

GOD & CANCEL CULTURE | NEW GLORY RISING | 9/11 20TH ANNIVERSARY

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SEPTEMBER 2021

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT



Heart Cry of a Generation

The inside story of **Maverick City Music**,
the worship collective releasing a new
sound of revival

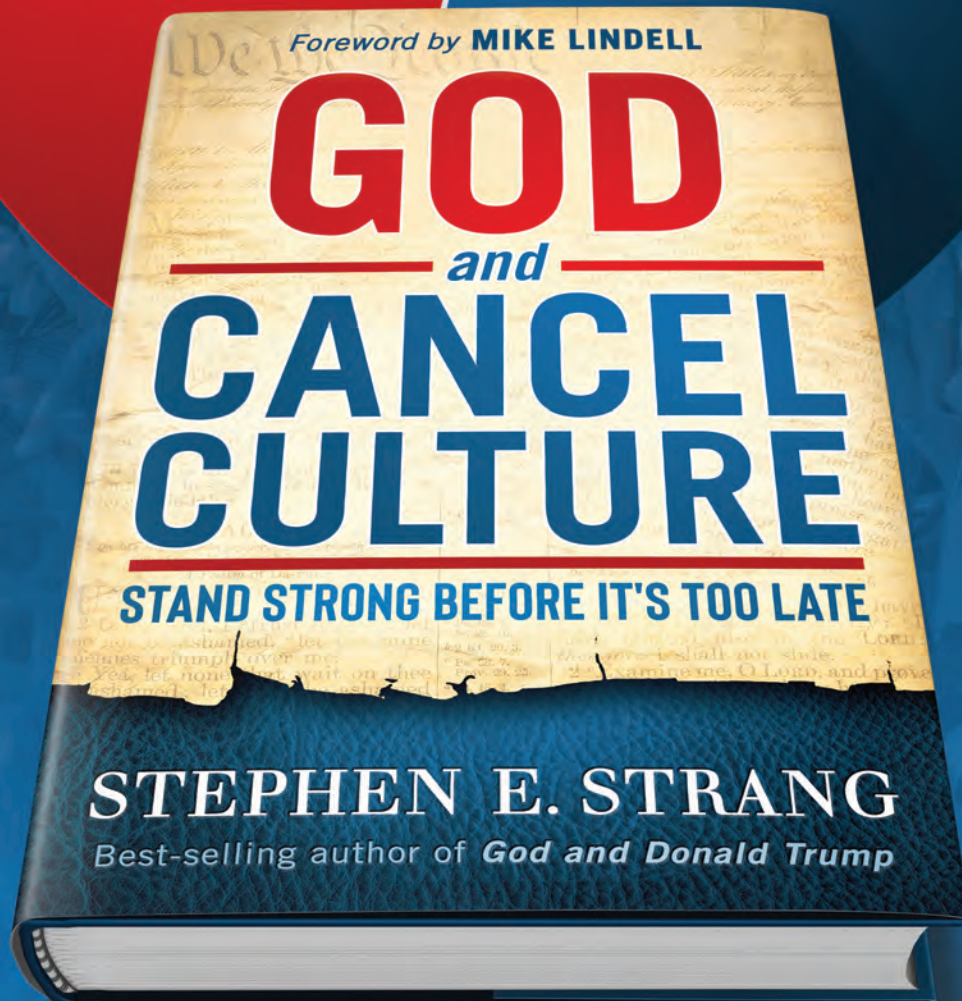
STEPHEN STRANG'S
NEW BOOK



See Page 38

64% OF AMERICANS BELIEVE *CANCEL CULTURE* IS A THREAT TO THEIR FREEDOM.

Where is GOD in ALL OF THIS?



Things are chaotic in America. Liberal policies are advancing. A rash of executive orders appears to be moving the nation close to socialism and a one-world government. And conservatives, including many Christians, are being censored as never before. In *God and Cancel Culture*, find out what best-selling author Stephen E. Strang says Christians must do for our future **before it's too late.**

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Peter Aiello

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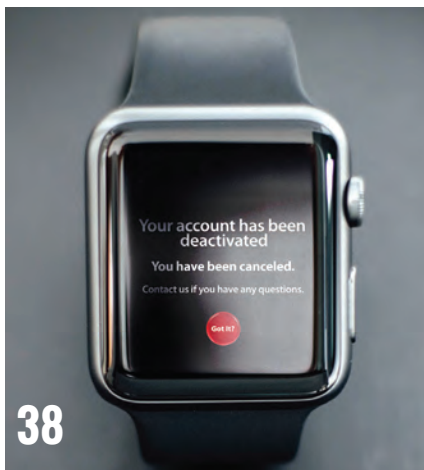
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"We must continue to trust Him whether we receive our miracle or not."

—D. Conder

BRAVO FOR CHARISMA COVER STORY

I want to commend *Charisma* magazine for doing a cover story on gospel singer Tasha Cobbs Leonard ("She's Still Breaking Chains," June-July), and for many reasons. Her lyrics "there is power in the name of Jesus, to break every chain" are truly inspirational to people who are hurting emotionally and who give in to the lies of the devil. Great story by Adrienne Gaines, and thank you again, *Charisma*.

Morris Jay, Lincoln, IL.

IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS

Knowing his track record for community outreach, it was great to see Pastor Choco De Jesus' article "A Lifestyle of Love" in the June-July issue of *Charisma* magazine. The subhead, "Love isn't a strategy. Love is a person, and He is calling us to share Him," says it all. It's all about Jesus. I especially loved the anecdote about the woman who had been in his church for 37 years and confessed she finally realized how much God loved her and how she can now love others. I don't know him personally,

but leave it to Pastor Choco to get to the heart of what Christianity is all about.

Kimberly Squires, Ft. Collins, CO.

WHERE IS MY HEALING?

Many of us believers have asked the question, "Where is my healing?" When God doesn't heal us, or He takes His time to do so, it makes us sometimes doubt our faith. But I loved Sarah Bowling's answers to the question in her article "When Healing Doesn't Come" (*Charisma*, June-July). We must continue to trust Him whether we receive our miracle or not. Like Sarah says, from Psalm 136, "understanding that God's lovingkindness endures forever has been a steady anchor for my soul." Take that one to heart.

D. Conder, Johnston City, IL.

WATCH OUT FOR SPIRITUAL LONE RANGERS

I always enjoy reading Lee Grady's column, Fire in My Bones. His article "Beware of Spiritual Lone Rangers" (*Charisma*, June-July) was right on the money.

Mike Lee, Deltona, FL.

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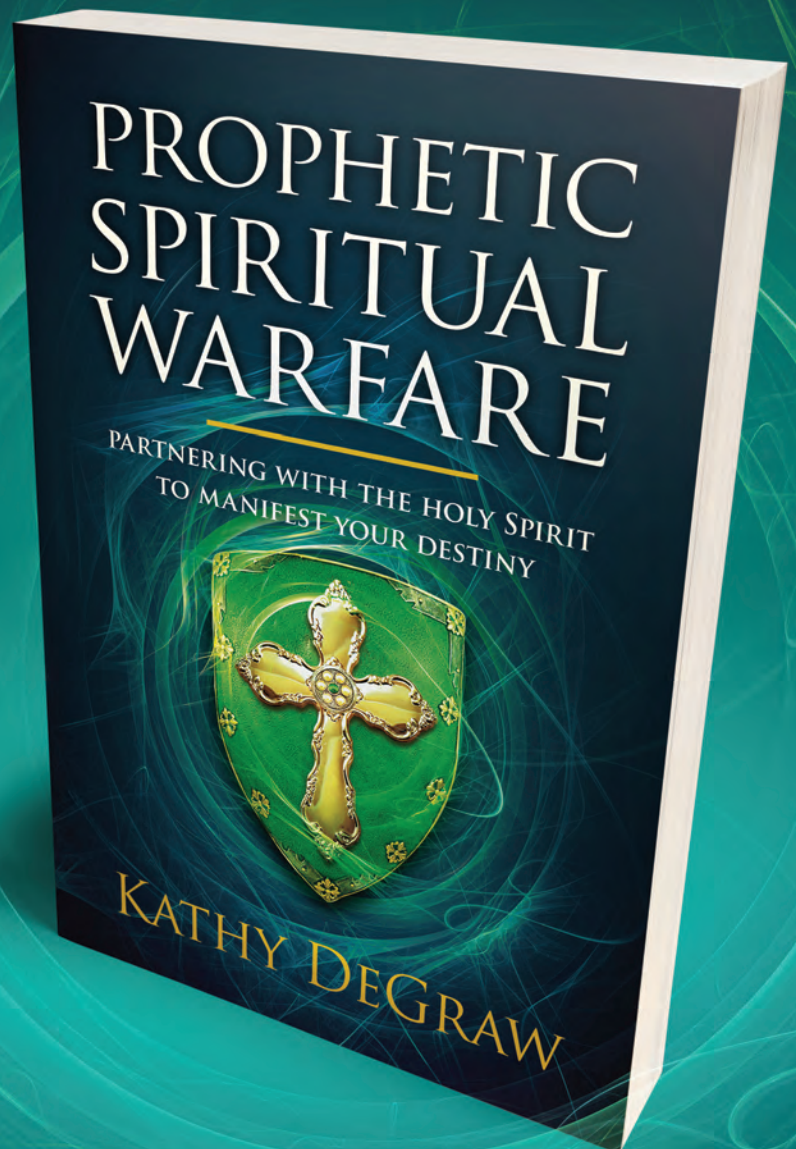


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Burning in the Spirit

Joseph Mattera teaches us how to move away from burnout and frustration

I submitted a theme in an English Composition class one day in which I described watching a house burn down. I received a Pavlovian reward in the form of an A, but a question my teacher posed disturbed me: "Does a house burn up or burn down?"

That question burned me up for years. I certainly never wrote the phrase again until now. But the word-choice challenge did prepare me to consider other similar quandaries: write down or write up, beat up or beat down, tear up or tear down?

I recently finished reading Joseph Mattera's book *The Jesus Principles*. He wrote it to help readers unleash greatness in themselves, their homes and their circles of influence. The principles he shares are those Jesus used to unleash human potential.

The book grabbed my attention quickly with seven questions to help me consider whether I'm currently living a directed life or drifting aimlessly toward the latest shiny object.

One of those questions took me back to that high school English Composition class: "Are you suffering burnout?"

The Mayo Clinic describes burnout with a non-medical description: "Job burnout is a special type of work-related stress—a state of physical or emotional exhaustion that also involves a sense of reduced accomplishment and loss of personal identity." The clinic offers the following list to consider:

- » Have you become cynical or critical at work?
- » Do you drag yourself to work and have trouble getting started?
- » Have you become irritable or impatient with co-workers, customers or clients?
- » Do you lack the energy to be consistently productive?
- » Do you find it hard to concentrate?
- » Do you lack satisfaction from your achievements?
- » Do you feel disillusioned about your job?

Whether we believe we're suffering from burnout or not, we all sometimes feel as though we are drifting through our work, our relationships and our spiritual walk. Some of us haven't recovered from the multiple impacts caused by COVID.

Things simply feel harder. Progress comes with more struggles, more effort and many more distractions. Some days, it just feels as though we are tied by a leash.



"When we lose our sense of passion and purpose, it's a good sign that our boat is adrift."

Another question Mattera asks cuts straight to the heart of a drifter: *Are you experiencing continuous frustration?*

If we aren't pursuing God's specific path for our life, it's likely that we experience many frustrations throughout the day. God lets us know when we are drifting. He sends us several wake-up calls.

When we lose our passion and purpose, it's a good sign that our boat is adrift. We may feel increased anxiety with every project we attempt and feel blocked by circumstances and feelings. We know the motions to go through and boxes to check. But motions and checkmarks don't satisfy the sense that God has more for us.

Frustration breeds more frustration. How can we influence others when we lack clarity of purpose?

Jesus accomplished more in his three short years of ministry than we can hope to accomplish in a lifetime. Yet we see no signs of frustration as the Savior walked through life. We see no signs of burnout, even when He spent hours ministering to large crowds.

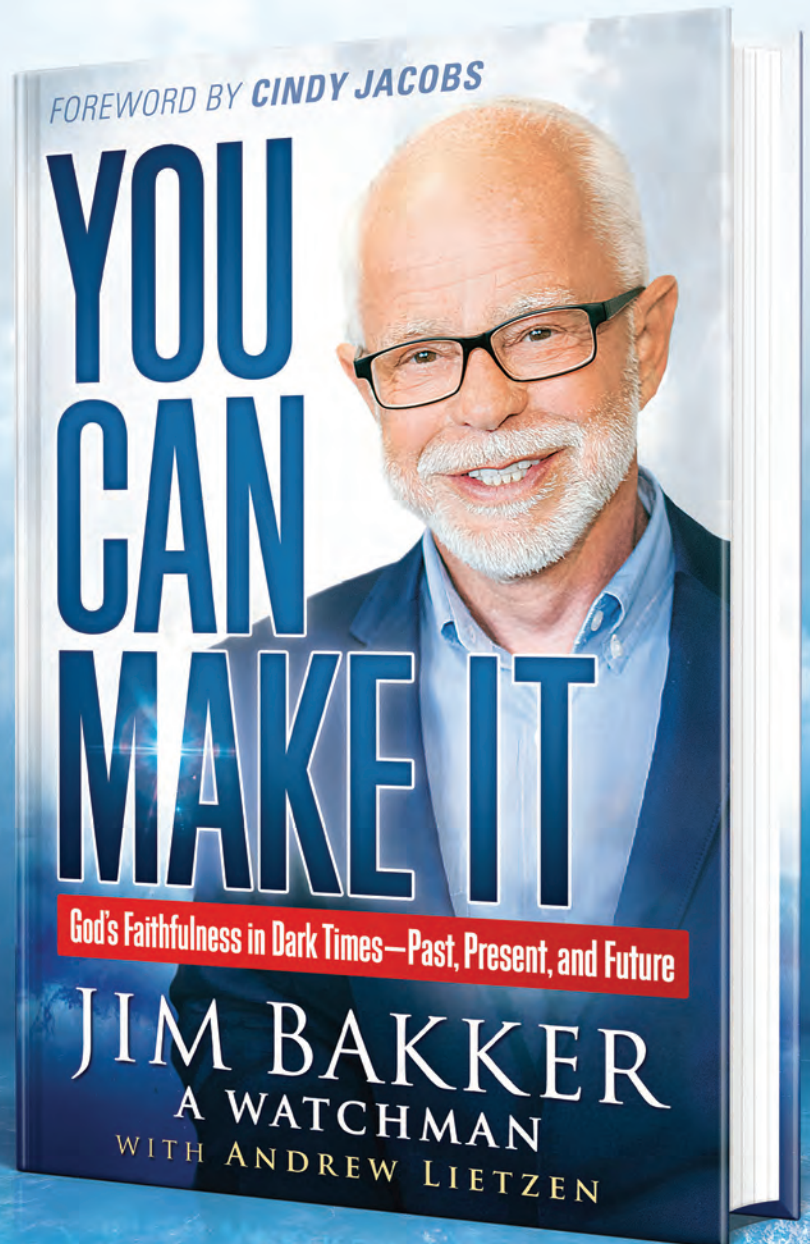
Instead, Jesus offered a simple, wise solution: "Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile." He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat" (Mark 6:31, NLT).

If you're feeling frustrated or burned out, check your rest meter. Find that quiet place with Him. Only He can transform a life of burnout to one burning with the Spirit of God.

DR. STEVE GREENE is the publisher and executive vice president of the multimedia group at Charisma Media and executive producer of the Charisma Podcast Network. His Charisma House book, *Love Leads*, shows that without love, you cannot be an effective leader. Sign up for his free "5 Things I Learned Last Week" and "Greenelines" newsletters, and download his Greenelines and At Work With God podcasts at greenelines.com.

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No matter what you are facing, you can MAKE IT.

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The Lord Says, ‘Cast Out Your Nets’

Are you ready for a surprising spiritual breakthrough after this long and difficult pandemic season?

I rarely use this column to share a word of prophecy. But for months, a message from the Holy Spirit has been rising in my heart. Christians all across the nation sense a similar stirring.

Everywhere I go, I encounter weary Christians and stressed-out church leaders who have been slogging through the challenges of this pandemic season. Some feel disoriented after months of online church meetings. Others have seen church members drift away during the quarantine. Still others are on the verge of a breakdown because of spiritual warfare, tension in relationships or overwhelming discouragement.

It reminds me of how the disciple Peter must have felt after fishing all night and catching nothing. Peter had failed the Lord. He had denied Jesus three times. He assumed he was disqualified. He went back to his old fishing career, but he couldn't even do that successfully. There were no fish in his nets.

But then the resurrected Jesus called from the shore. He said confidently, “Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you will find *the fish*” (John 21:6b, NASB).

Peter recognized the familiar voice of His Savior. He felt ashamed for denying Jesus, yet Jesus gave him another chance. Peter hesitantly threw the net back into the sea, and the fish swarmed in the water. The net wasn't strong enough to contain the catch.

This miracle was Jesus' way of showing Peter he was still in the game—and God would bring a spiritual breakthrough. It would only be a few more weeks before the day of Pentecost, when 3,000 people decided to follow Jesus after Peter's first attempt at mass evangelism (see Acts 2:1–41).

Many of us feel like Peter after he had fished all night. We are tired. We wonder if our labor is making a difference. We see aging congregations, ineffective methods of ministry and an increasingly secular culture that is hostile to our faith.

But I hear the voice of the Lord calling from the shore. He invites us to put our nets into the water—not in the same ways we did before, but on “the right side.” He invites us to try new methods, shift our paradigms and toss old traditions. He promises a surprise after a long season of fruitlessness.

Many churches I have visited in the past several months are beginning to see an unexpected harvest. Many pastors have told me that new people who never attended church in the past are showing up at their services as congregations are meeting in person again.

My friend Josh Lindquist is a 37-year-old evangelist who leads Global Harvest Revival in Minneapolis. Before the pandemic, he spent most of his time preaching overseas because



“We can't sleep during the harvest season.”

he felt people were more open to receive the gospel in foreign countries. But today he is witnessing a new spiritual openness in the United States.

Lindquist has been working with two national ministries—Sean Feucht Ministries and Awaken the Dawn—to conduct bold evangelism campaigns in major cities. Awaken the Dawn's goal is to set up 100 tents all across the United States to mobilize community-wide outreaches. Lindquist has seen dramatic displays of repentance at these events.

“I've seen people bringing their drugs, meth and vapes to the altars,” he says. “Usually I see this type of response overseas, but I'm seeing such a desperation here, especially among young people. There is a huge hunger.”

We can't miss this moment. We can't sleep during the harvest season. The Lord is saying to us:

“I have not given up on this nation. I will draw the broken, the hopeless and the hungry, and I will pour out My mercy on them. Prepare your nets and use them. Open your hearts wide and preach with compassion. My Spirit will empower you to reach the lost. Don't rely on old religious methods. I will give you creative strategies, new ideas, new partnerships and a message that is soaked in My love and forgiveness, not condemnation or judgment.

“Expect even the rebels, the prodigals, the addicts and the skeptics to surrender to Me. Cry out for the rain of My Spirit. Expect to be shocked by the level of response. Then preach with boldness, and I will give you a catch you cannot contain.”

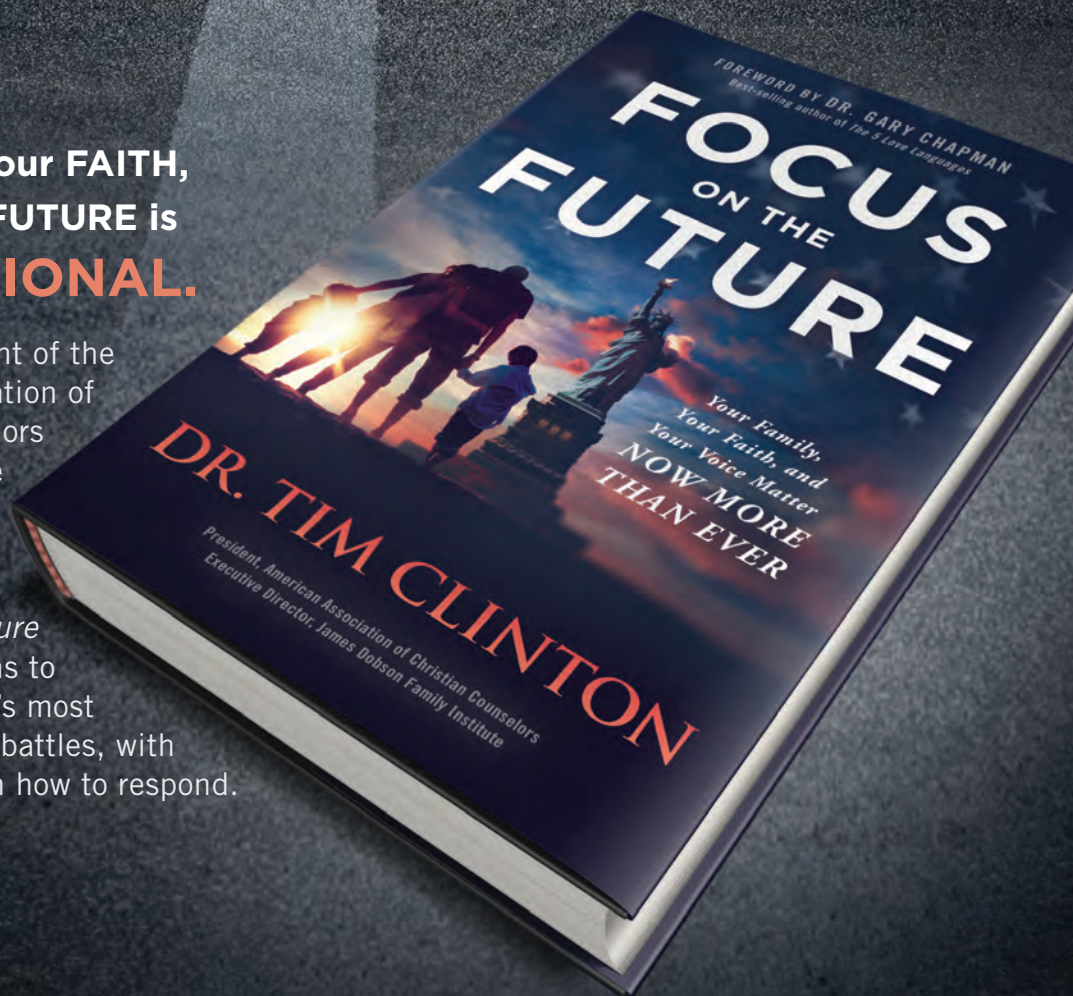
J. LEE GRADY was editor of *Charisma* for 11 years and now serves as contributing editor. He directs *The Mordecai Project* (themordecainproject.org), an international ministry that protects women and girls from gender-based violence. His latest book is *Set My Heart on Fire* (Charisma House).



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Simple Keys to Live with Confidence Every Day

Living by grace through faith can enable you to live the Spirit-filled life

God has a great plan for each person, and He wants us to enjoy every day of our lives. But we can't do it if we live in fear and lack confidence.

Confidence is the belief that you're able to do what you need to do or what you want to do. God gives us confidence, but we need to know how to access it by faith.

God-given confidence is actually the grace of God. We usually hear grace defined as God's undeserved favor or God doing something for you that you don't deserve. But it's really more than that.

It was life-changing when I learned that grace is also God's power, freely given to me, to enable me to do with ease what I could never do on my own with any amount of struggle or effort.

Think about this for a minute: Everyone who accepts Christ as their Savior is saved by grace through faith. Ephesians 2:8 (NIV) says, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God."

And the same way we are saved is the way we are supposed to live. In other words, once we are born again, God wants us to do *everything* in life by grace through faith.

I remember how exciting it was to realize that God is not just there to help us when we have an emergency. God wants to be involved in every single thing we do on a daily basis.

There's nothing you're involved in that God doesn't care about, and He wants you to pray and ask Him to help you with every detail of your life. He doesn't want you to continually strive in your own effort to do anything. God wants to be your close, personal, intimate friend.

I was a Christian for years before I learned how to access God's grace—His power—to live my everyday life. First, I had to get an understanding that once I was saved, God didn't expect me to live right by my own strength.

Just as I couldn't "earn" salvation through my own works or effort, I also couldn't really change my heart or behavior in my own strength. Jesus says in John 15:4b, "No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

Every day we need to come to God and tell Him, "God, I can do nothing without You. Nothing in my life is going to work without You. Apart from You, there is nothing good in me. My confidence is in You. I need You all the time. I believe You and trust You, Lord."

When we humble ourselves before God and ask Him for help, we can access His grace through faith.



"God can empower you to do anything you need to do."

To help you do that, I want to share three things that commonly short-circuit our faith, cutting off our access to God's power: complaining, self-pity and pride.

» **Complaining** is a negative attitude that keeps us from being thankful for all God has done, what He's doing and what He will do. It is a sin we need to repent of, and then be determined to thank God in all things, at all times. His grace and goodness always outweigh the things we think are wrong in our lives.

» **Self-pity** is simply a "poor me" attitude. It causes you to focus on yourself and think, "What about me?" We can't be pitiful and powerful at the same time, so let's decide to give up all self-pity.

» **Pride takes** credit for what God has done and steals His glory. It makes us independent of God, and we can't bear good fruit apart from Christ.

Before I learned how to live my life by God's grace, I was a mess. I was a nagging wife, manipulative and controlling. And I wasn't satisfied living like that. Then God helped me by opening my eyes to see that I couldn't really change until I started taking His Word seriously, trusting Him to change me.

When I made a firm decision to pray and study the Word in areas where I was weak, God's grace gave me the power I needed to overcome the things that were wrong. And I keep going forward in my journey with God the same way today.

God can empower you to do anything you need to do. He loves you and wants you to enjoy your life every day. You can do it when you live with God-given confidence!

JOYCE MEYER is a *New York Times*' bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries Inc. She has authored 130 books, including *Battlefield of the Mind* and her newest devotional, *Quiet Times With God (FaithWords)*. She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit joycemeyer.org.

A Vision of the Harvest

God is calling 'Gideons' to their appointed place

I was physically taken to my future one evening while praying. We lived in Texas at the time, and because my busy ministry schedule consumed my daytime hours, I skipped dinner each night and spent four or five hours of uninterrupted prayer time walking with the Lord. I wasn't trying to fast; I just wanted time with Jesus.

One night while walking, I instantly knew I had an audience with God. I was down here, and He was up there—yet there was a connection. His voice sounded almost as though it were coming through a pipe.

God the Father said, "You have my full attention. Tell me, what is it that you want, Georgian?"

I stood there and thought, *Don't say anything stupid! You have the attention of the Godhead, God the Father!* I knew I wasn't smart enough to answer God.

I prayed, "Holy Ghost, this is it. Say something. Helper, help me!"

The Holy Ghost punched me in the stomach, and a quick thrust of air came out of my mouth. With a jolt, I gasped out the word "souls!"

Thanks to the help of the Holy Ghost, the word "souls" whistled through that pipeline, and I sensed the Father's pleasure with my answer. Immediately, my knees buckled, and I collapsed facedown into the dirt.

Upon hitting the ground, I was physically taken into my future. When my face hit the dirt, I didn't feel the impact. I was in another place and another time. I found myself standing on a stage inside a stadium packed with thousands of people, all worshipping the Lord. I was not young anymore, but I still had energy. There were many others on the stage, and it was my turn to speak. With God's hand upon me, I began making declarations such as, "God is here! The King of glory is here! Lord, we worship You!"

I watched the cloud of the glory of God enter into the stadium like a fog. Traveling in from the top bleachers, the cloud rolled down row by row, slowly blanketing the entire stadium. The cloud was so thick that the most I could see was a reflection from the eyes of people being covered with God's glory.

Finally, the cloud reached the stage where I stood and covered it like a wave. All of us on the stage fell prostrate. The moment I hit the stage, I found myself back in Texas, facedown in the dirt.

I was shown things to come—a great harvest of souls brought to Him in glory as we, the church, declare the enormity and magnitude of our God.



"Will we hide in fear or lead our generation to Christ?"

All around me, I see that our society is in the throes of a war waged by the enemies of the cross. The enemy knows the Bible says there will be a final great harvest in the last days, and he is seeking to devour that harvest. He is after our generation. Will we hide in fear or lead our generation to Christ?

I am reminded of Gideon. Every year, the enemies of Israel invaded their land and annihilated their harvest like a horde of locusts. The economy was devastated, and people hid out in caves, filled with fear. The angel of the Lord found Gideon hiding inside a winepress, trying to salvage some of his harvest. Gideon thought he was a nobody, but the angel of the Lord said, "The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor" (Judg. 6:12b).

Gideon was frightened at first, but then the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and 30,000 people came out of their caves! Gideon's leadership drew them out of their fearfulness. Gideon thought he was the runt of the litter, yet God used him to prepare 300 men to oppose 135,000 Midianite soldiers. First, God weeded out the fearful. The 300 who were left were trumpeters, proclaimers and torchbearers. In one night, 135,000 enemy soldiers were wiped out. From that day forward, nothing could hinder the harvest of God's people!

Today God is mobilizing a growing company of believers who have returned to their first love. These saints will not be intimidated by the enemy but stand against fear and declare that Jesus and His harvest are coming. Jesus is Lord of the harvest, and that harvest will be filled with the glory of God!

Lovingly referred to as the "Joy Apostles," GEORGIAN AND WINNIE BANOV are a radical team with a powerful message. They travel extensively conducting revival meetings and conferences worldwide. Their presentation of the gospel is with rare clarity and depth, causing changed lives, healing and freedom from the past and religious bondages.



Clay Clark's Health and Freedom Conference in Tampa, FL (Reopen America Tour with General Flynn)

Clay Clark and Gen. Michael Flynn's ReAwaken America Tour Goes Viral

The tour carries with it increased optimism and hope for restoration

What organizer Clay Clark calls the BOOM, Big Optimistic Overwhelming Momentum, continues to increase. Without exception, each of the planned ReAwaken America conferences sells out long before the scheduled date. If you are thinking of attending, get your tickets in advance.

The exponential synergy from the event success in Oklahoma and Florida has attracted many well-known, highly respected patriot leaders: Gen. Michael Flynn, Patrick Byrne, Mike Lindell, Roger Stone, Sean Feucht, Amanda Grace, Scott McKay, Pastor Leon Benjamin and many more. There are more than 50 speakers on the main roster with more added daily. Clark reports

people are contacting him to ask to be a part of the event; that's how powerful the momentum is. At a time when some attempted to impose fear and intimidation to gain control of America and the people, organizers are observing an awakening of the people, who reject tyranny and oppression and want to see evil overcome with good. Clay Clark's ReAwaken America Tour is bringing increased optimism that our nation can be restored for and by the people as one nation under God.

The next events will be in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Sept. 24-25 and San Antonio, Texas, Nov. 11-13, 2021. To learn more, visit thrivetimeshow.com/reawaken-america-tour/. Text to get your tickets: 918-851-0102 or purchase online.

'Don't Fear Men, Fear God,' Canadian Pastor Tells Church After Serving 18 Days in Jail

Pastor Tim Stephens urges other
believers to continue proclaiming Christ



Pastor
Tim Stephens

After 17 nights and 18 days, Canadian pastor Tim Stephens walked away from his Calgary, Alberta, Canada, jail cell and, with tears in his eyes, delivered a heartfelt sermon in which he urged congregants not to fear taking a stand for Christ.

Stephens was arrested June 14 after his underground church met for the second week in a row following the shutdown of its campus for violating province COVID-19 rules. He had previously been arrested May 16 and spent two nights in jail.

Stephens' wife, Raquel, posted her elation on Instagram, quoting Hebrews 13:23a (ESV), "You should know that our brother Timothy has been released" and adding that "Alberta lifted all health restrictions including the ones that required him to tell people what to wear, where to stand, not to come to church, and not to practice hospitality."

Stephens told his congregation he was "encouraged that many of you were strengthened and emboldened in your faith."

IRS Reverses Course, Grants Tax-Exempt Status to Christian Nonprofit

The IRS has now granted tax-exempt status to Christians Engaged, a Texas-based nonprofit to which it had previously refused the 501(c)3 designation, First Liberty Institute announced. The reversal comes after a national outcry against the IRS' initial rejection, which the government agency claimed came because "[B]ible teachers are typically affiliated with the [Republican] party



and candidates." Christians Engaged had filed for its status in 2019, only to receive a notice of denial from the IRS on May 18 of this year.

A group of Republican members of Congress and state senators demanded the IRS repeal the original decision, as Charisma News previously reported.

"This is truly great news for our client, as well as religious organizations and churches across America," says Lea Patterson, counsel for First Liberty Institute.

Trail Life USA Sees 70% Increase in New Members, Boy Scouts Declines 43%

'What would you expect?' TrailLife CEO Mark Hancock
says of the longtime organization's downturn

Trail Life USA (traillifeusa.com) saw its new membership explode in 2020, increasing over 70%. In comparison, the Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of the USA organizations have seen their total membership decline in 2020. Specifically, according to figures provided to The Associated Press, numbers

for the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts plummeted from nearly 2 million in 2019 to 1.12 million in 2020, a 43% decline during the same time.

TrailLife USA's mission is to guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others and experience outdoor adventure.

TD Jakes' Church Celebrates 25 Years With Prophetic Words, Vision for Future

The bestselling author and pastor's global ministry has 30,000 members

Bishop T.D. Jakes' Dallas, Texas, church, The Potter's House, celebrated its 25th anniversary Sunday, July 4, with fanfare, memories and powerful prophetic words. The event also featured the signing of a vision statement by Jakes and other bishops. Speakers included both Jakes and Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams of NDW Ministries in Accra, Ghana.

"There is before us a divine and a holy assignment that I believe to be very significant for what God would have us to do in the 21st century," Jakes told the church before introducing the vision statement. Duncan-Williams' message affirmed this word, prophetically calling forth apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers and evangelists for "the end-time revival" who would "shake nations and ... change our world."

Jakes, also a bestselling author whom *Time* magazine once called "America's Best Preacher" and "The Next Billy Graham," found a home in Dallas for The Potter's House in 1996. Since that time, it has grown to a 30,000-member global ministry with an emphasis on life-changing local and global initiatives.

The church celebrated these accomplishments while looking ahead to the work the ministry continues in all facets of faith, entertainment and business. Jakes also announced plans to improve the quality of life for people of color with his Atlanta revitalization project.



Bishop T. D. Jakes



Follow our daily reading plan in each issue of *Charisma* to read through the Modern English Version Bible in one year. The plan is also available online at brg.charismamag.com.

"Therefore, PRAY TO THE LORD of the harvest, that He will send out laborers into His harvest." —Matthew 9:38

Sept. 1	Ezek. 15:16; Ps. 70; Rev. 6
Sept. 2	Ezek. 17:19; Rev. 7
Sept. 3	Ezek. 20:21; Ps. 111; Rev. 8
Sept. 4	Ezek. 22:24; Rev. 9
Sept. 5	Ezek. 25:28; Rev. 10
Sept. 6	Ezek. 29:32; Rev. 11
Sept. 7	2 Kin. 25; 2 Chr. 36; Jer. 40:41; Rev. 12
Sept. 8	Jer. 42:44; Ps. 48; Rev. 13
Sept. 9	Lam. 1:2; Obadiah; Rev. 14
Sept. 10	Lam. 3:5; Rev. 15
Sept. 11	Dan. 1:2; Ps. 87; Rev. 16
Sept. 12	Dan. 3:4; Ps. 81; Rev. 17
Sept. 13	Ezek. 33:35; Rev. 18
Sept. 14	Ezek. 36:37; Ps. 110; Rev. 19
Sept. 15	Ezek. 38:39; Ps. 145; Rev. 20
Sept. 16	Ezek. 40:41; Ps. 128; Rev. 21
Sept. 17	Ezek. 42:44; Rev. 22
Sept. 18	Ezek. 45:46; Luke 1
Sept. 19	Ezek. 47:48; Luke 2
Sept. 20	Dan. 5:6; Ps. 130; Luke 3
Sept. 21	Dan. 7:8; Ps. 137; Luke 4
Sept. 22	Dan. 9:10; Ps. 123; Luke 5
Sept. 23	Dan. 11:12; Luke 6
Sept. 24	Ezra 1; Ps. 84-85; Luke 7
Sept. 25	Ezra 2:3; Luke 8
Sept. 26	Ezra 4; Ps. 113, 127; Luke 9
Sept. 27	Hag. 1:2; Ps. 129; Luke 10
Sept. 28	Zech. 1:3; Luke 11
Sept. 29	Zech. 4:6; Luke 12
Sept. 30	Zech. 7:9; Luke 13

Former Casting Crowns Drummer Dies From Motorcycle Accident Injuries

'All of our prayers were answered'

Andy Williams, beloved former Casting Crowns drummer, died on June 27 due to injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident. Williams was on his way to church when the accident occurred.

The band released a statement online, which said, "Early this morning, around 1:00am, Andy Williams went to be with Jesus. He fought a great fight, but the injuries that he suffered took a toll on his physical body.

You prayed along with us that Andy would be healed. You prayed along with us that Andy would wake up. You prayed along with us that God would perform a miracle. While we mourn that Andy isn't here with us, and that we didn't get to witness the miracle we longed for here on earth, all of our prayers were answered. He is healed, he is awake and we believe that he is more alive today than he has ever been."

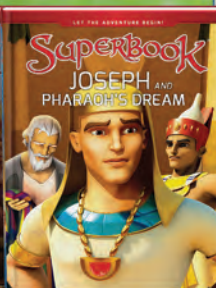


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THE MORE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." II Corinthians 3:14-16

With the words above, Peter gave his statement of faith in response to the questioning of Jesus. Jesus told Peter this was a revelation from the Father, because *"flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee"* Matthew 16:17. He quickly established that this revelation is the *"rock"* upon which He would build His church, and the *"gates of hell"* would never prevail against anyone who had this revelation of who Jesus is.

Peter's revelation that "Jesus is the Christ" was not given to him by man. Neither was it taught in the synagogues of that day. In fact, anyone who openly professed to believe such a thing would have been immediately expelled from the synagogue, and taken before the council to be tried as a heretic. For this reason, Jesus *"charged his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ"* Matthew 16:20. So, how did Peter receive his revelation of Jesus?

Peter's revelation was not received supernaturally, even though it was not received through flesh and blood. Peter, along with every Jew in Israel at that time, knew the prophecies of the scriptures. The entire nation was expecting the imminent coming of one called *"The Messiah the Prince"* Daniel 9:25, who would come to *"make an end of sins"* and *"bring in everlasting righteousness"* Daniel 9:24. Luke described the atmosphere in Israel the same year in which Jesus was baptized by John; *"...the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not"* Luke 3:15.

Peter's revelation came by simply studying the scriptures pertaining to the coming redeemer and observing the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. He reached the undeniable conclusion that Jesus of Nazareth and *"the Christ"* of eternity were one and the same, hence, *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."* This is the basis for *"saving faith."* It does not require a supernatural manifestation through dreams or visions to be saved. It does take more, however, than simply repeating a prayer with a preacher and professing to believe Jesus is the Son of God. What Peter understood could never be taken from him, not even in his worst failure. Six days later, Peter, along with James and John, had the most amazing supernatural experience of their three and a half years with Jesus.

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" Matthew 17:2.

Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus in the transfiguration. They had come to speak with Jesus concerning His death on the cross Luke 9:30-31. Peter was so overwhelmed by the glory of it all that he proposed building three tabernacles on the mountain; *"one for thee, and one for*

Moses, and one for Elijah" Matthew 17:4. Suddenly a bright cloud covered the mountain, and God spoke out of the cloud saying, *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him"* Matthew 17:5. Peter, James, and John fell on their faces in fear of the things they were seeing and hearing. When Jesus raised them up, however, *"they saw no man, save Jesus only"* Matthew 17:8. The meek and lowly Jesus of Nazareth was shown to be exalted so much higher than Moses and Elijah, and so much greater than the Law and prophets.

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." II Peter 1:16

Those who seek greatness very often invent stories about themselves which are nothing more than *"cunningly devised fables."* There are famous healing ministries who have never seen a true miracle wrought at their hands. There are those who are famous for their prophecies, who have never heard a word from God. In either case, their followers overlook their failures because of the façade they have built around themselves. In the 1940's and 50's God sent numerous men with true gifts of healing and miracles. Sadly, some of these descended into quarrels about who had the greatest miracles or who owned the largest tent. The presence of God was taken from these, and we entered into a time of gimmickry and fakery which continues to this very day. When Peter, James, and John told about *"the power and coming of our Lord Jesus,"* they did not need to fabricate. His glory shone forth as *"a city set on a hill that cannot be hid"* Matthew 5:14. His fame reached into all the land because of his words and miracles. *"Never spake a man as this man"* John 7:47; *"What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out"* Luke 4:36; *"What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"* Mark 4:41.

"For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." II Peter 1:17-18

Peter, James, and John were eyewitnesses of the events on the Mount of Transfiguration. They saw with their own eyes as His face shone as the sun, and his clothing became *"as white as the light."* They saw Moses and Elijah, and heard them speak with our Lord. They heard the voice of His Father giving Him honor and glory, *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased"* II Peter 1:17. Having seen and heard all these wonderful things, Peter makes an astounding statement in the next verse: *"We have also a more sure word of prophecy."*

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:" II Peter 1:19

What could possibly be more certain than the appearing of Moses and Elijah? Or a voice from heaven confirming that Jesus is the Son of God? At first it may seem ridiculous to consider such a thing. Many unbelievers think they would believe if only an angel from heaven would come to them, or an audible voice would speak to them. Peter, the *“eyewitness of His majesty,”* who along with James and John saw and heard things no other human has ever seen or heard, spoke clearly of *“the prophecy of the scripture”* as *“the more sure word of prophecy.”* It should be noticed that Peter had believed the prophecy of the scriptures when he said to Jesus, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”* Matthew 16:16. This was six days before his faith was confirmed on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Many spirits; many voices; One Word of God

I received a vision from the Lord over fifty years ago in July, 1969. I give it exactly as I published it years ago.

A woman was standing in a large clearing in a wooded area. I knew that she represented the church as the bride of Christ. A bird came out of the sky and circled above her for a time. Finally it lit on her head and I heard a voice speak saying *“Thou art a son of God.”* I was amazed. I thought to myself, *“It happened to her just like it happened to Jesus at the Jordan River.”* After this, the woman brought a pedestal into the midst of the clearing and stood upon it. It was a pedestal of the kind the ancient Greeks placed their idols on, and she stood upon it and began calling a multitude of people to come to her. She said, *“Look to me, I’m the one the spirit came upon. Look to me, I’m the one the voice spoke to.”* It soon became evident that she was manifesting a wrong spirit as she continued to exalt herself and point the people to herself. I asked the question, *“How can she have a wrong spirit when it happened to her just as it did to Jesus.”* I heard the Spirit of the Lord give this answer. *“It didn’t happen to her as it did to Jesus. The Holy Ghost came upon Jesus in the form of a dove. You didn’t see a dove but only a bird. A voice from heaven spoke to Jesus. You didn’t hear a voice from heaven, but only a voice. Always remember this, as there are many birds, but only one dove, **so there are many spirits, but only one Holy Ghost, and there are many voices, but only one Word of God.**”* As I came out of the vision I heard these words from Revelation 18:2, saying, *“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”*

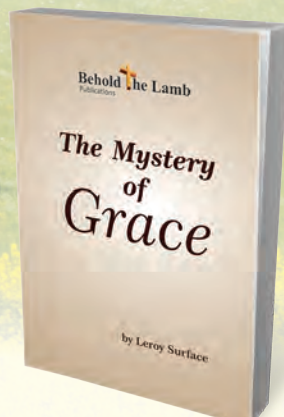
Almost immediately after this vision, I began to see those who were teaching the people how to speak in tongues, and how to prophesy. I knew by this that the *“unclean and hateful bird”* was even then seeking to replace the Holy Dove in the churches. We are the generation which Jesus spoke of when He said, *“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”*

Matthew 24:24

No Private Interpretation

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” II Peter 1:19-21

One day I quoted from I John, *“And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not...”* I John 3:5-6. Someone said to me *“that is just your interpretation.”* I had given no interpretation; I had only quoted what John said. Anything different would be a *“private interpretation.”* Peter said, *“Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”* These were the Old Testament prophets who prophesied of Jesus. Daniel said Christ would come to *“make an end of sins”* Daniel 9:24-25. The Apostle John said, *“Whosoever abideth in Him (Christ) sinneth not”* I John 3:6. John the Baptist introduced Jesus to the Jews as *“the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29. The Apostle Paul told us, *“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ...”* II Corinthians 5:17-18. How do you *“interpret”* these verses? The scriptures are not to be *“interpreted;”* they are to be believed. You can trust the original King James Version of the scriptures. If there are things you don’t understand, don’t seek a *“user-friendly”* version. Instead, get an original Strong’s Concordance and study the meaning of words you may not understand. If you refuse *“private interpretations,”* and believe exactly what the prophets and Apostles said about Jesus, and what He accomplished for us through His death on the cross, you will discover for yourself the truth, which Jesus said, *“Shall make you free”* John 8:32.



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Heart Cry of a Generation

The inside story of **Maverick City Music**,
the diverse worship collective that lives
out unity in the Spirit

BY TAYLOR BERGLUND





Maverick City Music

T rue to their name, Maverick City Music have taken the Christian worship industry by storm with a fresh perspective and an ardent commitment to authentic, Spirit-led worship. Though the worship group was only founded three years ago, many of its songs can already be found in church worship setlists worldwide, including “Promises,” “Jireh,” “Million Little Miracles” and “Man of Your Word.” Acclaim has come not only from churches but from secular media outlets as well. In May, the group received two separate nominations for the Top Gospel Album at the 2021 Billboard Music Awards, ultimately winning for their album *Maverick City, Vol. 3 Part 1*. And this fall, the group will embark on its first stadium tour, which has already sold out most of its venues.

Yet perhaps most stunning of all is the way the group managed to maintain its momentum and fervency in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the initial wave of shutdowns, Maverick City has released five albums and four EPs of original music. No one can accuse the collective of resting on its laurels, and the group’s hard work has paid off.

Naomi Raine, one of Maverick City’s lead singers and songwriters, says the group’s rapid ascent has been stunning for the members.

“Our heads are spinning by the speed of it and by the weight of what we’re carrying,” Raine says. “But one reason it is easier for us is because there are so many of us. If Dante [Bowe Jr.] was leading a worship night by himself, he would have to carry all of the moments, but we don’t have to do that when we’re all together. We carry it together. And that’s what makes it much simpler.”

Maverick City Music’s members view the collective’s size, diversity and tightly knit unity in the Spirit as its greatest strength. Though its impact cannot be denied, describing what exactly Maverick City Music is can

be challenging. It’s all at once a music record label, a publishing company for corporate worship music and a collective of over 100 different musical artists. That’s not to say that this fall’s tour will feature 100 people onstage at once; rather, Maverick City Music is made up of many distinct groups (or “little families,” as Raine calls them) that often collaborate and intermix with one another. These groups include TRIBL Music, Maverick Español and the Maverick City Choir.

Dante Bowe Jr., a Bethel-affiliated singer-songwriter who has been with Maverick City Music since the beginning, believes the group’s success is the result of talented people faithfully following the Holy Spirit.

“For me, I’ve been a student of worship since I’ve been alive,” Bowe says. “But I don’t know if I’ve ever heard such vocal skill from a group in the contemporary space. It just feels so skillful and Spirit-led, and I think that resonates. ... I think people can hear and see the skill, and also hear and see the Spirit of Jesus.”

Unity Through Diversity

Bowe says he first got involved with Maverick City Music as part of a group text with Tony Brown, who invited him to get together with friends in Atlanta—including Raine, Alton Eugene and Chandler Moore—to write worship songs. The artists assembled were not yet called Maverick City Music; they didn’t even expect to formally record the songs they were writing. Raine says the collective began as a publishing company, with a goal to write songs, record demos and then sell them to other worship artists. But when they all arrived in Atlanta, Bowe says the writing process became very relaxed and free. Between recording demos of the songs they had written, artists would break out in spontaneous worship during soundchecks.

“We were just demoing songs [in the studio], hoping maybe artists would want to sing the songs we were demoing,” Raine says. “But then it became, ‘Wait—these songwriters are actually artists too. Let’s put [these demos] out.’”

“People are tasting heaven, and this is what it’s going to sound like. This is what it’s going to look like.”

—Dante Bowe Jr.

That album of demos—*Maverick City, Vol. 1*—released in July 2019, and its minimalist title reflects its unexpected creation: “We didn’t even have a name for the first album,” Raine says with a laugh.

But if the first album was a happy accident, the names included in that initial invitation were not. Brown and Jonathan Jay—both members of the Atlanta-based worship band Housefires—started Maverick City Music as a way to increase opportunities for diverse voices to create worship music for the corporate church. Raine says that, within the worship music genre and even the larger contemporary Christian music space, about 10 people were writing 98% of the most popular songs. Maverick City Music’s founders shook up the industry by giving people of diverse backgrounds an opportunity.

For Bowe, that commitment to diversity has been a game-changer. He says Maverick City has given him opportunities and a platform he never would have been able to receive otherwise.

“Being a young Black kid and a Christian artist, I thought I’d never sell a stadium out,” Bowe says. “Because I never saw it. I never saw a single Black man or a Black woman like Naomi leading the worship movement. But now ... people are tasting heaven, and this is what it’s going to sound like. This is what it’s going to look like. Everybody—different tribes, different creeds, different tongues—singing the same song to Jesus.”



The sights and sounds of revival

In many ways, Maverick City's diversity parallels the diversity of the next generation of Christians. Thus, in many ways, the racially diverse, Spirit-empowered leaders of Maverick City reflect the future of the church. Perhaps this is why, in an era when many people are quick to talk about and signal their support for diversity, Bowe says living out diversity comes naturally.

Maverick City Music is continually growing, adding new songwriters and artists; Raine likens it to a high school, where there are always new freshmen classes. And the group's commitment to diversity expands beyond public optics. Though he was reticent to talk much about it (saying they prefer to do this part privately), Bowe mentioned that Maverick is involved behind the scenes in local community causes and prison reform.

Raine describes Maverick City as a

unified "family," one where everyone gets a chance to shine and where competition is eschewed in favor of cooperation. The leaders pray for each other, worship together and even eat, shop and laugh with one another. They seek to embody the concept of the unity of the Spirit.

"We are family," Raine says. "We fight. We disagree. We don't like certain things that happen with each other. But we always sit down and talk about it. ... But you love your family because y'all have worked together. You've sweated together, prayed together, cried together, eaten together. ... We get to be a part of something that's bigger than us individually."

Space for the Spirit

For all Maverick City's diverse makeup, something about its music itself has resonated with millions of listeners. Its writers and artists have

tapped into the heart cry of the next generation, which is bringing them before the altar to worship. So what is Maverick City Music doing differently?

Raine's theory may surprise you.

"I'm going to be honest: Most worship artists right now are singing vertical songs to the Father," Raine says. "They're lifting Him up. We're all singing and worshipping Jesus. There's nothing so special in terms of [our lyrical] content. We're loving on God; everybody's doing that. But I think what sets Maverick apart is that you can hear the room."

She says the final recording is left extremely raw. Listeners can hear it all: The chatter between musicians. Clothes rubbing against each other as people pack tightly into the studio. People chewing gum. A singer working out a spontaneous moment mid-track and the choir fumbling to figure out how to follow her. The creaks in the

floorboards. Raine says the recordings are not “stripped and filtered down to perfection” so Maverick City can maintain the authentic worship encounter in all of its rawness.

“I think it’s the actual sound of real people in a room together that has really ignited the hearts of people in worship,” Raine says. “I think when people are alone, on YouTube in their room, listening to that recording, it makes them feel like they’re gathered

day in the studio: “We wake up in the morning. We start with worship, and we start with the Word. Naomi will prophesy over one of our choir members. Chandler will pray over this person. I’ll be in the middle leading a song. We’re all singing a song. And then we’re like, ‘Let’s go write.’ So the atmosphere is already there. We don’t have to [ask the Holy Spirit to show up] because He’s already there.” Raine agrees.

thing mean for them? Both Bowe and Raine immediately reply, “Jesus.”

“For me, it’s Jesus and all He encompasses,” Raine explains. “And I know that sounds so simple, but when you look at Jesus’ life that He lived, He lived to glorify God. I think that we’ve all been given gifts to shine in the world as light, so that people would see it and glorify God in heaven. I don’t think that’s just by saying, ‘Oh, God is great.’ I think

“In many ways, the racially diverse, Spirit-empowered leaders of Maverick City reflect the future of the church.”



This generation is being drawn by the presence of God

with the saints. I think that when people are on a stage on a Sunday morning, they are able to pull from that corporate sound of this whole group of people lifting their voices, loud and unashamed, to worship God. And I think that’s the secret sauce. That’s what makes Maverick special.”

If the room noise is part of the “secret sauce,” the atmosphere that produces each song is also a critical ingredient. Raine says she wishes people could see or hear their songwriting and rehearsal sessions because of how powerfully the Spirit moves there.

Bowe walks through a normal

“We may schedule 45 minutes [for worship], and we’ll be there for an hour and a half, and almost miss out on writing time or have to cut some of our writing time short,” Raine says. “But that’s what happens. ... The rehearsal moments? To me, those are some of the sweetest moments that we get with the Holy Spirit.”

Yet perhaps Maverick City’s greatest asset is the simplest: The leaders profess their dedication to the fundamentals of worship, or as they call it, keeping “the main thing the main thing.” What does the main

that’s by them living their lives for Him and living in a way that loves people and shows them who He is, you know? I think it’s by giving Him back what He’s given us.”

Bowe says there is a “Maverick sound,” a shared lyrical DNA among the group’s songs; they write stories about doubt, Jesus and overcoming. Those are the fundamentals of their writing—the gospel in three pieces—and that’s the reason for Maverick City’s existence. Raine hopes it will always stay that way.

“I pray that we stay focused on the assignment that we have been given,

and I pray that we don't get distracted from what we've been called to do," she says. "I think it's easy when you start to get some level of success to begin to adjust and shift your heart and your goals, but I pray that we keep the main thing the main thing ... and that we always love Him and let Him be our goal."

Endurance in Adversity

If the music of Maverick City creates a space for authentic worship, it's an extension of the musicians' authentic love for Jesus. The leaders strive to follow God not only in public but also in private. Both Raine and Bowe reflected on how God is at work in their lives, still shaping and molding them in His image. For Raine, that means focusing on endurance in the face of adversity and failure. She says "Wait on You"—one of Maverick City Music's hit songs, originally written by Bowe and Moore—has gained new meaning for her in recent months. The chorus promises, "I've tasted Your goodness/ I'll trust in Your promise/ I'm gonna wait on You," with a bridge that quotes Isaiah 40:31.

"I think sometimes we have created this magical-thinking theology that things just happen instantly," Raine says. "They don't happen instantly. When you think about the children of Israel standing at the front of the Red Sea, the Bible doesn't say that the sea instantly just split open. No, it says that the wind came and began to push back the waters, and they began to recede. How long do you think that took, while Pharaoh's army was still coming? I think we read some of these stories and we look at people's lives and we hear the sermons, but we don't really get it. It takes waiting. It takes endurance. That is the type of process and journey the Lord has taken us through. So that's what God's been dealing with me on: 'Naomi, wait, trust Me and

Worship is the 'Now' Move of God

It's what the Holy Spirit is doing

By Jeff Struss

For over 100 years, the charismatic-Pentecostal movement has seen waves of revival crashing upon the shores of the modern church. We can trace the genesis of those waves to the early outpouring of God's Spirit at a New Year's service in Topeka, Kansas, in 1901. There, a Bible school student named Agnes Ozman received the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

The Azusa Street Revival followed in 1906, led by a one-eyed Black minister named William Seymour. Seymour served and oversaw that revival in which hungry men and women from around the world gathered at the simple facility that housed the services. They tarried in the Lord, praying and waiting for their Pentecostal experience.

Historian Frank Bartleman observed that "the 'color line' was washed away in the blood" at that revival, a reminder of the apostle Paul's admonition to "be eager to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). We can find the unity we all seek today in the Spirit of God. In His power, we maintain it—we don't create it.

When we think of revival, we recall the evangelistic revivals of Billy Graham and the healing revivals of Oral Roberts and A.A. Allen. We must also consider the Jesus People Movement of the 1960s and the prophetic restoration of the 1980s. We remember the worldwide revivals that began in the 1990s in places such as Brownsville, Florida, and Toronto, Ontario, Canada. We celebrate and honor every revival from every time period.

One question remains: What is God doing today?

To answer that question, one needs to look no further than the cover story on Maverick City Worship. This group, perhaps more than any other at this moment, catches the "now" move of the Holy Spirit.

Today's younger generation moves beyond Millennials to include Gen Z as well. Longing for authenticity, Christians in these age groups desire to connect with God and with other believers through heaven-infused moments of worship and praise. Worship, and God-encounters based in worship, form a cornerstone-reality to their faith. Maverick City embodies authenticity and simplicity in its bold approach to the throne of grace (see Heb. 4:16).

More than that, lost individuals are finding Christ through worship events and gatherings like those described in this month's cover story. The various crises of our recent past have made it easy to see the pain and brokenness of humanity. We find no lack of current stories about abuse, trauma and what the Bible calls "sin." Individuals, disillusioned with what the world has presented, are looking for something they can believe in.

The Holy Spirit is drawing people—young people, broken people, confused people, sexually abused people, addicted people—and softening their hearts with the power of His presence. In an age of transgenderism, confusion and isolation, He is revealing Himself as a loving Father to a generation that has no real definition of the term.

Like all moves of God, this one is not nearly as neat or tidy as the average church-goer might wish for. Proverbs 14:4, "Where no oxen are, the crib is clean; but much increase is by the strength of the ox," stands as a reminder and warning to every Christian throughout the ages. When there is no activity and no move of God, things are clean and tidy. Spiritual increase always brings a mess.

Let us echo the prayer of John Wesley, renowned revival preacher from the first Great Awakening: "Lord, send us revival without its defects, but if this is not possible, send revival, defects and all!"



Seeking the heart of God



Chandler Moore

“I think it’s the actual sound of real people in a room together that has really ignited the hearts of people in worship.” —Naomi Raine

endure. Do not give up. Do not throw in the towel. Don’t give in and make decisions based on fear.”

And Bowe says God is challenging him to show kindness, patience and love, even for situations and people that irritate him.

“The higher you go, the more you know; I’ll say that,” Bowe says. “For me, I’ve been growing in the industry for three or four years. So you experience a lot of accolades. You get people always congratulating you and building you up. You get the hundreds of thousands of followers, and everyone knows your name. You get stopped in airports. And the Lord’s been dealing with me on this like, ‘Dante, how should you love today? How kind can you be today?’ [That means] being patient with my friends and patient with the world when you make a statement and you can see Christians arguing

in your comments. The higher you go, you have to work on love. How can I be patient? How can I be more loving and kind? That’s literally my everyday right now. When I wake up, it’s a conscious decision to be kind and loving and patient.”

The leaders of Maverick City share that commitment to following Jesus in the private, quiet moments of everyday life. In fact, on the business side of things, Raine even mentions that Brown and the label leaders have been generous with financially supporting the collective’s members to ensure that they can support themselves from their work with Maverick City Music—a rare perk in the music industry, even among Christians.

“If I can be frank, we’re super blessed to not be taken advantage of by Maverick City Music, as a record label and as a company,” Raine says.

“We’ve been able to reap and eat off of what we produce. That is a blessing because that is not a lot of people’s stories in the industry. I’m grateful that we get to be a part of it, and I’m praying that more people get to be a part of it as well. [I hope] it will shift the paradigm for labels and that their way of doing business will hopefully change, so that it’s not just companies making a bunch of money off of artists.”

Bowe and Raine say they don’t know whether Maverick will remain a force in worship music for decades as Hillsong or other groups have, but for however long the groups lasts, they hope to keep shifting the industry in a positive direction.

“I pray that Maverick is not a flash in the pan, that it’s not just a ‘15 minutes of fame’ thing,” Raine says. “And mind you, if it is, then it is. We didn’t set out for any of this. It’s not like we had a goal to last forever. But I do believe we are changing things not only in the worship sphere, not only in churches, but in the industry and in the business side of it that I think honors people and reflects the heart of the Father.”

“And it was a choice,” Bowe says. “None of us signed to this massive label. ... I mean, we didn’t sign at all. That’s what people don’t know—we didn’t even sign any contracts when we were blowing up. And it was because Tony was trying to literally change narratives. It wasn’t about money. It wasn’t about fame. It wasn’t about opportunity. It was about, ‘How can we as Maverick City change the narratives?’ And that’s been our goal with Jesus: How can we make a change for Him? ... And I pray that we would honor and love Jesus deeper and deeper as the years go on.”

READ MORE: For more on the contemporary Christian music scene, check out music.charismamag.com.

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Thanking My 9/11 Heroes

Twenty years later, a survivor shares the story of how her desperate prayers launched her into a life of faith and power

BY CHRISTINA STANTON

Twenty years ago, my husband and I stood on the terrace of our 24th-floor financial district apartment, monitoring the smoke we could see billowing from the north tower of the World Trade Center six blocks away. Suddenly, a jet roared directly above us, and we watched in horror as it slammed into the south tower. The impact blew us backward onto the floor of our living room and ignited our panicked flight to the streets of Manhattan, where we joined with thousands who were frantically searching for refuge from incomprehensible dangers.

We spent that day running for our lives. We spent the next several weeks homeless and in shock. We spent the next several months battling unemployment and the effects of trauma.

Several people emerged to minister, comfort, pray for us and provide us with tangible assistance during that terrible time, and the Holy Spirit used their love and care as a tender but powerful means of pointing us to Christ. Because of them, our relationship with Jesus deepened and we committed ourselves to a Christian community. Many of our helpers were part of the massive aid efforts that took place on 9/11 and in the days after. Others were individuals who cared specifically for my husband and me.

Time has erased names from my memory—if I ever knew them. But I've remembered all their deeds for two decades, and I want to share a few stories to bring honor and glory to God, who sent help when we needed it most. I also want to show gratitude to our myriad of good Samaritans, whom we've never forgotten.

Boat Captain From New York Waterway

When we fled our apartment, we sought refuge in Battery Park. But after the towers fell, a thick, yellow, sticky dust covered every inch of our bodies and made it difficult to breathe. Debris floated through the air, and smoke from the fires surrounded us and cut off all evacuation routes. All around us, panicked people were running haphazardly, searching for an escape from the chaos and devastation. Thinking we might not survive, I held Brian's hands as we began to pray. I hoped God could hear me. Although I had always considered myself a Christian, I knew I had never made Jesus the center of my life. Why would He answer me now?

Later, we took refuge near the edge of the river, exhausted and out of ideas for how we could escape the devastated island with bridges and tunnels throughout the city closed. Suddenly, we saw a large white New York Waterway ferry headed toward us.

The captain didn't have a dock or a pier, but he maneuvered the boat along the seawall until he was close enough to tether the ferry with a rope and load the people gathered there. Two crew members grabbed my grimy arms, expressing no shock or surprise at the sight of me barefoot, in a flimsy, dust-covered nightgown. They gently lowered me into the boat and turned their attention to the next person in line.

continued »





The Tribute in Light art installation near the World Trade Center site

The 9/11 Memorial near Ground Zero

UNSPASH

Thank you to the captain and crew who carried my husband and me—and thousands of other filthy, terrified, exhausted New Yorkers—across the Hudson River to safety. You dropped us off and then turned right around and went back to rescue others.

As thousands and thousands of desperate people gathered by the coastline, the Coast Guard sent out a call, hoping local boat owners and operators would pitch in to help move people to safety. You were among the hundreds who answered the call. I didn't get a chance to properly thank any of you or the hundreds of other heroes on the waterway that day. But altogether, you participated in the largest boat evacuation in history.

I believe God orchestrated this maritime miracle, which rescued more than 500,000 people in jeopardy. When I think of the boat evacuation, Psalm 121:1-2 comes to mind. "I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

Welcoming Hostess in Newport, New Jersey

The ferry dropped us off in New Jersey, and for the first time in hours, Brian and I felt we were safe from the immediate danger of fire, smoke and collapsing buildings. But we were also filthy and clueless about where we were or what we should do next. I had run out of the apartment in my nightgown and with no shoes. Neither of us had stopped to pick up a cell phone. Our 40-pound dog was also covered in ash and gunk and was clearly exhausted.

We walked for blocks, looking for a store, a restaurant, anything—it had been hours since we left our apartment. We needed shoes and clothes, and I was anxious to rinse out my eyes, which were swimming with debris. I needed to find a restroom, and just as I became desperate enough to consider using the bushes, we saw a woman walking her dog.

We must have looked like zombies, coated in dust, staggering out of the apocalypse. But she approached us

and kindly ushered us into her nearby apartment. I couldn't believe anyone would invite complete strangers up to her apartment, especially filthy ones with a mangy dog reeking of smoke. I made a beeline for the bathroom while she put down a bowl of water for our dog.

Thank you, Miss Samaritan, whom the Holy Spirit must have sent to minister to us in this small but significant gesture. I'm sure you told me about your name at some point during our encounter, but the events of the day swept it from my memory bank.

God knew we needed a place to rest for a few minutes, and He also knew we needed encouragement and a kind word even more.

"For I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink, I was a stranger and you took Me in" (Matt. 25:35).

Jodi, the Apartment Owner

The falling towers destroyed blocks and blocks around the World Trade Center, and our apartment was inside the restricted zone. We spent the first few days after 9/11 crowded into the apartment of my gracious friend, Sarah. But the apartment was small, and the bunk beds were uncomfortable. We also knew it might be weeks or even months before we could get back into our home.

I learned that Citi Habitats had started matching displaced residents with apartment owners who were offering shelter in spare bedrooms. Through that program, we soon met a woman named Jodi, who handed us the keys to her studio apartment near Grand Central Station. She said we could stay there as long as we needed at no cost.

This amazing woman trusted two total strangers and an anxious dog with all her earthly possessions. This supernatural, practical blessing allowed us to rest, restore and regroup, and we are so grateful.

My friend Sarah, Jodi and those at Citi Habitats all offered us shelter while we were displaced.

"For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will



hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock" (Ps. 27:5, NIV, author's emphasis).

Staff at 21 West

In the weeks we were locked out of our apartment, we saw many news reports of looting in the restricted zone. But we didn't worry that we would come back to an empty apartment because we knew Flo, Gus, Miguel and others remained on the job. They spent every day going up and down the stairs with their flashlights, checking in on 294 apartments on 33 floors while guarding the lobby from intruders.

When we finally returned almost two weeks later, my wedding ring was on my nightstand, right where I left it when I went to bed on Sept. 10. But we did not find spoiled food in our freezer. Thank you for clearing out our freezer and throwing out our new Omaha steaks before they rotted and smelled up the apartment while electricity to the area was shut down. And thanks for removing the large chunk of debris off of our terrace, sparing us having to deal with that when we returned.

I know it wasn't in your job description to sleep on the lobby floor, wear the same clothes for days and give up the ability to take a shower while you did your work surrounded by smoke and dust. I realize it was hard to get proper meals during those days because grocery stores and bodegas were closed.



“Christ became the center of our lives in the aftermath of 9/11, which I believe was the answer to our prayers in Battery Park.”

You cleared away debris, cleaned out dust, turned off stoves and faucets, took care of people’s pets and followed Christ’s example in putting all of us first over your own families, whom I’m sure needed you too. You all worked way above the call of duty and went the extra mile for us, and we appreciate it from the bottom of our hearts.

Thank you, Flo, Gus, Miguel and all the staff at 21 West.

“Let each of you look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Phil. 2:4, MEV).

Redeemer Presbyterian Church and Its Donors

As we struggled with mounting bills in the weeks after 9/11, a friend who went to Redeemer Presbyterian Church told me that people from all over the world had donated money to help

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victims like us. I had a hard time accepting the idea I was a victim, but this comforting act helped us find a financial cushion when the attacks temporarily took away our jobs.

When I interviewed with the director of the program, she put me at ease and made me feel that she and her staff all cared about us, even though we didn’t go to her church. I appreciated the dignified way she treated the meeting and how simple and quick the process was. I know Redeemer helped scores of people who were really in a bind after the attacks.

Thank you, Redeemer Presbyterian Church and donors, for giving us emergency funds to pay bills during our unemployment after the attacks. Your generosity to strangers who didn’t have a connection to your church is something we never forgot.

As a result of your generosity, we began attending Redeemer. As we became more involved, we committed ourselves individually and as a couple to Christ. Twenty years later, we’re still active in this church and have never forgotten what brought us here. Christ became the center of our lives in the aftermath of 9/11, which I believe was the answer to our prayers in Battery Park.

“But my God shall supply your every need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19).

Age of Terrorism

The terrorist attacks carried out on Sept. 11, 2001, are considered to be the deadliest such events in world history, a true mark of the enemy’s work in our world. Almost 3,000 people lost their lives that day, and the death toll continues to climb as thousands of people who worked or lived in the area have died from cancers or other illnesses related to the toxic aftermath.

The shocking attacks grounded the country to a standstill for days. The Metropolitan Museum, the Stock Exchange and the Empire State Building closed. Major League Baseball games were canceled. Disney World shut down. College classes were canceled. The Mall of America in Minneapolis was cleared. Attractions

such as the Hoover Dam and Mount Rushmore shut down. However, churches opened their doors wide, and many added services as attendance rose across the country in the aftermath.

That day changed the way we lived and ushered us into a new age: the Age of Terrorism. We now take for granted enhanced security at airports, bag checks at concerts and amusement parks and increased scrutiny at schools and baseball games. The Department of Homeland Security was born as a direct result of that day. When civilians showed they had the capacity to turn commuter passenger jets into deadly missiles, humanity had to face the future with new precautions.

As we approach the 20th anniversary of 9/11, we should remember and mourn those whose lives were cut short and the innocence we lost. But even in our sorrow, we can take heart because we know God, who lost His own Son in an unjust attack, understands our pain and cares about our suffering.

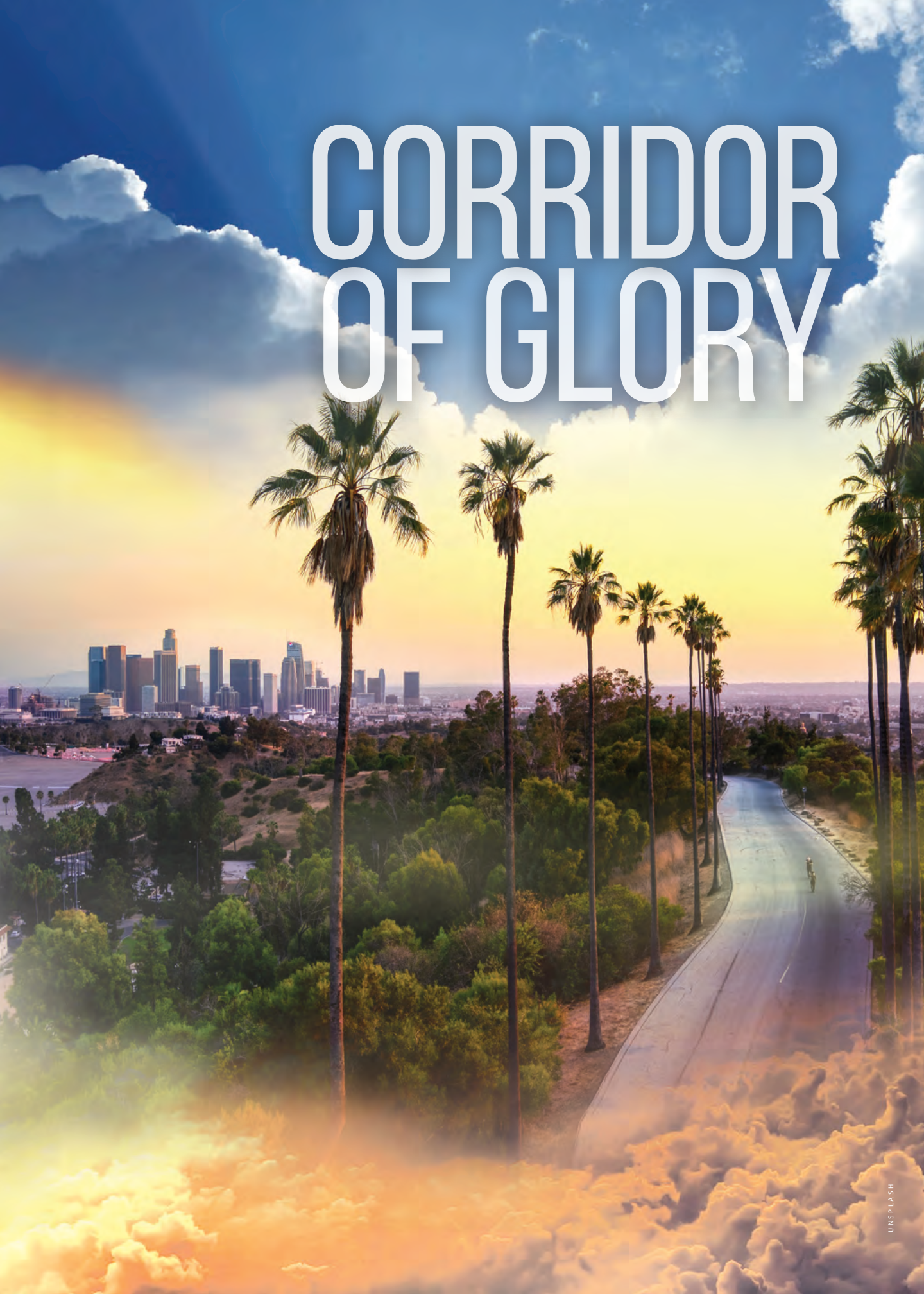
I am grateful for the opportunity, even two decades later, to recognize and publicly acknowledge those who answered God’s call to help my family and me in our darkest time of need.

God calls all believers to obey His command to love our neighbors, show mercy and help others through their pain, just as He supernaturally moved the good Samaritan to help the battered traveler. I learned on Sept. 11, 2001, and the days after how it feels to receive help during a time of trouble. And for the past two decades, I have prayed daily for the Holy Spirit to open my eyes so I can discern opportunities to act as a good Samaritan to others. I learned firsthand the power of simple acts of kindness and compassion to lift an individual from the depths of despair.

“Go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37b). ◀

CHRISTINA RAY STANTON has written two books and over 20 articles that have won awards and have been featured on TV channels and in top publications all over the world. She is a sought-after speaker on the subject of 9/11. Find her at christinaraystanton.com.

CORRIDOR OF GLORY



God is revealing Himself along California's Highway 99 through signs, wonders and miracles

BY MARIO MURILLO

God is revealing His glory along in California through mass conversions, healing and more in a series of tent revivals hosted by Mario Murillo Ministries. These events mark the fulfillment of a prophetic encounter six years ago, when God told me of a miracle that would occur along this 425-mile stretch of road. At each site, in each tent and in every changed life, He reveals His supernatural power.

It happened one Sunday afternoon. I took an afternoon nap before preaching, and a vivid dream overtook me. All at once, I was hovering high enough over California that I could see the entire length of Highway 99, from Red Bluff in the north to Laval Road, 45 miles south of Bakersfield.

I hear a voice say, "This is a corridor of My glory." At that moment, the highway became a river. I saw trees popping up along the river, and God told me their leaves were for the healing of the people.

At the time I had that dream, I couldn't imagine it would ever come true. Today, that dream is the only way I can begin to describe what is happening along this corridor of glory. And to God be the glory!

However, it will not be wise for me to share my story without first commenting on two passages of Scripture:

First, "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed" (Luke 1:3-4, NKJV).

In this age of self-promotion, we need both orderly accounts and certainty. All too often, when ministers tell about what "God is doing," they embellish the testimony, thinking it will bolster their story. Instead, such exaggerations cheapen God's work and raise doubts.

Second, the apostle Paul said, "not boasting of things beyond measure, that is, in other men's labors, but having hope, that as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere, to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment" (2 Cor. 10:15-16).

God is using many ministries in California, and we deeply honor them all. We will not claim their results as our own but only as more evidence of His supernatural work.

continued »



Mario Murillo at Living Proof Crusade, Modesto, California

Experiencing Revival

The tent is the site of the presence of God, so thick at times that I experience a deep fear of the Lord just walking in.

People come early, even in California, a state long notorious for late-arriving crowds. In every service along Highway 99, the tent fills up well before the planned starting time, and the Lord compels us to begin singing at least 30 minutes early.

Most of the time, all the seats are filled, and hundreds more people listen from outside the tent.

Today's modern, seeker-friendly churches boast of 12-minute express-sermons, but I frequently preach two complete sermons averaging 45 minutes each. The first is a soul-winning sermon, the second, a revival message.

Not only are there two sermons, but I break them up with an altar call for lost souls to come to Jesus. The number of people who come forward nightly ranges from 150 to upwards of 900.

“Sinners groan in their seats, convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit. Several times, the weight of the Spirit moves me to stop preaching and bring them the cleansing balm of salvation.”

Sinners groan in their seats, convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit. Several times, the weight of the Spirit moves me to stop preaching and bring them the cleansing balm of salvation. At times, the many lost in attendance move to the front as a group. Within just a few minutes, there is no room at the front, and the line stretches outside.

Two elements combine to make follow-up successful: our focus on true conversion and our intentional partnership with churches on fire for Jesus. We are also indebted to Inner City Action, a ministry to

the homeless and hurting led by Frank Saldana. ICA's laborers are the soldiers on the streets, battling the devil and helping us in our effort to bring souls from darkness to light.

Our team has seen evidence in every revival of yet another wonderful fact: Lost souls hear the voice of God drawing them to come to the tent.

A drug dealer in Bakersfield not only heard the Holy Spirit tell him to come to the tent, but he disrupted the meeting when he obeyed. He charged to the front, holding a bag filled with several pounds of marijuana. He came right at me!



“When I walked out to preach, the Holy Spirit told me, ‘Go over to that young man ... He is a heroin addict. His kidneys and liver are diseased. Lay your hand on him, and I will heal him.’”

Security started toward him, when all of a sudden, he threw the bag on the ground and stomped on it, crying out, “I need Jesus right now! Right now!”

In Fresno, another young man, about 19 years old, was driving to work on Highway 99 at 4:30 p.m. As he came in sight of our meeting place, he heard a voice say, “Get in the tent.” He phoned his boss and told him he would not be able to come to work. He was fired immediately, but he didn’t care. He had heard from the Lord, and he had no choice but to follow.

When I walked out to preach, the Holy Spirit told me, “Go over to that young man and ask him to stand. He is a heroin addict. His kidneys and liver are diseased. Lay your hand on him, and I will heal him.”

When I told this young man what God had said, he broke into tears. Demons fled. He told me the power of God was healing him. “I want to be born again,” he sobbed. After he received Jesus, the crowd rejoiced loudly as I walked away.

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But the Holy Spirit stopped me. “Go back,” He said. “You are not finished yet. He must receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.” Moments later, this newly saved man began praying aloud in a glorious unknown tongue, heard by all. Imagine the thrill that went through the audience!

Receiving Miracles

In the 99 corridor of glory, healings abound. God has placed us under a severe discipline to preach a clear, certain and unfiltered message—the catalyst to the miracles.

A key verse for us is Acts 14:3 (TLB), “Nevertheless, they stayed there a long time, preaching boldly, and the Lord proved their message was from him by giving them power to do great miracles.” We are preaching the message that comes from Him, knowing He will provide the undeniable proof of His presence. That is why we call these crusades “Living Proof.”

We have held Living Proof tent crusades in Marysville, Stockton, Modesto, Fresno, Hanford, Dinuba, Bakersfield and—our largest meeting ever—in Sacramento, California—all cities along Highway 99.

Many Californians wonder why the Lord would choose to send His

presence to what many consider a God-forsaken place. In 2010, the list of the top 10 worst places to live in America included five cities along Highway 99, and the Highway 99 corridor leads the nation in fatal accidents per 100 miles. Because of this, one law firm termed the route the “highway to hell.”

My dear friend Manuel Carrizalez, who directs Stay Focused Ministries in Bakersfield, preached at 52 funerals in 11 months for young men killed in drive-by shootings. The Central Valley church has been battered, beaten down and rejected by the coastal cities. Leftist Sacramento politicians have robbed the entire area which, already suffering, found itself decimated by the pandemic.

When Jesus began His ministry, it also baffled Israel that He would begin in Capernaum. “And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death, Light has dawned’” (Matt. 4:13-16, NKJV).

As a ministry, we will continue to lean into the grace God is releasing in fulfillment of the prophetic dream He gave me so long ago. We watch and celebrate as He turns the highway to hell into a highway of holiness. May it be merely a foretaste of what He will do across the nation, from sea to shining sea! ◀

READ MORE: Explore God’s work in revival at revival.charismamag.com.

MARIO MURILLO is the founder of *Mario Murillo Ministries* (mariomurillo.org) and his voice has been heard by millions around the world. He presents Christ with clarity and intellect, openly declaring the power of Jesus to totally transform a life.

How Cancel Culture Will Affect the Church, America and You

We can't avoid it, so here's what we can do to face this pervasive force with kingdom initiative

BY STEPHEN E. STRANG

Cancel culture is one of the most important, alarming and life-impacting trends in America today. In my new book, *God and Cancel Culture: Stand Strong Before It's Too Late*, I address what cancel culture is, why it's happening, where it may be taking us and what we can—and should—do about it.

This revealing new book speaks profoundly and prophetically about where America is today, both spiritually and culturally—and what the future holds for society, the church and each of us personally.

To be blunt, there is no avoiding cancel culture. It affects what you see and hear, the news you get, the education your kids receive, how normal citizens are treated in society—especially Christians—how we are allowed to run our businesses, our families, our churches and much more. By its very nature, cancel culture is pervasive; it leaves no stone unturned.

An Age-Old Battle

Cancel culture really isn't new. Censorship, propaganda and coercion have always been tools of the powerful throughout history, going by different names in each generation and under each new, intolerant regime. The purpose is always to silence opponents and control society by dominance and intimidation.

At present, liberal policies are advancing, and a secular culture is aggressively trying to eliminate all conservative thought that doesn't agree with it. If secularists don't like what you say or what you represent, they shut down your social media accounts, take away your ability to make a living and tell you that you have no right to your opinion. The message of the "tolerant" Left to Christians and conservatives is simple: "Be quiet and go away." Soon, it may be harsher than that.

It boils down to the ongoing battle between the kingdom of light and the dominion of darkness, which has been raging since before time began. After a few decades in which America seemed like paradise on earth

when compared with other nations, we are now stepping back into the mainstream of history, and this timeless conflict is breaking into the open. The battle has come to us. We have no choice but to fight it.

Since the 2020 election, cancellation has been happening at warp speed. In the first months of a new—illegitimate, in the view of many—administration, a rash of executive orders appeared to be moving the nation closer to socialism and a one-world government.

The new reality in America is that conservatives, including many Christians, are being censored as never before. It almost seems this is the beginning of the end, and the Antichrist will appear at any time.

A Church Divided

What bothers me is how divided the church appears regarding any workable answer. Among Christians, pick any cultural or political issue, and I can almost guarantee there is not even the appearance of widespread agreement. It seems we are in an unprecedented season of fragmentation, division and actual separation on many fronts. Instead of going forward in unity, much of the church seems to be moving backward or simply standing still, waiting for what's next.

Today, many Christians are stunned and discouraged. They saw Donald Trump as their champion and are wondering what happened—and what happens next. It almost seems as if a depression has settled over many in the body of Christ. People are disappointed, despondent, recriminating, finger-pointing and publicly arguing over who is right, who is wrong and what to do next. At this point, nobody seems to agree.

I know Christians who are so fed up or frightened that they want to check out and find a nation that is more hospitable to our values and beliefs. But while the Pilgrims did that, fleeing England to escape government persecution in 1620, there is nowhere left for American Christians to go—no undiscovered real estate on the planet to provide refuge for the faithful.



**“The battle has come to us.
We have no choice but to fight it.”**

In our day, we live with a possibility that, with a one-world government, there will be nowhere to go if surveillance and artificial intelligence help to enforce total submission. I believe perhaps the greatest danger now is that believers will get discouraged, leave the faith or become part of the progressive wing of the evangelical community where they compromise the gospel and “go along to get along.” Worse yet, believers could retreat.

The church has tried retreat before, and it didn’t work. In the 1920s Christians were blamed for Prohibition, which was widely unpopular, and when the Depression hit, Christians were blamed for that too because many supported Herbert Hoover’s election. In response, evangelicals (called “fundamentalists” at that time) retreated in the face of adversity, only reemerging under the name “Evangelicals” under Billy Graham and other leaders three decades later. Evangelicals also came to prominence in the 18th and 19th centuries during the First and Second Great Awakenings, but of course, those

movements were followed by bloody wars: the American Revolution and the Civil War.

History is nothing if not interesting. But it also matters to the Lord that we respond rightly, with courage and vision.

We Must Advance

I believe that Christians need to be strong in the face of cancel culture. Retreat is the one thing we must not do! We were born into battle, called to advance on every front. We must take ground in the face of cancel culture. We cannot say, “Woe is us” and opt out or accept defeat. God can never be defeated. We must find ways to remain effective and engaged.

I urge Christians to take initiative and move forward from where we are. The body of Christ is a big, diverse family, and we must choose to cheer each other on rather than become a circular firing squad.

In *God and Cancel Culture*, I point to many believers who are advancing and taking ground for the kingdom

in a time when the kingdom seems to be retreating. I cite wise, well-regarded and proven Christian leaders who are talking about the challenges we face, especially in the face of cancel culture, and how to overcome them.

This will give you hope and encourage you to do what you can in your own sphere of influence. It will compel you to take initiative. Where are you called to take your place on the battlefield against cancellation? We must all find specialized roles we can play in the raging cultural and spiritual battle. We must begin to understand what roles will have the biggest impact *now*—before we lose our freedoms entirely.

I truly believe this new breed of Christians will have backbone. They won’t care if they are politically incorrect and get canceled too. I believe these will be the ones who will help lead the prophesied revival Spirit-filled believers have been longing for. Instead of cancellation, we may very well see multitudes flood the altars, get saved and turn from sin, leading to a

renewal in our culture due to the sheer numbers of transformed lives.

My purpose in writing *God and Cancel Culture* is to illuminate the present circumstance for the purpose of doing good—to bring hope while allowing readers to look critically at the various approaches vying for their allegiance and attention. In the face of cancel culture, the body of Christ needs clarity and unity—and right now

it has precious little of both. Wounded armies want hope, focus and encouragement. In a war, those running the commissary matter as much as those manning the guns. So it is in the day of cancel culture—we must each wage war from our place of assignment.

The Church's Finest Hour?

Even though things are bad, we must understand that circumstances

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have been this bad or worse in the past, and God always came through. He has plans and purposes we don't understand.

Many people on the Left aren't even aware this conversation is happening. It's almost a covert activity. The mainstream secular media does not see what Christians do as relevant or important because it goes counter to the left-wing narrative. They want people to believe they won, conservatives lost, and it's time for everyone to move on. In reality, the country is fairly evenly split politically, and many on the Left may still be won over to our side as they see the gospel in action, experience the love of Jesus and have their eyes opened to the truth. This could be the church's finest hour.

This is neither the time for religious fatalism nor political inaction. Believers must stand strong and take action. We must pray, we must believe God for a great awakening, and we must realize that He remains sovereign over all. No matter how bad things get in the culture or in government, the Bible is true, and all things work together for good to those who love God (Rom. 8:28a). That's because we are called according to His purpose, and that purpose never goes in reverse.

I invite you to join this important, pivotal conversation. Let's see what cancel culture looks like right now—on the ground—in the day we are living in. Let's advance the kingdom of God, which always overcomes cancellation. ◀

STEPHEN E. STRANG is the founding editor of *Charisma* and the bestselling author of *God and Donald Trump*.

Mike Lindell Speaks Out on Cancel Culture

The fiery CEO of MyPillow urges fellow believers, 'Don't back down'

If you know anything about me, you know that 2021 has been much more than a pillow fight! By now most people are familiar with my story. For those who aren't, I share it in my book, *What Are the Odds? From Crack Addict to CEO*. Suffice it to say, I've survived a lot of things, including near-death experiences and decades of addiction to crack cocaine. Long before recent events, I'd been rejected and turned away. When I invented MyPillow, every distributor and big-box store turned me down—and that rejection ironically has come full circle!

The obstacles thrown at me throughout my life have all prepared me to stand strong in the face of this relentless assault. The battle I'm engaged in is not about politics; neither is it about Republicans versus Democrats. It's about the First Amendment and our right to free speech. The rights afforded to us under the First Amendment cannot be taken for granted, and we must never let them be taken away. This is a battle we cannot back down from—even if it takes everything we have to win it.

As a fellow Christian, I pray these words will encourage you to step out in faith and speak the truth. I also pray it gives hope to every patriot who refuses to be silenced and canceled by political correctness police and socialists in sheep's clothing.

Since I first stepped out, I've been attacked daily in the media. My Christian faith and my recovery from addiction have been maligned. I've become the poster child on the front lines of the vicious culture war, and it has cut across all channels. I've seen cancel culture at its finest, but I'm here to tell you that I remain positive in spite of the difficulties.

In fact, I believe this is the turning point. We are living in the greatest time in history because miracles are about to unfold. If we all stand up and speak our minds, I believe we're going to have the greatest uniting of our country and the greatest revival the church has ever seen. As people come to Jesus, we'll truly be one nation under God.

Look, we've seen what the devil can do to our country in one short year. Just wait until we see what God can do! I believe the most amazing days of our country are yet to come. That's why I'm always positive no matter what happens to me. It has never been about me anyway. I give all the glory to God and trust Him for the outcome.

Let's join our voices and make ourselves heard, and together we can cancel the cancel culture!



Mike Lindell

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SUPERNATURAL CONVERGENCE

God took this pastor on a journey to see how revival fire and governmental authority will work together to change our nation

BY CALEB COOPER

The God of heaven burns with an unquenchable fiery passion to see His children step into their prophetic destiny through His divine work to govern, guard and guide their lives. Jesus Christ, Alpha and Omega, who knows all things from beginning to end, has taken me on a powerful transformational prophetic journey toward the convergence of revival fire and governmental authority since 2016. Since this journey began, I've witnessed Holy Spirit's divine supernatural leadership, which has placed me on a spiritual launchpad. In revealing my prophetic destiny, He has also placed me in the middle of the fight for religious freedom and on the front lines in the spiritual battle for God's purposes in the earth.

I'll never forget the start of this journey. It was February 2016, and my wife and I had just arrived in Daphne, Alabama, to attend a conference at the Church of His Presence. The moment we checked into the hotel, a miraculous encounter took place as the heavens opened. I stepped into the elevator to head to our room when a sudden supernatural aroma from heaven overwhelmed me. The only way I can describe it is that my heart knew the fragrance of the Lord Jesus Christ had come upon me. I knew God intended this special gift for me because my wife, always spiritually sensitive, did not experience it.

"Maybe it's just the air freshener in the elevator," the enemy whispered. But when I stepped onto our floor, the scent remained. Heaven's aroma would not leave. I went to the room, and it grew stronger. We prepared for the service that night, and the aroma increased even more. We left for service and arrived in the church parking lot, and it only grew stronger and stronger.

We had a powerful time at the conference, but what most challenged and delighted me was that for three days, the fragrance of Jesus enveloped me. I knew then that God was doing something supernatural, something different than any of our previous encounters. From that moment, He placed my life and ministry on a Spirit-accelerated track.

continued »



Divine Encounter

As we began our journey home after the conference to our home in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, the presence of God overwhelmed me. Suddenly, I had a supernatural clarity that gave me insight into where He would take me in the next season of my life. His specific strategies downloaded from heaven to earth and into my heart. I heard these words, which struck my spirit like an arrow: “Son, you must go to Azusa Street and Washington, D.C, before the end of 2016.”

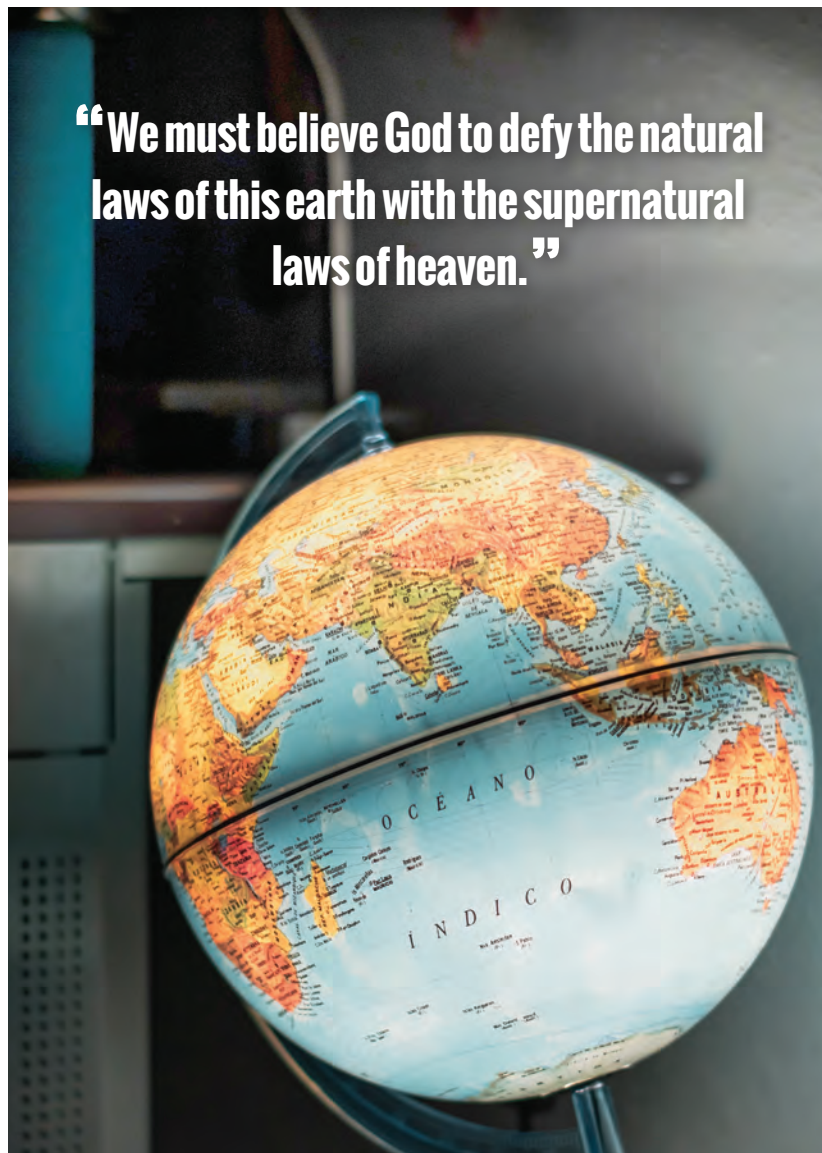
Why would I go to those places? I wondered. And what would I do when I got there? But as soon as I said yes to God—even without understanding what He meant—He said, “Son, I am sending a revival to New Mexico marked by a united people who are awakened by the past, empowered by the present and mobilized by the future.”

This word would set me on a course to encounter God in a way that would forever change my life.

I traveled to Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California; New York City; and Washington, D.C. Every stop and every location became pivotal and prophetic in nature, with the Lord drawing me from city to city. I carried my “Appeal to Heaven” flag and stirred up a spirit of faith to believe God for a shift in our nation. In each city, I felt a heavenly release, but I received something else as well. I believe God used this powerful time to prepare me for the next season and the unforeseen crucible of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During my time in our nation’s capital, Holy Spirit showed me that if we desire sustainable revival and transformational awakening, there must be a convergence of revival fire and governmental authority. At that moment, my mind immediately went back to when Jesus entered the region of Caesarea Philippi and delegated keys to the kingdom of God—keys that would bind and loose.

The Gospel of Matthew records the Savior’s words: “On this rock I will build My church, and the gates



of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:18b-19).

The Word of God makes it clear that as Peter spoke forth the revelation of Jesus’ true identity, our Lord promised to build His church. The Greek word for church is *ekklesia*, which reveals God’s ruling governmental authority in the earth.

God desires to manifest His ruling governmental authority in the earth through the body of Christ. Now is the time to legislate in the heavens as never before, and we must believe God to defy the natural laws of this earth with the supernatural laws of heaven.

We have entered an hour in America where we see many sins recognized as legal in the earth (and thus acceptable by society), but heaven does not view them this way. In heaven’s view, sin remains sin, and regardless of what society says, Christians need to flee it and fight against entities that seek to support it. In this moment, God desires to release governmental authority from heaven that burns with revival fire.

Spiritual Battlefield

I did not know that my 2016 encounters of saying yes to the process of the convergence of revival fire and governmental authority would be tested in 2020. The widespread impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

moved state governments to declare businesses “essential” or “nonessential” and order nonessential businesses shut down to stop the spread of the virus.

I would soon have firsthand experience with this. Growing concerns arose across the nation about whether government officials and law enforcement would uphold the oath they took to defend the U.S. Constitution, which clearly states:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

As pandemic-induced panic heightened and I saw governmental authority set its sights on violating the constitutional rights of the church, I knew we must lean into the government of God and revival

“Our church chose to obey God over man and exercise our God-given, inalienable constitutional right to assemble freely.”

fire. Holy Spirit spoke these words to me: “Son, this is not only ‘America’s storm,’ but will also be America’s ‘great divide.’ Keep My lighthouse open.”

On Easter Eve at 12 noon, New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announced that places of worship were no longer exempt from the state’s order and must close. She sent an emergency alert across every phone with this message: “COVID-19 update: gatherings not safe, even at church. Stay home.”

I remember looking at my phone, knowing the spiritual warfare against the church had just escalated. In my spirit, I knew God would not permit me to shutter our church,

which we had never closed since the pandemic began.

Later that day, Grisham revised her health order to state that “mass gatherings” meant any public or private gathering that brought together five or more individuals in a single room or connected space was prohibited. The order went on to say, “churches, synagogues, mosques and all other houses of worship shall adhere to these restrictions.”

Our church chose to obey God over man and exercise our God-given, inalienable constitutional right to assemble freely. We were met with great resistance—but also victory. I wielded



Pastor Caleb Cooper

the double-edged blade of God's Word on the spiritual battlefield, balancing Romans 13:1 (NIV), "submit ... to the governing authorities," and Acts 5:29 (ESV), "Obey God rather than men."

Not long after our decision to remain open, I received a call from the New Mexico State Police on our church phone. The message went as follows:

"This is in reference to New Hope Revival Church; we have a couple of complaints stating that the church is still open and running during church hours. Just to let you guys know that you guys are 'non-essential,' and this business should be closed down until further notice and until this epidemic is over and completed, until the government gives orders to reopen."

Supernatural Movement

After that first call, I went directly to the office of Sheriff Glenn Hamilton of Sierra County, New Mexico, our home county. The sheriff made it clear

that he would stand with our church and with me to defend our constitutional rights—even if it meant going to jail himself.

The following Sunday, Hamilton addressed our congregation, informing them of their constitutional right to assemble and making the following profound statement: "I'm here to ensure that I will be that guy who is the barrier between the oppressive government and those officials who are trying to enforce it."

I watched God at work in the convergence of governmental authority and revival fire. The sheriff addressed our church as the service was livestreamed, sending shock waves across our state. A peaceable meeting was set up with Hamilton, community faith leaders, the New Mexico state police and me. The law enforcement officers shared their concerns about the medical aspects of COVID-19.

One of my comments helped those present understand our moral

obligation and spiritual responsibility to keep God's house open. I stood before them and said, "the only thing worse than dying of COVID-19 would be to die of COVID-19 without Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of your life and burn in hell for eternity." These heartfelt words silenced the room.

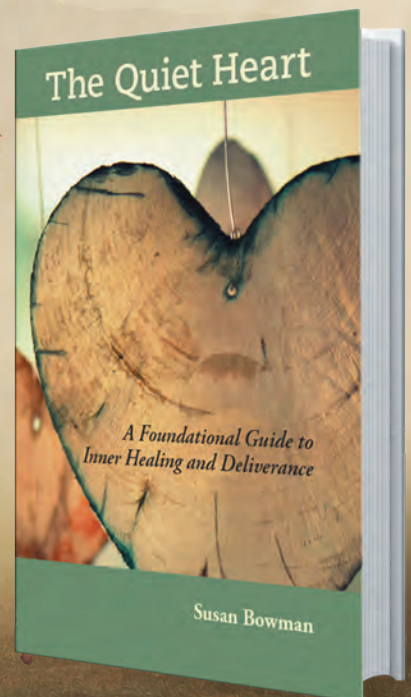
On May 3, 2020, Hamilton used the authority of his office to perform one of the most courageous acts in the history of New Mexico—and potentially America—as he deputized our entire congregation. After doing so, he congratulated us as special deputies and informed us that one of the benefits of this act was that law enforcement officials remained exempt from the governor's restrictive order.

However, not everyone saw this as positive. The New Mexico State Police served me a cease-and-desist order on May 10, 2020, because I continued to hold church services. The video of the officer delivering this order went viral, and by the following Sunday, people

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from all over our state converged on Truth or Consequences to stand with us. These supporters held a huge parade, showing they stood behind our church, the sheriff and me. Politicians and those running for powerful positions of government converged upon our small city.

The divine convergence the Lord had spoken to me about years before was now happening before my eyes. Because of that powerful moment of standing for His truth, I now serve as a co-chair of Rep. Yvette Herrell's Faith Leaders Coalition. On May 24, 2020—my birthday—former President Donald J. Trump declared the church essential. Hamilton's unprecedented deputization of our church members later became the catalyst that moved the New Mexico Sheriff's Association to nominate him as Sheriff of the Year.

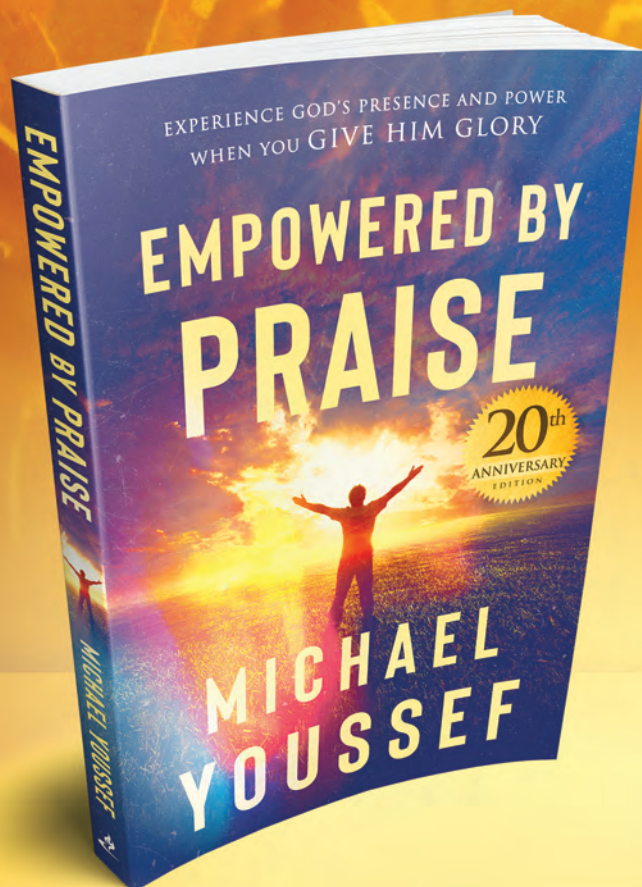
This powerful journey has paved the way for our church to reach people in government as well as law enforcement with the gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact, my most recent book, *The Call for Strong Godly Leadership*, has the subtitle *A Compilation of Leaders From the Church, Marketplace and Law Enforcement*. Seven active, former or retired law enforcement officials each wrote a chapter. Frank Shelton Jr., an evangelist who has worked for 20 years on Capitol Hill and in the lineage of six generations of Washington, D.C., police, wrote the book's foreword.

These are unusual times, and God is moving in unusual ways. My story is real and true, and I lived every second of it. But it is also a picture of what God is doing in our day. A convergence of revival fire and governmental authority is coming to America, and I count myself privileged to play a part in His divine purposes. ◀

READ MORE: To hear more from Caleb Cooper, visit cooper.charismamag.com.

CALEB COOPER is pastor of New Hope Revival Church in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico; founder of Caleb Cooper Ministries and the author of several books available at calebcooperbooks.com and calebcooperministries.com.

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Exposing the NAR Conspiracy

A real look at the rumors and accusations

BY DANIEL KOLENDA

Have you heard of the New Apostolic Reformation? Some people say it's a nefarious organization of heretical charismatics who are scheming to take over the entire world. The conspiracy theories surrounding the NAR range from mere speculations to full-blown Illuminati-type accusations. However, after talking with those accused of being a part of the NAR, I realized they had never even heard of the group and were shocked to find out they were among its "members." In fact, I now believe these theories point to nothing more than the discord between traditional evangelicals and charismatics that we've known about for years.

After hearing questions about the NAR come up multiple times from our listening audience, I took several months to research this subject to make certain I had the full picture. Then I decided to share what I discovered in a recent episode of my new podcast, *Daniel Kolenda, Off the Record*. During the podcast, I play audio recordings and published quotes from the accusers, addressing each of their accusations head-on. I will summarize my findings in this article, but for more detail, please listen to the podcast.

My quest began when I received a question from one of my podcast listeners named Max, all the way from Germany. He had heard rumors about the NAR in his congregation and was shocked to hear I had been named as one of its members.

Max wrote, "At some point, I read that Daniel Kolenda is a part of this movement and that he would believe [its teachings] himself. My first thought was, definitely not! After everything I've read and heard from you, I can't even imagine that you believe [like the NAR] even in part. But since statements from some of these 'members' find their way into our congregation, I would be very interested in what is this New Apostolic Reformation all about, and what exactly are the goals of this organization/movement."

continued »



“This isn’t just a Pentecostal or charismatic movement; it’s a significant trend that crosses over into all sectors of the church at large.”

Significant Trend or Concerning Movement?

Where did the term New Apostolic Reformation originate? C. Peter Wagner, a church growth expert and professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, coined the phrase. Unfortunately, Wagner died in 2016, so we can’t ask him to address the matter. However, he lived long enough to see the beginnings of the snowball effect he unintentionally started. He gave a public response, explaining the reasons he coined the terminology, in an article published on

August 24, 2011, on Charisma News:

“The NAR is not an organization. No one can join or carry a card. It has no leader. I have been called the ‘founder,’ but this is not the case. One reason I might be seen as an ‘intellectual godfather’ is that I might have been the first to observe the movement, give a name to it and describe its characteristics as I saw them. When this began to come together through my research in 1993, I was professor of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, where I taught for 30 years.”

This means there is no organization, ministry or denomination called the NAR. Wagner simply coined a phrase to describe a real phenomenon he had seen happening all over the world for the past 50 years or so. He noticed the shift because, for most of church history, there were basically one or two main Christian denominations, but then thousands of nondenominational church movements began experiencing exponential growth. Some of these church movements grew so large they dwarfed the mainline denominations in some regions.

This isn’t just a Pentecostal or charismatic movement; it’s a significant trend that crosses over into all sectors of the church at large. This is why Wagner described it as “independent,” and he was correct. Had he gone with the term “postdenominational” as a title for the movement rather than the “New Apostolic Reformation,” I doubt there would have been any backlash.

Instead, critics have grabbed hold of his term and taken full advantage of Wagner's innocent, albeit unfortunate, attempt to describe this type of church growth. I now believe the critics have done this as a way to push a nefarious agenda of their own.

The Wikipedia entry for the NAR is a great example. Here's what this online outlet gives as a definition:

"The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) is a movement which seeks to establish a fifth branch within Christendom, distinct from Catholicism, Protestantism (which includes Pentecostalism), Oriental Orthodoxy, and Eastern Orthodoxy. The movement largely consists of churches nominally or formerly associated with Pentecostal denominations and Charismatic movements but have diverged from traditional Pentecostal and Charismatic theology in that it advocates for the restoration of the lost offices of church governance, namely the offices of prophet and apostle."

If we examine the source for this entry, we find only one citation for the definition of the NAR, and it points to one Charisma News article from 2011. When we compare the Wikipedia entry to the source itself, we realize it doesn't support anything Wikipedia says other than the part about advocating for the restoration of the offices of apostles and prophets. The rest is completely unsubstantiated. I mention this because I find this typical, not only for this Wikipedia entry, but more generally for people who discuss the NAR. Much of what they say is pure and simple nonsense.

Doctrinal Issues or Dangerous Heresy?

The whole NAR question reminds me of a spectrum. On one end, we have some truth and a few facts, even if they're mostly misunderstood, and on the other end, we have extreme full-blown "Illuminati type" conspiracy theories. There in the middle, where most of the NAR criticism lands, we find pure

“Have these evangelical heresy-hunters accused Jonathan Edwards of being a heretic, part of the NAR or someone who believed in dominion theology because of his post-millennialism?”

speculation or exaggeration. Even when a critic raises a good point about a questionable doctrine or practice, when we uncover its root, it has nothing to do with something called the NAR. It's just a doctrinal issue that needs to be addressed.

Those who talk about the NAR are almost always critics who never have a clue what they're talking about. They usually use the term as a sort of catch-all, generic label to brand people they dislike as heretics. There may have been a handful of doctrinal issues typically associated with the NAR in the beginning, but that list has morphed into anything and everything the critics find distasteful in others' theology.

One of the main doctrinal issues that can brand a person as belonging to the notorious NAR is a concept known as "dominion" or "kingdom now" theology. This is taught in various ways, but the common denominator is the idea that as Christians, we're called to do more than just hang on until Jesus comes and rescues us from this God-forsaken world. No, we are called to be salt and light. We are here to make a real difference. Part of our assignment as the church is to influence society

and culture through our gifts, our talents and our lives in general.

Most Christians would agree with what I've just stated. If that applies to you, you might be surprised to learn that this could cause the critics to call you an NAR heretic. How do I know? Because I've been branded this way. Yet as far as "dominion theology" goes, what I just described is what I believe and teach.

A more radical view of dominion theology is post-millennial eschatology, or the belief that Jesus will return to set up His kingdom after the millennium rather than before. Essentially, this eschatological system sets forth the idea that the church will usher in the return of Christ by taking over in leadership. People like Charles Finney, John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards, whom the Calvinists usually revere, all ascribed to a post-millennial eschatology. Have these evangelical heresy-hunters accused Jonathan Edwards of being a heretic, part of the NAR or someone who believed in dominion theology because of his post-millennialism?

Of course not. He's one of their heroes. Yet they call charismatics "NAR heretics" on the basis of less radical views on the same subject. How is that consistent? How is that fair?

Jealousy or Charismatic Cabal?

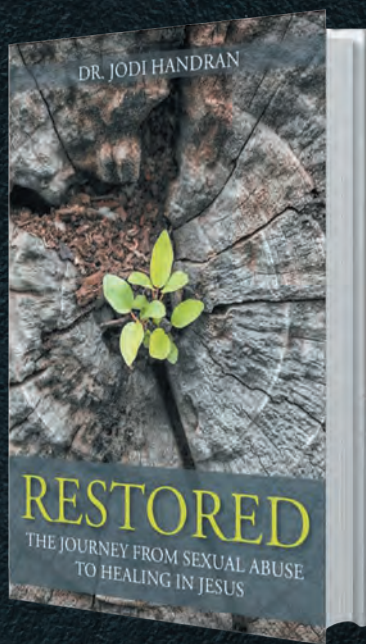
The second part of the whole NAR conspiracy is the charismatic connection. This part is pretty easy to understand because evangelical heresy-hunters have always disliked charismatics. Why? Much of it boils down to jealousy. The Bible tells us that even Jesus was delivered up by the Pharisees because of jealousy (see Matt. 27:18).

It's easy to understand why the critics are jealous. The largest spiritual movements in the world are charismatic. The most popular worship music is charismatic. Most of the large churches in the world are charismatic. There's energy and excitement and, more importantly, abundant evidence of fruit in the charismatic camp.

What's more, the charismatics expose the complete spiritual bankruptcy of these critics. If what the

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charismatics experience is indeed authentic, what does it say about their critics? Of course, it makes them look bad. It makes it look like they're missing out on something really important—and they are! But rather than repent and seek God, it's a lot easier just to attack charismatics, accuse them of heresy and claim everything they're doing is counterfeit Christianity. That way they can feel better about themselves and save face in front of their friends without having to change the very attitudes and doctrines that keep them unfruitful, miserable and critical.

The NAR narrative was the devil's gift to the critics for their help in His divide-and-conquer plan. For years now, they have been painting the charismatic movement as heretical and unorthodox, but thanks to the NAR conspiracy theory, they can now make it seem

and if Elvis and Tupac were still alive, but these theories are simply untrue. I think a lot of these conspiracy theorists are bored out of their minds and longing for mental stimulation. There is no secret cabal of charismatic leaders behind the scenes, pulling strings, trying to take over the world. Wagner coined the term NAR, wrote about it in several books and preached on it. In his mind, that terminology was a good way of categorizing the largest, most diverse and most influential swath of Christendom the world has ever known, but that was Wagner's terminology. It was his category.

The people Wagner described would have identified as charismatics, Pentecostals, nondenominational or as part of one of countless independent church movements. They never agreed on terminology, joined an organization or signed

“The people accused of being part of the NAR don't share a set of doctrines or beliefs beyond some basic ones, such as believing the gifts of the Spirit are for today—a belief held by hundreds of millions of people worldwide.”

diabolical and nefarious as well. They took over all of the leftist talking points, added a few of their own, made a few new guilt by association connections—and created a theory designed to divide. They created a picture of Christian leaders dedicated to taking over the world by any means possible and working in the shadows to accomplish their goal.

The truth is that there is no secret charismatic Illuminati. I'm sorry to disappoint anyone. I know the world would be a lot more interesting if there were things like Bigfoot and the Loch Ness monster,

a particular statement of faith. In fact, they didn't even realize the term existed.

I think these critics have vastly overestimated Wagner's influence. I spent my entire life in the charismatic world and rarely heard him mentioned. The charismatic world is massive. There are up to 700 million people who identify as charismatic, according to some sources, and few of us, relatively speaking, have any connection to Wagner. If I happen to believe something Wagner also believed, such as the relevance of the apostolic and prophetic offices, I promise there is no direct connection. I believed that



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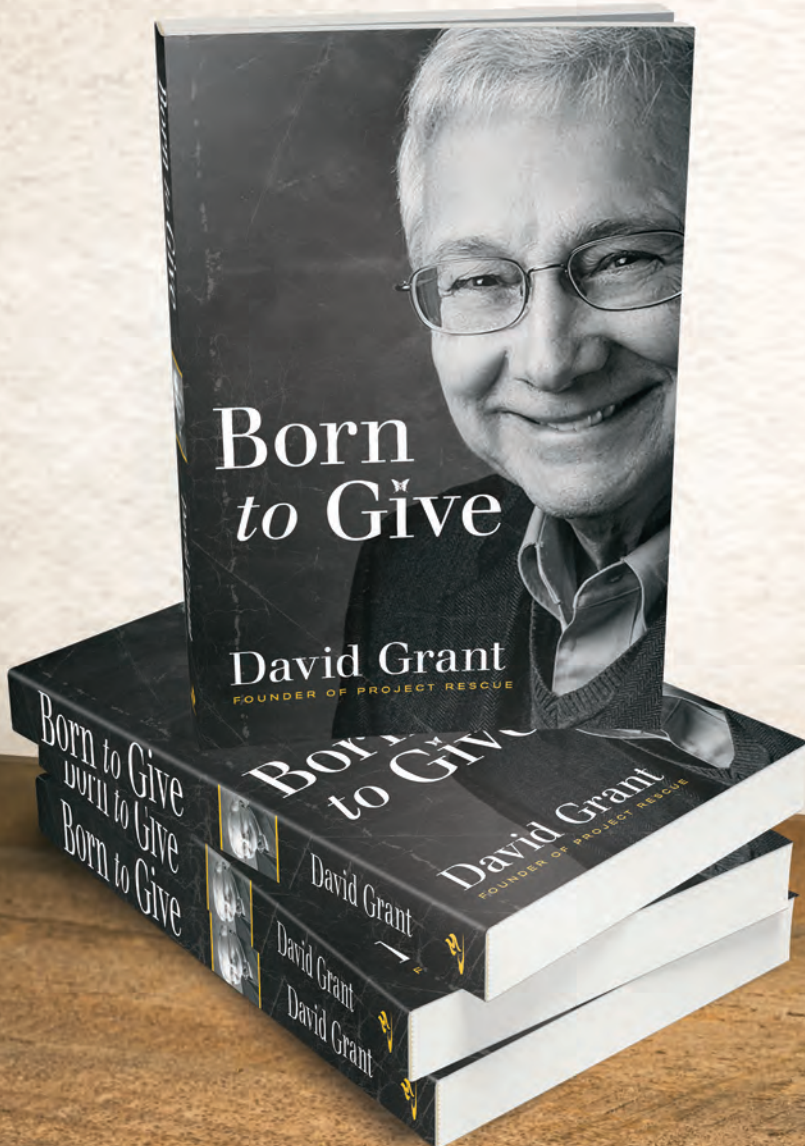
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way long before I heard Wagner's name. I didn't get my views from his or anyone else's book but from the Bible itself.

If we listen to these critics for long, we notice many seem to have great difficulty suspending their preconceived biases to evaluate in a fair and objective way. Maybe they're just irrational people. I don't know them personally, so I can't say. But they may tolerate irrationality on this particular issue because it confirms their bias.

Frankly, to dismiss our beliefs with this silly argument is lazy—the equivalent to a concession of defeat. When these heresy hunters talk about the NAR, we should interpret their words as though they're describing full-gospel, Bible-believing, Spirit-filled Christians. That's all we have in common. The people accused of being part of the NAR don't share a set of doctrines or beliefs beyond some basic ones, such as believing the gifts of the Spirit are for today—a belief held by hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

Do the NAR critics understand the difference between correlation and causation? Just because I believe apostles exist today and Wagner believed that apostles exist today doesn't mean one caused the other. This seems to be the central issue. Yes, millions of people believe apostles exist, probably more like hundreds of millions. We're called charismatics, not disciples of Wagner. We will continue to stand for the gifts of the Spirit and the full counsel of Scripture, no matter what Wikipedia—or anyone else—says we believe. ◀

READ MORE: Enjoying this discussion? Find more topics at Daniel Kolenda's new podcast, *Off the Record*.

DANIEL KOLENDA is a missionary evangelist who has led more than 22 million people to Christ face to face through massive open-air evangelistic campaigns in some of the most dangerous, difficult and remote locations on earth. As the successor to world-renowned evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, Daniel is the president and CEO of Christ for All Nations—a ministry that has conducted some of the largest evangelistic events in history.

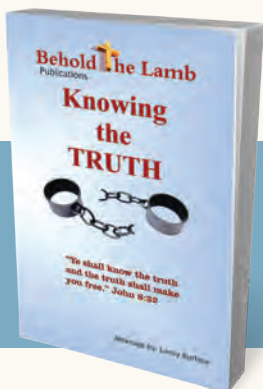
SIMPLY CHRIST



Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

CHILDISH THINGS

My dad sometimes speaks of his childhood and how much he admired his brother Bill. He is six years younger than Bill, so growing up, Bill was his hero and mentor. To him, Bill was the wisest person in the world and anything Bill told my dad was immediately recorded in his mind as "wisdom." There were times later in life as he faced times of decision, my dad would remember the wisdom Bill had given unto him so many years before. One day it dawned on my dad that he, a grown man with a family, was following the advice given to him by a twelve year old boy. He would always love and respect his brother, but he knew it was time to "put away childish things."



FREE BOOK
Knowing
the Truth

When the Apostle Paul speaks of putting away childish things, he is referring to childish speaking, childish understanding, and childish thinking. He says, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." I Corinthians 13:13. These "childish things" were things the believers held to be wise, but it was not the wisdom of God.

None of us were born again with a divine revelation of all things. All of us were taught. Sometimes the teaching was good; sometimes it was not. Often the things we learned were in fact a mixture of scriptural truth and carnal understanding. Yet most of us accepted the things we were taught as "truth and wisdom" because they came from someone we loved and trusted to give us the word of God.

Although we should always honor those who have instructed us in the Lord, each of us must come to a place where we determine to "...let God be true, but every man a liar." Romans 3:4. This is simply an acknowledgement that the words of any person, no matter how great they are in our sight, are just "childish things" in light of the word of God.

Decades ago, when we began to preach "freedom from sin" through the blood of Christ, we were well aware that it would be scoffed at by the "wise" in the modern church. We were not ignorant of the fact that this message was contrary to the dogma of almost every Christian group and denomination, and that it would cost us many friends in the ministry. Yet we did not choose to declare it because it is acceptable, but because it is what Jesus said ("If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36); it is what Paul said ("Being then made free from sin..." Romans 6:18); it is what Peter said ("...that we, being dead to sins..." I Peter 2:24); and it is what John said ("Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." I John 3:6). We had to make a conscience decision to "...let God be true!"

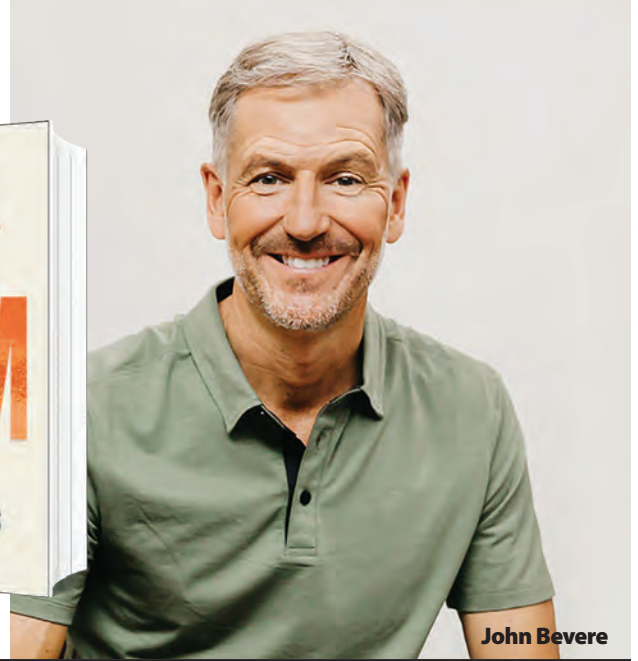
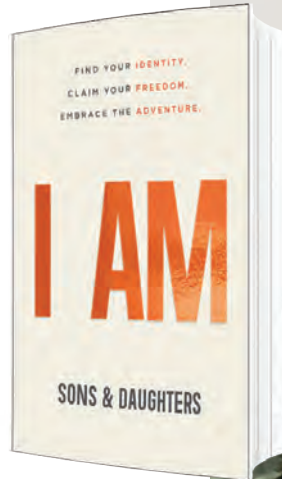
Someone once asked me why I preached that "our old man is **actually crucified** with Christ and the body of sin is **actually destroyed** and we are **actually delivered** from sin." They said, "Everyone else says that is not true. Do you think you know more than everyone else?" My response was this: "I preach it because every time I open my Bible it says, 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.' Romans 6:6. I choose to believe God."

In light of the word of God, my thoughts are merely the thoughts of a child, but then so are yours. The words of the greatest ministers of our generation are no more than "nursery rhymes" if they run contrary to the gospel as recorded in the scripture. Each of us must come to the hour that we choose to "put away childish things" and believe God for what his word actually says. Only then will you "...know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32.

Simply Christ is sent weekly via email to believers around the world. To request your freebook or subscription, visit cochurch.org or write to: **Behold the Lamb Publications, P.O. Box 750 Porter, TX 77365**

I AM Sons & Daughters Revell

I AM releases Sept. 21, brought to the market by John Bevere's ministry movement known as Sons & Daughters. Perfect for the young adult in the family, the book focuses on the fact that life is an adventure and God desires each of us to see ourselves as His children.



Angels of Fire Candace Smithyman Destiny Image

Author, prophetic revivalist, healing minister and Charisma podcast host Candace Smithyman's latest book focuses on the biblical truths about the ministry of angels. Many believers are more aware of demonic activity than angelic activity. We all need help from heaven, and *Angels of Fire* teaches believers how to access their heavenly heritage.



Grandparenting Teens: Leaving a Legacy of Hope Mark Gregston Forefront Books

Mark Gregston brings biblical insights on how grandparents today can help shape the character of their grandchildren. Many forces combine today as part of the enemy's attempt to tear down our families and their legacy of godly character. *Grandparenting Teens* equips readers to help restore the breach.



Joy in the War Daniel and Amber Pierce Charisma House

Joy in the War is a unique book about finding joy in the midst of devastating events, including those happening in America and around the world. The Lord desires His children know He is a covenant God. When we choose to align with His purposes, even the conflict and warfare surrounding us cannot stop His joy from manifesting.

God and Cancel Culture

Stephen E. Strang
FrontLine

Things are chaotic in America. Liberal policies are advancing. A rash of executive orders appears to be moving the nation closer to socialism and a one-world government. Conservatives, including many Christians, are being censored as never before. There's even a term—cancel culture—which 64% of Americans believe poses a threat to their freedom, according to a Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll. (Among Republicans, that figure is even higher, at 80%.)

Cancel culture poses a threat to all conservatives who oppose the politically correct crowd, but it's also part of a bigger effort to cancel Christianity and those who espouse biblical principles. It almost seems this is the beginning of the end, and the Antichrist will appear at any time.

We cannot go backward if we want to remain effective and engaged. Paul wrote that all things work together for those who are “called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28b). That calling is active, purposeful and energetic.

This book does not throw anyone overboard who is standing



Stephen E. Strang

for the truth in some positive way. Rather, it allows readers to look critically at the various approaches vying for our allegiance and attention as we press through 2021.

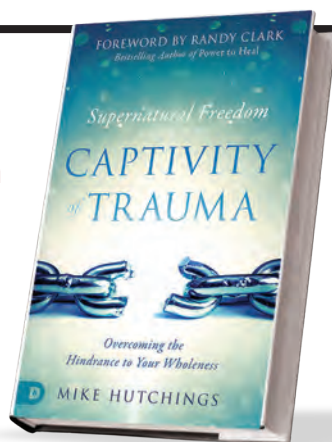
Supernatural Freedom From the Captivity of Trauma

Mike Hutchings
Destiny Image

We need supernatural assistance in breaking through and breaking out of the demonic ties that bind us. In his new release, *Supernatural Freedom From the Captivity of Trauma*, Mike Hutchings shares just how to do so. Drawing from his experience as a pastor, church planter, counselor and ministry school director, Hutchings ensures his counsel is practical for every person seeking help.

As society drifts toward the place of increased trauma and pain, we need handbooks and manuals like this to lead people out of PTSD and into the place of healing and freedom God has made available to them. Topics addressed range from understanding trauma as a soul injury and the effects of trauma on the mind.

All of the book's wisdom has led to endorsements from a wide-ranging group of church and ministry leaders, including Randy Clark, Pastor Danny Silk and J. Lee Grady of *Charisma* magazine. Psalm



Mike Hutchings

34:18 (NIV) declares, “The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” *Supernatural Freedom from the Captivity of Trauma* allows those who have experienced such brokenness to access the heavenly Father's promises to bring them into healing.



Why I Made the Radical Decision to Publish 'Let America Live'

Dr. Stella Immanuel's explosive new book reveals the lies behind the COVID-19 cancel culture

When Dr. Stella Immanuel stepped to the microphone in Anaheim, California, in mid-July at the ReAwaken America rally, the atmosphere changed from political rally to church service. Already the crowd of enthusiastic conservatives brought together by Clay Clark cheered in anticipation of speakers such as Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Lt. Gen. Mike Flynn, MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell, Dr. Sherry Tenpenny, Julie Mikovits and others.

Immanuel, originally from Cameroon but practicing in Houston, Texas, is one of the Frontline doctors who believe alternative treatments actually help COVID-19 patients get well; they also question the vaccine's effectiveness. For this they have been consistently canceled by the medical establishment and the secular media. I included a chapter in my new book, *God and Cancel Culture*, called "Controlling People Through COVID-19;" and one of my main sources was my May podcast interview with Immanuel.

Not only is Immanuel a successful physician with an active practice, but she is also a Spirit-filled Christian, a prophet and the founder of Fire Power Ministries in Katy, Texas. She devotes her life and resources to teaching believers to identify sources of spiritual weakness, deception and defeat to learn strategies of warfare to enable them to get and maintain their freedom. In Anaheim, Dr. Immanuel moved into spiritual warfare. "The church is the only entity that can fight this battle, and we have been missing in action," she said, in full preacher mode. She added a spiritual dimension to the ReAwaken America tour.

At the rally in Grand Rapids, Michigan, which took place in mid-August when this issue was mailed, I joined the tour to speak on cancel culture. I also hosted my first meet and greet, and I look forward to future events in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Sept. 24-25, and San Antonio, Texas, Nov. 11-13.

I watched the eight-hour Anaheim event online, and I thought Immanuel was the most exciting speaker there. As I did further study on the truth behind the cancel culture's lies, I became persuaded she had a message to get out. So when she approached me about publishing her new book, *Let America Live: Exposing the Hidden Agenda Behind the 2020 Pandemic: My Journey*, I was excited to do so—even though no other publisher would touch it.

Even some of my staff said publishing the book was too risky because we might get in the crosshairs of the cancel culture crowd. But I read the manuscript and realized it's a



**"The church is the only entity that can fight this battle, and we have been missing in action."
—Dr. Stella Immanuel**

carefully researched book and will open many people's eyes to the cancel culture. *Charisma* will cover it more extensively next month and online after her book releases Oct. 5.

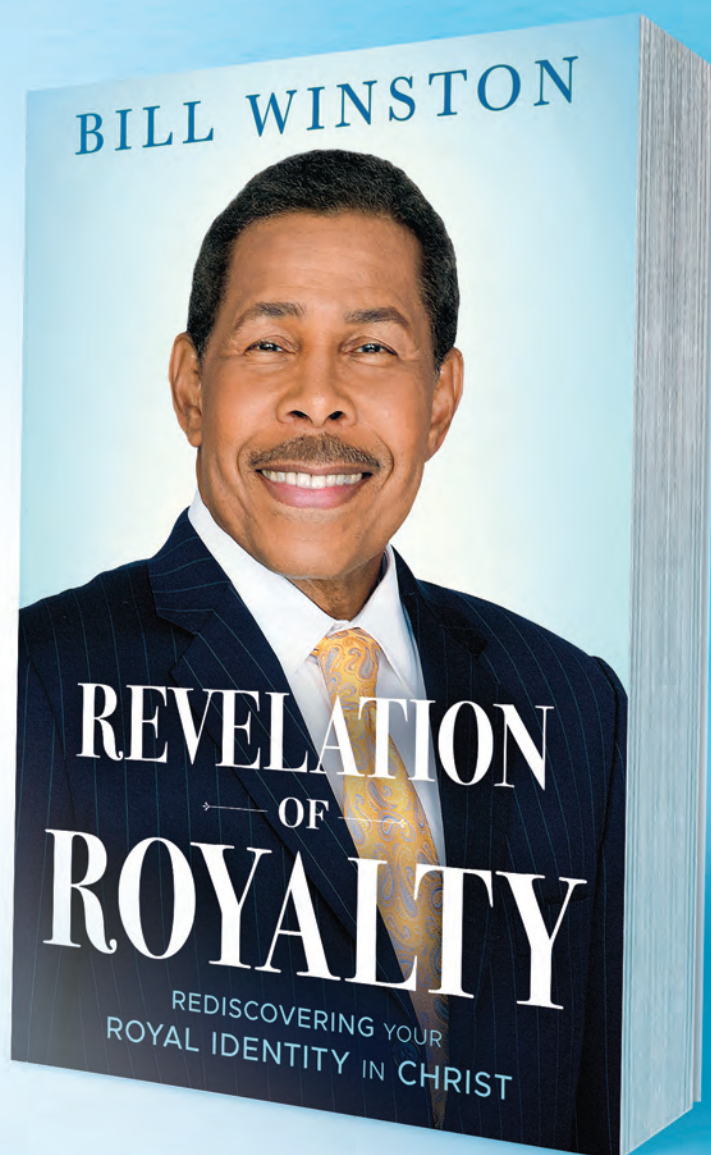
Immanuel has treated more than 7,000 corona-virus-infected or symptomatic patients at her Houston clinic and online via telemedicine, and of that number only eight have died—all of whom were in advanced stages of the disease.

In her book, she writes: "These results beg the question, why have the United States government and the Centers for Disease Control made a concerted effort to conceal the truth about hydroxychloroquine, arguably COVID-19's most effective treatment? Not only have government-sponsored and political organizations been trying to pull the wool over our nation's collective eyes concerning hydroxychloroquine, going so far as to mock, discredit and even villainize those who, like me, have become vocal advocates of it, but I am now fully convinced that there exists an evil, diabolical conspiracy of widespread cover-up and misinformation to mislead Americans—and people around the world—concerning the truth about COVID-19, including where it came from and how to treat it."

I hope you will want to read this important book and plan to attend one of Clark's ReAwaken America tours. Register to obtain your tickets at this link, reawakenamerica.charismamag.com, and receive special pricing and the opportunity to attend a meet and greet with me when a member of Clark's team calls you. I'd love to meet you and give you a copy of my new book, *God and Cancel Culture*.

Where you go starts with your recognition of
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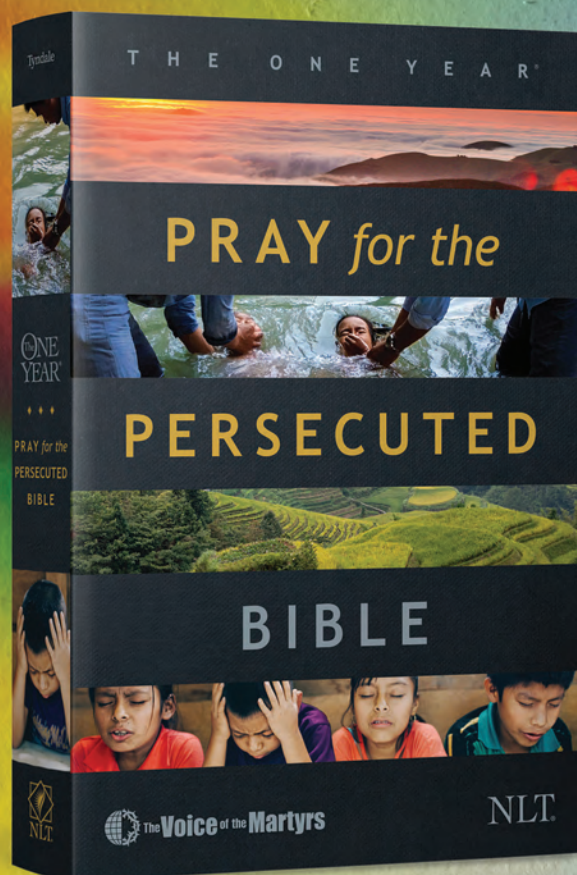
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