

The Spiritual Countdown Has Begun for Christ's Second Coming

Recently, my son, when walking out of his home to coach his son's Little League baseball game, received a call from his doctor about what he thought was an allergy problem.

The doctor instead explained that Jonathan had mantle cell lymphoma.

Jonathan called it the two minutes that changed his sensitivity of everything around him and in him.

My son is a godly, kind and thoughtful son, husband, father and pastor. In that one moment everything in him and around him changed. Yes, he was shocked—we all were shocked, but our faith in God is not shaken.

He still has three more chemo treatments and stem cell replacement. Brothers and sisters from all over the world have responded in prayer and love, standing with him against this evil attack. The doctor reports have been victorious. It is not over.

Even in the midst of what seemed to be a tragedy in his own life, Jonathan still responded with all of the qualities of a radically transformed leader, and God has been constantly moving in his life and body. Even in the midst of what seems to be tragedy in our own lives and in our country today, we must respond with all of the qualities of a radically transformed leader: aware of the time, awakened to the truth, alert to the problem, aroused to action and active in Christ.

A radically transformed leader occurs by a powerful inward relationship with God. This kind of relationship grows from a

hunger that must see the Holy Spirit awakening in their own life and in everyone around them. Or in the midst of a tragedy, it awakens the heart for an intimate relationship with God, where only He can replace the hurt and release healing for their broken heart.

“Awake, awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. For the uncircumcised and the unclean will no longer enter you” (Isa. 52:1).

It is critical that we awaken our hearts for an intimate relationship with God. Only He can replace the hurt in our world with healing. Only He can release a Holy Spirit awakening.

We talked about the unique hour that we are living in as the body of Christ in our blog last week. *It's unprecedented and unparalleled.*

For several decades, America has been on the slippery slope of spiritual decline. Still, our comfort level hasn't been disturbed significantly. We still maintain unprecedented personal freedoms and religious rights. We have the strongest economy in the world. Comfort and ease have become commonplace. A pervasive status quo mentality asserts that we just need to hold steady because surely, things will balance back to how they have always been.

The spiritual countdown has begun. Like a NASA shuttle about to launch into space, “T-minus 10 and nine and eight...” Moments remain before ignition produces combustion and momentum. In the same way, the countdown has begun both for the church to be taken out of this world and even more importantly, for the King of kings to return to this world for the second time. Heaven's countdown is activated and engaged.

Sadly, what Oswald J. Smith used to say is still true, “Many have never heard of Christ's first coming, let alone His

second one.” The hour has come to be aware of the time! The rapture and second coming loom heavily on the horizon—how incredible to alive. Yet, we must be alert and awake—for a great spiritual awakening among the nations must take place prior to heaven’s control room, announcing, “And we have liftoff” for the church. Only a church aware can participate in heaven’s plan.

As the church, awaiting Christ’s return, we must be aware of the time. We must respond as radically transformed leaders in the midst of tragedy and allow God to move throughout our own lives and in the body of Christ. {eoa}

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