

10 Revolutions for the New Year

The American church needs some radical changes during these times, not more broken resolutions

A single letter differentiates the words *resolution* and *revolution*, yet their meanings stand miles apart. At New Year's the world focuses on resolutions—promises we *resolve* to fulfill in the coming year. But as followers of Jesus, it's time we move past vows we're bound to break and pay more attention to the revolution that is God's kingdom expanding throughout the world today.

We live in an era in which the prayer, worship and missions movements have reached historic proportions. There are more believers on earth than ever before. Jesus is revealing Himself among millions of Muslims via supernatural encounters. And the Holy Spirit is increasingly moving through signs, wonders and miracles in the darkest corners of the world.

Yet by most accounts, the American church still struggles with core issues of division, apathy, hatred, pride, materialism—the list is long. Christians here may not agree on what we need—some call for revival, others for an awakening, still others for an overhaul. But we can agree that it starts from a place of “a complete or radical change of any kind,” which is the core definition of the word *revolution*. That said, here are 10 revolutions within the American church that I'd love to see this year:

1. **Shut up and pray!** I've attended too many recent prayer gatherings in which leaders spent most of their platform time talking, teaching or telling jokes rather than actually leading prayer. We Americans have a bad habit of this. Let's learn from churches in Korea, China and

India, where believers actually pray rather than just talking about praying.

2. **Fasting—what's that?** The good news is that countless believers are rediscovering the power of fasting and, as a result, it's discussed more these days. The bad news is that it's still a missing element of most American Christians' lives. Until we as a church realize fasting isn't a matter of *if* but *when*, we will continue to lose spiritual ground.
3. **Give it away now.** Despite a recession, we're still one of the wealthiest nations in history. Yet with only 5 percent of all American adults tithing, we clearly need a revelation and revolution of generosity and giving (and yes, those directly relate to tithing). Until then, we continue to rob God and withhold the blessings He desires to pour on us (see Mal. 3:6-12).
4. **Prophets of the obvious.** I love the prophetic—don't get me wrong. But we desperately need to mature beyond the "God has a plan for you" or "wealth transfer" prophecies flippantly given these days to tickle ears. I'm praying for a revolution in which truly prophetic voices—the watchmen (and women) on the wall—can call out what's on the horizon so the church can prepare. (Note: This also takes developing spiritual ears to hear the call.)
5. **No more "us vs. them."** I'm excited to see many emerging leaders within the Spirit-filled community realizing that we can't uphold a divisive mentality that says we've got "it" and no one else does. As much as God desires for us to walk in the fullness of His Spirit, that indwelling is about power, not pride. Until we can love beyond our own spiritual ranking system, we'll continue to miss the point.
6. **A Holy Spirit foundation.** At the same time, we have a generation dangerously close to losing grasp of the fundamental principles of what being filled with the Holy Spirit is all about. I pray we see a renewed commitment from leaders to preach and teach on why the

baptism of the Spirit matters more now than ever.

7. **The D word.** Like prayer, we talk about discipleship, yet how many of us are truly being discipled and in turn discipling another? I long to see a mass return to Jesus' model of authentic, lasting church growth.
8. **Lifestyle evangelism.** The concept's as old as the gospel, but what if we led people to Jesus more with our everyday living than with our words, apologetics or crusades?
9. **Past the trends, please.** I'm thrilled to see social justice still at the forefront of most young believers' minds. Now let's marry that missional passion with spiritual maturity and take the revolution to another level.
10. **What melting pot?** Why do America's churches rarely reflect the multiethnic blends of our cities? It's time Christians modeled to our culture a true reconciliation revolution that spans spiritual, racial and cultural lines.

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