

Spirit-Filled Pastor: 'Business as Usual' Isn't Going to Cut It Anymore

A friend of mine recently attended a large gathering of Christian leaders. When I mentioned how powerful it would be if they added times of prayer, fasting and worship to the schedule, he responded, "That would be a game-changer. But many still have the 'business-as-usual' mentality."

This is not only true at Christian events, but in our homes as well.

One Thing Is Needed

What's it going to take to draw us back to the heart of God? One word—*desperation*.

How many more school districts will be allowed to pervert sex education before we get involved?

How many more universities need to lead our children astray with false ideology before we take a stand?

How many more legislators need to pass wicked laws before we finally wake up?

Even though the world is falling apart and our nation sinks into a moral abyss, there is very little desperation for the things of God. "Business as usual" is not going to cut it! *Without another spiritual awakening there is no hope.*

Instead of Rubbing Elbows, Bend Your Knees

Many focus on posturing, name-dropping and rubbing elbows with superstars. Facebook timelines are full of selfies while prayer closets remain empty. Instead of rubbing elbows, we

need to be bending our knees.

Many gauge success by Twitter retweets and Facebook likes rather than the fullness of the Spirit. They are active on social platforms, but heaven barely knows their names. They focus on atmosphere and ambiance but miss the atmosphere of heaven.

Oh, how it must break the heart of God: He invites us to dine with Him through prayer and fasting, but instead, we feast with King Stomach! There is no lack of food in our meetings, but there is a famine of nearness to the Father. We are full, but it's not with the fullness of the Spirit.

We talk about the desperate need for another spiritual awakening, but are we truly willing to do what it takes to usher it in? As you can see, "business as usual" is not going to cut it.

Don't get me wrong, I'm all for Christian events, but we must focus on humility, prayer, repentance and worship rather than on attendance numbers. God cares about *nearness* more than numbers. As Psalm 51:17 says, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise." He is near to the brokenhearted, not the busy.

Too Bored to Pray, Too Full to Fast

In old biographies, I often read how leaders spent much time in prayer and fasting, even at their conventions and gatherings. For example, at one convention John Hyde wouldn't leave the prayer room until a mighty downpour of God's Spirit came. That's desperation!

Compare that to most of the meeting schedules today—many of us are too full to fast, too bored to pray and too busy to wait on God. Friend, it's actually okay to *ruin* the schedule if it *fixes* our heart.

To say that we have lost our first love is an understatement. We must resurrect the prayer closet and spend time in God's Word before it's too late! That spiritual foundation will never crumble.

Why the Apathy?

The American *Titanic* has been hit, but the ship hasn't gone down yet. Sadly, many are still comfortable and complacent rather than contrite and humble—they draw near to God with their lips but their hearts are far from Him (Matt. 15:8). But it's not too late to keep the ship from sinking completely.

Whenever I've brought up the importance of prayer and worship at events, I've been told there isn't enough time in the schedule for that. People are too busy, they say. How about in your own personal life? Are you too busy for God? If you're too busy for God, you're too busy.

If complacency has slain its thousands, busyness has slain its ten thousands. For example, when a study surveyed nearly 300 Christian leaders who fell into moral sin, one of the top causes was busyness. These leaders became too important and no longer had time for God.

Without intimacy with God, there is no repentance to adjust our moral compass. Pride pushes out a contrite heart, thus paving the way for a massive moral failure.

Big Names Draw Big Numbers

We don't always need big names—we need humble hearts. I'd rather hear from an unknown speaker who has heard from heaven than a leader who has millions of followers but lacks the anointing of God.

I can hear it now, "But Shane, we need big names to draw big numbers!" If this is you, stop what you're doing and reread this article. Even after that, get on your face and pray that

God would ignite you with the passion and power of the Spirit.

Please don't misunderstand, I thank God for national Christian leaders who stand up for the truth (we need more of them), and I love attending conferences. But they must be built on the *right* foundation and focused on the *right* priorities.

Our Finest Hour

Without a doubt, the one thing that always stands out about genuine spiritual awakenings is that they are birthed in the inner chamber of prayer as well as obedience to God's Word.

The famous football coach Vince Lombardi once said: "I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle—victorious."

"Business as usual" is not going to cut it in these dire times. I truly believe that our finest hour will come when we have labored for the Lord and lie exhausted on the field of battle—victorious.

Special note: Watch the sermon, "Is This Our Last Stand" here—part 2 of the message will be posted after 3/19/22.

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