

What the Spirit Is Saying about the Church

I. THE GREATEST REVIVAL IN ALL HISTORY

A. We stand at a critical juncture in our nation's history. The Holy Spirit is visiting His people with power as darkness increases. The light is getting brighter as the darkness is becoming darker.

²Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. (Isa. 60:2)

B. The greatest revival and crisis in history is soon to come. We look with confidence to God's promises to pour out His Spirit to empower His people to bring the gospel to all nations.

¹⁷It shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams...¹⁸I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy...

²⁰before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. (Acts 2:17-20)

¹⁴This gospel of the kingdom will be preached...to all the nations, and then the end will come. (Mt. 24:14)

C. A theological crisis is emerging across America that will perplex many who will be unable to discern truth and deception (1 Tim. 4:1-3). The Scriptures are clear that some will depart from the faith (Mt. 24:9-13; Lk. 21:26; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3).

¹Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ²speaking lies in hypocrisy... (1 Tim. 4:1-2)

II. THE LORD'S INVITATION IN CAIRO, EGYPT IN SEPTEMBER 1982

A. The Lord visited me in Cairo, Egypt, in September 1982 and said: "***I will change the understanding and expression of Christianity in the earth in one generation.***"

1. ***Changing the understanding***: speaks of the way unbelievers will perceive the Church. Today, many see the Church as boring, irrelevant, and non-threatening (Acts 5:11-13).

2. ***Changing the expression***: speaks of the way the Church expresses its life together as a people of prayer, walking out Sermon on the Mount lifestyles in the power of the Spirit.

- B. God spoke to me about **four heart standards** necessary for my future life and ministry. They are not the only values necessary in a New Testament church, but are the **most neglected** ones. In 1996, God corrected me and called me back to these values by using the acronym “IHOP.”
1. **Intercession**: night-and-day prayer and worship affects our ***time***
 2. **Holiness**: the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle (Mt. 5-7) affects our ***thoughts and attitudes***
 3. **Offerings**: extravagant giving by living simply to give more to the harvest affects our ***money***
 4. **Prophetic**: confidence in God’s intervention (provision, protection, direction) and standing boldly in faith for what the Spirit is saying affects our ***security and identity***

III. WHAT DOES AN END-TIME EXPRESSION OF CHRISTIANITY INCLUDE?

- A. The Spirit is raising up a victorious Church that will walk in the values, doctrine, power, purity, unity, and maturity as modeled by the New Testament Church (Eph. 4:13; 5:27; Rev. 19:7).
- ²⁷That He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5:27)***
- ⁷For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7)***
- B. **It is Church-centered**: Jesus is building His Church which functions locally as a spiritual family that walks out love and honors all its members, e.g., gender, age, ethnic, economic, etc. (Mt. 16:18).
- ¹⁸I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. (Mt. 16:18)***
- C. **It makes disciples and has a missionary spirit**: Each ministry is called to work with others to fulfill the Great Commission. It demonstrates God’s love and power to others by winning the lost, healing the sick, doing works of justice (for the poor, fatherless, and oppressed), making disciples, building godly families, serving in the marketplace, and working to transform the seven spheres of society: family, education, government (politics, law, and military), economy (business, science, and technology), arts (entertainment and sports), media, and religion.
- ¹⁹Go...and make disciples of all the nations...²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Mt. 28:19-20)***
- D. **It gives to the poor and does works of justice**: This includes feeding the poor, caring for the needy, widows, homeless, and helping to alleviate the oppression of abortion and poverty, etc.
- E. **It cares for the fatherless**: The spirit of Elijah (prophecy, power and repentance) includes focusing on the fatherless. The Holy Spirit is raising up the largest orphan outreach in history.
- ⁵Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. ⁶And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. (Mal. 4:5-6)***

- F. **It functions in God's power:** Each believer is called to function in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Church is to walk in supernatural ministry by functioning in the spiritual gifts and using our authority in Christ. We will not regularly function in the gifts until we earnestly desire them by praying for them and using them in the day of small beginnings.
*¹Concerning spiritual gifts...I do not want you to be ignorant...⁷The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one...³¹Earnestly desire the best gifts. ^{14:1}Desire spiritual gifts...
³¹You can all prophesy. ³⁹Desire earnestly to prophesy... (1 Cor. 12:1, 7, 31; 14:1, 32, 39)*
- G. Each believer must be taught to receive healing and freedom and then to keep it by personally exercising the authority that they receive in Christ by standing on the Word (Eph. 6:11-17).
- H. **It proclaims the supremacy of Jesus:** It magnifies Jesus' majesty, beauty, and worthiness. The conflict in the end times centers around defining who Jesus is and how we love Him. We must love God on His terms with love that is loyal to truth as seen in Jesus. It has great allegiance to the Jesus of the Bible. We magnify His deity, acknowledging His right to establish absolute standards (which the nations are accountable for). He is the only way of salvation.
- I. **It embraces wholeheartedness:** It makes disciples that walk out Sermon on the Mount lifestyles (Mt. 5-7). The Spirit is restoring the first commandment to first place in the Church. Cultivating love for Jesus is the first priority and the first emphasis of the Spirit. This love will overflow in God's people so that they walk out the second commandment and Great Commission. Jesus defined loving God as being deeply rooted in a spirit of obedience (Jn. 14:21).
³⁷Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment." (Mt. 22:37-38)
- J. **It endures persecution:** All godly people will be persecuted and receive rewards (Mt. 5:10-12).
¹²Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. (2 Tim. 3:12)
- K. **It engages in God's purpose for Israel:** Jesus' return is contingent on Jewish people turning to Him. In other words, the timing of Jesus' second coming is linked to the salvation of Israel.
¹⁹Repent...be converted, that your [Israel] sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, ²⁰and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you [Israel]...²¹whom heaven must receive [retain] until the times of restoration of all things [Millennium] which God has spoken by...His holy prophets... (Acts 3:19-21)
- L. Jesus prophesied that He would not come back to Jerusalem (from which He will rule the earth) until the leaders of Israel asked Him to reign over them as their Messianic King.
³⁹You shall see Me no more till you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Mt. 23:39)

1. The battle for Jerusalem is a spiritual, political, and military battle for the control of Jerusalem and the salvation of the Jewish people, which is deeply connected to Jesus' return (Rom. 11:26). This is one of the most significant battlefronts in the spirit today.
2. God will gather the nations of the earth around Jerusalem (Joel 3:2, 12; Zech. 12:3; 14:2; Zeph. 3:8; Ezek. 38:4; 39:2) and Satan will also draw them there (Rev. 16:13-14; 19:19).
²I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken...Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant...shall not be cut off... (Zech. 14:2)
3. The highest issue in serving God's purpose for Israel is obeying Jesus' sovereign leadership. We love Him, thus we want to do what He does and love what He loves. God requires the Church to stand with Israel in their coming distress and persecution (Rev. 12:17; Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:24; 11:33-35; 12:7; Rev. 6:9-11).

M. ***It prepares forerunner messengers:*** It will proclaim Jesus as Bridegroom, King, and Judge and declare what the Scripture says about the unique dynamics related to Jesus' end-time plan, so that people are not offended at Jesus, deceived by the enemy, or fearful of the future, and do not yield to compromise. Forerunners are "messengers" who function with a specific message in different spheres of life; for example, they are preachers, artists (singers, musicians, actors, etc.), writers (internet), media, marketplace, intercessors or those who disciple people one on one in the church, marketplace, campus, or home (moms are some of the most important forerunners).

²⁰The anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly. (Jer. 23:20)

N. ***Its ministries flow from intimacy with God:*** It emphasizes intimacy with God as our Father and Jesus as our Bridegroom King. For the first time in history, the Spirit will universally emphasize our identity as Jesus' Bride. As sons of God, we are in a position to experience God's throne as heirs of His power. As the Bride of Christ, we are in a position to experience God's heart and desire for us.

¹⁷The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" (Rev. 22:17)

O. The essence of the message of the Bride of Christ is the revelation of Jesus' beauty, His emotions for us, and commitments to us (to share His heart, throne, secrets, and beauty with us) as our Bridegroom God, alongside our response of abandonment or wholehearted love and obedience to His will. Mutual wholeheartedness is the foundation for deep partnership with Jesus. We must refuse all sensual overtones to the Bride of Christ message. Jesus is not our lover or boyfriend.

IV. THE END-TIME PRAYER MOVEMENT

- A. The conflict at the end of the age will be between two “houses of prayer,” or two global worship movements. The Antichrist will raise up a worldwide worship movement (Rev. 13:4, 8, 12, 15). The Holy Spirit is raising up the greatest prayer and worship movement in history (Isa. 19:20-22; 24:14-16; 25:9; 26:8-9; 27:2-5, 13; 30:18-19; 42:10-13; 43:26; 51:11; 52:8; 62:6-7; Jer. 31:7; 51:8; Joel 2:12-17, 32; Zeph. 2:1-3; Ps. 102:17-20; 122:6; 149:6-9; Zech. 8:20-23; 10:1; 12:10; 13:9; Lk. 18:7-8; Mt. 21:13; Rev. 5:8; 6:9-11; 8:3-5; 9:13; 14:18; 16:7; 18:6; 22:17).
- B. The highest identity of the redeemed throughout eternity is to be a **“house of prayer.”** The essence of this is that God speaks and moves our heart and then we speak and move His heart, resulting in a release of God’s resources on earth. The identity of the whole Church is to be a house of prayer (not just ministries that are focused on prayer).
⁷For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations. (Isa. 56:7)
- C. Jesus requires night-and-day prayer for the full release of justice in the Church and society.
*⁷Now shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who cry to Him day and night...?
⁸I tell you that He will bring about justice for them speedily. (Lk. 18:7-8; NAS)*
- D. The Spirit is orchestrating a convergence of the missions movement and the prayer movement across the earth. Such unity around prayer and world missions is in itself a sign of the times.