

POSITIONED FOR THE HARVEST

An Encouraging Word from Former PCCNA
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During this season on the Christian calendar, our Pentecostal-charismatic family becomes energized with fresh hope and anticipation for contemporary outpourings of the Holy Spirit. We often run past Ascension Day in our rush to reach the upper room and celebrate Pentecost. We long to see a fulfillment of the promised visions, dreams, signs, and miracles. We are praying and believing for God to restore the full operation of the spiritual gifts in our communities of faith. I say, "Yes and amen! May it be so in our generation."

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Pentecost is also about celebrating the festival of harvest. We see an accelerated harvest after the outpouring of the Spirit when 3,000 were added to the church (Acts 2:41) and following the miraculous healing of the lame man as the number of men believers grew to 5,000 (Acts 4:4). Yet in Jesus' Upper Room Discourse, people receiving the gift of eternal life and a knowledge of "the only true God and Jesus Christ" was intricately interwoven with oneness with the triune God and one another (John 17: 3, 20-23). Consequently, *"Demonstrating unity in the power of the Holy Spirit"* must be more than a byline or Christian mantra for the PCCNA.

Paul's prayers for God's family in Ephesians were that they would experience the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to know Christ better, the eyes of their hearts (center and seat of their spiritual life) would be enlightened, and their hope-filled calling would be enriched by His incomparably great resurrection and ascension power demonstrated in their lives (Ephesians 1:17-19). He also desired for the Spirit to strengthen their inner beings, so they would be rooted and established in love, having "power together with all the saints, to grasp" the voluminous dimensions of Christ's love that "surpasses knowledge" (Ephesians 3:14-19).

We are in a season of accelerated harvest as both a great shaking (Hebrews 12:26–27) and a great awakening (Romans 13:11) are occurring simultaneously around the globe. Surrounded by so much violence, chaos, and confusion, we may easily miss Paul's allusion to the Great Commandment and Great Commission in his Roman epistle as he speaks of this hour of awakening and salvation synergizing with loving our neighbor and clothing ourselves in the Lord Jesus Christ (vv. 10, 14).

The body of Christ has been deep breathing to recover from a severe case of spiritual COVID, caused by our years of being infected with moral compromise, strife, and competition, resulting in weakness, lethargy, and impotence.

Thankfully, we are beginning to inhale a purifying wind of the Spirit as He prepares us to exhale in powerful evangelism as never before. This will not be a season about individual churches or organizational movements. The fields are white for harvest because the leprous, sinful condition in people's lives has reached a "live or die" phase. The Father is moving us from self-focus and introversion to a lifting of our eyes to see the massive harvest awaiting us. We must be unified in our efforts to reach them NOW before it is too late for millions.

Similarly, when the crops have ripened, they must be harvested, or the next phase is the browning and drying of the kernels of grain that become useless except for silage. If this generation dies spiritually without the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, I question if we will have time for a resowing of the fields to reap future harvests.

The time is near for the Husbandman's Son to return and not merely assess what we have done with His investments, so we may be given more responsibility. He's coming to withdraw His inheritance from the earth. We are in the Greatest Commission season in the history of the world. We must gather the crop for eternal life, so both he who sows, and he who reaps may rejoice together (John 4:36).

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I believe we are living in a crucial time when God wants us to position ourselves for the wind of the Spirit to blow into our lives, cleansing and empowering us to speak forth the truth in love as never before. God is looking for those whose minds are not set on what the flesh desires, but those whose minds are set on what the Spirit wants to blow into, through, and out of our lives to the broken, hurting world around us.

During the birthing process, the period of transition is when contractions intensify. Labor and delivery coaches teach expectant parents a special breathing pattern to successfully navigate through this phase because it cannot be avoided or postponed. New life is coming into the world. "All creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth to the present time," longing for deliverance from its bondage to sin (Romans 8:21–22), desperate for a bursting forth into abundant and eternal life!

We cannot afford to have ultrasound Christianity that believes we already know what is coming and how this harvest is going to look. What God wants to birth in us is new and unexpected. The Psalmist said, "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defense; I shall not be moved" (Psalm 62:5–6).

The essential key for PCCNA and the broader kingdom of God will be living Great Commission lifestyles, inspired by Great Commandment love, so Father, Son, and Holy Spirit cannot only come upon us and overshadow us but literally make their abode and breathe life-giving hope and truth through us.