

Is the Church at its Breaking Point?

“Where are the packed churches whose altars are crowded with repentant and praying Christians?” is the question I’ve been asking a lot lately. From the hope of Trump being reinstated to the audits in Arizona, and from the failed California recall to the upcoming election in 2024, and from vaccines to boosters, we seem to be looking for hope in all the wrong places.

Don’t misunderstand: I’m all for electing godly leaders and exposing fraud; I’m all for medical advancements and the gift of science (read more here). But it appears that most Christians are angry, but not broken; upset, but not humble; argumentative, but not appreciative. What’s it going to take to bring us back to God? Here are a few suggestions:

1. Prayer must be a priority. Start a weekly prayer meeting even if it’s just a few people. You + God = the majority. God looks for faithfulness in the little things. A few years ago, three of us started gathering for worship and prayer every Sunday at 6 am at Westside Christian Fellowship in Southern California. Now there are anywhere between sixty and ninety people at this early service.

The old saints used to pray and fast until God heard their cry. They understood that desperate times call for desperate measures. Today, we get impatient if church services go long and we’re late for lunch. Costco carts are full, but prayer closets are empty.

As I wrote in *Revival is America’s Only Hope*, we see throughout the Bible that during times of crisis, we must consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly, and gather into the house of the Lord and cry out to Him (cf. Joel 1:14). Prayer

and fasting clear the way for a deeper work of God's Spirit.

2. Balance grace and humility with boldness and truth. Granted, I have not mastered this area, but I will die trying. Arrogant and harsh "in your face" responses and posts do more harm than good. But on the flip side, our silence speaks volumes. In the church, the crisis of post-pandemic pastors and the sin of silence does a great deal of harm as well. We must repent of both pride on one side, and cowardliness on the other.

3. Don't put hope in the mRNA, but in Jesus' DNA. Greg Laurie once asked Billy Graham if there was anything he would change in his preaching. He responded that he would talk more about the blood of Christ. And this is exactly what we need today: "They have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony..." (Revelation 12:11 ESV). Hebrews 9:22 reminds us that without the shedding of Jesus' blood there is no forgiveness of our sins. Our focus shouldn't be just on physical healing but on spiritual healing.

4. Don't buy into all the conspiracy theories. Granted, if it's true it's not a conspiracy. Many disheartening revelations are coming out, but if our eyes are fixed on fear it's going to be a painful journey. Do you fear Bill Gates more than God Almighty? The U.N. more than the Great Ambassador? Big Pharma more than a Big God? If so, repent and ask God to remove fear, but you must also remove the source of the fear. It's hard to fight what you feed!

Moral confusion, sexual confusion, and gender confusion all come from the author of confusion, rather than the Prince of Peace. Only by comparing thoughts and actions to God's Word can we have the insight to navigate these difficult waters. Be informed but don't be heavily influenced. Research before posting and please don't believe everything that you hear.

5. Listen to the "voices crying in the wilderness." In this

sin-filled world, there is only one solution: repentance. Second Chronicles 36:15-16 often comes to my mind during this difficult season. God sent warnings to His people by His messengers. The message of repentance was a priority, but not unlike today, the people “mocked the messengers of God and despised His words ... until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy.”

Are we there yet? Personally, I don't think so; I'm still hopeful. In the midst of tremendous decadence, there is still a call to purity that God will honor. In the midst of calamity, God still offers hope. We need repentance more than vaccination.

Full Surrender Is Not Optional, It's Essential

I ask again, “Where are the full altars and packed churches? Where are the churches who aren't in a hurry?” Get-them-in-and-out is a great slogan for a car wash but very destructive in the house of God. Have we forgotten the great scriptural truth of waiting on God? Are we so busy that we've forgotten that only those who wait on God will renew their strength (Isaiah 40:31)?

In the past, when spiritual awakenings spread across our landscape, Christians spent countless hours praying and fasting. They paid the price and pastors preached boldly about the cross and repentance. They could say, “Thus saith the Lord,” because they were filled with the Holy Spirit, not the Hollywood spirit. They didn't work revival up; God brought it down.

What's it going to take to break us ... to break you? “There is no safety in distance from God” (Adolph Saphir). Full surrender is not an option, it's an essential. {eoa}

Special note: Join Westside Christian Fellowship for Octoberfast as we pray and fast for our nation through the month of October. We will conclude with services at 6 pm every

night during the last week in October. Follow me here for more information. My books on prayer and fasting are available as free downloads here.

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