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From John L. Moore, posted Feb 20, 2001

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(Author's note: I don't know that I have had a word that I've labored over as intensely as this one. I thought of dictating it as a prophetic word but felt the Lord gave me the option of expressing it more as an article. I chose the latter to embrace more humanness, and hopefully, avoid some of the risk of self-righteousness. If I failed, please forgive me. Last August I received a word of warning for prophetic intercessors and watched -- and participated -- as that company was severely tried and shaken. I did not post a warning when I received it but only mentioned it to a few close friends. I regret not having been a better watchman. This is a word for pastors, and surely I tremble more at this responsibility. It is not a word to all pastors. It is to those who stand outside a door that only they can open. It will be opened by the courage of relinquishing control and the nobleness of repenting identification ally for the sins of spiritual abuse. In the past year we have heard prophets call prophets to task and we have heard apostles issue challenges of integrity to their fellow apostles. It is time for a company of pastors to rise up, take responsibility, and set a pastoral example.)

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"Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart." Col. 3:21

Provoked to Wrath

Shortly after coming to the Lord I got a puppy, a German Shepherd-Doberman cross. I named him Barabbas. One day my father noticed Barabbas running the highway. "Those well-bred dogs need something to do," my father warned. "If you don't work 'em, they'll get in trouble." I heeded the warning and kept Barabbas busy with obedience training. Barabbas was not a lap dog. He was a powerful but well-behaved watchdog that probably saved Debra's life one night in Albuquerque when a crazed heroin-dealer tried to break into our home while I was gone.

Barabbas interceded.

Now, imagine giving a dog like Barabbas to someone used to lap dogs. He would probably be tethered on a short leash and beaten when he barked. After weeks of abuse the animal would either become vicious or die of a broken spirit.

The Watchdogs of the Lord

Prophets are the watchdogs of the Lord. They guard, intercede, and warn. They are highly sensitive. As Ras Robinson pointed out in a recent teaching, the Old Testament prophet was a "foreteller, inspired speaker, and poet."

A poetic watchman. That is our modern prophet.

But, poetry is largely dead in our culture -- a symbol of our famine for hearing the Word of the Lord. The closest we have to popular poetic expression in America is rap. Lord help us!

Poets, by gifting, are expressive people. This is true whether they are as introverted as an Emily Dickinson, or as extroverted as cowboy poet Baxter Black who performs with pratfalls and histrionics.

But no matter their personality, the poet must express him or herself.

The same is true for prophets. They must be given a forum. Even in infancy they must be allowed the opportunity to learn through practice.

In many churches today prophetic people do not have that opportunity. They are watchdogs on a short leashes, provoked by insecure masters. The snubs, harsh looks, and tight-fisted controls are like the blows of a stick. Most prophets endure quietly, but eventually they either lie down and whimper or snarl and leave.

The ones that leave are dogs running loose in the night.

The Abused Running Wild

Those who moderate or oversee prophetic lists -- Meri Burlingame, Steve Shultz, Bill Somers, Pam Clark, and others -- often hear the howling and whining of abused watchdogs.

In just the past few weeks I have had correspondences with several people who are outraged about traditional church authority. They've obviously suffered greatly at the hands of leadership. Having broken their chains they now howl or growl from a distance. If you approach them they turn and run.

Discipline, to their reasoning, is simply another beating. They trust no one and are content to howl alone in the dark.

Neighbors throw verbal shoes at them. "Dang, independent prophets! Won't submit to authority!"

A dog in the wild will not survive long. They starve, get shot, hit by cars, or are killed by the very wolves that some have mistaken them to be.

Somehow the abused watchdog must find it in himself to trust again. He must scout the settlements until he finds a friendly home, one where he can submit but also serve. One where he can be what he was created to be: a watchdog, not a lap dog.

Some, unfortunately, will not come in from the cold. They become feral. Ultimately they will only produce the fruit of their own deception.

### The Danger of a Little Knowledge

I was recently told by one of my spiritual mentors that "...the problem is not that pastors don't know about five-fold ministry. The problem is that many know but they don't care."

I think many do care but are intimidated by the challenge of implementation.

"I have to bring my people along slowly," pastors often tell me. "They can only take baby steps."

Well, how much freedom is too much freedom? How much truth is too much truth? How much life is too much life? How much growth is there without the proper church government of five-fold ministry?

Growth is progressive, but the rate must be determined by the Holy Spirit, not the fear of man. Did Jesus lead the disciples in baby steps? "Oh ye of little faith," he often said, continuing to challenge and incite.

If we treat people like babies they learn to act like babies.

"But I don't know how to do it," they exclaim.

None of us do. He is a light onto our feet. We will learn by taking a step at a time in mutual submission.

Do as He shows, not as you have seen others do.

In the past seven years leaders throughout the Body have been impacted by outpourings in Toronto, Pensacola, Smithton, and other wellsprings. And, thousands have been inspired and activated by conferences in Colorado Springs, Dallas, and countless other cities.

Multitudes of pastors have heard the call for apostolic reformation, five-fold ministry, and a Third Day church and have returned to their home churches with new zeal, ambition, and hope. They've organized powerful prayer concerts, hosted seminars, and had mini-revivals.

But structure has not changed. People who claim to be apostles administer churches in the same style they speak against. The prophetic is often relegated to a sideshow for appeasing personal fears or giving a semblance of progressiveness.

Where is bold new direction? What about actual changes of government? It takes more than the latest worship C.D., hot guest speaker, or the waving of banners to revolutionize an encrypted system.

Directional revelation must follow visionary revelation. The prophets are the seers. They are the visionaries. Yes, apostolic leadership is necessary, but many pastors are in systems that do not believe in the modern prophetic office, let alone apostles!

If these pastors and systems can't handle prophetic anointing, they probably aren't ready for the apostolic. Who's right is it to put stumbling blocks in their way? Reformation cannot be programmed into an old system. Forget the old wives' tales about making old wineskins new by turning them inside out and soaking them with oil.

Any system that is flexible enough to be turned inside out is not the old system to begin with.

Faith means risk. If leaders of local churches believe in present truth they must pay the price for their beliefs. Until they do they will simply cheerlead the latest fad, copy other churches, and wreak havoc with the hopes and desires of their people.

And if a watchdog howls during this process, beat it or neglect it!

#### Teachers and Pastors Must Proclaim the Truth

It is time for pastors to be responsible for what they know. Delaying a decision is a decision in itself. Delay produces decay.

In researching an article for a national magazine I've talked to church leaders in fellowships where five-fold government and church growth is a reality. They all say the same thing: It comes at a price. The violent take it by force. And they aren't eager to tell you their system because their system might not work for others.

"Seek God," they simply say. "He will show you what to do and how and when to do it."

In the past couple years many challenges have been issued to the prophets. I have issued a few myself and some have been issued to me.

I have heard words of challenges for the apostles. How often does anyone hear strong words challenging pastors? They are still handled like NFL quarterbacks during scrimmages. They wear a special red jersey that means "no-contact." You can hit everyone else, but don't hit him! Touch touch God's anointed! Don't throw spears at Saul!

And don't tell the emperor he has no clothes on!

I am not suggesting rebellion, disrespect, insults or violence to anyone, but pastors who believe in church reformation must announce it and then stand in the face of opposition.

Stand! And if you are forced to go, then leave. Somewhere in the dark night a prophet is waiting. Find him. Seek God together. Pray for apostolic relationship.

If this is too costly then abandon the vision. Don't play with five-fold ministry. It is more dangerous than dynamite. Seek God for confirmation of your calling and role. Don't appoint yourself as an apostle in an effort to maintain control. You have no idea what you are doing. If you are apostolic then begin a new work on a sure new foundation. But do the work. Just hanging the title on a shingle means nothing. Find men you know by their fruits and signs as five-fold officers. Get close to them. Relate to them.

Pursue truth and direction by pursuing Him.

Should you lose everything but gain Christ you've won.

Five-fold ministry will never be four adornments around the center of one main office. And church reformation is not a program. It is a revolution.

Pastors can no longer sit in the security of their offices imagining ways to remodel their churches while cussing the noises they hear outside in the dark.

The man outside might be a master architect with the plans of God. Walking at his side is the watchman, the prophet. They roam the night looking for a shepherd.

Listen, they may be knocking at your door. Pastors Must Judge Each Other Or Be Judged By Others.

I can already hear some pastors saying: "John, you don't know the abuses I've taken, you don't know the nights I've cried to God, or the demanding prophetic people who have camped on my step or upset my church. You don't know what it is like!"

I have seen many aspects of the church political system. It emits a foul odor. I am not talking about congregational control or a Presbyterian system. I am not so naive as to suggest that anything will happen overnight or that feelings won't be hurt and livelihoods threatened.

But I know each camp must judge its own before we can truly submit one to another. True shepherds must rebuke the hirelings that sit around their own campfires.

We are in a time of identification repentance. Even the Vatican has officially repented for its treatment of Protestants during the reformation. Who is repenting for those who are howling in the night?

There is a shaking coming to the misconception of pastoral authority. I see a door that opens to new realms of heavenly authority. Standing beside the door is a small company of broken pastors. They have given up titles, positions, and politics. They only want to serve.

They can prepare the way for the next wave of blessings.

In their hands is the key.

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