

The Need of this Great Hour of History

I. THE GREATEST REVIVAL IN ALL HISTORY

- A. We stand at a critical juncture in our nation's history. The Holy Spirit is visiting His people with power as darkness continues to increase. The light is getting brighter as the darkness is becoming darker. The onslaught of darkness is increasing in our classrooms, boardrooms, courtrooms, and bedrooms. The Spirit is speaking clearly and many are responding with wholeheartedness.

² ***Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. (Isa. 60:2)***

- B. The greatest revival and crisis in history is soon to come. It is darkest before the dawn and so our hearts remain full of faith. We know that a great awakening is soon to sweep across the nations. We look with confidence to God's promises to pour out His Spirit on all flesh to empower His people to bring the gospel to all nations. What a privilege to live in this awesome hour of history!

¹⁷ ***It shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams...***¹⁸ ***I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy...***

²⁰ ***before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. (Acts 2:17-20)***

¹⁴ ***This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. (Mt. 24:14)***

⁹ ***I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne...* (Rev. 7:9)**

- C. The Spirit is speaking about this outpouring and crisis. We are already in the early days of the great end-time outpouring of the Spirit. In this great revival the Spirit will release the miracles seen in the book of Acts and the book of Exodus combined and multiplied on a global scale.

- D. Consider the crisis that is at hand. The nations are living under the threat of natural disasters, terrorism, lawlessness, and war (Mt. 24:4-12). Radical Islam is growing more intolerant as they seek global domination while Western governments are growing more tolerant as they legalize perversion and darkness. The result is that fear is quickly becoming more and more prevalent.

²⁶ ***Men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things... (Lk. 21:26)***

- E. Abortion continues to kill 4,000 babies each day in America. The sanctity of marriage has come under siege, threatening to destroy the moral foundations of our nation. Sexual immorality, both heterosexual and homosexual, is reaching epic heights of depravity, with easy access to pornography via the Internet and the hyper-sexualization of our culture promoted by the media. Entire school systems are giving way to this darkness. The number of women and children being trafficked in the sex industry is growing at an alarming rate. The list could go on and on.

- F. There is another growing crisis that is emerging in many churches across America. A new wave of confusion is systematically seducing young adults into deception. Sincere believers, once ablaze for Jesus, are being allured into compromise on biblical truths and practices.
- G. The true danger of this new kind of “Christianity” is obscured by the works of compassion and justice that its followers are engaged in. There is no amount of ministry activity that can “balance out” the profound spiritual compromises that many are embracing. They are doing more and more in the name of justice and compassion, but less and less in the name of Jesus. In the name of tolerance they are settling for politically correct theology that trivializes Jesus’ glory. Our works of compassion and justice must flow from *allegiance to Jesus and His Word*.
- H. A theological crisis is emerging across America that will perplex many who will be unable to discern between truth and deception (1 Tim. 4:1-3). The Scriptures are clear that many will fall away and depart from the faith in the midst of the crisis, as fear, offense, and deception abound (Mt. 24:9-13; Lk. 21:26; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3).
- I. The greatest revival in America’s history is coming even as our nation stands on such precarious footing. The onslaught of darkness is increasing in our classrooms, boardrooms, courtrooms, and bedrooms. Confusion is pouring forth from many pulpits and from the halls of Washington. It is time for the uncompromising voice of forerunners to speak clearly in the midst of so much confusion. Yes, it is time to draw a line in the sand and to take a bold stand for truth.
- J. We live in a very significant hour of history. I believe we are in the time described in the Scripture as the “beginning of sorrows,” or “the beginning of birth pains,” that precedes the Great Tribulation (Mt. 24:4-8, 21). The Bible tells us that during the Great Tribulation, sin will become fully *ripe* with unprecedented and unimaginable levels of sin (Rev. 14:18).

²¹ *They did not repent of their murders, sorceries, sexual immorality or their thefts. (Rev. 9:21)*

II. FORERUNNERS ANNOUNCE THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS

- A. Today’s hollow programs, prayerlessness, and preaching of a false gospel of cheap grace will not prepare believers for the coming revival of glory or the encroaching storm of darkness. There is a great need for the prophetic voice of forerunners who will speak with clarity into the confusion.
- B. Forerunners announce the second coming of Jesus as well as the great revival and pressures that are directly related to His return. Forerunners emphasize Jesus’ second coming, while proclaiming and manifesting the power of Jesus’ first coming as they win the lost, heal the sick, help the poor, and walk in love and holiness. We will develop this more in other sessions.
- C. The Spirit is preparing forerunners from many streams in the Body of Christ worldwide. At onething 2008, I experienced one of the highlights of my ministry when I witnessed **5,000 young adults make 7 commitments of a forerunner** that we refer to as the Sacred Charge. The forerunner calling is not reserved for the elite; it is available to anyone who wants it.

- D. End-time forerunners can find inspiration and instruction from New Testament forerunners like John the Baptist, the first apostles, and the seventy disciples, who all announced the first coming of Jesus to their generation (Mt. 10:5-8; Lk. 9:1-2; 10:1). John the Baptist functioned as a forerunner by announcing the coming of Jesus as well as the glory and pressures that would result from it in that generation (Lk. 3:3-9, 16-18).
- E. The apostles functioned as forerunners in two ways. First, they announced the first coming of Jesus to the cities of Israel (Lk. 9:1-6). Second, they proclaimed the second coming of Jesus and the resulting glory and pressures (Acts 3:19-21; 2 Pet. 3; 1. 4-5; 2 Thes. 1-2; Rev. 6-19).
- F. Today's forerunners will imitate the *message* of John the Baptist and the apostles by proclaiming the first coming of Jesus and the salvation accomplished by it, as well as proclaiming the second coming of Jesus and the *unique dynamics* created by events that will accompany it.
- G. Forerunners will imitate the *lifestyle* of John and the apostles as they pray, fast, and go deep in the Word, while at the same time winning the lost, healing the sick, making disciples, church planting, and operating in the power of the Spirit to meet the needs of people. As they proclaim the Word and do the works of the kingdom, they glorify Jesus and deliver the oppressed; *by the very same activity* they are being prepared for even more in the years ahead.
- H. In our new book, *7 Commitments of a Forerunner*, we offer a starting point in defining a few practical ways to walk out the forerunner lifestyle:
- **Pray Daily:** connecting with God while changing the world by releasing His power.
 - **Fast Weekly:** positioning ourselves to receive more from God by fasting two days a week.
 - **Do Justly:** being zealous for good works of compassion and justice that exalt Jesus as we impact the seven spheres of society.
 - **Give Extravagantly:** experiencing the joy of financial power encounters as we sacrificially give to the kingdom and support the prayer movement.
 - **Live Holy:** living fascinated in the pleasure of loving God that overflows to loving people.
 - **Lead Diligently:** taking initiative to minister to others and make disciples by regularly leading in outreaches, prayer meetings, and Bible studies.
 - **Speak Boldly:** being a faithful witness of the truth with allegiance to Jesus' Word.
- I. These seven commitments are not a comprehensive list covering the entire Christian life—they are a few practical activities that will prepare us to walk out the forerunner ministry. These seven commitments are cultivated step by step, day by day, year after year. We cannot treat them as optional, as activities to do when they are convenient and when nothing else is going on. We are to see them as *sacred*, or valuable to us, even when other opportunities come our way. Will you be one who responds in a wholehearted way? Will you set your heart to say yes?
- J. Forerunners must hear what the Spirit is saying to them in this hour and act on it. It is time for them to seek to live with a new depth of obedience and responsiveness to the Spirit. Even in this hour, the Lord is now calling some to embrace a season of rigorous preparation that will equip them to more effectively proclaim the forerunner message in the midst of the coming pressures.