

God Said: 'This Is Just a Taste of What Is Coming'

Last weekend, I led a men's discipleship retreat at a church in Augusta, Georgia. Of the 125 men who attended, there were African-Americans, Ukrainians, Hispanics, Indian-Americans, Brazilians and white guys—and more than a third of them were spiritually hungry teens or 20-somethings. (Those who say young people in the United States aren't interested in Christianity don't attend the same meetings I do.)

We had a special time together—worshiping Jesus, sharing meals, opening our hearts in small groups, listening to messages from both older and younger speakers (the youngest preacher was 25) and praying for racial healing in our nation. Over the course of three days, some guys were delivered from porn, others were reconciled with their dads and many decided to begin mentoring other guys in the faith.

But something happened on the last morning that I felt I needed to share with my *Charisma* family.

After the last message, I asked my Bolivian friend Ives Orozco to come to the stage with his father-in-law, Fernando Villalobos. I knew a bit of Fernando's testimony. He had been a part of the sweeping revival that occurred in Bolivia in the 1970s, and I wanted him to share a few stories from those days and then pray for us.

I was not prepared for what happened next.

Fernando is not a shouting preacher. He is very humble and soft-spoken, but when he took the microphone the atmosphere in the room shifted immediately. I felt the hairs stand up on the back of my neck.

Fernando began to tell a story about how Julio Ruibal, the

leader of the revival movement in Bolivia, had been baptized in the Holy Spirit while visiting California. When he returned to the city of La Paz, he led many students to Christ and was busy discipling them. One day, he asked a Christian woman to prepare a meal for 20 students—but when Julio arrived at her home he had 200 students with him!

When the woman worriedly complained that she didn't have enough food to serve the crowd, Julio told her that Jesus would provide. Then everyone watched as the meal was supernaturally multiplied. What Jesus did for a multitude 2,000 years ago was repeated in a modest home in South America.

"Jesus is here," Fernando said to us.

I have listened to countless miracle testimonies before. But when this broken man stood near the stage at Good News Church in Augusta, it was almost as if the same revival spirit that hit Bolivia more than 50 years ago entered the room.

Men spontaneously got up and walked or crawled to the front of the church. Some were kneeling, others were flat on their stomachs. I began to hear many of them sobbing. Within five minutes it became a chorus of wailing. It reminded me of some accounts I have read from the Great Awakening, when people were overcome by the presence and convicting power of the Holy Spirit.

Fernando did not ask for mood music, and he didn't manipulate the audience to get a response. He didn't tell anyone to cry. He simply reminded us that the same God who poured out the Holy Spirit on Bolivia in the early 1970s—resulting in hundreds of thousands of conversions over a four-month period—was with us now.

As I lay on the carpet in that church I thought of all the times I have prayed in the past year for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit on my generation.

Then I felt the Lord speak to my heart: “This is just a taste of what is coming.”

That is all I needed to know to be convinced. A fresh wave of God’s power is headed toward the United States. The Lord has heard the cries of His people, and He is about to do again what He did in the early 1970s—only this time young people will be catapulted to the forefront of the movement, and it will not be divided by race.

I pray we all have our lamps full of oil so we can be ready for this visitation. Pray and expect the tangible presence of God to rock your world. We are on the verge of something big.

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