

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

New Apostolic Reformation

Kryptonite

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1



Remember the one thing that could strip Superman of his unstoppable powers? If this thing was found in the vicinity of the “Man of Steel,” he’d be as helpless as a baby Giraffe on ice. That thing was *Kryptonite*.

No matter your position on the continuation of gifts that produce signs and wonders, there are certain truths that orthodox Christians have stood together on for millennia. When taught faithfully and proactively, these truths are Kryptonite to destructive doctrines that creep into the church.

Throughout church history, subgroups of mystically-inclined movements have spun off the reservation and well into heretical theological territories by their overzealous seeking of signs and wonders. When this occurs, there is often a fog of confusion that sweeps over the Church. *What are the grounds for calling someone a “heretic?” Should we, as some suggest, simply “chew the meat and spit out the bones?” Shouldn’t we avoid controversy and just love people?*

Regardless of varying position, people can’t follow a leader who isn’t clear. With that said, there are certain truths that every pulpit must be clear in presenting lest people be

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swept into doctrines that destroy. Perhaps there is not a more destructive force sweeping through the church today than the so-called, “New Apostolic Reformation.” This movement’s beliefs trample the deity of Christ, falsely guarantee healing for all who will follow their formula, and claim that their anointed leaders are a part of God’s reinstating of the Apostolic Era once again. Meanwhile, those leading the movement live like prosperity preachers and keep a tight grip on their positions of power. Don’t be deceived, this is a serious issue in the church today.

2

Here are five proactive truths that every pulpit should preach in order to protect those you serve from the winds of New Apostolic Reformation doctrine (Ephesians 4:14):

1: Earthly healing is not guaranteed in the atonement.

This truth counters one of the more common lies that was birthed out of the early phases of the charismatic movement. Over the last several decades, it’s caught on like wildfire in the word faith movement, prosperity theology, and New Apostolic Reformation. The teaching goes something this:

Jesus paid for your sin and your sickness. He was wounded for your transgressions, and by His stripes you are healed! Isaiah 53:5 says so! Why are you holding on to that sickness if He already paid for your healing? Let go of that cancer. Release infirmity. Receive your healing by faith.

Some basic questions should be asked, and answered. Are the problems of sin, sickness, pain, tears, and death all solved because of the atoning work of Christ on the cross and His subsequent resurrection from the grave? Absolutely.

Does that mean that all of the benefits from the atonement are fully realized on earth? Absolutely not. We still have to die (Hebrews 9:27). We aren’t yet in our glorified bodies (1 Corinthians 15:35-58). And God has not yet taken away all sadness, tears, and sorrow (Revelation 21:4). Further, I don’t experience the fullness of salvation until Christ is revealed (Colossians 3:4).

So, is salvation and healing a “package deal” as many faith healers claim? If so, what’s wrong with so many sick Christians? Is Joni Eareckson Tada sick because she’s simply not “tapping into” the atonement?

The answer is clearly and logically, no.

Teach your people how to praise God when He heals and even when He doesn’t. Say like Job, “He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21).

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2: Not all can heal and prophesy

This one isn't hard to understand, but many "schools of signs and wonders" are charging people tuition under the illusion that they can learn to heal and prophecy. Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry does this in Redding, California. But, can we guarantee that everyone is going to operate in all of these gifts, move in signs and wonders, and heal people? Can you bundle gifts of the Spirit like you bundle home and auto insurance?

3

Let's let Paul do the talking through the Holy Spirit's direct and final revelation:

All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? (1 Corinthians 12:29-30)

Those are rhetorical questions from Paul. Teach your flock to be discerning and steer them clear of schools and teachers who promise signs and wonders for students. You'll save them money, and maybe even their soul.

3: There are no more Apostles

This used to be an open and shut case. Few, if any, were arguing that the office of apostle was in operation today. However, this is now something preachers must be clear about time and time again.

Two distinctions should be made here.

First, in a sense, there is such a thing as being *apóstolos* (ἀπόστολος) today. This Greek word means "a delegate" and is synonymous with those who are commissioned to pioneer new gospel-work through planting, missionary work, or other frontier-like ministries. This is being a gospel-ambassador!

Second, there is no such thing as being an apostle in the sense of the New Testament office. This was restricted to a very specific group who met a specific criterion. When you survey the New Testament, you can gather that *real* apostles were:

- Commissioned and appointed personally by Christ (Mark 3:14; Luke 6:13 John 15:16; Romans 1:5; 1 Corinthians 15:7-9)
- Personally with Christ from baptism to ascension (Acts 1:21-22; Acts 10:38)
- Fulfilling prophecy when Mathias replaced Judas' specific office (Acts 1:19)

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- Performing undeniable and instantaneous signs and wonders (Acts 5:12; 2 Corinthians 12:12)
- Given direct revelation from God (John 16:13)
- Operating as the initial foundation for the Church (Ephesians 2:20; 4:11)
- Distinctly gifted for their uniquely foundational office (1 Corinthians 12:29)

While many people will be “apostolic” in their ministry in the sense that they are sent forth to do gospel work, based on what the Bible teaches about the requirements for being an apostle, it’s impossible for there to be any more apostles today.

4: Jesus was always truly God and truly man while on earth

One foundational (and false) teaching proliferated by the New Apostolic Reformation is that Jesus did His miracles as a man in right relationship with God, and not as God. The idea is that since Jesus wasn’t God when He did signs and wonders, you can do them too. This very twisted interpretation of the kenosis takes the “emptying” or “humbling” of Christ in Philippians 2:3-8 beyond biblical boundaries. Bethel Church pastor, Bill Johnson, and Todd White (Lifestyle Christianity) are two of the leading voices for this heretical belief more formally known as *ontological kenotic Christology*. Space in this article does not allow for extensive treatment here, but we offer plenty of footnotes and direct quotes from their teachings and their books in [Defining Deception](#). OKC is essentially the belief that Jesus laid aside His deity and takes variants of kenotic theory much too far. Any claim that Jesus was ever “not God” is deceptive heresy. In fact, Jesus Himself makes the claim that His signs and wonders were displays of the “works of God” (John 9:3). He was, as R.C. Sproul put it, “Truly God and truly man” while fulfilling His purpose on earth.

Never once does the Bible ever teach that Jesus laid aside His deity and ceased to be God. He was in perfect balance as the God-man; humbly adding humanity to His divinity. This was subtraction by addition.

Many evangelical churches have become holding tanks for heretical teachings whether it be through inviting these false teachers to headline conferences, using their music and endorsing their worship bands, or by downplaying the seriousness of their errors.

Make no mistake about it, this is a tier one issue. Preaching a proper view of the kenosis is essential for equipping your church faithfully.

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5: Judge a teacher's words against Scripture

Teaching this will be a valuable way to equip discerning Christians. People being deceived are taught never to question their anointed leader. Therefore, it will be a distinction of a biblical church and a faithful pulpit that people are taught to weigh every word taught in light of Scripture. This is the right kind of “judging” and believers are wise to exercise discernment.

Pro-active preachers who want their flock to be well guided and guarded do well to encourage them to weigh every word from any pulpit by the word of God.

More truths can certainly be added to this list, but if you're looking for key ways to assess your own ministry or to be more proactive in shepherding the flock of God, this list of teachings is a great place to start.

***If this is your first time encountering this kind of doctrinal indictment on Bethel Church (and music), the New Apostolic Reformation, or leaders like Bill Johnson and Todd White, please refer to the [following article](#) and read the sources linked in it for further research.



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