

TALK

WHERE THE
APOSTOLIC COUNCIL
SHARE THEIR HEARTS

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2012



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CHURCH OF THE NATIONS

YOUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE...

In many respects, it seems like just the other day that I was in a similar position, sitting down to write the lead article for the first edition of AC Talk in 2011. As the year closed, I heard numerous people say, I'm so glad to be seeing the back end of this year, as it's been one of the most disruptive and challenging years I've been through for a long time. For those who pay particular attention to these columns, some of Tony's insights into the Biblical meaning attached to the number 11 would have provided a possible context for this disruption, while the meaning of 12 would have been an encouragement for the year we've just entered. The great difference between the two is our anticipation of God restoring His governance in 2012.

In last year's column, I noted that, as I was writing, the annual World Economic Forum was taking place in Davos, where many of the world's leading economic, business and political leaders were gathered to discuss the economic prospects for the

year and that the tone of the meetings was sober, almost sombre, and the forecasts were not at all optimistic.

Bankers and business leaders came in for particular criticism from the political leaders and many people left the forum in a very downbeat mood. This year's WEF meetings have just ended and the mood is dramatically different. Although there is still concern about the state of the global economy and the prospects of recovery in 2012 vary depending on who you listen to, the overwhelming shift that took place in Davos was that blame for this ongoing state of affairs has now shifted squarely onto the shoulders of the politicians. When asked by Richard Quest in his nightly broadcast from Davos on CNN whether his guests thought we were ahead of the curve or behind the recovery curve, time and again, the guest would reply that business leaders were ahead



FROM
KEITH'S
HEART TO
YOURS

of the curve in recovery terms, but politicians were way behind and they were responsible for a sluggish global economy. What struck me was how well informed business types were saying that the problem lies not in business strategies (we've all learned hard lessons), but in GOVERNANCE. We need strong political leadership and a restoration of order but they're dragging their feet and seem to have other agendas. That seemed particularly appropriate in the light of what we've dwelt in as a COTN family this past year and our anticipation of God establishing His governance in greater measure in 2012.

I do not believe it's a coincidence that 2012 is a year of elections in some of the most influential nations. Change of leadership could be the order of the day and the leadership capabilities of the candidates, as well as their moral reputation is being scrutinised by all and sundry, as the electorate is calling for fresh, trustworthy and bold leadership. Where that is to be found, the people will follow. Regime change, on the back of repressive human rights violations, came at the expense of individuals who died for the cause of freedom in the Arab spring revolts, where people were saying "anything is better than what we've lived under". Where new leadership has emerged in those nations, subsequent public protest has taken place where continued violations have been feared under the new leaders. In Russia, unprecedented public protests have been the order of the day, as ordinary Russians have taken to the streets to express their determination that ethical and not abusive leadership will be the hallmark of the new presidency in that nation. Even in the USA, one of the Republican presidential hopefuls cited as his reason for retiring from the race that he felt the debate had not been in the best interest of the nation, as it had degenerated into personal attack and had become spiteful and not honouring of either the persons in the race or the notion of leadership at the highest level. So, we want change; we want bold leadership to lead us into economic prosperity; we want clean governance and we won't easily settle for leadership that's not anchored in uprightness. I wonder what kind of individual truly qualifies for that profile?

Leadership is influence, it means that each one of us is a leader of sorts, as we all have the power and ability to influence others every day.

It's true that we need transformation at the very highest levels of society's leadership and, for those COTN family members who have the opportunity of voting for their leadership in this year, do so wisely and responsibly, knowing that you help to put the people in place by the way you vote or don't vote. However, if the statement is valid that Leadership is influence, it means that each one of us is a leader of sorts, as we all have the power and ability to influence others every day. It's at the level where we do have influence that God is able to use us to be an agent of transformation and, whether we are

willing or not to be that tool could well be the difference between whether the kingdom of God really does take root in that environment or not. We don't have to be the most gifted leader or the most natural candidate for a formal leadership role.

When we see ourselves as

God's method for establishing His order, His governance and His value system in our neighbourhood or city, who knows what levels of transformation can become a reality when we use our influence, our democratic voice or vote, when we collectively raise our objections to what we see as wrong in our societies? Edmund Burke seems particularly prophetic in rousing us as the people of God to accept our kingdom mandate when he said (back in the 1700's): "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." Dare I point out that we are not just good, but godly men and women, who know who our Lord is and what He calls us to do in our sphere of influence in 2012?

May Father give you discernment and insight into the dynamics of your society and wonderfully creative ideas as to how you can be a kingdom transformer of note.

Keith



KEITH & SHELLEY du PLESSIS



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COTN DAY OF PRAYER	9 SEPT 2012
COTN LEADERSHIFT CONFERENCE EUROPE	12-14 OCTOBER 2012



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