Ripples into the Nations

Shaun Brauteseth 29 August 2017



‘Give me one hundred men who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not whether they be clergyman or laymen, they alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven upon the earth.’

That quote was from a letter written by John Wesley, and for a time in the 1700s, he and his friends actually did shake the gates of hell, with Wesley himself riding roughly a quarter of a million miles on horseback and preaching about 40,000 sermons. Britain and America burned with the fires of revival due to his anointing, power and ability to administrate discipleship at ground level.

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Today, though, the movement he started looks very different, and not necessarily in a good way. Why, exactly? The traditions of man. It’s what happens when people begin to put procedures in place – often with good intentions – that are not part of the pattern we see in Scripture. Most of us have probably seen some expression of this in a church body before, and it essentially limits the power of God and stunts the maturity, fruitfulness and effectiveness of the saints.

For that reason, one of the most important tasks of our generation is to build churches according to the pattern we see in the New Testament, and Jesus has given apostolic gifts to

people to enable them to build in the right way. None of us will ever be like the original twelve apostles or like Paul, who received his revelation directly from Jesus and wrote Scripture, but God still anoints people today with an apostolic gifting so that they can lead churches into His pattern, as it's laid out in the Bible.

At the beginning of August, more than 20 couples from South Africa, Zambia, Brazil, England, the Isle of Man, Switzerland and even Benoni convened at Provence in Wellington for a week of apostolic training, and it genuinely was life-changing.

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During the week, Andrew Selley, Will Marais, Jonathan Stanfield and Brad Verreynne taught us while we furiously scribbled notes. (My writing started out neatly and got less and less legible as the days went by; the last page of my notes looks vaguely like a failed lie-detector test.) There was teaching on strategy: how to bring change, how the Ephesians 4 gifts work, how to create a culture of discipleship, stirring up conviction and not conformity. There was teaching on vision: what the church can be, building relational bridges, leading people into a kingdom culture. But most of all, there was heart, and that's probably the most profound aspect of training times like these – you get an impartation from the heart of God.

Andrew, Will, Jonathan and Brad represent strong apostolic gifts in our field of churches that we've called Four12. They aren't perfect men with perfect theology, but they love Jesus and His church with a passion, and it's contagious. To see them shout with joy about someone coming into their destiny, or agonize over one person caught up in sin, is to be reminded of how deeply Jesus feels for His church. And so for all the incredible insight, understanding and practical guidance we gained during the week of training – and there was a huge amount – the heart behind it all is what made the deepest impression on me. Every church and every person is worth our best efforts, because Jesus paid the highest price possible for them. And so we keep leading, loving, encouraging and building.

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During the week of training, my wife and I met people we'll love for the rest of our lives. A love for Jesus and His church brought us all together, and we've resolved to only do things His way. I'm so thankful for the input, the effort and the hospitality extended to us, and if we apply it with

skillful hands and integrity of heart, I believe the effects will be felt in the nations. May we all, like John Wesley, seek to shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven here on the earth.