

## KINGDOM STRATEGY AND THE MARKETPLACE

Today God is restoring the gift of apostolic teams so that the church can come to maturity and have an impact on society. Part of the Apostolic call is to give STRATEGY to the church so that the nations can be reached (In Ephesians 3:9 the word 'administration' may be translated as 'strategy'. The Greek word is 'oikonomos', from which we get our word 'economy').

One strategy that the Bible gives is the partnership between apostolic team and marketplace people of influence.

I believe that today God wants to raise up men and women to have influence like Joseph, Daniel, Esther and Nehemiah had.

All four played a significant part in influencing the leaders of the greatest nations of their day, namely Egypt, Babylon and Persia. None of them were from the priestly tribe of Levi or the royal tribe of Judah. They were ordinary people with the call of God upon their lives. Although Nehemiah was the cup bearer to the Persian king, God called him to govern and to rebuild Jerusalem. Nehemiah can be seen as a type of apostle.

In the New Testament the testimony of Priscilla and Aqila is an illuminating study. They helped Paul and his team establish churches in three key cities.

### CORINTH

Priscilla and Aquila were refugees from Rome evicted by the Emperor Claudius (Acts 18:2).

They settled in Corinth, a key city of the Roman and Greek world and because they were tent makers they set up a new business there. When Paul arrived in Corinth he was able to work with them and get settled there (Acts 18:3). Paul and his team then planted a church in Corinth.

After 18 months Paul left for Syria accompanied by Priscilla and Aqila. They stopped off in Ephesus where Paul left them (Acts 18:18-19). Later Paul returned to establish the church in Ephesus (Acts 19).

### EPHESUS

After about two and a half years in Ephesus Paul wrote back to the church in Corinth; "The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aqila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house" (1 Corinthians 16:19). Again we see it is Aquila and Priscilla who have helped Paul. And not only has Ephesus benefited, but now churches have been planted all over Asia (the province in modern-day Turkey of which Ephesus was the key city).

### ROME

A few years later Paul is back in Corinth (Acts 20:2). He writes from Cenchrea, Corinth's port city, to Rome. (After the death of Claudius in 54AD, Jews were most probably allowed to return to the capitol). "Greet Priscilla and Aqila, my

fellow workers in Christ Jesus.....Greet also the church that meets at their house” (Romans 16:3).

This is amazing! What an incredible couple .The Bible never says that they are apostles, or deacons, or elders. They are business people. But they have facilitated THREE church plants in three key cities. This couple, marketplace people of influence, have used their business to help plant churches and further the Kingdom of God. Paul considers them on team with him calling them “fellow workers” (Romans 16:3), in the same way that he refers to Timothy or Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:22), or Mark, or Aristarchus, or Luke (Philemon 24).Amazing. This is God strategy .Paul also had a lawyer, Zenas, on team, plus a doctor, Luke (Colossians 4:14). Plus a city engineer, Erastus (Romans 16:24). This is God’s heart, the priesthood of all believers, getting involved in the strategy of making disciples of all nations .Wonderful. God wants to do it again in our day.

The example of the Quakers in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century England is inspiring. They were only 0.2% of the population and yet they had a great influence on the developing economy, out of all proportion to their numbers <sup>1</sup>.

Many household brand names of our day started as Quaker companies.

The chocolate companies Cadbury, Rowntree, Fry and Terry were all Quaker businesses. Drinking chocolate was introduced because workers were spending too much time in the pubs drinking alcohol. There was no place that gentlemen could meet to talk in peace. So the Quakers introduced drinking chocolate.

The maritime insurance company, Lloyds of London, was another Quaker company. It was born in Edward Lloyd’s coffee house. Clientele used to gather there to exchange news concerning the movement of ships. Lloyds grew from an ‘informal group enterprise’<sup>2</sup> to a multi-million pound business.

All the founding families of Barclays Bank were Quakers. It was known as the Quaker bank .The majority of country banks were Quaker owned and run.

Quakers could be trusted.

The iron and steel industry was started by Quakers.

The first railway line, opened in1825, from Stockton to Darlington was known as the Quaker Line <sup>3</sup>. Three Quakers were involved: Edward Pease a manufacturer and friend of the banker Jonathan Backhouse; George Stephenson the inventor of the railway engine; and Joseph Sandars a Liverpool corn merchant. And it was even a Quaker, George Bradshaw, who published Bradshaw’s Railway Guide, to give the first railway timetable to the public.

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<sup>1</sup> Beliefs and Business: the experience of Quaker Companies- Sir Adrian Cadbury, Christian Resources Library

<sup>2</sup> Great Britain from Adam Smith to the Present Day-C.R. Fay,Longmans

<sup>3</sup> Beliefs and Business

Jonathan Carr was a Quaker .He started Carr's Biscuits in 1831. Clark's shoes were a Quaker business.

William and Richard Lever were Quakers and built up Lever Brothers, makers of Sunlight and Lifebuoy soaps. William Lever was responsible for the design and construction of Port Sunlight. A model village compared to those around about it .George Cadbury established Bournville, Joseph Rowntree established New Earswick; all were model villages that gave their workers living conditions that were to be envied by others.

Quakers were persecuted and were not allowed to go to university, or to hold a government office. The Five Mile Act was passed in 1665 which meant that Quakers and other dissenters were unable to live within five miles of established towns and cities <sup>4</sup>. This forced them to be innovative and to look for alternatives. The apostolic spirit is an entrepreneurial spirit. Because they could be trusted they were able to network with each other all over England, and even across the Atlantic. William Penn was a Quaker and he established the state of Pennsylvania in 1682.

The Quakers were instrumental in the abolition of slavery. The initial drive from 1787 onwards was propelled by Quakers <sup>5</sup>. It was William Wilberforce who campaigned in parliament but he had an official team behind him. Seventy percent of this team were Quakers !

What an amazing testimony. Only 0.2% of English society and still their legacy is felt in today's economy. They were persecuted but their trust was in God and He blessed them.

Today our call is to reach all nations for Jesus. We need to see marketplace persons working hand in hand with apostolic teams and local elders to open the way for church planting into the nations.

God is calling an army together who are fully determined to make Jesus king. Will you volunteer? Your time? Your talent? Your business? How can you help to open doors and be used like Priscilla and Aquila to reach the nations? Stand up and make a decision today!

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<sup>4</sup> Beliefs and Business

<sup>5</sup> Quakers, Business and Morality- Professor James Walvin, Gresham College