

One Thing More Dangerous Than Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump This Election Season

Donald J. Trump. Hillary R. Clinton.

During this intensely heated election season, many have accused both candidates of being especially dangerous in their own unique ways. When it comes to politics, I have my personal views and opinions, but I do not sense a release to make these the focus of my ministry or writings. Just not my assignment.

With that said, I do believe there is something especially deadly creeping into the earth, through the church, that completely eclipses the danger-level that any presidential candidate could pose. If this issue goes unchecked and untreated, we truly have reason to fear for the future of our country and our world. After all, so goes the church, so goes the world.

The apostle Paul obviously caught a glimpse of perilous times such as ours, as he addressed them consistently in his epistles. Consider his writings to young Timothy:

“Know this: In the last days perilous times will come. Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, slanderers, unrestrained, fierce, despisers of those who are good, traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying its power” (2 Tim. 3:1-5, MEV).

What is the great danger of the last days church? Form without power, Christianity without the presence of God and power of the Holy Spirit.

The Greatest Danger: Form Without Power

Don't be deceived—this deception is subtle and sneaky. In verse 6, Paul describes the nature of those who infect the community of believers with this power-less Gospel: "Those of this nature creep." This deadly doctrine has stealthily infected the whole of Christianity over the past 2,000 years and the Western church that we look at today, by and large, is a product of what we have believed the church's assignment is. In recent years, we've embraced a dramatic shift of assignment, moving from accommodating the Holy Spirit to accommodating people and, worse, programs. The drive to accommodate people is God-honoring; however, we will never minister effectively if we exchange the outpouring of the Spirit's presence and power for a man-made program, no matter how good-intentioned it may be.

My job is not to be the Holy Spirit heresy hunter or God's designated policeman. My ministry is not dedicated to saying who's doing it right or wrong, being deconstructive. I simply believe heaven is making an announcement right now, not a suggestion, and it's for whoever would hear what the Spirit is saying. There will be order in the church before the Second Coming of Christ. For us to bring any semblance of spiritual order to the disorder around us, we first need to be in order—order according to the Bible.

This powerless deception has crept in to the fabric of Christianity as we know it and has shaped the way we "do church." Everything is getting ready to change. I repeat, the Lord is making an announcement to the Western community of believers, particularly the church of the United States, that the Holy Spirit will once again be given seniority. Jesus is ever and always our priority, yes, but the Spirit must be yielded to, as He is the great evangelist and revealer of Jesus!

Consider that the church of South America, Asia and Africa

often exhibits what the Western Church lacks: a preference of the Holy Spirit's presence. This is why they are seeing multitudes transformed for Christ and an abundance of miraculous phenomena. These people groups often walk in supernatural power and effectiveness, not because of God sovereignly favoring specific nations, but rather because people in these nations particularly favor the Holy Spirit.

Is this sovereignty? No, it's selection. God has not made a sovereign decision to deny us of His power; we've been a selective choice to continue our program without the priority of His presence. It might be weird, unusual, strange, bizarre and downright supernatural. Doesn't matter—the Holy Spirit must once again be given the freedom to rule our lives and our meetings without restraint. It's His outpouring that is critical to bringing spiritually thirsty people to Jesus!

How Should You See Your World?

"O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh faints for You, in a dry and thirsty land with no water" (Ps. 63:1-2, MEV).

Since we are called to connect our world with the presence of the Holy Spirit, we need to correctly see the world around us. David's description is very relevant to us today, as conditions have not significantly changed: It's dry and thirsty. We don't live in a hopeless world. We don't live in a world going to hell in a hand-basket. Yes, there is crisis and chaos. Yes, we sometimes wonder "what in the world is going on?" In the midst of this, but we must be careful not to let the crisis define the way we see our world and determine how we interact with people.

The way you view the condition of your world determines how you relate to it. If you see the world as hopeless, you'll disengage and embrace an escapist perspective that looks for God's great rescue mission. If you see the world as "dry and

thirsty," you'll recognize that the community of God, on Earth, carries the river that fills, refreshes and satisfies—Holy Spirit.

The good news? We have the answer. Revival is just a decision away. My question is who will cast the unpopular vote to welcome back the full power of the gospel through the presence of the Holy Spirit?

What is the hope for our nation and all the nations?

"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like a mighty rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. There appeared to them tongues as of fire, being distributed and resting on each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to speak. Now dwelling in Jerusalem were Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. When this sound occurred, the crowd came together and were confounded, because each man heard them speaking in his own language. ... They were all amazed and perplexed, saying to each other, 'What does this mean?' Others mocking said, 'These men are full of new wine'" (Acts 2:1-6, 12-13, MEV).

We are often too familiar with the account of Pentecost. Today, perhaps the situation would have gone much differently. As soon as the unusual manifestations of tongue-speaking, the mighty rushing wind, and sound from heaven came forth, a contemporary, far more "sensitive" and "down with it" Peter would have shut down the meeting due to "disorder." He would have sanitized the upper room. He would have asked the 120 fanatics to "take it to the backroom." The upper room was never meant to be shoved into the backroom—it was always meant to set the standard for what the open demonstration of Christianity looks like to a dry and thirsty world.

This story should forever challenge the way we do life and do

church. Why? Consider what drew the multitudes. It wasn't chart-topping music. It certainly wasn't a hip, cool and dynamic speaker. It wasn't the Disney World caliber children's ministry or the cutting-edge technology. Once more, none of these things are bad—God is not throwing them out! He is reorienting our perspectives, as for too long, we've exchanged presence for program. What drew the masses was outpouring, and God has not changed the strategy.

The gravity and urgency of the hour we're living in demands more than the church trying to repackage and represent the world to those living in the world. Newsflash: those living in the world, 24/7, are tired. They're weary. They are thirsty for the otherworldly. Pentecost is a glorious glimpse of what God has intended to be the standard throughout time immemorial: the sound of outpouring drawing the multitudes to Jesus.

Lord, may this sound of outpouring go forth, once again, from the community of God on Earth—the church!

I Vote for the Presence

There is an opinion that is, right now, more contested and controversial than whatever your political preference. It's a "vote" for a return to the centrality of the Holy Spirit in our lives, meetings and church culture. Everything else must take a "back seat."

I do not believe God is calling everyone to become denominationally charismatic.

I do not believe God wants pastors and leaders to simply "go with the flow" of the Spirit and, thus, abandon their programs completely.

I do not believe God is seeking for pastors to stop preaching, worship teams to stop singing, kids ministry to stop operating and church services to increase to a minimum of three hours in

length.

What is God calling for that does demand our unpopular, reputation-risking vote? An unqualified yes from us, here on Earth, to give the Holy Spirit space to move and touch those living in a dry and thirsty land.

We cannot shamefully hide the very person who is the solution to the thirst of every human being on the planet. Let's vote to give Holy Spirit pre-eminence so that the church can, once again, be otherworldly and thus, have the greatest measure of impact on the world around them!