

LEAVING BABYLON BEHIND

How an **angelic message** consecrates
the church to become the holy bride of Christ

BY TODD COCONATO

Two years ago this past August, I had a night I will never forget. I was sleeping soundly when, around 3 a.m., I felt something tap gently on my shoulder. I am still unsure whether it was a realistic dream or an event that occurred while I was awake, but nevertheless, it seemed as real as could be to me. That night, I was visited by a messenger angel.

My first reaction was fear. I was startled and unsure as to what I was even experiencing, yet only seconds afterward, I felt a peace come over me. I knew this visitation was holy and of the Lord. The angel spoke to me a simple

yet powerful word: “Consecrate yourself” and “Come out from among them.” That was it. Then he departed.

Little did I realize at the time that the angel’s word was a word not just for me but for the church overall, setting forth a blueprint and road map for us to return to our first love, Jesus Christ.

Still startled by what had just happened, I was wide awake. My wife and daughter were sleeping in the room next to me. I left the room so as not to startle them, went into my prayer room and started to weep and pray. What I had



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/FRANKROTON



just experienced was so impactful. I was undone. I knew this was from God. I was so moved by what had just taken place that I didn't go back to sleep for hours.

In the days and months that followed, I couldn't help but think about this encounter often. The only other experience even remotely close to this was 22 years ago when I was stabbed nine times and almost died. My testimony shows that this first experience in God's presence was what led me to where I am today as a minister of the gospel, still very much on fire for the Lord. Since that time, I had never again had a supernatural visitation until this night.

Why had God sent one of His angelic host to visit me? The message was so simple, yet I couldn't stop thinking about what the angel said.

Seeking God in Fresh Ways

As a Christian and pastor, I wanted to believe I was already consecrated.

God had healed me of many past vices, and I lived a largely straight and narrow lifestyle. Yet as time went on, God gently showed me areas of my life that

still needed work.

I always admit that I am far from perfect, but sometimes when you have known the Lord for a long time, you start to feel as if you have truly matured into the person God wants you to be. This was my situation; I felt I was walking according to God's Word.

I began to seek His face into a season of true consecration and yearning to hear more clearly from the Holy Spirit. If God felt the need to send an angel to me for this reason, it must have been important to Him. As I went deeper, I saw the anointing increase. The anointing comes in a greater way when we truly press in and walk in a circumspect manner in accordance with His Word and promises.

God wanted me to have big faith and believe I am able to lay hands on the sick and see them healed. He wanted me to ask for anything in His name and believe He is willing and able to perform miracles, signs and wonders.

My whole ministry changed when I did this. Doors began to fly open, and I experienced supernatural favor, blessing and a tangible presence of His Holy Spirit in a way I hadn't before. I dug deeper into fasting, and my prayer life was renewed, unlike any other time in my faith journey. God allowed for almost daily divine appointments, and I often saw miraculous answers to my prayers.

The phrase "come out from among them" is

directly stated in God's Word, its message repeated in various ways throughout the Scriptures. It means we are to be set apart and holy. Although we are in the world, we are not of it; we are citizens of heaven. God wants us to operate in such a way.

This new outlook was a game-changer. The more I dug into these two instructions, the more I realized I had strayed from God's perfect will for my life. The Lord loved me so much that He sent an angel to awaken me to the error of my ways.

The two words from the messenger angel are essential, especially in the hour we are now entering. God wants to move in a mighty way. He is coming back for a bride without spot nor wrinkle. This angel's message was an instruction not just for me but for the body of Christ as a whole. God wants the church to understand the importance of consecration.

Separating Ourselves From the World

If we are to perform the types of miracles Christ did through His Holy Spirit, we will need a level of commitment and consecration in our walk so the demons know our name. We need to understand the anointing of the Holy Ghost and why we must break the yoke of bondage in this generation. If not us, who? If not now, when?

We must be the head, not the tail, and lead this nation to Jesus. This means we must separate ourselves from the wickedness of this hour and walk in the authority of the living God. Throughout history, the church has faced many challenges when it comes to maintaining its purity and staying true to the teachings of the Bible.

One of the most significant of these is the influence of the Babylon system of the world. We must come out of this system.

Babylon represents the world's system of values, beliefs and practices that are opposed to God's ways. Nowadays, this system is blatant. It has crept into the church over time, leading to com-

instead of remaining set apart as a holy and distinct people.

However, the Bible is clear that the church must come out from the Babylon system of the world and be set apart. In

Second Corinthians 6:17 (NKJV), God commands His people to "Come out from among them [the unbelievers] and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you."

The command calls for believers to be set apart from the world, not conforming to its values and practices but living lives that are holy and pleasing to God. This includes abstaining from worldly pleasures such as drunkenness and sexual immorality, and living in a way that glorifies God.

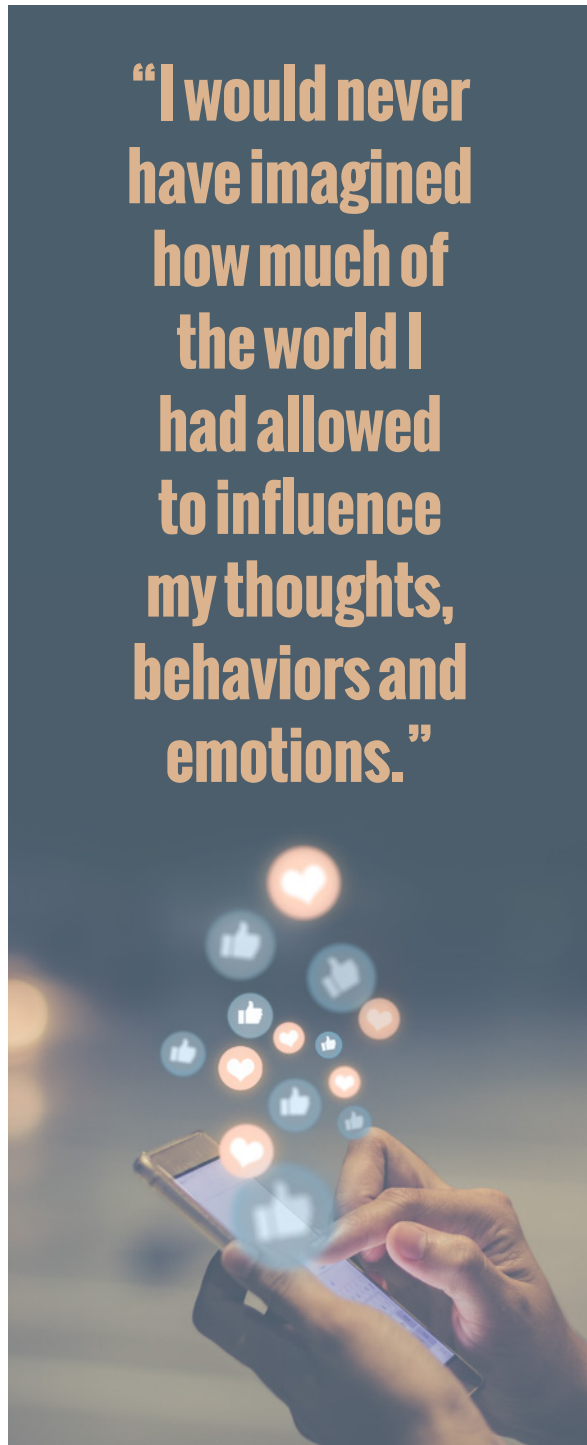
We must come out from the Babylon system of the world and be set apart according to the Bible. This means rejecting worldly values and practices and living a life that is pleasing to God. It also means guarding against false teachings that can lead the church astray. By doing so, the church can remain a holy and distinct people, shining the light of Christ in a dark world.

Guarding Against False Teachings

As Christians, it is essential that we guard ourselves against false teachings and doctrines that could lead us astray from the truth of Jesus Christ. False teachings and doctrines can be very subtle and can lead us down a dangerous path that ultimately leads to our spiritual destruction. Have you seen this issue with friends and people you know? As a Christian pastor, it is my duty to warn believers about the dangers of false

teachings and encourage them to stay true to the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

The Bible warns us about false teachings in several places. In



"I would never have imagined how much of the world I had allowed to influence my thoughts, behaviors and emotions."

promise and a dilution of our message. In many cases, the church has become indistinguishable from the world, adopting worldly values and practices

Matthew 7:15-16a, Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruit.” In 2 Peter 2:1, the apostle Peter warns, “But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.”

One of the most dangerous things about false teachings is that they often come from within the church itself. False teachers may be wolves in sheep’s clothing, pretending to be Christian pastors or leaders. They may have a form of godliness but deny its power (2 Tim. 3:5). They may use Scripture to support their false teachings but twist it to fit their own agenda.

One of the best ways to guard ourselves against false teachings is to know the truth. It’s important to have a deep understanding of the Bible and its teachings. This requires study time. We must be familiar with the core doctrines of the Christian faith, such as the Trinity, the deity of Christ and salvation by faith alone. We must be able to recognize when something is not in line with Scripture.

We must guard ourselves against false teachings and doctrines that could lead us astray from the truth of Jesus Christ. False teachings can be very subtle and can take us down a dangerous path that ultimately leads to our spiritual destruction. We must be discerning, test everything against the Word of God; know the truth; stay connected to a solid, Bible-believing church and have a heart for righteousness.

Growing in Our Faith

Sound doctrine is of utmost importance in a believer’s life. The Bible exhorts us to hold “fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict,” (Titus 1:9, NKJV).

Sound doctrine is the body of beliefs that are in line with the teachings of the Bible. It is not a matter of personal opinion or preference, but rather what

“In many cases, the church has become indistinguishable from the world, adopting worldly values and practices instead of remaining set apart as a holy and distinct people.”



God has revealed to us through His Word. Sound doctrine is crucial because it forms the foundation of our faith and guides our beliefs and actions.

This angelic encounter has impacted my life and walk in such a way that I can’t even fathom how I didn’t see some of these things before. God wants us to encounter Him, to not just survive, but thrive. Not just be present, but occupy. Not just be aware of the darkness, but instead take back the territory for the kingdom of God.

In a dire and critical hour in our nation and world, there is only one answer: Jesus Christ. It’s time to make the main thing the main thing again; we must be about the Great Commission. We must evangelize this country and bring back altar calls in our churches.

There can be no more dry-bones Christianity. It’s time we become the church of Philadelphia—the empowered church.

We have one more chance to get this right. The hour is late. The spotlight is on the church. It’s time we rise up! ◀

TODD COCONATO is an ordained minister and national evangelist. In addition to leading Todd Coconato Ministries, he is president of the Religious Liberties Coalition, a nonprofit coalition of pastors and ministry leaders; founder of Remnant News, a Christian News publication; and host of radio show The Todd Coconato Show—The Remnant. His latest book, *Come Out From Among Them* was published in July. Coconato lives in Nashville with his wife and child.