

10 Days of Pentecost 2023: Finding Comfort and Contrast at Pentecost

Would I have responded like that 7-year-old? The question burned in me after recently hearing of a family forced to flee their homeland upon becoming Christians. A friend of mine who often assists persecuted believers was helping the family pick up the pieces of their lives in a foreign country—all because of their faith.

After making Jesus their Lord and Savior, certain members of the family had been attacked and jailed. One day a group of men barged into the family's home and threatened them once again if they didn't renounce Jesus. Amid the exchange, one of the twin 7-year-old sons looked the men in the eyes and boldly declared that he was a follower of Jesus. He was kidnapped and, within days, his body was delivered to the mother—chopped into three pieces.

Such twisted evil is almost incomprehensible. But equally as staggering is the way God shows up as light in such utterly dark moments as this. When my friend met the mother and remaining twin son, they'd just been reunited with the rest of the family after weeks in hiding. The shock and pain on their faces was a look he'll never forget. Yet somehow, despite their seemingly insurmountable grief, God's comforting presence could still be found.

Before Jesus left this earth, He promised that “the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name ... will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (John 14:26). Some translations of that verse use the word *Counselor*, while others opt for *Comforter*. In situations like this family's, He is certainly all of the

above. No matter how long my friend stayed to comfort those wailing parents and children, no matter what words he offered, nothing could compare to the helping, healing, comforting *presence* of the Holy Spirit.

I imagine many of those in the upper room on the day of Pentecost felt the same way. Acts 2:1 records that “they were all with one accord in one place,” yet given the situation, their hope was probably mixed with a sense of sorrow. Though they’d seen a risen Jesus and heard His promises of the Comforter to come, still, the man who had transformed every facet of their lives was no longer with them. They’d watched the supernatural way He left, even talked with angels who assured them Jesus would return in the same fashion (1:11)—and I’m sure they believed this. But it’s likely many of them were still recovering from the emotional roller coaster of the previous two months and thinking: *I wish we could return to the good ol’ days of simply following Jesus in the countryside.*

Amid their unprecedented blend of grief, joy, hope and anxiety, they needed a Comforter whose mere presence could calm their minds, hearts and souls. Isn’t it typical of God, then, that this peace and stillness came via a Holy Spirit red-carpet arrival draped in anything but serenity: the massive sound, flames of fire and seemingly drunk followers making lots of noise with their brand-new vocabularies.

What fits the description of a rock concert was instead the welcome party for the Holy Spirit’s dwelling on Earth—now taking place *within* believers! Indeed, there’s no greater contrast than when the Holy Spirit silences the noise of our sin-stormed souls, only to reside there.

Yet it’s because of the power of this indwelling, which we mark this month on Pentecost Sunday, that is the true miracle. Not only is it the power that can lift the faces of the family my friend met amid utter darkness and pain, it’s also the same

power that gave Jesus' grieving followers the boldness to emerge from tragedy and preach a miracle-filled gospel in the face of opposition.

That 7-year-old boy had this Holy Spirit power. I can only hope I'd do what he did if put in a similar situation. And I pray that as we celebrate Pentecost this year, we'll be reminded of the true miracle that is the Holy Spirit's presence in us. {eoa}

Marcus Yoars is a previous editor of Charisma magazine. This article was written in 2012.

4 Things We Must Do for Millennials

Another teen. Another gun. Another school/mall/church/theater shooting that rocks the nation.

It's not that we're completely calloused and have forgotten how to mourn; our hearts still break for those directly affected by these massacres. But in 15 years America has mastered the art of moving on—so much so that we've become accustomed to the rising evil affecting our children and somehow forgotten our own guilt in the matter. Worse still, we're content to do nothing about it and carry on as if things will naturally fix themselves.

More than 2,700 years ago, Israel did the same thing as God sent prophet after prophet to warn them of His judgment, remind them of His mercy and call them to repent of their sins. The Jewish people shed countless tears for generations, yet their sorrow didn't change the situation one bit. Their

unwillingness to repent led to God's protective hand being lifted, and entire generations suffered and were lost to increasing calamity.

America now stands in the same place, and our seeds of spiritual defiance are yielding bitter physical fruit. Violence and disorder in the land continue to escalate, and this is most apparent among millennials (also dubbed Gen Y), who have been called the new "lost generation." Among older millennials (ages 25 to 29), nearly one in five is unemployed, one-third have moved back home with their parents, and the suicide rate among them is growing. In her book *Generation Me*, psychologist Jean Twenge analyzes our cultural self-centeredness now amplified among Gen Yers and concludes, "This is a time of soaring expectations and crushing realities."

That harsh combination undoubtedly is a factor in school shootings, but more important is the spiritual dynamic. We can no longer ignore the sobering statistics: that almost a third of those under 30 have no religious affiliation or that a whopping 59 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds with a Christian background are no longer part of a church.

R. Loren Sandford, a Denver pastor and author who's seen teen violence repeatedly hit close to home, has sounded a prophetic warning for years. After the most recent Denver suburb school shooting, he lamented: "Nothing short of a strong move of national repentance can turn this around, but in convincing us that we're all victims and not sinners—that law and morality are relative to the feelings of the individual—our enemy has effectively eliminated repentance from the conceptual realm for those who have not been reached for Jesus, and even from the hearts of many who call themselves Christian."

So how do we, the church, combat the enemy's assault on this generation? As Jesus' living body on earth, we carry the solution. With that in mind, here are a few basic things we can do for millennials.

1) Recognize the heightened spiritual warfare over the next generation. Satan is bent on destroying our youth and has succeeded in doing so perhaps more than ever in our nation's history. But until we understand that the real fight is first spiritual—against principalities and spiritual powers (Eph. 6:12)—and respond with repentance as Sandford says, no change in gun control or school security laws will do a thing.

2) Intercede like never before. Our fight is first spiritual; so is our solution. Prayer is the only way we'll turn the tide and see a shift among the Millennial generation.

3) Disciple a young person. Most Gen Yers can multitask and mask their way to looking good on the outside, yet beneath the surface lies unresolved hurt, deep questions and gripping fear. As the most biblically illiterate generation in years, they often lack an understanding of even the most foundational elements of their faith. Let's put our arms around them, dive into the Bible together and mentor them in the faith.

4) Open your home. This month's cover story is on adoption and foster care. While you may not officially take in an orphan, you can at least make your home a safe place for spiritually orphaned millennials to rest and wrestle with elements of their faith.

No politician or pop star can save America's "lost generation." Only Jesus can. As His living body, representing Him on earth, we can shape our nation's future by helping this generation find their way home.

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What to Do When You're Blamed for Something You Didn't Do

Every morning for 35 years, James Bain awoke with the face of injustice staring at him from across his Florida prison cell. He didn't need a reminder of the years lost to a crime he never committed, yet every day, *every hour* presented an unrelenting challenge to his one hope—that one day he'd be proven innocent.

As an 18-year-old, Bain had been convicted of kidnapping and raping a 9-year-old boy. An ordinary night in 1974 of watching TV with his sister instantly changed when two officers knocked at the door and asked him to answer a few questions down at the station. With only a few parking tickets in his past, he figured it would take minutes and didn't even inform his family that he'd left. But a single night in jail turned into decades when he received a life sentence that, despite evidence pointing to his innocence and an unfair trial, was upheld even after numerous appeals.

When Florida's laws regarding DNA testing changed in 2006, the door finally opened for Bain's conviction to be argued and his innocence proven. And on Dec. 17, 2009, at 54 years old, he left prison as a free man, exonerated by the state. Bain has every reason to be bitter, yet his response in the face of such injustice is remarkable. "I'm not angry," he said on the day of his release. "I got God in my head. I knew one day He will reveal me."

Few of us will ever face a trial like Bain. The injustices we typically deal with pale in comparison, yet too often we act as if we've been handed a life sentence by a rigged jury.

Instead of trusting in God's vindication—no matter how big or small the injustice—we take it upon ourselves to fight our accusers and keep a lifelong mental record of those who've "done us wrong."

Scripture guides us on a starkly different path. It's one Jesus modeled to perfection His entire life, particularly as He faced the greatest injustice in human history: His crucifixion. As we remember Christ's ultimate sacrifice during Good Friday and Easter this year, keep in mind the following biblical principles—and how Jesus modeled them—on how to respond when you're blamed for something you didn't do.

1) Hold your tongue. Our most dangerous body part, the tongue is "a world of evil among the parts of the body" (James 3:6, NIV). Yet when the heat turns up, most of us let our tongues run wild, and the result is a wildfire that destroys us and everyone around. When you're wrongly accused, don't lash out in "defense" with your words. Don't even resort to grumbling, gossiping or complaining. Jesus could've silenced His accusers with one word during His arrest and sham trial, yet He bit His tongue. In the face of false accusations, be wise and let others speak on your behalf.

2) Put things in perspective. Step back and ask: *Are these accusations really that big of a deal?* When I meet persecuted believers from around the world, I'm often struck by how consumed most are with the bigger mission of sharing the Good News. Their suffering is secondary to their kingdom call. Like Jesus, they're willing to take up their cross for the sake of God's higher purpose of saving souls. Before reacting with bitterness or anger against your accusers, consider both others' plight and the divine purposes of your own trial.

3) Turn the other cheek. Jesus' words in Matthew 5:39 have been part of our language for generations, yet how many of us, when facing unfair accusations, humble ourselves to serve our attackers—even posturing ourselves for more potential assault?

Everything in our nature and culture calls this foolishness, yet Christ calls it the way of His kingdom. Why? Because we must also ...

4) Understand that vengeance is the Lord's. God's sovereignty trumps our limited sense of justice every time. We aren't the ultimate judge; He is. Because of this foundational principle in life, revenge—if it's even warranted—isn't ours to deliver in the first place to those who attack us.

5) Forgive your accusers. Jesus' words in Luke 23:34 tell it all: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Remember, He said this *in the very moment* of being crucified! If He could forgive those who brought about the worst injustice ever, we can forgive others, whatever the case.

After enduring a night of unjust beatings and verbal assaults, Jesus was asked by Pilate, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things [the chief priests] are accusing you of" (Mark 15:4). Christ may have stayed silent with His words then, but His actions still resound throughout all time. He's empowered us with the Holy Spirit to respond just as He did when we face any kind of injustice. After all, it's by *His* blood—not ours—that we overcome.

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6 Things a Supernatural

Lifestyle Doesn't Do

Nothing silences a skeptic quicker than a bona fide miracle from God. I've known former atheists who became Christians by seeing God's supernatural power show up among everyday people. I'm not talking about minor "miracles" like finding a \$20 bill on the street, but instead limbs growing out, eyesight being restored, tumors disappearing and lame people walking. Like Thomas upon seeing a resurrected Christ's hands, these kinds of healings can cause even the most ardent doubter to confess Jesus as Lord (see John 20:28).

Likewise, countless Muslims around the world today are becoming believers after meeting Jesus in a dream, being healed by Him (without anyone praying or laying hands on them) or having other supernatural encounters with the Lord. It's exciting to see Joel 2:28-29 coming to pass in our day! And if you've read *Charisma* before, you've undoubtedly seen reports of how the Holy Spirit continues to move supernaturally, drawing people to Jesus with signs, wonders and miracles.

But the supernatural also attracts extremists. Not just those radical for Christ (something we should all want to be), but also those who jump from conference to conference seeking their next spiritual high from an angelic encounter, prophetic word or dream interpretation. If you've been to a healing conference, you know that when there's an atmosphere that invites the Holy Spirit to move freely, you draw those with a penchant for spiritual extremes (and immaturity).

That's fine. After all, Jesus handpicked a zealot to be among His 12 disciples, and I'm sure He attracted a fair share of weirdos wherever He went. The problem wasn't and isn't those people, whom we should love as Jesus did; it's the belief they often hold that supernatural encounters are the end-all experiences. And sadly, this viewpoint still runs rampant within Spirit-filled churches and charismatic conferences as

we elevate supernatural experiences over everything else.

Don't get me wrong: God calls each of us to a supernatural lifestyle. He desires for us to live out Jesus' promise that we would do even "greater works" than what He did (John 14:12). But so that we remain focused on Jesus and don't veer into unbiblical mysticism in our desire to see the Holy Spirit move through us, let's remember what walking in the supernatural *doesn't* do.

1) It doesn't supersede intimacy with Jesus. When it comes to living supernaturally, it's tempting to divorce the miraculous works of God with a relationship with Him. Yet Jesus' miracles were always a greater invitation for others to know Him. It's one thing to see the hand of God at work; it's another to, like Paul, consider everything—including signs, wonders and miracles—"a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:8, NIV).

2) It doesn't replace the presence of God. God's manifest presence ushers in the miraculous. Too often we think it's the reverse and end up chasing the gold dust or gold tooth fillings more than we care about actually being in the presence of a holy God.

3) It doesn't elevate us in God's sight. The Holy Spirit doesn't use us to do the miraculous because we've done something special, carry a weighty title or have a super-spiritual lineage. He moves through us because of His own nature. Don't let spiritual pride disqualify you from walking humbly before God as a broken yet redeemed vessel He can use for *His* glory.

4) It doesn't trump love. Paul makes it clear that we can speak in tongues, be prophetically gifted, carry supernatural insight and have miraculous faith; but if we don't have love, it's for naught (see 1 Cor. 13:1-3).

5) It doesn't signify true discipleship. Just because you walk

in the miraculous doesn't mean you're a true follower of Jesus. In fact, Christ disowned those who would claim to know Him by the demons cast out and wonders done in His name (Matt. 7:22). And in Matthew 24:24, He warned of "false messiahs and false prophets" who would deceive with "great signs and wonders."

6) It doesn't excuse us from the Great Commission. Why have the "power evangelism" messages from leaders such as Oral Roberts, T.L. Osborne and John Wimber resonated with so many? Maybe it's because they kept Jesus' last command at the forefront of their ministries. Rather than letting hype surrounding supernatural healings lead the way, they kept evangelizing and discipling the nations as the centerpiece.

As believers, we each have the gift of the Holy Spirit available to us. To avoid derailing our opportunity to walk with Him in a supernatural relationship, let's understand what this lifestyle does and doesn't entail.

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Are You Scared of the Light?

It happened again. As I write this, another scandal has captivated America's headlines and dominated the airwaves. The latest high-profile case involves a billionaire's private conversation with his mistress going public—a racist rant that turned him into America's most hated man overnight. The week before, it was a Hollywood actor allegedly trying to initiate a hotel hookup with a teenage girl. The week before that, a

married politician elected for his conservative Christian values was caught kissing his staffer. And next week, there will be another name from the world of—take your pick: sports, politics, Hollywood or, yes, even the church world—exposed for some career-altering mishap involving [insert sex, drugs, race or money here].

The key word there is *exposed*. Because in every case, the heart of a person was unintentionally revealed. It wasn't just things said and done in secret that became public; it was personal character. Indeed, when hidden sin—which stems from the heart, not from some one-time action or exchange—is exposed, our true colors get shown and the truth comes out. That's not just the case with those who make the headline news; we're all susceptible to having our deepest, darkest sins dragged out for all the world to see. Because we know this is the case, many of us walk around with a gripping fear that one day we'll slip up, forget to cover our tracks enough and be exposed for who we really are.

And therein lies the problem.

If you're a true follower of Christ, you're continually realizing more about who you were before you met Jesus and who you are now. Before Christ, we were as good as dead. Ephesians 2:1 says, "You were dead in your transgressions and sins" (NIV). Romans 6:17 says we were "slaves to sin" and James 4:4 actually describes us as an "enemy of God." We don't have to search far in Scripture or in everyday life to get a vivid picture of our natural depravity.

But after Christ, everything changes. We become new creations (2 Cor. 5:17), born again (John 3:3) and established in Christ through the seal of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 1:21-22). We're adopted into God's family (Rom. 8:15), given the gift of eternal life (John 10:28) and granted citizenship in God's heavenly kingdom (Phil. 3:20). And to top it off, we actually become the very righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21). What an

awesome thought!

All these too-good-to-be-true transformations (and more!) happen when we are in the light. Jesus is that light, and in Him we find forgiveness, hope, peace, love and infinite other elements of divine perfection. Outside that light—in the darkness—we find death, destruction, misery and all the fruits of sin. Why, then, would we ever want to go toward the dark, much less stay there?

The answer is relatively simple. I'm well aware, however, that I'm already stating the basics to an almost entirely Christian readership that's heard these truths countless times. And yet how many of us continue to hide things in the darkness? How many are one exposed sin away from scandal? How many of us truly understand the old saying that "there, but for the grace of God, go I"?

Ephesians 5:8 reveals the truth that many of us so easily forget. "For you were once darkness," it says, "but now you are light in the Lord."

Did you catch that? Paul doesn't say we were hiding in darkness or that we were lost in darkness. He says we *were* the darkness. If we had looked up the definition of *darkness* before we met Christ, our picture would've represented the word. Yet because of Jesus, everything's changed. We don't just walk toward the light or shine a light; we are the light because Jesus has remade our entire makeup, our very DNA. He has redefined us.

Far too many of us lose sight of this even as believers. We can't expect unbelievers to know this—the Bible is clear that their eyes are still blinded, just as ours were before Jesus encountered us on our journey and, like Paul, knocked us off our horse, asked us to join Him and turned our lives upside down.

If you're struggling with hidden sin, it's time to get

exposed—in the wonderful way that brings freedom and redemption because of the light of Jesus. I realize that sounds like the scariest—and worst—thing you could possibly do. The church is often horrible at handling honest confession. We sometimes botch it when people flip the switch and willingly reveal their sin. But don't let that stop you from the freedom Jesus offers. He has made us light. It's time for us to, as Ephesians 5:8 concludes, “live as children of light.”

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How to Be a Real Evangelist

These days, everyone's an evangelist—and not in a biblical sense. Until recently the word *evangelist* was reserved for a Christian who shared the gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet in today's marketing-driven corporate culture it's become an everyday term for anyone fervent about sharing a “message”—which could be anything from buying TOMS shoes to avoiding sushi to growing your stock portfolio.

While the secular world waters down the term, the church in America is showing early signs of returning to its roots of spreading the Good News. Evangelism—relegated in recent years as a function primarily for those in the office of an evangelist—is making its way back as a fundamental part of the Christian walk for everyone.

That's right, we're *all* called to be evangelists in the purest sense as we share the life-changing message of Christ. And as we reawaken to this calling, we would do well to take notes from Jesus' very first evangelists. Though technically the

first evangelist was the angel announcing Christ's birth, the first *human* evangelists were those who heard that message: the shepherds. Despite being regarded socially as the lowest of the low in that day, these down-and-outers still serve as a model for evangelism 2,000 years later. And their response upon hearing the Good News reminds us of four key aspects of our calling to spread the Word.

1. **They took action.** *Immediately.* Luke 2 says, "When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about'" (v. 15, NIV). As soon as the angels left, the shepherds didn't sit around "processing" the news or keeping it on the down-low. They bolted for Bethlehem!

How quickly do we respond today to the call to share the gospel? Is the evangelistic fire in you burning as strong as when you first followed Jesus? I hope it's even stronger, but if not, ask God to reignite that urgency. The key thing, whether you're a new or old believer, is to do *something!*

2. **They spread the word.** Luke's account says, "When they had seen [Jesus], they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child" (v. 17). The shepherds didn't complicate things; they simply repeated what they'd been told by the angel. These outdoorsmen weren't the wisest guys around (those would show up on the scene later), but they also weren't the idiots we sometimes hear them portrayed to be. They were culturally informed enough to understand what the angel spoke to them about, and they shared with others what they knew.

But let's not overlook the importance of what they shared: It wasn't their own knowledge, insight into the situation or personal opinions. They simply repeated "what had been told them about this child" by the angel. How often do we hear the Holy Spirit's words of direction and add our two cents' worth

every time we relay the message? Or how often do we feel the need to embellish the gospel when we share it with others, subconsciously (or maybe consciously, God forbid) fearing that maybe it's inadequate as is and needs a touch of relevance and modern-day marketing so we'll get better results? Our job as messengers of the Good News is simple: We are to repeat what we've been told. Let's not let our concern for how we present the gospel trump the fact that the gospel speaks for itself.

3. They let the message be the focus, not them. Upon hearing the Good News, "all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them" (v. 18). Notice this verse doesn't say those who heard were amazed that a group of social outcasts were the messengers. The focus was purely on the message, just as it needs to be for us.

4. They continued to worship. Can you imagine hearing and seeing that night's unforgettable encore session sung by the heavenly host? It's as if heaven couldn't contain the thrill of this moment's eternal meaning and the veil between the seen and unseen was, for a brief time, peeled back just for the shepherds. The angelic worship left such an imprint on them that they were still "glorifying and praising God" when they got back to their fields (v. 20). And I doubt their countenance would've changed whether others had believed their message or not; their hearts were too full of worship to bother with public opinion.

Not everyone accepts the Good News when we share it. But do our hearts remain filled with worship in the face of rejection?

We bear the same life-changing news the shepherds carried that night. This Christmas—and beyond—let's respond with the same passion to spread the gospel.

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Would the Early Church Be Able to Recognize the American Church?

By today's standards in the American church, Jesus wasn't cut out to be a pastor, nor would His ministry be highlighted as a model for church planters. Consider these facts:

Jesus had the greatest preaching, teaching and healing ministry in history. Thousands came to hear Him, followed His every move and lined the streets to get a glimpse of Him or simply touch Him. Yet amid His rock-star popularity, He intentionally offended religious leaders, challenged potential mega-donors and weeded out casual followers with tough teachings. Not exactly the textbook strategy you'd find today to grow your church, much less your Facebook likes and Twitter followers.

After Jesus spent three and a half years ministering to thousands, His church consisted of only 120 disciples gathered in the upper room. And even that was a low turnout, considering He had appeared to more than 500 people after His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:6).

But we know the rest of the story: how the 120 quickly became 3,120 and grew daily to where even unbelievers credited Jesus' followers as those "who have turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6). The truth is, we know that Jesus' divine church-growth tactics surpass all others—with the proof being a

global church that, 2,000 years later, refuses to die while it works to fulfill His Great Commission.

Why, then, do we in the 21st-century American church focus on all the elements that Jesus *didn't*? He focused on training and equipping 12 disciples; we focus on growing our crowds and spheres of influence, regardless of whether those people follow Jesus. He preached an uncompromising message of truth; we sugarcoat the gospel until we're saccharine-high on deception. He walked among His enemies in love; we ostracize our enemies by blasting them for all their sins.

Indeed, most of the U.S. church is enamored with size over substance and microwave growth over true reproduction. Research shows that while 235 million people call themselves Christians, only 40 percent of those meet regularly with fellow believers and only a fourth (at most) read the Bible on a regular basis. It's time we discovered the marks of the real church, measured by Jesus' standards rather than our own trendy metrics. So what are those elements? Here are just a few.

1) Love. Jesus defined a premier characteristic of His church in John 13:35: "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." If we can't even love fellow believers—if we skewer each other over theological differences and cultural preferences—how can we expect the world to want what we have? Transforming the world with God's love starts right where we are, on the home front, as we learn to love each other as Christ loved us.

2) Prayer. Jesus was constantly communicating with the Father, listening for His thoughts and seeing where He was already moving. Luke's Gospel shows that little happened in Christ's life without Him first praying. Why, then, do most church gatherings today focus so little on prayer? In trying to be culturally relevant and seeker-sensitive, we've conveyed that this essentiality of our faith—both individually and

corporately—is secondary. That can't be if we want to mimic Jesus.

3) Persecution. We in the West equate religious freedom and the lack of persecution with blessing. Yet when you look for the most powerful churches in the world, where the Spirit moves freely and in fullness, you'll always find persecution. It's time we wake up and realize that persecution galvanizes and unifies the body of Christ like few other pressures. Remember, Jesus promised persecution to those who truly follow Him (Matt. 5:11-12; John 15:20). When was the last time you saw this promise fulfilled in your own life or church?

4) Power. Jesus also promised that His followers would do greater works than He did (John 14:12)—a promise sealed by the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower us. Wherever the early apostles and church went, the miraculous followed. Though there have been seasons of Holy Spirit revival in our nation, even charismatic churches today are de-emphasizing such things as praying for the sick, demonic deliverance or the prophetic. Making room for the Spirit's supernatural movement isn't an option; it's the mark of those who truly follow Christ.

Charisma has highlighted eight of the biggest issues today's American church faces. Some are core to our nation's culture wars; others are more exclusive to believers. Regardless, all require the church to stand up as representations of Christ and be the solution—just as Jesus modeled.

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Mark Driscoll: Why Does God's Grace Allow for 'Lukewarm' Christians?

We know God's grace is amazing, but why does it also allow for so many to live as "lukewarm" Christians? Watch Mars Hill pastor Mark Driscoll tackle the tough question in this video.

A Forecast for True Revival

What will it take to bring true revival in the church and throughout our nation? Watch evangelist Pat Schatzline offer a forecast for revival at a Planetshakers conference.

Ed Stetzer: Does the Future of Discipleship Look Promising or Bleak?

Christians today are carrying out the Great Commission like never before, yet we also face unique challenges to making disciples in the 21st century. Watch LifeWay Research

President Ed Stetzer reveal the first part of a historic study on the future of discipleship.