

# ***Christian Leadership in the End Times***

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## **I. What spiritual challenges and battles does the Church face in coming years?**

### **A. Environment**

1. Globalization and demography
2. Financial, economic, political (chaos), crisis > shift
3. Biblical prophecy and Israel (Eze 38+39). Biblical scenarios are becoming reality!
4. Decline USA + West (EU)
  - a) Rise China, India
  - b) Russia, Brazil
5. M. East turmoil:
  - a) oil (currency new world order)
  - b) Iran dominance (Gulf). Syria/Lebanon/Hamas. Turkey (Ottoman empire)
  - c) Radical Islam > Egypt

### **B. Introduction**

1. Jesus taught relationship. Before sending them out!
2. Jesus did not found a religion (Christianity)!
3. Root is Jesus (one leader), not the 'church model'
4. Church separated Jesus from Israel! Disconnected (repl. theology).

### **C. From outside**

1. Post-Modernism and Secularism
  - a) In Europe, only 25% look at Christianity as their culture. 75% live separated from a Christian culture/heritage.
  - b) Post-modern people do not attend churches or such events. To reach them (75%), the Church needs to go to them (new ways). Huge opportunity (listen to the Holy Spirit, not just power away with him).
  - c) The gospel is not only in words (evangelization) but should be experienced in life (transformation, immersion).
  - d) Post-modernism (Europe and western world). Away from Christian culture (Bible) to smaller social cultural units (subcultures) > "Tribes" (reject Biblical world-view) unreached by gospel (need to build Christian communities). Especially younger Christians don't feel church their home. Want to be with their tribe (can reach them w/Jesus), i.e. sports (football clubs).
    - (1) Consumer Christianity > discipleship
    - (2) Providing (feeding) church to fellowship church
    - (3) "Come to us" culture to "go to them" culture
    - (4) Program evangelization to Holy Spirit evangelization (signs and wonders)
    - (5) Church membership to living in society (world/where life takes place)
  - e) Materialism (born to shop), a religion!
  - f) Spiritualism (New Age, esoteric, atheism)
  - g) ⇨ People seeking hope and love!

2. 2 Tim 3: Godliness in last days!
  - a) Satan finding inroads into church: witchcraft/manipulations, false prophets/teachings, tradition, legalism, deception, etc., occultism, Satanism (advertising/TV, media movies, entertainment, sports; see it everywhere)
  - b) Islam (radicalism): Christians are afraid to lose their lives! Political correctness. Use of democracy to destroy us (Europe)
  - c) Anti-Semitism: A curse, deeply rooted (repl. theology in church)
  - d) Persecution: Born-again are fundamentalists/sects. Those who live godly suffer persecution!
  - e) Fall Judeo/Christian moral and value system (society): divorce, abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, family, education (delegated to state). Mainstream gender (not man/woman). Business integrity.
  - f) Technology and communication: Internet, social networks (Facebook), video clips (YouTube), cell phones (see everything), etc. Blessing and curse!
  - g) Lost generation: walking away.
  - h) Shift North/South hemispheres: Mission/Gospel from Latin America to North America. From Africa/Asia to Europe. Money however still in N.America/Europe.

#### **D. From inside**

1. Pagan Christianity/rituals vs. Hebrew roots: Church not reconciled (C4I ministry!) Fall traditional and institutional church model: buildings, pulpit, pastors (dominant), passive believers
2. Tradition/religion (see letters to the 7 churches in the Book of Revelation): Jesus' enemies were Pharisees/Sadducees, not Romans/sinners. Christianity/Pharisees same (history repeats) today (legalism/religion) (700 denominations) Church traditions not tied to Jesus Christ, Apostles, NT, Judaism! Many pagan traditions/rituals entered church (Constantine). Legalistic perversion of the Torah was norm. JC redeemed us from legalism (Gal 4:4-5)!
3. Dismantling of "institutions"
4. Church full of 'hurting' people (plastic smiles): Uncounseled, unhealed, undelivered (not in truth and freedom), traditions. If not healed and filled with the Holy Spirit, we won't make it!
5. Church goes vs. followers of Jesus Christ (Laodicea): Carnal Christians (Rom 7) vs. spirit filled Christians (Ro 8).
6. False teaching and deceiving spirits (1 Ti 4:1; Mt 24:4): In later times, some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits (taught by demons), i.e. post-modern church, Kabbalah, Pantheism (god in everything). Teaching: World doesn't want sin, cross, hell, judgment, etc. Want Kingdom of God in this world (not wait for heaven): peace, no poverty, no suffering, new world order. Followers of Jesus Christ can remain Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus! etc.
7. Ignorance/lack of teaching: Part of the gospel not 'full' gospel. C4I: church endangering Israel (not reacting, teaching...spiritual warfare)
8. World entering church vs. church not engaging world (marketplace): church losing/lost role and influence (schools/educ., hospitals, charity, press, etc.)

#### **E. Conclusions (trends)**

1. Traditional Christianity, denominations will die (China)!
2. Split "religious people" and followers of Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit.
3. Jesus will be lifted up. A way of life.
4. Operate in (smaller) covenant groups (trend).

## II. What are the weapons we need as Christians in order to fight this battle?

### A. Understand signs of times (discerning spirit). Biblical prophecy (get smart, prepare):

1. Famine (food shortages)
2. Finances/money (gold, silver, cash, real estate?!) Barter trading.
3. Chip technology

### B. Covenant relationships (Jn 17)

1. Future leaders will be poor, humble, hungry (like Maria, lowest among maids). Jesus lives in the poor, hides in foolish preaching to shape our character, in children, inconveniences, silence, etc.
2. Revival brings inconvenience, splits, etc.
3. Moves of God usually from Para-churches! (C4I), Europartners, CBMC, etc.)
4. Based on Ac 2:42 – devoted to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, prayer (power/healing in bread, wine & oil)
5. From 'serving' to 'friendship' with Yeshua
  - a) Intimacy; focus on Yeshua (not church/ministry). Yeshua calls his followers 'friends' (Jn 15:14)
  - b) Obedience vs. sacrifice (tithing)
  - c) Humbleness vs. pride (David vs. Saul)
  - d) Servant-leaders (washing feet)

### C. Kingdom mentality

1. How do we live covenant groups?
2. Calling of Joseph (prepare grains for famine)
3. Jn 14:12-16: If we have faith in Christ, we will do what Jesus has been doing and even greater things than these (raise dead, heal the sick, deliver the oppressed, call by name). Lives are changed!

### D. Ministry of Holy Spirit

1. Baptism Holy Spirit (separate experience): (He will teach us all things, know the truth, truth will set us free)
2. Speak in tongues (when I don't know how to pray): intercedes! Gifts of the Holy Spirit with heart of love (1 Co 13)
3. Early Church, attracted people by God's power, miracles, love, compassion. People seek love and power: We have it!

### E. Truth and freedom in Christ

1. Counseling, inner + physical healing, deliverance
2. Balance spirit, soul and body
3. Address our lives (bio) at least once (generational curses, unforgiveness, rejection, fear, sex/sexuality)
4. Marriages: men love wives; wives respect husbands

### F. Work-Life balance

God, spouse, children and church: then we are ready to do business!

### G. Renew our mind (Ro 12:1-2)

1. Don't conform to world (Jesus gave us authority and power)
2. Lk 9:1f: Don't ask God to do what he commands us to do!
3. Show up for work: God gives us tools (gifts, not toys). Leave comfort zone!

**H. Use technology/communication (new tools)**

Internet, social networks, YouTube, etc. Key for C4I: church and media disinformation on Israel.

**I. Prayer**

D. Wilkerson: If I want nothing but Christ, then my ministry is not a career. My ministry is prayer.

**J. Immerse in world to transform**

Light & Salt at the workplace, etc. vs. up-front evangelization (outreaches) How to feed the spiritual hungry (live in tribes).

**K. Mentoring/discipling**

Make disciples not converts (Mt 28:19-20), Paul/Barnabas and Timothy (2 Ti 2:2), one on one (sharing lives).

### III. What does it mean for the development of a Christian leadership? "God's priorities for leaders in time of change"

#### A. Jesus never talked about developing leaders.

1. He lived a model to teach a way of life!
2. Don't aim for leadership development. Our goal is to live a way of life to make others hungry (heart).
3. Learn to live with persecution, suffering and pain. Bless others, love your enemies (those who persecute you)

#### B. Most successful men/leaders in the NT? How did they finish?

1. Jesus: perfect Son of God, sinless > crucified (sorrow not sickness)
2. Peter: leader, rebel > crucified (head down)
3. John: ended up in Patmos > banished
4. Paul: 1 Co 4:11f "suffered more than all!" > beheaded (Rome)
5. Lesson: Do not let world impose its criteria of success. Don't become 'world-pleasers'.
6. Jesus Christ in Lk 16:15: "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts..."

Am I ready to lose my life?

#### C. Keys to success

1 Co 7:25: "...I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy."

Jn 4:34: "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

1. Depend entirely on God's grace:
  - a) Not on your education, talents, title/position, gifts, success, years in ministry
  - b) Not about my ability to perform (self-reliant attitude). But work of Jesus Christ who laid down his life so I can be free (from performance). Peter in Jn 21 (fishing on wrong side of boat then met Jesus for breakfast). From my to his ability! Paul: "my accomplishments were rubbish!"
2. Like Jesus be absolutely determined to do God's will (until the end of your life)

#### D. Brokenness (Moses, most humble. Paul) vs. charisma

1. Christ-like: I can only deliver people (Israel) from bondage, once I am first delivered at the burning bush!
2. Submit my life into the hands of the master potter.
3. Moses had to unlearn the doctrine of Egypt (Paul/Pharisee). Do I rely on training instead of the Holy Spirit? Zec 4:6: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD Almighty." We know how to have church vs. how to have God!

#### E. Leadership and character (balance spirit-soul-body)

1. Leaders tend to focus on building their gifts and ministries, not paying attention to character! Invest in character, not gifting! Ps 127:1: "Unless Adonai builds the house, its builders labor in vain."
2. God looks at my heart. Learn to see into hearts!
3. People don't care what you know. Until they know that you care. Are we changing lives?
4. Know who we are in Christ! Born to be priests, not slaves (flesh)!

**F. "Feed my sheep" (Jn 21:17). Do you love me?**

1. Don't testify how much you love Jesus or the revelation you had. "Feed my sheep." If I love Jesus, I have to 'feed his sheep'!
2. Jesus has some dirty, awkward, funny, weird and astray sheep! Love of God pays no attention to distinctions (human sympathies).

If I love Jesus, I have to feed his sheep!

**G. Focus**

1. Don't look for leadership, leadership looks for you! The greatest leaders didn't want to become leaders (Moses, Jacob, David, disciples)!
2. Beware of leaders who drive (devil whips) vs. Holy Spirit leads/draws.
3. God gives us the tools (gifts) as we need them, when we show up for work!
4. Play to your strength, delegate weaknesses (Moses). I am not good at too many things!
5. What does God want me to do today? Mt 16:18: "...on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." Eph 5:25: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church..." Do you love your spouse like Jesus loves the Church?!

**H. Need for mentors and leaders**

1. Fathers and mothers, not theologians! Models (biblical), equipping shepherds!
2. Next generations (young and old). Under siege!
3. Discipleship in the church not working.
4. Spiritual climate: warfare > perfect storm! (materialism, secularism, Islam)
5. Christ's method (servant leadership) caught not taught. 12 disciples as catalyst to reach the world.
6. Ignorance and poor teaching (church). Grow up (not on "milk" anymore). Know the truth
7. Mentoring is spiritual transformation (Timothy ministry). Christ formed in us (Gal 4:19).
8. Kingdom leaders to expand Kingdom of God! Sense of purpose and calling.
9. "People do not choose to become spiritual leaders. Spiritual leadership flows out of a person's vibrant, intimate relationship with God" (Henry Blackaby)
10. Focus, having a new heart. Inner healing.
11. Skills of coaching used.

**I. Finishing well**

1. Few leaders finish well (30%)! Noah, Solomon, rich man, etc. Must become a passion/resolve. Close each chapter well (David). Start now! Plot your unique timeline. See whole picture (Jesus Christ) vs. disciples (narrow perspective).
2. Ps 90:10: "The length of our days is seventy years--or eighty, if we have the strength..." 70 years of active life.
3. Robert Clinton: "The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership Development"
  - a) Age 20-40: preparation
  - b) Age 40-60: one thing God called me to do (need I can fill)
  - c) Age 60-70: "Overglow" > Christian statesman for gospel (stature). Mentor, coach, train leaders.
  - d) Age 70-75: "Afterglow" > Still have voices!

**J. Conclusion: Fruitful ministry (leader)**

1. Total dependence on God.
2. Unhindered cooperation with the Holy Spirit (Spirit-filled leaders).
3. Fellowship (covenant), a way of life.
4. Evangelism and discipleship, a lifestyle.
5. Caring (also for widows, orphans, poor).

We will need aggressive leadership (end times)! Wake-up calls (church). Israel!

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