

California District Council

Diocesan, Bishop Henry L. Johnson, D.L., D.D.
16th Episcopal District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc.
179th Tri-Annual Council Session
Peace Apostolic Church, Carson, CA – November 2009

***THEME: “Working as a Team To Fulfill The Dream”
(I Corinthians 3:9)***

(Collaboration, Galvanization, Consecration, & Mobilization)

Chairman’s Address

Honor to our Savior Jesus Christ, our Diocesan the Honorable Bishop Henry L. Johnson, Bishops, Suffragan Bishops, District Elders, Pastors, Council Officials, Delegates, Saints and Friends.

For the past twenty-five years, I have been closely observing and scrutinizing the leadership and administration practices and principles of the honorable men who have occupied the “*great office*” of Chairman of this 16th Episcopal District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc. Men such as the late Dr. Andrew Cross, the Honorable Bishop Henry L. Johnson, Bishop Carl W. Stewart, Bishop David C. Foster, Sr., Suffragan Bishop Howard Swancy, and Bishop Michael J. Garrett, Sr.

As a result of my stewardship “*under the leadership*” of these spiritual giants, I learned how to effectively respond to a plethora of fellowship hardships and formulate a collaborative strategic plan to embrace the new direction that the visionary of our great state, the Honorable Bishop Henry L. Johnson is charting for the servants of the California District Council Conference. Having stated this, let me invite you to join in with me at this time to give a thunderous standing ovation on their behalf; for it was their sacrifices, obedience, and commitment that contributed to this Council being what it is today. By the way, while we are on that note, it is my participation and support in their “*under*” that is contributing to my current “*thunder*”!

Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to continue in the contribution of preserving our great legacy of Apostolic stewardship by “*presenting new methods and preserving old truths*” - (Bishop David C. Foster, Sr. – CDC Chronicle – Issue III – November 1999).

When you elected me to serve as your Chairman in July 2007, I presented to you a four part strategy to follow the leadership of our Bishop, Henry L. Johnson, and his vision for our spiritual success. That four part strategy consisted of *Collaborating, Galvanizing, Consecrating, and Mobilizing* our skills, talents, abilities, and resources into one nucleus to achieve our mutual interest in the service of Christ's Kingdom. At this point we are currently in the *Consecration* phase of our four part strategy, where as a consecrated team of oneness achievers, we are preparing to mobilize our skills, talents, abilities, and resources into fulfilling the dream of promoting the gospel of Jesus Christ here in the state of California... and recruit men, women, and children of all walks of life into this glorious kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, from among the "thirty-eight million people" within the constituency of the fifty-eight counties of our state. Remember... our primary mission is the saving of the lost and hurting souls, the edification and preservation of the saved souls and the continual consecration of the inner man; culminating in the expansion to at least two-hundred fifty churches by year 2014 - should our Lord tarry This is why our consecration activities should be taken seriously, prior to our entering into the mobilization process of our mission, to "work as a team to fulfill our dream". This action will require each of us to scrutinize our own personal lives in regard to the standards of true holiness that should be evident to all who witness our walk.

To accomplish this, we, the delegates of the California District Council, must realize and understand what hinders, blocks, and destroys our good intention to expand, achieve, and succeed. It is simple... "sin" and he who hides his or her sins shall not prosper. Why? Because sin weakens our moral code of ethics that we "holiness stewards" are mandated to serve by. However, it seems today that every selfish self-serving, self-destructive, greedy, unholy, unwholesome, or self-centered behavior is labeled as some kind of "personality disorder, addiction, or illness". I am not for one minute saying there are not such things, but it seems to me that there is some sort of clinical explanation these days for rapists, mass murderers, gays and lesbians, and even serial adulterers.

This is primarily due to the fact that sin is being "tolerated as a doctrine" – (The late Great Suffragan Bishop G. Grady Benton – taken from his message – "This Kind" – 1994).

So what does this have to do with the vision and directions and the future of this Council? More than many would like to admit, but here it is in black and white!

First and foremost, let us ask ourselves this personal question, “*am I a major contributor or a major obstacle to the team-oriented success of fulfilling the mission of this council?*”

We all then must collaboratively confront what is attempting to hinder our growth as a combined body of believers and what is ultimately going to destroy valuable team ministries and beautiful and anointed relationships. If and when we do this, we will discover that it is due to three primary reasons as follows: *Sin, Greed, and Hypocrisy!*

I therefore challenge all of us to look intently into it, and not just check it out, but go back to our Fellowships and weed them out! Because whenever the poison of *sin, greed, and dishonesty* is being practiced and permitted in key leadership positions inside of the church, it is then that the poison of disobedience to God’s commandments is being served as a spiritual communion in place of “*Holy full communion*” in the so-called cup of grace, it is then that the marriages and family representatives to the body (especially those of us who occupy the pulpit in whatever capacity) fail to realize that we can and will not be able to cause anyone’s marriage or family to go any higher than we are able to grow in our own individual marriages and families. This is the primary reason that we as a team must hold ourselves accountable and responsible to each other as did the Lord and his “*Holy Apostles*” in times past.

So what is the solution, and where do we go from here Brother Chairman?

My recommendations are gleaned from a combination of what God commands and have said, coupled with the orders given by our Diocesan as follows:

- **Let’s present our bodies a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-3)**
- **Let’s enhance teamwork among our council officials, pastors, and laity.**
- **Let’s “*pilot an evolutionary approach of inclusion and participation from those among us who are qualified and available for kingdom service as well as those who once served with us and are willing to return and support the process*” – (Bishop Henry L. Johnson – Fresno, CA – October 11, 2007 – CDC Staff Meeting)**
- **Let’s focus on the future of our youth, their program, and their careers with more personalized involvement.**

- Let's focus more serious attention and support to the Pastors and their families that will lead to their success.
- Let's make more financial resources available to our churches to assist and undergird their endeavors.
- Let's strengthen the Apostolic Holy Fiber of our morals, marriages, and monetary stewardship responsibilities.

In conclusion, these are the challenges that are before us and in order to successfully meet these challenges, we must “*work as a team to fulfill our dream*”.

So... until we gather again, at the “*eagles nest*” (AKA, the Headquarters of the CDC) in Fresno California this coming January 21-23, 2010 for our Leadership Conference, on behalf of our Diocesan, Executive Board, and Council Officials, we are praying that the favor of Christ will keep us all “*doctrinally pure, disease free, debt free, and distress free*” as we operate as a team in the business of Him who called us to serve.

According to His will,

Suffragan Bishop Robert T. Douglas, Sr., PhD
Chairman - California District Council