

# The Power of Nameless and Faceless People

Why obedient Nobodies in the Kingdom of God are more powerful than famous Somebodies



*Wolfgang Simson* has three passions in his life: the reformation of *ekklesia* back to biblical Kingdom standards, the return to Kingdom economics, and the unity of the smashingly attractive bride of Christ. Wolfgang is of Jewish/Hungarian/German descent and married to Mercy from India. Together they have three sons and live in South Germany working “lobally”, at a *local* Kingdom strategy that has *global* consequences. He is the author of the wellknown FridayFax and of eight books including “Houses That Change The World” that has been translated into 20 languages, and “The Starfish Manifesto”, a detailed map of the current spiritual reformation that sweeps the globe.

Tony Collis is a well-known Evangelist in New Zealand and currently pastors an Assemblies of God Church in his country. Tony and his wife Lynette have a long-standing passion for the church of Jesus Christ to return back to its original roots, and they have been developing a small network of what they call “micros” – small, organic communities or housechurches. Teaching these insights inside New Zealand, Tony told us, has not always been easy: “People seem reluctant to change, and feel very secure in the way they are doing church”. But the moment Tony took the very same message *abroad*, to a country outside the Western world and culture, he was able to see how explosive his own message and conviction actually was. Here is Tony’s report:

“In January 2004 I was approached by a Christian leader from Myanmar – the former Burma - to come to his country and help him train church planters. He commented that it has taken him 26 years to plant 12 churches and he did not want to take another 26 years to plant another 12 churches ... could I help! He had read an article I had written on House Churches here in New Zealand and he felt that such a form of church would work well in his country. His country has 50 Million people most of whom are Buddhist. In January 2005 my wife and I flew to the capital of that country to train the first batch of church planters. In the following three months the movement grew to ten churches. In April we encouraged and trained the same church planters and the movement grew to ninety house churches in three months with an average attendance of 5. In September I visited again and the house churches grew in strength to about 35 per house church. By the end of the year 120 house churches were underway. In March 2006 I visited the country again to find 150 house churches. By then, they had a goal to see five hundred house churches by the end of 2006. In early October the movement had exceeded all expectations and had grown to over one thousand house churches now scattered all over the nation. I was in the country again at the beginning of November 2006 and they now have a vision to see ten thousand house churches as their next goal. An indigenous apostolic team is developing and they are seeing apostolic fruit and effectiveness. While I was there I heard the following testimonies...

## Death and back

One young church planter had started a house church in a small Buddhist village. The Buddhist monk was angry with the young evangelist and verbally attacked him in public. He then directed the young man to follow him to a cave on the outskirts of the village. Inside the dark cave the Buddhist monk instructed the church planter to hold onto a small ‘glowing’ stone. The monk began to call upon the evil spirits to kill the young man and as he did his eyes glowed. Nothing happened to the church planter. Again the Buddhist monk called upon the evil spirits to kill the Christian. Again nothing happened. Third time the monk called upon the evil spirits to kill off the church planter and yet again... nothing happened to him, but rather the Buddhist monk fell to the ground dead. After a while it dawned on the evangelist that if he left the cave alone, the people would think that he had killed the monk. Afraid of the consequences of leaving the cave alone, the man ‘resurrected’ the monk and they walked out together. As soon as they were both back in the village the monk declared that the evangelist’s God was stronger than his and that he was now going to become a Christian. The whole village came to Christ.

## Take your beds and walk

During a Church Planting conference in October 2006 one of the evangelists was asked to go to the hospital to pray for a friend’s ill husband. He asked six of his fellow church planters to go with him. We prayed for the team before they left. When the seven arrived they stood outside the hospital and began to pray against the demonic spirits that were inside the compound. The guards watched with interest as they prayed fervently outside the gate. After a while they approached the door of the hospital. No visitors from other countries are allowed to look at the conditions of the hospital, so the entrance is guarded. These same guards require money from the local visitors, and these evangelists had none. As the evangelists approached one of the guards extended his hand looking for some money. One evangelist laid hands on the guard and the soldier froze. He could not move, face and body locked into position. The rest of the Christians strolled in unhindered by the rest of the guards. They

started to pray against all the spirits of sickness and disease in the hospital as they made their way to the room where the friend's ill husband is supposed to be in. They found out that he had already returned home, so they decided that they would not waste the trip and started to pray for the sick. 'Out.. out...out' they demanded of the spirits of infirmity. One by one people were healed. 'Take up your bed and walk', commanded the evangelists. As each person had brought his own bedding, the healed did indeed gather up their bed stuff and left the hospital. Ten people were instantly healed and left the hospital before the team left. Doctors, nurses, family members and the infirmed looked on with startled amazement. Others were prayed for and some came to Christ. The evangelists said that they had one more day left at the conference and that the people could ring them at a certain hotel tomorrow to inform them of others things that would happen as a result of their prayers. The next day, as we were hearing the story from the team of seven, the phone rang and more testimonies were given. The whole church planting group were inspired to step out with greater boldness."

## Loyalty over anointing and fame

Let us step back a bit from these stories, which probably stand for many other stories we have heard, seen or witnessed, and look at some important Kingdom principles. Stories and experiences are one thing; biblical, objective truth is another. Personally, I decided to remain tethered to the pole of biblical revelation with all my life, and rate and observe any experience, no matter how exciting, as secondary, judged and weighed by biblical truth. Might is not right - God is right.

If we pose the question today: 'Why are there so few signs, wonders and miracles happening in the church of the cultural West in our days?' we will hear some standard answers. Many in the non-charismatic segment of Evangelicals usually say: signs and wonders are not for today, but served once as an endorsement for the gospel when it was first preached. A small group even goes so far as to say: since the arrival of the biblical canon, all wonders are false, basically devilish, empowered from hell itself. The charismatic and pentecostal block says: we lack anointing, charisma, and therefore need to ask for more, drink more, soak more, take in more. The faith movement says: we don't have enough faith. Most traditional churches believe, that spiritual power is only for the clergy, for a select few. The same way that the diagnosis of a doctor defines therapy, our analysis of the core problem will define our path to a solution. As a close observer of the phenomenon of explosive church multiplication around the world – did you know that around one million new (house-) churches have been planted just in the last 10 years alone? - I have come to believe and observe that the single most outstanding factor defining true and authentic spiritual power is *loving obedience to our King, Jesus*. Let me explain (much more on this in "The Starfish Manifesto", available as a free download from [www.missionstarfish.net](http://www.missionstarfish.net)).

Many Christians know Jesus as their saviour; but a precious few actually allow him to be the active and factual King of their lives. For most, Jesus is allowed to handle the salvation part, which many end up consuming and remembering in religious services and programs on a weekly basis. But in the area of sex, money, power and church, in regards to life itself, they are practicing *Amalekites*, (remember that terrible tribe harassing the Israelites in Old Testament times?), literally meaning *those that have no king*. In these areas, good-old self, individual or corporate egoism, tradition, convenience, money, personal desires like safety-first, essentially an obsession with Middle Class values and, to top it all, a Republican mindset dominates their lives. If a Republican is someone who accepts all forms of government *as long as it is not a monarchy*, many have become spiritual Republicans, that says, sings and preaches „Lord, Lord“, but plain simply does not do as the King says. The core DNA of Western culture has been so deeply molded by individualism, splendid isolation, celebrations of our declaration of independence (including from God and from each other), that many have practically rejected each and any authority as inherently evil, as part of a bad machine of some Big Brother trying to run and manipulate us. And so we have become rebels – throwing out the baby of God's gentle rule over us with the bathwater of a general rejection of all manipulative powers over us. Because we have been ruled over many times, we have, in order to protect us from more hurt, rejected God's offer to "rule under", to offer his Lordship like a towel-bearing servant kneeling in front of us offering to wash our feet. If that happens, we, being completely politically correct, have silently joined that ancient and mad crowd cheering the verdict of Jesus before Pilate, screaming "we have no King but Cesar", or the democratic decision of the disobedient servants in Luke 19 who decided "we do not want this man to be our king".

Remember *Fussball*, the most popular game on the planet? Soccer can be played officially – on clearly designated football-fields with the FIFA rules in operation, 22 players, a referee and goals that count, or unofficially, outside the stadiums, on the parking lot, on the beach, or, as my sons do, when Mom isn't looking, in the kitchen ... Both forms of the game are fun and exciting, but only one version counts. Imagine a football-field with four clearly designated lines that have names: sex, money, power and religion. It is possible to play inside the field, according to the rules, obeying the norms and principles of the Kingdom, and receive God's blessing, but it is also possible to play offside or even outside the legal framework of God. God would still love those illegal players and shower them, as it is his nature, with gifts of grace. But one thing he will not give to them as he is bound to his own word is: his blessing. Love and grace are completely unconditional; blessing is

absolutely not. It is conditional, hinging entirely on God's big IF: "If you obey my commands, if you obey my rules, if you walk in my paths, I will bless you. Otherwise ..."

How many people that call themselves after God would be found playing outside the Kingdom, the governmental framework of God, because they neither respect nor obey his official rules? We would recognize them quickly by an absence of blessing. No fruit that lasts, no multiplication, and no world impact (Gen 1.22,28). With God's blessing, obeying the rules and respecting the blueprints of God for life, church, sex, money and power, we will see a return of fruitfulness, multiplication and a movement that quickly covers the entire globe. A movement of authentic, divine power. But this will happen only if we are not only loved and graced – but also blessed. And the blessing (Hebrew *barakah*, meaning knee) of the King requires that we are the kneeling subjects of the King. The essence of the Kingdom of God is the domain of his uncontested rule. And why would anyone do such a thing, kneeling in front of a king, voluntarily, freely, out of his own choice, without being forced with a gun to his head? The answer is as simple as it is powerful. **Love!** God loves us; we are invited to love him back. We then fall hopelessly and madly in love with the family of the King, *our* new family, with *one another*. And together we love the world, in self-sacrificial service, and do anything that it takes to introduce them to our King. Just like God modeled it for us.

Whoever finds a king becomes his legal subject. Such a person from now on respects the King, his values and principles – the kind of justice, that is valid before him, his righteousness and his kingdom-law – as top priority in life (Mt 6,33). Nothing can compete any longer with the role that Jesus the King now plays in a new royal subjects life. And in a world where everyone screams for our loyalty –patriotism, religion, tradition, clans, money, supermarkets, power, fun, political doctrines, tithe-collecting churches, systems and gurus of all kinds – a person that is loyal to Jesus as King sticks out like a fish swimming against the tide. Such a loyalty leads to **legitimacy**. Why? Because only tested and proven loyalty leads to legitimacy. Loyalty that does not stand up when challenged is cheap. Nobody gives a drivers license to a 15 year old simply because he can drive a car real fast. The teenager has to demonstrate that he can handle the car and the traffic well, and even more that he knows the traffic rules and actually abides by them. In Europe, driving license is issued only when one is 18 and with that he can now officially and legitimately drive a car. He had very much the ability, the *power*, to drive a car before, but now he has the *license* to exercise this power and ability in an official, legal, recognized way. In the same way that weapons don't belong into the hands of untrained children, the awakening of sexual ability during teenage years does not automatically mean that teenagers are allowed to practice sexuality if they want with whom they want whenever they want. It is just like with a driver's license: there is a driver's license for sex. This license is officially awarded by the society, including the own parents, after proving that a person is able to handle sexuality in a disciplined and responsible way – and not wild, out of bounds and with purely selfish motives. This driver's license is called marriage. Sexuality without this license trespasses God's creational order and borders. It hurts blossoming life like trampling on flowers before they bloom, and pays a horrendous price. The same is true for *charismata*, the charismatic gifts of God, given to every child of God through the Holy Spirit. Charisma requires character; and truly precious gifts call for a proper way of handling them. The more powerful something is that God is placing into our hands, the more maturity we will need not to create an unhealthy disaster, but to be good stewards of God's grace and use his gifts according to the directives of the King.

Power (Greek *dynamis*) in God's kingdom is not just ability (*charisma*) to actually do something („I can heal, therefore I heal; I can evangelize, therefore I evangelize“), but always official power (*exousia*), legitimate power, power that is bound to the King, aligned to his Kingdom and therefore licensed, endorsed power. Mere abilities that are naively exercised without official license and endorsement, quickly become the foundation of misused, robbed, assumed power, usurped power that inevitable leads to the establishment of self-centered, human empires, precisely because they don't care for God's Kingdom law. Such power, applied in ignorance or even defiance of God's rule that does not care about the directives of the King, is essential theft. It is illegitimate power that does not find God's backing. If such power becomes self-aware and therefore corrupt, it will inevitably try to back up itself, prove itself, or force itself on others, even if this means the twisting of arms and manipulation of other people.

Even Jesus had to prove his loyalty towards God. When he was „led into the desert, full of the Holy Spirit“ (Lk 4:1), he was challenged by Lucifer in three crucial tests. Why did Jesus pass all those tests with such high honors? Because he did not argue and act in his own best interests and simply used his amazing abilities (power) just because he had them at his fingertips. He demonstrated a much more powerful truth: that he is *under orders*, evident by him referring back again and again to a law that is above him: *it is written!* Jesus throws it into Satan's face like a bomb that he, other than Satan himself, is still voluntarily very much bound by God's word. He is the intentional subject of an objective codex that God has established, and therefore Jesus cannot and will not act in his own best interest, purely selfish and subjectively concerned with “what's in it for me”. He demonstrates both to God and the devil: “Your will, not mine, be done!” This totally robs the devil of any chance to handle Jesus, so that he had to shake his head in utter frustration and sneak away. But this is only one part of

the story: before his father in heaven, Jesus had just passed the tests of his loyalty, and therefore he is handed the license, given the official nod to - from now on - use his charismatic gifts, his God-given powers, in an authorized and official way that Satan has no chance to object. Jesus returns from the desert as someone given **exousia**, authorized power to perform *dynamis*: powerful signs and wonders. The desert was his graduation. From now on he is not only “full of the Holy Spirit” (full of abilities and possibilities), but he has been given official license (*exousia*) to use these abilities in accordance and in personal synchronization with his father (John 5:19,20; 8:38) on a day-to-day basis. Does it not strike you that this moment is exactly the time when the ministry of Jesus is transformed, the power is “switched on” and literally the supernatural sparks fly? If Jesus needed such a legitimization of his own loyalty as the Son of God, will we be able to do without? The solution to the amazing power crisis of great segments of Christianity is not a lack of the power of the Holy Spirit or a lack of gifts, but a lack of authentication, of license that has to do with our shortcoming in legal Kingdom existence. As long as we believe we can *play* church or ministry any way we want it (which is improper in the Kingdom), and if we are not apostolic in the biblical sense that we are sent forth by God, but basically send us out ourselves, if our motives are driven by anything else than our loving obedience to the King, wishing to do as he pleases, the King will not command his presence. He will always love us and grace us, but as he is bound to his own word, he will not bless us. He will not regularly confirm his word with signs and wonders (Mk 16:20), because we are not really his authentic subjects, who are legitimately bound to the King. Our way of life, ministry and the way we “do church” in transgression of Kingdom law proves this for all to see (maybe with the exception of – us).

The problem therefore is not *charisma*, but *exousia*. If we fail our graduations, our very own desert-tests, again and again, it is because we basically rebel against God’s rule, act in our own best interests and do not abide by his principles. This is such a powerful transgression that it makes us illegal aliens in God’s Kingdom. In that case, no amount of begging, fasting, praying, singing, the laying on of countless hands or magic self-appointing – by “declaring and decreeing ourselves to be mighty miracle workers” - will do the trick. Every human will be tested – Adam, Eve, Abraham, Moses, Josef, David, Peter, Paul -, so that David can write in his Psalm 139: “Search me, oh God, and know my heart, *test me ...*”. But those that pass those tests, which are *always* tests of our loyalty to God, become legitimate. And a legitimate life, a life that does not speak or repeat hollow and cheap words, but has been tested in the fire, ultimately becomes authentic, and therefore convicting. Words can convince, but only a life backed up by God *convicts*. Everything else will be religious hypocrisy, which the secular world despises, and rightly so. But when we live what we preach, it leads to **authenticity**. The whole world searches for genuineness, the real deal. And life in God’s Kingdom is very real, and therefore different from life in this world. It is authentic life, “abundant life”, a life in fullness (John 10), Life 2.0, not Life 1.0. As we can see with the example of Jesus, this does not describe a materially successful, secure, rich and healthy life that requires us to walk this earth eternally smiling as a part of a triumphant cult. It means a life that reaches its goal, fulfils its mission and purpose and is able to give life to others, because it is overflowing with life itself. Such a life cannot remain hidden and invisible, because no one lives in a vacuum. It is tangible and authentic in the six main domains of life: family, education, communication, culture, business and politics. And these are exactly the six areas in which the power of God will become evident, and difficult to ignore for anyone. Jesus said: If we don’t become like children, we cannot become part of the Kingdom of God. And if we are outside the Kingdom, outside God’s stadium, we can stand there with our religious songbooks, manuals, conference brochures and remain collecting visiting cards of as many Christian gurus that we had pray over us as long we want. Nothing will change. But if we dare become faceless nobodies, the loyal subjects of our King, that do as the King pleases; if we western renegades and hyper-individualists become again loyal and legitimate in the Kingdom and demonstrate the ability for individual and corporate obedience – which requires a true miracle of God, then we even might learn to do something entirely unthinkable. We will learn to swim in swarms like the fish that God created, and learn to fly in formation as every bird in God’s sky teaches us every day. This is when the sky will be the limit of what such a “church under God” can and will do. This is the lesson that the children – the non-western, former mission fields - are today teaching their parents – the new contemporary western mission fields. The church in the cultural West today will need to stoop down and humble itself to listen and learn what it’s children – the church in the non-West - is whispering back to them: obey your King, let go of your unholy individualism; return to be faceless (no)bodies attached to an incredible head - the King. And you, also, will be given *exousia*, legal power to lead an explosive life in all areas, business, politics, culture, arts, education and family included. This is how you move from success to significance. It happens when nobodies, who have died to self and denied their ego, become true disciples of Jesus, He makes all of us fit into that very spot that the King has designed us to fill, and thus fulfill our lives’ mission. This is how our lives hit bulls eye like a straight arrow, how we will finish well, and eventually hear that priceless words from the mouth of the King himself, for which everything was worth it: “Well done, you faithful servant.”