

California District Council

Diocesan, Bishop Henry L. Johnson, D.L., D.D.
16th Episcopal District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc.
72nd Annual Council Session
Torrance Marriott South Bay – July 2009

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

Chairman’s Address

To the Honorable Henry L. Johnson, Bishops, Officers, and delegates of the California District Council of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World; Grace and peace be unto you from God who is our Father in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ”
Philippians 1:6

“Our growth and success is the passion of my stewardship!”

Let me first began to state for the official record that as your Council Chairman and fellow bond-servant in Christ that our “Working Together As Team To Fulfill the Dream” is the primary concern and most vital objectivity to me personally. Therefore, I will continue to serve each and every one of you to the best of my ability along with the support of this council as a whole, coupled with whatever God ordained resources that are available in both human and material capacity.

As many of you remember in my previous Chairman’s Address delivered in July 2008, contained some dreams that I imagined from our Honorable Diocesan Bishop Henry L. Johnson’s Five Star Vision of success for the entire constituency of the greatest Episcopal District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World Inc., which happens to be the California Diocese and to God be the Glory. However, due to circumstances that arose which was not immediately identifiable in the schematics of the dream or in our strategic plans to accomplish the dream as a team, this has caused challenges of opposition to confront us, to the extent that we are compelled to modify

some of our action steps and core optional activities that are essential to team achievements.

For example, due to our current international and local economic and employment crisis combined with this deep recession compels us as a team, as well as an agency to re-think how we will respond to certain shortfalls among the membership in our local assemblies, districts, and regions. These realities have also produced a major impact on our revenue productivity as well as a drop in our overall attendance regionally speaking.

For these and other reasons, Bishop Johnson and the Executive Board employed a proactive approach to correct these and other situations relative to these issues. And while we are on this subject, I would certainly like to pause here and solicit your participation in giving a standing ovation to our Regional Chairmen, Suffragan Bishop Joseph Hall, James Belle, J. Grant Tolbert, Houston Crenshaw, and Jervis Williams for being the first to contribute to correcting our fiscal challenges by joining together as a team, and sacrificing financially in order to keep our budgeting activities above deficit status. God bless and prosper you and your region for such high levels of essential cooperation.

In addition to these accolades, on behalf of Bishop Henry L. Johnson, and the entire Executive Board we also extend heart felt “thank you” to each of our elected officers and departmental chairpersons and coordinators for your cooperation and support as we navigate our way through this “Sea of Adversity” and do not forget... and this too shall come to pass due to the fact that it is He, and Him alone *who has begun this good work in us, and He shall perform it until the day of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

So once again, we petition your patience, participation and earnest cooperation as we strive toward our goal to expand and strengthen the things that appear ready to die... i.e., our hope, anticipation and expectation in the Lord’s promises to the growth and expansion of the California District Council will not be denied. *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. (I Corinth 15:58)*

But once again, bear in mind that Satan has an advanced strategy to get us to miss this plan of God by getting us to contend with the man or woman of God who have divinely been placed over us in leadership. Consider what I say from the following scriptures and the Lord give the understanding:

“ And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded.”
(Acts 19:11-16)

Many of you may and some may not recall the fictitious cowboy known as the “Lone Ranger”. This former Texas Ranger became a self-appointed guardian of the law who in his day successfully brought many outlaws to justice. Being accountable to no one, he could act on his own with speed and resolution. Although he was actively fighting against evil, his independence actually provides a bad example for the Christian warrior in the struggle against supernatural powers. The devil laughs when he sees lone rangers coming at him. He treats them with the same contempt he showed t the seven sons of Sceva in Acts 19. Why? Because they do not place themselves under authority.

Jesus is the one with all power, and when he walked upon the earth, he delegated it to people who voluntarily placed themselves under His authority. These were not lone rangers; rather, they were men who were willing to be subjected to the Master.

The trouble with many of us today is that we are accepting of Jesus’ authority, but we do not want to answer to His body, the Church. God has placed certain individuals in church leadership positions for our benefit (Ephesians 4:11-12, and I Thessalonians 5:21) tells us it is our responsibility to test their words against scriptural truth. If they stand the test, we should humbly place ourselves under their authority. The proud, who go it alone, will become easy prey for the roaring lion who specializes in lone rangers.

However, thank God for his choice of leadership for the California District Council in the person of the honorable Bishop Henry L. Johnson, who has decreed... enough is enough! There is no room in the California District Council for lone rangers nor independent operators. We are a Winning Team, consisting of Oneness (Jesus only) messengers of mercy and agents of change. So now we have received another “divine mandate” to sound the alarm to re-enter into the battle of change by way of rallying

our troops together to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold to eternal life. And this we will do if God permits.

Therefore, we need your support and commitment to achieve our goals and objectives that are outlined in the Mission Statement of the California District Council, and when we operate in this mode, God will provide us with an opportunity to meet the needs of the people, to whom we are called to serve. But this is when the real battle begins, but we will not retreat for one second due to the urgency of the call on this great council to fulfill our purpose.

So, in conclusion, remember this quote from the late great “5 Star” General Douglas McArthur: “*A commander’s place is at the scene of the battle.*” So let’s stay and fight for that which we know is right (see Isaiah 42:3-9), let us cast aside the works of darkness and let us put on the Amour of Light. Let us strive to create in our fellowship and worship activities, the types of services that will market our victories and successes. Let us inspire each other to unite through our local, district, state, and national fellowships, and worship services that are anointed, affordable, and accommodating.

Finally, when we learn to master the three above mentioned Biblical Oriented Principles (provide anointed, affordable, and accommodating) service activities, then we as a team are well on our way to fulfilling the Lord’s mandate of becoming doctrinally sound, financially stable, disease free, and debt free, team of winners.

In pursuit of The Master’s Favor
In Jesus’ Name,

Dr. Robert T. Douglas, Sr.
Servant Chairman
California District Council

*P.S. – sometimes the adversary will attempt to make us believe that our leaders are in our way, when in actuality, they abide in God’s will so that we can’t have our way!
Selah.*