

Why Greg Laurie Is Believing for a Jesus Revolution in California This Weekend

SoCal Harvest is coming to the Angel Stadium of Anaheim on Aug. 23-25. The free, three-day crusade event will be streamed online on Facebook Live, YouTube Live, Apple TV, CBN and through various broadcast and streaming services. To learn more about SoCal Harvest, visit

Charisma News interviewed Greg Laurie about the event. Read the questions and responses below:

What are you expecting the Holy Spirit to do in this upcoming SoCal event?

Honestly, we are expecting and praying for the same thing we did 30 years ago: that people will come into a saving, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. From the very beginning, Harvest wasn't about the music or the preaching, per se. It was about the gospel, which is as relevant today as it was 30 years ago and even 2,000 years ago. In fact, I believe the gospel has never been more relevant for America. Studies show that Americans today are more hopeless, anxious and worried than ever before. Suicide levels and drug addiction are at record highs. People are not finding the answers to life's deepest questions in drugs, sex, money, fame or anything else this world has to offer. The meaning, hope and peace they are looking for can only be found in the gospel—and if you come to SoCal Harvest, you will hear it.

What are some obstacles you've had to overcome in getting this event going?

Putting a crusade on once, let alone 30 years in a row, is no easy task. There are a million moving parts to it, and

anything at any moment can go wrong. For example, over the years we have had unexpected power outages, flooding, a stage sinkhole and even a skunk that invaded the field! We have also had other kinds of problems, such as pushback from officials, picketers and activists who have tried to hinder our crusades. Most significantly, putting these events on puts us right in the middle of a spiritual battle. This only causes us to depend on God even more. You fight spiritual battles with spiritual weapons (Eph. 6). Through all these interruptions, God has helped us make sure the gospel message is still presented, year after year, decade after decade. We have seen more than 500,000 come on the field and make professions of faith over the last three decades. I also want to say that we have an incredible team that works tirelessly and goes way over and beyond to make each crusade a success, and I believe God has blessed the work of our hands.

What do Christians need to do to see revival erupt in California?

Without fail, every revival movement has included these two elements: unified prayer and public proclamation of the gospel. Unfortunately, these two have been largely lacking in the American church as of late. Too many Christians see sharing the gospel as optional and prayer as their last resort, when it should be the other way around: evangelism is the calling of the church and prayer is our first resort. The church needs to recapture these two elements if we want to see revival in California and America.

You've talked about starting a "21st-century Jesus revolution." What would that look like?

There is nothing I can personally do to start a revival or spiritual revolution. It's interesting to note, that back in the days of the last great American revival, we did not call it a revolution. We called it the "Jesus Movement" and ourselves "Jesus People." Others called us "Jesus Freaks." It

was *Time* magazine that dubbed it the “Jesus Revolution” in a cover story. Only God can send another spiritual awakening to our nation. The church needs revival, and the culture needs a spiritual awakening. Before revival happens in the church, it needs to first happen to us as individuals.

I think we often overly mystify the word “revival” today. It simply means to “Come back to life” or “Return to original condition.” As Christians, we need to, as Jesus told us to “Return to our first love” (Rev. 2). Jesus said to a church that needed reviving, “Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works” (Rev. 2:4–5a, NKJV).

I call this the “3 Rs” of revival. First “we remember” from where we have fallen. It is a form of falling spiritually to leave your first love. You think back and remember the time when you were stronger in your faith than you are today. Secondly, we “repent.” That means to change our direction. Finally, we “repeat” and “Do the first works.”

To sum it up, remember, repent and repeat.

What are some things that are holding the church back from experiencing that revolution?

One of the most effective ways in which the enemy has hindered the church in its mission to carry the gospel to everyone is by sowing division among Christians. How often do we see Christians fighting with each other—over theology or politics—instead of coming together for the sake of the gospel? The polarization and division that we see in America exist in the church as well. We need to come together if we want to see a spiritual revolution that will bring not only us but our country together. If we spent half as much time preaching the gospel as we do tearing one another down, especially on social media, it would make all the difference.

How can people pray for the upcoming event?

SoCal Harvest is this weekend, Aug. 23–25, at the Angel Stadium of Anaheim. We are expecting tens of thousands of people to come in person and many more to join via one of the many streaming options available. We ask Christians to pray for the event to go well, that the production works out, that everyone performing and speaking on stage will be filled with the Spirit and that God will protect us from any accidents or harm during the event. But above all, we ask that you pray for all those people who are coming and are looking for hope, healing, forgiveness, peace and meaning. Pray that the gospel will touch their hearts and they will come into a saving relationship with Jesus. That is the most important prayer we can ask for.