

‘We’re Not Spirit-Filled Enough’: Why Today’s Church Needs an Extreme Makeover

Even today’s most Spirit-filled churches must embrace radical reformation.

Listen to a short podcast as I describe the 2 Chronicles church model, a revelation-driven, prophetic model, that must come to the church, and fast. Then, read this article. It’s time for revolution.

Today’s Spirit-Filled Church Experience

Like most of you, I have quite a memory bank full of church experiences, many of them phenomenal, many of them poor, but most of them quite average, not memorable, good, but honestly disappointing and unsatisfying.

There is a collective roar sounding over our nation, a bellowing cry for an end to church as usual. (By the way, here’s the definition of “bellow”: *emit a deep loud roar, typically in pain or anger*. I think that fits.)

People are no longer impressed by a skilled worship team, a perfect flow, professional preaching or big-dollar theatrics. They want a mighty move of God.

If you listened to the podcast, you’ll understand that I’m attempting to bring distinction between today’s very good Spirit-filled church experience and the radical reformation that must come. We are all familiar with the Sunday ritual:

- Be welcomed by greeters, friends and maybe the pastor.
- Acknowledge the refreshing presence of the Holy Spirit while worshipping for 30-40 minutes or so.

- Shift into a time for the offering and announcements.
- Listen to a decent message.
- Possibly spend some time at the altar as God touches your heart.
- Shake some more hands and then head out to lunch.
- Repeat next Sunday.

This is a good experience. However, it's not the experience that can call down fire, usher in revival or shake the nations. Massive reformation must come to some very good Spirit-filled churches.

Pavement People

And when Solomon finished praying, fire came down from the heavens and consumed the burnt offering and sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests were not able to enter into the house of the Lord, for the glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house. And all the sons of Israel saw when the fire came down and the glory of the Lord came on the temple, and they bowed their faces low to the ground on the pavement, and they worshipped confessing,

*"The Lord is good,
and His mercy endures forever" (2 Chron. 7:1-3).*

I believe a mark of revival just might not be full buildings, but rather empty buildings.

Prayer and sacrifice resulted in fire coming down from heaven and the glory of the Lord filling the place! When that dramatic, supernatural event impacted that building, nobody could enter. They all hit the pavement and worshipped and declared God's goodness! This is the church experience the remnant is crying out for.

Pastors will have to fully stop their pursuits of numeric church growth and shift their efforts to facilitating a white-

hot atmosphere of intercession, groans, tongues of fire and prophetic unction. Understand, the church isn't a house of teaching, a house of friendships, a house of evangelism. It's a house of prayer. If a church isn't praying in the Spirit as the very foundation of its ministry, then all of the rest is compromised. Powerless. Out of order. Every person in the church must be fully devoted to praying in tongues and allowing the groans of the Spirit to burn through them.

Instead producing an order of service that expects more people to be drawn in, pastors must raise the bar, turn up the temperature and contend with the remnant in otherworldly prayer—fully expecting most others to be repelled. The pretenders will be identified, but so will the faithful and hungry. You will find your remnant when you start offering what the remnant is longing for.

We must have a 180-degree response to the ultra-damaging seeker-sensitive movement of recent decades. We can grieve the Holy Spirit no longer by keeping him on a leash, tied up outside the sanctuary. For too long, people have been expected to leave the Holy Spirit (and the manifestations He brings with Him) outside the church building, though they were certainly free to untie Him and take Him home with them if they so chose. Ichabod churches are numerous, and God is absolutely grieved. We should be too.

But let me bring this back to center. It's easy to identify the spiritually dead or the supernaturally resistant churches. This message certainly can target them, but more specifically, it targets the spiritually vibrant churches I identified above.

There are many such churches that are great places to raise a family, to connect with other believers and to worship and grow in God. But, again, I'm sounding an urgent alarm—this church experience is insufficient. In fact, such churches can become breeding grounds of mediocrity. It's easy to attend

such churches and to be casual in our relationship with Jesus. It's easy to be active in sin. It's easy to hide in the shadows.

On the contrary, churches that are marked by fire, with everybody praying in tongues, groaning in the Spirit, crying out for revival and contending for holiness, you cannot hide.

When everybody is praying, walking, crying, living and groaning in the Holy Spirit, when the fire of God sears them, when the challenge is intense and the atmosphere intentionally aggressive, impurities, sins and resistance are exposed. I've seen it time and again.

Sundays must quickly shift. Now. In fact, we are way behind schedule.

Instead of shaking hands and greeting visitors and meeting with friends, people will walk trembling into the sanctuary as a roar of intercession explodes throughout. People will be on their faces with deep supernatural groans erupting out of them. Others will be pacing, repenting, kneeling, crying out or exalting God with great passion.

Instead of sing-alongs and sermons, a revelation-driven church will be filled with prophetic decrees, biblical declarations, groans of intercession and messages that shift atmospheres, all while people are shaking, hungering and crying out for fire to fall and for the Holy Spirit to come.

You might be surprised at how many visitors actually are drawn to such a life-changing and legitimate move of God. You might also be surprised at how many elders, Sunday school teachers, staff pastors, worship leaders, ushers and pillars of the church run for the exits with complaints and curses in their mouths.

This reformation will shake everything that can be shaken, but we can delay no longer.

May the supernatural church arise, and the stigma of Ichabod be decimated as the Holy Spirit manifests in supernatural wonder again. {eo}

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