

American Church in Crisis

Rick Joyner

I've been told the same word for "crisis" in Chinese is also the same word for "opportunity." That may best describe the period we are entering-both crisis and opportunity.

One of the most remarkable verses in the Bible is Revelation 3:20, where we see the Lord standing outside the doors of His own church, knocking to see if anyone will hear Him and open to Him. During this age He won't enter where He isn't wanted, even in His own church. For the last few decades America has basically asked the Lord to leave every public place. In our public schools you can now use the f-word without impunity, but if you say the name of Christ (except as a curse), you can be expelled. The meltdown of American citizens' basic character has occurred, and studies show that in basic morality and integrity you can no longer distinguish between Christians and non-Christians. Without revival or another Great Awakening, America will not likely survive this decade as either a great nation or a free nation.

Those who have spent our lives in the most prosperous and free nation on earth may not be able to imagine this to be possible, which is probably what everyone in the Soviet Union thought right up to the day before it collapsed. For seventy years the Soviets had said there was no God, and then one day God said there is no Soviet Union, and it was gone. We may think that God cannot do without the U.S. but reality is that we cannot exist without God. The nations are like sand in the hand of the Lord. He can raise up the smallest and weakest to take the place of the United States in His purposes. Even if the United States collapses the kingdom will not even be shaken, or set back for a single minute.

America has now fallen to the lowest state of depravity that Isaiah declared, where we call evil good, and good evil, where we honor the dishonorable, and dishonor the honorable. This is the last state before we are assured judgment will fall. These judgments have been coming in waves for years, each one seeking to wake up His people. The church in America has been like Jonah, running from God, and sleeping through the storm. The reason for the storm was the sleeping prophet, not the heathen. The heathen actually had to wake the prophet up and tell him to call on his God. Will we wake up?

If the church in America awakens she will be given the kind of anointing that Jonah was given to preach to Nineveh to bring repentance. Our finest hour, and America's greatest times can yet be future. It does depend on those who are called to be salt and light. Will we wake up, repent, call on our God, and preach His gospel? Will we hear Him knocking, and open to Him?

Hope in Britain

J. John (Philo Trust)

With Britain heading toward financial, moral and social bankruptcy, it is hard to be optimistic about my country's future. Yet amid the gloom, I see rays of encouragement and hope. My predictions?

- The continuing decline in "Churchianity" will lead to a void in which a genuine Christian faith will stand out clearly.
- The current affection for hedonism, consumerism and secularism will be maintained, but there will be a growing realization that they do not satisfy.
- Though the decline of the formal, traditional, institutional churches will continue, significant mega-churches will arise in all the major cities to become the new "cathedrals," which will coincide with a rapid rise in small, fluid fellowships.
- As society becomes colder, more detached and increasingly virtual, the attraction of authentic, caring, Spirit-filled fellowships will be compelling.
- As book culture wanes, there will a loss of biblical knowledge that will leave the church vulnerable to fads and heresies. This will be balanced by a growth in Christians who will hold to God's Word with a new seriousness.

· The failure of "multicultural" philosophy and political correctness will produce some urban areas as no-go zones for evangelism. Nevertheless, there will a growing number of Christians, churches and martyrs.

It's not going to be boring! And God is still on His throne.

From Turmoil to Revival

Ruddy Gracia (Segadores de Vida)

As I've traveled in recent years, I've had to be cautious to not have my humanity affected by the fear and dissolution expressed by people everywhere in the world. The Lord warned us about the empowerment of darkness in the last days (see Is. 60:2), but this turmoil will be the pathway to one of the greatest revivals the church has ever seen.

I'm a strong believer that, as in the beginning, God's Spirit loves to hover over what has become dark, empty and void, which is how our generation is viewed. That perception is about to change because "the best wine has been reserved for the end." I have no doubt that in this next decade, beginning with a shaking of the nations, a prophetic generation will arise that will speak to the overwhelmed body (see Ezek. 37:4), and we will witness an army rise up and possess the gates of the enemy. I believe the church will impact every area of society around the world, from the pews to the marketplace.

Muslim Opportunity

Paul Tan (Los Angeles City Blessing Churches)

"Paul, what do you think about the growth of Muslims according to Muslim demographic studies?" my friend asked me. "I believe God is doing us a favor," I said. He opened his eyes wide as if needing more explanation. "In my opinion many churches are reluctant to go out, reach out and demonstrate the love of Christ to the Muslims. That's why God is sending them to us."

The church in 2020 will be more engaged in love-in-action, with a strong emphasis on integrity,

accountability and holiness. In Indonesia, the spiritual climate is already changing as a result of this: The church now ministers to the poor in the community and shows genuine care to the people, regardless of their belief, race or background.

World at War

Chuck Pierce (Glory of Zion International)

In this season of seeing and gaining new vision, the eyes of the church must be cleansed and focused. We cannot "see" through the traditions of our past or the fears of our future. We must restore a true vision of the one who liberated us to represent Him in sharing the Good News of the kingdom and take dominion in our generation. This rearrangement of vision is causing leaders for a new generation to see beyond the world's filters. These conforming screens have caused us to lose the same boldness and transformational change that Jesus of Nazareth displayed. He represented the Father and resisted the opposition of a supernatural foe that longs to mold us into an image denying the power of the King of all Kings.

A new governmental order will arise. The key to the civil government war will be the restored government of God regaining power to legislate the heavens. Binding and loosing, forbidding and permitting will be transferred to the hands of the apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers and evangelists of the future. The government of God will lose the political spirit of Judas, align itself with heaven and represent the order of God. This means that these gifts-leaders in the church must be restored from territory to territory and nation to nation. The voice of God in His leaders must be restored and heard, just as Moses represented the Lord before Pharaoh, and as Jesus represented His Father before the Sanhedrin. We must do likewise!

There will be a governmental war as the governments of the world realign against God's covenant plan in the earth. This will be recognized as nations harden their hearts toward Israel and agree with the violation of God's covenant boundaries with His firstborn nation. For a brief period in this new decade leading up to 2020, there will be a move of God among Muslims. Many will rebel against the violence that robs their freedom and accept the grace of God given through His Son. Because of the war over financial control in the earth, watch the influence of China. The megatrends associated with capitalistic materialism through communist control that have developed in that nation will now infiltrate many nations as they rearrange their financial structures.

The real war in days ahead will come over how we, the church, gather, fellowship and exercise our kingdom authority. We are approaching a historic time when a megachurch will not be the only recognized expression of kingdom success. The information age has changed the way we communicate. This change has altered the way we gather. Gatherings will now be more functional and focused on causes rather than territorial (local church) issues. Many denominations and spiritual structures will be fading and losing their relevance by 2016. Prophetic accuracy will now mature, causing the church to have new prayer power and kingdom strategies. The god of this age will be defeated.

Sound creates movement. We will hear the sound of heaven penetrating the land and the response from the land being expressed in our worship. Our form of worship is changing rapidly. At the same time, corporate worship gatherings in certain territories will break through into new levels of revelation, restoration and transformation. The Word will become even more applicable for this age through sound and worship. Many of what are now corporate warfare worship gatherings will turn into times of travail, and the result will be changed nations. As we come together and worship in such settings, we will gain new strategies for how to govern in our spheres of authority.

Overall, a new triumphant reserve or remnant will arise and be willing to love not their lives unto death!

Innovation Generation

Iverna Tompkins (Iverna Tompkins Ministries International)

The 2020 church will embrace and utilize every means to create an exciting, relevant and real presentation of Christ. The rapid progression of knowledge and the technological dissemination of it demand change in attitudes, methods and mindsets in the local church if we are to make use of it. It will reach far beyond its walls and welcome all who respond, and will fulfill a need for discipling those who don't attend church services but need to be led into the kingdom by trained, Spirit-filled and loving believers.

This new generation is fearless and intelligent and will make a great army to war against sin and

the devil. They are innovative, talented and energized, and if the church can love them into the kingdom and help them to grow by communicating with them, teaching them, praying for them and accepting them, then we will have not one revivalist but a generation of them.

Because technology can't replace the desire for intimacy and community connection, I believe smaller churches will become more united in love with one another, embracing the fivefold ministry and releasing believers to the works of the Lord. Our nation's open borders will result in a heightened emphasis on other nations of the world, which will translate to greater emphasis placed on training missionary-minded Christians to minister both at home and abroad.

Instead of creating more megachurches, the cry for fellowship, community and love will necessitate smaller groups. Perhaps all churches will not do this, but those who won't will be reduced to survival instead of being empowered by revival.

Clear Word

R.T. Kendall (R.T. Kendall Ministries)

I was named after Dr. R.T. Williams, who cautioned young preachers, "Let the old men deal with prophecy; they won't be around to see their mistakes." I will be 85 in 2020; I expect, however, to be around to observe:

1. The greatest move of God ever on the earth underway; the clear preaching of the Word will be paralleled by the supernatural, possibly eclipsing the magnitude of the miracles in the book of Acts.

2. The Word emphasis will be on Romans, especially chapter 4.

3. The "midnight cry" (see Matt. 25:6) will have taken place; both the wise (who cherish the Word and Spirit) and foolish virgins will have been awakened.

4. The cessationists (who believe miracles ceased after the closing of the canon of Scripture) will have largely reassessed their thinking.

5. Unthinkable suffering and persecution of the church will abound.

6. The "secret rapture" theory will be widely discredited by the abundance of terror and pain that was supposed to happen after the rapture.

7. Many leaders will be exposed and largely set aside owing partly to their misguided emphases and partly because of immorality.

8. The lifting of the blindness on Israel will be evident, resulting in hundreds of thousands of Jews turning to Jesus Christ, their true Messiah.

9. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims will affirm Jesus Christ as the Son of God and their Savior.

10. The second coming of Jesus will be at hand.

House Church Movement

Tony Dale (House2House)

If I were writing a journal entry on Jan. 1, 2020, I imagine it would read like so:

I can't believe I turn 70 this year. I was effectively born into house-church movements as my parents before my birth had gone out to China to work with Watchman Nee's Little Flock. Who could've known that what began in China in the '50s would then sweep the United Kingdom with an embryonic house-church movement in the '70's (while my wife Felicity and I were medical students in London), and then would re-emerge in India in the '90s and sweep the rest of the world in the last 20 years? In 2010 we watched with amazement as mega/large and micro/small churches began openly exploring how they could work and live together as the body of Christ. Now, 10 years later, we see meaningful expressions of "city church" all across the country, with virtually all large churches having transformed into varying expressions of house-church networks, and virtually all house churches and house-church networks having recognized and joined with the mega-churches to help recognize and live together as the church in the city.

Forsaking Tradition

Guillermo Maldonado (El Rey Jesus)

In the next decade I believe the church will experience the most powerful spiritual awakening and revival in history. We will see God's glory manifested upon the entire body of believers. Many are leaving the traditional denominations of Christianity and embracing independent churches because they feel the traditional churches lack the ability to experience God at a personal level. This trend can be seen around the world and especially among U.S. Hispanics, whose cultures are rich with religious traditions. This shift is likely to continue because there is an ever-growing hunger and thirst for the Holy Spirit, not tradition. Many Hispanics are seeking something more than just a religious experience; they want a more personal relationship with the Lord. As they seek to know Him at a deeper level, God will use them to catapult the revival that is already beginning to ignite in our countries.

Messianic Jewish Movement

Daniel Juster (Tikkun Ministries International)

The Messianic Jewish movement is unified by one distinguishing commitment, that Jews who come to faith in Jesus the Messiah are called to live and identify as Jews. Our very existence is

a challenge to the church concerning its own self-identity as one organically connected to the Jewish people from whom it was born. The challenge is to pursue an understanding of the Bible in its original Jewish context. I do not mean by this a superficial approach that seeks to make the churches look like Messianic synagogues. This is a superficial approach and offensive. Getting the issue of Jewish rooting in balance is important for our partnership for the salvation of Israel and the nations.

Secondly, the Messianic Jewish movement is called to greater maturity. Some in our movement are defining maturity as commitment to and deep understanding of Rabbinic Judaism. We should honor our heritage where it is good; but true maturity is conformity to Yeshua, His teaching and knowing how to walk in power of the Spirit. It is crucial that we approach the Jewish heritage through biblical emphases. We now have a growing Russian movement in Russia, Ukraine, Eastern Europe and Germany. In Israel we have more than 100 congregations. The Israeli congregations are not Rabbinic in orientation but find their Torah rooting in being Israeli, living in the land, speaking Hebrew and making a contribution to our society. Bridging the gap between the Israelis, Russians and Americans will be a key for the future. I believe that unity will be connected to the center of our movement being in Israel.

Maturing Church

Esteban Fernández (Biblica Latin America)

Because we are a living body, I anticipate that in 10 years the church will be more mature, more experienced and will have received more "treatment" from God. We will not only be more aged in years but will have had 10 more years of listening to Jesus and knowing His heart. If we really listen to Him and follow His model, it's logical to anticipate that the church will not grow old. It will be more mature, but also more vivacious-mature but renewed. We will also continue to be a model of life for society, providing solutions for modern-day problems.

My ministry as a pastor and leader involves working with teams and leaders to do the latter. We must lose our fears of fully entering into areas of power and influence-both in government and elsewhere. And we must recover the segment we've allowed the New Age and other "spiritual" movements to steal, which have distracted people from a real touch of power from the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

Timeless Call for Unity

Nicky Gumbel (Holy Trinity Brompton)

I don't know what life will be like for the church in 2020. But I hope and pray that the church will be growing as more and more people come to know Jesus and experience the love of God being poured into their hearts by the Holy Spirit. I hope we will see the barriers between denominations coming down and an increasing unity within the body of Christ. I hope we will see God's kingdom come in power as the world is both evangelized and re-evangelized. I hope as well that we will see an increase in justice and peace, the ending of extreme poverty and preventable disease, and the transformation of our society. With God everything is possible.