

# Revivalist Warns: Prepare for 'the Greatest Test of Our Lifetime' in America

Author and revivalist Bert Farias says God has been patient and long suffering with America for decades. But, Farias warns, believers need to begin to prepare themselves for what is going to be "the greatest test of our lifetime."

Farias says we're on the edge of tumultuous times in this country, and that the decade of the 2020s will be one of challenge and persecution for Christ followers.

"Believers are going to have to be strong, and they're going to have to know what they believe and know what they have committed their souls to," Farias told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "We're at the door right now. Not to the degree that you're seeing in China or Iran, but certainly it is coming.

"What is happening right now in our nation can be described as turbulent. The division, the violent anger and—if I can—even rage toward our president and the government and the changes that the president is making. Let's not fool ourselves. We're already there.

"I'm telling you, if this president that's so hated wins the election in November, you're going to see this thing turned up tenfold. And I'm concerned about what the church is going to do in the middle of this tumult. We know authentic Christianity is never going to die. We're going to be here until Jesus comes. But America cannot exist without authentic Christianity. The church has to become a force to be reckoned with and lift up the standard of what Jesus told us to do to bring this nation back to righteousness."

For more about Farias' thoughts on America's future, listen to the entire podcast.

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## **Missionary 'Jungle Jen' Miraculously Healed as She Shares Jesus With Unreached in Amazon**

From the tender age of 8, Jennifer Foster had a deep desire to become a missionary and to reach the unreached with the gospel of Christ. Twenty years later, she began to fulfill that dream in the remotest parts of the Amazon jungles in Brazil.

Multitudes who might never have been introduced to Jesus are now finding salvation because of the woman they call "Jungle Jen." Through the power of Holy Spirit, Foster's ministry, Stand Out Ministries, has planted several churches and distributed thousands of Bibles to the unreached. Her ministry has also made disciples of people in the Amazon, several of whom are ministering and planting churches themselves.

After being sent out by the International Mission Board, it took Foster three days to get to her destination. She went through three months of language training in Portuguese, one of the world's most difficult languages to learn.

"I went and served a couple of years, and our goal was to set out to plant a church among an unreached group," Foster told

Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. “I went through three months of training in Virginia where there was no river and no mosquitoes. When I got to Brazil, they put me in jungle survival training camp.

“I survived survival training camp. We ate bugs. We learned how to kill and clean and eat our own homegrown food. After that, they put me on the boat and sent me three days up the river. I tell you, my heart was singing. I was finally what I wanted to be, a missionary to an unreached people group, and I was fine.

“But we went through some hardships. On the first trip, I remember that I literally had a mosquito bite line on my arm. My arms were literally covered in mosquito bites. I’ve never caught a disease, and I’ve had some supernatural health. But there was one point where I had a jungle spider bite me and I almost died. But I was miraculously healed and knew for sure that God was protecting me to do what I was meant to do.”

For more of Foster’s incredible journey and story, listen to the entire podcast.

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## **Operating in the Supernatural Requires This Daily Habit**

In order for a believer to operate and lead in the supernatural, including the gift of prophecy, Shawn Gabie says it is imperative for that person to hear and clearly discern the voice of God daily.

The co-founder of Kingdom Culture in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, along with his wife, Michelle, Gabie says it's one thing to be a principled leader, and quite another to operate in presence-driven leadership. It's what he teaches on his show, *The Supernatural Leadership Podcast*, on the Charisma Podcast Network.

"I believe the core of presence-driven leadership is simply learning how to recognize the voice of God and how it pertains to us walking out our faith every day," Gabie told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of the *Greenelines* podcast. "Psalm 46:10 simply states, 'Be still and know that I am God.' Positioning yourself in a place where you are listening is key.

"And then, you need to write it down. Whatever it is that He is saying, if you want to grow in the supernatural, you have to write it down. For me, when I was starting out, that was huge. I would pray and ask God to speak to me and spend time with Him. You'll hear from Him.

"Positioning yourself in that stillness, listening and not talking, and writing things down is a huge key to moving forward and recognizing the voice of God. When you do that, you can actually show others that, 'Hey, this is what I felt, this is what God spoke to me today about you.' In my experience, crazy things would begin to happen for some because not only were they saying what I said to them, they were seeing it happen as well."

For more about how you can operate in the supernatural, listen to the entire podcast.

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# Tim Clinton: How Our Culture Is Trying to Demonize Biblical Masculinity

Tim Clinton says our culture is determined to redefine masculinity as something it was never meant to be. The American Psychological Association asserts that “traditional masculinity is psychologically harmful.”

It’s time, then, says Clinton—executive director of the James Dobson Family Institute—for Christian men to reject our society’s definition and seek biblical examples of true manhood.

And it’s happening. Clinton says he’s seen multitudes of men rededicate their lives to the Lord and their families at Ignite Men’s Ministry’s Impact Weekend conferences. Christian men are becoming who God created them to be and impacting a culture that’s in desperate need of their influence.

“God is moving in our conferences, and thousands of men have come forward, weeping,” Clinton told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. “They’re bringing these red cards and they’re placing them at the cross. These men are throwing away packs of cigarettes and throwing cans of Skoal down at the foot of the cross. Men are hugging on each other.

“Virtually every man I’ve met doesn’t believe that God loves him. But deep down inside, he’s crying for something. He’s crying for freedom. There’s a lot of shame from some things they’ve done. But there’s a stirring and I believe that there is a move of God beginning to happen.

“I’m seeing something like I’ve never seen before. Men are wanting to take back what they have lost, maybe what they’ve given up. They want to be encouraged and affirmed so that they can become a difference maker in their circle of influence and have a positive impact on the culture. And for sure, this culture is in desperate need of their influence.”

For more about how you can find freedom in God’s love, [click here](#) for the entire episode.

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## **Are You Consuming Heart-Healthy Foods in the Spirit?**

God’s main concern is—and our main concern should be—the condition of our heart! It is more important than the condition of our body, our car, our house, our yard, our clothes or anything else.

There are numerous “heart-healthy” foods on the market now that are low in sodium, low in fat, low in cholesterol and low in taste. (Many people are health-conscious, and rightfully so.) If we are mindful about the shape of our physical heart, shouldn’t we be equally attentive to our spiritual heart?

Your physical heart is a vital organ (muscle) about the size of a fist that pumps blood throughout the body. On average, the adult heart beats about 70 times per minute—that’s 100,800 beats per day, automatically without even thinking about it. God wisely designed our amazing circulatory system (60,000 miles of arteries, veins and capillaries that would circle the

globe two and one-half times at the equator) to ensure that every cell gets its blood supply.

The heart is one of our most important organs (when it quits working, we die!). A person can have many other health problems, but if their heart is healthy, they will usually survive.

In a spiritual sense, our heart is the engine of our whole being, the core of who we are. Your “heart” is your true character, nature, attitudes and motives—the real you on the inside. There are over 900 references to the heart in the Bible (most refer to the spiritual heart, not the physical organ).

The heart is so important that Scripture tells us to make it a top priority to protect it from negative influences. One key verse is, “Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life” (Prov. 4:23, NLT). You can have many things going wrong in your life, but if your heart is right with God, you can still thrive.

People tend to focus on our looks, personality, possessions or talent; God focuses on our heart! Remember when God sent Samuel to anoint a new king of Israel? When he saw Jesse’s eldest son, Eliab, he was immediately impressed with his muscular physique. He jumped to the conclusion, “Surely this is the Lord’s anointed!” (1 Sam. 16:6b).

God reminded Samuel that He wasn’t looking for the strongest, tallest, smartest or most handsome man, He was looking for a pure-hearted man of character to wear the crown. “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees. For man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7, MEV)..

Samuel interviewed all of Jesse’s sons (Eliab, Abinadab, Shammah, Nethanel, Raddai, Ozem—1 Sam. 16:6-10, 1 Chr.

2:13-15). The three oldest served as soldiers in King Saul's army and were fine specimens of humanity—strong studs who were tall, dark and handsome. But none of them was chosen. Frustrated, Samuel asked Jesse, "'Are these all the sons you have?'" 'There is still the youngest,' Jesse replied. 'But he's out in the fields watching the sheep and goats.'" 'Send for him at once,' Samuel said. 'We will not sit down to eat until he arrives'" (1 Sam. 16:11, NLT).

David was so young and insignificant he wasn't even invited to the party. He was overlooked by his own father, by his brothers and even by the prophet Samuel, but God noticed him. He was a scrawny kid, the runt of the litter, but God saw something different in him—the heart of a champion! God's not looking at your hair, your face, your clothes, your car, your house, your bank account, your intelligence or your talent; He's looking at your heart!

The human heart is easily corrupted—"The heart is more deceitful than all things and desperately wicked; who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9, MEV). The good news is Doctor Jesus still performs heart surgery, even total transplants! "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26).

Jesus promised, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). C. S. Lewis observed, "It is safe to tell the pure in heart they shall see God, for only the pure in heart want to." Not only will they see God in heaven, they will see God intervene in their lives here on earth. To be "pure" means "without mixture, or free from anything of a different, inferior or contaminating kind." A thoroughbred dog has a pure bloodline. Pure gold has no other alloys mixed in with it.

How does God purify our hearts? By placing us in the fire. The most precious metals go through the hottest fires. "Silver and

gold are purified by fire, but God purifies hearts” (Prov. 17:3, TLB).

When gold and silver are melted down, the impurities rise to the surface. Then, the dross is removed, and the process is repeated. A silversmith knows his product is pure when he can look at the liquid silver and see a clear reflection of himself. How long will the purifying process last? Until God can look at us and see a clear reflection of Himself. No wonder Job, who endured many fiery trials, said, “When he tests me, I will come out as pure as gold” (Job 23:10b, NLT).

The human heart is like wax—close to heat, it softens; away from heat, it hardens. When we’re close to God (who is a consuming fire—Heb. 12:29), our heart stays soft; when we drift away from Him, our heart hardens.

Like David, the man after God’s own heart (Acts 13:22), we should constantly pray, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me” (Ps. 51:10, MEV). Do a self-checkup today. How healthy is your heart? With God, the heart of the matter is always the matter of the heart! {eoa}

**Ben Godwin** is the author of five books and pastors the Goodsprings Full Gospel Church. You can read more articles or order his books @ .

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## 6 Keys to Demonstrating Holy

# Spirit Power

To live victoriously during difficult times and spread the kingdom of God, bringing transformation to society, we need real power. When the Holy Spirit comes upon us and fills us, we are enabled to “explode” the dynamite power of God through manifestations that come from the invisible world to the visible world to meet the many needs of the people around us

Here are six keys to demonstrating kingdom power:

1. **Understand the purpose of the power.** Jesus knew He needed to prepare His followers to receive the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. If the Holy Spirit had descended *before* Jesus had given His disciples the revelation of the kingdom, they would have lacked the spiritual context for the power they received. The power of God always comes with these purposes: to build and expand the kingdom. Likewise, we must understand—and teach—the context for the power that God wants to pour out in our lives.

Another purpose of demonstrating the kingdom is to restore the “territory” of a person or place to God’s original design. Suppose someone suffers from scoliosis, and the power of God heals that person, straightening his back. With this act, God has restored the person’s back to the way He originally intended it to be. He has reestablished the order of creation.

2. **Be open to experiencing the supernatural.** “And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (1 Cor. 2:4, NKJV).

The apostle Paul produced great results for the kingdom through the visible demonstrations of the work of the Holy Spirit in his ministry. Experiencing God and seeing His manifestations changes our mind-set, attitude and behavior. It

is hard to live in victory unless we walk in the power of God. This is not a luxury for us—it is an absolute necessity.

If Pentecost has come upon us, it should be the norm for us to manifest the power of the resurrection daily! Everyone can have a permanent Pentecost experience. I urge you to make the decision today to experience the supernatural in your life. I pray that the power of the kingdom be released over you and that it manifest to your physical senses. Receive it, right now!

**3. Build kingdom relationships.** The members of the body of Christ are meant to be interdependent as they exercise their stewardship of the power and presence of God's kingdom on earth. When Jesus ministered on earth, He taught and established a flexible structure for the kingdom based on relationships.

He said that the Father was in Him, and He was in the Father. (See John 17:21.) He told His disciples, "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:5a), and "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7). And Paul wrote, "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12).

The kingdom of God is about relationships.

If we don't establish a relational structure through the Holy Spirit, we will reject our fellow believers instead of working in unity with them. When we have a kingdom mindset, we recognize the worth of each person and their contribution to the body of Christ. We welcome the diverse people whom God has sent into our lives.

**4. Recognize that you can bind Satan and his demons.** The subjugation of Satan always occurs in conjunction with the arrival of God's kingdom. Each time we cast out a

demon, we bind the enemy. Satan is defeated when the power of the kingdom comes into a place and seizes the territory he has been occupying illegally.

Some Christians have the impression that if they rebuke a demon, it will jump on them and hurt them, similar to what happened to the itinerant Jewish exorcists in Acts 19:13–16. This fear causes many people to reject the practice of casting out demons. In essence, they have taken one incident from the book of Acts that depicts demons having the upper hand and have established it as a norm for believers. Yet those itinerant exorcists were not believers. They were operating according to their own initiative—not according to the power of Christ.

When we don't understand the purpose of the kingdom, we overlook our ability to defeat the enemy, and we fail to cast out demons. The church is in a position to cast out demons because Jesus has already won the victory! (See, for example, Luke 10:19.) We don't have to host an annual "miracle crusade" and bring in special preachers to cast out demons from people. We have the power of God within us. While the demons may first try to resist us, they have to flee when we expel them in the name of Jesus and the power of His Spirit.

**5. Let your motivations be pure.** Demonstrations of God's kingdom can bring either judgment or mercy, as people variously reject them or accept them. When Moses delivered the Israelites from slavery, the power of God brought judgment on Egypt and mercy to Israel—destruction for one and freedom for the other. It is important that the motivations of our hearts be pure and that we be open to God when He moves in our midst, because we want His mercy rather than His judgment. And yet, when we are in Christ, there is mercy even in His chastisement of us. His mercies are new every morning. (See Lam. 3:22–23.)

**6. Release the same power through which you have been**

**delivered or healed.** We believers are credible if we can produce the same spiritual fruit that the early church produced. God confirmed their testimony of the risen Christ with mighty demonstrations of His power. We can bring salvation to people when we ourselves have been saved. Similarly, I believe we will be able to deliver people when we ourselves have been delivered. We will be able to heal others when we ourselves have been healed. Our fruit will validate our testimony, wherever we are—at the office, at school, at the grocery store, anywhere. When we release the same power through which we have been delivered or healed, we can create a spiritual revolution.

Let me encourage you to begin at the beginning: Tell people what happened to you the day you were born again. Next, tell people how you have changed since that day. No one else can communicate your testimony like you can. Only you can speak with absolute certainty about how you have been transformed. When you do, the power of God will manifest because you will be a legitimate witness. Decide to share your testimony today!

The more you respond in faith to the revelation God gives you, thereby experiencing His presence and power, the more you will grow in your ability to testify with manifestations of the kingdom to support your words. Show people a demonstration of the power of God that dwells within you so that they, too, can be transformed, healed and delivered! {eoa}

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## **Why Funerals Are Precious to God**

Recently while attending a funeral for a friend's mother, I received a revelation. No, the sky didn't split open, nor did lightning and thunder flash, nor did I hear the audible voice of G-D.

The truth is that I was sitting quietly, listening to the words of comfort being brought forth by the person officiating the funeral, when I thought to myself, *I am so glad I didn't have to officiate this funeral.*

Over the years, I have officiated many funerals; each one was heartbreakingly difficult. I left each one hoping that something I said or did would bring comfort to those who were suffering loss and grief, those whose lives had been changed completely when their loved one left this world.

At that moment when, for just a second, I thought, *I am so glad I didn't have to officiate this funeral*, a second thought came to my heart and mind: *Funerals have great value.* Now,

I've always known the value funerals have in providing "closure" and support of family and friends during this most difficult of times. I've known that funerals provide moments to share memories and share the life and legacy of those who have passed from this world to the world to come.

However, I had never realized that there is something of great value that you and I as believers in Yeshua (Jesus) can experience only when we encounter a loved one dying. Until that moment during that funeral, I had never realized that funerals were not only to comfort those who were experiencing the loss of a loved one, but funerals also allow us to experience something that provides a window into a spiritual truth that can only be understood when someone we love passes.

It is only when we are in the middle of those moments of sorrow, loss, grief and pain that we can get a glimpse of what our heavenly Father felt when Yeshua was on the cross. But that glimpse isn't the complete revelation; it is only half of the revelation.

Our heavenly Father at that moment when Yeshua said "It is finished" didn't only feel sorrow, loss, grief and pain. He also felt victory, jubilation and excitement because, while the pain and sorrow of the death of His only begotten Son was real and powerful, so was His understanding that Yeshua's death brought joy, victory and the promised redemption of mankind.

It is the mix of emotions, the blend of sorrow and joy, loss and victory, grief and elation that G-D felt at the moment of Yeshua's death that we as believers can partially understand when someone we love, who has been born again, dies. This mixture of emotions is a gift from G-D designed from the foundation of the world, a moment in time when we share an experience with our heavenly Father.

We are not alone when we are hurting deeply because our loved

one has passed. At the same time, we are also joyful that they are in the presence of the King. Nor are we alone during those moments of deepest loss, as we also recognize and rejoice at their victory.

We also aren't alone when our grief is the strongest because we will miss them, while simultaneously our elation is also the strongest because we know they are where they longed to be.

No, we are not alone in these feelings because our heavenly Father didn't only experience those feelings when Yeshua was on the cross; He experiences those same feelings along with each and every one of us each time one of His other children dies. {eoa}

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## **Robert Jeffress: How to Stand Firm for Your Faith in a Hostile World**

Pastor Robert Jeffress knows well that God wants His children to do more than just get by in life. He wants them to thrive, even in this chaotic and hostile world where persecution of

Christians worsens daily.

The senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, Jeffress says believers need to find the courage to stand up for their faith, and there are effective strategies for doing so.

“I don’t think there has ever been a time, at least in American history, when it’s been more difficult for Christians to live out their faith,” Jeffress told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. “Think about the world in which we live. C.S. Lewis called it ‘enemy occupied territory.’ If you’re a child of God in this world, you’re in enemy occupied territory, and you’re taking incoming from every direction. We have attacks from a hostile culture that is increasingly at odds with God.

“But you also have attacks from within your own sin nature, or at least the residue of it, that pulls you away from God. And if that weren’t enough, we have attacks from below from our adversary—the devil—who has a blueprint to destroy everything important to us. And yet, God says we can live courageously.

“He has given us 10 survival tactics that we need to use in threatening situations—things like, ‘don’t panic; do the next right thing.’ Remember your training and apply those 10 strategies to living the Christian life. You don’t have to just survive. You can thrive with joy.”

For more on the strategies to thrive in this Christian-unfriendly world, listen to the entire podcast.

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# If Coronavirus Is an End-Times Sign, We Shouldn't Be Surprised

The first 195 Americans evacuated from Wuhan, China, amid the deadly coronavirus outbreak, were released last Tuesday after a two-week quarantine at March Air Reserve Base in Southern California.

However, over 400 additional evacuees from Wuhan remain under federal quarantine. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has now confirmed 15 cases of the infectious coronavirus microbe, now named "COVID-19" in the United States, combining the virus with "disease" and the year it was discovered, while avoiding attaching it to the country from which it has promulgated.

All of which raises the question to some, "What does the Bible say about pandemic diseases or sicknesses?" For that matter, "why does God allow—or even cause—pandemic diseases, and are such illnesses signs of the end times?"

The Old Testament describes numerous occasions when God brought certain diseases or plagues on His people and on His enemies "to show in you my power" (Exodus 9:14, 16).

Pharaoh was forced to free the descendants of Jacob (Israel) from slavery by the plagues God heaped on the Egyptians, indicating His sovereign control over the pagan gods of Egypt.

Meanwhile, His people were unaffected by the diseases and other afflictions as long as they were obedient to the divine healing covenant God made with them (Ex. 12:13). He promised those who obey His word to be their Healer (*Yahweh-Rapha*, the Lord who heals) and *recover* them to health and to *sustain* them in health (15:26).

Even those who are called by God's name may be brought to experience God's punishments of natural calamities, droughts, pestilences or plagues. All these can have the purpose of bringing the erring children of God to repentance and restoration.

The familiar promises of God in 2 Chronicles 7:14 to forgive sins and "heal their land" is preceded in verse 13 with a review of resources for repentance and restoration: "When I shut up the heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land or send pestilence on my people."

Our heavenly Father may initiate negative circumstances—even plagues and diseases—to draw His people to Himself. Or He might just remove His hand of protection and allow the negative consequences of personal choices and our living in a broken and fallen world.

The New Testament Gospels reveal Christ's compassion for those impacted by sin and sickness. Matthew reminds us that Jesus healed "every sickness and every disease," as well as exercising authority over unclean spirits in the areas He visited (Matt. 9:35, 10:1; Mark 3:10).

We must remember that God is sovereign and all-powerful. He will cause all things to "work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

However, Jesus related to His disciples that future "famines and pestilences" will be part of the signs of the times and end of the age (Luke 21:11). Communicable diseases and certain pandemics (not unlike Ebola and the coronavirus) may be expected in our broken world during the last days (as in Rev. 18:4-8), but "it will turn out for you as a testimony for you" (Luke 21:13).

The book of Revelation details (in somewhat mystical, often apocalyptic language) the events of the last days, with its

three sets of major judgments, known as the seal judgments, the trumpet judgments and the bowl judgments.

During the middle (trumpet) judgments, “two witnesses” are described in Revelation 11 as having power “to shut heaven, that it may not rain during the days of their prophecy. They have power over waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every plague as often as they desire.” (Revelation 11:6).

Also, during these future last days, seven angels will wield seven plagues in a series of final, severe (bowl) judgments, described in Revelation 16. During these climactic days, hardened sinners will still blaspheme the name of God, “who has power over these plagues, and they did not repent and give Him glory” (v. 9b).

Disease and death will be increasingly common in the last days as we await our Lord’s return. We live in a fallen world, and life is tenuous. It can be lost at any moment.

None of us are guaranteed tomorrow. Rather, as the old gospel song said,

“Many things about tomorrow I don’t seem to understand/ But, I know Who holds tomorrow, and I know Who holds my hand.”

In fact, the longer we live in this old world of disease and death and approach the uncertainties of the last days, the more we long for and desire to be at home with our Lord!

Pastor Jack Hayford composed a short song, several decades ago, expressing that heavenly desire:

*Come on down, Lord Jesus, and take us away/ Come on down,  
Lord Jesus, could this be the day?*

*Even so, come quickly\*, Lord Jesus, we pray/ Come on down,  
Lord Jesus come soon.*

*Take us home, Lord Jesus, your church upward bring/  
Maranatha\*\*, the word that our lips gladly sing.*

*For we long to assemble before our great King/ Come on down,  
Lord Jesus, come soon.*

*\* Revelation 22:20*

*\*\* O Lord, come! / 1 Corinthians 16:22*

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## **5 Spiritual Benefits of Close Fellowship With the Holy Spirit**

*For Part 1 of this article, [click here](#).*

Fifty days after the crucifixion of Jesus, Pentecost occurs. Jesus ascends 40 days after His resurrection, the disciples gather in the upper room for 10 days, and now the Holy Spirit is poured out. Peter quotes from Joel 2:28-32,

“‘In the last days it shall be,’ says God, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even on My menservants and maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy” (Acts 2:17-18).

Peter affirms that this is the fulfillment of God’s promise. “God raised up this Jesus, of which we all are witnesses.

Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this which you now see and hear" (Acts 2:32-33).

During the Feast of Tabernacles, the priests poured out the water, symbolizing the water from the rock. But now, on the day of Pentecost, God Himself pours forth water from the rock, the river of His presence, the river of the Holy Spirit!

The Holy Spirit is to the Christian what the cloud by day and fire by night were to the Israelites: God's powerful personal presence! The Spirit is part and confirmation of our present and future inheritance. Through faith in Jesus, we are sealed and anointed with the Holy Spirit! Paul states,

"Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and established the guarantee with the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1:21-22).

The Holy Spirit is our down payment, or guarantee, of our present and future hope in Christ. The Greek for guarantee is *arrabōn*, which means "the first or initial payment of money or assets, as a guarantee for the completion of a transaction or pledge (in the New Testament, ἀρραβών is used only figuratively in referring to the Holy Spirit as the pledge or guarantee of the blessings promised by God)—'first installment, down payment, pledge, guarantee.'" Paul continues this theme in 2 Corinthians 5:

"Now He who has created us for this very thing is God, who also has given to us the guarantee [arrabōn] of the Spirit" (2 Cor. 5:5).

In this passage (2 Cor. 5:1-8), Paul is giving the reader assurance of the resurrection and glorified body we long for. Our present new life in Christ is experienced by the Holy Spirit within as a guarantee, pledge, or down payment!

Paul's use of *arrabōn* in these verses implies God taking the initiative and that the Spirit is part of the promised future meeting us now in the present. *Arrabōn* is a word used at the time for legal or commercial transactions, such as down payment on a piece of land. Therefore, the Spirit is a sign that one day we shall fully possess our inheritance—the already and not yet of the kingdom.

According to theologian Gordon Fee, "Along with the resurrection of Christ, the Spirit is the certain evidence that the future has been set in motion; and the Spirit's indwelling presence serves as God's own guarantee that we are to inherit all that has been promised."

You and I have been marked by God, sealed securely by Him in Christ, who is always our yes. Further, the Holy Spirit has been given as a deposit, down payment money, a first installment, which guarantees full inheritance when the whole is paid later!

The Holy Spirit is partial payment or pledge of our future joys and bliss in heaven. The Holy Spirit gives a foretaste or guarantee of things to come.

The Holy Spirit's presence is also a deposit on God's promises to us. We can have assurance of the dreams and promises God has made because we are sealed in Christ and have the Holy Spirit as a deposit. Further, the river of the Holy Spirit flowing through us is life and hope to a barren world around us. We need to allow God's river to flow freely through us!

God is highlighting to me the importance of the Holy Spirit. Why?

The Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of the promise Jesus made to the disciples that He would send another comforter, the Spirit of truth who would abide with them, and with us, forever (John 14:16). The Holy Spirit was given to teach us; to bring all things to remembrance; He was to testify of

Jesus; convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; and He empowers us with courage and wisdom to proclaim Christ in our world. Believers are anointed by the Holy Spirit, who abides with us and teaches us all things (1 John 2:20, 27).

The Holy Spirit is our Comforter, our friend, our helper in our time of need. Jesus is the rock, our source, and the Holy Spirit is the river that never runs dry, never wearies, never quits, never stops flowing!

We can dam up the river, but God's desire is that the Holy Spirit would run freely through our lives as living water to bring life to barren places. To realize individually and corporately what God has promised, we must learn to partner with the Holy Spirit. *Miracles don't occur because we will them into being.* No, as we agree with God's Word, pray and trust the power of the Holy Spirit working in and with us, all things become possible!

As we abide in Jesus and fellowship with the Holy Spirit:

1. **We participate in true worship.** John 4:23 says, "Yet the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. For the Father seeks such to worship Him." The heart of worship is Jesus! He is our affection and desire. We pursue Him, not His gifts or His benefits. We worship the King in holiness, in singularity of heart. No other gods before us, no other false affections. This is worship in Spirit and in truth.
2. **We hear God's voice.** Revelation flows from intimacy with Jesus and communion with the Holy Spirit, our friend and helper. He guides us into all truth, speaks what He hears, and reveals God's plans and purposes to us.
3. **We are revived and renewed.** "In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11b). Jesus said He would send us

another helper. "Another" is from the Greek word *allos*, which means "another just like me." The Holy Spirit daily wants to revive and renew us, we need to drink of His river continually!

4. **We are empowered.** Jesus said in John 14:12, "Truly, truly I say to you, he who believes in Me will do the works that I do also. And he will do greater works than these, because I am going to My Father." As we remain in Christ, trust His finished work and yield to the Spirit, God releases His might through us to do what we cannot of ourselves!
5. **We become a conduit for God to touch others.** You and I were destined to be a river of blessing to others. This is not accomplished in our human effort alone; rather, as we walk with God faithfully and rely upon His Word and the Spirit, we begin to bring life to dead places. In Christ, we have become the temple of God, and the river of God's presence is bursting forth through those who are yielded to His mission and purpose.

The Holy Spirit, who is the river of God's presence, wants to burst forth in your life. With joy, draw water from His well!

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