Witness to the Culture

One thing is abundantly clear: We live in an uncertain time, where division, hatred and evil are on the rise. Disagreements over race, gender, culture and more are dividing our society as people choose sides and vilify one another. These challenges impact the church too, resulting in a time where we no longer only face persecution from outside influences, but discord and dissension from within the family of God.

I firmly believe the Spirit is calling for yet another Great Awakening. The challenges of this hour demand a church that is fervently, humbly and passionately surrendering to the Holy Spirit through prayer and fasting. I believe if the church does not rise and respond to the call, we stand to miss the greatest revival this world has ever witnessed and so desperately needs. I believe the Spirit is calling for no less than a reformation, with Jesus Christ at the center of it all.

As I lean in to hear what the Spirit is saying about the hour in which we live, I believe there are specific areas in which He is leading us:

Young adults. Many young adults and professionals are walking away from our churches. I believe the enemy has convinced many of us that this battle is unwinnable. For many in my generation, we believe this is an issue of commitment—that these young people are drawn to comfort, ease and entertainment. What we fail to see are the unique passions and desires God has breathed into them to position them to impact our world.

As I talk to next-generation leaders all around the world, I hear a fervent desire to see an authentic move of the Holy Spirit at a level unlike past generations. They have a deep hunger that will only be satisfied by an encounter with the living Savior. They want their lives to count for something

and are willing to embrace pain and sacrifice to make a difference. For the church to fulfill our mission in this critical hour, we must seek ways to not only disciple, but also empower and release this generation.

Culture. Jesus was often at odds with the leaders and prevailing culture of His time. As we follow Jesus and strive to be like Him, we too will find ourselves at odds with most of the world today. We cannot afford to remain silent when the eternity of souls, the integrity of God's Word and the persecution of the church are at stake.

Homosexuality, abortion, gender identity, feminism and refugee migration are all moral issues we face as a church. For the most part, the church has remained silent. We slumber while the enemy invades—stealing destinies and robbing us of our witness.

We must look prayerfully and critically within the walls of the church as well. Sin in the church, false teaching and poor discipleship must be corrected. For the church to fulfill her mission in this critical hour, we must unashamedly and correctly preach the truth of God's Word with a spirit of love and hope.

Women. For the most part, what we read in the Bible is about men in leadership. Only two books in the Bible bear the name of women: Esther and Ruth. But when we come to the New Testament, we find that even though Jesus chose 12 men to be with Him, women were a vital part of His ministry and the ministry of the early church. He spoke to, visited and served with women.

People meant more to Jesus than traditions, and His ministry involved everyone—men, women and children. He broke down the wall that separated people, including Jewish tradition, by allowing women to be a part of His ministry. Jesus liberated women and gave them equal status. I believe churches and

denominations must prayerfully study the role of women in ministry. For the church to fulfill our mission, we must value, validate and release all people to fulfill their God-called purposes, regardless of age, race or gender.

The time has come for us to awaken. These are only three areas in which I believe the Holy Spirit seeks to stir us. If we remain silent on these issues and fail to give straightforward answers to probing questions, we give room for the enemy to cause confusion and create a lack of confidence among God's people. We must do as Scripture instructs us and make sure the trumpet gives a clear call (1 Cor. 14:8).

I do not envision the church remaining in a valley of dry bones. I see the Spirit of God breaking forth. I see sons and daughters rising up. I see a mighty army rising up to storm the strongholds of Satan and break down the gates of hell. Revival is coming to the nations!

Bishop Sam Clements is the general overseer of the Church of God of Prophecy.

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