

WHAT HAS GOD PROMISED?

God has made many powerful promises to and through prophetic people.

A church of unity

1. The high priestly prayer of Jesus recorded in John seventeen places before us a request of God's Son to the Father for the church to come to unity. Listen to Jesus pray.

John 17:21-23 *That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: 23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (See also Isaiah 49)*

2. Before Christ returns, it is the plan and will of God to bring the church of Jesus Christ into unity. God will answer the prayer of his Son. God's purpose to bring unity to the church is also seen in Ephesians chapter four. Notice that these gifted people are given to the church to minister "until" the church comes to unity. **(Ephesians 4:11-13)**

A church of intimacy

1. In this verse it also says that the church will come to "the knowledge of the Son of God." Intimacy with the Lord Jesus is going to increase. Right now there is a revival of intimacy happening within the church. The Spirit of God seems to be brooding over the church, stirring our spirits to long for the Son of God. This is God's activity; he is watching over his word to perform it.
2. The Old Testament prophetic promises reveal to us that this is one of the characteristics that will mark God's people in the last.

Malachi 3:1 *"See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. (See also Isaiah 26:8-9)*

A church of maturity

1. Another characteristic of the end time church will be maturity. **Ephesians 4:13** says that we will also *"become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."* **(See also Rom. 8:29; Isaiah 29:23-24)**
2. Unity, intimacy, and maturity are marks of the Last Days church. God has made great and mighty promises in which we should hope and rejoice.

A church of purity

1. The Lord Jesus will have a pure and holy bride.

Ephesians 5:25-27 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*

2. The church has a part to play in pursuing this purity and preparing her wedding garments. **(Rev. 19:7-8)** Notice that the bride *"made herself ready"* and that the preparation is to put on *"righteous acts."* The Old Testament prophecies again confirm this coming purity.

Malachi 3:1-3 *"See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. 2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. 3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness.*

3. God's purifying activity will increase as we draw nearer the dawn of his kingdom. God declares that he will show himself holy *among the nations* through his people. **(Ezekiel 20:34-38, 41; 39:25-29)** Notice that all of this holiness and righteousness is displayed in God's people among the nations. God will have a holy, righteous people within human history. **(Isaiah 61:10-11)**

A church of prayer

1. The church is also destined to be characterized by prayer.

Matthew 21:12-13 *Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. 13 "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers'".*

2. The church will become a *"house of prayer for all nations"* because it is the word of God. When we read of Jesus cleansing the temple in **John 2:17**, it says of Jesus according to the Old Testament prophecy, *"Zeal for Thy house has consumed me."*
3. What is Jesus so zealous for as he cleanses the temple? Was he simply interested in getting out the bad things? No. His heart was zealous for the declared prophetic purpose of his Father. The prophetic promise of the Father is that his house would become a *"house of prayer for all nations."* (**Isaiah 56:7**)
4. Remember, we are God's house. God no longer dwells in a temple made by human hands, but in a temple made of human hearts. We are the Father's house, individually and collectively. Jesus has a consuming zeal for your life and mine to become a house of prayer. What is true for us individually is also true corporately. The church will become a house of prayer.

1 Corinthians 3:16 *Do you not know that your are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

5. Read carefully the prophetic promises of God in the Old Testament. (**Psalms 102:13-18**) We are in the midst of the greatest prayer movement in the history of the church. Perhaps we should pay attention to the "signs of the times." Isaiah prophetically sees the day when God's people will truly be a house of prayer.

Isaiah 62:6-7 *I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, 7 and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.*

A church of power

1. As the final chapters of human history are written and God completes his prophetic picture by putting the final overlays in place, we are going to become a church filled with the power of God. God has declared that he will show forth great power at the end of the age.

2. Much of his power will be displayed through his people.

Acts 2:17-21 *In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. 20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. 21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*

3. The same Spirit who anointed and empowered Jesus will be poured out in great measure upon the church. As we move further into God's final purposes, we will begin to become the church that God has prophesied we will become. **(John 14:12)**
4. Jesus fully intends for us to do the works that he has done. Just as the Father sent Jesus into the world, Jesus is also sending us, "*As the Father has sent me into the world, so send I you.*" **John 20:21**. In the Last Days, God will act much more in the ways which he acted when he led his Old Testament people out of Egypt. He will be nearer and more direct in his involvement and the display of his power. The prophet Micah tells us of these coming days. A powerful church will come forth from the womb of God's prophetic promises. **(Micah 7:14-16)**

Days of transition

1. Christianity, as we have known it, is about to change. The nature of the church is going to be transformed. God has declared that she will become intimate with his Son. The Bride of Christ will come forth in purity, unity, maturity, and power. In light of these revelations, these promises of God, we need to remind ourselves that God's word must come to pass.

Matthew 5:18 *I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*

2. **John 10:35** reminds us that "Scripture cannot be broken." There must come a time for the church, like there did for natural Israel in the days of Joshua, when according to **Joshua 23: 14**, "*Not one word of all the good promises which the Lord spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you.*"

3. First the natural, then the spiritual, that is our principle. If God's promises to his natural people, Israel, did not fail, then neither will his promises fail to his spiritual people, the church. God's word will not return to him void.

Numbers 23:19 *God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?*

World-wide revival

1. Both the Old and New Testament prophetic writings declare that God has purposed a final harvest of souls. These people will be birthed into his kingdom before the end of this age. This harvest will be the greatest revival that our planet has ever known.

Revelation 7:9-14 *After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." 11 All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!" 13 Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes--who are they, and where did they come from?" 14 I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."*

2. This vast multitude that no one can count is those who are saved during the great tribulation. The greatest in-gathering of souls to ever occur happens during the closing years of human history. A revival, world-wide in magnitude and massive in number, lies before us on the prophetic landscape.
3. This may well be the greatest hour for the church that the human race has ever known. We are always looking back and wishing we could have it as good as the church in the first century. We look back longing for that kind of anointing, power, and results. I believe, however, that the greatest days are not behind us; they are ahead of us! What if we are actually the generation that takes the baton and crosses the finish line with the shout of victory upon our lips:

Revelation 11:15 *The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever!"*