

RT Kendall Warns 'Silent Divorce' Between Word and Spirit Is Crippling American Church

R.T. Kendall is warning that the American Church will not experience genuine awakening until it reunites sound biblical teaching with the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.

During an interview with Tyler Feller, the longtime pastor and theologian said Christians have separated two essential elements of New Testament Christianity.

"In my opinion, there has been a silent divorce in the church between the Word and the Spirit," Kendall said.

Church Must Recover Biblical Truth and Spiritual Power

Kendall said Christians on the "Word side" often emphasize sound theology, including justification by faith, the sovereignty of God and assurance of salvation. Many of them, however, reject the present-day operation of spiritual gifts and miracles.

"We're living in a time when so many evangelical Christians are what is known as cessationists," Kendall said. "They don't believe in the possibility of the miraculous."

Kendall, who identifies as a Calvinist, sharply criticized the belief that miracles and spiritual gifts ended after the first century.

"It's a theory that they've turned into a dogma, and it

quenches the Spirit before the Spirit has opportunity to work," he said.

But Kendall also challenged charismatics who pursue spiritual experiences without developing a firm foundation in Scripture.

"When it comes to so many charismatics, if I may say, so many of them have a theology one inch deep," Kendall said.

He argued that neither sound doctrine without spiritual power nor spiritual activity without biblical depth represents the fullness of the New Testament Church.

"What is needed is the two to come together," Kendall said.



Pre-order R.T. Kendall's New Book, "Holy Fear" on !

The church needs the sound teaching emphasized by believers devoted to the Word, he explained, as well as the "signs, wonders, miracles" and gifts of the Holy Spirit embraced by charismatics.

"Both are exactly right," Kendall said. "But we're living in a time, in my opinion, Tyler, when it's one or the other."

Kendall connected that division to another crisis facing the American Church: the disappearance of the fear of God.

"The fear of God has perished from the church. It's perished from the nation," he said.

He defined the fear of God as "total respect and awe" for the Lord and said it cannot be separated from the gospel. Restoring that reverence will require more than emotional gatherings or abbreviated messages.

Kendall observed that many churches now devote more time to singing and worship than to preaching. Feller described much of what is labeled revival in America as "short sermons and

long experiences.”

True awakening, Kendall said, brings sound preaching, conviction of sin and unmistakable demonstrations of God’s power. He pointed to America’s Great Awakenings as examples of spiritual movements that transformed people and reshaped the nation.

“That is what will restore fear of God to the nation,” Kendall said. “We need both, not one or the other.”

James Lasher, a seasoned writer and editor at Charisma Media, combines faith and storytelling with a journalism background from Otterbein University and ministry experience in Guatemala and at the LA Dream Center. A Marine Corps and Air Force veteran, he is the author of *The Revelation of Jesus: A Common Man’s Commentary* and a contributor to Charisma magazine. For interviews and media inquiries, please contact media@.