

"I will set a Plumbline among my people..." Amos 7:8



The Plumbline

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Assessing Current Teachings, Issues and Events with Scripture

Does Joel Osteen Speak For Evangelicals?

Michael Horton has written a number of essays after two interviews Joel Osteen gave on television. The following are a number of comments by Horton regarding Joel Osteen's public statements.

"In his interview with Larry King (CNN, June 20, 2005), Joel Osteen said he is not sure what happens to people who reject Christ. King followed up with the question about Jews Moslems and other non-Christians. "They are all wrong aren't they?" Osteen replied: "well! I don't know. I don't know if they are wrong...But I think only God knows a person's heart. I spent a lot of time in India with my father. I don't know all about their religion . But I know they love God and are sincere." Certainly there is truth in this position. God will expose all of the secrets of our heart on the last day. However, where Osteen seems to think that God's judgment of our hearts is good news, scripture treats it as the worst possible report, since the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jer. 17:9). Jesus added that, "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses and blasphemy." (Mk.15:11)... Far from being a relatively unspoiled beach of sanctity, the heart is the citadel from which our mutiny against God and neighbor is launched...[In Osteen's gospel] there is a lack of a vertical dimension. That is, it is not obvious that sin in Osteen's view is an offense against God. That is why he does not talk of sins, but mistakes and or failures... In the message of preachers like Osteen, however, sins become offenses I commit against myself that keep me from realizing 'my best life now.' It is therapeutic narcissism. I have failed to live up to my potential and God's best for my life... No longer is falling short of the glory of God sin, but sin is falling short of my best life now...Did Jesus think people are basically good when you look at their heart? Did He think that sincerity and moral effort would serve as our clothing when we appear before the judge of all the earth?...The victory of the gospel is far greater than relief from stress, sadness loneliness, disappointment and even illness leading to death. It is victory over everlasting death through the resurrection on the last day we will share in Christ... God's love is far greater than being nice. He tells us the truth. First He tells us about our condition. We are not just sick, but we are dead in trespasses and sin (Eph. 2:1), not good people who could do better, but people unable to meet God's standard. If we are to be judged on our own integrity we will be lost. God could have left the matter there, but he determined from eternity ... to regenerate, sanctify and glorify a new humanity from every kindred , tongue, people and nation...But God also tells the truth about the good news. No doctor can actually assume your cancer, suffer it's terrible result and assure your own resurrection by his own victory over death. But God has done this! As God incarnate, Christ fulfilled his own law in our place, bore it's judgment against us on the cross, was

raised the third day for our justification (to make us right before Him) (Rom.4:25)... Salvation is a free gift for us, though it cost God dearly. Osteen's message seems softer but not kinder. He thinks that people who show signs of integrity and willingness to change their life situations are candidates for God's blessing. He apparently doesn't believe God justifies the ungodly, but says you're not too bad to those who do their best. [If that's true] how is Christianity better and any different from other religions"? (Michael Horton, *What Ever Happened to Sin*, Westminster Seminary, 2010).

Chris Wallace interviewed Osteen. Wallace asks Osteen: "Is a Mormon a true Christian? Osteen replies: 'Well in my mind they are. Mitt Romney says he believes in Christ as his savior and that's what I believe. I am not the one to judge the little details... Mitt Romney seems like a man of character and integrity.' Wallace asks: 'When people start talking of Joseph Smith and the golden tablets from upstate New York and God assumes the shape of a man, do you get hung up on those Mormon theological issues? Osteen replies: 'I don't get hung up on them because I haven't really studied them.'"

So what does the Gospel actually save us from? Is it finally primarily a therapeutic Gospel or is a Gospel of eternal salvation from sin? If I have cancer will a misdiagnosis of gall bladder be what I really need?

The Coalescing Of The Christian Right With Apostolic Dominionism

In the last *Plumbline*, I detailed the vast pervasive reach of the NAR and its myriads of affiliates around the globe. From that directory of affiliates we saw a voracious appetite for interlocking organizations. At some point Wagner (Convening Apostle of the International Coalition of Apostles) decided rapid church growth dominion over society could be accomplished inside a democratic process and without establishing a full blown theocracy. Wagner and Co. decided to employ the infiltration of churches, denominations (behind the scenes), expansion of cell churches... In addition Church Growth strategies employ the "reclaiming of the 7 spheres of culture, now named by revelation, The 7 Mts of Culture to take over business, government, media, arts, education family and religion. In Wagner's book the Church in the Marketplace, he points to the importance of hither to unknown Market Place Apostles. Indications are that he is well along and has billionaire Apostles in place. He calls for a gigantic wealth transfer from the unrighteous to the righteous to finance Kingdom advance. But Jesus left no doubt that "my kingdom is not of this world." Jesus alone can consummate the kingdom when He comes on the clouds in power and great glory. Until that time the kingdom grows in the hearts of men and women. (wheat among tares) Neither does the Kingdom start and end with Uber-American patriotic Christian politics. Having lived overseas for decades, I know that Christians in other countries often look at American Christian politics in bewilderment. The kingdom of God is not identified with political might and control even as Jesus came not to be a political messiah in this first advent. Only Jesus the King can rule after His return, resurrection of believers, the final judgment and a new heavens and a new earth.

Forays by NAR Apostles into the political scene in America have been until recently sparse. But Lou Engle, the bobble head (ala Jews and the wailing wall) Apostle, who has his own ministry to youth called "The Call", has been politically active in pro-life and homosexual issues. Some months ago he was able

to pray for Gingrich and Huckabee with the laying on of apostolic hands. But very recently the political stars seem to have come suddenly into alignment. The American political landscape has suddenly changed. A tumult is appearing in the land with the passage of health care reform. The Christian Right with its years of courting political influence is now poised to merge with the new Tea Party Movement. In times of crisis, natural or caused, things seem to happen faster and opportunities, that would take years, seem to happen in months. There is the scent of rebellion in the air. Martial Arts and Christian actor Chuck Norris has called for a Second American Revolution. Appearing on Mormon Glen Beck's radio program Norris promised, if things get any worse, he will run for president of the Sovereign state of Texas. Surely this is only bluster, but it reveals the mood of many.

Some political conservatives are stoking a political upheaval and they need recruits. Christian Right people have for years worked the political right. Now the time seems right (pun intended). The New Apostolic Reformation NAR, which has been called the largest protestant movement you have never heard of apparently is ready for a "mating dance" with the Christian Right and by extension the Political Right. Surely, the NAR must see this as a match made in heaven which they hope eventually could lead to dominion.

"The engagement party" will be held on the steps of the Lincoln monument. MAYDAY DAY2010: A Cry To God For A Nation In Distress, May 1, 2010. Janet Porter, a long time Christian shock radio personality with a turbo powered presentation and longtime political right contacts, is openly promoting dominion. She has been quoted as saying: "our goal is to take dominion in every area and occupy until Jesus comes." She has not been bashful, and has consigned Christians, who voted for Obama, to Hell. I am sure glad I didn't vote for Obama.

Porter apparently is the match maker. She is the organizer of the MAY DAY event. For her years in the pro life struggle we can only commend her. But now she has assumed a role much greater than herself and the Kingdom of God, unless of course you see the Kingdom of God as a political kingdom. Janet Porter has taken the initiative to organize the May Day event. She has coaxed James Dobson to come out of semi retirement. A bevy of traditional evangelical leaders will now include 3 of the most prominent NAR Leadership, Church Pierce heir apparent (see the last Plumblin), Dutch Sheets who appears to be third in line to the throne (if no palace intrigue occurs) and Cindy Jacobs, (the most prominent of all the prophets and prophetess. (Apostolic Council of Prophetic Elders). At the rally on the Lincoln monument the 7 Mountains Scheme of Dominion will be publically prayed. How was this all arranged? It appears that Janet Porter herself had the leading role. It took place at Cindy Jacobs "Convergence 2010: A Cry To Awaken A Nation. All the NAR heavies were there, including Peter Wagner, Lance Wallnau (who only lectures on 7mts Dominionism), Ed Silvoso, and Jim Garlow (recently appointed to Newt Gingrich's Renewing American Leadership, (ReAL) organization).

During the conference Porter prayed publically (utube, Rightwingwatchdotorg) that God would grant control of the media. She suggested taking over CBS and renaming it the Christian Broadcasting System. It appears that the media is the first of the Seven Mts to be conquered for the kingdom. Where will this leave CBN, TNN and God TV which now reaches 212 countries? In passing Jacobs did not disappoint the conference thrill seekers. She told of the seraphim coming into her room and catching it on fire.

But, before the May Day conference, a Freedom Foundation Summit is scheduled for April 15, national tax day and hosted by Liberty University. This will be a more overtly political event. Many political operatives will be there, including our own Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty (Republican candidate wanna be), Governor Perry of Texas, newly elected Governor of Virginia and Ken Cuccinelli Virginia Attorney General attempting to block health care reform, Newt Gingrich, Gary Bauer, Necon Frank Gaffney, Ann Graham Lotz and of course Jonathan Falwell. But significantly in the list of dignitaries invited for the very first time are Lou Engle, Rick Joyner Lance Wallnau, an Apostle promoting the 7 Mts Dominion teaching. Also listed is Cindy Jacobs, Rick Joyner, Bishop Harry Jackson (touted be an Apostle Martin Luther King, and Samuel Rodriguez, all NAR Apostles. Palin having been prayed for by an Apostle named Thomas Muthee in Alaska regarding the 7 Mts scheme will be there in spirit.

All of this will give the NAR a respected place in Christian Right and national politics. But the agenda of NAR goes beyond social values and politics. This is infiltrate to dominate. Samuel Rodriguez is an apostle who is also a passionate speaker/orator. He heads Wagner's National Christian Hispanic Leadership Council and has also been invited to the Freedom Federation Summit at Liberty University April 15. Speaking earlier at a Rick Joyner's Oak Initiative gathering at Fort Mill, with great emphasis, Rodriguez rallied the crowd asserting that the Oak Initiative, Joyner's political action group, is "the New Jerusalem and also Washington DC. We will mobilize for cultural reformation, not just engagement. We will not be held hostage by a donkey or an elephant." How better to express the Dominion Mandate.

Rachel Tabachnick writes: "Imagine for a moment that a very large block of the evangelical world decided to reorganize into a hierarchy somewhat like the Roman Catholic Church with leaders (Apostles) in authority over each nation, region and city... Peter Wagner has streamlined this ideology and named it the NAR. Wagner is the presiding apostle of the ICA which includes 40 nations and prayer warrior community networks in all 50 states and worldwide." (Christian Right Watch). The merging of Christian Right Politics and Apostolic/Prophetic Dominionism is a giant leap forward for the Dominion Mandate they espouse. Apostle Jim Laffoon has written: "Have you ever wondered why we have spent two thousand years reaching the the same nations OVER and OVER and OVER again.? It's because we've only set the goal of reaching them, and not understanding what it is to rule them... Before it is all done, God will give us hundreds of Apostles and Prophets... for they will equip the greatest army of professionals...the world has ever seen...We believe that the Kingdom of God can come upon the earth as it is in heaven... We believe we will produce a generation that will not only reach but rule. We are called to change history. We are called to produce a generation that will rule. I believe one day we will leave our children Nations and Regions and Continents." (Laffoon, Dark Side of the Latter Rain, www.talk2action.org/story/2000, The Dark Underside of the Latter-Rain).

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