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FROM CHAOS TO THE KINGDOM

TRANSFORMATION

I want to thank my brothers from other countries for their presence here, for the effort made to come from faraway lands to share what God is doing through their lives in different places of the World.

To my fellow servants in Colombia, for their longing to see our nation transformed through the advancing of the God's Kingdom as Nehemiah expresses it: "The task is large and extensive and we are scattered in the walls, distant from each other. That's why, when the alarm misheard, lets close ranks, our God will fight for us. This reality makes times like these so important in the execution of the task that He has given to us.

CHALLENGES

With the advances of science and technology, the expectations, which promised that by the third millennium, humanity was going to live in a land full of peace and tranquillity resembling paradise, has ended in frustration. Chaos and despair unfold with great magnitude and makes us feel that we are living in apocalyptic times.

In the midst of this despair, the human race is searching for an answer. In the innermost of every person in this planet, there is a sense that there is an answer and that is possible to find it. The most regrettable part is that when they get close to church it only offers them hope after death, causing uncertainty because where the light should be shining hope, is faded leaving the world in complete darkness.

From the previous section it is clear that the answer we have given to despair has no difference to the materialistic and atheist worldview that has invaded our culture. This invites us to revise the message we've been proclaiming.

The prophet Isaiah says: "In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many people will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD. " (Isaiah 2:2-5). The Desire Gospel, how our brother Giovanni has called it, the Kingdom Gospel, does offer the hope that the human race longs for.

In the beginnings of my conversion I was taught that Jesus had brought the message of the

Kingdom, but that because the Jews had rejected it was postponed till the second coming, and that it had opened a new dispensation, the one of Grace. After a while, the Lord clarified the vision little by little and it was more clear that the Lord has never had a plan B in the eternal project, that history is linear and not cyclic and that we are to understand that we are living part of that history and that plan to live in harmony with the purposes of God. To my understanding that is an inescapable quality in the **Apostolic and Prophetic ministry**.

There is foundations, in the revelation of Gods eternal purpose, that have to be base for our action: the Kingdom is immovable, The King of that Kingdom (Jesus) never changes, His truth (the Bible) is unchangeable, His people (the church) is invincible,- the gates of hell will not prevail against her- and that we have been given a Transforming Vision, with a message of hope and redemption; "...until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets." (Acts 3:21).

The forces from hell have done all that is in their reach to frustrate God's Plan, and sometimes it seems that its action has been that perfect that we have been left thinking that the only hope that the human race has, starting from the Church, is the "Operation rescue"; The Check out. I want to affirm that I believe in the second coming and that I live in the light of that hope, at the same time I find that there is few things that we need to understand: 1st, the day and time of that event is kept in secret by the Father. 2nd, we need to work until he comes. 3rd, His kingdom has to be proclaimed in all corners of the Earth. 4th, there is not an aspect of the humans task that won't suffer the transforming effects of the Gospel of the kingdom and 5th that when Jesus returns he will finish the work that the Church has done with diligence, faithfulness, unity, holiness, and loyalty. There is a new day waiting for the earth like the Apostle Paul affirms it: "and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God." (Acts 8:19-21)

Reality

SOTERIOLOGY has guided us for more than a hundred years, that is to say, that the proclamation of the Gospel has been centred in the salvation the soul and the Checkout, which makes part of the Gospel but we has forgotten that the Gospel we have to proclaim is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, of Christ's Lordship, one that drives us to experience God's eternal purpose.

ESCHATOLOGY has brought us to believe that this World is "like a ship that is sinking in the middle of a huge ocean", and that there is no other hope. That God's plans, revealed in the cultural mandate (Genesis 1:26-27) have failed, that the satanic craftiness has defeated and that as a consequence God had to start a different plan, the reason why He sent His Son to die in the cross; just to save the soul.

ECCLESIOLOGY has brought us to live in a capitalist model of competing with each other and being influence d by the evolutionist declaration of the "survival of the fittest". Churches and ministries are built a feeling of them being a family patrimony, ignoring that the ecclesiastical ministry is a calling from God (Ephesians 4:11) and not an inheritance transferred to our family. Even then when discussing about the "local church" we confuse it with a "local group".

Talking about the Gospel preached in the Christian world today, Mr Darrow Miller says “From the time that secularism started dominating the academia; seminaries had to face the infiltration of the theological liberalism. Unfortunately, with few exceptions, fundamental leaders opted to stay out of the debate. In fact, they abandoned reason and called the church to “simply believe”. Faith was discarded to participate in a public arena and it turned into a private affair. Instead of defending the eminently defensible worldview or Judaeo-Christian perspective of the universe, the Church stopped concerning itself with everything that was considered “secular” as it was a refugee in a reduced space called “sacred”. (Disciplining nations)

There were two world wars last Century, the invasion of the humanist thinking, and its impact in the culture, Darwin’s vision with his first evolutionist approach and all of the rest tragedies that is lived by the human race, wasn’t seen as an opportunity to present the transforming Gospel but to check out. Without realising that, that it had fallen unto the old Greek dichotomy that divides the universe in the spiritual realm, which is considered sacred, and the physical realm, which is seen as profane. Faith, theology, ethics, missions, devotional life and evangelism has been put in the spiritual field and considered of first importance. The reason, science, business, politics, arts music and the people’s satisfaction of the physical needs came to occupy a lower dimension, the physical dimension. When expressing the desire of serving in missions or pastor-ship, frequently, Christians often betray the dichotomized thinking by declaring that they want to enter “fulltime Christian service”, implying that all Christians involved in secular activities are part-time Christians.”

That evangelical schizophrenia has brought us to live a “new Gospel” which has come to be considered as the “evangelical Gnosticism” which has brought us to interpret the great commission as a task that only concerns itself with saving souls, planting churches and preparing itself to leave Earth. It is more concerned for what happens in its interior than what is happening in the world, forgetting what Jesus told his father: “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one” (John 17:15). Work, business, science, economy, politics, education, family, and others tasks that humans do, have to be permeated by the principles and values of the Kingdom of God. More than a century ago the Christian leader Abraham Kuyper said “No inch exists in earth and in the task we ought to do, where Jesus has to be proclaimed and recognized as the Lord.”

The apostle Paul teaches us the reality of the gospel that we are to preach: “For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”(Colossians 1:16-20)

The “Gnostic Gospel” also has brought us to think that work is a result of the punishment of the fall of man. A song that has been considered as a Latin culture heritage which affects the Christian world is called “ El negrito del Batey” the lyric goes this way (not translated due to not making sense for other cultures However it basically says that Work was made by God as a punishment and that it causes pain)...

... No. Work is not a punishment, is part of our vocation and there we are to reflect the loveliness of God's Kingdom, just as the reformers expressed it: A place to live Coram Deu, "In the presence of God."

Another characteristic of the influence of this dualism is to see society in individualistic terms and not in community terms. Being affected by that stream, we interpret Jesus mandate "go and make disciples" as an individual mandate, spiritual and no secular, thinking that our task applies only to the convert and not to society or to the nations. The "evangelical Gnosticism" has to end. The spiritual and secular are part of the Gospel, of the implications of proclaiming the Kingdom of God and the Lordship of Christ.

Martin Luther said: "Before Gods eyes the works of the monks and priests, no matter how holy and hard they are, they are not different than the rustic work of a peasant in the country, or the work of a woman doing the house labors; because the sole measure of every work before Gods eyes is faith. Certainly the insignificant work of a peasant is frequently more acceptable to God than all fasting and works of the monk and priest because they lack faith."

The great commission

After His resurrection, the Lord Jesus was with His disciples for 40 days telling them about the Kingdom of God. He gave them a task, before leaving once more, to realize and fulfill God's desire; of God's eternal dream.

"He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." (Mark 16:15)

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19)

As noted, the Great Commission has two big components: Evangelizing and discipling. And two unavoidable instruments preaching and teaching. –Kerigma and didaque.

What Mark teaches us is easy to understand. But there is confusion in what Matthew declares. Sometimes is translated: make disciples IN all nations, others OF all nations and some other times all THE nations. The prepositions IN, OF and THE do not exist in the original text, that's why every translator writes them depending on their criteria. That's why the text can be translated: **"go and disciple all nations"**

To understand it better, let's see what the Lord has revealed through scriptures, and look to history through the divine perspective:

1st When God called Abram, later Abraham, He told him: "I will make of you a great nation and in you all the families (nations) of the earth will be blessed. The apostle Paul referring to this episode says: "Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." (Galatians 3:8)

2nd When we ask what was God's main purpose when he called Moses to take Abraham, Isaac and Jacob's descendants out of Egypt, we read in Deuteronomy: "See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this **great nation** is a wise and understanding people." What other **nation is so great** as to have their gods

near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?" (Deuteronomy 4:5-8)

God's purpose was to make of a poor people group, without education, economic system, government principles, military forces, industry, that only knew how to be slaves, with just three million people to make a nation that was to be of example and serve as a model to the other nations. He gave them government, education, health, arts, family, faith principles etc. The great tragedy was that instead of being a model nation, with time they wanted to be like the rest of the nations (see 1 Samuel 8). Israel's exodus history wasn't written as an allegory to teach the benefits of Salvation; is a true story, exactly how we should read it and understand it.

3rd "I will proclaim the LORD's decree: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father. Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession" (Psalm 2:7-8). The Bible scholars agree that this is a promise that God the father gave to His son Jesus.

4th Mystery novels make the reader ask many questions throughout the development of the story, which in the last episode, at the end is resolved. When the reader observes the outcome he asks himself: "how didn't I see it before?" "It was logical". Let's see how this story ends:

"The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said:

"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever." (Revelation 11:15)

"...Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the nations. Who will not fear you, Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed." (Revelation 15:3-4)

The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it."(Revelation 21:24, 26)

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations."(Revelation 22:1-2)

An outstanding aspect of this story is that in the end there will be saved and healed nations. The only thing that brings salvation and healing is the redemptive work of Jesus.

A well known Christian thinker, Mr. Vishal Manalwadi, of India, referring to Isaiah 53 that mentions that thanks to His "Wounds we were healed", says: The American individualism has gone so deep in church that many Christians assume that "us" means "her, you and I as individuals." Meaning that a collection of individuals make an "us". But if you read well in Isaiah, you will find a very different description.

Who is sick and needs health? Isaiah replies to that question from Verse 4 of His 1 chapter:

“Woe to the sinful nation, a people whose guilt is great, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the LORD; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him. Why should you be beaten anymore? Why do you persist in rebellion? Your whole head is injured, your whole heart afflicted. From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness— only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with olive oil. Your country is desolate, your cities burned with fire.”

Who is sick and needs healing? Isaiah may be describing the financial institutions responsible for the present economic crisis as he continues saying in verses 21 and 23:

See how the faithful city has become a prostitute! She once was full of justice; righteousness used to dwell in her— but now murderers! Your rulers are rebels, partners with thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; the widow’s case does not come before them.”

Israel is a sick nation and the prophet proclaims the good news that there is healing for the nation in the sores of the Messiah. In chapter 6 Isaiah uses the word healing again. Isaiah saw the Lord and heard his Calling: “Whom would I send? Who will go for us?”... Go and tell the people “Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’ Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”

If you fixate in the words like healing and health, in the book of Isaiah you will discover that the prophet does not speak of people. He uses this words referring to nations. God called Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to bless all the nations through their offspring.

... The Idea that the sores of Jesus are for the healing of the nations, raises a theological problem for the Christian individualism.” (Truth and Transformation).

Allow me to finish by expressing that the Great Commission in the following way:

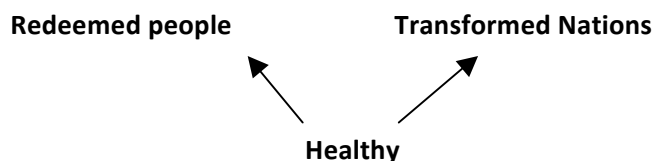
Mark 16:15

Go _ Preach _ Individuals_ Mono generational _ Urgent

Matthew 28:19

Go _ Teach _ Nations _ Multi generational_ Strategic

In the understanding of “ministry” from Great Commission this is the climax:



“Individuals and nations have a special place in God’s heart. We find in the Psalms the following: All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations.” (Psalm 22:27-28) Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD (psalm 33:12) “May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun. Then all nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.”(Psalm 72:17) “All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name.” (Psalm 86:9) and in says in Proverbs: “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people” (14:34).

Suggested Strategy

The work that we are projecting in Colombia, we have the following scheme:

Person _ Environment _ Pact networks _ Community _ Nation

Antropos Oikos Koinonos Polis Etnos

We have learned to evangelize with the principles of the Kingdom, but ignored how to disciple nations.

We either learn how to disciple nations, or they will disciple the Church.