

Articles and Sermons :: GER 011 - The Eternal Purpose of the Church Art Katz [Transcript]

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GER 011 - The Eternal Purpose of the Church

Art Katz

November 24, 1999 - Zurich, Switzerland

(This message is with German translation)

Good evening children. You didn't know that I fluent in German, huh?

I am in a stragne mood and disposition tonight which I think is entirely for your sake that could best be described as saying I'm dead. Without inspiration, I can't describe to you the strangeness of the mood and the sensation. I know you won't believe it so I won't take pains to explain it but I am right to this moment without any understanding of how to proceed further.

We apostles and prophets are a spectacle to the World. And to the powers that prevail over the World. That if anything triumphant is to happen in God, it will take place on the basis of His resurrection power and life to those who have joined Him in His death not only once and for all but day by day and moment by moment, even now. It's our prophetic privilege to bring the Word of God but to demonstrate it.

So Lord have your all together perfect way. We're willing to taste death that your life might go forth to this people and through them and beyond them to a dying world, dying city. Come and demonstrate the reality of the power of your resurrection. Bring us into the that realm, into the eternal realm, now. We bless you and give you the praise, the glory and the honor. In Jesus Name, Amen.

I might be dead but I have such a love for you that still palpitates, even in my death. And I am curious to observe that there is a different configuration of souls every night. Some of you have been here through the beginning, but there are new ones every night. So it's hard to encapsulate what has already taken place. But one thing I know is that God is not wanting an academic presentation on the principalities and powers of the air though I thought to bring it. But Gary and I have a very distinct impression that God has a very different kind of purpose that the need here is not so much for instruction as for change. That your needs of a greater priority than the dissemination of this kind of this kind of understanding. So we will only give to the principalities and powers only a minimal acknowledgement sufficient to raise the issues of the faith and the reality of it which God would bring us that indeed we might wrestle against them.

Just to repeat a key verse if you have not been here before, it's Ephesians 3:10. Well, it begins with nine and ten.

Quote:

-----Ephesians 3:9-10 KJV

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

And this is the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus. I never stagger, always reading these statements in Ephesians, a lways to sense the usual rhetoric Paul employs. It's as if language is stretched to its ultimate capacity to enumerate such realities as this. Language cannot contain. That our tendency is just to gloss over it. We enjoy the flow of the words and t he sense of them but we don't seriously determine to grasp the content. That this is a mystery, given from the beginning by the God who created all things in order that through the Church, a certain demonstration might be made of an eterna I kind to principalities and powers of the air, whatever and whoever they are, through the Church. It makes no sense to u s. It has nothing to do with our immediate purpose or benefit as Christians. It has not even to do with the World and our present age. It seems utterly remote and transcendent. It even threatens to be irrelevant. That we can safely ignore this and consider this again after we die and are in the eternal realm. I can't think of a more tragic response, that the whole n ature of the Church, the paradox of the faith that gives the Church its power and credibility in the Earth and in time now,

has every thing to do with embracing its eternal purpose though the demonstration is eternal and in the Heavenlies, the character of the Church that manifests the wisdom of God needs to be developed and established now. And what is its essential character, which has been lost to us since apostolic time? That it is a phenomenon or institution in time that is occupied with eternal purposes.

Ultimate purposes. You would think that this would be a formula for insanity or irrelevancy. And, yet, I commend to you the author of statements, Paul himself, who was the epitome of apostolic sanity and was ultimately relevant and practical man in earth and in time. All the more because he saw and embraced the eternal purposes.

But what does the World say, "Oh, you're so heavenly minded that you're no earthly good." have you heard that one? Of course, its an utter most lie and standing the truth on its head. And we need to confront that lie with this reply, "Except that you're heavenly minded you're not earthly good."

"Heaven, more Heaven" is the cry and the need of the nations now. So what is the ultimate eternal purpose of God in the Church for which reason He has created all things? I'm waiting for a lightening bolt to come out of Heaven and strike me that I should such words to my mouth and speak them so hurriedly and glibly. That God has created all things, the whole panoply of nations, life, nature, production, everything! Merely to provide a platform for the Church. May we esteem the Church as much as He does.

The master piece of God to the praise of His eternal glory. That He did not think it extravagant to create all things for it. And how intimidated you are by the 'all things.' The apparatus of civilization - the skyscrapers and great buildings, its corporation and great business organizations, its institutions of culture and education, and how little impressed you are in the Church. So fragile, so ordinary, so undistinguished. So eclipsed by the grandeur and magnificence of the world. It's time to align ourselves with the word of God and because we have not, we have treated the Church as a secondary thing. A Sunday phenomenon, a midweek Bible study, perhaps. One might even come to a seminar on a week day. Big sports! Because we think that our job, our career, our health, our body, our family that these are the primary and foremost things. How we have bought the lie and allowed the world to define for us what the Church is. A polite supplement to the World but not something to be taken seriously. Let alone to be considered foremost and the whole purpose for creation in the fulfilling of an eternal purpose of God that has not to do with our immediate need.

Dear children, if you can understand this, you would recognize the genius and wisdom of God who gives us an eternal purpose beyond any capacity in ourselves to fulfill that saves us from ourselves and being centered in our own needs. I get so sick in my gut when I hear the familiar phrase, "and what are the needs of the church today? How many in the congregation have a need tonight? Come up and let us pray for your need." My God, it is sick! And we will continue to have 'needs' until we become occupied with His.

The ultimate and eternal purpose of God.

Come on, let's be honest, such words sound to us impractical, irrelevant and, certainly, beyond our ability. Therefore we can dismiss them but I want to say tonight that the only one who will take this seriously to give themselves that the eternal purpose of God be fulfilled are the lovers of God who yearn for His gratification. I'll teach you a nice word in Yiddish, I think its Hebrew also, they desire God to have nakhas. That's what my Jewish mother always wanted from me, and so rarely got it. It means the deepest satisfaction, the deepest gratification of heart. This does not commend itself to our natural understanding. What is the means that God is to obtain this? That there be a demonstration through the Church of the manifold wisdom of God to whole invisible, demonic spirit realm that is presently prevails over the nations. We would need another week and ten days just to scratch this. But to take up this purpose, to consider it our mandate, however inadequately we understand it, this much is evident that is cannot be fulfilled by individual virtuosos. It's clearly the task of the whole Church or not at all. A Church that is really Church that does not occupy itself with its own needs and its own benefits. If we could come to that alone we would already be demonstrating another wisdom contrary to the wisdom of this world which is egocentric in its deepness nature. Take care of number one. No one else will.

How many times have you been told that? Even by other Christians, and agreed with it? Because it is so self evidently true so reasonable. If you don't take care of number one, who will? It's the law of life according to the wisdom of the world. Self preservation. Self interest. Self itself. But a people who will live for another and what is more, die for another and die in such a way as to manifest another wisdom, this is what God is after. But we are presently rooted in time, in the things that are visible, immediate and practical. What is needed is the triumph of the unseen and the invisible. In a word, a postolic seeing. Paul did not look on the things which are seen, the things which are temporal, visible but he saw the things that were invisible, eternal, the eternal weight of glory that made his present afflictions both momentary and light. This

may be the most practical thing of which you have ever been reminded because if you are going to take the mandate of God seriously to be this kind of church that can make this kind of demonstration, be assured of this - you will experience affliction. The very absence of that affliction, persecution and oppression is the testimony that we have not taken up God's eternal purpose.

Be assured, when you will, it will come. You'll join those who came before you, of whom the world was not worthy whose places of persecution and martyrdom we will be visiting tomorrow. And may actually be sharing in the not too distant future when they will tie our hands behind our backs and cast us into the Lamont River\* with the cry that we're not fit to live. Because we are so offensive in what we represent so much as to threaten the stability of society and religion itself.

How do you see the things that are invisible and eternal by which means your present affliction is made more momentary and light? It's this God's apostolic answer to last night's theme of pain and suffering? We are going to have to forfeit one kind of seeing if we are going to see another. Which is no light and easy thing to do. I itch to look into the jewelry windows and see an Omega watch. The ultimate masterpiece of watchmaking. Just look upon it and contemplate it, let alone to wear one. To feel the heft and the weight of it. Supreme excellence of it. And so it goes with all other things of the World. It takes a wrenching away not to look. A painful self denial. Because we're told it's legitimate to contemplate such things and indeed, it's not inherently sinful in itself. All it does is bring us down to the earth, into things, into the world and it eclipses the things that are invisible and eternal. Are you following me kinder?

To see apostolically is to suffer to see that way. Our eyeballs are trained to dwell on opulence and sensuality. We need to declare a fast even on the things that we allow ourselves to see. Praise God for our calling to eternal things which alone has the power to break the bondage to the things which are visible and earthly. We have a task tonight and in these days, and the whole destiny of the Church rests upon it. In our ability to convert the rhetoric of the book of Ephesians into that which is actuality. What a task! Not to be content with the verbal acknowledgement but to come into the actuality of what is spoken. At the very time that the powers of the air want us to regard the things which are earthly and seen as being ultimate in themselves, money, fame, security -- things. To give them a value beyond God's intention, that they should be exalted beyond measure. And that they should be for us a kind of ultimacy. To have an Omega watch, a Mercedes Benz, a comfortable retirement, fame or renown. To take the things that God has given to be relative and limited and to become for us something that is ultimate that we would give them an undue attention and respect and even a worship as the gods of this world. No wonder that we are fearful and insecure and intimidated because we have been seduced to worship what God has only intended to be as something relative.

False gods that need to be unmasked and, by such an unmasking, be defeated. When the Church can persuade all the victims of these powers that these are deceptions, illusions and lies. Not because we verbally tell them but because we demonstrate in the reality of our life, a life that is free from the influence of the powers, that is not insecure or threatened or fearful. Does not lust after things. Has been restored to the correct priority to which God gives them. And has brought eternity into its rightful place of consideration, not as a concept or as a verbal thing but as a reality. Already in the stratum of eternity while we're in the stratum of time. Tell me how we can go from where we presently are to that definition of Church without suffering. Are we willing for it? That He might have nakhas, not only in this age but in the ages to come. By a Church that once walked by the power of the spirits of the power of the air that now works in the disobedient sons in the earth who was sanctified by His power and utterly redeemed out of the earth brought into a heavenly citizenship, even while in the world. That demonstration is to the eternal praise of his glory. Are we yielding to it? Welcoming the disciplines of God by which is to be obtained? Desiring to be exhorted and spoken to in love? Needing and welcoming the exhortations that come daily from the others in the Body? That we might be brought to such a place, willing to have our privacy invaded and our convenience ended. To be a church that is earnest and real that needs each other and will avail themselves of each other in the way that God intended that we might be the demonstration for which He waits. If you will give yourself to this you will find that the Church is place of suffering before its place of glory.

Turn with me to Ephesians chapter 1, just as we quickly move through some of these precious verses where Paul prays in verse 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of glory may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. The eyes of your understanding be enlightened that you may understand HIS calling. What is the riches of the glory of HIS inheritance in the saints. Maybe this now has a different ring in the light of what has been said tonight. Something that pertains to Him. It's the issue of His calling. His inheritance. His purpose.

Something that is patently impossible to us. It is so heavenly, so eternal. Therefore what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the working of His mighty power raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places far above all." I'm stopping right in the middle of a phrase, far above all -- that's where the resurrection will bring the dead. Not only Him but us. We're going to confront the principalities and powers of the

the air? Only by "the exceeding greatness of His power toward us which was wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead?" And will work in us when He raises us from the dead. And we will also occupy the heavenly places "far above all - principality and power and might and dominion and every other name that is named." Not only in this world but in the ages to come. And if it will not be explicitly and clearly for the ages to come, neither will it be valid in this age. You can not separate the two, it's the seamless garment of Christ. The ages to come and this present age, if we are invalid for the one, we are invalid for the other. We need to get those earthly concepts out of our minds. These tidy little categories, first this, then that. First this age, then the ages to come. We would be much wiser to embrace the ages to come and then we will demonstrate that power in this age as well. The whole issue is the issue of resurrection. Whether we will be satisfied with it as a correction doctrine of the faith or insist upon it as the supreme reality of our own life.

Because only from that power and from that place can we be above all principality and power and all names that are named. If we have hope in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. There children hear the cry of God. We have allowed the World and Church to trivialize the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We have been satisfied with it as a category, as a doctrine and have not understood that God calls to the appropriation of that power. Or we will be of all men most to be pitied.

If you want, you can turn with me to 1 Corinthians 15 where Paul upbraids the Church, verse 12, "how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" If I can take this liberty, I will paraphrase this "You say brother, when did we ever say that there is no resurrection from the dead?" It is not what we have said with our mouths, it is what we have demonstrated with our lives. Our lives have testified to the world that there is no resurrection from the dead. Because they have not seen that supreme power in us who are unwilling to taste of His death and insist on living on the basis of our own power and ability and indeed have seen to it that our present Christianity is sufficiently timid and undemanding that it does not require more. But take seriously the eternal purposes of God for the Church and you will cry out for first time, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Because if we are not living in the power of the resurrection and demonstrating that power, then what we are saying to the World is that Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen then our preaching is vain. It might be correct preaching, doctrinally sound and biblical but if it's not in the power of resurrection, it is vain. Oh, but Art, you're going too far now, it might still be interesting for us, it might still be edifying. Perhaps. But it's vain in terms of the eternal purposes of God. That's what I had to come up tonight as one dead. That's why it was pointless for me to try to prepare myself today. All we could do was go out and take a walk. It was pointless to look at my papers. Full of treasure though they are. God was wanting to do something tonight more than say something.

But to demonstrate, to encourage your faith. To lay hold of the resurrection from the dead and be willing for the deaths for which He will bring us. But I know you Swiss, you're too Jewish and want to succeed on the basis of your own ability. Your own 'klugheit.' You're too clever. Too able. Too competent. All the world knows your reputation. Or there would be no such thing as an Omega watch. To get you to leave that basis for living, to die to it and to be weak and to trust for the resurrection and the life of God through you in critical moments where life and death issues are at stake, when eternity is at stake. That is the faith.

We have trivialized the resurrection. And we are living beneath it and we have allowed the World to make an Easter bunny over it. But you say, "Brother, how often are the issues life and death and eternity?" Always. If you can see apostolicly. From the perspective of God, is there such a thing as a small thing? "Oh, this is only a meeting brother." It may be for you and that's all you'll take from it but I believe that in God's sight, this is an eternal moment. A once and for all thing that will not be given again. The Spirit of God speaking to the Church, even in the Earth. "Give ear, oh heavens, and give ear, oh earth." For The Lord has spoken. Can that ever be considered a small thing?

If there is so much as one person in this room tonight whose life shall be radically turned for God, and liberated by the Word to be His revolutionary, even to assure their martyrdom, who can measure the consequence of that? Either in time or eternity? When are we going to begin to see apostolicly? That in God's sight there is no thing small? May we repent on our faces tonight that sees Christianity as a succession of meetings and comes with the lowest of expectations and does not expect God. Or that the word that comes should constitute an event?

I'm afraid we have said to many that there is no resurrection. That has made of preaching vain and our faith vain. And we are found to be false witnesses that do not rise. That Christ is not risen. This is the issue, this is the power, the enablement to be kind of people for which God is waiting who calls us to heavenly places above all principality and power. The God who has raised us up together and has made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, verse 6 chapter 2.

If there's no resurrection, how could He have raised us up together to sit together in heavenly places? Because it is in that stratum that the action is.

Do you remember Jesus with Nicodemus? Who spoke of Himself as the Son of Man. "No man ascends to Heaven who has not first come down from Heaven, even the Son of Man who is in Heaven." The Son of Man was standing on a piece of earth in Jerusalem and yet describes Himself at the moment as being in Heaven. Is that a formula for insanity? Is it a place that we might also occupy? That itself is ultimate reality and sanity. That we can be seated in heavenly place while we are yet in the earth and from that place have power over all or we are of all men most to be pitied. Or let's shut our Bibles and go home or go out for a bash. This is either true, the book of Ephesians is not some kind of rhetorical flight of fancy. And that we need to come into the reality of what's described and from that place combat the power of the air that tyrannize men and by that same confrontation come to that ultimate maturity that fits us for eternity.

Are you in the heavenly place tonight? Or only in Zurich? And if you're not in the heavenly place, why not? Where is your resurrection faith? How shall you experience the power of the ages to come?

For in Hebrews it says, "By one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified." What a glorious verse. It deserves weeks of attention and contemplation. For by that one offering He has opened up to us a new and a living way. That we might have a boldness, in verse 19, to enter into the holiest. Here's where I really risk losing you. This stretches your faith unbearably to breaking. You were pretty much with me till now. Yes, agreeing to the resurrection life as power. Yeah, that we might even be seated in heavenly places by faith together with Jesus. But that there is yet a further entry that really explains what being seated in that place means. That we are invited into the holiest place of all. The inner sanctuary of God. Where only the High Priest in levitical times could come only once a year. And God forbid he should come in unsanctified. And the Israel that was waiting outside should not hear the bells of his garment tingling. To go from the outer court to the Holy Place, even beyond that in veil, the final and ultimate, notice the word - Holiest Place of All. And then here to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the Mercy Seat for the whole of the people of Israel. The sublime and eternal purpose of God in the unspeakably holiest place of all between the wings of the cherubim where the very shikina presence of God is. This is now the ultimate test of your faith. Everything of your Christian life was until now. That God has made for us a new and living way in Christ Jesus and invites with a boldness to enter into the holiest place of all. This is the heavenly place. There is the inspiration and the power above all.

Verse 22, "Let us draw near with a whole heart and full assurance of faith." Have you ever entered that place? We have come to the final impasse. We are either only going to go so far in our Charismatic and Evangelical intention from which we can never fulfill the eternal purpose of God nor obtain the power to wrestle effectually against them. And God never intended that we should from a lesser place but calls us to enter where only the High Priest was allowed in the earthly tabernacle. He invites us tonight to the holiest place of all within the veil which is above all principality and power and every name that will be named and from that place to live and have our being. For the just shall live by their faith.

But brother, I'm not qualified. I'm not too priestly. It doesn't say by your qualification, it says by His blood by which He has perfected forever them that are sanctified, verse 17 in chapter 10. We have trivialized the resurrection, we have minimized the Church, we have made the blood of Jesus a commonplace, a cliché, we have not seen the things that are invisible. God calls us to open our eyes. He's giving an apostolic and prophetic call to the remnant church within the Church in the city of apostolic martyrdom and sacrifice. Who even tonight are about us as an invisible cloud of witnesses, waiting and expectant, not complete or made perfect without us.

Have you entered by faith into the holiest place of all that you might be seated with Him in heavenly places? Above all principality and power and every name that can be named? Dear children, if this is only a fanciful rhetoric and not an actual real entry, if God is toying with us and mocking us and speaking only fancifully and if this is not a reality that we can live from and experience, we of all men are most to be pitied. We can forget any presumption to take to our hearts the eternal purpose of God because it is only from this place that the power for it is to be had. He's made a way, a new and living way. And few there be who call themselves Christians who have ever found it. He rent the veil by His own flesh and came into the shikina presence of His own Father by His own blood, once and for all. Faith is an act.

I would have much preferred to have given you beautiful lectures on the complex subject of the principalities and powers of the air but there is a much more profound requirement now. That to come into this place in God. The only place by which they can be defeated. By a people who are occupying that place, seated in heavenly places, raised up together in the resurrection with Him together and from that place fulfilling the eternal destiny of the Church. My own faith is stretched to breaking tonight to believe that you can have faith for this. The faith that enters and holds fast the confession of this faith without wavering, even when you look at the Omega watches. It will not appear the same. So I want to give you an invitation tonight, it is really His invitation, if you've never entered, He invites you to draw near and to come even with boldness not with arrogance as if you were qualified but as you esteemed the blood of the Lamb as the Father Himself este

ems that blood that it has opened a way for us all. So I want you to bow your heads before God and ask for the faith which is of God, not of yourself lest any man boast. This is a supreme faith for an ultimate place in God that there might be a fulfillment of the ultimate purposes for which reason He has created all things and this eternal purpose of God.

Precious God, in Jesus name. In the name of Him who made a new and living way for us, grant us the grace, the faith, the desire to enter and to occupy that place that you have made possible once and for all. Forgive us for living from a lesser place with a lesser Christianity that was only occupied with our need, our satisfaction but not yours.

The Scripture says hold fast the confession of your faith. How shall you hold fast what you have never confessed. And ask you to do it now. In this once and for all time which God has given in the eternal now. One by one - sitting, standing, kneeling, confessing.

Heavenly Father, by the blood of Jesus, and not my own qualification, I now do enter within the veil into the holiest place of all and there to abide. From there to live and move and have my being. To draw power and inspiration to fulfill your eternal purpose. From within the veil.

This will unfit you for the World. If you make this confession tonight, within 24 hours you will be an offense to men. They will not be able to understand or identify what has happened. But you will be a new savor of life unto life for some and death unto death for others. For you will be breathing the very reality of eternity upon men while you're in time. Do you have the desire, the faith, to enter? Make a confession of such a faith and hold it fast though the Enemy would seek to steal it from you from this night forth.

I'm going to sing and then I'm going to sit down. Claus will translate the lyric.

Within the veil, I now do come,  
Into the Holy Place to look upon Your face,  
I see such beauty there,  
None other can compare,  
I come to you oh Lord  
Within the veil.

As I'm sing, come.

Within the veil, I now do come,

Faith is an act, get out of your seat, get on your knees, come forward.

Into the Holy Place to look upon your face,  
I see such beauty there,  
None other can compare,  
We worship you, oh Lord,

We serve you also.

Come within the veil

You can hum it with me in the Spirit.

**Re: Editing Request: GER 011 - The Eternal Purpose of the Church Art Katz [Transcript - posted by Jeremy221, on: 201**

Can someone help in editing this? I tried to be accurate but know I probably made mistakes, missing words, sentence and paragraph breaks and so on.

Thanks,  
Jeremy221

EDIT: Link to audio,

Quote:

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