

Spirit-Filled Pastor: One Major Flaw in the House Impeachment Proceedings

I think I may have found the major problem in the recent impeachment inquiry proceedings: None of the witnesses in the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee have affirmed their truthfulness by their accountability to God!

None have affirmed, with their right hand raised and the other on a Bible (or religious symbol of their choice), that they call on Almighty God (or even a "Higher Power") to hold them personally and particularly accountable—in this life and the life to come—for what they are about to testify.

Author and educator Bill Federer is the host of *American Minute*, a radio short-feature we enjoyed and used on our network. He has written extensively about the purpose of an oath ("...so help me God") in this "...one nation under God."

For over 200 years, witnesses in proceedings in our courts and Congress affirmed their honesty and personal submission to a Sovereign God. However, this House Judiciary Subcommittee and the Democratic Chairman Jerry Nadler, along with his liberal, majority members, took God out of the Oath of Witnesses. They abruptly and arbitrarily changed it all earlier this year by their arrogant actions—without any vote or even consultation with the minority members.

In Federer's recent blog, he reports how the Democratic-dominated House Judiciary Subcommittee, on Feb. 28, 2019, broke with centuries of American congressional practice and precedent. He reports that:

Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN) was swearing in witnesses.

Rep. Mike Johnson (R-La.) made a point of parliamentary inquiry: "I think we left out 'so help me God.'"

Cohen replied: "We did."

Johnson asked, "Can we have the witnesses do it again for the record?"

Cohen responded: "No," then added: "If they want to do it, but some of them don't want to do it, and I don't think it's necessary, and I don't like to assert my will over other people."

Johnson responded: "Well it goes back to our founding history, it's been a part of our tradition for more than two centuries and I don't know that we should abandon it now."

Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) interrupted: "If any witness objects he should not be asked to identify himself. We do not have religious tests for office or for anything else ... and we should let it go with that."

Cohen then moved on.

That was it.

Over 200 years of precedent of witnesses ending their oath with the phrase "so help me God" was gone.

The purpose of an oath is to call a Higher Power to hold you accountable to perform what you promised and the truth of what you are about to testify.

Federer clarifies that "if there is no God, there is no law, no future account; the government then is the ordinance of man only, and we cannot be subject for conscience sake."

He further accentuates the American tradition for all official oaths to end with "So help me God."

-The military's oath of enlistment ended with "So help me

God.”

–The commissioned military officers’ oath ended with “So help me God.”

–President’s oath of office ended with “So help me God.”

–Congressmen and senators’ oath of office ended with “So help me God.”

–Witnesses in court swore to tell the truth, “So help me God.”

–Even an oath proposed by Lincoln for individuals in the “rebellion” wanting to be or restored as U.S. citizens says they were to express their allegiance to the United States, ending with “So help me God.”

The acknowledgment of God and spoken oaths of obedience to His laws and accountability to His commandments, like “Thou shalt not bear false witness,” are only effective if the public at large maintains their respect for and fear of God.

Our second American president, John Adams, said:

“Our Constitution was made only for moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

As modern church attendance falls (particularly in “mainline churches”) moral principles and observed obligations are weakened and the effectiveness of oaths of moral truthfulness is open to debate—even in our modern Congress.

Is it any wonder that patriotism is weakened as the Pledge of Allegiance and inspirational lyrics of Irving Berlin’s “God Bless America” are also under scrutiny—mainly because of their reference to God?

President Ronald Reagan, twice in 1984, made quotable comments about God and our nation:

“If we ever forget that we are one nation under God, we will be a nation gone under.”

Later that same year, “The Great Communicator” wisely said:

“Without God, there is no virtue because there is no prompting of the conscience.”

But we, brothers and sisters, have God, living by His Spirit in us, and He has destined us to serve Him in this “land of the free and the home of the brave.” Let our lives be so lived to do all we can to influence for good and overcome evil—in these last days!

May all the readers say: “Amen!” and “So help me God!” {eoa}

*Ordained to the ministry in 1969, **Gary Curtis** is a graduate of LIFE Bible College at Los Angeles (soon to become Life Pacific University at San Dimas, California). He has taken graduate courses at Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois, and Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. Gary served as part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the First Foursquare Church of Van Nuys, California, for 27 years (1988-2015); and served for the last 13 years as the vice president of Life on The Way Communications Inc., the church’s not-for-profit media outreach. Now retired, Gary and his wife have been married for 50 years and live in Southern California. They have two married daughters and five grandchildren.*

Why Many Believers Miss Their Prophetic Breakthrough

Through his ministry, apostolic leader Hakeem Collins says he constantly hears how Christians are stuck in a rut and that they're missing their kingdom breakthrough because they cannot hear the voice of God.

That breaks his heart and God's, Collins says, because the God he knows is a great communicator and wants only the best for His children.

"The reason that happens is because I don't think they really understand that the Father is a relational Father," Collins told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "He is a speaking Father. He loves to speak.

"I think, oftentimes, we get frustrated because we believe that God speaks only to really spiritual people. But the truth is that God longs to speak to His children, and that we have an ability to hear His voice and to respond. I think it's just really understanding and breaking through that type of mentality, and to overcome what you might have been taught."

Since he was a child, Collins has been studying and pursuing the voice of the Lord. He wants to offer believers wisdom on how to hear God's voice for themselves.

"My heart and desire is to teach people to really tune in to the persistent voice of God, and that He can direct you to where you receive from Him everything He wants to give you," Collins says. "We need His voice and we need His direction. We have the Holy Spirit that will lead us and guide us. When you tune into that, it's then that you will start receiving the amazing things He's been longing to reveal to you."

For more of Collins' ministry and how to hear the voice of God, listen to this podcast. And tune in to Hakeem's podcast, *Prophetic Breakthrough*, on the Charisma Podcast Network.

Remember This Convicting Truth When You Fall Into Sin

When it comes to the people we read about in the Bible, we all have favorites. In the *Brit Chadasha* (New Testament), my favorite is Peter because, while he was mightily used by G-D, he was also a person of whom the Scriptures transparently show His humanity and personal weaknesses.

Paul says in Romans 7:19 (TLV), "For the good that I want, I do not do; but the evil that I do not want, this I practice."

We really don't read examples of Paul's failures and errors. However, when it comes to Peter, we are exposed to his victories and his failures. So, when I read about Peter, it helps me to have confidence that G-D can use me even though there are many times when, like Peter, I struggle with my humanity.

In the *Tanakh* (Old Testament), my favorite is Jacob for the same reason that I love Peter. Jacob is a person that the Scriptures call upright, as in Genesis 25:27, "When the boys grew up, Esau became a man knowledgeable in hunting, an outdoorsman, while Jacob was a mild man, remaining in tents."

In verse 27, the word generally translated a *mild man* is the Hebrew word *tam*, which means upright, perfect or even morally innocent. Yet we also see him as the one who deceived his father and defrauded his brother out of his blessing.

I think one of the things that makes me like both Jacob and Peter is that, even though they have spiritual ups and downs, they both seem to have a heart for G-D. They both at times give in to their flesh, but they never seem to give up on their faith. They seem to have a deep understanding of G-D's covenant promises. They know that while they may fail G-D, He will never fail them.

It is because of Jacob's faith in G-D, even when Jacob sinned, that G-D met with him on the way to Laban's house to remind Jacob of His covenant promise. It is this reminder that we read in Genesis 28:15, "Behold, I am with you, and I will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land, for I will not forsake you until I have done what I promised you."

This reminder helped Jacob to get beyond his sin and walk in G-D's forgiveness and restoration. And it was these same words of covenant promise that we are reminded of when we read in Hebrew 13:5, "...For God Himself has said, 'I will never leave you or forsake you,' so that with confidence we say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What will man do to me?,'" which is a quote from Deuteronomy 31:6, "*Chazak!* Be courageous! Do not be afraid or tremble before them. For Adonai your God—He is the One who goes with you. He will not fail you or abandon you."

It is vital to also note that both the verse in Hebrews 13 and the verse in Deuteronomy are spoken by G-D to His people who have already sinned. Once again G-D is encouraging them not to sin anymore and reminding them that He would neither leave them nor forsake them.

This is vital to understand, because just as Jacob fell and sinned and just as Peter fell and sinned, you and I will unfortunately also fall and sin. But it is also vital for us to remember that just as G-D never left Jacob and G-D never left Peter, G-D will also never leave us. {eoa}

Eric Tokajer is author of *With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians and Galatians in Context.*

End-Times Expert: '2020 Is the Most Prophetically Important Year in Our Lifetime'

Note: This interview was done prior to Wednesday's impeachment hearings.

End-times expert Michael Snyder says Democrats have made removing President Donald Trump from office a "life or death" proposition.

And while the House of Representatives was successful in impeaching the President Wednesday, Snyder says Trump will remain in office at least until the American voters say differently in next November's election.

“We’re moving into an election season where Democrats and the mainstream media are stirring the pot,” Snyder told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. “Every day, their talk about Trump is so horrible. They hate Trump so much, and the division just keeps deepening in this country as we move into election season.

“It’s going to be chaotic. I think it’s going to be much more heated than the 2016 election because, for the Democrats, the left, this is everything. It means everything to them. And if they’re not successful—and there is a good chance they won’t be—we’re going to see an eruption like we’ve never seen before.

“I’m very, very concerned about this coming year. I mean, 2020 is going to be the most important, most consequential, most prophetically important year we’ve seen in any of our lifetimes. America continues to turn away from God. As Christians, we need to let our primary attention be focused on God and on the kingdom and on winning souls and doing the mission that we’re here to do.”

For more of Snyder’s thoughts on the state of the country and President Trump, listen to this podcast.

Prophecy: The Lord Says

Angelic Assistance Will Increase for You

As I was in prayer, the Lord spoke to me and said we will begin to encounter more angelic presence and assistance as it pertains to what God has called His people to do in this next season.

That means there will be also antagonistic demonic presence and resistance against those who are moving forward to fulfill their calling, dream, vision and God-given mandate in the earth.

There is a war in the heavens over the prophetic destinies of God's people, whole nations and territories. We are coming into a more intense season of the clashing of kingdoms of light and darkness over God's will being fulfilled. We already know that the kingdom of light is unmatched and undefeated. God spoke to me that we are approaching a time, era and new decade that heavy angelic activities will be surprisingly noticeable.

An example is when a believer is praying for breakthrough in a specific area. What would have taken months or even years to happen will take weeks or even days to manifest. The Lord said it's the result of the supernatural reinforcement of the angels assigned to the prayers of God's people.

Don't stop praying, decreeing God's Word and pursuing by faith what the Lord has purposed in your heart to do for Him. I sensed in prayer that the enemy somewhat have been attacking the minds, peace, joy, families, bodies and even finances of God's people. The Lord said it is the plot and strategy of the enemy to weaken the believer and hit them where it hurts.

What you may be encountering is not permanent. The Lord says He has dispatched and deployed a host of angelic warriors and

guardians to protect, cover, marshal and minister unto you in your most challenging and difficult moments. Angels are assigned to us while we are here on the earth, and they only respond to the voice of the Lord—not ours. They belong to God and work for Him to carry out His will. In the first chapter of Hebrews, we are told that Jesus was above the angels since He was and is God.

However, in the book of Hebrews 2:7-9, explains that when Jesus became incarnate, He was created lower than the angels in the sense that Jesus took human form. He was still God in human flesh. He was temporarily and subjectively made lower than the angels because He took on human form. Therefore, Hebrews 2:7-9 implies that mankind was created lower than the angels.

It is important to note that Scripture never stated believers in the earth realm are equal to or as powerful than angels. Scripture only reveals that we are lower than the angels, as Jesus was for a season, while we live here on this earth. Yet, those who go to heaven will someday judge angels.

As humans, we typically imagine God's protection as a firewall or force shield surround us that's preventing any and all harm sent to us. While God has the ability to stop all evil, we have to keep in mind that we live in a broken society and fallen world where we have free will. Due to this, often the Lord will have to work in supernatural and mysterious ways that we may not often able to cope with or comprehend. Instead, God's protection can come in the form of peace and strength in the middle of despair, possibly in the form of angels to do His bidding.

As believers in Christ Jesus, we are promised a new life covered under the God's protective order, services and custody. Not God's angels or anything in this world can ever separate us from the Father's love. We can rest assured knowing that no matter what hardship we are currently facing,

Father God is our source, protector and provider. God dispatches His angels to watch over and protect us from dangers seen and unseen.

These angels can give us peace so we can focus on knowing and fulfilling His divine plan preordained daily. Throughout the Scriptures, there are over 300 verses that reference them. Angels are not a myth but a supernatural reality of celestial existence that predates the earth and humankind.

Angels will provide guardianship, and God give them a specific charge, commission and assignment over us for us to fulfill our mandate. They become invisible security guards.

“For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways” (Ps. 91:11, NASB).

Angels will bring deliverance and breakthrough: “The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them” (Ps. 34:7, MEV).

Angels will come to minister to you (those who inherit) the kingdom: “Are not all angels ministering spirits sent out to minister to those who will inherit salvation?” (Heb. 1:14).

Angels are sent by the Lord to protect believers so we are able to inherit the kingdom of God. It’s great to know that we are given shelter, protection and ministry by angels. In addition, they possess the ability to assist us in our own deliverance from sin and being gifted by eternal life in heaven. Angels will protect you and bring you to a place of destiny, purpose and fulfillment. Furthermore, angels are God’s servants primarily that carry out His will, Word and work for our good.

“Indeed, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared” (Ex. 23:20).

This is a great example of God showing us how He can use His angels to protect us—His children. Basically, the Lord promised the children of Israel they would be guided by an angel to the promised land of Canaan. During their journey through the wilderness, because they trusted in God and His promises, God used an angel to provide unlimited protection and surveillance. Keep in mind that one single angel of God has the power to wipe out a whole city. Can you imagine what a legion of them can accomplish?

One important thing that the Lord revealed to me in prayer is that believers must not forget, no matter how immeasurable or impossible the situation may appear or how much the spiritual warfare has intensified against you, the power of the heavenly army.

Here is a biblical example and story of the prophet Elijah in 2 Kings 6:15-17:

When a servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, a force surrounded the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What will we do?"

And he said, "Do not be afraid, for there are more with us than with them."

Then Elisha prayed, "Lord, open his eyes and let him see." So the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire surrounding Elisha.

I come to prophetically decree to you that there is an insurmountable angelic force and army in the unseen realm fighting for you! This is a season when God has declared war on the unseen enemies of your purpose and destiny. Breakthrough victory is your portion. So whenever you feel overwhelmed, defeated or deplete, just remember that there are

invisible friends and warriors standing guard all around you if you just open your eyes to see that the enemies of God are no match against the Lord of Host and His will over your life.

Dr. Hakeem Collins *is an empowerment specialist, respected prophetic voice, apostolic leader, governmental minister, life coach and sought-after conference speaker. He is known for his keen accurate prophetic gifting and supernatural ministry and the author of the bestselling books Heaven Declares and Command Your Healing. He's been featured on many television shows: Sid Roth's It's Supernatural!, The Word Network and Cornerstone TV just to name a few. He is host of the Prophetic Breakthrough podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network. Follow him on: .*

How You Can Rediscover the Daily Joy of Jesus This Christmas

I love it all! I love everything about this miraculous, melodic, much-anticipated season of the year.

I love the cards that arrive daily, flooding my mailbox with heartfelt greetings from friends and family from long ago and far away.

I love the calorie-laden goodies and the family recipes that have been passed down from generation to generation. I love knowing that when I make the fresh cranberry jello in

preparation for Christmas dinner, I am holding the same recipe card in my hands that my grandmother held in her hands over 50 years ago.

I love the smell of Christmas! My heart melts at the fragrances of the evergreen, peppermint and cinnamon that flood my home from the days before Thanksgiving right through New Year's Day.

I love giving gifts to those I know the best and love the most. Even I, a woman who thinks that shopping is a waste of time, can't wait to hear the delight in my children's and grandchildren's voices on Christmas morning.

I love the childlike wonder that wraps itself around even the cynical world of entertainment.

I love the music ... Oh, how I love the music of Christmas. Even now, I could weep thinking about the lyrics of the songs that are particular only to Christmas.

"Mary, did you know/
That your baby boy/
Has walked where
angels trod?/
When you kiss your little baby/
You kissed the
face of God!"

"Immanuel/
Our God is with us/
And if God is with us/
Who could stand against us?/
Our God is with us,
Immanuel!"

"I will hold you in the beginning/
You will hold me in the
end/
Every moment in the middle/
Make my heart Your Bethlehem/
Be born in me!"

"Word of the Father/
Now in flesh appearing/
O come let us
adore Him/
Christ the Lord!"

But what I love the most about Christmas is the story itself. I am breathless and humbled with the realization that, like Mary, I have been chosen to carry the Christ-child to my lonely world.

I am in awe and wonder, with the shepherds, that the joy of heaven would explode into the darkness of planet earth.

I am humbly joining in the worship with the Magi as I am invited to bow before the infant King.

The first recorded words of God in the Bible are very familiar to most of us. "Let there be light!" (Gen. 1:3) was the declaration of the Creator God as he obliterated the darkness and void of the world pre-creation. His vibrant and powerful words washed away the dominion of darkness and He became the eternal light of the world!

Thousands of years later, when Jesus came to restore what sin had stolen from creation, the angels made a declaration on behalf of the King of heaven. Into the darkness of sin and shame, an angelic chorus heralded the news that delivered Jesus to earth:

"Listen! Do not fear. For I bring you good news of great joy, which will be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

When heaven announced the presence of Jesus into the battle-scarred world over Bethlehem, they sang, "Let there be *joy!*"

My prayer for you this Christmas season is that you would rediscover the joy that belongs uniquely to Christmas. I pray that you would hear the song of the angels in your dark world and that you would join in the chorus that humanity has sung for hundreds of years. Don't allow the trappings of this time of year deny you of the dynamic and eternal song of Christmas.

A Savior has come and He has brought with Him heaven's joy!
{eoa}

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God

with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written five books: No More Ordinary, Holy Estrogen!, The Rooms of a Woman's Heart, Defiant Joy! and Refined: Finding Joy in the Midst of the Fire. Her teaching DVD The Rooms of a Woman's Heart won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming.

What God Is Doing in This Hour to Elevate Women

As a Christian psychologist, Barbara Lowe has accepted a calling from God to help all believers move into a fuller life with Christ.

But God spoke to Lowe nearly two years ago and told her to concentrate her focus mainly on helping women reach the wholeness in Jesus that many hunger for but cannot find on their own. That's why she developed *Dr. Barbara's Whole Life Podcast*, which helps women move from a weary, wounded and disillusioned life to one of peace and contentment.

And Lowe knows all about what she's preaching, having grown up in an abusive and dysfunctional family and gone through drug abuse, divorce and an eating disorder.

"Right now, God is doing something to elevate women," Lowe told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "Our ministry and podcast

addresses issues like domestic violence, marital abuse, eating disorders, infertility and finding your purpose.

“We’re helping to equip women to walk in wholeness. God is after women and all people really being whole because He is after legacy. And we can offer a legacy when we step into more wholeness. The women in the Bible—the Samaritan woman, Ruth, Hannah, Mary—their legacy was gargantuan and ours can be too.

“The impact on the kingdom we have as women is much greater than we ever thought possible. It is my pleasure to help them step into wholeness, to help them receive healing and to help them become more than they ever thought they could be.”

For more about Barbara Lowe’s ministry, listen to this podcast. And listen to *Dr. Barbara’s Whole Life Podcast* on the Charisma Podcast Network. {eoa}

How Believers Can Sabotage Their Own Prayers and Miss Their Breakthrough

Years ago, apostle Venner Alston came to a revelation. She realized that, if she were going to defeat the enemy through spiritual warfare, she must keep a guard on her mouth and prevent negativity from spewing forth from it.

That is one of the main reasons, she says, that many believers

do not experience victory and breakthrough in their own lives. They open the door for Satan's attacks with their own words.

"All too often we are guilty of what I call self-sabotage," Alston told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "Every time we speak, we are creating something, and the words we speak are powerful.

"When we make statements like, 'I'm never going to make it or this is never going to happen for me,' we will have what we say. We keep putting those negative words in the atmosphere, but that's the harvest that we are going to reap. Because we keep putting negative words in the atmosphere, we are sabotaging our own prayers. From that perspective, we have to set a watch over our mouth and say what God says and come into agreement with God and be consistent in the place of prayer. Ask the Lord to give you your war strategy.

"You don't have to experience flatline living with the same setbacks. There is a strategy God gives us to overcome our enemy. You have to be willing to let the Spirit of God help you ascend to the next level.

"We know that, in the spirit, God is moving in your prayers. We just can't see it through the eyes of our understanding because our ways are not His. When you have a promise of God, it is not a gesture of what you would like to do. It's God's intent. Once we have the prophetic promise of God, we know what God will do for us. We have to learn how to pray and decree that word. We have to keep that word in front of us so that we are moving in time with God, so that we don't lose sight and focus on what God has for us."

For more about Alston's ministry and how to defeat the enemy, listen to this podcast. {eoa}

This Act Allows Holy Spirit to Breathe God's Passion on You

Editor's note: This is the third article in a three-part series. [Click here for Part 1 & Part 2.](#)

In my last article I asked these questions: "Is Jesus your passion, and desire? Do you love him with every ounce of your heart? How desperate are you 'to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge'?" (Eph. 3:19).

If you cannot answer with a firm "Yes!" then perhaps your "first love" for Him has grown cold.

Here is the great news—a humble admission and fresh surrender to God positions you for the Holy Spirit to breathe God's love and passion upon your heart once again. Prayer with fasting is a great way to humble yourself and draw near to God. Hunger pulls on heaven. Expectancy brings heaven's realm into your life. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

When you return to "first love," God quickly honors your fresh commitment. The essence of revival is love for Jesus. The Holy Spirit reawakens true love and passion—the things of the world grow dim and single-minded focus on God takes precedence.

Paul wrote to the believers in Rome, "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord" (Rom. 12:11, NIV). The surest way to maintain the fire of God in your life is to keep your spiritual fervor and never lose zeal for the Lord! However, if your love for God has grown cold,

quickly repent, turn back to Christ and begin to live completely for Him once again (Rev. 2:4-5).

The fire of God's presence is beginning to fall fresh on His church. Fire draws. Fire captivates. Fire consumes. Revival fire awakens hearts to first love—it becomes a consuming, passionate fire once again. God is inviting His “glorious church” to steadfast love in this hour. Let us continue our discussion of practical steps to maintaining the fire of God in your life.

Practical Principles for Maintaining the Fire of God in Your Life

1. **Consume God's Word.** The fourth principle to maintain God's fire in your life is to consume—read, meditate and study—God's Word. Moses declares in Deuteronomy the significance of God's Word to the Israelites:

“He humbled you and let you suffer hunger, and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord” (Deut. 8:3, MEV).

The principle is true for us today as well—the world cannot meet all our needs—only God and His promises can satisfy the depths of human need. His word is like daily manna—like the children of Israel, we need fresh manna every day to remain strong and maintain God's fire. If you are living off yesterday's “manna,” it has become stale—you need God's revelation today.

Jesus is the living Word, the bread of life. Choosing to feed daily on God's written Word and abiding in Christ strengthens you and maintains His fire in your life. Psalm 119 speaks to the value and necessity of God's Word in your life:

“Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin

against You. ...The law from Your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver coins. ...Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Ps. 119:11, 72, 105).

Hiding God’s Word in your heart strengthens you against temptation and falling into sin. His Word makes you wise and is more valuable than great riches. The wisdom of God will empower you to accomplish what money cannot give. God’s Word guides your path and illuminates your way—your destiny unfolds through ongoing encounters with God and unfolding revelation from His Word.

The Word reveals God and builds faith. Paul writes, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). His Word brings you into an encounter with Him. Faith is a gift and develops through obedience with God. Daily, as you read and meditate on His word, you experience fresh encounters with Jesus.

I heard a song last week by Elevation Worship that speaks to the power of God’s Word. Here are some of the lyrics and chorus:

You have the last word/ It is finished/ My fear is silenced in Your love/ My hope is word stands through the ages/ Your voice shatters the darkness/ In You we are more than conquerors/ You speak and strongholds surrender/ Your name overcomes the enemy. In You we are more than conquerors.

His word silences fear, provides hope, strengthens the weak and stops the enemy. His Word is ageless. Meditate daily on God’s Word—it keeps His fire burning in your heart.

2. **Serve others.** Another principle to maintain God’s fire in your life is to serve others. Jesus revealed servanthood. He humbled Himself, came to earth and served others (Phil. 2:5-11). He said the greatest among you would be servant of all (Matt. 23:11).

Jesus also commanded His followers to “go”—there is a “go” in the “gospel” (Matt. 28:18-20)! To make disciples of all the nations requires a steadfast commitment to Christ to reach and serve others.

James states:

“Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you” (James 1:27, NLT).

Learning to serve others and those in the margins of society keeps you close to the heart of God. As you serve the least, the fire of His love and passion will burn in your heart. Many grow cold because they stop serving others and helping the needy.

James goes on to say in a later chapter:

“What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don’t they come from the evil desires at war within you?” (James 4:1).

Most conflicts could be eliminated in our relationships if selfishness and pride are removed from our thinking and attitudes. Learning how to humbly serve others—within and outside the local church—helps free you from selfish attitudes and positions you to walk in God’s love and compassion for others.

Humility will take you beyond your comfort to minister to those in the margins of society. As you serve the least, you stay focused on God’s mission, and positioned to avoid the corruption that is in the world. Learn to go to the least with God’s love and compassion to remain ablaze in His love and presence.

Lastly, as you take the gospel to the world, remain in God’s peace and joy as you serve others. While doing so, learn to embrace suffering if required. If you believe you are above

suffering for Christ, you have a distorted understanding of God's grace. The New Testament reveals God's grace sustains us as we go and amid suffering for the sake of the gospel. This understanding will keep your heart steadfast in Jesus and help you to maintain your love for God when trials come.

God is always good, but trials and suffering occur in life as you serve Jesus and others.

Paul said:

"If children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified with Him" (Rom. 8:17, MEV).

Set Me Ablaze

Another song that captures the cry of a generation desiring to be filled with God's presence and fire is a Jesus Culture song, "Set Me Ablaze," written by Bryan Torwalt, Jacob Sooter, Katie Torwalt and Mia Fieldes. Here are some of the lyrics—make them a prayer and may you maintain the fire of God in your life!

*Set me ablaze, set me ablaze/
Till it's all that I know/
Set me ablaze, set me ablaze/
So I'll never grow cold/*

*Breathe, come and breathe/
On the coals of my heart/
May Your fire start/
Breathe, come and breathe/
On the coals of my heart/
Keep me burning/*

*Set me ablaze, set me ablaze/
With a single obsession/
Set me ablaze, set me ablaze/*

With an endless passion/

Your fire, burn brighter/

Deep inside my heart/

Consume me, reach through me/

I want all You are {eoa}

Bob Sawvelle is the founding and senior leader of Passion Church in Tucson, Arizona. Passion Church is a vibrant, kingdom-minded church in the heart of Tucson that values God's love and presence. He is a Doctor of Ministry doctoral mentor for the Randy Clark Scholars cohort at United Theological Seminary (UTS), an adjunct professor teaching master's-level classes in evangelism, discipleship and church planting with the Global Awakening Theological Seminary (GATS) and an online course facilitator for Global Awakening's Christian Healing Certification Program (CHCP) and Christian Prophetic Certification Program (CPCP).

Why Many Believers Miss God's Incredible Promise in Matthew 11

We live in a world that seems to be spinning out of control in many ways. Between advancements in technology and what appears to be the loss of our moral compass, it is very easy for believers to become weighed down by the burdens of our lives and our callings.

One great verse that is often quoted and stood upon to deal with the battle in weary souls of believers is found in Matthew 11:28 (TLV): “Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

These powerful words spoken by Yeshua (Jesus) were intended to encourage His disciples to seek rest in Him only, which includes those of us who are His disciples today. Too often, however, believers come to Yeshua seeking their burdens to be removed and to receive their rest, and they leave somewhat unfulfilled.

The reason they leave unfulfilled isn't because Yeshua didn't keep His promise. It is because too many believers stop reading after verse 28, while Yeshua didn't finish His instructions until verse 30.

Let's look at this promise again in its context.

“Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and ‘you will find rest for your souls.’ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matt. 28:11-30).

You will notice that when we keep the complete sentences together, there are actually two parts to Yeshua's instructions:

–**Step 1:** Come to Me.

–**Step 2:** Take My yoke upon you.

If those who are burdened will do both steps, they will find rest for their souls. Too many of us do step 1, but fail to do step 2. We gladly come to Yeshua. But most of us do not complete step 2.

To understand a little more about step 2, we have to take a moment to think about what a “yoke” is. A yoke is a device

that is used to connect two work animals, such as oxen or horses so they can walk in unity in the same direction under the control of the one guiding them. With this in mind, let's look again at the promises given here by Yeshua.

If we are weary and burdened and searching for rest, we should come to Yeshua who will give us rest (step 1). How will He give us rest? We take His yoke upon us by joining together with Him to work for the kingdom in unity, walking and pulling in the same direction as we follow the leading of the Father (step 2). We read in John 8:28:

“So Yeshua said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know who I am. I do nothing by Myself, but speak just what the Father has taught Me. The One who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to Him.”

So, if you have become weary and burdened, please remember that it is only after we both come to Him and take His yoke upon us that we will find rest for our souls. But don't worry, because He also promises that His yoke is easy and His burden is light. [eoa}

Eric Tokajer is author of *With Me in Paradise*, *Transient Singularity*, *OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry*, *#ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer*, *Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians* and *Galatians in Context*.