

...FOR THOSE SEEKING THE EMPOWERING PRESENCE OF THE *Holy Spirit*

Lutheran Renewal

Your Appointment Awaits You

by Francis Frangipane

Appointed Times

In spite of escalating turmoil in our world, there still remains one last, great outpouring of mercy before the time of the end (Matt 24:14; Acts 2:17). This supernatural season is not something for which we must beg God. No, its coming has been predetermined. It is the “appointed time” of the Lord.



For those unaware, an “appointed time” is, in truth, an open display of the sovereignty and power of God. In it we discover with absolute certainty that nothing is impossible for God. It is a season when God fulfills the hopes and dreams of His people. The Psalmist wrote, “But You, O LORD, abide forever, and Your name to all generations. You will arise and have compassion on Zion; for it is time to be gracious to her, for the appointed time has come” (Ps 102:12-13).

During an “appointed time” it’s as though the Lord physically rises and moves in unfailing compassion on behalf of His people. It is the time when divine promises, dreams and spiritual hopes are fulfilled. Recall: Abraham and Sarah had waited in faith for a quarter century for the promise of God. Finally, as they neared one hundred years of age, the Lord told Abraham, “At the appointed time I will return to you ... and Sarah will have a son” (Gen 18:14). One year later, “at the appointed time” (Gen 21:2), Isaac was born to aged parents!

While there are, indeed, appointed times of judgment (Mk 13:33), the phrase most frequently represents a time, preset by God, when He invades mankind with “wonders, plans formed long ago, [that unfold] with perfect faithfulness” (Isa 25:1).

Demons may stand arrayed against the Lord; nations may align themselves to fight Him. It does not matter. He who sits in the heavens laughs. For He makes all things His servants (Ps 119:91), even His enemies’ plans for evil are reversed and made to serve the purpose of God (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28; Acts 2:22-24).

If God gave you a vision, a spiritual hope or dream for your future, there will be an appointed time when that which God spoke comes to pass. Thus the Lord assures us, “Record the vision and inscribe it on tablets, that the one who reads it may run. For the vision is yet for the appointed time. It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay” (Hab 2:2-3).

If you have a vision or promise from God, that vision also has a time of fulfillment. Though it tarries, wait for it. For it will certainly come to pass at the appointed time.

Appointed Servants of God
Prior to the unveiling of an appointed time, God has, of course, been actively working in hiddenness. When He rises and moves, He is moving the power grid He laid in secret. The work manifests suddenly, but the preparation may have taken years. Likewise, the Lord also appoints people. He predestines the time of their breakthrough in advance, even as He works silently within their hearts in preparation.

Lutheran Renewal

(Independent of North Heights Lutheran Church)

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Consider the Lord's word to His disciples. He said, "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain" (Jn 15:16).

I'm sure the disciples felt that they had chosen Christ. Yet, the deeper truth is that God chose us before the foundation of the world and predestined us to come to Christ (Eph 1:3-5). We could not even come to Christ had not the Father drawn us (Jn 6:44). So, let us make no mistake: God chose us. Yet, He who chose us also appointed us to bear fruit. The same power that worked in us surrender and then inspired our faith continues to work in our hearts throughout our days, appointing us to bear fruit.

You may look at your life and feel unfruitful. But God is not done with you yet. Do you believe God has chosen you? Then believe also that He has appointed you to bear fruit. The same power that drew you to Christ is now working to conform you to Him as well.

The Enemy's Work

One may argue, "But I know people who were good Christians who have fallen away." Yes, but in most cases you will find that, at some point, they fell into deep disappointment about some failed spiritual expectation. Disappointment is not just a sad emotional state of mind; deep disappointment actually can sever our hearts from faith. It can "dis-appoint" us from our appointed destiny.

I have known many who were doing well, moving toward their appointed destiny. The future God had for them seemed almost close enough to taste. Then they became disappointed in someone or something. By accepting dis-appointment into their spirits, a bitter cold winter took over their souls and their faith turned dormant.

When one is dis-appointed, he is cut off from his appointment with destiny; the appointment remains in the heart of God, but the individual is isolated. It is here, even in the throes of disappointment, that the righteous must learn to live by faith (see Hab 2:1-4).

I, too, have been through disappointment. Indeed, the promise of God was so distant that it seemed like a foolish spiritual fantasy. For nearly three years I had not been involved in pastoral minis-

try. No doors would open. God was doing a work in my soul to cause me to trust Him, but I felt abandoned and cut off from my calling. In a moment of abject honesty, I prayed, "Lord, you promised that those who believed in You would not be disappointed. Master, You know all things. Look at my heart. I am full of disappointment."

The Lord simply replied, "You're life is not over." Of course, I knew that. I was a healthy young man not older than forty. Yet, the spell of disappointment had flooded my soul with darkness, causing me to conclude erroneously that God was done with me.

Listen well my friend: Satan can stop our destiny if we accept the power of disappointment into our lives. Once we accept the heaviness of a deep dis-appointment, backsliding is often not far away. You see, dis-appointment cuts us off from our vision and without a vision people perish.

Therefore, let me ask you: are you carrying dis-appointment in your heart? Renounce it. Forgive those who have let you down. Have you personally or morally failed? Repent deeply and return to your Redeemer. Right now, I ask the Holy Spirit to remove disappointment's paralyzing sting! Beloved, the Spirit of God has come to release you of the effect of the dis-appointment. He reminds you, "Your appointment with your destiny is still set.

Holy Spirit, I confess that disappointment has crept into my soul. I forgive those who have disappointed me and release them back to You. I also forgive myself for accepting disappointment. I renounce unbelief and submit again to Your call on my life. Lord, prepare me again to move into the future You have appointed for my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Reprinted with permission from **Ministries of Francis Frangipane**, www.frangipane.org.]



This Day We Fight!

Francis Frangipane will be speaking at the February 10-11, 2006 Equipping Conference in Arden Hills, MN. He and Greg Boyd will teach on the theme, "This Day We Fight—Breaking the Bondage of a Passive Spirit."

Need a brochure? Contact Lutheran Renewal at 651-490-1517, ext. 13. You may download a brochure at www.LutheranRenewal.org.

The International Lutheran Leadership Conference

Saldus, Latvia. October 12-15, 2005

A Report by Paul Anderson

In 1993, my friend Martins Irbe, a Latvian Lutheran pastor, told me that he was going on a trip to Latvia. And I said, "I'm going with you." He said, "Fine," and I replied, "Let's do a pastors' conference." I prayed for twenty participants, while an elder at our church prayed for eighty. I thought he was unrealistic, but eighty-five attended. That began a yearly mission to a country struggling to find itself again after breaking free three years earlier from fifty years of Communist oppression.

The most significant of these many trips occurred last October, and I'll tell you why. My first assignment was to conduct a "Dream Day" seminar at a key Baptist church in Riga, Latvia's capital—key because the former pastor and one of the members are now in the Parliament. On Monday, following a Lutheran pastors' seminar at the Lutheran Consistory, a team consisting of Arlen Salte, worship leader and his wife Elsa; Mike Bradley, Executive Director of The Master's Institute; Nate Johnstone, MI graduate now a pastor, and I went to the Latvian Parliament to speak with the Christian party at their invitation. These are people of influence in the country, and we were given the joy of encouraging them in their task through worship, teaching, and prayer. We felt as if God were giving us a role, however small, in the rebuilding of a nation. We could see that the contacts we had made in multiple trips were growing stronger and more significant.

Two days later, following a tour of the Old City, we launched the International Lutheran Renewal Leaders' Conference at the majestic Dom Cathedral in Riga. The mixture of high liturgy and free praise was powerful. Some Parliament members were present for the service and received Holy Communion and personal prayer. The conference, which took place in Saldus, two hours west of Riga at a Bible school, headed up by Martins and Gunta Irbe, went from Thursday to Saturday. Fifty participants joined together for rich and lively worship and strategic talks on doing kingdom ministry. Wolfgang Simson from Germany was particularly well-received.

This conference was strategic for several reasons:

1. It brought together over 50 Lutheran renewal leaders from 14 different countries who have a common heritage and now a growing common destiny to encourage the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit around the world wherever there is a Lutheran presence.
2. Three days of meeting together made us friends. These relationships are now continuing through ongoing e-mail communication. What we had attempted to do (an international communication link) happened in an informal fashion after we spent time together in prayer, worship, and fellowship.
3. We agreed to have our next conference in two years rather than waiting for ten years as we had done before. We realized that we were joined together by the Spirit of God, and we wanted to properly steward that unity, which has already produced plans for joint ministry and mission efforts.

On this trip God allowed us to leave a fresh deposit of the Spirit in Latvia. One Latvian pastor, who gave his testimony about Russian occupation (sometimes choking up), slumped to his knees during our prayer time for Latvia—and cried and cried. Then he rose up and said, "This is the greatest day of my life." He expressed the kind of gratitude other Latvians were feeling in their hearts.

Thank you for praying for renewal in the Lutheran church and especially for our friends in Latvia.



(left-right) Mike Bradley, Director of The Master's Institute;
Bishop L. Mphahlele of South Africa;
Paul Anderson, Director of Lutheran Renewal;
Asbjorn Simonnes of Norway

RESOURCES

Dare to Dream

Do you want to discover your dream? Learn how to pursue it? Need to recover broken dreams? In *Dare to Dream*, Paul Anderson will help you to discover what God has placed inside of you! (\$10)

Dare to Dream Workbook

This journaling book by Paul Anderson will assist you in creating the kind of climate in which God-sized dreams can grow. Each page has a Dream Reflection and accompanying questions. (\$6)

Dare to Dream and Workbook Set (\$14)

The Father's Gift

Paul Anderson has written a book that answers many of your questions about the Holy Spirit. Are you wondering about the gifts? Would you like to be filled with the Spirit? Can the Spirit really lead us? Questions at the end of each chapter make it great for a Bible study group, Sunday School class, or for personal reflection. (\$10)

Gospel Stories

Pastor Orval Moren has written a powerful resource for anyone who would like a "3-minute lesson" for children. You'll also find suggestions, visual aids and Scriptural references in this indispensable tool. (\$12)

A Rose for Nana

Carol Greenwood is the author of this delightful, inspiring collection of stories and reflections about the God who speaks to us every day. (~~\$10~~ Closeout \$5)

Breaking Strongholds in My Life

A booklet by Paul Anderson that identifies key strongholds of bondage in our lives and how we can break free through the power of the Spirit and not merely by our own effort. (\$2)

Building Christian Character

An inspiring and challenging study by Paul Anderson of 34 Christian character traits. The study gives a biblical meaning and example of each trait and shows how the trait can be applied in practical ways. (Workbook or Teacher's Guide: \$6 each, 8 or more \$5 each)

Charismatic Renewal Among Lutherans

Larry Christenson gives practical guidance for understanding and experiencing spiritual renewal, charismatic gifts, and renewed faith. (~~\$3.95~~ Closeout \$2)

Especially for Pastors

Edited by Paul Anderson, a monthly newsletter to encourage and assist pastors as they shepherd the Lord's flock. (\$20 annually for hard copy or \$10 annually for e-mail. Include e-mail address on order form.)

The Gift of Tongues (Booklet)

A biblical study of this spiritual gift by Larry Christenson. He also traces its connection with receiving the Holy Spirit, answers questions, covers theological concerns, and discusses practical aspects. (\$2.25)

Healing From a Father Wound (Booklet)

A message by Paul Anderson that brings emotional and spiritual healing to those who carry wounds from the past. (\$2)

He Knows my Name (CD)

A collection of original and familiar worship songs from Living Water Lutheran featuring four songs performed by the Kenyan orphans living at Agape Children's House. All proceeds go directly to Agape. (\$15)

Kyrie (Music by Paul Anderson & David Brewer)

Much requested instrumental music of traditional and contemporary Christian songs. (Cassettes: \$5)

Prayer Ministry (Expanded)

A booklet by Paul Anderson with practical help in training prayer ministers. Twice the size of the original. (\$3)

Pray For the Power of the Spirit (Tract)

By Rev. Del Rossin, a biblical study on releasing the power of the Holy Spirit. (6/\$1 or 100/\$15)

The Renewed Mind

This book by Larry Christenson touches on five major areas of spiritual experience: Dependence on God; Facing challenges with the authority of Christ; Patience; Discipline; Prayer. (\$9)

A Soldier Looks at Spiritual Warfare

Author Dick Denny uses military analogies to confront readers with the reality of spiritual warfare. "Superb" said one longtime adult educator. (\$15)

The What About...? Series (Booklet)

A set of 11 individual booklets by Paul Anderson. Titles: What About Repentance? ...Prayer? ...Demons? ...Healing? ...Fasting? ...The Lord's Supper? ...Holiness? ...Death? ...Satan? ...Heaven & Hell? ...Those Doubtful Things? (Complete Series, 11 Booklets: \$5)

Welcome, Holy Spirit

Edited by Larry Christenson, this 432-page book is important reading for all Christians, but especially Lutherans who want a definitive study on renewal. (~~\$15~~ Closeout \$5)

What About Baptism? (Booklet)

A practical 17-page booklet by Larry Christenson. Topics include: Infant Baptism, Immersion, Re-baptism and Baptism with the Holy Spirit. (\$2.25)

You Shall Be Baptized in the Holy Spirit

This book, written by Elsie Fuhrman, teaches believers how to receive empowerment of the Spirit and how to minister it to others. (\$7)

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