys, but stubborn donkeys choosing to submit to God's way—not opinionated.

[inserted: onos (*on'-os*), an ass - Strong's #3688 - hupozugion (hoop-od-zoog'-ee-on), an animal under the yoke (draught-beast) - Strong's #5268; Matthew 21:5, KJV: *Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass (onos), and a colt the foal of an ass (hupozugion).*]

I know that after a conference of this nature with such a diverse group amongst us, some of you will go out there and say that is his opinion, that is his view, he is entitled to it, but I will follow my way; a very opinionated position that can be adopted, rather than saying, "Let me go and search the Scriptures to see what God is doing." When we talk about the donkey principle here, we are talking about an animal under a yoke. And sometimes we need to come under submission and be yoked to be able to experience the peace of God in our lives.

I pray that you caught what I am saying today, more specifically the necessity for structural thinking and the reorganization of our churches, hierarchically, so that we can start to prepare for some very powerful things that will be taking place in the earth. I am excited about the future. I have not got a negative view of the future. Maybe it is negative for the global community, but not for the Church, the Holy Nation, the emerging Church, the remnant, a very unique group that have chosen righteous standards as a means of compliancy. They have acquiescently submitted to a heavenly way. Such a Church is going to see some powerful things happen in the days ahead. And believe me when I tell you, extraordinary favor is coming upon this Church. We will talk about some of those things and try to summarize; regrettably time does not permit me to go into greater detail. But thank you for your time again, and thank you for listening so attentively. The Lord richly bless you! We will see you again tomorrow.



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