

50 Years of Charisma: A Journey of God's Faithfulness

This year marks a milestone I never imagined when I first felt the Lord nudge me toward publishing: Charisma's 50th anniversary.

Back in 1975, I was a young journalist at the Orlando Sentinel. My wife Joy and I were newlyweds, deeply involved in our church during the height of the Jesus Movement and the charismatic renewal. I had no plan to launch a magazine, but God had other ideas.

Our church leaders asked me to help create a youth ministry newspaper. I wasn't a publisher—just a reporter—but I took it on. As I watched the presses run, the thought came: "We could do a church magazine." Our first issue was 32 pages, sold for 50 cents and was put together almost entirely by volunteers. It was simple, but the vision was there—to report what the Holy Spirit was doing and to encourage believers in their walk with God.

Our early covers featured people like Thurlow Spurr, Kathryn Kuhlman and Arthur Blessitt. Those choices set the tone: we weren't just telling church announcements; we were documenting a move of God. Before long, Charisma was attracting readers beyond our congregation. Within five years, we had a staff of nine and a circulation of about 50,000. Eventually, through what businesspeople call a "leveraged buyout," Joy and I purchased the magazine from the church, allowing us to operate independently while keeping a strong relationship with our home fellowship.

From the beginning, our goal wasn't muckraking or controversy. We wanted to publish teaching articles on the baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, deliverance and inspiring feature

stories about ministries and leaders God was using around the world. Over the years we've covered everyone from a young Mario Murillo to well-known figures like Oral Roberts and Joyce Meyer. Many times, being on the cover of Charisma became a sign that a ministry had "arrived"—not because of us, but because the Spirit was moving in powerful ways and people wanted to know about it.



To order Jonathan Cahn's new book, The Avatar, visit .

One of my favorite Scriptures, quoted by Pat Robertson, is "Despise not the day of small beginnings" (Zech. 4:10). We truly started small—manual typewriters, paste-up boards and no computers until our eighth year. There were seasons I felt like quitting. I remember once sitting on the floor, completely discouraged. I picked up a Zig Ziglar book that encouraged me to set a time limit on my "pity party" and then get back up. By God's grace, I kept going. That persistence—just not giving up—has made all the difference.

In 1986, the Lord expanded our reach when we acquired Christian Life magazine and its publishing arm, Creation House. Overnight, we became a book publisher. Since then, we've released more than a thousand titles in print, with 19 hitting the New York Times bestseller list. The most successful, Jonathan Cahn's *The Harbinger*, has sold more than million copies. Through these books, countless lives have been touched, challenged and drawn closer to Christ.

Charisma Media has never been about building my name—it's been about connecting people and ministries, telling the stories of what God is doing and providing biblical teaching to equip believers. We've published in Spanish and Russian, partnered with ministries around the world and raised millions for missions through Christian Life Missions. Every step of the way, we've seen God open doors we couldn't have forced open ourselves.

As I reflect on five decades, I'm deeply aware this has only been possible because of God's faithfulness and the prayers, work and support of so many—our talented staff, faithful authors, ministry partners and loyal readers.

But our story isn't finished. The need for truth and Spirit-filled ministry is greater than ever. As we step into this next chapter, we are committed to using every tool—print, digital, video and audio—to proclaim Jesus and equip His people.

I recently sat down with our media manager, John Matarazzo, to share more stories from Charisma's history, from interviewing Kathryn Kuhlman in her final year of life to the lessons I've learned about faith, persistence and trusting God in ministry. If you've ever wondered how Charisma began—or if you need encouragement for your own calling—I think you'll enjoy this conversation. Watch the full interview, and our recent 50th Anniversary Open House, here: [click to watch on YouTube](#). Fifty years ago, I could never have imagined the journey ahead. Looking back, I can say with certainty: what God starts, He will sustain. The best is yet to come.

Stephen Strang *has seen major changes in the church, the culture and technology since he founded Charisma magazine in 1975. In addition to being CEO of Charisma Media, he hosts a Strang Report podcast live on YouTube and Rumble at 4 p.m. EST every Tuesday and Thursday. His important recent book Spirit-Led Living in an Upside-World is available wherever fine Christian books are sold including .*