

Samuel Rodriguez: Why Complacency Will Define Who Survives

Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, Lead Pastor of New Season Church in Sacramento, California, and President of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, shares his outlook on the spiritual battles ahead.



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The church has been forced to choose sides in a culture that demands compromise on every front. Over the past 12 months, American Christians have faced mounting pressure to soften their stance on biblical truth or risk being labeled intolerant. The political landscape has intensified tribal divisions, pushing believers into camps defined more by party loyalty than by scripture.

Rodriguez, who has advised three U.S. Presidents and leads the world's largest Hispanic Christian organization representing over 100 million Hispanic Evangelicals across more than 40,118 U.S. churches, sees the shift clearly. "The battle is not political, it is spiritual—between light and darkness, between truth and relativism," he says. The fault lines are no longer about doctrine alone. They run through immigration policy, social justice, and how believers engage with culture.

Yet many Christians remain paralyzed, unsure how to act. "We are paralyzed by skewed thinking. The number one thing that paralyzes us is an erroneous application of Scripture that becomes an ill interpretation of God's will for our lives," Rodriguez explains. This paralysis has left churches reactive rather than proactive, responding to culture instead of shaping it.

What People Are Getting Wrong

The most common mistake is treating the current moment as a political problem requiring a political solution. Believers have been drawn into partisan battles that distract from the core mission of the church. Rodriguez warns that dependence on political leaders or cultural movements will fail. "When we depend on others more than we depend on God, perpetual paralysis will define us," he says.

Another error is redefining Christianity to fit contemporary cultural expectations. Rodriguez argues that modern believers have accepted a watered-down version of faith that ignores the full scope of the gospel. "My argument all along has been that Christianity has received a very inappropriate, skewed definition. I'm looking at the Christianity of Christ, one that addresses Luke 4 and Matthew 25, the fishes and the bread of compassion, of love, of tolerance, of mercy."

Churches are also mistaking comfort for faithfulness. "Jesus is not coming for a church that complains or compromises, but for a church that is firm," Rodriguez states. Complaining about cultural decay while compromising on biblical standards is not a strategy for revival. It is a recipe for irrelevance.

What Will Get Harder

Maintaining a biblical stance without leaning into partisan politics will become more difficult. Rodriguez has built his ministry on the principle that "we do not lean to the left or to the right, we remain firm in the Word of God." But that middle ground is shrinking. Expect increased pressure from both political camps to align fully with their agendas.

Immigration reform will remain a flashpoint. Rodriguez, who has spoken extensively on biblical views of sanctuary and justice, knows this issue divides even within evangelical circles. The tension between compassion and the rule of law will intensify, and churches will be forced to articulate positions that satisfy neither political extreme.

Cultural tolerance for Christian viewpoints will continue to erode. What was considered mainstream Christian teaching a decade ago is now classified as bigotry in many public forums. Rodriguez believes this trend will accelerate, making it costlier to hold traditional views on marriage, gender, and morality.

Church unity will be tested. The same divisions plaguing the nation are appearing in pews. Pastors will

face difficult choices about whether to address controversial topics or avoid them to keep the peace. Silence, however, has its own cost. "Complacency today is captivity tomorrow," Rodriguez warns.

What Will Still Work

Firm biblical conviction paired with genuine compassion remains the most effective witness. Rodriguez has built a career on this dual commitment, earning recognition including the Martin Luther King Jr. Leadership Award in 2011, the Rosa Parks Courage Award in 2015, and the Defender of the Dream Award in 2016 from Alveda King and the King Family. His message of righteousness and justice continues to resonate because it refuses to sacrifice either for the other.

Prayer and dependence on God will outlast any political strategy. Churches that prioritize spiritual disciplines over cultural relevance will find themselves better equipped to navigate turbulence. Rodriguez's mission has always been clear: "to glorify and magnify the name of Jesus in every sphere of society—giving God all the glory for his influence and impact."

Storytelling through media and film will reach audiences traditional preaching cannot. Rodriguez served as executive producer on films including Breakthrough, which won a GMA Dove Award for Inspirational Film of the Year, and Flamin' Hot. These projects demonstrate how biblical themes can be woven into mainstream culture without compromise.

Building coalitions across ethnic and denominational lines will expand influence. The National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, which Rodriguez founded in 2000, now represents over 450,000 churches throughout the Spanish-speaking diaspora. This model of unity around core convictions while respecting diversity will be essential.

Three Scenarios for the future

Optimistic Scenario: Spiritual Awakening Churches abandon complacency and experience genuine revival. Believers rediscover the power of prayer and dependence on God. Cultural divisions begin to heal as Christians model unity without compromise. Immigration reform moves forward based on biblical principles of justice and mercy. The church regains credibility as a moral voice because it refuses to be co-opted by political parties.

Recommended Actions: Commit to daily prayer and scripture study. Join or start a prayer group focused on national and spiritual renewal. Build relationships with believers from different ethnic and denominational backgrounds. Speak biblical truth with compassion in every conversation.

Realistic Scenario: Continued Tension. Political and cultural divisions persist. Churches remain split between those who engage culture and those who withdraw. Some congregations grow while others decline. Immigration and social justice remain contentious issues with no clear resolution. Believers who maintain biblical conviction face increased social cost but also find deeper community with like-minded Christians. Incremental progress happens in pockets, but no sweeping revival.

Recommended Actions: Choose a church that holds firm to biblical teaching without political partisanship. Develop a personal theology of engagement that balances truth and love. Support ministries and media that present the gospel clearly. Prepare for the long haul by building spiritual disciplines that sustain faith through difficulty.

Cautious Scenario: Accelerating Decline Cultural hostility toward Christianity increases. Churches

continue to compromise or retreat. Believers become more isolated and less effective in public witness. Immigration debates become more divisive. Political tribalism deepens, making it nearly impossible to hold a nuanced biblical position. Younger generations abandon the faith in larger numbers. The church's cultural influence continues to shrink.

Recommended Actions: Double down on personal faith and family discipleship. Ensure your children have a robust understanding of Scripture, not just cultural Christianity. Find or create small communities of believers committed to biblical truth. Prepare for the possibility of increased marginalization by building networks of mutual support. Do not rely on political or cultural trends to reverse course.

Choose Your Path

The year ahead will reveal which Christians were serious about their faith and which were simply going through the motions. Complacency is not a neutral position. It is a choice that leads to captivity.

Pick one of the three scenarios above. Now follow the recommended actions for that scenario. Start today. Your response to this moment will determine your effectiveness in the next.

About Samuel Rodriguez

[Rev. Samuel Rodriguez](#) is Lead Pastor of New Season Church in Sacramento, California, recognized by Newsmax as one of America's most influential megachurches. He is President of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, the world's largest Hispanic Christian organization representing over 100 million Hispanic Evangelicals across more than 40,118 U.S. churches and over 450,000 churches throughout the Spanish-speaking diaspora. Rodriguez has advised Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald J. Trump, becoming the first Latino to participate in multiple U.S. presidential inauguration ceremonies. He has received numerous honors, including the Martin Luther King Jr. Leadership Award, the Rosa Parks Courage Award, and the Jerusalem Award, and holds honorary doctorates from William Jessup University, Northwest University, and Baptist University of the Americas.

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