

OUR 21st-CENTURY CHURCH CHALLENGE

“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” Says the LORD of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6

THE END IS AT HAND!

God Still Calls, “Come!”

Long-prophesied end-time storms are striking from east to west and north to south; but if you *abide* in Him, fear not! All things great and small are under the overarching authority of God Himself, three celestial realms above, in the third heaven (II Cor. 12:2-4; Ps. 33:13-14)!

“He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision” (Ps.2:3-4).

Evil is taking the spotlight these days, but God has a great Remnant of people scattered throughout the whole world, worshipping Him in Spirit and truth! A glimpse into foreknowledge from the heavenly realm reveals God at work, even in the *worst* of times still to come!

“After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb...”

“These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev.7:9,14b ESV).

We live in tasteless times, but the “salt” of Truth has *not* lost its flavor! We live in dark times, but the “Light of the World” has *not* gone out!

His Truth *still* holds in a sea of lies, and His light *still* dispels the darkest night! He *still* watches over His own, and *shall* watch over us; and He *still* calls His own to “Come and see” the place of peace where He abides (Jn. 1:38-39)!

“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” (Jn. 7:37-38).

Our Lord is *not* surprised by the evils of our time. He has always known the end from the beginning (Rev.1:8). We see the world collapsing around us. He sees the dawn of His soon-coming “righteous kingdom” (Rev.20:1-6). We see “in part.” He sees the whole (I Cor.13:12; Is.46:9-13). We see tests of our faith; He sees a Glorious Church (I Pet. 1:3-9; James 1:2-4; Eph. 5:25-27)!

Now is *not* a time to fear, but to *grow* in faith and in the knowledge of God. It is time to *really* know Him and make Him known - to know His *peace*, His *provision*, His *presence*, His *power* from on high (Jn.14:27; Phil.4:19; Ps.16:11; Acts1:8)!

We are His ambassadors to call, “Come!”

- Come out of the world; *enter into* Him!
- Come sinful; be forgiven *through* Him!
- Come humble; worship *before* Him!
- Come broken; be whole, *trusting* Him!
- Come weary; rest *in* Him!
- Come hungry; feast *on* Him!
- Come thirsty; drink *from* Him!
- Come empty; be filled *with* Him!
- Come lonely; be befriended *by* Him!
- Come now; be forever *beside* Him!

(I Jn. 2:15-17; I Jn. 1:9; Ps. 95:6; Jn. 5:1-8; Matt. 11:28-30; Jn. 6:33-35; Jn. 7:37-38; Jn. 6:35; Eph. 3:19; Ps. 107:8-9; Jn. 11:25-26)



A NATION THAT REJECTS GOD LOSES ITS LIGHT!

“All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you, and bring darkness upon your land,” Says the Lord GOD.”

Ezekiel 32:7b-8

THE ORGANIZED CHURCH, THE REMNANT, AND “THE NEW NORMAL”

Unprecedented cultural shifts we’re witnessing today are the culmination of what began in the 1960s and ’70s. Those two decades gave birth to “The New Normal” of today, characterized by rebellion against authority (earthly and heavenly) leading to social disorder, gross immorality, and general chaos, causing both immediate anxiety and uncertainty about the future. What was introduced sixty years ago has reached maturity.

It was due to events of that same era that Christians across America, and throughout much of the world, were awakened to the fact that, surely, our “blessed hope” and His “glorious appearing” would be realized soon (Titus 2:13). The same is true today - but much more so!

I believe the Bible plainly teaches that our “blessed hope” refers to Jesus’ coming to take His people out of the world *before* the “wrath of God” is poured out on the world for sin; and that the “glorious appearing” refers to the time when He will come to earth and establish His righteous kingdom for one thousand years, *after* His wrath for sin on earth is over (Rom. 1:18; 2:5-8; [Rom.5:9; II Thess.5:9]; I Thess.4:15-17; Rev.6:12-17; 19:11-21; 20:1-6).

We are rapidly approaching that moment when “in the twinkling of an eye” we shall all be changed (I Cor. 15:52)! While it is *certain* that we *will not* suffer God’s wrath,” two important questions remain: How great a judgment will God execute on earth, and for how long, *before* His Bride is taken up; and are we prepared for whatever that is?

Is the earth not shaking beneath our feet already? It is! Is the world not on the brink of much more? It is! Are 21st-century American Christians prepared for more? How much more?

There has always been the True Church (the Remnant) inside and outside the Organized Church. The Remnant are those truly born of Him who remain faithful to the end, also called the Bride. The Organized Church includes all sects, institutions, denominations, etc., that worship God in *form and tradition* - whether they’re Orthodox, Reformed, Evangelical, or whatever (Col. 2:8; I Cor. 3:12; II Tim.3:5). The Remnant, I believe, is the Bride, kept for Him (Matt. 7:21-23; 13:24-30; 15:6-9; I Jn.2:19; Jn. 6:37-40; Rom. 5:1-4; I Pet.1:6-9; 4:12-19; Eph. 5:25-30,32; Jas. 1:1-4).

Everything that matters is changing. Beware! The only way anyone will remain unscathed by the world’s system is to become part of it.

SPIRITUAL POWER

Much of the Church at large is caught unprepared; many are not spiritually exercised at all for the spiritual warfare we’re engaged in, and many have very little knowledge of what real Holy Spirit intervention would look like. Let us seek to know God’s Spirit in Person and Power!

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Must the Body of Christ set aside all pursuits of true spiritual maturity to sign up for fulltime service in this new hand-to-hand combat ground battle for the soul of the nation? I hope not!

Could this ground battle for truth in the world’s culture drive us to spiritual maturity... *finally*? Only if it drives us to our knees.

UNITY FOR STRENGTH

As we join ranks with others in today’s battle for truth, we should be careful to be led by God’s Spirit, lest unifying for a holy cause lead to the creation of an *unholy* union.

Religious dogma is divisive and childish. *Absolute truth* is divisive too, but for the benefit of spiritual adulthood. Let us seek to discern the difference!

VICTORY

We engage in the battle for truth in culture, not because we are sure we’re going to achieve ultimate victory in the culture. At the end of the age, we surely will not. We do so because God charged us to live and proclaim His righteousness regardless of our perception of success.

Many historians agree that the 1960s and ’70s represent “a watershed moment in American history,” when postmodern thinking got the boost it needed to begin to forever alter the trajectory of the “American experiment.”

What we today call “The New Normal” was born in the 20th century, but its progress was *slowed* by God’s intervention.

God will not *equally* slow this 21st-century culture war because we are rapidly approaching the tip end of the age, when the Bible plainly says the world will grow worse while some in “the Church” will become apostate.

II Tim. 3-4; II Thess. 2

SPIRITUAL WARFARE MOVES IN WAVES. ASK FOR ANOTHER HOLY SPIRIT POWER ENCOUNTER!

THE BIRTH DATE OF “THE NEW NORMAL”

Destabilizing leaders and events are scattered across the entire landscape of history. Many historians agree that cultural shifts starting about sixty years ago had an exceptionally disruptive social impact on America that extends to today.

In addition, some of those things pointed directly to Bible prophecies about the end of the age and the return of the Lord.

As we look at some of those outstanding events, let’s remember that events do not have to be “bad” in order to cause one to look up. Some were *very* good. The events below pervaded American life for twenty years and beyond. Disturbing cultural shifts were felt on the ground by everyone. There was civil unrest as well as widely felt uncertainty about the future; and Christians began to take a much closer look at Bible prophecy.

The 1960s

- The US Supreme Court struck down all public school-sponsored prayer - an effort to remove God from the classroom in a nation He founded and richly blessed
- The Cuban Missile Crisis - the first ever real and imminent nuclear threat to America’s homeland
- The assassination of President Kennedy by elites in our own government - greatly elevated the lack of trust in government
- The Hippie and Sexual Revolutions - national glamorized rebellion
- The Civil Rights Movement - a much-needed, long overdue social change that shook America to its core, including a new era of Race Riots resulting in many tragic deaths; the rise of militant Black Power; the Black Panthers; and finally the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, a national hero
- Israel’s Six-day War - once again, clearly *proving* to all the world that the God of Israel was (and is) still the God of Israel, even though the vast majority of Israelis still reject Him

Notice the two significant US Supreme Court rulings issued against God *and* man at the onset of each of those decades; both rulings were a radical departure from America’s founding traditions of sanctity and respect for God *and* for man.

1962 – The US Supreme Court struck down the long-standing tradition of public school-supported prayer.

1973 - The US Supreme Court struck down the right of a child to remain alive in the womb.

Should there be any surprise that each of those decades is known for events that led to a disturbing and permanent undoing of America?

Also notice that, near the start of each of those decades, there was a shakeup in American leadership, much like today.

- The height of the Vietnam Anti-war Movement - with 60,000 American deaths, *no* victory whatsoever, and *major* civil unrest
- Man walked on the moon - signaling a new, uncertain era of technology for man (Today, AI signals a new, frightening era for man also.)

The 1970s

- The Watergate Scandal and resignation of President Nixon - the first president ever to resign, coming after two solid years of relentless political turmoil
- The US Supreme Court legalized murdering children in their mother’s womb - Roe v. Wade paved the way for legal murder of 60 million unborn babies over the next 50 years
- The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) Movement - a radical leap by feminists for female dominance to be protected by the Constitution; very divisive, and did not succeed, but created heated debate and social uproar throughout much of the 1970s
- The Carter Years - 22% interest rates; 14%-18% inflation; The OPEC Oil Embargo; The Hostage Crisis, born out of the Iranian Revolution; The Camp David Accords, when Israel and their Arab enemies came to the same table for the first time since Israel’s rebirth
- The dawn of The Me Generation and our narcissistic culture

By the end of that twenty-year era, America was in desperate need of a break from fear, uncertainty, and anxiety.

GOD AWAKENED HIS PEOPLE FOR THE TASK OF SLOWING THE RISING TIDE OF EVIL

That break started with the election of President Reagan in 1980, much due to the victorious effort from Christian leaders and their organizations that had risen to the challenge of the times.

God did not sit on the sidelines; but rather, He gave a much-needed awakening to the Church about the world around us that was running wildly off the rails. God’s people were the only hope. If we wanted to keep a free society, we would need to become much more involved in the main-street discourse about how we were governed on every level. Hence, most of the debate during that era came from voices of “The Religious Right,” without which America would already be a totalitarian state, with Christian voices silenced. That is an almost certain reality that we should not pass over; and we are in the midst of that same kind of spiritual warfare today, but exponentially worse.

Through the resurgence of the Judeo-Christian faith in American policy in the ‘60s and ‘70s, again led by The Religious Right, America’s strong foundation established by the Constitution was reaffirmed, and the increase in immorality in the mainstream was slowed.

Also, God did a spiritual work in America and throughout the world, entirely separate from what He was doing through leaders in the culture war, by reintroducing His Spirit on a scale not seen since Pentecost!

The 1950s - ‘80s

Major organizations that God raised up at that time include: Full Gospel Busi-

In the 1950s, God initiated a fresh move of His Spirit only a few years *before* cultural events led to widespread social unrest and decline.

Church revivals peaked in the ‘60s and ‘70s; and The Jesus Movement was born *outside* the Organized Church.

Many organized churches were shaken up as the Holy Spirit turned over the tables of lifeless religious form.

We have yet to see a wide-sweeping move of His Spirit to accompany us through *this* dark season, but God *is* at work throughout America and the world.

Let us pray earnestly for an authentic move of God’s Holy Spirit and expect it to come.

Extraordinary prayers lead to extraordinary moves of God.

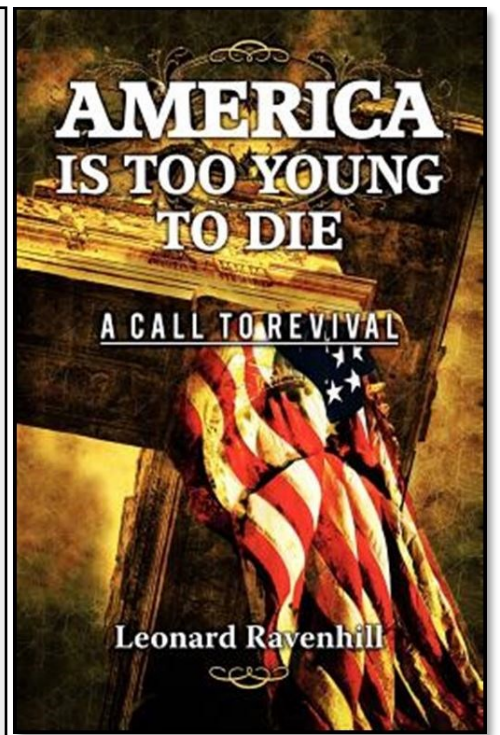
ness Men’s Fellowship (1952); the first ever nationally televised Christian revival broadcast - the unprecedented Billy Graham Crusade in New York City, which lasted sixteen weeks straight, introducing millions of Americans to the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ (1957); The Christian Broadcasting Network, the first Christian television ever launched (1961); Bott Radio Network, the first nationwide Christian radio network, with 120 stations (1962); Evangelism Explosion, the first house-to-house mass evangelism curriculum, with tens of millions of salvations (1962); Right to Life with 11 million members (1968); Liberty University (1971); Eagle Forum on 600 radio stations and in 100 newspapers, debating on 500 college campuses nationwide for decades (1972); The Heritage Foundation (1973); The Trinity Broadcasting Network (1973); The LeSEA Broadcasting Network (1972); Prison Fellowship (1976); Regent University (1977); Focus on the Family (1977); The American Family Association (1977); Concerned Women for America (1978); The Moral Majority with 4 million members (1979); followed by The Family Research Council in 1983, and many more.

The cumulative total of believers who participated in the “Religious Right” organizations numbered in the tens of millions. It was an exceptional time of God’s favor, during an exceptional time of the overflow of evil.

Also, God raised up spiritually gifted men *outside* the Organized Church, sent to speak *into* the churches of America in particular - men like A. W. Tozer, Leonard Ravenhill, David Wilkerson, Vance Havner, and more, all widely respected.

For those who are skeptical of the many things God did in that era (skeptical, perhaps, because of human errors, failures, doctrinal divides), let us remember that God’s interventions throughout the ages weren’t ever pristinely clean, not when placed in man’s hands. Let’s not discount God’s role due to man’s shortcomings.

We do not discount that God raised up Moses, even though he became frustrated and angry with the obstinate people of God (Num. 20:1-13). We do not discount that God raised up Abraham as the father of our faith, even though he lied to the king to protect himself (Gen. 20:1-13). We do not discount that God raised up David, even though he murdered a faithful man to steal his wife (II Sam. 11:1-26).



In 1979, a call to all Christians to give prayerful attention for saving America in decline

All these, and more, would have likely made us doubt their work with God and from God if we had been living in their day. Again, let us not discount God’s role in society or in His Church simply because leaders fail or because we can’t assimilate, within the framework of our ever-growing spiritual understanding, extraordinary gifts and/or movements that God *has clearly used* to advance His kingdom’s righteousness on earth.

While we may win *some* limited, short-term battles for truth in this 21st-century culture war, they *will not* be like long-term past victories.

Our warfare *this time* will take us up to the return of the Lord. The steadfast, unwavering proclamation and demonstration of His righteousness, despite the cost, will be victory in itself.

The Bible is clear. In God’s perfect time, His work on earth through His Church *will* end; then, He *will* judge the world for sin. Bible prophecy, compared with events today, clearly reveal that we are living in that era.

Let us discern the times.

I Chron. 12:32; Luke 12:54-56; Rom. 13:11-14

WE’RE NOT READY SPIRITUALLY FOR OUR TWO-FOLD CHALLENGE

Now, suddenly, we have the extraordinary challenge of a new culture war where the stakes could not be higher; at the same time, we still have the extraordinary challenge of doing our own spiritual housekeeping that is way behind.

We have yet to learn to *grow up* spiritually as members of His body. Many of us act as though we are as weak spiritually as we were when we first believed.

We’re challenged with fixing the world around us as we race into what could become the darkest days of American history, while fixing ourselves too! And

The world *adopts* us when we *adapt* to it. The sad reality is that we have been so adapted to the world, we have lost our unique identity.

ALL POWER AND AUTHORITY ARE HIS. USE THE NAME OF JESUS OFTEN!



God and America in the Crosshairs - This culture war is like no other in American history. Millions of children across America are being brainwashed and sacrificed on the altar of Baal in ways we never would have imagined anywhere. That's only the beginning of a long list of unthinkable atrocities taking place right now under the authority and insistence of our own government. God's people can use our voices effectively to defend the defenseless. The battle is spiritual, and the Bible teaches us to take up spiritual weapons. *“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God...” (II Cor. 10:4).* To sit on the sidelines or adopt an escapism attitude (the rapture) are not options. Pray, stand, listen, and participate as His Spirit leads.

what is more, many of us don't even realize we're so absent of spiritual power. We are in *desperate* need of a sovereign move of God's Spirit!

SEEKING GOD FOR REAL REVIVAL, OUR SURE AND ONLY HOPE

Christ followers from every generation have seen the need for spiritual revival, and ours is no different. There are several reasons we could certainly conclude that we are in greater need of spiritual renewal right now than at any other time in history. I believe God is going to give us one more spiritual awakening, but not until doing Christianity *our way* has been tested a little longer. Our way does not necessarily mean an evil way, but it's just *not* God's way. His way is perfect!

His perfect way is still available to us in the Bible. If we will make that our reference point for everything we think, say, and do, we will be headed in the right direction for real Spirit-filled revival.

“This is what the LORD says: ‘Stop at the crossroads and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls...’” (Jer. 6:16a NLT).

America has experienced many great revivals, beginning with The [First] Great Awakening (1730s - 1770s). That spiritual awakening is credited with bringing the American colonies into Christian solidarity to fight for the freedom we still have today. The single most important document directing and protecting America's long history of blessing is our Constitution. It is by going back to that Constitution time and time again that we've been able to maintain a strong, stable republic and *“a more perfect union.”*

In like manner, the Bible is THE single most important document, one that we must go back to if we would remain in “perfect union” with God and His plan.

We must recognize the seriousness of the hour. We must acknowledge our need to know Him in His mighty power. We can use what we already have, the mighty name of Jesus! And we should ask God for more of His mighty Holy Spirit power too!

The question remains: “Will we return to that sacred document as it is written, or will we continue marching downhill, giving priority to our own companion documents, which include *“the traditions of men?”* Israel had to answer the same question under the Old Covenant: Would they return to the Torah (their sacred Bible document left by God), or would they continue to prioritize their companion documents, which included *“the traditions of men?”* Jesus said it this way:

“...making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do” (Mk. 7:13).

There was a time when the Apostle Paul was *“more exceedingly zealous”* than his *“contemporaries”* about *“the traditions of my [his] fathers”* (Gal. 1:14); but then he

The American Church may be about to experience tests of our faith that millions of other Christians have endured for centuries, and still do today. Are we really ready for that?

The Apostle Paul, inspired by the wisdom and perfect foreknowledge of the Spirit of God, identified two kinds of people - with God, and without God, who will grow to their purest form at the end of the age.

He wrote that people without God will become the worst of humanity (II Tim. 3:1-5,13), and people with God will become the best of Christ's likeness until we see Him - His “fullness” (Eph. 4:7-16).

When writing to Ephesus about what I call the best of Christ's likeness, Paul points to a measure of spiritual maturity that we have yet to realize, but I believe will be realized in the Remnant, the Bride of Christ (Eph. 5:25-32).

When writing to Timothy about what I call the worst of humanity, I believe Paul is referring both to those who have rejected Jesus Christ, as well as to those who profess Him but do not “endure to the end,” forsaking their allegiance to Jesus Christ (I Cor. 9:24-27; II Tim. 4:7-8; Matt. 13:18-23).

Those without God are the loudest right now; but God is moving in and among His own people, quietly preparing us for His greater glory and His soon return!

He will complete His work in us!

saw Jesus as He really is, *not* through the shroud of his religious practice. His eyes were opened, and his life was changed!

Today, millions of Christians are a part of a church, saying and even doing all the right things; but they have *never seen Jesus as He really is.* They have seen Him *only* through the shroud of their own experience - usually shaped entirely by their particular Church affiliation.

If we truly desire another spiritual revival, we need to go back to our *most sacred* document, the Bible, and critique what we've been taught and what we believe.

In addition, we need to pray *consistently* for revival. We need to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal things in our lives that are not good and then forsake them. We need to prioritize *Him* at all times.

THE BATTLE FOR TRUTH IN AMERICAN CULTURE

God raised up an army of gifted men and women outside the framework of the local church to lead the charge for establishing and maintaining moral clarity in our nation's culture through the 1960s and '70s. Through those men and women and their supporters, God raised a standard of truth against the rising tide of a God-rejecting society.

The leaders God used were a mixed bag of believers. There were Evangelicals of every type, Catholics, Episcopalians, some from Reformed churches, Lutherans, and more. All fought for a common goal - to assert, affirm, and magnify the God-ordained principles within America's constitution, including life and liberty for all, even for the unborn; and to promote the founding national traditions adhering to Judeo/Christian ethics and morality, with Jesus Christ front and center.

Unprecedented support for godly principles in America's Constitution came from their organizations; and *any* moral clarity we've had in our culture over the last half-century has been primarily due to their leadership. Clearly, God intervened!

The many local churches across the country that stood firmly behind the principles of righteousness and morality in God's Word also played a major role in maintaining truth in American culture; but the Head of the Church in the world is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who is in heaven. So God raised up leaders here to bring the many sects of Christianity together for spearheading the charge, injecting *some* righteous standards deeply into political and cultural arenas, preserving the nation.

Had God *not* raised up those leaders and their supporters, beginning almost three-quarters of a century ago, we would likely already be under the tyranny of a God-hating government, with truth cancelled. Let us not fail to support what and whom God is raising up in *this* hour for that same purpose in this most dangerous time of American history.

No Christian denomination, group, sect, entity or church has tapped into *all* the Holy Spirit's power that God made available to us and that is needed today.

If we're not willing to humble ourselves, beseeching Him for more of His power, we'll continue spiritually impotent.

giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God...” (Eph. 5:15-21).

THE MIGHTY WORKS OF GOD OVERWHELM ALL DEBATES

The words *and* the works of God must become commonplace among us if we would be good representatives of Him to the world - *not only* the words. The Bible is full, from cover to cover, of God demonstrating Himself through His people. God's Word teaches us that He *wants* to demonstrate Himself through miracles of His Spirit until the end of the Church age (Eph. 3:20-21). Many believers have allowed Him to do that for almost twenty centuries; yet many others *still* resist Him. Why?

Abraham - believed God and fathered the Promise Seed when he was 100.

Moses - believed God, and God worked many mighty miracles through him, including parting the Red Sea.

Jesus, God with Us - spoke the Word with authority (since He *is* the Word); but also, He worked many miracles among the people, demonstrating His Father.

The Disciples/Apostles - were sent out two-by-two, *“preaching the kingdom of God,”* casting out devils and healing the sick, *demonstrating* the God of heaven.

The Body of Christ Today - *everyone* who is born of the Spirit of God is able to be empowered by the Spirit both to *speak* on God's behalf wherever and whenever the Spirit would lead them to and to *demonstrate* God on His behalf, each one according to his gifts as the Spirit leads.

To speak truth in culture is only half of our responsibility. The other half is to do the works of God that only God can do.



TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, ONE MUST ASK IN FAITH AND RECEIVE BY FAITH.

In 1929, Enos Cox and Byron Dement asked the question: *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?*

That question begs for another: *Where are the Elijahs of God?*

The reality is: *The Lord God of Elijah is waiting for the Elijahs of God to believe Him and to act on His Word.*

We must fight spiritual warfare empowered by the Spirit of God if we would ever hope to win a spiritual battle. All power and authority reside in the name of Jesus, the name above every name that is named in heaven and earth.

We must employ Jesus' name with the power of the Spirit into every conversation and debate about truth. The name of Jesus overwhelms the enemy, just like when Elijah prayed and God sent “down the fire.”

“Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, ‘The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God’” (1 Kgs. 18:38-39 KJV).

Use the name of Jesus when proclaiming Truth. He is Truth (Jn. 14:6)!

God has gifted many of His people to communicate and to argue for Truth in this culture war. They are smart, swift, and confident. We are grateful!

However, it is the name of Jesus that is above every name in heaven and on earth. His name is high above all principalities and powers of both heavenly and earthly realms!

It is the Truth in Jesus Himself that all are fighting to make known in the sea of lies. It is for the glory of God through Jesus that makes the effort worth it!

He will back up His name whenever it is used rightly.

The battle for Truth has always belonged to God and to His Son, who, again, is Truth. It is His, not ours. Use every means He has given to represent Him!

There is no Truth without Him.

There is no need for debate without Him.

There is no need for a free, moral society without Him.

Inject His name in every debate about Truth, in every argument, in every conversation!

Do not be ashamed of using His name, especially in the most intellectual arguments on Truth.

There was no doubt about God being involved sixty years ago; and there's no doubt about His help now. However, culture wars about truth in America's past have so overwhelmed every aspect of our lives that oftentimes they have smothered any potential for us to nurture our own spiritual growth. Proclaiming truth in a culture war is not His recipe for us to grow up into His image.

Lies that Satan used to start the war are a cancerous virus permeating society. We know that. But what many don't realize is that the sheer busyness of heart, mind, and strength that is required to debate

that virus on Satan's turf (the world stage) is another virus itself - called “overload.”

That overload hinders any substantial pursuits leading to greater Holy Spirit power and authority in His name. Taking down the enemy only can and does divert our attention from our *higher* calling - a *heavenly* platform meant for spiritual growth accompanied by spiritual power.

We must rethink the question: Is God's *priority* for us to help establish and enforce His righteous standards for the kingdoms of *this* world, or is it to grow up into the image of His Son, filled with His Spirit's power to *show Him* to the world?

The latter is our *priority calling*! If not, we will be too weak spiritually to do the first one, *fully representing God* to the world!

God is represented best through His body when we are growing up into His image.

We've thought incorrectly for centuries that our top priority is to share Jesus with the world. That's our mission. Our top priority is to become like Him!

Remember, the Lord is the Word. If God had wanted only to inject His Word with authority onto the debate stage of the lies of religion, God would not also have anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit's power to *demonstrate* Him as well (Is. 9:1-7; Matt. 12:18; Lk. 4:18).

How much more do we need the power of the Holy Spirit for demonstrating Him through signs, wonders, and miracles as He shows us to do so? Jesus said that He did only what His Father did. Are we doing what our Father does, as well as saying what He says?

For us to strengthen through debate a Biblical worldview in secular society in an increasingly demon-driven America is virtuous; but a debate alone, at its best, employs only *half* of the ability God has made available for us to represent Truth.

To run back onto the battlefield where secular society resides, even to rescue innocent victims, in *many ways* sidetracks the potential for our own deeper spiritual development. We must be Spirit led and not need driven. Without *true spiritual growth*, the spiritual *power* we can inject into the debate over what is true and what is a lie is limited. God has enabled us to *demonstrate* His Truth with His mighty power!

To *speak* the truth is necessary, but that is only *half* of what God has equipped us to do. To *demonstrate* that Jesus Christ is the Truth is the other half - the half that we're not very good at doing, because to demonstrate God by His power is something that comes only as a result of our deep spiritual growth and intimacy with Him, along with our spiritual development with one another. Again, this is what we have missed out on, partly because of our focus on *speaking* truth.

IS PROPHECY ABOUT AMERICA FROM 1985 COMING TO PASS?

Recently, I came across a little book that I had not seen in years. It is a prophetic message written by the late Pastor Frank Hammond, titled: *God Warns America - Arise, Oh, Church!* He was a conservative pastor and author of good reputation.

(I do not casually give attention to prophetic dreams and visions due to so many people “dreaming their own dreams” while claiming they are of God [Jer. 23:25-26]. False prophets and teachers always outnumbered the true.)

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith” (1 Jn. 5:4).

Here's an excerpt from the vision he said the Lord gave him nearly forty years ago - much of which is happening now. I can imagine that Hammond was labeled crazy back then, but he would not be today!

Hammond says the Lord showed him three eagles: green, red, and blue.

The Green Eagle showed the collapse of US currency due to our placing our dependency on the “almighty dollar,” rather than on God.

The Red Eagle showed bloodshed and death for many Americans via terrorist attacks from a foreign nation, the consequences of America's legalizing the killing of millions of babies in the womb.

The Blue Eagle showed God's judgment upon much of the Church of America for having strayed from Truth.

THE GREEN EAGLE...

“is a symbol of the United States of America, and I was thus shown that the judgments coming down were upon our nation. Furthermore, the American eagle, which normally speaks to us of our nation's power to defend herself and to overcome her enemies, was now in the role of aggressor against our nation. I was made to understand that the approaching judgments will be self-inflicted from within our own nation, and through our own government. The lifestyle in our nation, which has long been looked upon as a blessing, will become a curse.”

“I was not told in what ways this judgment would come (rising inflation, rising interest rates, deflation, or in other ways). In all probability it will come by a combination of factors. The god of money will fall and its power will fail.”

“Since the Lord gave enlightenment that our own nation will be the channel for this judgment, we might expect that leaders within government will make decisions or pass legislation which will create economic chaos... It will be through the function or malfunction of government that the curse will appear.”

THE RED EAGLE...

foretells of “added bloodshed that comes through terrorism and violence in our land” [partly due to terrorism from abroad].

THE BLUE EAGLE...

is about “persecution and hardship coming against the Church due to her failure to keep God's truth through purity of doctrine and practice... Again we are reminded that the impending judgment will be channeled from within our nation. It will come principally through the federal and state governments and their agencies.”

“The Lord caused me to understand that the increasing persecution against the Church from the state is because the Church in large part has departed from the truths of God. She has not faithfully heralded an uncompromising gospel. The result has been the erosion of the spiritual and moral foundations of the nation. Truth upheld and lived by becomes an individual's or a nation's bulwark. Truth denied and abandoned becomes their downfall.”

Indeed, all these things are in play today.

Jesus is our Safe haven! To abide in Him is to have confidence in Him! Have faith in God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

As we see the world around us spiraling downward, it is of great comfort to know that all these things point to His soon coming; and though our faith may be tested more than we like, we are saved from wrath for sin!

“... God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing” (1 Thess. 5:9-11).

America needs an *Awakening*, and the Church in America needs a *Revival* - both by the Spirit of God! Call on the Lord!

We know the Bible tells us that “*evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse*” as we draw nearer the end (II Tim. 3:13 KJV); but the Bible gives hope that God will finish His good work in us here. Our Lord Himself declared:

“... I will build My church, and the gates of Hades [hell] shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18).

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...” (Eph. 4:11-13).

Obviously, His work of building His Church into His image is not complete; but His Spirit and His gifts are here to finish His work. We have hope!

“... that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:14-16).

Let us aim for that! “Not by [our] might, nor by [our] power, but by My [His] Spirit...” (Zech. 4:6)!

In the grace of our Lord and Savior,

Mark and Debbie Case

The Father's Field Ministries
P. O. Box 330852
Murfreesboro, TN 37133

www.proclaimit.org

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21st-Century Believers' Checklist

1. Be on constant watch for His soon return (Matt. 24:42; 25:13; 26:41; Mk. 13:33, 35; Lk. 12:35-48; 21:36).
2. Buy Holy Spirit oil to last late into the night (Matt. 25:1-13).
3. Be about our Father's business, expecting to give account to Him according to what He has entrusted to us (Matt. 25:14-30).
4. Buy gold tried with fire and white garments (Rev. 3:18).
5. Put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-16).
6. Add to your faith virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love (II Pet. 1:5-11).
7. Hold fast to the Word of life (Phil. 2:12-16).
8. Abide in Him (I Jn. 2:28-29).
9. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, do not quench the Spirit, do not despise prophecies, test all things, hold fast to what is good, and abstain from every form of evil (I Thess. 5:16-23).
10. Be continually filled with the Spirit and His power (Eph. 3:20-21; 5:18).

