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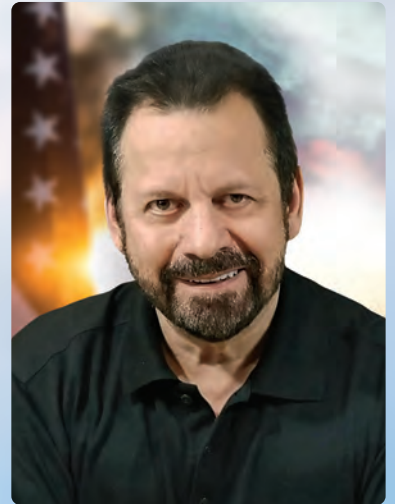
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LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

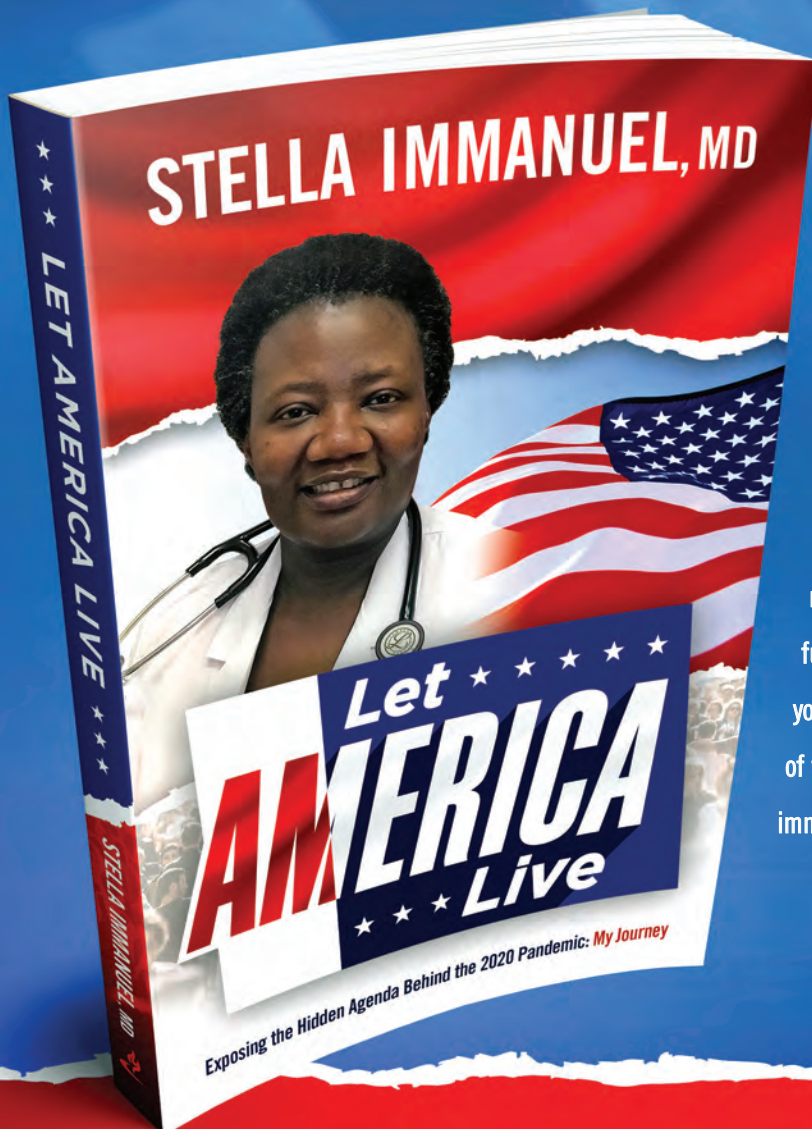
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Evangelist Mario Murillo is seeing incredible fruit in his tent crusades. Is this the beginning of a revival?



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"Strang's message... grabbed my attention and showed me how much of a threat cancel culture already has become."

—Michael Chieffo, Sanford FL

"GOD AND CANCEL CULTURE"

Stephen Strang's article "How Cancel Culture Will Affect the Church, America and you" (*Charisma*, September 2021) was as timely as it was insightful. I have considered this a topic that only affects other people, especially public figures and social media personalities. Strang's message in this article and from his new book (*God and Cancel Culture*, FrontLine) grabbed my attention and showed me how much of a threat cancel culture already has become. His thoughts on how to confront it are spot-on!

Michael Chieffo, Sanford, FL

MAVERICK CITY MUSIC

Thank you for the excellent article about Maverick City Music (*Charisma*, September 2021). I only discovered their music in the past year, and they quickly became a new favorite. Their music definitely captures the unity and peace I feel and seek during worship at my church. The small article along with it was great, too. ("Worship is the 'Now' Move of God.")

Anne Marie, Isle of Palms, SC

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11

On the 20th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks, it was a great comfort to read the article by and about survivors from New York City on the morning of the attacks ("Thanking My 9/11 Heroes," *Charisma*, September 2021). We will never forget that terrible day, but it is a wonderful assurance to read about the way God brought beauty from the literal ashes of ground zero in Manhattan. Christina Stanton's testimony is very inspiring.

Ellen Kemp, Leesburg, FL

MARIO MURILLO AND HIGHWAY 99 REVIVAL

The Mario Murillo article on revival breaking out along California's Highway 99 ("Corridor of Glory" *Charisma*, September 2021) was great! It was amazing to discover how much God has been moving there. I'm always amazed with *Charisma's* reports that talk about gifts of the Holy Spirit manifesting. The young guy healed from heroin addiction and praying in tongues was inspiring!

Jim Daniels, via email

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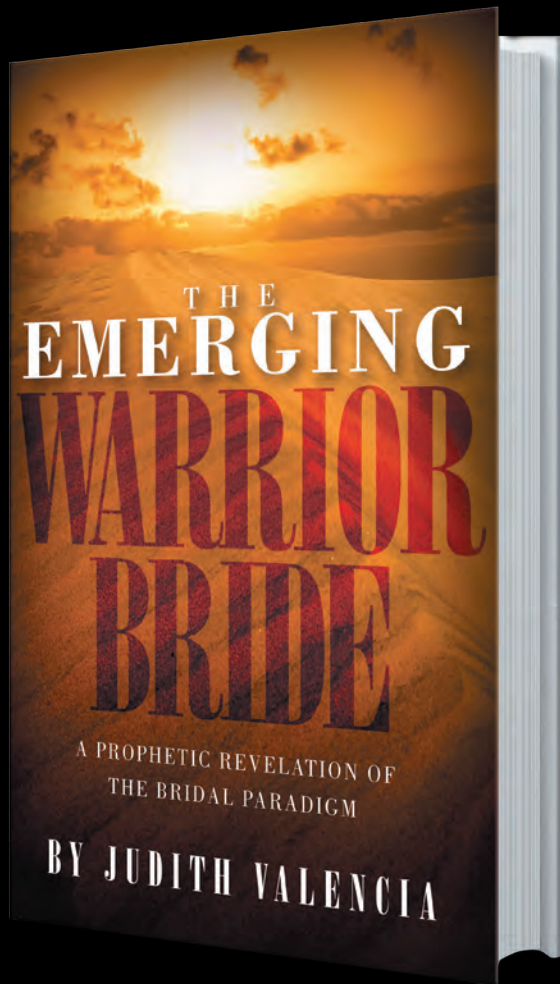
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Wide-Angle Lens

'Lord, give us Your perspective to see what we've been missing'

I enjoy photographing birds. I especially like to capture them in flight.

Often when I'm out watching birds, I have a powerful telephoto lens on my camera. I can zoom in on a bird from relatively far away and capture a stunning image of God's creation.

Sometimes, from the corner of my eye, I notice a bird winging across the pond. I try to yank my camera around with lightning speed to snap that picture-perfect calendar shot, only to find that my subject has escaped the viewfinder. The bird hasn't moved, but I missed the shot because I looked through the wrong lens. I need a wider angle to capture the flight properly.

Likewise, I need a wider lens—a different perspective—to make it through most days. The Lord has more for me to see than my hyperfocused activity allows. Last week, circumstances forced me to write a column using my iPhone for data entry. The front door lock on our building refused to unlock, so I trekked back to my car to write.

My normal place of focus is a computer screen above my keyboard. I write in total quiet with little stimuli within eyesight. But on that day, I opined from the front seat of my car, windows rolled all the way down. I listened to birds singing in the early-morning hours—birds I couldn't see but wished I could photograph. They sounded so full of color. I was wholly satisfied to snap images with my ears.

Here's the life lesson: When we change our focal length, we often expand our horizon. We see things—or hear things or think about things—in a new way. When we focus only on the issue at hand, we may miss a broader view of what God wants us to see. When circumstances force me to zoom out, I receive inspiration to see and hear new things as a young child would see, as if for the first time. Perspective is everything.

This probably happens to you as you read the Word. A familiar verse jumps from the page with fresh insight. The Holy Spirit leads us with many and varied methods. I want to receive His direction with an open mind, especially when I've fallen into comfortable patterns or established ways of thinking. Comfort helps us zoom in with a desire to hold onto this feeling forever. But at times, God wants to move us out of the comfort zone and into a creative zone.

The Shepherd is happy when we "lie down in green pastures" (Ps. 23:2). This holds true until we must transition to a new pasture. We often have trouble traveling from



"When the Spirit stirs us for a move, our vision must change to a wider lens."

where we are to where the Lord knows we should be without a prophetic perspective of what lies ahead. Although we walk by faith and not by sight, we must be willing to change our lens to see as God sees when we sense transition at hand. When the Spirit stirs us for a move, our vision must change to a wider lens.

What is the Lord doing with me? I remain happy in my normal routine. But He has greater plans. His rod and staff bring a unique kind of comfort to me if I don't respond with instant obedience. I want to be where He is, but sometimes that means hearing what He is saying, seeing what He is seeing—or at least sensing that He wants to show me something—and walking in blind trust, because He's ordering my steps.

The same is true when we live in discomfort. Our focus seems to narrow when we feel things are going well. We don't want anything to change when we're standing on top of the mountain. We enjoy the view. By contrast, when we're in the desert—when we are stuck in a cave—we can only see the problems that surround us. We cry to the Shepherd, "Get me out of this mud pit." We can't see the bigger picture. We likely won't be moved until God opens our eyes to the lesson of the day. *Lord, give us Your perspective!*

I put away my zoom lens that morning to allow the Shepherd to feed me with the dawn of a rising sun, bird-filled trees in our parking lot and creative thoughts about the day's potential. Change your lens and see all the Lord has for you today.

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Are You Resting in the Lord ... or Sweating?

We must learn the difference between the sweat of the flesh and the sweet oil of heaven

Here's an honest confession: I struggle to rest in the Lord when I'm doing His work. The apostle Paul told the Philippians: "For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Phil 2:13, NASB 1995). It is a wondrous truth that God uses flawed human vessels to do His will. But He can't work through us if we are anxiously trying to do the job ourselves.

In Old Covenant times, God instructed the priests to dress in linen garments instead of wool so they wouldn't perspire while they worked. Ezekiel 44:18b says: "They shall not gird themselves with anything which makes them sweat." God doesn't need our perspiration to accomplish His purpose. He can't work through us if we are anxious, fretful or pursuing our own agendas.

As I have prayed for more of the Holy Spirit's power in my life, I've realized that we often manufacture our own version of the "anointing" so it looks as though God is blessing what we do. Often this is because we have a distorted understanding of what the true anointing of God looks like. We must discover the following truths:

The anointing isn't in numbers. We place so much importance on church size today, yet God doesn't seem impressed by crowds. I have nothing against megachurches as long as they preach the gospel. But we're headed for disaster if we think seating capacity reflects God's approval. Stop striving to fill chairs and just minister to the people God brings!

The anointing isn't in eloquence. Some people have an uncanny way with words, but persuasive skill isn't the same as spiritual anointing. The oil of heaven is holy; it brings conviction and repentance. True preaching doesn't exalt preachers or make people feel good about themselves. It crucifies flesh and focuses all attention on the Son of God. Stop trying to be a celebrity and just let God speak through your brokenness.

The anointing isn't in looks. In today's evangelical scene, we worship what's cool. Rock star pastors are expected to be sexy, and everyone in the praise team needs trendy clothes. There's nothing wrong with dressing to reach your audience, but I hope we don't think the Holy Spirit is impressed with hipness. The grandmother with orthopedic shoes might have a word from the Lord for the congregation—but will we allow her on the stage? Today, we need a demonstration of the Spirit more than we need a show.

The anointing isn't in technology. I love to use digital graphics when preaching. But some of the most anointed meetings I've been in were in poor countries where



"Today, we need a demonstration of the Spirit more than we need a show."

we didn't even have reliable electricity, much less projectors and big screens. When genuine anointing falls on a preacher, he or she can talk for two hours without having to entertain.

The anointing isn't in emotionalism.

In many churches today, lack of anointing creates a vacuum that is filled by screaming and other forms of religious theater. It doesn't matter what is preached—it is "anointed" as long as the preacher punctuates it with enough volume, and the people shout back. Remember: Backslidden Israel shouted so loud that the earth quaked, but by the end of that day the Philistines had plundered them (see 1 Sam. 4:5-11). The anointing isn't determined by volume.

The anointing isn't in contrived manifestations. I love it when the Holy Spirit does miracles. But when people fake the supernatural in order to get an audience response (or a big offering), I run for the door. If we had the fear of God, we would never pretend to have the anointing by stretching the facts in a testimony, pushing people to the floor or sprinkling glitter on ourselves to pretend it is "glory dust."

Charles Spurgeon referred to the Holy Spirit's anointing as "unction," and he said: "Unction is a thing which you cannot manufacture, and its counterfeits are worse than worthless." Let's turn away from every false form of anointing and ask God to soak us with His heavenly power.

Pray and surrender your heart to His will. Trust Him to work through you. Instead of sweating and striving, relax and be a conduit for His powerful presence.

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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God's Plan for Your Pain

God can carry you through hard times—and use you to help others as well

At one time or another, we all experience a disappointment or a significant loss. Maybe that's where you are today; perhaps you've lost a job, a relationship or even someone or something you love.

If so, I want to encourage you with Matthew 5:4 (AMPC). Jesus says, "Blessed and enviably happy ... are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted!"

I used to think this was odd. I wondered, *How can we be blessed if we are mourning?* Then God helped me understand that our times of pain are actually perfect opportunities to receive and experience His supernatural comfort.

In fact, having a problem is one of the best places to begin again. Why? Because God's comfort goes far beyond any ordinary kind of comfort. He is the only one who can carry you through the pain and help you to actually become a better, more powerful person than you were before.

With God's help, we can look at our pain as an opportunity. I believe we can have an attitude that says, "This may be tough right now, *but I will never give up.* I'm really hurting, but I'm going to bounce back!"

I recently went to a coffee shop and met a woman who recognized me from my television program. She began telling me what a mess she was in and said, "Joyce, life has just thrown me under the bus."

Almost without thinking, I responded, "My life used to be the same way, but I decided to *drive* the bus."

I wasn't trying to be flippant or imply that I made anything happen on my own. I explained that when things go wrong, the enemy wants us to spend the rest of our lives under the bus, feeling sorry for ourselves. But God's plan is for us to bounce back, get in the driver's seat and then go pick up other hurting people who are under the bus.

Now, there is an appropriate time to grieve after a loss or tragedy, but we don't want to get stuck there.

Look at the life of Joseph in the book of Genesis. As a young man, Joseph had great dreams for his life. But his older brothers resented him and sold him into slavery, and he was taken to Egypt. However, Joseph refused to give up. He found great favor with his master, Potiphar, and was eventually put in charge of his entire household.

Years later, Potiphar threw Joseph in jail for a crime he didn't commit. But he still



"With God's help, we can look at our pain as an opportunity."

didn't give up. In fact, the Lord eventually gave Joseph an opportunity to interpret a dream for Pharaoh, who then promoted him to be the highest official in Egypt!

Joseph literally went from the pit to the palace. Then, years later, when a famine struck the land, the Lord used Joseph to save his family and the entire house of Israel.

Romans 8:28b (NIV) says, "In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Some of my greatest victories have come out of difficult moments when I had to press through and seek God for His help and comfort. I'm grateful today that I didn't give up during those times because I wouldn't have the privilege of helping people the way I do today.

When you are hurting, I encourage you to run to God—the "God of all comfort" (2 Cor. 1:3b). Spend time in His Word, talk to Him in prayer and choose to worship Him in every situation.

God will often use others to comfort us. But even those people who are extremely close to us cannot give us everything we need all the time.

When we expect others to do for us what only God can do, we will always be disappointed. But Isaiah 49:23 says that those who put their hope in the Lord will never be disappointed.

God sees every hurt, trial and disappointment we face. Psalm 34:18a says, "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted." And if we let Him, He will take the bad things that happen and work them out for our good.

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.

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THE STING OF DEATH

In the beginning of the Revelation, Jesus spoke to John, saying, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; **and have the keys of hell and of death.**" Revelation 1:17-18. This statement was a declaration of victory and of promise fulfilled. The power of "death and hell" had been crushed, as foretold in the word of God.

There are two different Greek words translated as "hell" in the New Testament. One is "geenna," which speaks of a place of eternal punishment. The other, which is used in this passage, is "hadés," and means "unseen, or the place of departed souls." It is translated as "hell" and "the grave." This word is never used in reference to "the lake of fire." In some places it seems to speak of where those who died without knowing God are kept, but in other places it speaks of

"the grave" in general as simply the place of departed souls. It would be an equally accurate translation to read Jesus' words as "I am alive for evermore, Amen; **and have the keys of the grave and of death.**" Revelation 1:18.

When the Bible speaks of Jesus, saying, "...thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" Acts 2:27," it is speaking of "hell," not as a place of punishment, but as "the grave." Jesus entered "the grave", to destroy its power, but he never went to the "lake of fire." The teaching that Jesus "burned in hell," is a perversion of the word of God.

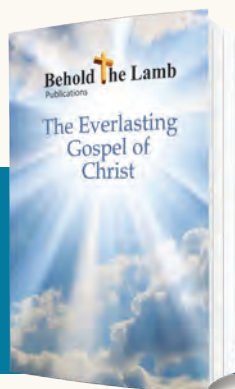
God had given a promise of Jesus' victory over the grave through the prophet Hosea, saying, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: **O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction:**" Hosea 13:14. Countless souls have entered the grave because of deadly plagues which came upon them. This prophecy, however, was a promise that God Himself would be a plague upon death. In a sense, God would cause "the death" of death!

Jesus also gave a promise of "the grave's" destruction. When Peter made the statement "thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus said "...upon this rock (this revelation of Christ) I will build my church and the gates of hell (the grave) shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18. This statement is actually a promise of the resurrection of the saints. It was assurance that "the grave" would not be able to keep or hold those who stood upon the truth of Christ.

The Apostle Paul reminds us of this promised victory when speaking of the resurrection of the redeemed. He said, "...then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" I Corinthians 15:54-55. In that day, both "death" and "the grave" will be powerless to hold the children of God. This passage is actually mocking "death's" and "the grave's" impotency. Paul asked, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Paul then identifies the "sting" of death, saying, "**The sting of death is sin!**" I Corinthians 15:56.

This thing called "Sin," which Paul calls "the sting of death," is what gives "death" and "the grave" dominion over a person. The Bible says "death" entered the world with sin, and "passed upon all men..." Romans 5:12. From that day, "sin and death" have been partners. Wherever sin is found, death reigns. Romans 5:14. As long as sin is in your heart, "death" has dominion over you.

Jesus was "...manifested to take away our sins." I John 3:5. Paul explains the reason Jesus suffered upon the cross, saying, "...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. This is how Jesus fulfilled his promise to make us free from sin. John 8:36. In our death with Christ, sin is destroyed, and death then loses its dominion over us. We may indeed one day depart this world by way of "the grave," yet even so, "the gates of hell (the grave)" cannot hold us if we truly know Christ. On the other hand, those who die in their sin ...will be lost! John 8:24.



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Heavenly Blueprints Create Heavenly Results

Six prophetic keys for the next season

We are living in unprecedented times. While significant challenges will continue to arise against the purposes of God, God will not fail His people. He is releasing the greatest outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the corresponding wisdom to birth this outpouring. It is our privilege to represent God, and it is our high responsibility to position ourselves to receive the blueprints of heaven for this season. The choices we make today define our future experience in God.

On Father's Day morning, June 20, 2020, God spoke to me six prophetic keys that must define the future of the global church. While this is not an exhaustive prophetic word, I believe it gives insight into God's purpose for His people in this season.

1) Families must become the foundation for generational discipleship.

After taking Judah captive, the Babylonian king assigned Daniel and other young Israelite boys to three years of training in the Babylonian culture. Though his training demands conformity, Daniel refuses to violate the covenant which he has been taught. A child who refuses to conform is a child who has learned the nature of God and the power of a godly belief system. Daniel is so convinced of his belief system that he suggests it be tested. Families are foundational for generational discipleship that results in a superior display of the nature of the kingdom of God.

2) Corporate prayer, worship and intercession are mandatory and essential. God desires to give "deep and secret things" to His people to shape nations (Dan. 2:22a). Our ability to shape history will be defined by the extent to which we build a culture of worship in prayer, the fruit of which will be the release of unprecedented revelation.

3) Divine messengers will bring direct words from heaven to shift the earth for the greatest habitation of the glory of God. This will be a season of divine messengers on the earth. I see a close group of earthly pioneers as large flames of fire, bringing the word of the Lord to release divine strategy and wisdom. These words will birth realities that have not existed previously on the earth. These messengers will love God's beauty and embrace His character in every area of their lives.

4) The fivefold ministry must work together as one to establish God's government on the earth. The fivefold ministry is one of Jesus' gifts to enable the church to function like Him. While a segment of the body of Christ has recognized



"I want to enlarge My people's vision and their ability to see and hear from heaven."

and welcomed the fivefold ministry, we have yet to see a synergistic effort in the manner God originally intended. Only in the fivefold working in cooperation with each other will we see the power and authority God longs to release through His divine order. The ability to change and disciple nations is the end result of the fivefold ministry working together as one.

5) Learning to see humanity through the lens of God's mercy and goodness.

Though Daniel's interpretation of Belshazzar's dream was one of judgment, he made this statement to the king: "My lord, *if only* the dream was for those who hate you" (Dan. 4:19b). Daniel saw an evil man through the eyes of God's love and compassion. We are in a season of abundant harvest and unprecedented reaping of souls. One of the keys to reaping this abundant harvest is for the body of Christ to see humanity from God's glorious perspective.

6) The people of God learning and understanding new paradigms. This is a season of unique and divine strategies from heaven, released on the earth for those who have listening and attentive ears. In this season, God's great desire is to release divine words from heaven that will quickly come to pass.

Even now I hear the Lord say, "As my people lean into Me with corresponding wisdom, I am releasing keys that would unlock the manifestation of prophetic words and mandates, some given long ago. Indeed! In this season, the just shall walk by faith as never before. I want to enlarge My people's vision and their ability to see and hear from heaven." Amen!

ABNER SUAREZ is the founder and President of For Such A Time As This Inc. He has been welcomed in a variety of streams in the body of Christ and different sectors of society, including government, education and business. His latest book, *Trust: God's Unseen Power to Change the World*, is now available for sale. You can find out more about Abner at abnersuarez.com.

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 **CHARISMA MEDIA**



Virginia School District's Shocking Response to Pro-Trans Policies

'When my children are at school, they are students and not the school's children,' one mother said

The Chesapeake Public School Board rejected the state of Virginia's updated policies regarding the treatment of transgender and nonbinary students, *wavy.com* reports. Under guidance from the Virginia Department of Education, nonbinary and transgender students can play on gender-specific sports teams or use restrooms and other facilities that correspond to the identity of their choice rather than their birth gender. The school district's proposed policies, an adaptation of the state's, did not reach a board

vote as only board member Patricia King moved to consider them, without receiving a second.

"When my children are at school, they are students and not the school's children. My parental authority doesn't end in the parking lot," one mother speaking against the policy told the board.

Virginia Department of Education Superintendent James Lane said the state won't penalize districts who fail to implement the policy but said they face pressure from families of students who identify as transgender, reports *wric.com*.

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Stephen Strang, owner
Joy Strang, owner

Pastor, Author, Renowned Evangelist Charles Green Dead at 95

The founding pastor of Word of Faith Ministry, New Orleans, remained active in traveling, preaching and writing until shortly before his death



Charles Green

Charles Green, a leader in the Latter Rain Movement, president of Harvest Ministries to the World and founding pastor of Word of Faith Ministry in New Orleans, Louisiana, died Aug. 22 at age 95 in Frisco, Texas. Active in traveling, preaching and writing until a short time before his death, he was known as a unifier and builder in the charismatic community who encouraged others with his strong faith.

Green, born Feb. 27, 1926, was a graduate of Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina and a veteran of World War II who spent 14 months in the China-Burma-India

theater of operations. He received the doctor of theology degree from the Evangelical Seminary of Brazil, the doctor of humane letters from the California Graduate School of Theology and the doctor of laws degree from Oral Roberts University. He wrote numerous books and study courses used around the world, including his most recent, *Light of Victory*, a personal story of his deliverance from fear, anxiety and depression. Churches around the world continue to use his Bible study courses. Condolences continue to appear on the Facebook page of Green's daughter, Cyndy Green Crider, who announced his passing with the words, "Dad is with the Lord & Mom. He is singing every song he ever knew & every verse. Dad was a true servant of God. He was a proud Army veteran. He loved God, his family, his church family & friends & he loved his country. There will be a celebration of life at a later time. We thank you for all your love & prayers."

Witchcraft in America

Man Accused of Sacrificing Animals in Apartment

ANew Jersey man has been accused of sacrificing livestock as a part of Santeria after investigators discovered 22 farm animals—not all of them alive—in his apartment in August, several media outlets reported.

Santeria has been labeled by some as a form of witchcraft, but Emilio Otero,

the alleged perpetrator, told *NBC-4 New York* that he is a Santeria doctor and that Santeria is "an Afro-Caribbean religion that started in Cuba and popularly sacrifices animals as a form of devotion."

As the investigation continues, media reports indicate Otero could face fines of \$2,000 and 90 days in jail per count.

An Atheist Chaplain? Say It Isn't So, Harvard University

Harvard University, a school that was established four centuries ago to educate the ministry and that adopted the motto "Truth for Christ and the Church," has done the unthinkable: It has elected an atheist as its chief chaplain, media outlets have reported.



Greg Epstein

told *The New York Times*. "We don't look to a god for answers. We are each other's answers."

Chosen by Harvard's organization of chaplains, Greg Epstein, 44, took on the position in August of this year. The university was named after a pastor, John Harvard, and more than 70 years passed before Harvard had a non-clergyman as president.

"There is a rising group of people who no longer identify with any religious tradition but still experience a real need for conversation and support around what it means to be a good human and live an ethical life," Epstein

Descendant of Slaves Addresses Critical Race Theory School District is Forced to Respond

Critical race theory took yet another hit nationally when Derrick Wilburn, a father in Colorado Springs, Colorado, who said he is a descendant of slaves, said that putting critical race theory into our classrooms does not combat racism; it only "fans the flames of what little embers are left."

Shortly after Wilburn's stirring speech, School District 49's Board of Education voted 3-2 to ban critical race theory from its classrooms.

"I travel across this country

of ours, and I check into hotels, and I fly commercially," Wilburn said. "I walk into retail establishments, and I order food in restaurants. I go wherever I want whenever I want. I am treated with kindness, dignity and respect, literally from coast to coast. I have three children. They are not oppressed, either; although, they are victims. I taught my children they are victims of three things—their own ignorance, their own laziness and their own poor decision-making. That is all."



BIBLE READING GUIDE

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.

"AND WHATEVER YOU DO in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." —Colossians 3:17

Nov. 1	Ps. 121; Mark 9-10
Nov. 2	Job 23-24; Mark 11-12
Nov. 3	Job 25; Mark 13-14
Nov. 4	Job 26-27; Mark 15-16
Nov. 5	Job 28-29; Gal. 1-2
Nov. 6	Job 30; Ps. 120; Gal. 3-4
Nov. 7	Job 31-32; Gal. 5-6
Nov. 8	Job 33; 1 Cor. 1-3
Nov. 9	Job 34; 1 Cor. 4-6
Nov. 10	Job 35-36; 1 Cor. 7-8
Nov. 11	Ps. 122; 1 Cor. 9-11
Nov. 12	Job 37-38; 1 Cor. 12
Nov. 13	Job 39-40; 1 Cor. 13-14
Nov. 14	Ps. 149; 1 Cor. 15-16
Nov. 15	Job 41-42; 2 Cor. 1-2
Nov. 16	2 Cor. 3-6
Nov. 17	2 Cor. 7-10
Nov. 18	Ps. 124; 2 Cor. 11-13
Nov. 19	Matt. 1-4
Nov. 20	Matt. 5-7
Nov. 21	Matt. 8-10
Nov. 22	Matt. 11-13
Nov. 23	Matt. 14-16
Nov. 24	Matt. 17-19
Nov. 25	Matt. 20-22
Nov. 26	Matt. 23-25
Nov. 27	Ps. 125; Matt. 26-27
Nov. 28	Matt. 28; 1 Thess. 1-3
Nov. 29	1 Thess. 4-5; 2 Thess. 1-3
Nov. 30	Rom. 1-4

ASSAULT on AMERICA

Sean Spicer Exposes Biden's Plan for Remaking America.



America is under assault by radical progressives bent on transforming our country into a socialist society. Already they're dismantling democracy, destroying our economy, abolishing our freedom, and attacking our Christian values.

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Perhaps no one knows better the threat this radical administration poses than **Sean Spicer**, former Trump White House press secretary, *New York Times* bestselling author and host of Newsmax's *Spicer & Co.* Now, in his explosive bestselling book, *Radical Nation: Joe Biden and Kamala Harris's Dangerous Plan for America*, Spicer reveals the true personas and dangerous hidden agendas of Biden and Harris.

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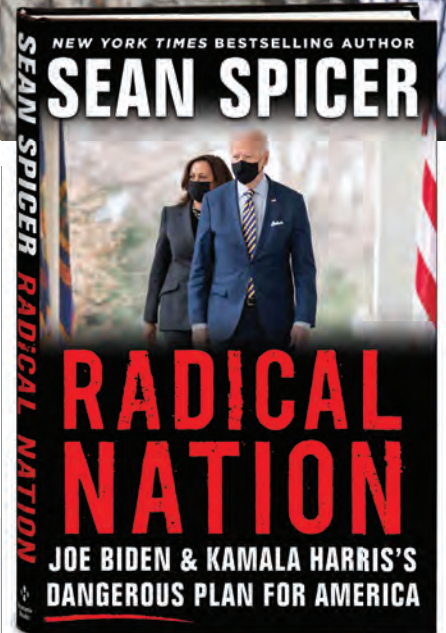
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— **Newt Gingrich**

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- **Why Kamala suddenly becomes the invisible woman during a crisis. Page 55**
- **Keystone Pipeline job massacre — the stunning secret behind who really benefits. Page 173**
 - Who really started critical race theory and why it's trash — but people buy it hook, line, and sinker because it came from this esteemed university. Page 213
 - **House Democrats' sinister plan to get around the First Amendment and shut down conservative speech. Page 255**



SEAN SPICER



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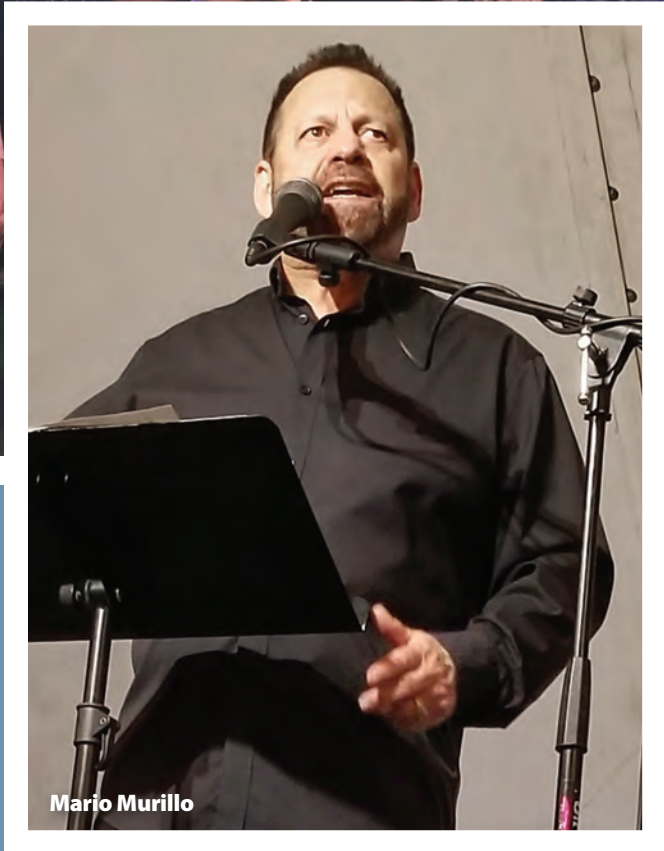
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The spiritually hungry are responding to the message of the cross



Mario Murillo

SIGNS *of* AWAKENING



Evangelist Mario Murillo is seeing incredible fruit in his tent crusades—and that revival spark is spreading across the country

BY JOEL KILPATRICK

Fifty-four years ago, a young California evangelist named Mario Murillo emerged as a key voice in the Jesus Movement. His fiery message, accompanied by signs and wonders, profoundly influenced a generation of leaders.

Today, Murillo is holding tent crusades up and down California's Highway 99, drawing thousands to services where they encounter the power and grace of God. The meetings, foretold in a dream, are one evidence of the arrival of a large-scale move of God that many have expected and prophesied.

"Powerful. Unbelievable," is how Greg Fairington, founder and pastor of Destiny Christian Church Assembly of God in Rocklin, California, a suburb of Sacramento, describes the tent meetings Mario held in Sacramento earlier this year. "Nobody was expecting the crowds that came out. People told me, 'Don't do that. Outdoor revival meetings are a thing of the past.' We had 4,000 people come, four nights in a row, but the best was the hundreds of people who came to give their hearts to the Lord. The presence of God was so evident. There was a spirit of expectation every single night."

Further south, in Fresno, Jim Franklin, longtime pastor of Cornerstone Church Assembly of God, has attended all but one of Murillo's nearly 40 "highway" meetings, and hosted some of the first.

"These meetings are amazing," Franklin says. "They are a return not to the days of old but to the days of the power of God. The crowds grow every night."

Franklin firmly believes something new is sweeping California.

"I want to be part of it," he says. "I believe in the vision God gave Mario. As a local pastor, I have to engage in the revival that is happening now, not just wait for it to happen with me."

The Highway 99 tent revival began with an unusual experience in Stockton, an hour south of Sacramento. In 2014, Murillo was taking a nap after preaching a morning meeting and had a spiritual dream ("I'm not given to that kind of thing myself," he says). In it, he was hovering over California and saw Highway 99 stretching from beginning to end, 470 miles or so from south of Bakersfield to Red Bluff. The highway then turned into a river, and Murillo heard a voice say, "This is a corridor of My glory."

Thinking it was a word for Stockton, he shared it that night and let it go. But five years later, his ministry was given a tent and a thousand chairs, and he says it became clear he was to start doing tent crusades at the bottom of Highway 99 and work his way up. He wondered, "What in the world does a highway have to do with it?"

He then realized that Highway 99 is California's devastated corridor, passing through some of the richest agricultural land in America, but also some of the poorest cities. Rocked by drought, the housing bust, political mismanagement and the arrival of foreign gangs, the Central Valley still produces much of the

world's almonds, fruit and vegetables, but also an outsized amount of violence, poverty and despair.

Sparking a Flame

When planning the first set of meetings in Bakersfield, at Canyon Hills Assembly of God, with Pastor Wendell Vinson, Murillo says he didn't expect crowds.

"I thought I was just kind of obeying God, and we'll see," he says. "But then the sovereign hand of God began to descend on each crusade that we did, and the momentum began to get stronger and stronger."

Thousands showed up in major cities along the 99, including Fresno, Bakersfield, Modesto and Sacramento. "Amazing miracles" took place, Murillo says.

He dubbed the meetings "Living Proof," because he preached a straightforward gospel message, then saw it confirmed with signs and wonders. Linda Noonan, who has served in Assemblies of God ministries and churches for several decades, was on a prayer team for the Sacramento meetings. She had never attended a tent revival before.

"I was sitting up in the front. [Murillo] had an altar call, and people just swarmed our altars," she says. "I had never seen that before. It was the most beautiful thing, and I started weeping. I didn't expect that."

Noonan, who has attended Destiny for 27 years, sat next to a woman in a wheelchair at a pre-meeting dinner. That night, Murillo called the woman out and said, "God is healing you." The woman stood up from her wheelchair and walked up to the platform.

"That was miraculous," Noonan says. "I had people come [receive prayer] for salvation, for healing, for a miracle in their life. ... It's phenomenal, what's going on."

Fairrington says there is "a genuine hunger for God that I have never seen before. People want the truth, something they can put their hope in, not something just to make them feel good."

Murillo's meetings "felt like the

book of Acts being revisited—signs, wonders, and the miraculous," Fairrington says. "People were healed every single night, and we're still sharing the reports of that four months later."

In Redding, California, a few miles north of where Highway 99 terminates, Bill Johnson, senior leader at

"It was Jesus who saved me. But it was Mario who brought me into a life-changing encounter with the love of God."

—Pastor Bill Johnson

Bethel Church, recalls being strongly impacted by Murillo's ministry in the early 1970s. Johnson calls Murillo "a messenger from God for me in my youth."

"While my generation was celebrating compromise and independence from God, Mario made no concessions," Johnson says. "He preached a no-compromise gospel. That gospel was backed with power. It's exactly what I needed in order for me to be willing to forsake every other ambition in life but to serve Jesus."

At the time, Johnson's parents, Earl and Darliene, were leading Bethel, and Bill and many others were in the midst of what came to be known as the Jesus Movement. Murillo's ministry center in Berkeley, called Resurrection City, drew many young people for outreaches that marked their entire lives.

"I've told him and others many, many times that I owe him my life," Bill says. "I know it was Jesus who saved me. But it was Mario who brought me into a life-changing encounter with the love of God—it was authentic, life-changing, filled with power—the only kind of gospel worthy of giving our life for."

Spreading the Fire

In Laverne, Tennessee, just south of Nashville, evangelists Jennifer and Munday Martin heard about Murillo's tent meetings in early 2021.

"We said, 'There's a movement happening right now,'" Jennifer explains. "We need to do that here. Let's see what God does."

An unexpected donation allowed them to buy a tent, and favor allowed them to place it in a field along Interstate 24 in Murfreesboro for three weeks, starting last April. The Martins sensed "something different and special was going on," but neither expected the Holy Spirit to lead meetings the way he did, forcefully encountering and driving darkness out of young people. Spontaneous responses often overwhelmed their preaching, with people coming forward, crying out to God and being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

"Preteen kids would walk up weeping, with stammering lips," Jennifer says. "Nobody taught them praying in tongues. Nobody was praying for them. It was just them and God."

Then demons started manifesting, which Jennifer had never witnessed except on internet videos. By faith, she, Munday and a team of volunteers cast them out. She estimates they have performed more than 100 deliverances since April.

"The tent was such a free atmosphere that people could open up, and the Holy Spirit could finally get to the places in them that needed healing," she says. Still, it was initially so far beyond their normal experience that "we didn't even know how to do this. I felt like God dropped us in a different pond and said, 'Figure out how to swim.' He didn't prepare me,



Murillo preaches repentance and revival

didn't tell me in any dreams that this would happen."

Many were baptized in a silver horse trough volunteers filled with water every night at the local Speedway gas station. Visitors said the meetings had a Brownsville-like environment with a strong repentance message. In May, the Martins moved the services indoors on Friday nights at a nearby church. Everyone

bloomed from an oceanside gathering to the most popular traveling meeting in America.

Jay Koopman, associate pastor of Ché Ahn's Harvest Rock Church in Pasadena and a Teen Challenge graduate with an eye-popping testimony, has preached in all 130 of the events except the first two. Koopman and Feucht were only passing acquaintances until both took flak from

move of God, man, and we locked in forces, because we were like Jonathan and David," Koopman says. "We just said, 'We've got to do this.'"

The largest church gathering in America in 2020 was the Let Us Worship event at the National Mall on Sept. 11, 2020, he says. Koopman describes their gatherings as having "that impartation from Brownsville," which he experienced as a young Christian. People ran to the altars to get right with God.

Sometimes the collision of kingdoms is dramatic.

A recent event in Portland, Oregon, was preceded by an attack on a church outreach in the same park Let Us Worship would use the very next day. About 6,000 believers showed up, and "the power of God hit that place," Koopman says. "Needles, heroin, drugs all thrown on the stage. One of the antifa members ended up coming down, demonically possessed, and gets completely delivered—and that's on video."

In places like California and Oregon, known for their liberalism, "people are carrying a fire like never before," Koopman says. "They are preaching on airplanes, they are open-air preaching on trains, they are preaching in restaurants, and so

"The tent was such a free atmosphere that people could open up, and the Holy Spirit could finally get to the places in them that needed healing," -Jennifer Martin, evangelist

is invited to eat a free dinner together before meetings begin, which has helped create what Jennifer describes as "a family."

Birthing a Revival

Due west of Highway 99, during the riots and lockdowns of 2020, another outdoor evangelistic event was born. "Let Us Worship," led by worship leader and recent congressional candidate Sean Feucht,

some Christians for not submitting to all government guidelines. In the same week that Feucht held the first Let Us Worship events, Harvest Rock Church sued California's ultra-liberal governor. The ministers, both around 40 years of age, bonded under friendly fire from fellow believers.

"He was getting rejected for doing what he was doing, I was getting rejected for suing Gov. Newsom with Pastor Ché, but out of that birthed a



People are desperate for the power of Christ

it's giving the church this boldness to not just fight for America, but also to win souls and make disciples.”

In little more than 12 months, with no paid marketing, Let Us Worship has gone from being a worship-centered protest of church shutdowns, to what Koopman calls “a full-blown revival.”

“The Lord was shifting us from being this worship movement to being this revival movement,” he says. “We kept prophesying revival, but we didn’t know it was going to happen like this.”

Multiplying the Momentum

In part, that has meant reviving Christians who lapsed into sin during extended lockdowns.

“The body of Christ has been shut down for so long because of COVID, and a lot of them got back into bondage and started coping,” Koopman says. “The Christian church needs to be set free and healed.”

The Let us Worship team plans to start holding statewide events, as the team continues to function as a firestarter of revival that flows into local churches.

Murillo says more and more people are ready to give Jesus

“People are hungry for miracles in this time. They don’t need another fancy sermon.”

—Pastor Jim Franklin

a try. “Everyone is stunned by how many people want to be saved.”

Miracles also play a major role. He tells of a man healed of an injury due to a punctured lung. He speaks of a woman he called out of a crowd who was healed of liver cancer and neuropathy that caused extreme pain in her hands and feet. He says a major drug dealer walked down the aisle while he was preaching, waved at Murillo and announced, “I need to get saved right now,” then threw a big bag of marijuana on the ground and started stomping on it.

Murillo’s ministry has had to buy a new, larger tent to accommodate the crowds. “The momentum is just intensified,” he says.

He is now receiving invitations from other states, such as New York, where he will hold his first tent crusade

outside of California this fall.

“People are hungry for miracles in this time,” says Franklin of Fresno, whose church continues to reap a harvest of people from Murillo’s meetings. “They don’t need another fancy sermon. They don’t need another show or song; they need a demonstration of the power of God that is relevant to their lives in these critical times.” ◀

READ MORE: Find more stories about how God is sweeping the land in revival at awaken.charismamag.com.

JOEL KILPATRICK is an award-winning journalist and author whose work has appeared in *Time* magazine, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *CBS Radio*, *The Dallas Morning News* and many of newspapers and magazines. He has authored and ghostwritten more than 60 books, including a *New York Times* bestseller.

Confronting 'Wokeness' From the Pulpit

These California pastors are speaking out and standing for freedom

By Joel Kilpatrick

High-profile Christian leaders in California have switched from defense to offense and are leading a new resistance against worldly philosophies and government control of churches and citizens.

"The situation has become so extreme in America that suddenly a lot of things I used to be marginalized for saying are now mainstream in a lot of people's minds," says Mario Murillo, who often speaks against "wokeness" and critical race theory in his meetings.

"In America we're not going to have the freedom to preach the gospel unless we confront this evil. And so to the pastor who says, 'We don't want any politics in our church,' I say, 'That's the most political thing you can say.' The reason a lot of people are coming to our meetings is because they feel like evil is actually being confronted and the power of God is being released to set people free."

Pastor Bill Johnson of Bethel, Redding, says Murillo is "a clear voice for me today" and "has the unique ability to have a finger on the pulse of the church and on secular culture without being governed by either in a negative way."

One church that has risen to a new calling, and doubled in size in the past year, is Destiny Christian Assembly of God Church in Rocklin, which could have been described as "seeker sensitive" until the lockdowns began. The congregation and its pastors, Greg and Kathy Fairrington, have found their voice and become a beacon of freedom, speaking boldly to state leaders 22 miles away at the Capitol building. The Fairringtons are recapturing what Murillo calls "stolen lightning."

"Ben Shapiro, Jordan Peterson and to a lesser degree Candace Owens all take up the eloquent exposure and fallacy of modern culture," Murillo says. "They're showing why it doesn't make sense. All of that belongs in the American pulpit; it doesn't belong to Shapiro or to Peterson—it belongs to the pulpit of the American church."

Ché Ahn, founding pastor of Harvest Rock Church and Harvest International Ministry in Pasadena, stepped into history books by winning, along with another Pentecostal plaintiff, a major U.S. Supreme Court case protecting churches from government shutdowns. He also campaigned for Donald J. Trump in an indirect way in battleground states before the 2020 election.

What Ahn calls "the election debacle" has served to bring key Christian leaders in California together for the first time. Ahn, Bill Johnson, Samuel Rodriguez, state Sen. Shannon Grove, Christian university presidents and successful businessmen have covenanted to bring reformation and revival to every sphere of California.



Beyond the barbwire is the Golden Gate bridge in San Francisco.

They call their coalition Revive California (revivalcal.com) and encourage others to join them.

A major focus of Revive California is "teaching the church about the government mountain," Ahn says. "That means everything from registering and voting, to running for office successfully. I believe that God wants to raise up a whole army of people that are called to be ministers in the government mountain. I thank God for the [U.S. senator from Missouri] Josh Hawleys and Christian evangelicals who are in this right now, but we need many more that

have typical kingdom values."

Ahn calls the state's recall of a sitting governor "a major earthquake in our nation. This is a sign of revival for me in California. It's all part of the revival reformation. Because for me, what revival looks like is social transformation. I've never been more encouraged by the church rising. We're encouraging our network of pastors to run for office and they're receiving the call, they're doing it."

Speaking prophetically in the political realm attracts attention—and attendees. During California's lockdowns, Harvest Rock opened four campuses, mostly in Southern California. Many come to check out the church that successfully sued the governor—and many stay because "they can smell freedom, and they're drawn to that," Ahn says. "We've had so many first-time converts this past year, more than ever in the history of our church. I think God is honoring us for our obedience and taking a stand."

He calls Let Us Worship "an appetizer, just a preview of what's going to be coming. It reminds me of the Jesus People Movement."

Let Us Worship evangelist Jay Koopman says regarding Christians' response to government overreach, "what blew our minds was not that government did what they did. What blew our minds was the Christians who complied with it. Like, you're not going to fight this?" Now, Let Us Worship is mobilizing at the state level "not because we need to have bigger crowds, but because we want to start equipping a generation to know how to stand for God in the government, and to bring revival to their cities," he says.

Murillo says local police chiefs and mayors encourage his meetings because they see that nothing else is healing hopelessness. In his view, America has just two choices: great revival or great unrest.

"I believe what's coming next is a massive social populist uprising," he says. "I'm praying with all my might that the church can capture it, because I don't want it to become physical. I don't want it to become thousands and thousands of Americans up in arms because they're finally at the boiling point. I'm convinced that we have an opportunity to harness the uprising and turn it into a massive awakening for the glory of God."

God Has a New Season for You

Your breakthrough lies ahead. Are you ready to step into it?

BY KEVIN WALLACE

I live with my family in Ooltewah, Tennessee, a quaint, almost sleepy bedroom community of Chattanooga that is tucked into the southern tip of the Appalachian mountain range. One of the things we most appreciate about our region is that we get to enjoy the full gamut of seasons and the unique beauty they each bring. Of course, the seasons also have their distinctive difficulties. We slip and slide on the ice in the winter, spend spring fighting pollen (which seems to accumulate as high as the winter's snow), sweat on hot summer days, and rake leaves every fall. As predictable as sunrise and sunset, the cycle of seasons never ends. As it is in the natural, so it is also in the spiritual.

Seasons change but not quickly. On early fall mornings, we may notice an unexpected chill in the air. On late-winter afternoons, we may feel as if the sun has a warmth that is more typical of May than March. But those weather previews aside, the seasonal changes do not generally occur suddenly. Slowly we shift from season to season, one degree and a few minutes of daylight at a time. Yet as slow as their passing may be, the seasons do pass.

The beauty of Tennessee's seasonal shifts is not so different from anywhere else on the map. No matter where you live, and in ways that have nothing to do with climate, life has a way of changing seasons as well. Sometimes the change can be devastating, a hard hit that feels totally unfair. At other times, the change inaugurates new life, bringing us a fresh dose of joy and hope. On some occasions when we find ourselves experiencing great success, we feel as if we are living in showers of blessing. But we also have seasons of tragic loss, abject failure, unimaginable suffering and debilitating frustration.

The seasons of life, spiritual and emotional, have one thing that is unlike the natural seasons. In the world of temperatures and precipitation, the seasons are rather predictable, designed by God to follow certain patterns. This allows us to know with some consistency how long these seasons will be and when they will end. But with the seasons of our lives, we do not have this luxury. Some of our seasons are long and drawn-out, while others are short and pronounced.

Most of you know what it is like to be in a place from which you wish you could escape. Maybe you are there now—stuck in a difficult season. Maybe it is a ministry place. Maybe it is relational. Or it could be financial, spiritual or any number of other things. Whatever the season you find yourself in, God has something in store for you. I call it “after this.”

continued »





Your Best Season Is Ahead

I am confident in telling you that you have not yet experienced the greatest season of your life. I know it is a bold statement, but I believe it—and not as some pie-in-the-sky, wishful thought. This belief is firmly rooted in the truth of God’s Word and the identity of God Himself. Your best season is ahead.

Perhaps I should offer a qualifier to that statement. I did not say it will be the easiest, most relaxing or calmest season you have ever encountered. Nonetheless, I have no doubt that the God of unfolding, unending glory has yet to reveal the fullness of His goodness in your life.

Some may imagine that I am speaking about a hollow, materialistic kind of season, one so shallow that you find yourself feeling as if you’re sitting in a kiddie pool with lots of toys, all the while wishing for deeper waters. That is not what I have in mind. Stepping into a greater season is less about having more things and more about thriving because you are possessing a wholeness and strength that come only from God.

A moment is coming in which your life will come into greater alignment, your steps will become

more divinely ordered, and your Christ-centered ambitions and efforts will become increasingly favored.

As a recreational golfer, I spend most of my time trying to find the sweet spot on the golf club. When I hit the ball with the sweet spot, it goes further, is more accurately placed and sounds better than when I hit it on the toe or heel of the club. The odd thing is, I usually hit the sweet spot when I swing smoother, not harder.

The secret to hitting with the sweet spot is not swinging harder; it is continuing to swing. No matter how many times you hit the ball into the water on one hole, you just pick the ball up, move to the next hole and swing again, searching for that sweet spot. Nothing keeps me coming back for the next round of golf like hitting the ball with the sweet spot.

We are about to find the sweet spot on our journey with Jesus. It does not matter how many times you missed it. Forget the previous season. Let go of the feeling it gave you. Get back in the game and swing again. Whatever you do, do not stop. This place you are in is not permanent. There is an “after this.”

My job is not simply to persuade you to believe that. I sense

an assignment to remind you that you may have forgotten that God is good. Remember what Paul said in Galatians 6:9 (NKJV): “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” Let me encourage you to prepare yourself for the thing God has been working on, both in you and for you.

The Assault Against Our Hope

I am not sure what your world has felt like recently, but I have noticed a collective assault against our hope. I have witnessed an unleashing of assassins of our future who have an agenda to drain our dreams and destroy the expectations we have for divinely blessed tomorrows.

Whether it has been the barrage of images, stats and reports regarding the carnage and collateral damage associated with the COVID-19 pandemic or the unrest and division that have permeated virtually every conversation in our society, the truth is we are living in challenging times. Hardly a day goes by during which we do not see something that makes our hearts sink or causes our minds to be invaded with worry.

In addition to the challenges that our world is going through, I have noticed an increase in the spiritual conflict being experienced by children of God. Though some would be quick to reject such a notion or pretend that we are exempt from warfare on this spiritual journey, a transparent and honest assessment of our lives reveals that those who love Christ and walk by faith at times find themselves being resisted and assailed by the enemy.

What is the response of the believer in such moments? The key to operating in victory and thriving in this climate is to guard our vision, protect the expectation we have for a better future and keep the faith. Paul alludes to this reality in Ephesians 6 when he encourages us to put on the whole armor of God. He does not tell us to put on the armor so we will be culturally hip and socially relevant. He says to arm ourselves so that we will be able to stand. Too many people have

TO LEARN MORE, READ THIS...

Scripture gives the testimony of many who walked through turmoil before stepping into blessing. *After This* points you to your next best season.



lost their ability to stand. We quit too early. We give up too soon.

When I think about those who have the ability to stand, to keep on believing, I am reminded of a sweet saint who was part of our church family for decades. Betty Johnson was a church mother who worked for the Lord nearly all her life. She often encouraged her pastor and anyone else who preached the gospel from our pulpit with expressions of

“There is an ‘after this’ coming, no matter what you have endured or are currently fighting through.”

affirmation as they preached the Word. She confirmed the message with a frequent “Amen!” and other key spiritual phrases to encourage the minister and the church during the delivery of the message.

I will never forget my favorite phrase that she ever said. One Sunday, I was preaching about the “more of God.” As I was laying the foundation for all that God had in store for His people, I said, “Many people cannot comprehend the greatness of what God is getting ready to do in their lives. Their minds cannot receive it.” Without hesitation Johnson stood up and said, “Lord, bless their feeble minds!”

That is my prayer for you. No matter the journey, the dead ends, the bad reports, the spiritual conflicts or

the closed doors you encounter, I pray that your mind would be so blessed that you stand, you stick with it and you see the next season of blessing and greatness that God has for you.

There is an “after this” coming, no matter what you have endured or are currently fighting through. Satan may have planted the thought in you that you will never recover. But I intend to uproot that lie and plant seeds of hope as I introduce you to revelation that produces greater expectation for your future.

After This

Many people are familiar with the story of Joseph. His life seemed like a roller coaster at times and offers us a clear picture of the ups and downs in the life of a person who walked in the goodness of God. His journey began with unexplainable favor from his father and a dream from God. As Joseph’s story unfolds, we discover that pain and disloyalty are part of the journey that led him to fulfilled dreams.

After Joseph had been through betrayal, alienation and the shame of being sold into slavery by his brothers, he was eventually promoted to a place of honor and prestige as the viceroy of Egypt. When the world was thrown into a famine, everyone was forced to go to Egypt to find food for their survival. This situation resulted in the reuniting of Joseph with his brothers. As they came into his presence to buy food from him, “Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him” (Gen. 42:8). Perhaps they thought he would look defeated and run-down at this point in his journey. After all, he had spent time in a pit, a prison and Potiphar’s house. But he did not look like the pit he was left in, the inmate that he was in prison or the scoundrel he was accused of being with Potiphar’s wife.

They did not recognize him as Pharaoh’s right-hand man because that isn’t how they remembered him. They remembered leaving him alone and in slavery and could not recognize him in a place of prominence and favor. In short, he didn’t look like what he had

been through. You may feel as if the pit and the prison have left an indelible mark on your life, but the grace of God is in operation, and you will not look like all you have been through.

My life story is a record of the challenges, tests and adversarial environments I have walked through on my journey. Please make no mistake about it; the Lord has been good to me. I have experienced the kindness and blessing of God in ways that have blown my mind. But often we suspect those who have experienced a modicum of the favor of God to be people who have been exempt from real challenges and pain. That is not the case.

We do not remember Peter for denying Jesus three times. We remember him for his day of Pentecost sermon, the souls he won and the epistles he wrote for our spiritual development. All those pieces of his legacy happened after his greatest failure.

We do not remember Lazarus for dying, stinking and being entombed in grave clothes. We remember him for being a friend of Jesus who was in a tomb in and then, after being raised from the dead, was sitting at the table with Jesus (John 11:1-44, 12:1-2). We do not remember Rahab and her harlotries. We do remember a woman who cooperated with the spies of Israel, hid them from their enemy and secured her place in the hall of faith (Heb. 11:31). Mary Magdalene could have been known by her promiscuity and the demons that were cast out of her. Instead, she is enshrined in church history as a follower of Jesus who was the first witness of the empty tomb (John 20:1-2, 11-18).

If you are breathing, God is still writing the story of your life. See the Mary Magdalene glory in your future. If you are not dead, Jesus is not done. You will see it *after this*. ◀

KEVIN WALLACE is lead pastor of *Redemption to the Nations church and founder of Ruach Global Network. He and his wife, Deven, have committed their lives to the city of Chattanooga, Tennessee, with a message of love and redemption while raising up sons and daughters equipped with the power of God to change nations.*

IF THE FOUNDATIONS ARE DESTROYED

It's the 400th anniversary of Thanksgiving, but America's foundations are under attack. What is the truth about our history, and why does it matter?

BY DAVID BARTON

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving in America, and while the Pilgrims are probably best known today for the tradition of the Thanksgiving holiday, their true legacy goes well beyond that. The permanent positive contributions they made to American culture define much of what is good about America today.

The Pilgrims were the product of the Reformation, which was a back-to-the-Bible movement in Europe. It urged a return to those teachings of the Bible that had been ignored or forgotten over the previous millennia, and it birthed both civil and religious liberty.

When people began to study the Bible and apply its teachings, it threatened many corrupt practices of that day. The monarchs, who controlled both church and state, therefore singled out Reformation followers for brutal torture. Many of these persecuted ones therefore

began to look for a place where they could freely practice what the Bible taught, and America was that place. The Pilgrims were the first Reformation group to arrive here, soon followed by the Puritans, and the two groups joined to form Massachusetts.

In America they found the freedom to live their lives by the Bible's teachings on government, faith, economics, law, family, education and much else. Of course, they did not immediately create perfect biblical institutions and practices, but the progress they made was not only notable but also remarkable.

Positive Contributions From Pilgrims

For example, the Pilgrims wrote America's first document of civil government: the Mayflower Compact. They elected civil leaders every year, not only ending the concept of a perpetual hereditary monarch but also ensuring that civil government would be local and accountable. The government instituted by the Pilgrims was, to use Abraham







“The government instituted by the Pilgrims was, to use Abraham Lincoln’s words, truly ‘of the People, by the People and for the People.’”

Lincoln’s words, truly “of the People, by the People and for the People.”

The Pilgrims also made sure their civil authorities did not run the church, so they selected church leaders differently from government leaders. This secured religious liberty and ended government’s control over the church.

The Pilgrims did not take land from the indigenous people but rather bought it at the price those people agreed to. As their governor affirmed, the Pilgrims “did not possess one foot of land in this colony but what was fairly obtained by honest purchase of the Indian proprietors. The result was that the Pilgrims had the longest-lasting treaty in American history between indigenous people and Anglos. (When that treaty was eventually broken, it was by the indigenous people, not the Pilgrims.)

The Pilgrims tried socialism in their early years but were greatly frustrated by the many shortages it produced. Recognizing their mistake, they instead embraced the teaching of 1 Timothy 5:8, that “But if any do

not care for their own, and especially for those of their own house, they have denied the faith and are worse than unbelievers” As a result, in 1627 they started the first free-market business in America. With the change, their productivity dramatically increased and from that time on, no general want ever again existed among them.

The Bible-followers of Massachusetts provided education for all boys and girls. The result was that female literacy in New England far exceeded female literacy in other countries of the world. So effective was this system that generations later, John Adams reported of New England that “A native of America who cannot read and write is ... as rare as a comet or an earthquake.”

The Massachusetts colonists also built what historians describe as “the first comprehensive body of law to be enacted in North America.” Based on the Bible, that legal code served as a model for future American codes, and many of the rights protected by their laws were

later incorporated into the Bill of Rights. Of course, critics are quick to dispute this, pointing to the 27 individuals who died in the Witch Trials of 1692-1693.

There is no defense for these trials, but a significant question that should be asked is why the trials stopped after only 27 deaths? After all, witch trials were occurring across the Old World at that time, resulting in 500,000 deaths in Europe, including 30,000 in England, 75,000 in France and 100,000 in Germany. Additionally, the European trials lasted for decades while the American trials lasted just 18 months. So why were there fewer deaths in the American trials, and why did the trials end more quickly?

The American trials were brought to a close because Christian leaders such as the Rev. John Wise, the Rev. Increase Mather and Thomas Brattle confronted the civil leaders. They pointed out that the rules of evidence and due process set

forth in the Bible were not being followed in the courts, thus convincing civil officials to end those trials.

Even modern Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer affirms that many of the due process rights we enjoy today track back to the work of these early Massachusetts Christians, and today's federal law books affirm the same. Significantly, when those colonists recognized their mistake and ended the trials, restitution was paid to the families of the accused and their names exonerated. Sadly, many modern texts are quick to point out the 27 deaths that occurred in this Christian colony but ignore the hundreds of thousands of deaths that took place in Europe or the fact that Christians made prompt changes when they saw their error.

And because these Massachusetts colonists were familiar with biblical teachings on the equality of all mankind, they viewed chattel slavery as wrong. In fact, in 1641 “manstealing” became a capital crime, punishable by death. (Manstealing, made a crime by Exodus 21:16 and 1 Timothy 1:10 in the Bible, was the forcible abduction of a person from their own country to send to another.) So when a shipload of slaves arrived in Massachusetts in 1646, the slaves were freed and the slave traders imprisoned and punished. Decades later when slavery was common throughout the British Empire, Massachusetts passed anti-slavery laws but they were vetoed by the king. After America separated from Great Britain and declared independence, Massachusetts became the first state to totally abolish slavery, and by 1790, there was not a single slave in the state.

The long-term result of the Bible-minded colonists in the Massachusetts Colony is that they changed the world for the better. They introduced and successfully demonstrated many

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Critical Race Theory

How critical race theory and its media child, the 1619 Project, are spinning a false narrative of American history

Over the past two years, America's history and heritage have been openly attacked and vilified. Critical race theory has taken root and is yielding a poisonous fruit dividing our society. According to this view, from its beginning America happily embraced a spirit of racism that actively sought (and still seeks) to subjugate Blacks. Our public education is now so pathetically bad that many have embraced these falsehoods, completely unaware that:

» Black Americans were elected to office in America as early as 1641, with hundreds elected to local, state and federal positions in the 18th and 19th centuries; yet it was not until 1987 that a black person was elected to Parliament in Great Britain, 2010 in Russia and so forth.

» New England was the first major region in the modern world to abolish slavery, with all northern states having passed abolition laws by 1804.

» America was the first nation in the world to sign a law banning the slave trade (1807).

» With America's nationwide abolition of slavery in 1865, it become one of the first nations in the world to completely end slavery (most consider it fourth among the scores of nations in the world at that time).

» Of the 193 nations in the world in 2020, 94 still have not criminalized slavery—slavery is still legal in almost half the world today.

» There are currently 40 million slaves in the world—three times more than in the entire four-century history of the transatlantic African slave trade.

» Today, America is ranked by the Global Slavery Index as the second-most active/best nation in the world in fighting slavery.

So why do progressives focus on 1619 instead of some other year in American history? Because they claim that slavery was first introduced into America through Virginia's Jamestown Colony in

1619. But that claim is definitely wrong, for the Spanish brought slaves to the Carolinas in 1526 and to Florida in the 1560s. So what happened at Jamestown in 1619?

English privateers off the coast of Virginia captured a Portuguese slave trading ship and carried some of its slaves to nearby Jamestown to sell. Hence, according to critics, slavery began in America. Yet once again, they are wrong, this time on the story.

When the privateers arrived ashore, they found that slavery was not legal in Virginia, so they simply left the slaves with the civil authorities. Because of Virginia law, those captives did not remain slaves but instead became indentured servants, the same as many whites in Jamestown. And as was customary with all indentured servants, after serving a few years, they received their freedom and were given land by the state, making them free landowners.

One among that group was named Anthony Johnson. Receiving his land from the state, he became prosperous, amassed considerable wealth and began employing indentured servants to work for him. After a dispute with one of his Black servants, Johnson went to court seeking the permanent ownership of the man, and in 1653 the court granted him that man's service for life. This was the first occasion of legal slavery in Jamestown, and it occurred when this Black man sued to own another Black man.

Without doubt, several bad practices in America can be traced to Jamestown, including that of slavery. The Colony often failed to live up to its Christian ideals and profession in many areas where it could have shone brightly. But this failure was the product of the English culture in which the people lived, not the Bible's teachings.

Earlier generations of Americans knew this and understood that what happened in Jamestown was not the only word—there was another story to be told: the Pilgrims and Massachusetts. Early America literally was the tale of two cities.



concepts largely unpracticed at that time but which thereafter became common—things such as local self-government, a free market/free enterprise economic system, racial equality, religious freedom, education for all children, protection for religious conscience, due process rights and much else.

Despite this clear record, today the focus is on Jamestown and 1619, not Plymouth and 1620. Both colonies had a powerful impact on the nation, and each created a long-lasting legacy felt across the generations, but in dramatically different ways. Jamestown does not reflect what America eventually became; Plymouth and the Massachusetts Colony do.

In 1888, with America still deeply reeling from both the direct effects as well as the after-effects of the Civil War, a wall map was published showing many of the fruits produced by the two models. That graphic showed God's blessings flowing outward from

“One other important point should be made: While the colonists of Jamestown were professing Christians, the Pilgrims were biblical Christians.”

the biblical principles introduced in Plymouth, and God's curse moving outward from bad philosophy applied in Jamestown. While today both geographic areas of the nation are dramatically different in their current beliefs from their original views, the two dissimilar seeds early sown in America nevertheless produced

distinctly different thinking and behaviors that lasted for generations.

First Day of Thanksgiving

American history, like the Bible, should always teach the truth, which means the good, the bad and the ugly. Thus, while the story of Jamestown must surely be taught, so, too, must the story of Plymouth and the Pilgrims. And since this year is the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving, it is certainly appropriate to conclude with a focus on that historic event.

The Pilgrims experienced extreme shortages and difficulties in their first year, and half of them died. But they still recognized many providential blessings, so Pilgrim Gov. William Bradford appointed a Day of Thanksgiving.

The Pilgrims invited their native neighbors to celebrate and give thanks to God with them. After all, part of the reason they had survived was because



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of their good relations with neighboring tribes, especially with Samoset and Squanto, who helped and taught them. Chief Massasoit and 90 of his men accepted the invitation and came and feasted with the Pilgrims.

A common narrative today is that Indians hated colonists because of their land-grabbing practices and general racist disdain for natives. Some have even renamed America's annual Thanksgiving Day celebration as "A Day of Mourning" because of the Pilgrim's alleged abuse of local native tribes. But that first Thanksgiving shows that this claim is, at the very least, problematic. After all, of the 53 Pilgrims at that first Thanksgiving, four were women, 14 were young boys and girls, 13 infants and young children, and only 22 men. On the other hand, the 90 Indians were all warriors. If there had been ill-will, they could have eliminated the Pilgrims in a matter of minutes, but they did not; they were friends.

The Pilgrims and their Wampanoag neighbors dined on deer, turkey, fish, lobster, eels, vegetables, corn bread, herbs, berries and pies. They also engaged in athletic competition, including running, wrestling and shooting. The chief and his men enjoyed themselves so much they stayed three days. This Pilgrim event birthed the tradition of Thanksgiving as a time that includes not only prayer but also feasting and athletic events. The Pilgrim story is one of many demonstrating that modern portrayals of the early colonists are often incomplete and inaccurate.

One other important point should be made: While the colonists of Jamestown were professing Christians, the Pilgrims were biblical Christians. Those in Jamestown were not students of the Bible and knew little of its teachings, but the Pilgrims were serious students of the Bible and sought to apply its teachings. The resulting difference between the two colonies is evident.

The legacy of the Pilgrims should be perpetuated and celebrated, and like them, each of us should strive to study, know and apply the Bible in all areas of life. We will certainly fall short from time to time, just as they did, but if we persevere in His Word, our overall trajectory, like theirs, will certainly be positive.

(You can find more information about Jamestown, the Pilgrims and America's early founding in *The American Story* by David and Tim Barton.) ◀

READ MORE: For additional study on history from a Christian perspective, check out history.charismamag.com.

WallBuilders' founder, DAVID BARTON, has received several Who's Who honors, two Angel Awards for excellence in media and the George Washington Honor Medal. He has spoken to state legislatures, consulted with state and federal legislators on various bills and has written amicus briefs in cases at the U. S. Supreme Court.

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10 WAYS THE
**CHURCH CAN
THRIVE** IN THESE
EVIL DAYS

It seems our immoral culture has gained the upper hand today. Yet we know Jesus will ultimately win this battle. We must take some bold steps today to overcome.

BY JOSEPH MATTERA

The contemporary church is facing unprecedented challenges to its faith. In addition to the increasing pressure upon believers to conform to the values of secular culture, churches have experienced considerable declines in attendance and finances due to COVID-19. However, Jesus commanded His disciples that amid tribulations, they must “take heart” because He has “overcome the world” (John 16:33b). His words have proven true as the early church not only survived, but thrived. It became a massive movement that has outlived and outlasted every worldly and political empire for the past two millennia.

The following are 10 ways the church can thrive in these evil days:

1) The church needs to gather together all the more during times of testing.

The book of Hebrews tells us to assemble more as we see “the Day approaching” (Heb. 10:25b). Whatever your perspective on the precise meaning of this passage, we can all agree that “the Day” is referring to an ominous day of reckoning, a time of testing and judgment that every generation experiences to one degree or another. Thus, the only way the church can thrive during such challenging seasons is to come together to support one another. The devil would like nothing more than for Christians to use COVID-19 as an excuse to remain fragmented and isolated. Enough is enough! We need the whole body of Christ to physically gather as soon as possible (depending, of course, upon the physical health of each individual).

2) Pastors need to connect with each other.

After a challenging season in my own life in the 1980s, I received a life-altering call from God in 1991 to focus my attention on uniting the pastors of New York City. I realized that a spirit of ethnic segregation and independence was limiting the potential of God’s purposes for our huge metroplex. Jesus said seven times in the book of Revelation that we were “to hear what the Spirit was saying to the churches” (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). This illustrates that there are some things God will not speak to individuals alone, especially when it comes to what Jesus wants to do in a community or region. continued »

After starting a prayer movement called All City Prayer in 1991 and combining it with the Concerts of Prayer in 1994, we saw the crime rate drop dramatically in our city. Even more importantly, united prayer became the catalyst for breaking racial barriers and developing great levels of trust among hundreds of pastors.

The united church in our city paved the way for a robust response after the 9/11 attack on our city. Many pastors came together to coordinate crisis counseling as well as a memorial service broadcast to the nation. After that, a huge church planting movement began in Manhattan and beyond, which, to this day, is positively affecting every borough and region of the greater New York region. A united church is more than up to the task of meeting the challenges of the day. Truly, God releases a blessing commensurate to the amount of unity that exists in the body of Christ (Ps. 133).

3) Church place and workplace leaders need to collaborate.

God never willed that there would be a separation between the church place and the workplace. Historically, the original 12 apostles were recruited from the workplace, not from the religious class. (Several had fishing businesses, one was a tax collector; another was involved in politics as a zealot; and even Judas Iscariot was the treasurer, indicating that he had experience managing money.)

Arguably, the greatest church in the New Testament, the church of Antioch, had leaders connected to the marketplace. For instance, Barnabas bought and sold real estate. Paul was a tentmaker, and most likely Manaen was a politician raised with Herod the Tetrarch (Acts 13:1-2, 4:37, 18:3).

During times of financial lack and social unrest, the church must form partnerships with key community leaders in both the church place and workplace so they can put a collective of gifts and resources together to serve their city. Pastors and leaders who aren't open to collaborative efforts with the marketplace essentially tell

more than 90% of their church that they are not needed. Indeed, for the church to thrive, we need to end this unbiblical bifurcation so the church gathered on Sunday becomes the church scattered on Monday.

4) The church needs to discern divine opportunities in the crisis.

Paul commands the church to make the most of every opportunity because the days are evil (Eph. 5:15-16). Scripture teaches us that the "sons of Issachar" had a divine assignment to understand the times in which they lived so they could know what Israel should do in response (1 Chron. 12:32). In light of these principles, every crisis becomes an opportunity for the church to go to another level of effectiveness to shine the light of Christ to the community. For example, the betrayal and subsequent crucifixion of Christ revealed an opportunity for Jesus to rise from the dead. The challenge of feeding all the Grecian widows in the early church moved the apostles to set up the permanent ministry of the diaconate (Acts 6:1-6, 1 Tim. 3:8-10).

The persecution of the Jerusalem church afforded an opportunity for Philip to preach to Samaria and witness a great awakening (Acts 8:1-8). The imprisonment of Paul and Silas led to God bringing an earthquake that resulted in the Philippian jailer and his whole family getting saved (Acts 16:25-34). Hence, the present-day crisis in the church is an opportunity to manifest the power of Christ and dispel the darkness. Furthermore, the fear, depression, confusion and hatred abounding in the world today reveal an opportunity for the true church to manifest the truth, love and peace of God to unbelievers. The true church will always thrive amid darkness and chaos!

5) The church needs to be bold amid opposition.

The focus of the early church was never about preserving people's lives and human freedoms. They thrived because they were willing to risk life



and limb for the sake of the gospel. The apostle Paul said, "I consider my life worth nothing to me, my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given to me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace" (Acts 20:24, NIV). What a far cry from many in the American church who invest more time, talent and money in protecting their religious freedom than they do in gospel proclamation! (It is fine to protect religious liberty if it does not replace the proclamation of the gospel and winning the lost.)

The early church did not even consider persecution an obstacle. When the people prayed, they did not ask for less persecution but that God grant them boldness to preach the gospel with signs, wonders and miracles (Acts 4:29-31). The church will thrive when Christ's followers fearlessly proclaim the gospel despite persecution and cultural disapproval.

6) The church needs to put its trust in the Lord Jesus instead of political leaders.

Although the church is called to nurture good citizens who vote and engage in the political process, our ultimate trust should be in King Jesus, not in elected officials. When the church puts too much of its hope in a mere man or a political system, it practices idolatry and will



“During the days of evil, the church can only stand fast by putting on the full armor of God.”

witness a swift correction from the Lord. (The past election has revealed the hearts and motives of many in the church, for good and for evil.) Jesus, as King of kings and Lord of lords, is sovereign over all the kings of the earth (Rev. 19:16). They are commanded to bow down before Him and “kiss the Son” lest His wrath flare up and destroy them. Hence, we are blessed only if we put all our trust in Him (Ps. 2:7-12). Thus, when Jesus is truly Lord of the church, we will thrive no matter who the president is!

7) The church needs to maintain corporate spirituality during evil days.

Since most societal systems lie under the control of the evil one (1 John 5:19), the church needs to continually walk in the faith of Jesus to overcome the world (1 John 5:4-5). However, the only way for the church to walk this way

is to cultivate certain spiritual disciplines within its congregations. Paul tells us that amid evil days, we need to discern the will of the Lord so that we do not walk foolishly. How do we do this? We do this by continually being filled with the Spirit, by saturating ourselves with the Word, psalms and hymns, and living lives of thanksgiving (Eph. 5:15-20).

Hence, the church will only thrive if both corporate and individual spirituality are taught and celebrated. Only the church saturated with the Word of God will prosper and bear fruit in every season (Ps. 1). Notice, Ephesians 5:19 begins, “Speak to one another.” This passage connects being filled with the Spirit and the knowledge of the will of God with assembling together for the purpose of corporate spirituality. When the church equips and releases the saints to minister to one another, the body of Christ will thrive no matter what the challenges are.

8) The church should employ regular times of corporate prayer.

The book of Joel illustrates how the people of God should respond in the midst of a crisis. God instructed the people of Israel to call a “solemn assembly” that consisted of fasting, prayer and repentance (Joel 1:13-14; 2:12-13). The result is that God would remember His people and pour out a blessing (Joel 2:18-28). Peter quoted this book on the day of Pentecost after a 10-day prayer meeting that culminated in God moving in power and saving 3,000 people in one day (Acts 2:17-40). The church that engages in much corporate prayer, fasting and repentance will thrive even during the days of evil.

9) The church should put on the full armor of God.

During the days of evil, the church can only stand fast by putting on the full armor of God. This primarily involves complete alignment with the Word of God. In Ephesians 6:10-17, we see the church must put on “the helmet of

salvation.” The helmet protects the head, which is where our thoughts emanate. Hence, Jesus wants our thought life protected during times of testing. Proper thoughts are those based upon the knowledge of God’s Word, which alone is able to cast down every imagination and false thought (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

We have to wear “the belt of truth,” which is the piece that holds the whole armor together. Only those whose view of reality is framed by the Word of God are those who will escape deception and stand fast in the midst of spiritual battles. “The shield of faith” quenches the fiery darts of the wicked one. How does this overcoming faith develop? “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17, MEV).

Finally, “the sword of the Spirit” is our only offensive weapon. Jesus employed the Word of God against the devil when He quoted Scripture to counter his temptations (Matt. 4:1-11). The church that aligns with the Word of God will thrive in these days of testing.

10) The church should have an eternal perspective to counter temporary suffering.

Paul says the sufferings of this present world are not worthy of being compared to the glory that will be revealed (Rom. 8:18). With an eternal perspective, the church will weather any storm, since its anchor does not rest upon temporal things and circumstances (Isa. 40:6-8, James 4:13-14, 1 John 2:17). The eternally minded church does not place significant value in things like material goods, wealth, fame and popularity. Hence, when any of these are threatened or lost, we can still walk in the joy of the Lord. When the church has an eternal perspective, it will thrive amid every crisis. ◀

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**CAN YOU
HEAR
ME
NOW?**

**Align your life in faith and make your
words hold weight in the Spirit**

BY KIM DANIELS

I have never been one to focus on the end of the world, but I can attest that we are living in what are called the last days. Now more than ever, Christians need their voices to be heard. But in order to have a legitimate platform to pray out loud, a person must be a true believer.

Ephesians 2:8–9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one should boast.” The Bible makes it clear that our good works don’t save us, and 2 Corinthians 3:5 tells us that we are not “sufficient in ourselves to take credit for anything of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.” This means we cannot boast in our own goodness.

The world is changing around us, and the church is facing challenges we’ve never encountered before, but what it means to be a true believer has not changed. True believers still have certain characteristics.

True Believers Will Face Opposition

Matthew 10:22 says true believers will be hated for Jesus’ name’s sake, but only the one who endures to the end will be saved. I always say we are not saved; we are being saved. Salvation is a continual process of endurance, and true believers never stop reaching toward the mark. Paul made it clear that he could not sit back and be comfortable in his place in God. He had to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:14). The word “press” means to “move or cause to move into a position of contact with something by exerting continuous physical force.” Often this force must be exerted because of opposition.

One of the main signs of true, born-again believers is that they will have opposition. The reason Paul had to press was because there were obstacles and hindrances between him and the mark. These obstacles and barriers are called distractions, and they are demonically set in place to stop us from reaching the mark. Because there’s opposition ahead of us as believers, it is very important that we not walk alongside the opposition.

Second Corinthians 6:14 warns us not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. The Word of the Lord goes on to say, “What fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”

A yoke is a wooden bar that joins two oxen to each other. It’s a connector that can overpower or pull a person in a particular direction. As believers, with all the opposition ahead of us, it will be dangerous to walk side by side with people who can pull us in the wrong direction. I pray this message is getting your attention. Be careful not to connect or yoke up with any person, place or thing that will pull you toward the wrong course. Of course, that begs the question: If you need to avoid relationships in which you are unequally yoked, how can you tell which people, places and things to be yoked to?

True Believers Have Signs Following Them

Mark 16:17–18 (KJV) says, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” This passage of Scripture tells us who believers are. Believers do not run after signs like the Bible says evil men do; instead, signs follow them! Based on the passage from Mark 16,

» Believers cast out devils.

continued »



- » Believers speak with new tongues.
- » Believers take up serpents.
- » Believers can drink any deadly thing and it will not hurt them.
- » Believers lay hands on the sick, and they recover.

I've been saved for over 30 years, and one of the most baffling things to me is that people who call themselves believers don't believe Mark 16:17–18!

True Believers Face Persecution

Consider the following verses.

» “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:10).

» “Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake” (Luke 6:22).

» “If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you” (John 15:18, MEV).

» “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim 3:12, KJV).

At the end of this article, I include several Scriptures for you to confess out loud, especially during times of persecution. Whenever you do, also take a minute to praise God, because if you are being persecuted for your faith, God is about to bless your boots off. But this blessing is conditional on you blessing those who attempt to destroy you. (See Rom. 12:14.) As crazy as it may sound, you must begin to take pleasure in the arrows that are shot against your life. I prophesy over your head that no weapon formed against you will prosper, and because you've been reviled for Christ's sake, you will receive “mega-more” and manifold blessings. Your latter will be greater than your former, and eyes have not seen nor ears heard what God is about to do for you.

It is no secret that believers will be drawn together by the persecution they endure from those who hate Christ. The good news is that favor undergirds persecution. Walk out your persecution and walk in favor. Whether you are being persecuted by



Kim Daniels

“There is a kingdom language whereby believers know one another.”

family members, your job, your community or even everyday life itself, press toward the mark.

I'm qualified to talk about being persecuted as a believer. During my tenure as an elected official, numerous false allegations were made against me. I had to learn to endure the defamations and accusations my enemies leveled against me back to back. I have never been through an election without my opponents involving me in a manufactured scandal. But as I write this book, I am an overcomer and more than a conqueror as I continue to press toward the mark.

The name of the strongman that continually sets its ugly face against me is religious persecution. Political entities, special interests and those with antichrist agendas have hijacked the mainstream media to work against true believers or anyone who supports or associates with them.

By God's grace and favor, I was able to operate as an elected official for nearly a decade. That favor allowed me

to write legislation to put prayer back in school in Florida, have “In God We Trust” conspicuously displayed in all public schools, be the prime sponsor of a huge criminal justice reform bill, get \$2,125,000 for a man wrongfully incarcerated for 43 years and allocate millions of dollars to programs run by everyday people for community outreach in my city. Much more was accomplished, but these are the highlights of my four years as a state representative. They are the fruits of my labor, and they came with a lot of hard times, hatred, and opposition.

I'm sad to say that if you really love Jesus and are a true believer, you must learn to be hated, but be encouraged. As I mentioned previously, Luke 10:19 says, “Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by no means hurt you.” And Romans 16:20 (NKJV) says, “And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.” Hang in there. Your breakthrough is about to come.

True Believers Are Known by Their Fruit

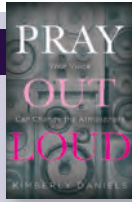
In addition to being known by the persecution we face, true believers will know one another by the fruit they bear. Matthew 7:16b–20 (MEV) explains this clearly.

“Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit. But a corrupt tree bears evil fruit. A good tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore, by their fruit you will know them.”

Galatians 5 highlights the fruit of the born-again believer as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (vv. 22–23). I would also like to add that there is a kingdom language whereby believers know one another. We can touch and agree because we speak the same tongue and travel on the same circuit. We can walk together in agreement because

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Kim Daniels' latest book teaches readers how to intercede with power and pray prayers that proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ



we are receiving the glory from the same spout. No longer do we walk according to the course of this world and the prince of the power of the air who rules over the careless, rebellious and unbelieving. We are the children of God, who care, obey and believe.

True Believers Are on Assignment

Another way to know true believers is to look for those on assignment. Matthew 28:19–20 (KJV) says it best: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” These words are to strengthen you in your calling. God is saying that wherever we go we must take the gospel of Jesus Christ with us.

There is another gospel being preached in the land, one with a different Holy Ghost and a false Christ. There are spirits of seduction in the land, so we must obey the high calling and go forth, speaking truth and walking in discernment. Beware of those who act like believers, look like believers and even try to speak the language of the kingdom. First John 4:1 warns us not to believe every spirit, but to “try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” I like the way *The Message* puts it: “My dear friends, don’t believe everything you hear. Carefully weigh and examine what people tell you. Not everyone who talks about God comes from God. There are a lot of lying preachers loose in the world.”

Second Timothy 3:5 speaks of those who have a form of godliness but deny the power of God. Timothy

teaches that they are not believers, and we must turn away from them. Christianity has split into so many factions that it could be confusing to an everyday person. Acts 11:26 tells us the term “Christian” was coined at Antioch. Christian persecution became so bad that believers had to hide out and use certain symbols to identify one another.

Eventually it was not important whether people called themselves Christians; the question asked to ensure a person was a true believer was, “Do you know the way?” Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6, MEV). As you come to the end of this article, I ask the same question of you: Are you a Christian in name only, or do you know the way?

Prayer to Affirm Your Identity as a True Believer

Father, in the name of Jesus, I renounce nominal Christianity. I speak the language of the kingdom and no longer walk according to the course of this world under the rulership of the prince of the power of the air. I renounce carelessness, rebellion and unbelief. I am a good tree, and I cannot bear evil fruit. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are my portion. I touch and agree and form a circle with my fellow believers, and together we have power over all the power of the enemy, and the God of peace will crush Satan under our feet shortly. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Confessions for Building Faith in the Midst of Persecution

» I am blessed because I’m being persecuted for righteousness’ sake; mine is the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:10).

» “I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Cor. 12:10).

» I know that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. I choose to live godly;

therefore, I suffer persecution (2 Tim 3:12).

» Though the world hates me, I know it hated You before it hated me (John 15:18).

» I am blessed when people hate me and when they separate me from their company, reproach me, and cast out my name as evil for the Son of Man’s sake (Luke 6:22).

» Nothing shall separate me from the love of Christ, not tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword. No, in all these things I am more than a conqueror through Him who loves me. “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities nor powers, neither things present nor things to come, neither height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my Lord” (Rom. 8:35–39).

» I am blessed when people revile me and persecute me and say all manner of evil against me falsely for the Lord’s sake (Matt. 5:11).

» No one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for Christ’s sake and the gospel’s, shall not receive an hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mother and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the world to come, eternal life (Mark 10:29–30).

» I will bless those who persecute me; I will bless and curse not (Rom. 12:14).

» “My times are in Your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me” (Ps. 31:15, NKJV).

» I will be sober and vigilant because my adversary the devil walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8). ◀

KIMBERLY DANIELS is a former member of the city council of Jacksonville, Florida, and the Florida House of Representatives. The author of several books, she is a sought-after conference speaker and preacher and the pastor of Spoken Word Ministries in North Florida.

| SUPERNATURAL

Supernatural Guidance in the Night Season

God is speaking to us in dreams. Can you hear what He is saying?



BY KENDALL LAUGHLIN JR.

Think of a moment from a significant dream. When you awoke, did it make you emotional? Did it warn you of a coming event? Did it linger throughout the day and then it suddenly came to mind? Could the dream have been from God?

For the last decade, I have given myself over to the study of dreams as a spiritual discipline. Dreams are a source of fascination to me, and the subject seems to follow me around. I have discussed dreams with people on planes, in taxis and Ubers, at the grocery store, at church events and at wedding receptions. I have learned that most people have hidden lives in which they explore their biggest questions, feelings and fears—a life of dreams. As I share my findings, I hope you will recognize the diverse ways God speaks through dreams—and the impact these dreams have had on our world.

I have yet to meet a person who hasn't experienced at least one powerful dream during their lifetime. For many people, these experiences are difficult to forget.

I have experienced impactful dreams for all of my adult life. I have often prayed about them, wondering if they were from God. What I didn't know, however, is that God has been speaking this way all over the world.

I have found that in the nations, many people are dreaming divine dreams. Many, like Jacob, awaken from strange, heavenly dreams. They wonder, *Is God in this place and I didn't even know it?* (see Gen. 28:16). Scripture is clear in that God is guiding us more than we realize, and He intends our dreams to be a significant means of His guidance.

Speaking to Nations

The year was 2012. I desperately tried to keep my cool in the back of a metal van bumping over the roads in Beirut, Lebanon. My young child was screaming. It had been a long trip already from Los Angeles International, with multiple layovers, late flights and lost luggage.

My family and I were thrown in the back of a van to meet our group at a popular boardwalk area by the sea. A meal and a nap had sounded nice, but we knew getting on the ground would allow us to reconnect with our team, who was beginning a street outreach.

On the streets, the atmosphere was electric. Youth around the nation were crying out for freedom, as anti-government rebellions from the early 2010s took full effect.

Syrian refugees were pouring into the nation, desperate for help. And, in the midst of all this, revival loomed. One could feel the region bursting open in a spiritual awakening.

I closed the door to the van, took three steps on the sidewalk, and a Muslim man approached me. He had an ominous look, as if he wanted answers.

The man pointed out to the sea's dark waves and asked a strange question: "Last night, I had a dream that the Prophet Isa walked upon these waters and invited me to join Him. What does it mean?" (Isa is the Muslim word for Jesus Christ). He seemed to think I had some kind of inside knowledge into the meaning of this dream!

That night, we were able to see dozens of people, for the first time, encounter the freedom Jesus offers. People were healed, touched and changed as they searched for answers amid crisis. I just had one problem: All my luggage was lost in Paris.

Finally, after I spent three days in the same black T-shirt, our bags arrived at the airport. I hopped into a taxi, looking forward to some alone time as the taxi traversed through traffic. Eventually, the taxi driver, who knew of my interest in dreams, interrupted me with an abrupt question: "I had a dream recently too. Do you mind if I tell you about it?"

He had dreamed of a long journey. While traveling, he chose to stop at a store and purchase some items for his child's birthday and an upcoming holiday. The man then decided he wanted a sandwich, so he went to the grocery store, then down a specific aisle.

Hearing the driver's dream, I felt bored, lost and a tad bit annoyed. *Why is this guy sharing this dream with me about grocery shopping?* I wondered. Then came the punchline: "In the store ... Jesus was there ... sitting on a bag of beans!"

Through this dream—and my lost luggage—I was able to share with this man the message of Jesus. Through a dream, God changed his life forever.

This dream, and many others like it, have caused me to wonder—is God hiding in our dreams? Do dreams have spiritual keys to life's passages we might be neglecting? How do we know what our dreams mean? My 10-year journey of studying the spiritual impact of dreams moved me to write my book, *The Dream Map*.

Although dreams may seem mystical and esoteric, they have shaped our world more than we realize. When I began to study dreams, I had a hunch. *If God is speaking to people through dreams today, what else is He revealing in dreams?* What I found was a surprising web of stories about how

dreams have impacted history far more than most of us know.

Shaping History

When we have a supernatural encounter or spiritual dream, our first reaction may be to explain it away. We see this in Jesus' ministry. At one point, God spoke from heaven to a large crowd! The people's reaction? "The crowd that stood by and heard it said that it had thundered" (John 12:29).

Some people could make professions out of ignoring the spiritual aspect of life. Yet I recall housewives, businesspeople, doctors, scientists, laypeople, clergy and government leaders who all report having significant dreams they attributed to divine guidance. I think of the stoner I met in Southern California who, after falling asleep in a drug-induced haze in the parking lot of a 24-hour pharmacy, had a dream of a man he had never seen wearing a crown of thorns.

Dreams from God are possible. We need to acknowledge our skepticism and unbelief in this area. Remember the kinds of people God promised would receive revelation from His Holy Spirit? The young and the old, men and women, the learned and servants (Joel 2:28-29).

I believe one of the ways God has stepped into the course of world history is through dreams. Let's explore some of the disciplines of study transformed through the dreams of great artists, thinkers and innovators. I do not claim every dream listed below to be divinely inspired (that would be impossible to know). After this brief survey, you will find history's connection with dreams closer than you may have first realized. Dreams have, in fact, shaped the course of world history.

Several leaders in history report prophetic dreams that predicted the future. Abraham Lincoln dreamed of being murdered the night before his assassination. New York attorney Isaac Frauenthal dreamed of a shipwreck before he boarded the *Titanic*.

Perhaps one of the most influential dreamers in world history was

“The Holy Spirit will provide us with supernatural intuition as we pray about our dreams.”

Winston Churchill, who, from an early age, dreamed he would save the United Kingdom and the city of London from the invasion of an evil empire. Biographer Martin Gilbert recently discovered a letter recalling a conversation with Churchill by one of his boyhood friends, Sir Muirland Evans. Evans records Churchill as saying, in part:

“I see further ahead than you do. I see into the future. This country will be subjected somehow, to a tremendous invasion, by what means I do not know, but I tell you I shall be in command of the defences of London and I shall save London and England from disaster.

[After Evans asked if he would be “a general, in command of the troops”]:

“I don't know; dreams of the future are blurred but the main objective is clear. I repeat—London will be in danger and in the high position I shall occupy, it will fall to me to save the Capital and save the Empire.”

If God spoke to Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar and Pilate's wife in dreams, we can be sure He is speaking to world leaders today. My question is this: Who will be available to bring a God-inspired interpretation?

Bringing Inspiration

Modern and classical music legends both claim dreams as a source of inspiration for their music.

Sir Paul McCartney received the melody of the hit song “Yesterday” in a dream. The experience totally perplexed the young musician. “For about a month I went round to

people in the music business and asked them whether they had ever heard it before,” he said. “Eventually, it became like handing something in to the police. I thought if no one claimed it after a few weeks then I could have it.” To date, “Yesterday” is the most covered song in world history.

McCartney must be a dreamer because he has also said he received the inspiration for the song “Let it Be” in a dream. Can you think of two more beautiful pop songs than “Yesterday” and “Let it Be”?

Bernard Holland, a national music critic, mentions that Beethoven was known for intense dreams. In *The New York Times*, Holland reports, “When Beethoven dreamed his piano sonatas, or so one theory goes, he dreamed them on instruments that had not yet been invented.” Amazing! To learn more about how sacred music has been shaped by revelations from God and prophetic dreams, I suggest the book *The Spiritual Lives of the Great Composers* by Patrick Kavanaugh (Zondervan, 1996).

Although it may seem hard to believe, scientific discoveries often come to the world through dreams. Here's a short, documented list of historical discoveries that happened through dreams:

» The Periodic Table of Elements came to chemist Dmitri Mendeleev in a dream after he fell asleep, exhausted from his work on an orderly system of classification for the elements.

» A Nobel Prize-winning discovery about neurotransmission.

» The double helix we now so often associate with DNA came to Dr. James Watson in a dream of two snakes intertwined at their heads.

» Albert Einstein's youthful dream of sledding down a mountain led to the theory of relativity.

If dreams teach us anything, it may be that there is less of a divide between “secular” pursuits such as science and medicine and our spiritual lives than we often think.

In our century, dreams have inspired seismic shifts in the economy. During a 2009 University of Michigan commencement address, Larry Page, then CEO of Google, shared that the inception of Google came to him in a dream. At the time of this writing, Google has a market value of over \$1 trillion. That was quite a dream!

In the 19th century, Elias Howe had a dream that assisted him in his invention of the sewing machine. This dream also had a significant economic impact as it accelerated the industrialization of America.

Building the Church

With dreams having such an impact throughout world history, it should be no surprise to us that the Holy Spirit has been giving dreams to the church as well. The church throughout the ages has explored the power of dreams.

Dream interpretation, fortune-telling and idolatry were rampant during the expansion of the early church, and many hucksters touted the ability to interpret dreams. But rather than condemning the early Christians for an interest in dreams, the church fathers during the first, second and third centuries took great pains to explain their biblical nature, seek out what dreams from the Holy Spirit might mean for the believer and even record their own dreams for mass circulation.

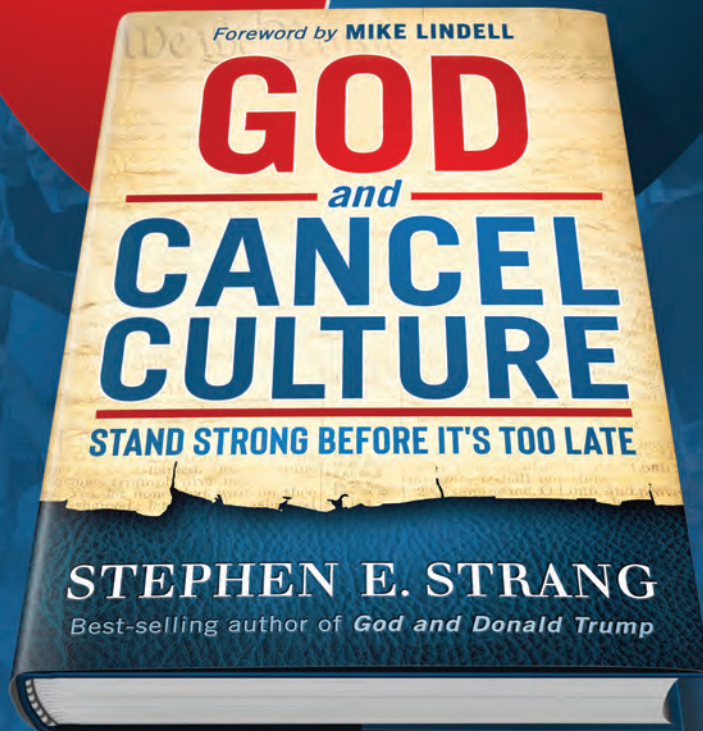
Nearly every great apologist and theologian of the early church wrote on dreams, including Augustine, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement, Origen, Tertullian, Athanasius and St. John Chrysostom.

One church father, Synesius of Cyrene, put it this way: "One man learns ...while awake, another while asleep. But in the waking state man is the teacher, whereas it is God who makes the dreamer fruitful with His own courage."

St. Patrick, St. Francis, Martin Luther and many other important Christians in history experienced guidance in dreams. Although there have been movements

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

Where is GOD in ALL OF THIS?



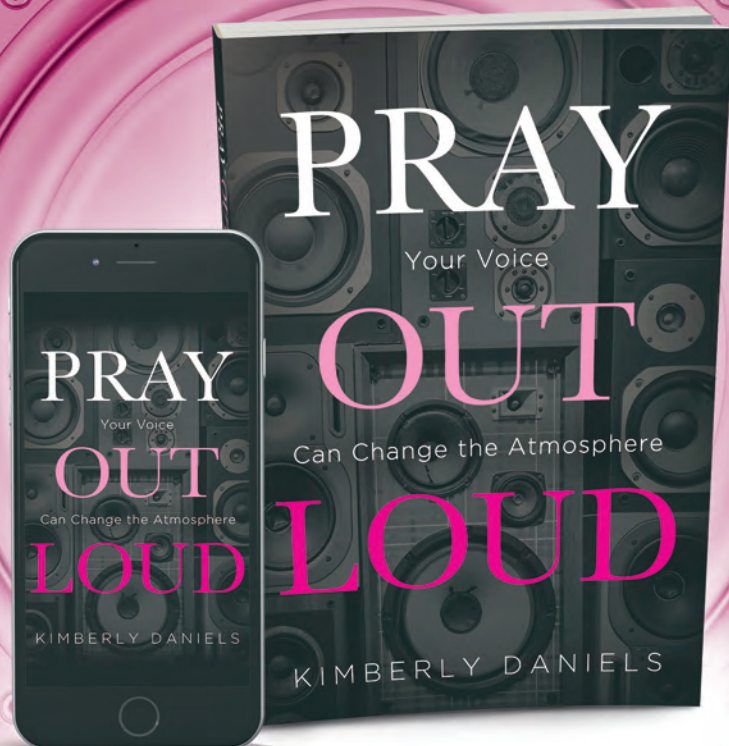
Things are chaotic in America. Liberal policies are advancing. A rash of executive orders appears to be moving the nation close to socialism and a one-world government. And conservatives, including many Christians, are being censored as never before. In *God and Cancel Culture*, find out what best-selling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



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throughout history that have sought to discredit divinely inspired dreams, God's guidance perseveres amid skepticism.

God has used dreams to bring freedom. Harriet Tubman, the famed American escaped slave and abolitionist, was a dreamer. Tubman had frequent dreams and visions—which she ascribed to God—that guided her on her journey of rescuing the lives of many enslaved people along as a conductor on the Underground Railroad. Dreams allowed Tubman to function as a modern-day Moses, rescuing people from enslavement.

Revealing Mysteries

This brief walk through history reveals the power of dreams. What about today? How do we know if a dream is from God?

Although there will always be charlatans and fakes who claim divine revelation for personal gain, we must not discount God's power to speak in dreams. God is raising up Josephs and Daniels to interpret the dreams of those around them today.

The Holy Spirit will provide us with supernatural intuition as we pray about our dreams. Pharaoh's intuition told him that the original interpretations of his dreams supplied by his advisers were incorrect. His intuition also told him Joseph's was the most accurate interpretation.

"For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God's deep secrets" (1 Cor. 2:10b, NLT).

As I study the Scriptures and shared life experiences, I see the following truths about dreams given by God. They may prove helpful in determining the source of a dream or dreams:

» **Dreams from God linger.** I often hear the phrase from people, "I never remember my dreams, but I had a dream that I think may be from God," or "This dream felt different." Dreams from God have certain, intangible, spiritual qualities. Dr. David Benner writes that the "vividness of these dreams often lasts a lifetime."

» **Dreams from God may have a divine messenger.** Scriptural dreams often record a divine messenger sent

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to the dreamer for a specific purpose.

» **Dreams from God may have overt scriptural themes or language.** The presence of an obvious scriptural theme or symbol indicates a dream is from God, because Scripture will always affirm what God is saying to us.

» **Dreams from God may cause you to wake up in the presence of God.** I think of Paul, who experienced the Lord's presence and encouragement at night (Acts 23:11). Many people report waking up with a sense of peace, excitement or awe after a prophetic dream from God.

» **Dreams from God contain predictions that come to pass.** In Deuteronomy 18, we learn that true prophets will have predictions and dreams that come to pass. If your dream predicts a personal or world event, and that event comes to pass, there is a high probability the dream has a divine message.

» **Dreams from God pass the PEACE test.** Even in tough circumstances, God promises to lead His people forth in peace (Isa. 55:12). Peace is the indicator that we are receiving divine guidance from God, especially if peace is present in a situation that should not otherwise be peaceful.

I use the acronym PEACE to describe what God's voice sounds like to me:

» Points us to Jesus (Rev. 19:11).

» Encourages us with faith, hope and love (1 Cor. 1-14).

» Agrees with the Scriptures (John 10:35).

» Confirmed by community (1 Cor. 14:29).

» Empowers life change (Rom. 12:1-2). ◀

READ MORE: Discern how God may be speaking through dreams today at dreamers.charismamag.com.

KENDALL LAUGHLIN JR. is the executive pastor of All Peoples Church, part of the Antioch International Movement of Churches. He lives in San Diego, California, with his family and is an author, pastor and coach. Visit his website, kaljr.com, to learn more about his book, *The Dream Map*.

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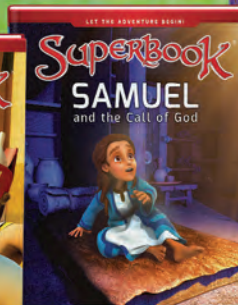
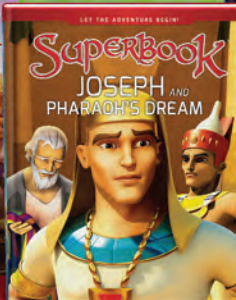


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The Reality of a Believer

The following is my answer to an inmate who wrote with questions about our message of "freedom from sin." This man was a very sincere believer who sometimes found himself in a struggle with sinful thoughts or actions. He did not write as a critic, but as one who was sincerely trying to believe.

Roger,

The "freedom from sin" that I preach is a work of grace, and not of works. Jesus promised to give "rest" to those who come to Him. The apostle Paul says, "For we which have believed do enter into rest" Hebrews 4:3 and "He that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works" Hebrews 4:10. When the apostle says in verse eleven, "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest," he is not speaking of our works. The word "labour" was translated from the Greek word "spoudazo," which means "to use speed." Don't hesitate; be quick to believe what God has said in the gospel of Christ and cease from your own works.

It is a common error to believe that we are "saved by grace," but "kept" through our own works or efforts. Jude closes his short epistle saying, "Now unto him that is able to **keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy...**" Jude 1:24. The words "from falling" were translated from the Greek word "aptaistos," which means "**not stumbling, that is, (figuratively) without sin.**" Roger, it is a mistake for anyone to think they can "keep themselves" from sinning through their will power. Only Christ can keep us, which He does absolutely as long as we abide in Him.

Roger, you wrote, "I do have victory over sin more than ever before because the truth is setting me free from faith to faith." We must understand that our wonderful salvation is not based upon "victory over sin," but "freedom from sin." "Victory over" is an "active" term, which requires our effort. "Freedom from" is a passive term, which requires our rest. I realize this is hard to comprehend, but I illustrate as follows;

A man-eating lion is loose in my house. If I am to live in that house, one of two things must happen. **1.** I must have power over the lion, which means I must be a trained lion tamer. If I have that power over the lion, I can keep him at bay. I can make him lie down, roll over, sit up and beg, but there is one thing I cannot do. I cannot rest in sleep, because if I am not "ever vigilant," the man-eating lion will kill me. **2.** I am not a lion tamer. If I must live in the house with the lion, I will soon be devoured, but I know a "lion killer," so I bring Him into my house and he kills the lion and takes his carcass out of my house. Now, I can rest without fear of the lion, because the lion is dead. Christ did not come into the world to tame the lion (sin), but to kill the lion. In fact, He came into the world to destroy Satan Hebrews 2:14 and nail sin to His cross I Peter 2:24. He did this for "whosoever" will believe and trust in Him who did it through His death on the cross.

Roger, you also wrote, "...reality shows me that we don't "abide" in Christ 100% of the time, and so we make the foolish choice to sin." We must have a correct view of what "reality" is. The apostle Paul says, "...we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the **things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal**" II Corinthians 4:18. We look at the things around us, and think they are the

"reality" because we can see them with our eyes, touch them with our hands, smell them, hear them, etc. These are not the reality, however, because they will all pass away. The "reality" is that which is eternal. The "new heavens and earth" will be the reality of which the present heavens and earth is only the image. The "new man in Christ Jesus" is the reality, and the gospel of Christ is the reality. If our experience does not match the word of God, the "word of God" is still the "reality," and our experience is the lie.

When God first began teaching me the "truth as it is in Jesus" Ephesians 4:21, I argued with Him. Concerning I John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doeth not commit sin...", I said, "I know by experience that those who are born of God do sin." The Spirit of God rebuked me sharply; "You do not know anything by experience; you only know by my word." Let God be true, and every man a liar. As long as we judge what reality is by our experience, we must continue in sin, because we will never be free. I made a choice almost twenty-five years ago to "believe God" even when I did not understand. It was when I believed without understanding, and without "experience" to prop me up, that God gave me understanding, and with that understanding came glorious freedom from sin.

Roger, again, you wrote, "...so we make the foolish choice to sin." When Christ has taken our sin away, which condition is received by grace through faith, and not by works Ephesians 2:8, we do not have the "choice" to sin, because our hearts have been "purified by faith" Acts 15:8-9. Jesus told us that everything that defiles a man "comes out of the heart." "For from within, **out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man**" Mark 7:21-23. All these evil things are in the heart of man until such time that Christ, who "came into the world to make an end of sins" Daniel 9:24-25, takes sin out of the heart of those who believe and trust in Him to do it. Those "evil things" Jesus spoke of in this text are not in the heart of those who "know the truth" John 8:32 and "trust in Him" Ephesians 1:12-13.

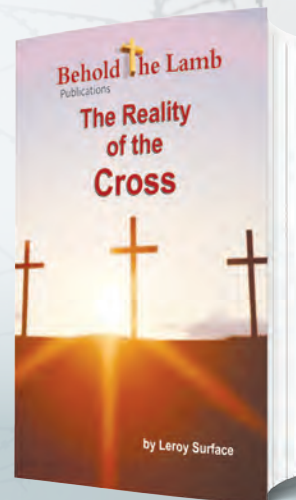
I come to the part of your letter that asks how long since I have sinned. On pages ten and eleven of the booklet "Is a Christian also a sinner," which I have sent to you, I go into some detail concerning what the apostle John called "sin unto death" and "sin not unto death." When sin is taken out of the heart of man, it is impossible for that person to "sin a sin that is unto death" unless they have been moved away from Christ. John told us to pray for those among the believers that "sin a sin **not unto death**" I John 5:16. He continued to say "There is a sin **unto death**; I do not say that you should pray for it" verse 16, and in the seventeenth verse, "There is a sin **not unto death.**"

The sins that are “unto death” are clearly listed; “Be not deceived: neither **fornicators**, nor **idolaters**, nor **adulterers**, nor **effeminate**, nor **abusers of themselves with mankind**, nor **thieves**, nor **covetous**, nor **drunkards**, nor **revilers**, nor **extortioners**, shall inherit the kingdom of God” I Corinthians 6:9-10. These are the sins that it is impossible for the children of God to commit, because these things are not in the heart of those who are “born of God.” Sadly, I did commit some of these sins after I was “born again” and even “filled with the Holy Ghost,” but I was first “moved away from Christ” before any of these things were possible. I was backslidden and lost during that horrible time which came into my life almost forty years ago. If I had died during that time, I would have been eternally damned. It was after I was forgiven and even restored to ministry that I began a desperate search to find the answer for the sin problem that is in the heart of man. My mind was sometimes tormented by the horrible sins I had committed and even though I was not sinning, my mind was still troubled with sinful thoughts. It was in the spring of 1991 that the understanding of Hebrews 9:13-14 shone into my heart as a great light. “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, **purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**” In a moment of time the Holy Ghost fell upon me and the filth that troubled me at nights turned off like you would turn off a faucet. I can honestly say that since that day, I have been free.

Have I sinned since that day? Not a single sin “that is unto death.” Those are the sins that require sin in the heart to commit, and those whose heart is pure cannot commit them. “Sins not unto death” are a different story. These do not consist of the “evil fruit on a corrupt tree,” but of “lack of fruit on a good tree.” The apostle Paul says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law**” Galatians 5:22-23. A lack of any of these in a child of God’s life is what John calls a “sin not unto death.” Certainly, there have been many times that I have not shown enough love, joy, peace, etc. Oftentimes not gentle enough or patience enough, and sometimes not meek enough. These are the things that John told us to pray for one another concerning. If a person “dies in sin” they will be lost eternally because of those “sins unto death” that are still in their heart. Concerning the “works of the flesh,” Paul says, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; **Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God**” Galatians 5:19-21. How many times must the apostles tell us these things before we believe them, and how many times must they tell us that Christ died to take these things away before we will believe the truth and trust in Christ?

Many people have been deceived to believe that a man or woman could die in the act of adultery, and Christ would receive them “if their faith is grounded in the cross of Christ.” That is about the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard. The cross of Christ is the end of sin for those who trust in Christ “who

loved us, and gave Himself for us” Galatians 2:20. It is hard for people to believe the truth when they first hear it because it is foolishness to them. They know they are not “strong enough” to live free from sin, so their first inclination is to believe that it is only the “self-righteous” who would believe such a thing. It is a wrong understanding of “grace” that actually blinds the people. They think we are “covered by grace,” or that we “go to heaven by grace.” Neither of these is true. The truth is that we are “made free from sin” by grace. It is not by works. In my early experience, several years before I backslid into sin, I went to the extremes trying to “sanctify myself,” and “crucify my flesh.” I fasted more days than I ate for three years straight. During the same time, I gave over 50% of my income to the church, and tried to pray several hours a day. Many of those around me thought I was the most consecrated young man they knew, but they didn’t know the struggle that was in my heart. This intense disciplined lifestyle actually helped in my backsliding, because a person can maintain such a lifestyle only for a period of time. Before I was “made free from sin,” which is the promise of the gospel of Christ, I had to cease from my own works Hebrews 4:10. I had to “believe God,” which is to “believe the record that God gave of His Son” I John 5:10. God gave His record through the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New Testament. It is called “the testimony of Jesus.” Roger, the “glorious liberty” you seek is the gift of God to fallen man. It must be received as a gift, which means it is “by grace” and “not by works.” Believe and trust in Christ, who has already done the work. Spend time in His presence every day until you live “in His presence.” Very soon, you will say with the apostle Paul, “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me...” Galatians 2:20.



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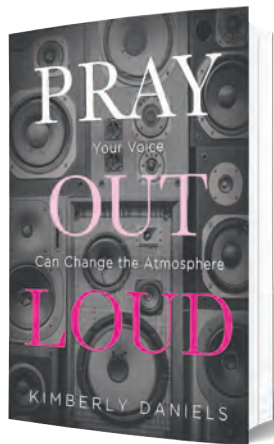
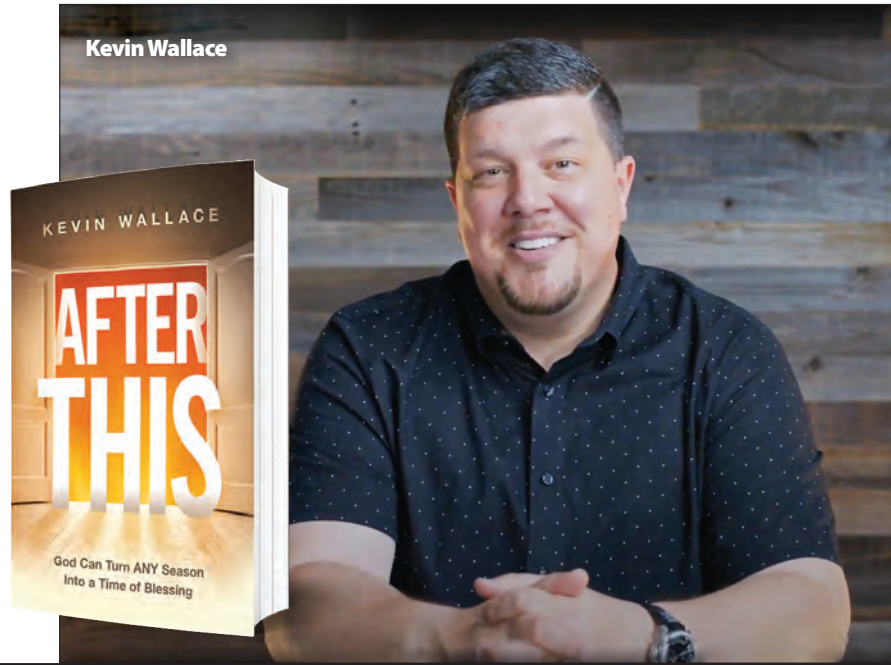
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After This: God Can Turn Any Season Into a Time of Blessing

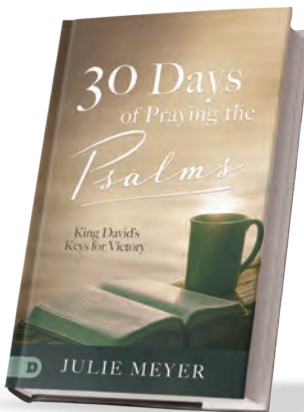
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Life's greatest struggles often arrive with the least warning. But periods of calamity can be followed by a season of blessing. Pastor Kevin Wallace's new book, *After This*, is a timely prophetic word. It reminds believers that God is working all things for their good.



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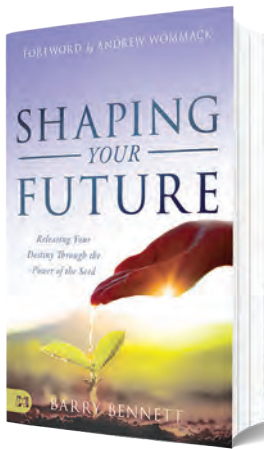
30 Days of Praying the Psalms
Julie Meyer
Destiny Image

Dove-nominated singer and songwriter Julie Meyer equips readers with powerful breakthrough prayers in her new book, *30 Day of Praying the Psalms*. Derived from the first 30 chapters in the book of Psalms, Meyer presents King David's worship that declares God's faithfulness and provides powerful keys for intercession that believers can use in their own journeys.



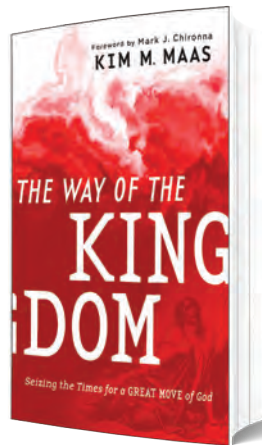
Digging the Wells of Revival
Lou Engle
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First published in 1998, this 2021 anniversary edition of *Digging the Wells of Revival* brings fresh anointing to the coming season of revival. Lou Engle, revival intercessor, again presents the rich heritage of revival over the past century from Azusa Street to Brownsville, but with a fresh and timely urgency for this present era of our end-times days.



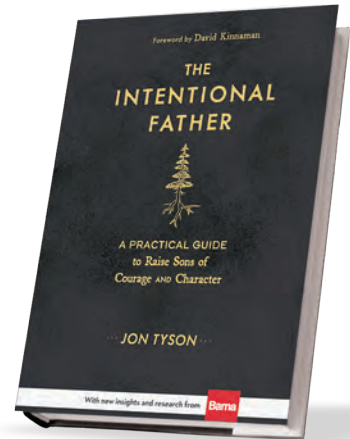
Shaping Your Future
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Barry Bennett reminds believers every word, thought, deed and plan is a seed for blessing or destruction. *Shaping Your Future: Releasing Your Destiny Through the Power of the Seed* furnishes the body of Christ with practical truths useful for grounding choices and life decisions in God's Word.



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Charisma Courses

The Holy Spirit and Dunamis Power Soaker and Teaching Combo

Katie Souza

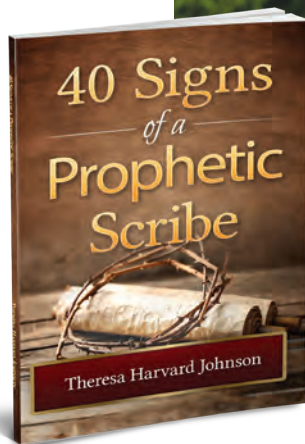
Katie Souza's *The Holy Spirit and Dunamis Power* e-course is a "soaker" (instrumental music with declarations and prayers) and powerful teaching series. It focuses on the role Holy Spirit fills in the life of the believer. Learn how to lean on Holy Spirit, asking Him to search out answers for the problems and situations you face. He is ready to move on your behalf and move through you in power to those who receive your ministry. Be immersed in the powerful presence of God as Souza prays and decrees scriptures over you in partnership with Holy Spirit to bring healing, power and love in your life.



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Theresa Harvard Johnson
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40 Signs of a Prophetic Scribe lists some of the most common and easily recognizable characteristics and behaviors that supernaturally identify the unique ministry of prophetic scribes of the King. Theresa Harvard Johnson, originator of The Scribal Anointing teachings on the office of the scribe, lists these signs along with relevant, powerful Scripture references and insights that will empower and encourage those who believe they may be called into this often-overlooked ministry. Harvard Johnson is a leading apostolic voice concerning the ministry of the prophetic scribe, scribal prophets, worship and the arts.



Theresa Harvard Johnson



Housefires VII (Live)

Housefires

Housefires has become synonymous with gutsy lyrics, raw gang-vocals and raucous praise mingled with intimate moments of worship. The band occupies a space in many ways spearheaded by United Pursuit and now championed by Maverick City Music. Young adults have been drawn to the House Fires sound—and for good reason. Housefires has built a reputation for producing authentic and non-commercialized albums that strike the heart-strings of the younger generation.

The group's new album, *Housefires VII*, is no different. The melodious opening track, "Bless the Lord At All Times," is at once simple and profound, transporting the listener into what feels like a home-group worship session. Everyone is participating and experiencing the same Spirit we have all been given to drink (1 Cor. 12:13). Looking for something new to add to your worship playlist? *Housefires VII* won't disappoint!



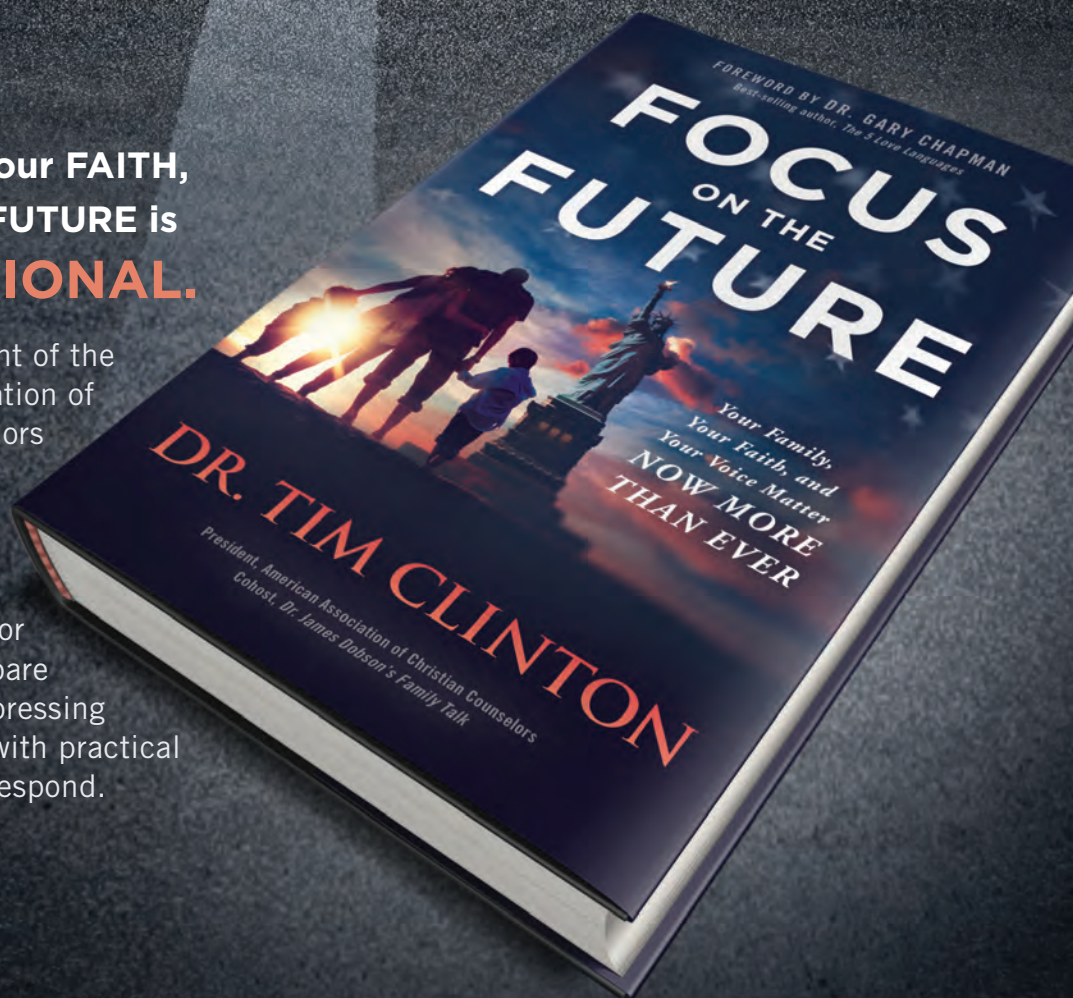
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How Mario Murillo Affected the Direction of My Life

His ministry had a tremendous impact in the past and present

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

God and Cancel Culture contains additional insights from Murillo. But his statement that there is a hurricane of revival should give us all hope. This is not the first time in history



"When God's Spirit falls on a culture that is starved for truth, it will overrun the walls of the church."

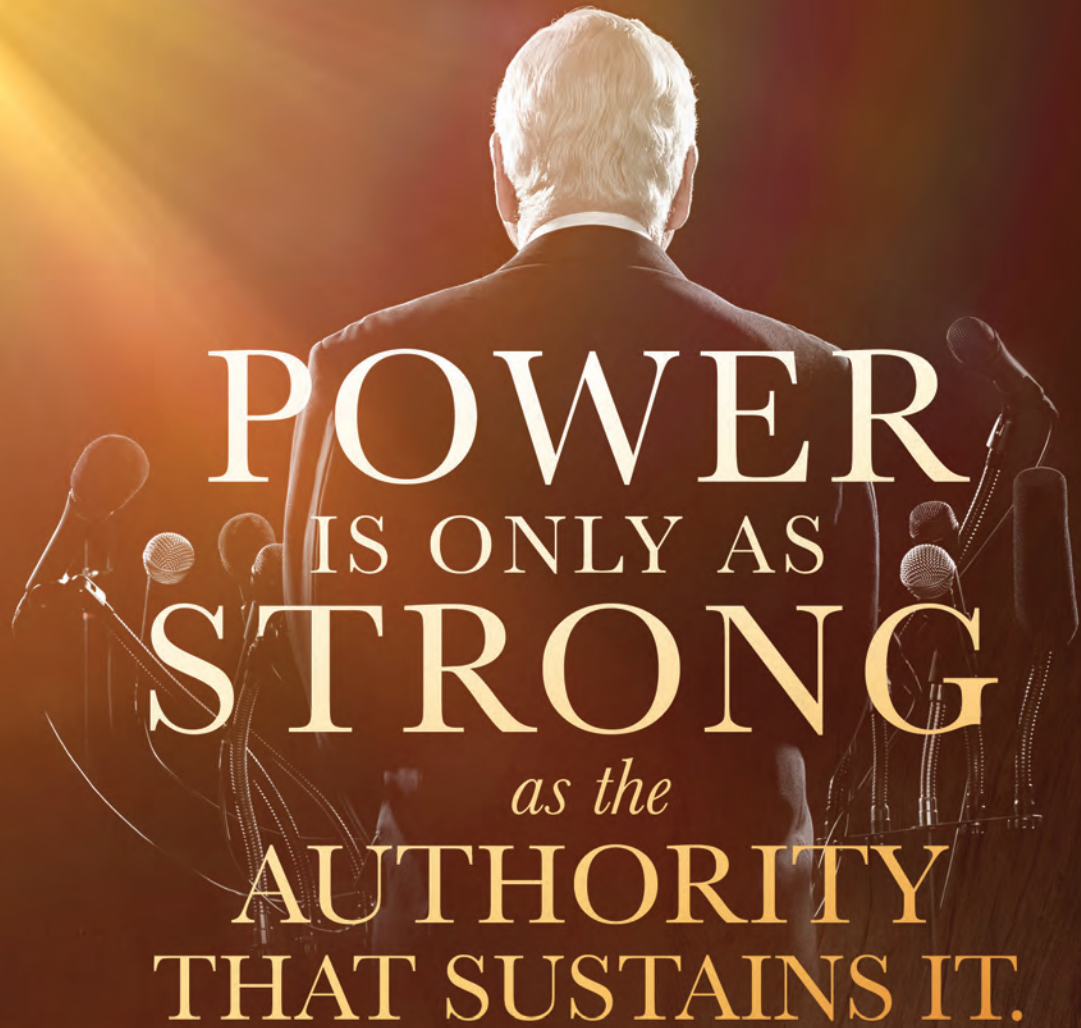
—Mario Murillo

things have looked bleak or that history was altered by a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Things were pretty bleak when God gave Martin Luther the revelation that the just shall live by faith.

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

At one point I visited Resurrection City just to see what was happening. Two other times I attended meetings where Murillo ministered. At one, God dramatically healed my back. At the other, I distinctly remember responding to a call from God to serve Him with my whole heart no matter what. Over the years I have stayed in touch with Murillo, and I've told him how much that ministry transformed my life. I have no doubt that what I received under his ministry and decisions I made in those services directly influenced what I'm doing today.

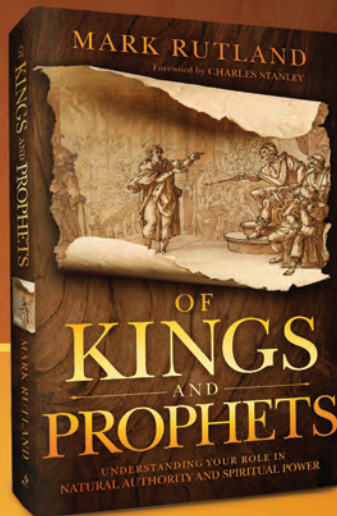
You can understand why it means so much to me to cover Murillo's ministry after all these years. Each of us has probably been impacted by Christian leaders as Murillo impacted me. But we must also understand that we impact the lives of others God may use in future decades and remain sensitive to letting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



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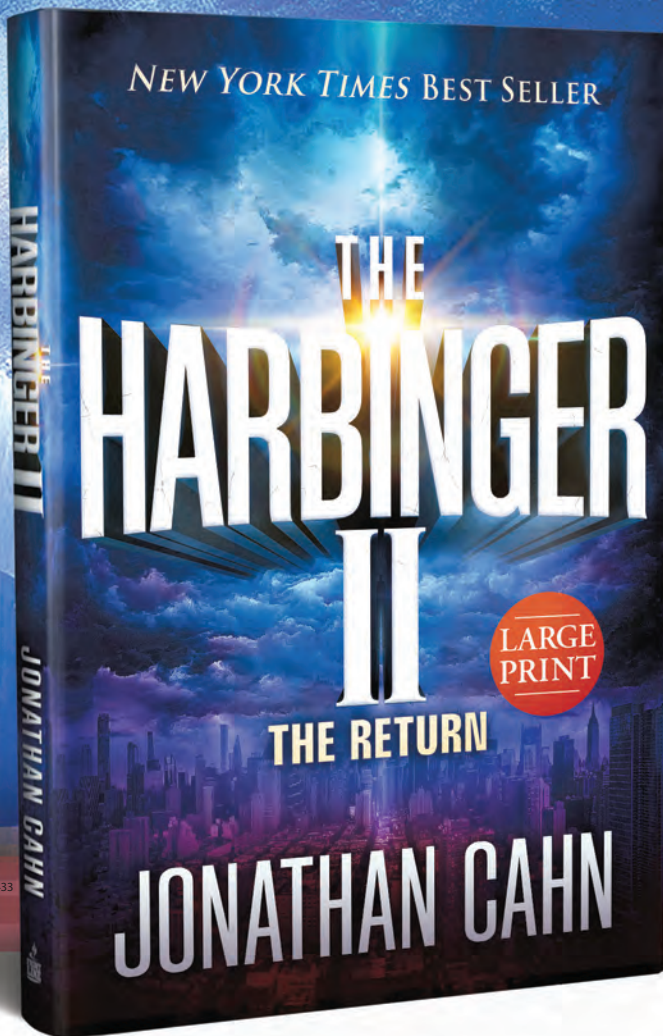
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