

How Mario Murillo Affected the Direction of My Life

This month's cover story on Mario Murillo means a lot to me because of his impact on my own life and ministry. As you will read in our article, the Lord has given him a huge influence at a time when we need a fresh move of God. That's why Murillo was one of my main sources for my new book, *God and Cancel Culture*, which outlines what's happening in America and how we face having Christianity canceled if we don't take a stand before it's too late.

However, my book is not all doom and gloom. As believers, we know God has plans and purposes we don't understand. I believe good things will happen in spite of all the negative trends we see around us. In fact, Murillo helped give me the word picture "Hurricanes of Revival," which became one of my chapter titles.

"One of the patterns for revival that Jesus referred to was weather," Murillo told me. "He said, 'You see the color of the sky and the cloud formations, and you know what's coming, and you don't discern the signs of the times.'"

Murillo said the big flashing sign of the times today is spiritual hunger and a vacuum of answers. When a vacuum of good exists, something must rush in to fill it. Observing the cultural signs, Murillo believes it is "inevitable that the revival is coming."

"The natural hunger for God is something that no atheist can abolish, no university can ban," he said. "No human engineering is ever going to be capable of erasing man's deep desire to know God and the inner emptiness they feel. When you create a culture where you don't know what gender you are, or what love is, you don't know what's up, what's down, what's

truth, what's false or who you can believe—all of a sudden, these deep, eternal yearnings rise to the surface, and people turn to God.”

Just like a hurricane. In fact, Murillo and many others believe the spiritual vacancy and hunger are so profound that “When God’s Spirit falls on a culture that is starved for truth, it will overrun the walls of the church.” We have seen this happen many times through history in the great revivals we now honor and celebrate.

“The hunger is there,” Murillo says. “The tide of spiritual awareness has gone out so far that the youth are starved. It could be a new Jesus Movement; it could be something else. But anyone who supposes that something big is not at work is going to miss it.”

God and Cancel Culture contains additional insights from Murillo. But his statement that there is a hurricane of revival should give us all hope. This is not the first time in history things have looked bleak or that history was altered by a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Things were pretty bleak when God gave Martin Luther the revelation that the just shall live by faith.

We can also point to many Spirit-birthed events that changed the trajectory of our nation, such as the First and Second Great Awakenings, the Azusa Street Revival of 1906, the charismatic renewal movement of the late 1950s and 1960s and the Jesus Movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. One of the early leaders of the Jesus Movement was Mario Murillo, who, at age 19, founded a ministry called Resurrection City on the campus of the University of California at Berkeley.

At one point I visited Resurrection City just to see what was happening. Two other times I attended meetings where Murillo ministered. At one, God dramatically healed my back. At the other, I distinctly remember responding to a call from God to

serve Him with my whole heart no matter what. Over the years I have stayed in touch with Murillo, and I've told him how much that ministry transformed my life. I have no doubt that what I received under his ministry and decisions I made in those services directly influenced what I'm doing today.

You can understand why it means so much to me to cover Murillo's ministry after all these years. Each of us has probably been impacted by Christian leaders as Murillo impacted me. But we must also understand that we impact the lives of others God may use in future decades and remain sensitive to letting God use us as He used Murillo in my life.

Stephen Strang is the founding editor of Charisma. His latest book, *God and Cancel Culture*, released Sept. 7.

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