

# *Building a Church to Impact the World*

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### **Introduction**

Jesus declared: ... I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.  
**Matthew 16:18**

When a builder decides to build a house, he knows very well the various phases necessary to complete it. It all begins with an idea that is transformed into a design and finally a project. Sometimes a model is made first. They follow up with the legal phase, getting permits, the building licence and the finances. Only then does it pass to the executive phase, which has its own stages and problems: the excavating, the foundations, the pillars, the frame, the walls, the roof, the conductors, the cables, doors and windows, and finally the aesthetics. But throughout the stages, each of the different managers always has the same document before them: **The Plan**. Without that, nothing gets done.

The building of the Church did not begin with us. It has already been a few millennia that the Lord Jesus has been working, completing many phases through thousands of obstacles. Before time began, God was working on the plan; the model of the Old Testament and with Jesus He opened the "site". The Apostles lent a hand with the foundations. And bit by bit, in the course of time the plan began to come together through the various phases and difficulties. Now it is our turn to do our part. When moving ahead in our part of the construction, we cannot **not** take into account how much has already been done and how much more will be done in the future. Above all, we must constantly watch that the construction sticks to **the plan**, to bring the Church into its fullness.

### **The Plan**

The coming of the Lord Jesus gave the way to the workers. *"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it"*. **Matthew 16:18**

Jesus clearly laid out the plan. He is the designer of the plan. He is the Great Architect. And He is the director of the Work.

**Colossians 1:16** ... *All things were created through Him and for Him*. His disciples would become His working team. The foundation stones, like that of Peter, one of the first stones would state: *you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*. **1Peter 2:5**

To them Jesus revealed His heart and His Great Plan:

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations ... **Matthew 28:18, 19**

*"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."* **Matthew 24:14**

I would like to consider with you the revelation that Jesus gives to the Apostle John regarding His Church.

**We read in Revelation 7:9-12:** <sup>9</sup>*After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,* <sup>10</sup>*and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"* <sup>11</sup>*All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,* <sup>12</sup>*saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honour and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen."*

The text starts like this: *After these things I looked, and I saw (behold).* Every great work needs a clear vision that describes every detail. Even Moses had a vision with a lot of detail. To him the **I AM** said in **Exodus 25:8-9**: *"And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them. <sup>9</sup>"According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.*

The recommendation was repeated at different times **so that every detail** was done according **to the model**: in **Exodus 25:40** *"And see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain."*

When God means to do something important, He takes care to show His plan through a visible model; the Tabernacle, the Priests, the Cloud and the Fire, the Law that precedes the vision of the Plan.

But it is only with the Coming of Jesus, the working team that the architectural model begins to be explained, understood and reproduced in real life.

As the Mosaic meeting was "a copy and shadow of heavenly things" **Hebrews 8:5**, so was John's description of the Plan of God, the one in which Jesus really had in mind:  
A Church that could be here on earth, a copy and shadow of the Heavenly Church.

One thing that is noticeable about John's vision is that the Church is concentrated on the presence of God, around whom we see this sea of people in contemplation and worship. God and the multitude are, in this vision, one.

**Revelation 21:3** *"And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God."*

Here is a vision in which we see a palpable God among the people from all round the world – Today there are already 700 million Evangelical Christians– without counting other Christian families, in which the 12 Tribes of Israel before the Tabernacle of Moses were a small visible representation, all together before Moses, under the pillar of smoke and fire.

The Church throughout the centuries, apart from a few exceptions, like the Jews, have often separated the earth from Heaven ending up with a very religious part and not much reality of the presence of God; a people who have lived divided between religiosity and worldliness; God in Heaven and the Church on earth.

The words of Jesus were relevant and still often relevant today for the Jewish religion and also often for the Church:

*These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. **Matthew 15:8***

Again in **Hebrews 12:22-24** we read: <sup>2</sup>*But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, <sup>23</sup>to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, <sup>24</sup>to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.*

The Church must be a people that lives in God, before God and near to God. Without this closeness, this intimacy, the Church only has the appearance of holiness.

**Rev 3:10** and **21:2** tell us that the Church, the New Jerusalem, the Tabernacle of God, the Bride ready for her Bridegroom, is a heavenly creation, comes from heaven. It does not come from earth. It is not a product of liturgy, of theology or human religion. It is something real produced by God and that comes from God.

As it was for Moses, the recommendation is the same for us: *Look to do everything according to the pattern!*

There is a part that comes exclusively from God, which is the design, the life and the spirit of the Church. It is an invisible, deep, and irreplaceable work of the Holy Spirit in people and

through people. And He can only fulfil the work according to the measure in which the Church has as its main goal, **to fervently seek the presence of God.**

**John 15:4** *Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me*

This speaks to us of unity, intimacy and total dependence. It is not only a question of healthy doctrine, biblical strategy, activism or intelligent programs. Not even of charisma, ministries, and powerful works or of miracles. NO! It is a question of the evidence of the presence of God. Everything starts from there.

 **The Church that will impact the world is a Church in which the people continually breathe this Presence. He is at the centre of every thought, of every initiative, every plan and every word. In that presence the people will not necessarily see great preachers, good singers, or perfect organisation but they will meet with God, the only One who can meet the needs of every Human being, with all His love and power.**

For this reason, the command: *see that you do everything according the pattern*, is relevant even for us. There is a part that must be fulfilled by man and which must be perfectly aligned to the part executed by God. That is why it is vital to build according to the heavenly vision. If we see that which John saw, the part of the Church that we will build, it will reproduce **a people focused on, above all else, the presence and the person of the Father and the Lamb.**

Let us reflect for a moment: **How do we think? What do we see in our spirits? What vision of the Church do we have before us?**

### **THE VISION**

Let us go back to the pattern that John contemplates on, the Church that stands before the throne of God.

➤ **In the vision, John sees a great multitude that no one could count.**

Here it speaks of numbers; BIG numbers... Because GOD is interested in numbers, in the six and a half billion people that live in this world, because people count to Him! They have an eternal and infinite value!

**Let us reflect for a moment:** How many people do we "see"? 500, 1000, 10,000, 100,000? And above all what are we doing to reach them and bring them to the Lord?

**He sees people from all nations.** To complete the Plan of God, Jesus asked us: Make disciples of all nations! (Mt 28) Today there are 194 nations on the earth!

**Let us reflect for a moment:** How many nations do we see? One? Ours? Or do we see others?

➤ **He sees a multitude from every nation, tribe, people and tongue.** There are not squads of people divided into groups. There are not Africans in one part, Americans in another and Europeans in yet another. And neither are there Evangelicals distinct from Orthodox, Catholic and Coptic. There is only ONE people; One Church, multi-ethnic and trans-cultural.

➤ **Let us reflect for a moment:** What are we doing in our cities to build a multi-ethnic, trans-cultural, trans-denominational Church? How are we applying ourselves to bring the different races, tribes, peoples and tongues into the presence of God... and the different denominations and confessions on the road to unity?

➤ **Here is this multitude, standing, before the throne with white robes and palm branches in their hands.**

- They are people that are standing before the Lord, honouring Him and worshipping Him with robes that reflect a holy life. **Rev 19:8** ... *for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints*

- They have palm branches in their hands, synonymous with victory. Like those athletes accustomed to overcoming hard discipline, rigorous exercise, races beyond human limit and that win gloriously, or the soldiers that return victorious from war, are the valiant people worthy to have the name of the Lord.
- They proclaim with a loud voice the salvation of their God and the Lamb, the Lord Jesus.
- They worship God constantly together with the Church of the past (the elders) and all the angels.



### **The Church that will impact the world:**

**Stays before God, is continually concentrated on Him and lives for Him.**

- **Constantly proclaims His Salvation and Glory to all peoples, before the whole universe.**
- **Instructs each person how, like an athlete or a soldier, to lead a holy life, overcoming obstacles and trials.**
- **Continually worships God, prostrated, submitted, surrendering life, thoughts, actions and words.**

**Let us reflect for a moment: Is this the Church we imagine? Is this the Church we are working on?**

We have already said that the Church is a divine reality that comes from heaven, in the sense that it is built by God Himself. Jesus said: ***I will build my Church.***

And Paul in **2 Corinthians 3:18** sustains that *"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just **as by** the Spirit of the Lord"*.

There is a human action, to reflect on the Lord, His divine intervention and our transformation into the image of God.

**I would like at this point to consider with you our part in this Plan of collaboration with God.**

**Paul states in 1Corinthians 3:10**, *According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. **But let each one take heed how he builds on it.***

The building of the Church has gone on for 20 centuries. Today this Church is certainly closer to that Heavenly Vision compared to yesterday. It is no secret that everyone becomes that which he contemplates. We are all influenced by the models with whom we have grown up. This is relevant for the Church. Our vision was strongly conditioned and limited by the churches in which we were born and grew up in. Today, more than ever, we need to reflect on the Plan, follow it, and complete it in every detail.

**God said to Moses:** *"And see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain."* **Exodus 25:40.**

**Paul in Ephesians 1:9-10** reveals to us that God *"having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, <sup>10</sup>that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.*

The design that was pre-established and which must be completed, God made known a long time ago. We have entered into the work of those who preceded us. We must be sure to continue it to completion according to the Divine Plan.

**There is no room for** improvisation, independence, presumption and competition. For these reasons, throughout time, **God has raised up ministers because together, they could work to the completion of this, His Plan.**

**1Corinthians 12:28** *And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that... the rest.*

**Ephesians 2:20** *having been built on the **foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.***

**Ephesians 4:11-12** *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup>for the equipping of the saints **for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...***

Equipped by God for the equipping of the saints for the edifying of the body of Christ!

**"But let each one take heed how he builds on it."** Ministers are gifts of God to equip the saints for this great work and the building of the Church, the Body of Christ.

Unfortunately, in many churches it is only the pastors who carry out this work. The congregation listens, observes, and appreciates their hard work. I have seen in Italy, people building their "houses" on their own. It takes a lifetime. NO! God does not have all this time. People are slipping into Hell in their millions while pastors try to build, on their own, their part of the Church.

 **The Church that impacts the world is a Church made up of equipped workers, trained by Ephesians 4 ministers to evangelise, disciple, serve, educate help and heal.**

**The 1<sup>st</sup> Century Church** had to confront many similar problems that we face today, even if they were typical of the society of that time. In the Apostles letters, the "giants" are evident that the Early Church had to face. But it is thanks to those letters that we have an enormous number of directives to confront even the "giants" of our time a century. On top of that, the spirit that influenced the Greco-Roman society is the same that continues to influence our society today.

We are well aware of the challenges that our respective churches face and I will not spend a long time on it. I would rather stay on the model of the Church on which the Apostles in **Acts 2:42-47** had begun working on, whose qualities bring back to us the vision of John, a Church that certainly impacted the world then. It would impact the world of today. In it, the Apostles use some of the instruments that I believe would be extremely relevant for us today. And because we know well we will not read it again. We will only take the relevant verses.

**The first Instrument: TRAINING: v 42:** *And they devoted themselves to the Apostles teaching... (NIV)*

It is interesting that at the beginning of the Church – born on the Day of Pentecost to do the work of the Holy Spirit (the Church from Heaven) was made radical through the teaching of the Apostles.

**The Apostles** have as their most important quality, the revelation of the design of God for His Church. In **Ephesians 3:5** we read that "*which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets.*"

In **Romans 16:25-26** the apostle Paul writes: *Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began <sup>26</sup>but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations...*

**The model of Church that will impact the world is that which was revealed to the Apostles.** It is therefore important to observe attentively how these operate. In Acts 2 as in Revelation 7, the Church is made up of numerous people from every part of the world, culture and race. When it was born in Jerusalem, there were with the Jews, religious men from every nation under heaven. (There were a good 15 nations and 3 continents.) *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. (Acts 2:41)*

The apostolic vision was immediately put into effect in a way that all these people could be disciples. The Apostles came to be recognised by these converted Jews as a new order of rabbi, those that were at the school of THE Rabbi, the TEACHER, Jesus. And, as it was

already in use at that time, baptism was the acceptance into being disciplined, this time by the apostles of Jesus. The apostles worked **with purpose**. And their purpose was clear: to build a church made up of people who are educated, instructed, trained and able to live the life of Jesus and His commandments.

They new **Hosea 4:6** well: "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*"... and they were determined that this would not happen again. Jesus instructed them saying, "*Go therefore and make (MY) disciples of all the nations... **teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you*"

That is why, as it says in **Proverbs 11:14**: *Where there is no (WISE) counsel, the people fall*... For those who wanted direction, that of the Master, just baptized, would start the process of discipleship.

It is no secret to anyone that the nature of the apostolic teaching contains two aspects:

- 1) **The kerigma, which means, "proclamation", (see Eph 1-3) that produces vision and requires faith.**
- 2) **The Didaké, which means, "teaching", (see Eph 4-6) which places objectives and requires obedience.**

The preaching of Christianity cannot give precedence, as some large parts of the Church have done for a long time, only to the "**kerigmatic**" aspect. The people also need to learn how to live for God and how to live the life of God.

**Jesus said:** *preach the gospel – kerigmatic preaching – to every creature, BUT also said: teaching them to **observe** (obey) all that I have commanded you – this is Didaké.*

Pay attention to not give privilege to the didactic aspect as other parts of Christianity have done. They always go together... **The Kerigma of the vision of Grace on which we count on AND the Didaké, the instruments to live it.**

**Finally an important note on teaching. The strategy of Jesus is that of relational discipleship:**

- 3) *As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. Pr 27.17*
- 4) *If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Eccl 4:10*

Jesus chose 12 disciples with whom he shared life, heart, kerigma, didaké and ministry. The development of the Church will depend on the solidity of that which He builds in His disciples. Certainly, he strongly influenced, instructed and taught other people. In the Upper Room, there were 120 disciples of the Lord. But 12 of those He sent as Apostles, even though He would lose two of them in a short space of time (Judas and James).

It seems that the Church throughout history had enormous difficulty to implement this form of teaching, that of relational discipleship. But THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE. It is how fathers and mothers train their own children!

**Let us go back to the model given to us by Jesus,** that which Paul learned and came to say:

**1 Corinthians 11:1:** *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ*

**Philippians 4:9:** *The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.*

**Otherwise, we will not have a Church that will impact the world!**

**The point on which to ponder:**

Whom are we disciples of? Who are our teachers? Who are our disciples? What are their names? How many do we have?



**For a Church that impacts the world, kerygmatic preaching is not enough. You need a patient Didaké. But the preaching is not enough. It needs teaching, transmitted from life to life, person to person... a relational discipleship. Only in that way the children of the Lord will learn to have white robes, and will be able to obtain the palms of victory over the world and sin!**

### **Second instrument: BROTHERLY COMMUNION**

**Acts 2:42** (NIV) They devoted themselves ... to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

**v44-45:** All the **believers were together** and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

**v46:** *Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,* (NIV)

Our society has been stripped of interpersonal relationships. The developed nations of the world are ever more involved in the world of business and the consequence is that they always communicate in an impersonal way, live a life locked up in isolation that brings about an individualistic existence, detached and anti-social, the consequences of which often lead to loneliness, abandonment and depression. The only references and models we have come from the unreal idealistic characters of the media. The people immerse themselves in a virtual and unreal world, similar to the effects of drugs, living under illusion, without goals, without purpose and without sense.

Human relationships are more and more orchestrated and are self-centred. They are more concentrated on the quest for success, personal pleasure and ever less sensitive to the needs of others. Affection, kindness, respect, goodness, goodwill, and generosity are virtues that are becoming a rarity.

**The church in the book of Acts gave to the people, through relationships, the warmth and sense of family, and the loving arms of God. And to their needs, the care and attention of God.** (In the spirit of Eph 4:28 – working to share). In fact, to those that had possessions, it tells us in **Acts 4:35**... that they *“laid them at the apostles’ feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need”*.

**The most difficult problems** shown were in the area of relationships. All the problems of society come from relationships.

A) This is because you have to take into account peoples limitations that do not have a model of quality relationships.

B) Because the society in which it is taught is materialistic, individualistic, or confliction and opportunist.

C) Because the sin is essentially, “live for yourself” and everyone has that tendency.

The model and quality of relationships reflected in the lifestyle of Jesus were inspired in the total giving of Himself to His team. In **John 15:13**, Jesus states that He considered His disciples His friends and loved them so much to give them His very life. *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.*

Nevertheless, He also knows the difficulty and disappointment of relationships. He said to His disciples many times, *how long will I be with you?* He experiences the pain of division from when they follow Him and then when they abandon Him. But Jesus perseveres: **John 13:1**... *having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*

To build a Church that expresses this divine reality it needs to be immersed in the love of God for people. And thanks to the heart of Jesus that could touch people at their point of need, leaving with them a sign of the love of God in their lives... a heart that came from His communion with the Father. It will be the same for us. How many times in a moment of conflict, with emotions in turmoil, after being set apart for God, we received a different prospect and a redemptive heart?

Relationships are the main spheres of human existence at risk in which we face challenges. And it is in this sphere that people need the most attention and therefore discipleship. It is evident to all of us that having good relationships is not automatic fruit of the New Birth! People are disciplined by example and the teaching of Jesus transmitted to them not only by the words of the Gospels but also by the strength of living models that reproduce this same heart, lifestyle and quality relationships. The Gospel must first be lived out by the teachers; to be understood, accepted and embodied by the disciples, exactly as happens with our natural children that learn from their parents by imitation! But also, they can learn thanks to the security of the family. Love is learned in the small family unit, learning to be a family, a team; to learn to fight together side by side, for each other, as the Musketeers declared, "One for all and all for one!" Relationships can only really be learned in a small group. "*They remained together; eating together every day.*"

How many churches are there, led by pastors and ministers that are held together only by a common vision more than by solid relationships matured into a climate of family and team?

In the Church of the book Acts we then notice the sensitivity to the needs of the weak and the poor... *having everything in common*. They show a mature love by staying together, through renunciation, sacrifice, help and solid assistance... *they sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need*. The use of material goods in the Church becomes an instrument for relationships, contrary to what happens in the secular world. The Church in the book of Acts became a fellowship of love, sensitive to the fragility, poverty and the suffering of others. It is no wonder that if it could manifest the love of God through signs and wonders, healing and powerful miracles, it was a Church that knew how to love and touch people sacrificially with the love of God.

One last consideration on this sensitive theme of relationships... The evangelical world in particular is infected with the mortal virus of independence and division! When conflicts, tension, misunderstanding, and disagreements among brothers arise, the only way out that they know and resort to is division. From the division of the East to today, we have one story after another of division. A Church that is divided certainly cannot impact the world. And the over-emphasized justification of the division between Paul and Barnabas is certainly a divine teaching in that sense. On the contrary, Jesus underlines in **Mark 10:9**, "*Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate*"... this is not only relevant to marriage, it is relevant for any relationship.

The other equally damaging virus is the lack of respect for privacy and the rights of the differences of the other members of the church. Because of the fact that we are brothers in Christ, many allow themselves to behave disrespectfully in a damaging way with regard to the quality of relationships. God has united us to build ONE BODY. Relationships are precious; they are the "cement of the building". They are maintained through great sensitivity and respect.

We need to disciple people so that they do not divide, by being superficial, that which God has united! The model of the vision is a people *from every nation, tribe, people and tongue that were together... standing before the throne*. There was no division among them because their eyes were not on the differences but on the Person on the throne.

**Let us ask ourselves:** How are our relationships with those people that God has put over us, beside us, and under us? How much friendship, intimacy, transparency, respect, submission, faithfulness, and loyalty do we show and build around us?



**The Church that will impact the world will be made up of people that allow God to use them to loving touch the needs of their peers and to also build quality relationships.**

**Third Instrument: The LORD'S SUPPER, i.e. THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE LAMB**

Acts 2:42: *And they continued steadfastly... in the breaking of bread... So continuing daily ... and breaking bread from house to house*

In John's vision notice an important detail; a great multitude... that stood before the throne and ***before the Lamb***.

The Lamb is a metaphor of a quality of the Spirit of Christ. **Isaiah 53:7**, *He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter...*

It is this spirit with which Christ desires to influence the Church throughout the ages. The Supper instated by the Lord Jesus shows us to fix our eyes on the *Lamb led to the slaughter*.

Through the Lord's Supper Jesus:

- a) imparts to us simple, visible signs in the way the bread is broken and given, the cup is shared, to communicate the spirit in which the Lord offers Himself to humanity, the spirit that must continue in the Church. **1 Cor 11.23**
- b) highlights the quality of fraternal relationship. **1 Cor 11.27, 18**
- c) places emphasis on communion and alliance, true adhesion in the Body of Christ: **One, together forever! 1 Cor 10.16-17**
- d) Reminds us continually: *receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of (your) souls.*  
**1 Peter 1: 9**

In many Churches, the Lord's Supper tends to have an individualistic value where the remembrance of Jesus' death is **for me** or the partaking of the mystical body of the Lord is for their **own** salvation. We can see from the emphasis of the Lord's Supper in **1 Cor 11** that it goes beyond the sphere of the individual. In fact, it proves relationships among the members of the Body of Christ, the Church, and strikes at selfishness and injustice.

**1 Cor 11:30-31**: *That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. (NIV)*

The Lord's Supper is celebrated to continually keep the Church's attention on Unity in the Body of Christ. With that in mind, the Apostle John can say without hesitation that "If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar". **1 John 4:20**

And in **1 John 4:8** he adds: "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love"

And therefore in verses **10-11**: "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, if God so loved us, **we also ought** to love one another".

The objective and the prayer of Jesus in **John 17:21** is "that they all may be one... that the world may believe that You sent Me."

**The Church that will impact the world is that which lives according to the New Covenant: all ONE with the spirit of the Lamb.**

#### **FOURTH INSTRUMENT: PRAYER**

**Acts 2:42** *And they continued steadfastly ... in prayers.*

**46-47**: So continuing daily with one accord in the temple... praising God.

As in **Revelation 7:11-12** ... "All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

**Jesus took great care to pay attention to His intimacy with the Father withdrawing regularly to pray.** Mt 14.13 ; Mk 1.35 ; Lk 5.16 ; 6.12 ; 9.28 ; 11.1 ; 22.44

- Like Jesus, the Church is born and grows through prayer. Acts 1.14 ; 3.1 ; 6.4 ; 12.12 ; 16.13 ;
- **Isaiah 25:7** It prophesies that: *On this mountain (The Church that knows God) He (God) will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations;(NIV)*
- **The apostolic exhortation says...** *Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.* **1 Timothy 2:1**

- **We all know 2 Chronicles 7:14**, *if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*
- **Isaiah 56:7** *Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.*
- Finally, **Isaiah 25:7 On this mountain** *He will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations;*(NIV)
- **The success of any enterprise is born before the throne of God, being prostrate before Him with expressions of praise that focus on His Glory, knowledge, power and strength. Everything comes from Him. Without Him nothing is possible and the fact that He lives in us, does not mean we do not need to climb the mountain to meet Him. Jesus was full of the Spirit but before impacting the world He climbed the mountain.**

**Let us ask ourselves: how much of our ministry revolves around the search for the presence of God? Before the Church needs good organisation, big events, good worship teams or impressive preaching, it needs the presence of God.**

### **The Last Instrument: THE HAND (ACTION) OF GOD**

**Acts 2:43** *Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles...*

47 ... *having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.*

**Mk 16:20** *And they **went out** and **preached** everywhere, **the Lord working with them** and confirming the word through the accompanying signs.*

**1Cor3:6** *I planted, Apollos watered, but **God gave the increase**.*

**Conclusion: The Church that will impact the world...**

- 1. is established on the foundation of the Apostles, according to the model we have in Scripture.**
- 2. is built by those who have the vision of the multi-ethnic multitude, that no one can count.**
- 3. is built by a people that seeks His face and presence, that worships Him and meditates on His glory.**
- 4. is guided by how much it disciples through personal relationships, equipping the saints to live, and preach the Gospel AND discipling new believers to live, preach the gospel and disciple...**
- 5. is promoted by how much it courageously preaches the great message of the gospel, everywhere, in every way and manner, casting out demons that they encounter, liberating the oppressed and healing the sick.**
- 6. is trained by how much it lives in the unity of the Spirit of the Lamb, welcoming people with the warmth and love of God offering them a family atmosphere and responding to their immediate needs.**
- 7. is the expression of how much it seeks the presence of God, His glory, power, His supernatural wonders, so that He gets the Glory, always.**