

How Steve Hill Encourages Me During This Time of Unparalleled Upheaval

I don't know about you, but the constant barrage of negativity and gloomy reports in the news tends to beat me down. Polls show only a paltry 21% of American voters believe we're headed in the right direction.

Terrorism, polarization, deception, economic stagnation, political corruption, racial agitation and ongoing moral deterioration are widespread and escalating. Let's be honest, things are not getting better no matter what our President tells us.

Now don't check out just yet. There is some good news!

"Spiritual Awakening Happening Now!"

"Revival Breaking Out in America!"

"America Is Turning Back to God!"

"Gathering Reveals USA in Midst of Major Move of God!"

News headlines, blog declarations and sermon titles like these excite my soul. Yet how many times have I closed my eyes and whispered a Nehemiah-like "shoot 'em up" prayer (Neh. 2:4), "Lord, please may this be true not just wishful thinking that isn't rooted in reality."

Speaking from Experience

God began my ministry in the midst of the '60-'70s Jesus Movement that swept across our land. Starting with a handful of people in a home we exploded in a few years to over 2,000, primarily young people, gathering weekly just minutes from the

White House.

In the '80s, God launched a core of us into a dynamic church-planting network called "People of Destiny International." Thousands of us published "present truth," evangelized passionately and pioneered, with other similar groups in the U.S. and Great Britain, a "restoration of authentic New Testament Christianity." The growth was exponential.

In the '90s, I found myself integrally involved in the Pensacola Outpouring/Brownsville Revival with John Kilpatrick, Steve Hill and Dr. Michael Brown. Several million came and waited in the scorching sun for hours on end just to get a seat. Our Bible school alone exploded from a few hundred to over eleven hundred in a few years as millions were impacted worldwide.

During my earlier years I also was honored to be involved in the Catholic Charismatic Movement which touched the lives of millions of Catholics throughout America and abroad. I was asked to write of my personal experience and, to my amazement, a quarter million copies were gobbled up in the U.S. and abroad.

Every Friday, I joined hundreds of zealous, renewed Catholics piling into Georgetown University as lives were being transformed by this heaven-sent move of God. Our experience was replicated in communities everywhere, reverberations going all the way to Rome!

I don't share the above to boast of anything but simply to convey that I've experienced firsthand the genuine, supernatural intervention of God. I'm ruined for status quo religion and lackluster, tepid "American Churchianity." I can never go back to anything less than God's best for our generation, which I believe to be another spiritual awakening.

Having participated in the real, I'm cautious amidst all the discouragement today, to prematurely celebrate "prophetic"

proclamations that are well-intentioned yet overstatements. I am not skeptical or cynical, only committed to avoid hyperbole and be honest.

Months ago I served alongside dedicated brethren in United Cry which called for 30,000 leaders to pray on the Mall in Washington, DC. Horrific weather and threats of cancellation because of it resulted in a minuscule turnout. Incredible things were accomplished but some miscellaneous glowing reports misled readers to believe it was a massive gathering, which just wasn't true.

So while dealing with discouragement and remaining passionate in pursuit of genuine spiritual and cultural transformation, what can we do to stay in the radical middle and on track?

Gleaning Something From a Recent Hall of Fame Induction

"Baseball is continuous, like nothing else among American things, an endless game of repeated summers, joining the long generations of all the fathers and all the sons."- Donald Hall, poet

Professional baseball goes back to 1871. Yearly baseball writers of America select the best of the best and receive its royalty into the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. Perhaps you watched on ESPN Sunday's 2016 induction ceremony.

This year, the 312th inductee was a man named Mike Piazza.

A sports writer by the name of Bob Nightengale commented, "Perhaps no man in history has overcome greater odds and taken a stranger journey into baseball's Hall of Fame."

Mike Piazza holds the distinction of being the lowest draft pick to ever achieve enshrinement in MLB's hall of heroes. Professional scouts passed over 1,389 players before he finally was picked.

Coach Tommy Lasorda shared in *USA Today* (7/24/16) that his organization, the Los Angeles Dodgers, “didn’t want him ... And even when they signed him, they tried to get rid of him ... They were hoping he’d simply go away.”

Even though he didn’t know Spanish, he consented to go to a baseball academy in the Dominican Republic to become a better player. Even though he was a first baseman, he agreed to be a catcher if that would keep him in the game he loved. Mike made a quality decision to do whatever it took to see the fulfillment of his heart’s desire.

Mike Piazza had a passion for baseball. He remains one of the best examples of perseverance I’ve encountered.

For baseball aficionados like myself, here’s his track record. Almost 30 years after he was drafted, he looks back at 12 All-Star selections and 427 home runs! He’s considered by many experts the greatest power-hitting catcher in baseball history.

Amidst all the negativity, setbacks and discouragement, Piazza, 47, kept his eye on the prize and ran the race with perseverance. He expressed it this way:

“It was a tough time in my life, but I’m glad I got through it. It’s a lesson to a lot of people that when you struggle, sometimes it’s meant to build character and meant to make you stronger ... It taught me a lot of humility, and it taught me a lot of patience” (*USA Today*, 6/24/16).

Continuing to Contend for America’s Third Great Awakening

To further equip you and help you remain encouraged as we pursue God’s intervention in our generation, join the movement endorsed by America’s top Christian leaders and take the “Bullseye Challenge.” This 15-min/30-day initiative gives you immediately accessible, compelling videos and an easy-to-read book that will make you an informed influencer and catalyst

for revival.

Go to to get started today! Chapters 2-4 all focus on perseverance.

When I served for five years in the Brownsville Revival, I was privileged to interact with one of my heroes, the late Steve Hill. I keep his picture next to my desk in my study to inspire me to persevere amidst discouraging times.

Steve was the general editor for the Revival Study Bible which I highly recommend as an accompaniment to the excellent Modern English Version Bible. I close with these words from Steve's introduction to this revival translation:

"There have always been pockets of believers, sprinkled throughout the land, earnestly seeking God, and motivated by a desperate desire for revival. God has always had His remnant. They have a hold on the horns of the altar. The darkness of night was pierced by their agonizing pleas for a visitation from God. Their white-hot prayers lit up the sky just as lightning displaces utter blackness.

"These soldiers of now and then share in common the constant pursuit of revival. God has heard their cries and answered their prayers. Determine in your heart to be one of those who won't flinch in the heat of battle. Go after God with unquenchable zeal. Be a Wesley, be an Edwards, be a Finney, be in pursuit of revival!"