

Session 5: The Spirit and Power of Elijah

I. Importance of the Spirit and Power of Elijah

1. This session continues a discussion of the forerunner call with an explanation of the spirit and power of Elijah.

a. In this session, we will continue our discussion of several key phrases in Luke 1:16-17 which reads,

And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

b. As way of review, in Session 3, we examined the phrase *turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God*, and in Session 4, we expounded upon the phrase *make ready a people prepared for the Lord*. In this session we conclude our dissection of this passage by explaining the anointing that is to empower end-time forerunners, *the spirit and power of Elijah*.

c. As we begin our study of the spirit and power of Elijah, three brief points are in order. First, the term *forerunner* defines the function of the company of people God is raising up in this hour to make ready a people for Christ's second coming whereas the spirit and power of Elijah describes the anointing of the Holy Spirit that empowers forerunners to function effectively in their forerunner call.

d. Second, the spirit and power of Elijah refers to an anointing upon people, not to the reincarnation or the return from heaven of a person who literally lived in times past. Elijah was not reincarnated as John the Baptist; instead, John the Baptist was empowered with the spirit and power that was on Elijah. He had a similar function and moved in the same anointing that was on Elijah's life. Jesus called John the Baptist "Elijah" because he was anointed with the spirit and power of Elijah. The same will be true in the end times as God raises up a worldwide Elijah company to operate in the anointing that empowered Elijah and John the Baptist--with the purpose of making ready a people prepared for the Lord.

e. Third, the anointing of the spirit and power of Elijah is not the impartation of an additional or different spirit than the Holy Spirit. Rather, it is much like a gift of the Holy Spirit being given to a believer. For example, not every believer receives every gift of the Holy Spirit in equal measure. Instead, gifts are given to empower believers for the ministry function to which they are called. The same is true with the spirit and power of Elijah. It is an anointing granted to forerunners to empower them to accomplish the task of the forerunner.

2. It is important that end-time forerunners be empowered by the spirit and power of Elijah.

a. With the understanding that we are speaking of a specific anointing necessary to fulfill the call as a forerunner, we want to emphasize that the anointing of the spirit and power of Elijah is extremely important in order for forerunners to minister effectively in this calling. To be clear, in our opinion a forerunner cannot be fully effective in bringing about transformation in peoples' lives, churches, or nations without this anointing. It is crucial that forerunners not only take up the call to turn people

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back to Christ so as to make them ready for Him, but that they also walk in the anointing that was on Elijah, Elisha, and John the Baptist—the spirit and power of Elijah.

- b. In support of the above stated premise, scripture passages that highlight the forerunner call emphasize the spirit and power of Elijah much more than they do the functional calling of the forerunner. To illustrate, there are four predominant passages that we have used previously calling for end-time forerunners. They are,

Behold, *I will send you Elijah* the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse (Mal. 4:5-6, NKJV).

And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him *in the spirit and power of Elijah*, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:16-17).

And He answered and said, "*Elijah is coming and will restore all things*; but I say to you that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist (Matt. 17:11-13).

And I will grant authority to my two witnesses [*one of which, many commentators refer to as Elijah*], and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire (Rev. 11:3-6).

- c. It is important to note that in each of these passages, Elijah and the anointing of the spirit and power of Elijah is emphasized far more than the functional role of end-time forerunners. Like we stated earlier, the word forerunner does not appear in the Hebrew or Greek texts of any of these passages; instead, they all refer to Elijah or the spirit and power of Elijah. Each passage suggests one or more of the ministry functions of a forerunner; however, the emphasis in each is not upon the function but upon the anointing that was upon Elijah's life. To attempt to minister as a forerunner without this accompanying anointing is to try to accomplish a task in the Lord without the associated empowerment. Therefore, it is imperative that we not only say yes to the call as a forerunner but that we also eagerly receive the anointing of the spirit and power of Elijah.
- d. A personal illustration about how I became convinced of the reality of this anointing will help us understand its importance to those called as forerunners,

My experience of receiving the spirit of Elijah has convinced me that the spirit and power of Elijah is here now and is a necessary ingredient to function effectively as a forerunner. In the year 2000, Noel Mann came for one of his periodic visits to minister at our church. My wife and I met Noel and his wife, Di, in 1996, and we had seen each other only three times between 1996 and 2000. We eventually became very close friends, but because we were so different, at that point in time we were still evaluating each other. Toward the end of one of the services that year, he sensed the leading of the Holy Spirit to impart to

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my wife and me the spirit and power of Elijah. I was all for it although at that time I did not know anything about it. I didn't realize its importance to functioning effectively as a forerunner. I just wanted all God wanted for me and it sounded glamorous and exciting. Drawing upon his anointing as a prophet, Noel laid hands upon me imparting the spirit and power of Elijah to equip me as an end-time forerunner.

I wish I could write that as soon as I received the impartation, I began to sense great power and receive great revelation. Instead, what I experienced was the exact opposite. Immediately, I began to question in my mind as to whether this was real or right. By the time we got back to our house where they were staying, I had decided in my mind that this was all wrong and that he was a false prophet. A deep depression suddenly came upon me and I withdrew from any conversation. You can imagine the tension as our wives prepared our lunch. I would not talk to him and began to eat my lunch without waiting for anyone else. We laughed about the instance for many years, but it was not funny at the time. What changed the situation was that before the service the Lord had given Noel a scripture verse, 1 Kings 19:1-4, where Jezebel vowed to retaliate against Elijah—as she did against me. After I settled down a little, we discussed the situation and he showed me the passage that the Lord had given him. I realized that just like Jezebel attacked Elijah after he confronted the prophets of Baal, the spirit of Jezebel had attacked me to keep me from receiving this impartation or to cause me to reject it. Finally, I resisted the attack of Jezebel, received the impartation in faith, and began to see the difference in my ministry.

It was at this point in time that I began to receive increased revelation about the end times, the end-time church, and the call upon the end-time church to be forerunners in the spirit and power of Elijah. It was after receiving the anointing of Elijah that I began to write the materials that have become the teachings of Lifeschool International. God began breaking down old mindsets and religious traditions in my mind about the end times, about the rapture, and the second coming. It was after receiving this impartation that the ideas that are contained in the book my oldest son and I wrote, *The Worthy Bride*, began to solidify in my mind. This impartation changed my ministry—and I will add, for the better. I cannot imagine what my ministry would be like had I continued to reject the anointing of the spirit and power of Elijah. But, praise God, I received it and have passionately pursued the forerunner call ever since.

- e. The primary point for this session is that my personal experience in receiving this anointing has convinced me beyond a doubt that the anointing is real, important, and necessary for those called as forerunners. Our conclusion from all of these points is that to be truly effective as forerunners we must be empowered with the spirit and power of Elijah. It is essential to be fully effective as a forerunner.
- f. Now that we understand the importance of forerunners being empowered with the spirit and power of Elijah, we will now explain the spirit and power of Elijah beginning with the meaning of *the spirit of Elijah*.

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II. The Spirit of Elijah

1. The spirit of Elijah is the anointing upon forerunners which creates *the inward desire* to prepare the way for the Lord's second coming.
 - a. The spirit of Elijah is the work of the Holy Spirit which impacts *the heart* of forerunners and creates within them the strong desire to prepare the way for Christ's second coming. It is the anointing upon end-time forerunners that creates an inward desire to operate in a similar call to that which was upon Elijah and John the Baptist.
 - b. As we think about the life of Elijah, we quickly realize that Elijah was driven by a deep desire to see God's people turn away from compromise and false worship back to the true, sincere worship of Yahweh. Elijah was motivated all the days of his life by a strong inward desire to turn people back to wholehearted devotion to the Lord.
 - c. For example, as Elijah was preparing to confront the prophets of Baal, he "came near to all the people and said, 'How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.' But the people did not answer him a word. Then Elijah said to the people, 'I alone am left a prophet of the LORD, but Baal's prophets are 450 men'" (1 Kings 18:21-22). As you read between the lines, it is evident that Elijah was deeply hurt by the people's response. Whether it was motivated by fear, compromise, or desire for Baal and Asherah worship, the people did not respond to Elijah's invitation. This greatly disappointed Elijah.
 - d. A similar attitude empowered John the Baptist. His prophetic heart to prepare the way of the Lord was evident as the following scripture relates,

Then they said to him [John the Baptist], "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" He [*John the Baptist*] said, "I am A VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD,' as Isaiah the prophet said" (John 1:22-23).
 - e. John chose to live a simple life in the wilderness outside the mainstream of religious life, eating locusts and wild honey and dressing in camel's hair. He chose to forsake many of the privileges of life within the mainstream of the religious thought of the day in order to fulfill the deep inward desire the Lord had put in his heart. It is apparent that his life was focused on preparing the way for Jesus to be received as Israel's Messiah. He was a voice who *cried out with passion* pleading with people to receive Jesus because His coming was at hand, as he alerted them that the kingdom of God was coming in a new and dynamic way.
2. The spirit of Elijah is the work of the Holy Spirit that produces a deep burden in the heart of forerunners to make people ready for the Lord.
 - a. Somewhat similar to the previous point, the spirit of Elijah releases a deep burden in the hearts of forerunners that the church is not ready for the end times or eternity and causes them never to be content or never stop until a people are made ready for the Lord's second coming. When a forerunner receives this anointing, the forerunner ministry ceases to be a job and becomes a burden

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deep within the heart of the forerunner. The burden can lead to great fulfillment but also at times can be overwhelming and discouraging as one pours out their heart to make people ready for the Lord but receives very little response.

- b. In the passage in which Elijah said that he alone was left as a prophet of the Lord, you can feel the burden in Elijah's heart. He had just called the people to abandon Baal and follow Yahweh, yet their fear and indifference led them to remain totally unresponsive. Elijah's response was that he was the only prophet left in the land. His statement conveyed his great burden that the hearts of the people were hardened toward God. And this broke his heart.
- c. Elijah lived with a deep burden in his heart for the people to turn away from Jezebel and Ahab and their false religion and to come back to God in wholehearted devotion. Elijah was extremely burdened as he saw the people's entanglement in Ahab and Jezebel's wicked religion and their indifference toward the Lord. In a similar manner, end-time forerunners will also carry in their heart an ever-increasing burden to be used of God in the end times to make ready a people for God and His purposes.
- d. Just like in the lives of Elijah and John the Baptist, the spirit of Elijah will change our heart and give us a burden to see a people made ready for Christ and to prepare the way for His return. As the spirit of Elijah matures in the heart of a forerunner, a burden for transformation in the church will grow and drive forerunners to the place where they can do nothing other than devote their life to the forerunner call.

III. The Power of Elijah

1. Forerunners operate also in the power of Elijah.

- a. As we explained in the previous section, the spirit of Elijah is the impartation of the Holy Spirit that produces the desire and burden to see a people turn back to God and to motivate those called as forerunners to devote their lives and ministries to preparing the way for Jesus' second coming. As important as the spirit of Elijah is, the scriptures speak of forerunners operating in both the spirit *and* power of Elijah. Whereas the spirit of Elijah is the anointing that fuels the heart of the forerunner for their call, the power of Elijah is the anointing which causes the efforts of the forerunner to bring true results.
- b. Jesus spoke these words to the apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness", and Paul responded, "Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me" (2 Cor. 12:9). Based on this verse, we define a primary meaning of *grace as God's divine enablement which empowers His will to be accomplished*. In other words, His grace is His power working in and through a people to accomplish what He desires.
- c. Paul wrote in the same book these words, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves" (2 Cor. 4:7). Just as Paul wrote about himself, we too may feel weak and unable to bring about any meaningful change. Whether through our prayers, our teaching, or our ministry, we often feel we can do nothing and accomplish nothing. For sure, we often feel like a weak, earthen vessel unable to do anything meaningful. However, even though we are an earthen vessel, we have the treasure of Christ within

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us who can and does bear much fruit and fruit that remains. Therefore, a basic tenet of our relationship with Christ is that His power works through us in our weaknesses and frailties and produces His intended purpose. In the context of the power of Elijah, this anointing produces the results of the forerunner call.

- d. Therefore, the power of Elijah is the divine enablement granted to forerunners by God's grace that empowers forerunners to be effective in their assignments as forerunners.

2. The power to heal and perform what we normally identify as miraculous signs of power may or may not accompany the ministry of a forerunner.

- a. We normally associate power with signs, wonders, and miracles. Jesus operated in great power of the Holy Spirit, and the awesome power in His life empowered Him to heal the sick and set free the demonized. As we study the lives of Elijah and Elisha, two Old Testament prophets who operated in the power of Elijah, we observe that they too healed the sick, raised people from the dead and performed many signs and wonders.
- b. Whereas Elijah and Elisha operated in great signs and wonders, John the Baptist performed no miraculous sign. Note what is recorded about John the Baptist,

And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. Many came to Him and were saying, "While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true." Many believed in Him [Christ] there (John 10:40-42).

- c. John the Baptist performed no miraculous sign, yet John operated in great power as a forerunner as evidenced by the fact that many turned to Christ because of John's ministry. Ministering in the wilderness of Judea, multitudes of people flocked to the wilderness to hear his message and to respond to it, without the hope of a miracle but only to repent so as to be prepared for the coming of Christ's earthly ministry. He moved in such power that even the religious leaders of the day came to see what he was doing (Matt. 3:7).
- d. Even though he performed no miraculous signs, as Jesus summarized the ministry of John, He said this, "Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist!" (Matt. 11:11). To have the Son of God summarize his life's work in this way required that he operate in real power. John performed no miraculous sign; even so, his ministry was a very powerful ministry!
- e. We all love to pray for the sick and see them recover. We love to see miracles occur when we minister to people. These things are great when they happen. However, it is important that we recognize that forerunners may or may not be used in the type of power we associate with healing the sick, casting out demons, and prophesying to individuals with clarity and detail. The reason for emphasizing this idea is to caution those who are considering say yes to the forerunner call that it is not an anointing that will necessarily empower you for a healing ministry or a prophetic ministry. The call is to be *a voice* into the church and the world and to grant you the power such that your voice brings positive transformation.

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- f. I will conclude the discussion of how the power of Elijah might impact forerunners with another of my personal stories. When we were on the staff of the Baptist church and even after we began the church we planted, my wife and I were used in some powerful ways in praying for the sick. When I wrote the book *Learning to Hear God's Voice*, I shared a lot of examples where I heard God, prayed for people, and they were healed. However, around the time I accepted the call as a forerunner, the miracles stopped. I was used in more miracles in the first decade of my ministry than in the thirty years following. Even though the power for miraculous deeds has been greatly reduced, I have seen the power of God over my life in a number of ways, all of which surround being a voice to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.
- g. Summarizing, we define the power of Elijah as the power of the Holy Spirit *that empowers forerunners to effectively accomplish their mission as a forerunner.*

IV. The Effect of the Spirit and Power of Elijah

- a. Now that we understand the spirit and power of Elijah, in this section, we want to identify a few traits that should characterize one who has received this anointing. The purpose is to help us discern if we have actually received the spirit and power of Elijah. We will not know if we have received this anointing just by having someone pray to impart the spirit to us. This is important in its time and place, but the true test of whether we have received the spirit and power of Elijah is whether we are changed and whether our voice leads to transformation. Therefore, in this section, I share seven changes that one receiving the spirit and power of Elijah should experience as evidence that they have received this impartation.
1. First, the spirit and power of Elijah changes the life of the forerunner.
 - a. When one accepts the forerunner call *and* is anointed with the spirit and power of Elijah, their life changes. Like we said earlier, the forerunner message begins to burn in their heart. Forerunners will have an urgency deposited in their heart to proclaim the forerunner message to their sphere of influence, whether to their neighbors, the local church, their nation, or to the nations. The burden of the current condition of the land and degree of error and compromise in the church consumes them.
 - b. They realize there are many other aspects to the Christian life; even so, the burden for the church to turn believers back to their first love and the Person of Christ is their supreme motivation. They are no longer content with normal church life; they burn in their hearts for people to live wholeheartedly for Christ.
 2. The spirit of Elijah is the anointing that equips forerunners with the fresh revelation needed to prepare the way for the Lord's coming and to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.
 - a. In addition to this newly deposited burden, the spirit and power of Elijah is the anointing that equips forerunners with a fresh revelation of end-time and eternal issues. When a forerunner receives the impartation of the spirit of Elijah, their life changes. They not only receive the heart calling to be an end-time forerunner, they also begin to receive revelation that empowers them to be a voice in the end times.

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- b. Topics that they once were ignorant of or uninterested in now become their passion. They develop a desire for revelation knowledge of issues like getting ready for the end times, the bride of Christ, preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb, and for eternity.

3. The spirit and power of Elijah empowers transformation in the church.

- a. As forerunners come forth in the spirit and power of Elijah, the worldwide church will change. Forerunners anointed with the spirit and power of Elijah speaking into the lives of believers and church leaders will bring change causing the church to turn away from external issues and psychological solutions back to the person of Christ and to His eternal plan and thought. The anointing will impact believers in a way to draw them closer to Christ, and to be more and more conformed into the image of Christ.
- b. The spirit and power of Elijah will cause the church to comprehend a fresh understanding of the end times, the rapture, the call to partner with God rather than just being a spectator in end-time events and to prepare for eternity.

4. The spirit and power of Elijah empowers forerunners to stand strong against the forces that would oppose the emergence of the church into God's eternal purpose.

- a. We will look at this idea in greater detail in later sessions, but forerunners empowered with the spirit and power of Elijah will be empowered to be a strong voice in their preaching, teaching, intercession, and spiritual warfare into the forces that oppose God's plans coming forth.
- b. Just like Elijah stood strong to resist and defeat against the prophets of Baal and Asherah and John the Baptist confronted the religious spirit in the Pharisees and the government of Herod, the spirit and power of Elijah will empower forerunners to do likewise. Probably not as dramatically as Elijah calling fire from heaven, but still with very effective results.

5. The spirit and power of Elijah is the empowerment that leads forerunners to lay down their lives, ministry dreams, and church programs to follow in the steps of Elijah, Elisha, and John the Baptist.

- a. Forerunners are called to a lifestyle of separation from the mainstream of religious activity so that they can be a voice into the church to make the church ready for the coming of the Lord. Elijah lived much of his life alone, separated from the religious activity of the day and separated from the normal activity of the community. Likewise, John the Baptist spent much of his life in the wilderness of Judea alone and separated from the routine of religious life.
- b. The spirit and power of Elijah is the work of the Holy Spirit that empowers the forerunner with the determination to walk a path that is often rejected by the wider body of Christ and opposed by the world. Forerunners almost always have to come out of the normal religious culture of the day so that they can speak into it. Many forerunners are required to surrender their ministries, churches, family goals and dreams for the purpose of serving the Lord in the capacity of a forerunner. The

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spirit and power of Elijah is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that motivates forerunners to do this—lay down the generally accepted role of a church leader for a life that confronts and impacts the religious culture of the day.

- c. When we hear that the spirit and power of Elijah might cause us to lay down our life in a significant way, our initial reaction is to resist the invitation. Often, the forerunner call seems more difficult, more restricted, and much less appealing than what we are currently doing. In some ways, this is true. However, this call is also very exciting and fulfilling as God miraculously opens doors for ministry. The ministry of a forerunner many times is much more widespread and impactful than it ever would have been if one had said *no* and continued to lead or participate in a community church.

6. The spirit and power of Elijah will be transferred from one generation to the next until the Lord returns.

- a. The spirit and power of Elijah is transferable from spiritual fathers to spiritual sons. This anointing is not just for a season and then the church will move on to something else that is new and exciting. The spirit and power of Elijah is an anointing that will remain and, in fact, increase until the Lord returns, whether His coming happens in a few years or a few generations.
- b. We see clearly the transfer of this anointing in the life of Elijah. Elijah imparted the anointing on his life—that is, the spirit and power of Elijah—to his spiritual son, Elisha (2 Kings 2), and both Elijah and Elisha imparted this same anointing to their spiritual sons, referred to as the sons of the prophets.
- c. My family and I believe our church received this passage of scripture as a prophetic promise related to the spirit and power of Elijah from our spiritual father, Noel Mann, in 2011. It reads,

"As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the Lord: "My Spirit [in the prophetic word, the spirit and power of Elijah] which is upon you, and My words [in the prophetic word, the forerunner message] which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the Lord, "from now and forever" (Isa. 59:21).

- d. As the above passage states, this anointing will be transferable within our family and church from one generation to another until the Lord returns. It is a transferable anointing. But not only true for us, it is also true of those who want it, live in it, and minister in it from one generation to the next until the Lord returns. The second coming of Jesus may come during the days of this generation, but He may delay. The good news is that the spirit and power of Elijah is transferable from spiritual fathers to spiritual sons. In fact, the spirit and power of Elijah will ultimately empower the church which will usher in the second coming of Jesus.

7. The spirit and power of Elijah is a specific anointing given for a specific purpose upon the fivefold ministry and the larger body of believers.

- a. Just to make sure we understand the forerunner call very clearly, we must know that this call and the spirit and power of Elijah does not in any way replace the fivefold ministry or the giftings upon the body of Christ. Rather, the spirit and power of Elijah is a specific anointing for the end times that is being released to the fivefold leadership and to the wider body of believers. It is being released for

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the specific purpose of empowering the church in the end times to prepare the way for Christ's coming.

- b. The forerunner call and the spirit and power of Elijah will not change the basic fivefold calling upon leaders or spiritual gifting upon believers, but it will add *a distinctive mission* to their basic call. For example, an apostle who is anointed as a forerunner in the spirit and power of Elijah will still operate as an apostle. A prophet who is anointed as a forerunner will still operate as a prophet. And so forth with the other giftings. But forerunners will operate in their giftings with a specific mission of preparing the way for the second coming of Jesus.
- c. Even though the forerunner anointing will not change a leader's foundational gifting, it will transform their ministry. For some, this call will change everything about their ministry. For others, it will add an emphasis to their ministry that was previously not there. In either case, the anointing is critical in these days.
- d. Let us all be reminded that the spirit and power of Elijah releases a strong inward desire and sufficient power to prepare the way for the Lord's return and to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. The anointing of the spirit and power of Elijah is not something to take lightly. When an altar call is given to receive this anointing, it is easy to receive prayer. But being prayed for is not evidence you have received this empowerment. The evidence is that you yearn for people to make themselves ready, you carry a deep burden for this to take place, and you begin to see with spiritual eyes what is required for God's purposes to be fulfilled.
- e. As we close this session, my prayer is that you will hunger for this anointing and prepare yourself to eagerly receive it!