

The Morning Star

PROPHETIC BULLETIN

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RECIPE FOR DISASTER

by Rick Joyner

The prayer that the Lord gave His people to pray was for His kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven (see Matthew 6:10). Having been most likely prayed by every Christian in history, we can be sure that this prayer will be answered. The kingdom is going to come, and no utopian philosophy has even proposed just how wonderful this world will actually be when it does. Of course, the great question is, when?

The Lord assured His disciples that no man could know the day or hour in which He would return, but the Scriptures are clear that we can have a part in determining when it will take place, such as II Peter 3:12, which says that we should be **"...looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God..."** In light of this, an even more important question would be: How can we hasten the coming of the Lord?

The Lord also said that He could not return until the gospel of the kingdom was preached throughout the world as a witness. The gospel of the kingdom has probably not been preached since the first century. We have preached the gospel of salvation, the gospel of the church, and the gospel of many truths, all of which are wonderful, but they are not the gospel of the kingdom. The gospel of the kingdom is the good news about His kingdom coming to the earth so that God's will is done on earth just as it is in heaven.

The good news about the coming of the kingdom is much better than the news that the church has been focused on for decades now, which is that the end of the world is near. It is the end of this age, and this age will end with a

time of trouble such as the world has never seen, but that is not the gospel. The gospel is that this age of darkness, rebellion, and war is just about over, and the King is coming to make all things right. We cannot continue to allow the new age movements, and all of the cults and false religions, seize the high ground of hope for the future when the church has been given the greatest hope of all.

The great tribulation, the antichrist, the prophesied wars, earthquakes, famines, and other problems are issues that should be understood, but they are not the main issues we should be focused on. If we are really going to understand the times, we should spend far more time on seeing and being a part of what Christ is doing, than trying to understand what the antichrist is doing.

One main thing that Christ is doing right now is preparing His people to preach the gospel of the kingdom, to refocus us more on the Great Commission than the Great Tribulation. The gospel of the kingdom will soon be preached with power and authority to demonstrate the power and authority of the coming kingdom. The world will have a witness that the authority and power of the kingdom of God will prevail over all earthly kingdoms and will soon come to the earth so that His will is done here just as it is in heaven.

We also know from the prophecies of Scripture that the end of this age will be the greatest time of trouble the world has ever known. We do not want to overlook these, but rather understand them so that we can be prepared for them. However, the best way to be

prepared for them is to see and enter the kingdom, which we can do now. The kingdom of God is a kingdom that cannot be shaken. When the entire world is shaking, those who have built their lives on the kingdom will be as steady as a rock because they are standing on the Rock.

You have to be born again to see the kingdom. You have to use the keys of the kingdom to enter it. The main key to the kingdom is to **"...seek first His kingdom and His righteousness..." (Matthew 6:33).** To seek His kingdom first is to make all major decisions based on the interests of the kingdom. Many Christians have lived fruitless lives of frustration because they made the decision on where they would live based on where the best job opportunity was, where the best geography was or family—or just about anything other than the interests of the kingdom. The Lord will still be with us when we do this, and will bless us and take care of us as much as He can, but we will not be in His will.

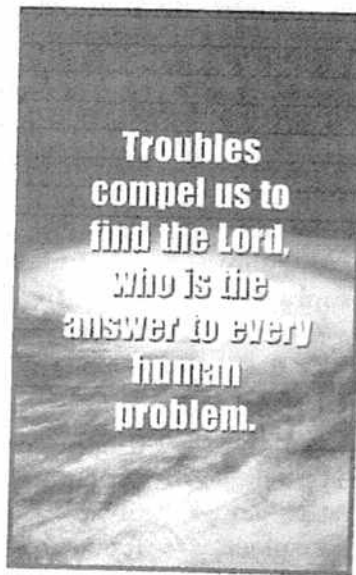
A huge repositioning has been going on for a time and will continue as many Christians wake up to the fact that they are not in God's will geographically. If our identity is mostly in what we do in the secular realm, such as being an engineer, doctor, or school teacher, rather than who we are in Christ, then we have sought our secular position in this world more than we have sought our position in the body of Christ. Do we live where we are because it is where the best job is, or because it is where the Lord has placed us in His body, the church?

Presently, most Christians have a church life that is somewhere between frustrating and non-existent. These mostly tend to blame the church for being in such bad shape, but the main reason for this is that they are not in the right place and will never fit well into the church in their region. We are told in I Corinthians 11:29-30, **"For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep."** This is still true; most of the weakness, sickness, and premature death among Christians is the result of not discerning the body rightly, and therefore not fitting into it.

We cannot be properly joined to the Head without also being properly joined to His body. His life blood flows through His body, which is why we are told in I John 1:7, **"but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."** The true fellowship of the Spirit that can only be found in an authentic church relationship is required for walking in the light and for His life blood to flow through us.

The word that is translated **"fellowship"** throughout the New Testament, including the texts quoted above, is the Greek word *koinonia* which means much more than a slap on the back and handshake on Sunday mornings. It is a deep and vital interconnection and relationship like organs are connected to a body. If you disconnect the organ, it will die fast. If it is a vital organ, the whole body will die as well.

The most important thing that we can do to be prepared for the times is to get close to the Lord and to find our right place in His body. This is the first step in seeking His kingdom first. We can know all of the prophetic scenarios accurately, but we will still be in grave danger if we have not been obedient to this command.



Troubles Are Doorways

In Acts 14:22, we are told that **"Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."** This is basically because troubles compel us to find the Lord, who is the answer to every human problem. In the same way, the Great Tribulation will be the doorway through which the whole world enters the kingdom.

The Great Tribulation is basically the result of mankind trying to run this world without God. We are fast entering the time when human wisdom, power, and resources will not be able to cope with the magnitude of problems arising in the world. However, there is wisdom, power, and resources to deal with any human problem. Jesus Christ, His atonement, and the provision for His reconciliation to the world so that His kingdom can come is the answer to every human

problem. We are going to begin to see this demonstrated repeatedly in every place.

As the troubles in the world increase, the light and power that is revealed through the church will grow. The church will start to be esteemed as the source of the greatest wisdom, power, and resources for the great and increasing needs of the world. That is how Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom, by demonstrating its power and authority over any condition on the earth. There are no cripples or blind people in heaven; so He demonstrated what would happen when the power of the kingdom of heaven touched a cripple or blind person on the earth. There is no lack for anything in heaven; so He demonstrated what would happen when heaven touched the need for wine at a wedding, or to feed thousands of hungry people, even multiplying the lunch of a little boy with a single touch and blessing from above.

The resources of heaven cannot be exhausted. If they were used to pay off all of the debt of every nation and every individual on earth, heaven would not even know anything was missing. This is the primary job of the church in the last days of this age—to witness and demonstrate the power of the kingdom over any condition on the earth. To do this, we must be living in the kingdom ourselves. The gospel of the kingdom will therefore need to be preached to the church first, and the church must choose to build on the kingdom of heaven and not the kingdoms of this world. This will be a practical, step-by-step process, but it will not take long. The shaking that is coming upon the world to shake everything that can be shaken is beginning to happen, and Christians are starting to flee to the kingdom instead of just wistfully dreaming about it.

Jacob's Ladder

When Jesus told Nathanael that He saw him under the fig tree, Nathanael was so astonished that he immediately declared Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God. The Lord replied to him, **“Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You**

shall see greater things than these.’ And He said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, you shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” (John 1:50-51). When we begin to see who Jesus really is, we will see the heavens opened and the messengers of God will ascend into heaven upon Him, returning to the earth with evidence of heaven's reality. This is our most basic calling. The door to heaven is opened by this one thing—seeing who Jesus really is, where He sits above all authority, power, and dominion. The true understanding of the kingdom is first and foremost a true understanding of who Jesus is.



I Corinthians 1:24 declares **“Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”** As we begin to see Him as He is and He begins to take His rightful place as the Head of the church, the church is going to be filled with Him, His power, and His wisdom. The gift of the Spirit that is about to take preeminence for a time is the gift of “a word of wisdom,” which is supernatural wisdom from above. This will come forth through the church with such profound power that it cannot be disputed or confounded. We are about to see the government of God, the kingdom of God, revealed as the only source of

light and power that can confront and overcome the great darkness of the time. Again, Jesus Christ is the answer to every human problem. The church is going to learn this, and then the world is going to see it through the church.

Disasters have been with the world since the Fall and will continue until the King returns. There are many which can be avoided by prayer and/or repentance. There are others that will not be avoided. These we must use for good. Everything that is meant for evil can be turned into a victory for the kingdom.

The church that is about to arise will have the resolve to see the Lord glorified in every situation; even the worst human disasters will be turned into good. We must not settle for anything less than the victory of the kingdom over evil, regardless of how bad the disaster or

problem is. In fact, the worse the disaster or the greater the problem, the greater the opportunity to do good and rebuild what was lost on a foundation that cannot be shaken.

The Cleansing of Katrina

The very word Katrina means to cleanse or make clean. That will be the ultimate result of this storm. The Gulf Coast that was hit by this mega storm is still in a state of almost unimaginable devastation and depression. Even though the refuse of the storm has been mostly cleaned up, the emptiness is palpable. That will change. It will be turned into good, and the same region will be the source of one of the great revivals in history. It will be a spiritual jubilee, setting many captives free.

However, we must learn the lessons of Katrina. As Francis Frangipane likes to say, "You never fail one of God's tests—you just keep taking them until you pass." We don't want to take any more tests like this than we have to, so let's resolve to pass this test by gaining all of the understanding we can from it, making the necessary changes needed so that no more such disasters are necessary.

Can we get to a place where no more disasters are necessary? Absolutely. There will be places of refuge through all that is coming, safe zones where Psalm 91 has been applied. These can be cities or nations. The Lord would much rather show mercy than judgment, but if He has to, for our sakes, He will send judgment. We actually choose if we need it or how severe it will be through our response to His warnings.

As devastating as Katrina was, it was just a warning. It could have been much, much worse. We now know that Katrina came ashore as a Level 3 storm. How devastating would it have been if it had hit at its peak power as a Level 5? How much more deadly would it have been if the levies had broken during the storm when people would not have been able to escape from the floodwaters and get on their roofs? Make no mistake about it; God did remember mercy with Katrina. Did we get the message, or will it take more?

Hurricane Katrina brought out the best and the worst in our nation. In many ways, it was a revelation of the true state of the nation. It is crucial that the church, which is called to be the light and salt of the earth, understand this revelation in order to be prepared for the times and proactive in the midst of them. The church was without question one of the brightest lights in response to the Katrina disaster—a fact that was even admitted by the liberal press. In the time to come, she will shine brighter and brighter.

The evaluations of the situation and problems, which were cast about during the disaster were revealing, but in the stress and emotion of the catastrophe, they were not very accurate. However, now that we have had more than a year to consider this disaster, the revelations of our strengths and weaknesses are much more dependable, and the lessons can be much more helpful. We must learn these lessons because the church will have an increasing role to play in future disasters, and now is the time to prepare for them.

As great as the response of the church was in the Katrina disaster, it can be many times more effective if we plan and prepare now for what the Scriptures make clear will

be coming. There will be more storms, earthquakes, floods, famines, and as lawlessness increases, devastating terrorist and criminal attacks. If we believe that we will be raptured out before the Great Tribulation, we need to understand that all of these things were prophesied to come as "the beginning of birth pangs" (see Matthew 24:8). Even if the church is taken out before the Great Tribulation, being prepared for times of trouble is still wise. Our main preparation for them is to simply obey and abide in the Lord, and use these times to preach His gospel.

If fear rises in you at just the mention of these things, know that your fear can be easily expelled. I have watched many who were gripped by fear of such things become bold and proactive in the midst of them with just a little training and preparation. Those who are adequately prepared for the times will not fear them.



The Coming Great Theological Shift

Some Christians see nothing but bad times coming. Others cannot see anything bad coming because they have faith that it won't. These are both extremes that are inaccurate, and thankfully most Christians have a much more balanced, biblical view of the future. One of the most clear prophecies is Isaiah 60:1-5:

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

"For behold, darkness will cover the earth, and deep darkness the peoples, but the LORD will rise upon you, and His glory will appear upon you.

"And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

"Lift up your eyes round about, and see; they all gather together, they come to you. Your sons will come from afar, and your daughters will be carried in the arms.

"Then you will see and be radiant, and your heart will thrill and rejoice; because the abundance of the sea will be turned to you, the wealth of the nations will come to you."

At the very time darkness is covering the earth and deep darkness the people, the Lord's glory will arise on His people. The result of this will be the nations turning to God's people, even bringing their wealth. This promise is for natural Zion, Israel, and spiritual Zion, the church. So, as some things start to get darker, we should begin looking for more glory. These are the times that the prophets of old desired to see, and we have been chosen to live in them!

Most Christians who wander off into some theological extremes from time to time, realize they are off course, and get back on the path of life and keep moving. There is a ditch on either side of the path of life, and sometimes coming out of one, we overreact and fall into the ditch on the other side. However, most, if they just keep moving, stop drifting to extremes and learn to stay

on the path. As remarkable as this may seem, Christians in all extremes are moving toward one another, and a great unity is going to start taking form in the church.

As we draw closer to the end of this age, there will be increasing troubles in the world. Even so, **"...we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).** For those who have built their lives on the kingdom which cannot be shaken, it really does not matter what happens in the world; they will not be moved, except with compassion to help those who are in need. Those who are prepared will have faith, not fear. They will not suffer loss, but rather reap a harvest.

Disaster response is going to be one of the most important and effective ministries in the time to come, and will be a primary vehicle for turning the people who are in darkness to the light of the Lord. There will be more storms, earthquakes, floods, fires, terrorist attacks, and criminal acts that cause great devastation. However, the worst tribulation our neighbors may ever know could come at the next stoplight. To be trained and prepared for disaster response is to be quick and proactive at responding to disasters, big or small. Not

only is a great harvest going to come from this, but the esteem of the church in the eyes of the world is going to rise dramatically because of it.

Almost nothing makes friends faster and deeper than helping someone in their time of need. The Holy Spirit is the Helper, and if we really are Spirit-filled, Spirit led people, we will be there for our neighbors to help in their time of need. This is the true ministry of "helps," to be able and willing to respond to those who cry "Help!" Even some of the most radical Muslims in the world started to esteem Christians in a whole new way after the tsunami disaster in Indonesia because of the way they were helped by Christian relief agencies. When someone helps you or your family through a crisis, there is an appreciation and often a bonding that goes deeper than could ever happen otherwise.

This ministry of helps that arises within the church is also going to help the church more than



any other ministry project in history. It will mobilize and energize the lives of Christians like few things have ever done before. There is a fulfillment and satisfaction that comes from helping others in a desperate time of need that can change the life of the one who helps as well. This will begin to deliver many believers from the spiritual apathy and lukewarmness that has gripped them. Souls will be saved, and teachers and pastors will be raised up to take care of them and establish them on a solid foundation. Churches will swell in numbers so fast that it is going to be extremely hard to keep up with the growth.

Where Are We?

When you go into a shopping mall, at most entrances they have a map of the mall which shows the location of the different stores. However, this map would be useless in finding the location of the store if it did not have the little dot that says, "You are here." Once you know where you are, it is easy to determine the best way to get to where you want to go. However, knowing where you are is not very helpful if you do not know where you are going. We need to know both where we are and where we are going.

We must keep in mind that the Great Commission is to make disciples of nations, not just individuals. God is going to be dealing more and more with nations as His kingdom approaches. The Katrina disaster showed us much about where we are as a nation. We need to evaluate this and understand it as fully as we can to use it to get to where we are supposed to be.

The prophecies of Scripture are clear about where we are going in general, and prophetic gifts are given for more specific guidance. We need to grow in our understanding of the prophecies of Scripture and promote the growth of the proven prophetic gifts the church has been given. These prophetic gifts are some of the divinely powerful weapons we have been given. They are "weapons of mass construction" which are given to help build the kingdom.

Many prophetic people had foreseen the coming of Hurricane Katrina. However, I do not know a single church or ministry that was prepared for it when it hit. This we must acknowledge and learn from. The devil had his people prepared. Just days after the storm, they were at city hall with a plan for rebuilding the city which they had been working on for years. In Biloxi, it

was a plan for basically letting the casinos and their associated businesses take over. I was told that the mayor asked one of our relief workers why the church did not have something like this. We should have.

The good will and appreciation for the church and Christians after Katrina was so great we could have won the battle for the future of that town if we had been prepared with a plan for it, but we weren't. The casino owners were prepared and took advantage of the vacuum. They won that round, but we do not have to lose the next one. We must take the foreknowledge we are given and use it to plan strategically for the future.

A Beautiful Mind

There has been a knee-jerk reaction to planning among many Pentecostals and Charismatics, considering that anything planned by man could not be from the Holy Spirit. Nothing could be further from the truth or sound biblical teaching. We are called to be conformed to the image of Christ, and it is His plan by which we are all saved, and by which the earth and all it contains will be restored. Planning is a very basic nature of God and sound planning should be our basic nature as well. Of course, we do not want carnal planning from carnally-minded men, but spiritual planning from those who have had their minds renewed and transformed so that they have the mind of Christ. This renewed and powerful mind is also a gift from God.

The whole world is going to soon start taking note of the astonishing and profound wisdom that comes through the church. The plans and wisdom with which the church moves, builds, and does what we are called to do, will start getting the attention of the world. As Christians begin to become properly aligned with Christ and His body, their minds will not be as clouded with the lusts or the fears of this world, and clarity will come to them that is greater than they have ever known.

A New Wave of the Prophetic

We are told in Acts 2:17-21 that in "the last days" the Holy Spirit will be poured out. The result of this is that prophecy, dreams, and visions are released to male and female, old and young, which means everyone. This increasing prophetic revelation at the end of the age is

coming because we are going to need it for the times.

The Lord chastised the people for being able to discern the signs of the weather better than they could discern the signs of the times. The Lord always used metaphors that were related. Discerning the weather is a lot like discerning the times. In the last few decades, weather forecasting has gone from being a joke and ridiculed to being amazingly accurate and getting more so all of the time. However, many people continue to think of weather forecasting the way it was rather than the way it now is. The same has been true with the emerging prophetic ministry.

As a pilot, my life could depend on accurate weather forecasting. The same is true for those who make their living on the sea. In the time to come, we will find our lives increasingly dependent on accurate, reliable, prophetic ministry. We must continue to devote ourselves to seeing this ministry mature and take its rightful place among the ministries of the church. Without prophetic ministry, the church will continue to stumble into the future blind and vulnerable.

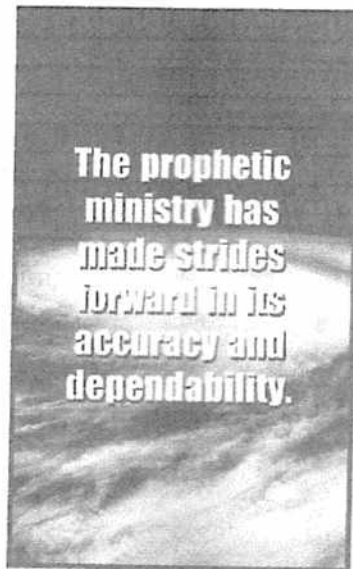
In the last few decades, like weather forecasting, the prophetic ministry has made strides forward in its accuracy and dependability. However, many seem to think of it as still being in the immature state that it was two or three decades ago, but this is to be expected.

The ridicule and outright persecution of the prophetic ministry by other Christians has actually helped the prophetic a lot by driving away the many pseudo prophets who were drawn to it when it was popular, but were the ones creating much of the confusion. As the prophetic becomes not only popular again, but is also seen as increasingly essential, we need to recognize and watch out for the pretenders who will try to associate with the prophetic this time. They will do much damage. As we see throughout the Scriptures, it is the job of the prophetic ministry to deal with the false prophets. Popularity can be one of the hardest of all trials for the prophetic.

During the time when many were rejecting prophetic ministry, some of the world's most

powerful leaders in government, business, sports, and even the military, began to think more highly of the prophetic ministry given to the church than the church did. The prophetic has been used to help them, sometimes in spectacular ways. However, we must never forget that this ministry is first for the church.

In many ways, rejection is essential for the healthy development of authentic prophetic ministry, which must not be overly concerned by what people think in order to do what they are called to do. Even so, the mature prophetic ministries will be like Christ, not rejecting in return, but laying down their lives even for the ones who rejected them.



The prophets in Scripture were often called “watchmen” because they were spiritually positioned like watchmen on the walls, able to see what was coming from afar. There are dependable watchmen with extraordinary gifts being raised up today. Before the end of this age comes, every local church will have its own recognized and credible watchmen on the walls. Others will be watchmen for whole cities, nations, and such things as corporations and industries, which is already happening to some degree.

In biblical times, the watchmen of a city were positioned on the walls, and they conveyed what they saw to the elders who sat in the gates. The elders then determined what action needed to be taken based on this information. They could sound the alarm when an enemy or thieves were coming. They could likewise command the gates to be opened for merchants with important resources for the city. This partnership between the watchmen and elders is now being established in many churches, and in other realms such as governments, industries, etc. Not having this relationship will prove increasingly costly in the time to come.

The Lord is not giving the prophetic revelation that is described in Acts 2 just for our entertainment or to make our meetings more exciting. We are going to need it to survive the times, but we are called to do much more than that—we are called to seize the times, preaching the gospel of the coming kingdom of God, and in places taking spiritual dominion over our cities and regions in preparation for this.

Where We Are Going

The whole nation, and even much of the world, was traumatized by mismanagement during the Katrina disaster. The wealthiest, most powerful nation on earth was brought to its knees by a single storm. This will increasingly be the case in almost every realm from politics to natural disasters to medicine—the problems we are facing are beyond human remedy. As stated, the “great time of trouble” prophesied to come at the end is basically the result of mankind trying to run the world without God, and reaping the foolishness that has been sown because of this. Even so, in truth the response to Hurricane Katrina was not as bad as the media made it seem, but it was bad.

As is usually the case, the ones who did the most accusing and blame-shifting during this disaster were probably the most guilty of mismanagement. We must start to more quickly discern that the people who do the most criticizing in such things are usually trying to hide their own failures. This was the case with the Hurricane Katrina disaster. Many did needlessly die, not because the resources were not available, but because they were not managed properly. That needs to be fixed. However, to do this we need to understand the mismanagement, not for the sake of accusing anyone, but in order to fix the problem.

I once heard how an executive cost his company hundreds of thousands of dollars by a foolish decision. When the owner was asked if he was going to fire this man his reply was, “Of course not! I just spent hundreds of thousands of dollars educating him. Why would I fire him and give him to my competitors?” The point is that some who make the greatest mistakes, as we see in Scripture, can, if they learn from them, be used to do great things. Likewise, those who have humbled themselves by admitting their mistakes in this disaster should not be thrown away. Most of the key people involved in the federal government, including the President, did this—they humbled themselves and admitted their mistakes.

The mismanagement of resources during this storm was not just on the part of FEMA, but the local governments were just as bad, and possibly worse. We heard over and over how the poor in New Orleans could not afford the transportation

to evacuate before the storm, but then we saw the hundreds of school buses which sat idle that could have easily done the job. To do this, required planning and proactive leadership, both of which seemed to be absent even though the city and state had many years to prepare for this disaster.

There is a list too long to examine in detail of the other major mismanagement problems that exacerbated the already tragic situation after Hurricane Katrina. However, we should keep in mind that most of our elected officials are not elected for their crisis management abilities, and most have little or no experience in it. The qualities that make good leaders in times of peace can make bad leaders in times of crisis. Leadership and management in crisis situations is a very unique and rare gift. However, for the time to come this needs to be one of the basic qualities we look for in our leaders.

Government officials on all levels are increasingly burdened by a continuous onslaught of minor crises to the extent that they often have little time to consider or prepare for major ones. To remedy this, many government leaders and managers are being required to go through some crisis management training to know their available resources, and how to mobilize and use them when needed. This is a positive step, and it should also be done with every church leader as well.

Resources Are Available

Just a little bit of planning and preparation now can save many in the time to come. There is some basic training that every pastor and church leader should take. The chaplain’s training provided by the International Fellowship of Chaplains (IFOC) is excellent, and is now being made widely available to the church. So is the Crisis Intervention and Stress Management (CISM) training offered by FEMA. Our leadership team went through these and immediately we could see how everyone in any ministry could benefit greatly from them even if they never worked in a major disaster.

The credentials provided by completing these courses can also open major doors for ministry and will most likely greatly raise your church’s esteem in the eyes of the local officials. That esteem can give you access to other powerful ministry opportunities and help make your church a true light to your community. It is no

accident that church buildings are called "sanctuaries." The church is going to become the sanctuary from the storms that are coming. We need to be prepared for this.

Just one example of how this training can be helpful was demonstrated by one of our local church elder's wives who went through the chaplain's training. Immediately after she finished the course, the husband of the family next door to her committed suicide. By her own admission, if she had not had this training she would not have known what to do to help. However, because she was armed with the training, she became proactive and engaged, leading that devastated family to the Help they needed. What could have terribly damaged their lives left no bad effects, but rather a victory instead.

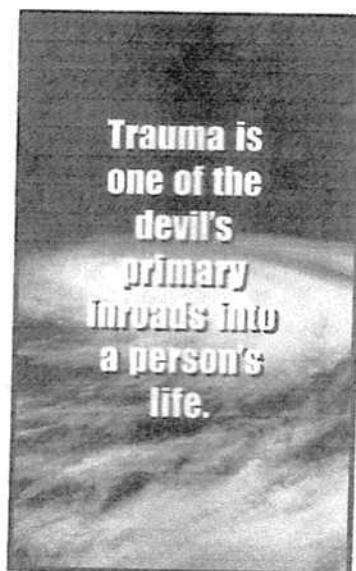
Few understand that 40 percent of all people who are given a death notice of a loved one react violently, even to the point of going to get a gun to shoot the messenger. This is serious business, and people who have been trained and experienced in this for years can impart that wisdom to us in hours. The church needs to take this burden of giving death notices off of its local police forces and turn this most difficult task into ministry to those who mourn. Isn't the Holy Spirit the Comforter? No one will ever be able to do this better than one who is anointed by the Spirit, and most police forces will gladly give this difficult task to those who will take it.

Trauma is one of the devil's primary inroads into a person's life. We need to shut that gate of hell, and learn to use every traumatic situation as an opportunity for the Lord, the Comforter, the Helper, to prevail in that situation. A large church could be built using the obituary page in the paper to reach out to people in crisis. A sincere sympathy card with a personal note can be such a touch from the Comforter. This is not trying to take advantage of people in a weak state; it is doing our job to serve them in their time of need.

An increasing number who have been through chaplain's training have not only become a huge and trusted resource by their local police

force, but some have had major inroads into companies by helping their people through crisis. Others have found a place ministering to sports teams, schools, and other institutions. Once the Helper starts using you, not only will you find a fulfillment and satisfaction which is greater than almost any other accomplishment, but this may be the biggest open door of all to "full time ministry" for those who feel called to this but have never found a way to do it.

Because many local churches do not have the resources to bring this kind of training to their own church, we will be offering these regularly at H.I.M. We can offer them at a fraction of their usual cost because of the numbers we bring in. Also, to do this training together in a setting like Heritage, with people from many other churches, states, and even nations, also enables us to meet and develop relationships with other church leaders who are becoming engaged in this important mission. Check our website regularly for more information on future training.



Television Unreality

As I alluded to above, the media may have exaggerated some in its coverage of the Katrina disaster mismanagement, but if they did it was at least in part due to them trying very hard to help the nation understand and mobilize for this disaster. Overall, the media did a great job with their coverage of Katrina, and most sincerely were trying to convey a true picture of the disaster. Even so, the media now has a knee-jerk tendency to pick out and highlight the negative and controversial issues, which causes it to sometimes completely miss the positive things that are happening.

When I first visited the disaster area my initial response was shock at the overwhelming destruction which TV just could not possibly convey. In the midst of such tragedy, it was hard to believe that I was standing on American soil. My next response was to be overwhelmingly thankful to be an American. It was truly wonderful to see the multitudes of individuals, Christians, Muslims, Jews, and heathens who responded.

Companies loaded up their corporate aircraft and began flying in supplies they had either manufactured or purchased to send to the victims. They were not sending junk either. I heard many victims say that they had never had such great clothes, food, or felt such caring from the church, companies, or their government.

Despite those who were so vocal in their complaints of the government's response, overall our government did a remarkable job facing the obstacles that they did. They may not have made the news, but there were many stories of those who took great comfort in the way their government mobilized. Even if it was inept in some areas that governments will typically be, there was no question that our government cared, was at least trying to help, and did help greatly in many ways. I was sorry that more of these stories of true heroism on the part of many government officials and corporations which mobilized to help were not told.

The Best of Times and Worst of Times

For a time, everyone seemed to be shocked and overwhelmed by the magnitude of the Katrina disaster. The best came to the surface as common people, often with no training or expertise in an area, and became proactive in coming up with solutions to overwhelming problems. They may have been imperfect solutions, but most of them were good enough to work—doing anything helped in many cases. Once improvising started it was carried to an art form. The creativity that came out of people in this situation was truly remarkable.

The worst of people also surfaced—the ones who prey on the misfortune of others, or who start blame-shifting and accusing others for their own failures. Almost before the winds stopped, I started getting reports from the first people we sent down that they thought the mayor of New Orleans was going to incite a riot with what he was putting out on the radio. I never heard what he was saying that they thought would cause this, but the problems were exaggerated in a most

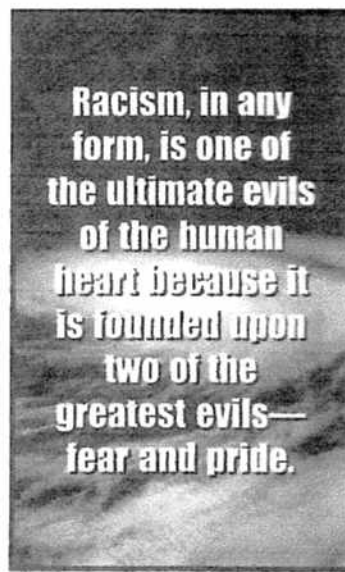
tragic way. Soon shots were even being fired at the rescue workers, substantially delaying further relief of the people in desperate need.

Then other local leaders stepped up their blame of FEMA and the federal government for not doing more. It later became obvious that the breakdown on the part of the government was on every level, not just the federal. Then came the accusation that this was all done out of racism. This was the worst thing that could have been said and at the worst time, with no evidence whatsoever for bringing such a charge. This caused a huge backlash, and actually sowed the seeds of racism more than possibly anything could have. This polarization does have the potential to do much more damage to the country than Katrina.

Racism, in any form, is one of the ultimate evils of the human heart because it is founded upon two of the greatest evils—fear and pride. We become racist when we are so insecure that we fear those who are not just like us, or when we have the most terrible and profound form of pride—pride in the flesh.

I confess that when I heard the racist charges being made by some black leaders I had to fight a rise in racism in my own heart toward them. Some of these leaders I had come to have a growing respect for, even to the point that when I saw them on the news or a talk show, I would go out of my way to listen to them and consider their points of view. When they came with these charges of racism at such a terrible time, I thought they so irresponsibly overplayed the race card that this would certainly cost them all credibility, and it certainly did cost them a lot.

I do not believe in writing anyone off, especially because of just one mistake, but this was so out of place and so damaging that they will have to do something very remarkable for me to respect them or trust them again. I know I am far from being alone in this disappointment. This irresponsibility caused the rise of racism, and probably set back black leadership in this country many years. As soon as the racism



charges were made, others reacted and started saying things like "There weren't any white people shooting at the rescuers." It seemed for a time as if this could cause a meltdown.

Some courageous reporters rose up to call these racism charges baseless and hurtful. This helped a lot. If racism is ever going to be healed, it is going to be on the basis of truth. If we are going to be true, we are going to have to start calling bigotry "bigotry" regardless of who it comes through. The charges of racism on the part of those black leaders was the most racist act in the disaster and made matters much worse, not better.

Even so, we must understand that there is a new order of black leadership rising in America. The old order, which has worn out the racist card to manipulate people, is an archaic and dying breed. There is a new breed of black leadership which is above using such base tactics, and we must be careful not to judge them because of what others are doing. This new breed will rise above being thought of as black leaders, but will just be leaders. All of America, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and all other ethnic groups, will be the beneficiaries of the new breed of leadership that is rising from the black community.

America does have a tragic history of racism. Most of it has been white against black crime, and of the most diabolical type. However, now it at least seems that most racist crime is black against white. We can understand how the oppressed black community is still wounded and bitter, but Satan will not cast out Satan, and when we return evil for evil we only multiply evil. There is the potential for a devastating race war in every nation, including America. However, a black leadership is taking its rightful place in almost every field now, including government and represents some of the best leadership in America. When someone has the right to be angry or bitter, but rises above it, he or she has a dignity and class that will cause trust in those of all races. We must not judge all black leadership

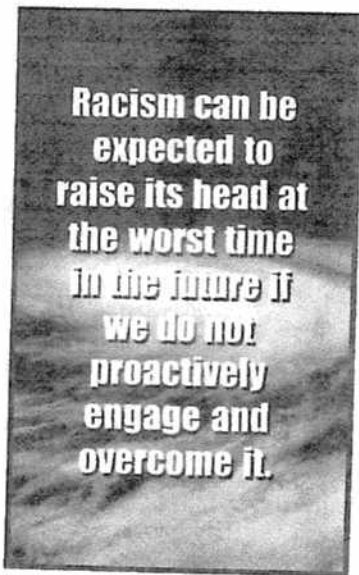
by the few who seemed to let the worst come out of them during this crisis.

Even so, what surfaced in New Orleans was a revelation of where we are, and we are a long way from overcoming racism in America. Racism can be expected to raise its head at the worst time in the future if we do not proactively engage and overcome it. America, which is made up of those from every nation, culture, and race, may have the best opportunity to do this of any nation. We must if we are going to survive the times.

A Root of Lawlessness

The prophecies of Scripture make clear that lawlessness will be one of the worst problems at the end of the age. Socialism is one of the biggest roots of lawlessness. Socialism has multitudes of people considering the government as the source for all of their needs, and as governments are increasingly unable to provide them, the rebellion of these people will be quick and vicious.

MorningStar joined Urban Life Ministries to run a POD (point of distribution) in Biloxi, Mississippi after Katrina. We provided three hot meals a day for several thousand and helped distribute clothes, tents, and almost everything else needed by the victims. By Christmas, it was estimated that our base had distributed about 25 million dollars worth of food and other materials to the victims. Our people also worked clearing the downed trees, rubble, removing mold from houses, and just about everything that required physical labor. This was all done by volunteers who were there on their own time, not making anything for what was probably the hardest, most dangerous work they had ever done. The victims that we helped were generally very grateful, but some were demanding to the point of being obnoxious, and a few became enraged if something was not done the way they wanted or in the time that they expected it. In most of these cases, and possibly all of them, it was the ones who were on welfare who were the most demanding and obnoxious.



When God created man, He put him in the Garden to cultivate it. Man was created first to have a relationship with God, but we were also created to work. Studies have shown that those who are deprived of meaningful labor will go insane. There is a basic need in every human being to accomplish something. We need meaningful labor almost as much as we need food, water, and oxygen. To deprive anyone of this is not only a tragic mistake, but cruel. Our welfare system has done good in some cases, but overall it has been a tragic and cruel yoke of bondage on the very ones who deserve the most to be free.

Entitlements have a huge number of people thinking that the government owes them, without doing one thing to earn it. Most of these have no skills to help themselves, and do not even know where to start. Much of their rage is based in fear. Even our government, the wealthiest and most powerful in the world, cannot take too many Katrina level disasters without being reduced to just trying to keep order, and not having anything to give the people. There will be riots and lawlessness when this happens on a scale that few comprehend in every nation that has been built on the socialist mentality. If we do not work fast to reverse this, we will pay a most terrible price in the future.

The Recipe

What the church releases in heaven gets released on the earth, as we are told in Matthew 16:17-20. The church is called to be the light of the world, and it will be. It will have the answers to the world's ultimate problems. However, before we can pull anyone else out of the quicksand, we must be standing on solid ground. The only solid ground is the kingdom of God, and we must build our lives on the kingdom.

MorningStar became engaged in the Katrina relief efforts because of a prophetic understanding that disaster relief is going to be an essential and powerful ministry of the church in the time to come. It will help the church reap a great harvest, but that is not the only reason why we must do this—we must love our neighbors. The

Helper we have been given loves and wants to help all people, even if they reject Him. It is simply the right thing to do, and is a basic part of our commission in this world.

If we have built our lives on solid ground, the kingdom, then we must demonstrate the power of God's love for the world. He has redeemed the world, and we are here to start the process of reconciling the world to Him. This will lead to its restoration. In the beginning, the Spirit of God moved upon the chaos and brought forth this beautiful creation. He knows how to deal with chaos and seems to even love using it to demonstrate what He can do. When we see disaster

or chaos in any form and we are walking in faith, we will have an expectation of seeing the Holy Spirit do great things. True warriors run to the sound of battle, not away from it. Those who are truly filled with the Spirit will respond to those crying "help" because the Spirit is the Helper.

If we will move forward in faith, becoming proactive in our communities, we will see great miracles and pluck many out of the fire. Our students and volunteers who spent just a week at our Katrina relief base received more out of that week than they had in many years just sitting in church. The impact was far greater in building our

church, dispelling lukewarmness, and delivering Christians from their apathy than just about anything we have ever done.

Even so, as great as the church was in responding to Katrina, we can do much better. I do not want to just point at the government's or other large charities' mismanagement, but rather learn from it so that we can do better. We also need to understand how many churches have drifted into a form of socialism that is crippling our people and leading them to bondage, not the liberty of the Spirit.

A great mobilization is coming among Christians. A great unity will also come. The church is about to become a true representative of the most powerful government there is—the kingdom of God, which is coming. It is time to prepare the way for the Lord. ■

