

A VISION FOR HERITAGE CHURCH

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Lead Pastor, J. Wesley Hilliard

VISION: Imagine this with me ...

God sends a person with an Apostolic Calling ... and a direct commission from Jesus to do a great work in our area That person would have the anointing and vision to draw together a team of Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, those with gifts of Healing and Miracles, Helps ministries, and Administrators, and mighty Spirit-led prayer warriors. Envision those ELDERS gathered together on a regular basis, seeking the LORD, ministering to Him, and receiving direction (like they did in Acts 13: 1-3 at the great church in Antioch).

Now, place anointed Missionary/Evangelists working through out age groups: among high schoolers, Jr. High and with middle school and grade-school children, senior adults, young adults, young married, and middle-aged singles and families. Send out anointed Missionary/Evangelists to reach our city through the leading of the Holy Spirit ... making friendships ... serving the community ... meeting needs ... demonstrating the Love of Jesus in practical ways and sharing the good news of Jesus ... seeking to touch every unreached person in the community, at least once a year.

Now imagine those with apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral and teaching anointings equipping the entire church family **to live as foreign missionaries** right here in this community, in their neighborhoods, in their schools, and at their work ... Imagine us sharing Jesus with our friends, family members, neighbors, and co-workers ... and then bringing them into the family of believers and baptizing them as they receive Jesus and are filled with His Holy Spirit and filled to overflowing with LOVE, PEACE, and JOY unspeakable and full of glory!

Imagine such individuals whose lives have been transformed, now changing our county and city governments, our schools, our law enforcement, the marketplace and industry ... Imagine the drug and alcohol addicts getting set free totally, and the drug pushers leaving because they have no one to buy their stuff. Imagine our jails empty because there is no crime!

Now, let's choose Pastors with true hearts for God's people! -- one for every 10 to 20 people! Let them gather these persons into small groups to disciple them and to help them grow and mature as believers. Do not burden the pastors with building programs or financial concerns. Send other pastor/shepherds out to visit the lame, the sick, the imprisoned, the orphan, the widow. Commission an army of shepherds to invite straying Christians over for dinner, to minister to their families, and to draw them out of the world. Let others care for the older saints, loving them and watching over their personal needs, and then BRING THEM IN TO THE

HOUSE OF GOD WHERE APOSTLES, PROPHETS AND TEACHERS can build them up and equip them for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4).

Allow those with **Gifts of Healing and Miracles** to lay hands on those with needs. Instruct these ministers to visit the hospitals regularly and to build a reputation whereby the hospital staff respect and look forward to their coming. Release the **ADMINISTRATORS** to handle the finances, construct the buildings for the Glory of God, and organize the church family so that outreach, food distribution, social gatherings, and other activities are carried out with harmony and grace. Put into office serving ministers (**HELPS/service/deacons**) who are filled with the Spirit of God, and let them serve so that those with the office gifts are free to devote themselves to **prayer and the ministry of the Word** (see Acts 6). Take the chains and traditional restrictions off the church, and let the believers minister in their gifting. Undergird all of this with Spirit-led prayer ...

“Men and women of God will stop looking for the Spirit to come and do a new thing. They will realize THEY are the “New Thing” waiting to be released” (quote by Benji Mallory). How much of an impact do you think that church would have in our area? Think about it, and let hope rise in your heart! (inspired by the writings of Harold Eberle) ...

I dream of such a church ... I believe **God dreams of such a church!** I believe we are called to be such a church! That is the vision the Lord has been giving me since I was a teenager! Each year, I get more of the pieces of the puzzle! Each year the vision/picture gets clearer. ***With every difficulty we face, with every setback we overcome, my hope and my faith grows!***

God is raising us up to be, not just a New Testament, Apostolic Church, but to be **the fountain head of, the mother of, A MOVEMENT!** I don't know totally what that movement is going to look like. But I think it's going to look a lot like the book of Acts in the 21st Century!! We will be a church that throws off the blinders and straight-jackets imposed by Western denominationalism and self-absorption and consumerism and lives out the radical, faith-talking, faith-walking, love-filled, peace filled, joy erupting, hope inspiring, life-changing Spirit-led, Spirit-filled/anointed WAY of Jesus.

The WAY of JESUS through the PEOPLE of JESUS is the HOPE OF THE WORLD! WITHOUT THE POWER, BLOOD, AND SPIRIT OF JESUS, THE WORLD IS TOAST! AND BURNT TOAST AT THAT!

This is why, the Lord has been having me teach you this entire school year on the Gifts of the Father – the Creational/Motivational Gifts, and the Gifts of the Spirit ... equipping you to be the church of God's dreams ... I am seeking to hold nothing back!

Acts 20:20 *“I did not shrink back from teaching you anything that was profitable to you ...*

Act 20:27 "I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole/full counsel/will/purpose of God."

I want you to know it and to have it all—the the Good News, all the tools! As I mentioned last week, just as the angel commanded the early disciples in Acts 5:20 "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

God has captured me with this vision for the church, and yet I have become one of the primary hindrances ... Because of my weakness and desire to please everyone more than I sometimes desire to please God, I have allowed myself to get squeezed into the box of a WESTERN denominational idea of what church leadership should look like! -- a hired senior pastor seeks to meet the needs of everyone! Super-pastor does it all!

This was NEVER God's plan or intention! ... Now understand my heart. My shepherd's heart ... wants to sit down with and be with and care for every single one of you! Those of you who have been here over a few years, have heard this message from me before ... I personally want to respond to every need, but it is impossible, and it is killing me, and IT HAS BECOME A LID on this church! I have become the lid by operating this way. We could be growing and impacting this community so much more, if I would lead the way God wants me too, and not how I feel many of you expect me too, AND ... it is keeping many of you from rising up and exercising your ministry gifts as well.

As the LEAD PASTOR, I'm the ASSISTANT HEAD COACH, taking my orders from Jesus ... the HEAD COACH, TEAM OWNER, and GENERAL MANAGER ... Part of my job is to call forth, recognize and legitimize the ministry of other coaches the Lord has given us on this team! Those coaching roles are ... **Apostle**-- (sent forth, ambassadors of God ... to establish God's purposes and lead the movement ...), **Prophets**: the eyes and ears to see, hear, edify, encourage/exhort (warn), comfort and discern – execute judgment and protect the flock. **Evangelists** : gifted persons who both have a passion and gifting to win people to Jesus and to teach others how to do the same. **Pastors** to gather, feed, care for, heal, protect, hold accountable these persons ... then **Teachers** to establish them in the TRUTH/DOCTRINE/teachings of JESUS ...

These are the coaches on God's staff! They are roles to equip the team/family for the Work God has for us! We live in both exciting and dangerous days. Islamic Extremism and Anti-Christian secular humanism is on the rise! Our world needs us to RISE UP, and BE the CHURCH OF GOD'S DREAMS! We will be a praying church, a great missionary church, a restoring church, an equipping church, a teaching church, a sending church, and a church that exercises influence over a movement of Christians who share this vision. We will supply a great fountain of Christians who will lead and fuel this movement around the world.

THE GIFTS OF GOD

I. The Gifts of the FATHER: Romans 12: 3-8 Foundational/Functional Gifts: Basic Life Purpose and Motivation, like your spiritual personality.

1. Prophetic
2. Ministering/Serving/Deacon
3. Teaching
4. Exhorting/Encouraging
5. Giving
6. Organizational Leading
7. Mercy-giving

II. The Gifts of the SON: Ephesians 4:11, 1 Corinthians 12:28 The offices to facilitate and equip the Body of the Church for the work of ministry in order to reach fullness (full maturity) in Christ.

EPHESIANS

1. Apostle
2. Prophet
3. Evangelist
4. Pastor
5. Teacher

CORINTHIANS

1. Apostle
2. Prophet
3. Teacher
4. Miracles
5. Gifts of Healing

III. The Gifts of the SPIRIT: 1 Corinthians 12: 7-11 Freeing Gifts/Ministerial Gifts: Gifts to help free us to serve God fully and to help us minister to others in order to set them free.

A. Revelation Gifts

1. Word of Wisdom
2. Word of Knowledge
3. Discerning of Spirits

B. Power Gifts

1. Faith
2. Gifts of Healing
3. Working of Miracles

C. Vocal Gifts

1. Prophecy
2. Different Kinds of Tongues
3. Interpretation of Tongues