

ALIGN CONFERENCE 2017

KIGALI, RWANDA

12th to 17th NOVEMBER 2017

1. THEME: Preparing a new generation for the end-time Ministry

2. TEXT: (Joshua 1:16-17) *"They answered Joshua, saying, "All that you commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you; only may the Lord your God be with you as He was with Moses. -----"*

3. INTRODUCTION: Joshua was preparing the people not of his generation: There were only two survivors of the people who left Egypt under the powerful compelling hand of the Lord. It was himself and Caleb; the rest had perished in wilderness due to their constant murmuring, rebellion and unbelief before the Lord God.

The Lord had sworn in His divine wrath that none of the people of the generation who set off from Egypt would step foot in the Promised Land except the two people; those were Joshua the son of Nun of the tribe Joseph, Ephraim and Caleb the son of Jephunneh from the tribe of Judah. The two had served the Lord faithfully and effectively in their generation.

Not even the founder members of that mission, Moses and Aaron; the custodians of the original copy of immigration, people to whom God delivered the vision of the fulfilment of His Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were exempted from divine Judgment.

Aaron died on Mount Hor shortly before major offensive against the Amorites begun. Amorite was one of the seven nations which God had designated for complete destruction and their land passed over to the blessed nation of Israel. ***The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor by the border of the land of Edom, saying, "Aaron will be gathered to his people; he shall not enter the land which I have given to the sons of Israel, because you rebelled against My command at the waters of Meribah (Numbers 20:23-24).***

Moses was equally exempted from setting foot on the promised land of Canaan on the same ground of not honoring God at the waters of Meribah before Israel. His constant plea could not alter God's decision to include him in the list of people who would not see the Promised Land, ***"But the Lord was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me; and the Lord said to me," Enough! Speak to me no more of this matter. Go up to the top of Mount Pisgah and lift up your eyes to the west and the north and the south and the east, and see it with your eyes, for you shall not cross this Jordan(Deuteronomy 3:26-27)***

Moses, the founder and the vision bearer had died, the icon and the fountain of honor in Israel was no more. Joshua, the son of Nun comes up to assume office of Moses to continue with the project of conquest and distribution of the Promised Land.

Yes, the Lord had spoken to him, but had not yet publicly ordained him before the new generation of Israel the way he had with Moses in the smoking mount Sinai, show down in the Red Sea and various miracles in Egypt before departure. People were still waiting for a leader ordained by God through miracles and wonders.

He begins to issue commands and directives to the people of Israel without this vital stage. People were not so sure if Joshua would manage it the way Moses had done it before. People were well 'vast' with both historic and contemporary evidences of Moses' work right from Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, provision of water from the Rocks, daily manna from heaven, provision of quails, the extinction of nation of the Amorite at the Eastern side of Jordan river, and plus many more other divine intervention through Moses. God may have called Joshua but people wanted proof. ***It is always people's right to authenticate any claim of any calling. A call should not be imposed on people.*** There are so many self-styled workers out there in the field who have claimed a calling which none existent. Prophetic and Apostolic have been grossly abused.

The nation and elders of the people of Israel pledged to accept his leadership claim under one condition, and that is **God is with Him as He was with Moses.** It was simple and profound condition. Seeing God in Joshua's ministry was Joshua's identification that would distinguish him as a leader and a commander of the army of God, and therefore the custodian of people's security. Otherwise, they would have designed another strategy to return to Egypt or crowd on the Eastern side the Jordan River.

This is practically the same even today: People want to see God in their leaders. Genuine respect flows naturally once people have established a strong link between a leader and God. If the current Church leadership would like to positively shape, influence and impact the next generation of church leadership and ministry, they equally need to demonstrate, in a practical sense, God's presence, not just a matter of empty word. Young generation needs to see this.

4. COMPARISON BETWEEN JOSHUA'S TIME AND OUR TIMES: Before discussing our theme more elaborately, let us compare the tasks that Joshua was facing with his next generation and us in our next generation:

(a) Joshua was dealing with people of a new generation, just like our theme talks about, "Preparing a new generation"

(b) Joshua was dealing with a generation of people who had not yet crossed Jordan river to face the seven great nations; the nation of Hittites, Gergashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites just like our coming generation have not experienced victory over the seven corresponding great wars with the ***Flesh, the World, Provision, Health, Family, Ministry and Persecution.***

(c) Joshua was dealing people with vested interest in Eastern side of Jordan river, the beginning of victory. Moses had made them test success in the Eastern part of Jordan. The tribes of Reuben, Gad and half tribe of Manasseh were already contented. Our new generation may also be contented not knowing what value lies

on the other side across Jordan. They are always attempted to evaluate ultimate success in ministry according to acquisition of wealth and status of this world.

(d) Joshua was dealing with a generation which was yet to be circumcised. Circumcision took place in Gilgal a place 5 Km after crossing river Jordan. The current generation's values are in partnership with the world. The values of sacrifice, persistence, long suffering could be myth to them.

5. THE ASSETS NEEDED TO PREPARE A NEW GENERATION: Moses had three fundamental assets which enabled him to deliver the children of Israel from Egypt to the plains of Moab before he finally died on top of mount Pisgah after making them test victory on the eastern side of river Jordan. The children of Israel wondered if Joshua had the similar capacity as Moses; if those assets were also functional in Joshua. Just like Joshua's time, the new generation still demands the same assets from us, the current leaders. I sum up those three assets in **acronym, "PAC"**. Let us consider them one at a time in details:

One: P= Power : The dictionary has two definition of the word power:

Power is defined as ability or capacity to do something or act in a particular way. It is also defined as ability to direct and influence the behavior of others or the course of the event. This definition can be split to mean the capacity to influence inanimate things and people. The Greek word for power is, "DUNAMIS" used 120 times. It is loosely translated as, "Strength" from the English word, "Dynamite". The Greek word for authority is, "EXOUSIA" power of moral influence.

Apostle Paul told the Corinthian church that his gospel was not of persuasion coated with human wisdom, but a demonstration of power," *I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of Power" (1 Corinthians 2:3-4)*. He also told the Church in Thessalonica the same thing, "*for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power----- (1Thessalonians 1:5)*

Similarly, our new generation needs to see power accompanying our word, not just a word of mouth. The ugly reality is that young and well educated people are running away from traditional Pentecostal and Evangelical churches in search of power of God manifestation. They have baptized our churches as churches of "**The Law**". We may be theologically powerful and have knowledge of Christian doctrines, but without the manifestation of power, we cannot influence the new generation.

The Congregation was asking for the public ordination of Joshua as it happened to Moses in several occasions in Bible history: In Mount Sinai, by the Red Sea, in the wilderness, during military confrontations etc. They told Joshua what was in their hearts: "**We shall obey you in all things as long as the God of Moses is with you**", Period!

Today young generation is falling prey to the mushrooming cultic religions in Africa because they desire to see the power of the living God. The devil has changed tactics by removing deep commitment and fellowship with God from many church leaders. As a result they do not have that divine connection where the power flows. Leaders are focused on social and development projects; the service of tables. We are left in the comfort of well-structured and formalized religious institution devoid of God's power. These lofty and rigid institutions with bureaucracy tougher than that of the Pharisees have stifled the movement of the Holy Spirit creating a vacuum of God's power. Big titles, crave for recognition and survival equation are

the preoccupation of a majority of churches leaving nothing new to show to the young generation. Everything from Worship to the word is ritualistic and exceeding boring. Not many youth will accept to be trapped in that formalism.

This pharisaic mentality must go, and bureaucratic structures demolished to pave way for the Holy Spirit to flow. Church leadership is not a survival mechanism, but a way of loving and demonstrating God's power and presence.

Young people everywhere in Africa are deserting traditional Pentecostal and evangelical churches because there is no power in them. They are looking for where God is manifested in the Spirit of power. As a result hunger and curiosity, they have fallen victims of scrupulous cultic groups masquerading as true Christian fellowships. The unsuspecting and innocent youth have been persuaded by these people who amalgamate truth with demonic power and hidden witchcraft. Our generation has let down the next generation.

Two: A=Authority: The word Authority is the capacity to morally influence and control someone, but not to possess him or her. It is not based on:

- (i) Intimidation
- (ii) Coaction
- (iii) Buying Favors
- (iv) Sympathy etc.

It is divine authority from the call of God. It is not demanded for or mechanically defended. The delegated authority flows from God through the leader (Mentor) according to the perfect calling of God. Moses had that Authority. He was able to control and manage the congregation of stiff necked Israel. But his elder brother, Aaron did not have it. Aaron was not called to lead Israel but to be **a spokesperson** for Moses.

He acted for forty days in a position of top leader in the absence of Moses, but within that short period Israel had span out of control, Aaron has miserably failed. *"Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control –for Aaron had let them get out control to be a derision among their enemies (Exodus 32:25).* Aaron did not have any authority, so deserves sympathy than blame. He was in the wrong place, he followed the peoples wimps to committing, an abomination; a grave error before the Lord, *"Now when people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, "come make us a god who will go before us, as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him. Aaron said to them, "tear off gold rings which are in ears of your wives, your daughters and sons and bring them to me (Exodus 32:1-3).* A leader who does not have calling becomes the follower instead of a leader. He will always have backbone to say "No". He is as helpless as any one else. God's Calling is specific and measurable. The Calling comes with '**authority**' not "**political manipulation**" to survive in leadership for the sake of privileges.

The authority of a leader comes from:

- (i) **Functioning within the calling of God.** Aaron's calling wasn't of a leader but a spokesman to Moses, and also as a result of Moses fears. Moses created Aaron because of his fears. Sometimes we create people because of deep seating fears. The created people will always be headache to us and ministry. *But he said, 'Please, Lord now send the message by whomever you will". Then the anger of the Lord burned against Moses, and He said, "Is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he speaks fluently.....You are to speak to him and put words in his mouth; and I, even I will be with your mouth even his mouth (Exodus 4:13-15).*

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Aaronic leadership lacks the capacity to direct people because it does not have the appropriate mandate. Most of the Apostle Paul's letters were authoritative and were effective in combating doctrinal errors and disorder in fellowship because he was within the limits of his calling. No one grew above Apostle Paul in ministry. He kept a head of every one he was leading. We cannot lead people who have grown in relationship and fellowship with God beyond our level. You may remain a ceremonial leader while some one has the real authority. The challenge we have in the body of Christ today is misplacement and stunted growth among the leaders. When ministry becomes bureau for employment and means of survival, then it loses the vitality and effectiveness it ought to have. Wars always characterize such ministries

- (ii) **Having close and intimate fellowship with God**: This is vital ingredient to maintaining authority before people. When we communicate what people believe is from God, then our authority comes automatically. People are interested in our family life, issues of financial and other moral integrity. A testimony cannot be acted and masked out. People see it and they form an attitude which is the basis of the leader's authority. The leader himself may not be conscious of it, but people can see. Moses' life radiated God's glory.
- (iii) **Walking in holiness**: The magnitude of our authority is directly proportional to the degree of Holiness. Living in deliberate errors against the word of God diminishes our authority before man and even before demonic world. Repentance is key component of our daily prayer; a model given by the Lord Himself. The Bible clearly gives a condition for seeing God as Holiness, not righteousness, "*Pursue peace with all men, and holiness without which no one will see God*" (Hebrews 12:14) The Greek word for Holiness is "**Hagios**" meaning separation from evil or sanctification and the Greek word for righteousness is "dikaiosune" meaning justifiable ,innocent or faultless. Holiness is acquired while righteousness is imputed.

The loss of authority breeds insecurity in a leader. He begins to hunt down whoever seems to be of a threat. Secure leaders identifies someone with potential and conscript them in their ranks. The one with authority builds, and one without authority demolishes.

When water is flowing and you stage a blockage; for example a stone or any other heavy obstacle, one or more of the three things are bound to happen. Either by force, water will throw away the barrier, water will jump over the blockage or water will create ways by the sides. No one can stop the move of God. The Roman Catholic Pope tried to stop the Reformation but failed, King Saul tried with spears in his hands, but ended up at witchdoctor's shrines at Endor.

Leaders, it is important to know that people will always come up by God's Grace, who are above us in anointing because of their calling , obedience to the Lord, intimate relationship and fellowship with Him. We need to give them our support and right hand of fellowship if we want to survive in authority. The people will always be sensitive to the truth whether we like it or not. You may be a pastor or a leader, but there may be some on a better influence and authority, welcome him but do not fight him. By trying to fight him you are actually raising him up. But insecurity in us always dictate that we carry several spears in his hand pinning him on any available opportunity, the way king Saul did to David.

Also if the person who is being hunted down has a genuine authority and calling from God, he will not fight back, but flee to give way to give his opponent to display his folly.

Time will always tell. But if he is equally foolish, he will engage in counterproductive and senseless battles, and they both are rendered foolish, as the adage goes, “***do not argue with a fool, you will all be fools***”. Such person will display the Spirit of maturity and just like king David. David gave way for King Saul to display all the folly till was eliminated by God Himself without David touching the anointed of God.

Three: C= Compassion: Our God is a compassionate God. He passes that attribute to the person whom He has called and is obedient to the call. Compassion is love aroused towards those in need or are vulnerable. Compassion is action packed response towards alleviate suffering from another person.

People look to leaders for practical solutions to their difficulties. At the back of their minds people believe that a leader must always have a solution to any problem. True leadership is bearing peoples burden always. This is a component of true leadership which portrays a leader as a true representative of God. The children of Israel saw how Moses was a part of practical solution to the challenges such food, water and dietary change needs.

True mark of a leader is a person with the capacity to find a solution to corporate and individual needs of his flock. It may not necessarily be tangible answer, but a counsel that leads to a solution.

Faith is energized by Compassion, “*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision mean anything, but faith working through love* (Galatians 5:6)

Elisha was running a school of hundreds of prophets in Gilgal. Famine struck that community and Prophecy students did not have food to eat like any others in the community. One day Elisha received a gift in terms provision; bread of first fruits, some 20 loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in a sack .He commanded his attendant to share it to the entire school of prophets, probably one hundred and above. Obviously it wasn't enough for such a number of hungry people. Human limitation will always try to resist compassion.

He said “***Give them***”, *His attendant said, “What, will I set this before a hundred men?” But he said, “Give them to the people that they may eat, for thus says the Lord, “They shall eat and have some left over”* 2Kings 4:43

The Lord Jesus Christ reiterated the same phrase, “***Give them***”, several years later. He had been ministering to a large crowd of people. It was getting late and the people were fainting due to hunger. His disciples; men without compassion as Him, advised Him to dismiss the crowd. “Let people find their own solution”, they counseled. But Jesus said, “***Give them food***”. They counseled him that it would probably require a lot of money; 200 denarii is an equivalent of US dollars 14,500 (UGX 52,200,000 or Swedish 121,395,kes 1,470,000, Rf 13,050,000 derived from USD minimum wage for 10 hours, *When it was already quite late, His disciples came to him and said, “ This place is desolate and it already quite late; send them away so that they may go to the surrounding villages and buy themselves something to eat’.* *But He said, “You give them something to eat!” And they said to him, “Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread and give them something to eat?”* Mark 6:35-37

This story represents today church-needy people, and donor-partner- beneficiary relationships. You hear the words such as ***cost sharing, sustainability, dependency syndrome etc.*** These are good words, but what is the spirit underlining them? Is it the spirit of compassion to send them away to the surrounding villages and let them sort themselves out?

Other people like Nehemiah who created significant impact in his time was a man full of compassion. He did not insist on his rightful privileges at the expense of the impoverished nation of Israel. He accommodated over 150 people on his daily food supply, *Moreover there were at my table one hundred*

fifty Jewish and officials, who came to us besides those who came to us from that were around (Nehemiah 5:17)

David the great King of Israel was a man full of compassion. He welcomed a lame and practically useless man to be included in the list of his daily guests, Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan, David's friend. He was supposed to be a royal, but because of his grandfather's Saul disobedience, he lost it. He was living in abject poverty in Lo-debar in the house of Machir. Lo-Debar was a ghetto town in Eastern Jordan. It was a town without pasture for animals. David sent for him, *David said to him, "Do not fear, I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of your father Jonathan, and will restore you all the land of your grandfather Saul; and you shall eat at my table regularly 2Samuel 9:7*

Both Apostle Paul and Pastor James say "love" and "faith" are inseparable components. People can only see faith where there is love, and God will only see faith where there is love, *For in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love Galatians 5:6.* James on the other side said that love is the only way we can display our faith. *If a brother and a sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you say to them, "Go in peace and be warmed and be filled", and you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself....."Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works" James 2:15-18.*

6 SUMMARY: We, the current generation of church leaders must know that the future of the church depends on us. Accountability will be required from us for whatever has been placed in our hands. We should not be content with the occupation of office, and probably the benefits that accrue from it. We must critically evaluate and judge our own work first before anyone else passes judgment. Does our work have basic indicators of the quality of the Church which Jesus Christ is coming for?

1. A church full of Love and Unity
2. Church walking in the fear of the Lord
3. The Church involved and investing in the Great Commission.

We cannot pass on to the next generation what we do not possess ourselves. It is time for self-examination and repentance. The next generations demands to see and taste our fruits first.

We can only achieve that when we get plugged into the source of energy, and that is the Holy Spirit. It comes through investment in prayer and the Word. Our quality time the Lord releases the fruit and the fundamental assets above and summarized below:

Power: Control and directing inanimate events

Authority: Control and influence upon people

Compassion: A channel through which God passes practical help to meet needs.

END

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