

Sharing Some Concerns
LCJE
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Along my leadership journey over the 30 years I've been in ministry, I've had to ask and attempt to answer some difficult questions.....**very** difficult questions at times...questions that that have required me to be brutally honest with myself and those around me.

Sometimes, we have to ask and attempt to answer difficult questions about **what** we are doing, **why** we are doing it and whether what we are doing is working?

Concerns I want to share:

I Aging Leadership Demographic

- Predominantly A Baby-boomer Lead Movement
- Rooted in a 1970's-80's revival (90s in Russian speaking world)
- Do you have a succession plan?
- We need to find ways to truly make a way for younger generations
 - Most in our congregational movement are not in a position to do this.
 - Lack of trust
 - Single salary
- 65 year old quarterback

As I was thinking about this message (over two months ago) I had a picture in my mind of a 65 year-old quarterback...he drops back to throw the ball. Two outstanding wide receivers are in the end zone...but he can't pass the ball that far because of his arthritic arm. The receivers can catch but he isn't able to throw.

And I wonder if this is a metaphor of where some of us are at? The problem is that at 64..or even 55, or 50..you can't play any more. **The best and brightest become coaches**

- Perhaps we need to establish some sort of retirement fund?
- We need to leave a legacy!

The question I 'm asking and I think **we** need to ask isnot "where are the fathers"? We have lots of fathers...lots of us here are grandparents, even great grandparents...silver haired, no haired....

- The question I am asking is“Where are the sons and daughters”? We must have the next generations trained and released or we die childless.
- Think of Abraham without Isaac, Moses without Joshua, Elijah without Elisha, Paul without Timothy,.....Yeshua without the 12?
- “2 Timothy 2:2- 4 generations of leadership.
- For us who are leaders, this is not a marathon, this is team baton Race
- It is about handing off the baton; it is about raising up the next generations.
- Success in the world of business is focused on **results**, on **leadership**. Good leadership is about helping people come into their full potential.

II We Haven't Been Growing

- The combined income of all Jewish Ministry in the US is under \$125,000,000
- The combined employment of all workers (including congregational leaders and staff and all staff of para-congregational organizations is less than 1,000
- The combined attendance/membership at Messianic Congregations is under 15,000 people
- In contrast Chabad On Campus (just college outreach) is over \$61,000,000
<http://chabad.edu/media/pdf/367/vbWs3673701.pdf>
- I found 618 registered Chabad entities in GuideStar
- Total income: \$850,000,000- \$1billion + (Encyclopedia of Judaism)
- Over 200,000 adherents
- 2,425 centers

North America	1,173
South America	80
Europe	465
Asia	615
Africa	25
Oceania	67
Total	2,425

- Are we doing the things that will fulfill the call God has given us?
 - Are we “taking hold” of that which He has taken hold of us for?
 - How effective are we?
- We have to be doing evangelism
 - Moishe Rosen used to say that Messianic congregations were not evangelism

- We have to be a Missions-based movement (rather than see ourselves as the mission (Genesis 12:1-3)
 - The Missions organizations have been better than the congregational movement

III. College Campuses

- Hotbed for BDS and anti-Israel propaganda
- Controlled by far left
- 41% of Americans identify themselves as Born Again or Evangelical (Barna 2004).
- Dropped to 19-21% by 2012
- “Nones” are on the rise (Pew 2012)
- Among “Mosiacs” (18-23) only 1% hold a biblical worldview
 - 36% by age 19

Is Evangelism Going Out of Style (highlights of article)

Closing thoughts?

Have we lost our vision?

- Without a vision, were told, the people perish. The scripture is talking about revelation, divine direction. Without this divine impartation, the people cast of restraint.

The idea here is that without divine order, without divine direction, without divine interaction and intercourse, without divine values and submission, the people cast of restraint. In other words, there is decay....morally, developmentally...things regress rather than progress.

- Sadly, I believe it is happening here in America
- Is it happening....or maybe worse... has it happened to some extent in our movement? **I'm just asking the question.**

Have we lost motivation? Are we doing this simply as a job? Have we lost our vision for people, for growth, for real forward momentum?

- Are we willing to look honestly at our plan, our strategies, our activities?
 - How we spend our time?
 - The finances entrusted to us?
 - Are we effectively investing in people...or does the urgent always dictate our day...our week...our month...our year?

One definition of insanity is to repeat the same actions and expect a different result. Are you satisfied with the results you have achieved? ***Have you achieved what God***

has assigned you to do? Are the things you are currently doing really bearing the fruit you can....and God wants you....to produce?

To achieve our Ruach-directed goals and objectives, we have to invest our time in **the right things**.

Dennis Prager in a 2013 article wrote concerning Messianic Judaism after a short burst of media attention leading up to former President George W. Bush addressing a Messianic gathering in Dallas: *“let them sink back into the irrelevance, back into the shadows”*.

Considerable energy is exerted by Jewish journalists and media executives to block us from:

- the mainstream media,
- from any sort of sort of political presence
 - (if you remember, the liberal media tried to cast David Brickner as Sarah Palin’s Jeremiah Wright)
 - we’ve had political figures agree to come on Jewish Voice then cancel when they find out we are messianic)
 - We are blocked from having voice in Christian Zionist dialogue (by both Israeli politicians and Christian Zionist leaders themselves)
 - We are blocked even by the conservative media
 - We are blocked (for the most part) from participation in the mainstream Jewish Community (with some wonderful and miraculous exceptions)
 - We are blocked (to some extent) from a leadership role in the Historic Church, the evangelical church...or certainly, we fail to exert the weight of leadership I believe God has destined for us...

And **we** have to ask...

***What have we done or failed to do to contribute to these realities?
What can we do to change these realities?***

It is time for our “movement to” *“move-forward”* ...to advance, to re-engage the culture, to rise not only to **relevance**, but **prominence!** (If I was more Pentecostal, I would say...shout amen!!)