

Session 3 Positive Sign Trends in the Church

I. THE END-TIME VICTORIOUS CHURCH

- A. Scripture prophesies of the Church being made ready and full of glory before the Lord returns (Rom. 11:25; Eph. 4:13, 5:27; Rev. 12:11; 15:2; 19:7). Jesus prophesied of and prayed for the Church being victorious in context to unbelievers seeing it (Mt. 16:18-19; 22:37; Jn. 17:21-26).
- ¹¹ He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry...13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man... (Eph. 4:11-13)*
- ²⁷ That He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5:27)*
- ⁷ For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7)*
- ² I saw...those who have the victory over the Beast...standing on the sea of glass... (Rev. 15:2)*
- ¹¹ They overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. (Rev. 12:11)*
- ²⁵ Blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. (Rom. 11:25)*
- ¹⁸ I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. (Mt. 16:18)*
- B. There are many prophetic signs in Scripture that give insight into the victorious Church and mark the final generation as unique. As we discern these positive sign trends, we are strengthened in our faith to stand with confidence in the midst of the negative trends. As these trends accelerate at the same time, we are to understand that we are in a unique season in history. Currently, all of them are increasing in a **measurable way** in a manner that is distinct from any time in history.
- C. Some things will be much better at the same time that other things get much worse. The light will get brighter at the same time that the darkness will get darker (Isa. 60:2; Mt. 13:30).
- 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)*
- ³⁰ Let both [the wheat and tares] grow together until the harvest... (Mt. 13:30)*
- D. Jesus connected the timing of His return to four trends that are all emerging simultaneously in this hour of history. They are the preaching of the **gospel** throughout the whole earth (Mt. 24:14), the repentance of **Jewish leaders** (Mt. 23:37-39), night and day **prayer** for justice (Lk. 18:7-8) and **unity** in the Church to such a degree that the nations will believe in Jesus (Jn. 17:21-23). Jesus prayed for unity and Paul connected it to the Lord's return (Jn. 17:20-26; Eph. 4:11-13).

II. THE GREAT HARVEST: THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO ALL NATIONS

- A. **Gospel preached to all nations:** Jesus connected the timing of His return to the preaching of the gospel to all nations. Mission leaders identify 4,000 geo-political zones using 6,000 languages (20 primary languages used by 90% of the earth) and 12,000 cultures or ethnic groups (ethnos).
¹⁴ This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations [ethnos or ethnic groups] and then the end will come. (Mt 24:14)
- B. John saw believers from every nation (Rev. 5:9; 7:9; 14:6; 15:4). John saw a specific group of believers who will come to Jesus during the Great Tribulation (Rev. 7:9-14).
⁹ A great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes...standing before the throne 14...These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. (Rev. 7:9, 14)
- C. The leading mission organizations project from statistical data that the gospel will be presented to all 6,000 people groups (ethnic groups) for the first time by 2020. Steve Douglass (Campus Crusade For Christ) and Loren Cunningham (Youth With A Mission) are stating that the task of preaching the gospel in every nation can occur possibly by 2020. The Bible has been translated in over 2,000 languages (that are used by 98% of the world's population).
- D. The remaining 600 "Untargeted and Unreached People Groups" (UUPG) are now being targeted. Over 300 of these final 600 UUPGs (representing 600 million people) are now being engaged. DAWN (Disciplining A Whole Nation) does research for reaching the nations.
- E. Today, 2.1 billion people say they are Christians (baptized as a baby but not practicing) and an estimated 1 billion are true Christians or what is referred to as Great Commission Christians. In 100 AD, there was a 360 to 1 ratio of believers (under 1%). In 1000 AD, there was a 220 to 1 ratio (under 1%). In 1500, there was a 70 to 1 ratio (just over 1%). In 1900, there was a 25 to 1 ratio (about 4%) and finally in 2000, there is about a 5 to 1 ratio (about 20%).
- F. Christianity is the world's largest religion, encompassing one third of the world's population. Christianity is growing at a much faster rate than the overall population. The primary growth has taken place in the southern hemisphere and in Asia.
- G. About 250 million Christians live in North America, while over 400 million live in South America, 350 million in Africa, and almost 350 million in Asia. By 2025, an estimated 600 million Christians will live in Asia, another 600 million in Africa, and 500 million in Latin America. There are over 100 million Christians in China with 30,000 coming to faith every day.
- H. An estimated 70% of the expected 2.5 billion Christians will come from what demographers call the "Global South." These findings can be confirmed in the Status of Global Mission 2005, published by the International Bulletin of Missionary Research, and the Global Survey of World Missions, compiled by Professor David Barrett, editor of World Christian Encyclopedia.

- H.I. According to David Aikman, former Time Magazine Bureau Chief in Beijing, in 25 years the Chinese population will be over 25% Christian, making China the largest Christian nation. In 1900, there were 10 million Christians in Africa, representing 10% of the population. Today there are over 350 million Christians in Africa, representing almost 50% of the population.
- I.J. The greatest missionary forces in the Body of Christ are coming from Asia. For example, the “Back to Jerusalem” ministry is focused on going from China to Israel (Beijing to Jerusalem). It has a vision to evangelize the major unreached nations of the world, taking the gospel to Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu nations. This ministry started in 1920 with a 5-word slogan encapsulating their commitment to Christ: “Sacrifice, abandonment, poverty, suffering, death.” Today there are about 220,000 missionaries worldwide. The Chinese Church alone will double the work force.
- J.K. In 1800, at the beginning of the Protestant Missions Movement, nearly 75% of the global population had never heard the gospel. Today, only 25% of the global population remains unevangelized. In 1800, one billion dollars a year was given annually to churches and parachurch ministries. Today, nearly 900 billion dollars a year is given to Christian causes.
- K.L. The Jesus Film has been shown in 230 countries and territories (out of 262). There have been six billion viewings of the film, with a decision for Christ being made every four seconds somewhere around the world, totaling 225 million decisions for Christ.
- L.M. We are already seeing the early stages of the beginning of a global harvest unlike any other period in history. Every Home For Christ, led by Dick Eastman, reports that they mobilized 25,000 workers who led 10 million people to Christ and planted 10,000 churches in 2008 alone.

III. THE SALVATION OF ISRAEL

- A. The revival in the nations will also occur in Israel. The glory of God being expressed in the lives of Gentile believers will provoke Israel to jealousy (Rom. 10:19; 11:11, 14). There are more Jewish people coming to Jesus than any time since the first century. There are over 120 messianic congregations (Jewish believers) in Israel, totaling over 15,000 believers. This is an increase of over 500% in the last 10 years. Messianic congregations in Israel are experiencing more growth through conversions than any time since the first century. Today there is a vibrant Messianic remnant in Israel. This remnant is growing and soon a "critical mass" will be reached.
- B. Jesus prophesied that the Jewish leadership would openly celebrate Him as the Messiah!
³⁹ You shall see Me no more till you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.” (Mt. 23:39)
- C. Peter prophesied that the Jewish people would repent before Jesus returns.
¹⁹ Repent...be converted, that your sins may be blotted out so that...²⁰ He may send Jesus...²¹ whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things... (Acts 3:19-21)

- D. Zechariah prophesied of the inhabitants of Jerusalem praying, repenting and coming to Jesus.
¹⁰ I will pour on...the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him [Jesus]... (Zech. 12:10)
- E. It is significant that a remnant of Jewish believers live in the land (Rom. 9:27, 11:5). We live in a time of unprecedented salvation regarding the Jewish remnant of believers.

IV. THE WORLDWIDE PRAYER AND WORSHIP MOVEMENT

- A. **Global prayer movement**: Jesus connected the timing of His return in Luke 17 to night and day prayer in Luke 18.
⁷ Shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who cry to Him day and night...? ⁸ When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith (agreement in prayer) on the earth? (Lk. 18:7-8; NAS)
- B. Jesus prophesied of a time when the Church would pray (bind negative and loose positive things) until the powers of hell were openly defeated. This occurs mostly in the generation He returns.
¹⁸ I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.(Mt. 16:18-19)
- C. The Holy Spirit will raise up an end-time prayer movement (Rev. 22:17; 5:8; 8:4; Lk. 18:7-8; Mt. 25:1-13; Isa. 62:6-7; 24:14-16; 25:9; 26:8-9; 27:2-5, 13; 30:18-19; 42:10-13; 43:26; 51:11; 52:8; Joel 2:12-17, 32; Jer. 31:7; Mic. 5:3-4; Zeph. 2:1-3; Ps. 102:17-20; 122:6; Zech. 12:10).
- ~~C-D.~~ The bowls of prayer will be full just before the book of Revelation judgments begin (Rev. 5:8).
⁸ When He [Jesus] had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ They sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals [release the end-time judgments] for You...redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation... (Rev. 5:8-9)
- ~~D-E.~~ Isaiah prophesied of 24/7 prayer ministries continuing until Jerusalem is made a praise in the earth (Isa. 62:6-7). Currently, Jerusalem is hated in the nations, but will be a praise in the earth at the time that Jesus returns. There will be a remnant of intercessors in the besieged city of Jerusalem who will cry out to God on her physical walls, as Gentile believers across the nations cry out on the spiritual wall of intercession for Jerusalem.
⁶ On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen [intercessors]; all day and all night they will never keep silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves; 7 and give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. (Isa 62:6-7 NAS)
- ~~E-F.~~ We are living in the time of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy that God would set or appoint watchmen intercessors who will never be silent day or night. Since 1999, four houses of prayer have been established in Jerusalem that are devoted to night and day intercession.

- F.G. The worldwide prayer movement is a prophetic sign of the times. The recent explosion of the number of prayer events and ministries across the nation is unique in history. In the last 10 years, there has been a significant increase in the number of prayer gatherings in stadiums, new houses of prayer, and 24/7 prayer ministries.
- G.H. In January 2008, Mark Anderson, leader of the Call2All, hosted a meeting in Orlando in which 170 CEOs of most of the top missions organizations worldwide. They made commitments to start 500,000 new houses of prayer and 4 million new church plants by 2020. In the Hong Kong Call2All Congress (June 2009), 3,000 leaders from 900 organizations committed to start 400,000 house of prayer and 2 million new churches by 2020 (7,000,000 churches today in the earth).
- H.I. **Global worship movement:** Jesus is coming back in context to the greatest worship movement in history (Isa. 42:10-13). The current explosion of worship music combined with prayer is a sign of the times. Isaiah prophesied of the prominence of singing in the end times (over 100 verses). See Isa. 5:1-7; 6:3; 9:3; 12:1-6; 14:3-27; 24:14-16; 25:1; 26:1-6; 27:2-5, 13; 29:19; 30:29-30; 35:1-10; 38:19-20; 42:10-17; 43:21; 44:23; 48:20-21; 49:13; 51:3, 11; 52:8-10; 54:1; 55:12; 56:7-8; 60:18; 61:3, 7-11; 62:6-7, 9; 63:7; 65:13-14; 66:10-14, 21.

V. END-TIME UNITY IN THE CHURCH

- A. Unity and maturity will occur in the Church in the generation in which the Lord returns.
- ¹¹ He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints...¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith ...to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; (Eph. 4:11-13)*
- B. Jesus prayed for the unity of the Church and linked it to the time when God's glory fills the Church and the world, or the nations coming to salvation. The Father is determined that the Church will operate in oneness worldwide. Then He will release the fullness of His glory called the commanded blessing (Ps. 133:1-3).
- ²¹ ...That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. (Jn. 17:21-23)*
- C. The world will believe when the church operates together in unity. We can do something together that we absolutely cannot do separately. Without unity, the task of bringing the gospel to the nations will be impossible. The Lord loves the whole Church and therefore, He is causing all of His people to love and honor the whole Church. The Lord is bringing a new level of unity and gracious cooperation within the Church. It is a prophetic sign of the times.
- D. Honor heals division and dishonor creates division. The missions movement, prayer movement, and church planting movements with the market place leaders are converging together at a new level for the first time since the early Church.

VI. OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT, BRIDAL PARADIGM AND FOCUS ON CHILDREN

- A. **End-time outpouring of the Spirit:** The greatest prophetic moment is yet to come (Isa. 26:9; 29:24; Jer. 31:9; 23:20; Dan. 11:33-35; 12:3, 10; Joel 2:28-32; Mal. 4:5-6; Mt. 17:11; Jn. 14:12; Acts 2:17; Rev. 11:3-6; 18:20). It will be accompanied by prophecies, healings, and miracles. All believers can and will receive prophetic dreams and visions. The Spirit is doing this now.
- ¹⁷ In the last days...I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions...¹⁸ On My menservants and My maidservants 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)*
- B. The greatest outpouring of the Spirit in history will include miracles that were seen in the book Acts and the book of Exodus combined and multiplied on a global scale. The number of Pentecostal/Charismatic believers has exploded from under 1 million in 1900 to over 600 million today, indicating an increased pursuit of the power of the Spirit. Those believing in the gifts of the Spirit are in the majority for the first time since the first century. [Phillip Jenkins, Penn State University professor](#), wrote in [The Next Christendom](#) that [the greatest movement of the past century was not Communism or capitalism](#), but [Christianity, known as Pentecostalism](#).
- B-C. The Spirit is raising up end-time prophets (Acts 2:17-21; Eph. 4:11-13; Rev. 11:10, 18; 16:6; 18:20, 24). A spirit of prophecy will operate in the Church and rest on every believer (Acts 2:17).
- ⁵ I will send you Elijah the prophet before...the great and dreadful day of the Lord. (Mal. 4:5)*
- ³ I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy 1,260 days...⁶ These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues... (Rev. 11:3-6)*
- C-D. **Unparalleled understanding of end-time prophecy:** Jeremiah prophesied that the saints in the end times would have perfect or complete understanding (Jer. 23:20; 30:24; Dan. 11:33; 12:10). An angel told Daniel that some end-time information would be sealed until then (Dan. 12:4, 9).
- ²⁰ The anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly. (Jer. 23:20)*
- D-E. **Bridal identity:** John connected Jesus' return to the Church understanding her bridal identity. This is occurring worldwide for the first time in history (Hos. 2:16; Mt. 22:37; 25:8; Rev. 22:17).
- ¹⁷ The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" (Rev. 22:17)*
- E-F. **Global youth focus in the kingdom:** Malachi predicted a unique time in which the fathers of the faith would turn their heart to love and serve the younger generation. This includes a turning of the heart of the Church to the fatherless (abortion, adoption, orphans, human trafficking victims). This great change is connected to the power of Elijah being released before Jesus returns.
- ⁵ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. ⁶ And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children... (Mal. 4:5-6)*