

The Apostolic **LIFE**

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PERSPECTIVE ON CHRISTIAN LIVING, DOCTRINE, AND MINISTRY

The Apostolic Life

by David K. Bernard

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Contents

Preface 9

Christian Living

1. An Apostolic Vision 13
2. The Greatest Commandment 15
3. Loving One Another 19
4. Apostolic Unity 23
5. Unity of Spirit and Faith 27
6. A Thirst for More 31
7. Saved by Truth 35
8. Spiritual Warfare 39
9. Finding God's Will in Life 47
10. Career Planning and God's Will 55
11. Apostolic Education 65
12. Communication in Marriage 69
13. Should Christians Keep the Sabbath? 73
14. Moral Values in Society: Why We Should Not
 Support Homosexual Marriage 83
15. The Blessed Hope 91

Doctrine

16. The Apostles' Doctrine 97
17. Oneness Perspectives on the Incarnation 101
18. The True Humanity of Jesus Christ 111
19. Christianity without the Cross? 119
20. Discussion between Trinitarian and
 Oneness Pentecostals 125
21. Response to Robert Morey, *The Trinity:
 Evidences and Issues* 133
22. The Last Things 143

Ministry

23. Revival in the Time of Promise	153
24. The Confirming Power of the Gospel.	163
25. Signs, Wonders, Miracles, and Gifts.	173
26. Supernatural Spiritual Gifts	177
27. Growing with the Increase of God	181
28. A Faithful Servant	189
29. Favoritism and the Church.	193
30. God's Minimum Requirements for Preachers. . .	203
31. The Paradox of Preaching	211
32. Should Every Local Church Have a Senior Pastor?	215
33. The Charismatic Ministry of Women in the Early Church	223

Outreach

34. The Paradox of the Cross (Easter)	259
35. After the Passion of the Christ (Easter)	263
36. Celebrating the Day of Pentecost.	267
37. Free Indeed! (Independence Day)	271
38. The Significance of a Name (Christmas)	275
39. Faith That Transforms	279
40. Forgiveness	283
41. Humanity's Relationship with God.	285
42. The Way of Salvation	295

Science and Scripture

43. Science and the Existence of God, Part 1	303
44. Science and the Existence of God, Part 2	311

CHAPTER 1

An Apostolic Vision

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers . . . praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved (Acts 2:42, 47).

It is the will of God for the church to fulfill a threefold apostolic vision.

First, we must maintain our *apostolic identity*. We exist as a movement because we proclaim the beautiful, scriptural truths of the oneness of God in Jesus Christ, the new birth experience of Acts 2:38, the lifestyle of inward and outward holiness, heartfelt worship, and miracles and gifts of the Spirit. We must always treasure and champion this message. There is plenty of room for growth in grace and knowledge, but there is no room for compromise or abandonment of these fundamentals.

Second, we must have *apostolic unity*. We must unite in fellowship, in prayer, and in the common cause of winning the lost. While we have the right to different opinions

The Apostolic Life

in matters of personal preferences and organizational decisions, all of us have the responsibility to reach out to one another with mutual support, prayer, forgiveness, and love. All of us need to be involved in the work of the kingdom of God in and beyond our local church.

Third, we must have *apostolic revival*. When we continue steadfastly in apostolic identity and unity, then we can expect miracles of healing, deliverance, and salvation. Our heartbeat must be souls. We need a continual renewal of the saints and a continual harvest of the lost. We must seize this historic opportunity to grow existing churches, to plant new churches and daughter works, and to evangelize the diverse population of our area, including minorities such as Hispanics, African-Americans, and Asian-Americans. Otherwise, we have no reason to exist.

In order to fulfill this apostolic vision, we need the active involvement of men and women who are called of God. We need ministers to work to fulfill the vision and to raise up lay leaders as well as new ministers who have a call, burden, and anointing. We must mobilize the whole church!

In addition, there are a number of qualified and proven ministers among us who have not yet been ordained. There is a special anointing that comes with ordination, as the church and Holy Ghost jointly confirm the call of God with the laying on of hands of the elders. As these ministers are ordained, they will help launch the church into a new dimension of revival and growth. It will not be a formality but a spiritual breakthrough.

Together, let us make history as we fulfill the apostolic vision!

South Texas Vision, January-February 2003 (first issue)

CHAPTER 2

The Greatest Commandment

In the hustle and bustle of life, we need to keep our focus on things of ultimate priority. Recent events such as natural disasters remind us of what is truly valuable and what is transient and temporary. We must not become so busy tending to urgent things that we neglect the most important things.

What is most important? We find the answer in the following story, taken from Mark 12:28-31 (NIV):

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."