

Campaign: Pray for U.S. This Sunday

✘ On July 5, the day after our nation celebrates its independence, Christians will acknowledge their dependence on God by taking time during their Sunday morning worship services to literally bow, pray and repent as part of the Call 2 Fall campaign.

Participants are being asked to pray for at least three to five minutes, not that the government would change America's dire situation, but that the church would change its focal point to reliance on God.

The Y Factor

By Liam Roberts, Realms, softcover, 368 pages, \$.



The Genographic Project maps DNA samples to develop a comprehensive family tree of mankind. Computer scientist Eric Colburn discovers that one of the project scientists is plotting to inflame Muslims with genetic proof that Ishmael is the rightful heir of the Abrahamic covenant. He vows to unify the Muslim kingdoms into an Islamic empire that will finally drive the Jews into the sea.

Any Minute

By Joyce Meyer and Deborah Bedford, FaithWords, hardcover, 304 pages, \$.



Sarah Harper's successful career consumes her life at the expense of her family. But a car accident changes everything. Everyone thinks she has died, but her spirit is still alive. What she learns on the other side transforms her. When she is revived, she is a new person, and her life is changed forever.

Marching for Jesus in Secular France



In France, a country known for its secularization and growing Islamic population, tens of thousands of Christians will take to the streets for a March for Jesus on Saturday, which is being held at the same time as the nation's annual gay pride parade.

An estimated 30,000 Christians will parade through the streets

of Bordeaux, Lille, Nantes and Paris, France, distributing 100,000 Bibles and 20,000 gospel tracts. Representing at least 70 different churches, marchers will carry signs proclaiming Jesus as Lord as they sing worship songs.

Social Activism Useless

☒ **QUOTE:** “Community service and social activism are ultimately useless unless they yield salvation. You can provide a man with sustenance daily for his entire life, but if you never share the gospel with him he will still be cast into damnation in hell. Many churches are beginning to adopt this social gospel, which basically equates the church to any other nonprofit association. The church is meant to be far more than a Red Cross or a YMCA. The church are those who have been ‘called out’ of culture, mediocrity and sin. Therefore the church’s activism must be inspired by the gospel while simultaneously proclaiming the gospel to the world. Much of what is being deemed as ‘servant evangelism’ that is divorced from true gospel proclamation is a result of fear rather than of love. We cannot truly love someone without giving sacrificially of ourselves by providing for their greatest need: liberation from sin. If we allow the fear of rejection to take hold of us and deter us from sharing the message we are demonstrating that we do not trust in the sovereignty of God, even as it is present in the work of salvation. ... If baseball is played with underhand pitches and a larger ball then it changes the game from ‘baseball’ to ‘softball.’ Similarly if ministry is done without the inclusion of the gospel message then it changes the work of ‘ministry’ into ‘social activism,’ and this will not suffice to bring salvation unto sinners. Ministry is the role or position of one serving God in a special way for the advancement of the

gospel. The marriage between the work of ministry and the message of the gospel is one that God meant to endure until the Final Consummation when all things will be joined unto Christ. Therefore we cannot advance a message that is not upon our lips, and salvation cannot be accomplished when the gospel is divorced from the actions of the church.” –Washington, pastor **Gilberto Gonzalez**, voicing concern in a column called “Is ‘Ministry’ Getting a Divorce From the ‘Gospel’?” over what he sees as a growing imbalance among churches concentrating more on physical needs than spiritual ones [, 6/9/09]

Suffering From ‘Sunday School Syndrome’

✘ With surveys showing that more American Christians are becoming biblically illiterate, many proponents of the Sunday school model have argued for a churchwide return to weekly Bible classes—especially for children and youth. Yet a new study by Ken Ham, founder of apologetics ministry Answers in Genesis, indicates that Sunday school may actually lead teens to abandon church reports worldnetdaily.com.

How Do I Know When God Is

Speaking?

You and I are living in a day when we need to be certain that God is directing our lives. We get His answers for the situations in our lives when the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, speaks into our spirits and transmits the “overcoming” victory of Jesus.

If you want to clearly hear the voice of the Lord, you must create an atmosphere for the Holy Spirit to talk to you. You must also develop your listening abilities so that you are able to distinguish among all the competing voices in the earth. This is essential for you to live a godly life—a life of victory.

God wants you to know His will. But for Him to reveal it to you, there has to be an open line of communication. Take these steps to make sure there’s no interference:

1. Recognize the hindrances to hearing God’s voice. To walk in the Spirit, you must focus on God and shut out distractions. Your emotions are one thing that can divert your attention and keep you from hearing the Holy Spirit.

You can’t receive a “phone call” from Him if you’re busy taking a “call” from your emotions. When fear, worry, anxiety or depression dominates your thinking, it blocks out the still, small voice of the Spirit.

Fear. One of the emotions that shouts the loudest is fear. Recognize that the voices that come to torment you do not come from the Father, who deeply loves and accepts you and is in control of your every circumstance (see 2 Tim. 1:7).

You can hang up on fear. The Word says you are to “[cast] all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” (1 Pet. 5:7, NKJV).

Selfish ambition. Maybe you’re a doer, an overachiever. There

is nothing wrong with desiring to succeed in life, but if that drive dominates your thoughts, you will not be able to hear clearly the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Pursuit of pleasure. Some people are consumed with the desire for material “things”—things they believe will bring them comfort and enjoyment. Others are so wrapped up in themselves or their families, they hardly give a thought to God. As a result, they are simply not attuned to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Still others become professional “escape artists” who keep their minds occupied with entertainment—movies, books or television—in order to avoid their fears or problems.

In any case, the Holy Spirit will not shout to be heard above the din that fills your mind. To tune Him in, you will have to tune out the rubbish and clean out the clutter of your inmost thoughts. One of the best ways to do this is by taking time to encounter God through worship.

2. *Become a worshiper.* Worship increases your sensitivity to the voice of the Holy Spirit. It is a wonderful tool to help you focus your attention on God, rather than your problems and desires.

Worship is something you do, not something that happens to you. It is an act of your will, to magnify or enlarge your vision of God. When you worship, the things you face appear smaller, less important and less daunting in comparison to His greatness.

Two worshipers in the Bible are good examples for us. The first is Moses. In Exodus 15, after God parted the waters of the Red Sea and led the children of Israel to safety, Moses and Miriam led the Israelites as they praised and worshiped the Lord for their deliverance.

When they began to sing, dance and play their instruments in

praise to God, the Holy Spirit prophesied through them about the victories God would give them as they took possession of the Promised Land.

The second is David. Perhaps, of all the people in the Old Testament, David understood, cherished and delighted in the Holy Spirit the most. After being caught in adultery and murder, David pleaded with God, "don't take your Holy Spirit from me" (see Ps. 51:11).

As a psalmist, David was a singer of praise and one who reveled in worshiping God. He did not want to lose his sweet communion with the Holy Spirit.

3. *Perceive in your spirit.* As you worship God, you will begin to develop spiritual perception. The more you worship and commune with Him, the greater depth your relationship will have; and the more familiar His voice will become.

You may not always hear Him with your ears, but you can perceive what He's saying as He whispers truth to your spirit (see 1 Cor. 2:9-10).

4. *Pray in tongues.* First Corinthians 14:2, 4 says, "For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself" (NKJV). To "edify" means to "build up." It is another way to heighten your communication with the Holy Spirit.

Praying in tongues not only builds you up, it also strengthens, rebuilds and recharges your spirit so you can hear the Holy Spirit more clearly. He has all the answers you seek.

Nearly every successful thing I've ever done came to me as a revelation after praying in tongues. When you face a dilemma or a decision, don't reason in your heart; instead pray in the Spirit, and you will receive the answers you need.

Being able to hear the Spirit's voice isn't an option. It is essential to live as God wants us to live. He doesn't hide His will from His children. But doing God's will is dependent on our clearly hearing His voice and perceiving His direction.

God speaks constantly through His Word, through His creation and by His Spirit in our hearts. These voices never contradict one another.

The responsibility to have "ears to hear" what He says falls to you. Your job is to eliminate undesirable noise and tune in to the Holy Spirit by offering up worship to the Lord, developing your spiritual perception, and building up your human spirit by praying in tongues.

Saturate yourself in God's Word, and re-order your priorities. Make whatever lifestyle changes you need to make. Nothing in life is more important than hearing from God.


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Iran Election May Be Turning Point for Christians

- ✘ For many Christians in the rapidly growing church in Iran, Friday's presidential election could be life-altering.

The underground Iranian church has experienced unprecedented growth in the last 10 years despite tremendous persecution under hard-line Muslim President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Believers are praying that new leadership would grant them religious freedom.

Nominate Your Church

{jcomments on} *Charisma* is looking for healthy churches to  feature in future issues of the magazine. We'd like to hear about how your church is thriving.

Please tell us your story in the comments section of our Web site below.

Live Recession-Proof

Christians don't have to be casualties of the global recession. God has set principles in place to help His people live recession-proof. Watch a free tutorial from well-known Christian financial adviser Dave Ramsey and learn God's keys to moving forward when the economy is standing still.

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