

Samuel Rodriguez: This Thanksgiving, Thank God for the Rain

Read Time: 3 Minutes 33 Seconds

No matter how powerful, faithful, brilliant, beautiful, wealthy, educated or accomplished you may be, you overcome because God empowers you with His authority. May we give thanks for God's power in us this season.

The perseverance that leads to blessings can only be motivated by love, gratitude and trust in the living and almighty God. The apostle Paul makes it clear that giving God all areas of our lives is an act of worship: "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship" (Rom. 12:1). We push our plows as a sacrifice to more fully honor the Lord and all He has done, is doing and will do for us.

Although they often last longer than you prefer, droughts end, fires smolder until the skies open and rain falls. Trials may test your patience as fires refine your faith, but your hope will be rewarded when clouds burst with heavenly rain. Through the spiritual reckoning, you trust God to see you through.

Looking back, you see how He has prepared and equipped you for the blessings and resources currently entrusted to you. The rain represents holy restoration and renewal, a quenching of the thirst and filling the hunger experienced during the drought and fire.

In God's Word, He tells us, "And in the proper season I will send the showers they need. There will be showers of blessing" (Ezek. 34:26). As life-giving streams of living water nourish

and hydrate, you realize that God is going to add over here what you lost back there! "The Lord will send rain at the proper time from his rich treasury in the heavens and will bless all the work you do" (Deut. 28:12).

Just like Elijah, you will persevere and wear the Christ-centered, grace-tailored mantle only given after you survive the drought, pray down fire and thrive in the rain. After the holy fire consumed everything on Elijah's altar, Elijah told Ahab, "Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain," (1 Kings 18:41). While the king acted on the prophet's recommendation, Elijah "climbed to the top of [Mount] Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees," (1 Kings 18:42).

After being the conduit of holy confrontation that God used to silence the idolaters, Elijah humbled himself and gave God all the glory. The prophet knew that when you go high, you must bow low! The more you experience God's outpouring of power, grace, peace and abundance, the more praise and thanksgiving should flow out of you.

The apostle Paul says about the Lord, "But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me," (2 Cor. 12:9).

Plowing without grumbling or complaining builds character, strengthens faith and exercises patience. Such practitioners serve God despite fluctuating feelings and frustrations, regardless of circumstances and crises. They persevere when others turn back, give up, abandon their plows and run away. They may not be the most talented, educated, experienced or even strongest. But they are the most faithful, loyal, determined and stubborn.

Rather than being discouraged by the vast fields to be plowed

before seeds sprout and fruit is harvested, these individuals start at the beginning of each new row and push their plows. Step by step, inch by inch, furrow by furrow, they upturn the hard ground to fulfill their dreams. They keep going despite all obstacles blocking the path to progress. These servants of the Lord steward all that He has entrusted to them and push their plows until their mantle arrives.

Today, I pray you will push your plow for God's glory and celebrate how He is preparing you for more.

This Thanksgiving, remember all that God has done to bring you the rain. No matter how powerful, faithful, brilliant, beautiful, wealthy, educated or accomplished you may be, you never reach mountaintops and experience the deluge of restoration in your power. Only by relying on the limitless power of God's Spirit have you reached a point where you can now soak up His goodness.

You overcame because God fought for you, protected, empowered and elevated you.

So, give thanks. {eoa}

This excerpt is courtesy of Chosen Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group (2022) and used by permission.

Bring *Charisma* magazine home with a subscription today!

Samuel Rodriguez is the President of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC), the world's largest Hispanic Christian organization with 42,000 plus U.S. churches and many additional churches spread throughout the Spanish-speaking diaspora. Rodriguez serves as Senior Pastor of New Season Church, one of America's fastest growing megachurches and #13 on Newsmax's Top 50 megachurches in America, with campuses in Los Angeles and Sacramento, CA, where he resides with his wife, Eva, and their three children.