



THE SAFETY OF LIVING IN A GLASS HOUSE

The Sin of Stone-Throwing within the Apostolic/Prophetic Communion

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Not all in apostolic/prophetic circles are above reproach. Some are intoxicated by what we will call “positional authority” and the approval of men. Some are swallowing mammon’s bait, hook, line and sinker. And ambitious people are deceiving others in their drive to build their own kingdom down-lines. Still others are so financially vested that they are bound by the choices they have made.

But, wait. Can we pause for a moment and consider our attitudes and motivations? We would do well to consider Jesus’ way of dealing with the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-12). Should we not stoop down, and write on the ground? Throwing stones is not the answer to the challenges facing the body of Christ.

There is also much that is right. For one thing, Paul acknowledged that it is good when the gospel is preached. Even when the motives of the preachers are questionable, God watches over His word. And, nothing escapes His watchful eye. Also, many servant-leaders have not fallen into reproach (1 Timothy 3:7), and should not get caught in the midst of any rush to judgment.

Many who are drawing attention have made significant kingdom contributions. It is tragic that some who have invested their entire lives in service to Christ and His kingdom should, in the autumn of their lives, get caught up in overreaching, ambitious posturing, and structuring. The only antidote for deception is the word of God, and the word needs to be embraced and mixed with faith.

Perhaps some are thinking that they are too heavily invested to repent. What would they do? How would they live? I have faced these challenges, repented of errors as they have been revealed, embraced necessary disciplines, and thrown myself on the

mercy of God. To this hour, we trust God for our daily living, choose repentance as our way of life, and are given to worshiping Him in our thoughts and actions.

Righteous judgment will always leave room for repentance. Righteously delivered judgment will always be redemptive and normally begin by reaching out to the offender.

Faithful servant-leaders must live in repentance and hold nothing so tightly that fresh understanding cannot remove it from us. Even our livelihood must remain on the altar as continuing evidence of our faith and confidence in Christ, our Head.

Leaders are to *receive a stricter judgment* (James 3:1-2), because to *stumble in word* is to stumble the whole body!

Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear. I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure. – I Timothy 5:19-22

There was only one church in each locality when Paul wrote this letter to Timothy. Today, there are almost as many choices of church expressions as restaurants. And, people who tire of one “diet” can opt for another, simply by driving down the street.

Tragically, there is no significant accountability for anyone, follower or leader. It is doubly tragic when those who are considered to be senior leaders do not voluntarily submit themselves to their peers—peers who are beyond the borders of their own spheres.

The needed checks and balances are available within the apostolic/prophetic communion for those who walk in meekness and humility. Relational accountability among peers in different spheres—as demonstrated by Paul and Peter— provides safety that is simply not available within hierarchically structured organizations. Leaders who can only see their up-line and/or their down-line risk finding themselves on the sidelines. We all need others, and we need to rightly respond to adjusting counsel.

Those who are being publicly named and accused need to reexamine their hearts and their actions. Hopefully, they would be willing to sit with others within the apostolic/prophetic communion—not only those within their own tribe, but those whom they know to have differing viewpoints on kingdom issues.

I have personally offered to travel at my own expense, and give myself to reasoning together with one such leader. I have made this offer twice, and not received a response. My heart grieves as his reputation continues to be damaged. My offer remains on the table. There are many under his global influence that would be positively blessed by his repentance in just a few critical areas.

Meeting together with only those who agree with us perpetuates the sad saga of denominations and dogmas. The body of truth has been distributed among us in such a way that we need one another if we hope to ever totally embody the Truth. So long as there remains any corruption on any level, we will be unnecessarily limited and hampered from seeing the fullness of God's kingdom and glory in the earth.

I choose to live in a glass house. It's safe here where I am accountable to my peers. To embrace transparency and its corresponding vulnerability as a way of life is essential for us to be in His image, and for His sons to be revealed in revolutionary glory.

I have nothing to offer others until and unless Father gives it to me. I can freely give what I have freely received (Matthew 10:8). When I ask Father for bread, He does not give me a stone (Luke 11:11).

I want to give my brothers bread. I do not want to throw stones!

POST SCRIPT

A Prophetic Perspective

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There is an ever-present, age-old danger lurking in the human soul of prophets called with a holiness/revivalist/purity/reformer type of calling. If they do not understand and operate in the realities of the New Covenant, they will end up alone. It is not that what they see is necessarily wrong. However, the spirit in which it is conceived and communicated is frequently wrong.

The slide into delusional isolation starts with the mistaken belief that the New Covenant prophet is ordained by God to "call out" egregious things in other believers . . . things so bad that anyone with an ounce of discernment would agree. This normally develops a "following" for the prophet among those of like temperament, especially among those young in the faith. Youth are frequently vulnerable to idealism. Spiritual adolescents know just enough to be dangerous, but lack the maturity to handle what they know.

The prophet then with a sense of righteous vindication, goes after the next, slightly less egregious thing on the horizon. Then the prophet goes after even less egregious things, then things not egregious at all, then things only slightly off, then things only of a different perspective, until finally, the prophet is alone within his circle of flawless ones.

All of us have glaring deficiencies in both belief and practice that are more visible to

others than ourselves. If we start throwing everyone out of the room when we see their Achilles heel, we will ultimately be alone in the room with ours.

Being called as a prophet isn't easy. What is a pinhole for most people is a chasm for a prophet. I am sympathetic. However, believing one's self called to be God's voice in the earth, the straightener of all that is crooked in others, is fundamentally intoxicating. In the New Covenant era there's a way to deal with Truth passionately. "Calling out" others in the blogosphere is not it. The practice will inevitably lead to personal destruction no matter how right an individual's point of view may be.

The inwrought Cross of Christ, a deep grasp of the implications of the universal prophetic Spirit in the New Covenant, and being intimately in touch with the clay in one's own vessel, will help inoculate us from the down-side risks of the pursuit of purity.