



The making of the New Apostolic Church (7)

A crisis and a new beginning

The Apostles were waiting to be sent out. Eight of them wanted to explore the countries they would be working in and travelled there. At their return they had to face diverging views of the Church's future course. Two Apostles went their separate ways. Did this mean that the work of Apostles had come to an end.

The “tribes” and the Apostles’ chapel

In June 1836 a prophecy spoken by Apostle Drummond initiated the division of the European Christians into twelve “tribes”. Each Apostle was to be in charge of a “tribe” and his first task was to acquaint himself with it. They found this prefigured in the spies sent into Canaan. The Apostles and their travelling companions were to “look for gold”—meaning that they were to find out what elements of the original Christian teachings had been retained.

Eight Apostles went abroad to explore the countries assigned to them and four remained at Albury. In the meantime Apostle Drummond had an Apostles’ chapel erected there at his own cost. In imitation of some cathedrals he had an octagonal chapter house added to it.

Who leads the church?

The chapel was just reaching completion when the work that God wanted to do through Apostles entered a time of crisis. There was dissension regarding the relationship between the Apostles and the church council called the “Council of Zion”. A significant number of ministers thought that the Council of Zion was a kind of church parliament and that the Apostles were church officers that had to implement the decisions made in that parliament. The Apostles, on the other hand, claimed to be called by God to make the rules. They acknowledged the Council as an advisory body helping them to find the right decisions.

As a consequence of these conflicting claims the meetings of the Council of Zion were adjourned indefinitely and never resumed. In looking back Cardale thought the conflict could have been avoided if the Apostles – before going on their travels – had drawn up definite rules defining the respective positions of the College of Apostles and the Council of Zion.

Loss of the twelve-fold Apostle unity

The Apostles succeeded in affirming their claims, but Apostle MacKenzie did not think the Apostles justified in claiming those high privileges before they were sent out. So he refused to put his signature to the collective statement drawn up by the Apostles. He stayed at Albury for further talks, but finally no longer saw himself able to exercise his office of Apostle. Shortly before his death he spoke of himself as the weakest of the Lord's Apostles.

Apostle Dalton left Albury even before Apostle MacKenzie. We know from some later proceedings that he criticised conditions in the "work", but those documents do not give any details. He returned to a position in the Church of England. However, at a later date (1859) he resumed his position in the College of Apostles. So his role in the conflict is rarely mentioned in the literature on the subject and one easily gets the impression that the crisis was caused solely by Apostle MacKenzie.

Early in February 1841 the Apostles ceased to work together. The ten remaining Apostles met a few times, but in 1844 they delegated the leadership of the Church to a committee of four, consisting of the Apostles King, Armstrong, Tudor, and Sitwell. There had been a similar arrangement between 1838 and 1840 when eight Apostles were away in their "tribes" and four remained at Albury. The Seven Churches in London had originally been entrusted to the care of all twelve Apostles collectively because they had been meant to be a model of the future Church. In 1844 Apostle Cardale, already in charge of England with the exception of London, was given the care of the Seven Churches in London until the Apostles decided to resume their collective leadership. All other Apostles were at liberty to use their time as they considered best.

Will the work under Apostles end?

The remaining Apostles took different views of the new situation. There was a time when Apostle Drummond thought that God was revealing what kind of church He really wanted, but that it would be impossible to erect that kind of church. At best there would be a few model congregations showing what such a church might look like. This view was later to become the official Catholic Apostolic doctrine.

Apostle Carlyle still trusted that the Apostles would be sent and that God's plan for the Church would be fulfilled. He learnt to speak German and was actively laying the foundations for the future work in Germany. He closely cooperated with the Evangelists Boehm and

Caird. As we shall see he pleaded for action to complete the number of Apostles. This was because he still hoped that then the Apostles would be sent out to work in the full power of their ministry and that the expectation of large numbers of Christians being gathered under Apostles would be fulfilled.

Apostle Cardale wrote a *Manual* for the ministers based on the *Testimony*. He also composed an extensive *Liturgy*. In order to concentrate on this kind of work he temporarily withdrew from active leadership of the Church.

Without their Apostle bitter conflicts developed amongst some ministers in England. They had to be solved without Cardale as the Apostle in charge. They debated the sequence of events at the return of Christ and differed on the question of a detailed Liturgy – which laid down the precise words of what the minister and the congregation had to say in large parts of the divine service – and whether it enhanced or hindered the activity of the Holy Spirit.

There were also disagreements between the Apostles Cardale and Drummond regarding certain details in their Liturgies. In the end two different Liturgies were published: one for England served by Apostle Cardale and another one for Scotland where Apostle Drummond was in charge.

Apostle Cardale attached such importance to questions of right liturgical practice that smaller congregations were closed because the new liturgical forms could only be celebrated in larger congregations. The Evangelists felt hindered in their work because the members they had gathered in the congregations that had been closed were then told to attend Anglican services again.

Continuation of the Apostleship

In 1846 the Apostles abandoned one of their very own principles: to make all their decisions together. They ruled that each of them should decide what to do in his “tribe” and discontinued the committee of four at Albury. With this decision they also gave up the impression they had been creating that there was a committee governing the whole Church. They adjourned their official meetings indefinitely. Another meeting could be convened by Cardale either on his own initiative or if two other Apostles applied for it. The latter case happened in 1851.

Where there were congregations the Apostle in charge was to start with the sealings that had been expected for fifteen years. In May 1847 the first sealings took place in England. In Germany Apostle Carlyle held a sealing service in Frankfurt am Main on 17 October 1847 and another one in Berlin on 19 March 1848.

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