

Transforming Revival Defined

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Saturday PM Session

I have concluded something this evening, and that is that you are all worship-aholics. I am glad nobody got their eyes poked out tonight by a flag or finger or something else. These are the kind of evenings that remind us what we have in store throughout eternity where we are not bound by these mortal bodies, the fatigue, the pain, and all the limitations that go with them.

Do you have enough energy to hang in there for just a little bit longer this evening? We are not rookies. My normal bedtime is 3:00 am, so do not tempt me. You know, it is interesting. Most of us are so timed conscience, particularly in the West. The reason for that is because we want to protect our boundaries. We are afraid somebody is going to encroach upon our space or, particularly our sleeping space. So, we tend to cut things off at what we think is a reasonable hour and in so doing, we often cut the Holy Spirit off at the knees. Sometimes we even use our own children as human shields against the purposes of God in our midst. I have seen that happen many times.

I remember talking with the believers in the Hebrides about the height of their revival, which lasted for four years from 1949 to 1953. It was amazing because every night when they would come home from work, which would be about 5 to 6 o'clock - sometimes it was fishing, sometimes you would be cutting peat blocks in the field for fuel, shearing sheep, doing all kinds of different things out there. Then they would go to the **first church service** during the revival years. Then they would go to a **second one** in the early hours of the morning. When that was over, they would go to what they called **Cottage Meetings** that often would last until 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning. This revival went through four years of all of the seasons including winter. If you have ever been late in the year in the Hebrides, man it is cold! It gets the full force of the North Atlantic gales and it is a damp cold, and it goes right into your bones.

I have been mindful of that because in many of these home meetings, they could accommodate maybe 20 or 25 percent of the people who wanted to get in. The others would stand outside the homes, out in fields with the windows wide open, and this would happen in November, December, January, February, into the wee hours of the morning. These people said to me, **"We never remember once ever feeling tired during those years. We never remembered being cold because the Presence of the Lord was with us and He strengthened us and He warmed us."**

I remember once attending back-to-back-to-back all-night prayer vigils. If you are counting, that is 48 plus 24, 72 hours. How many of you have ever done a 14- or 15-hour intercontinental flight? Now I do not sleep on planes. I have visited and ministered in a hundred and ten nations of the world. I do not know how many miles I have flown, but I know United has been counting a lot of them, and I just do

not sleep. By the time I land, I feel like death warmed over. And that is sometimes after 15 or 20 hours of non-stop travel. But here in this one occasion, it was 72 consecutive hours without any sleep.

I remember on that third night being out in a stadium, this was in Kampala in Uganda, feeling absolutely as alive as I have ever felt in my life. Exhilarated! And how is that possible with no sleep for 72 hours to actually be waking up and to be finding added renewed energy? **It is the Presence of God that renews our strength and that is what we want to welcome into our midst and into our communities.**

Transforming Revival

I promised you last night that one thing that we would do this evening is I would talk to you about a full-bodied definition of transforming revival. We need to understand what success looks like if we are to achieve. I think it is important that we set a high bar of expectations, not a little tiny sort of dwarf Olympics kind of thing in a way where you can take a little bunny hop over the bar and then celebrate your accomplishments like so many do today in the church. I want something that has hair on it when we talk about transforming revival.

Rapid and substantial church growth is very much a part of transforming revival, but it does not fully define it. For the term "transformation" to be properly applied to a community, **change must be evident, not only in the lives of that community's inhabitants, but also in the fabric of its institutions.** Most people head into churches to observe a revival that they have heard about, but **genuine transformation is best viewed by taking a walk through the community's commercial district.**

Almolonga, Guatemala

I remember a number of years ago, even before we started filming our transformations videos, visiting the community of Almolonga, Guatemala in the northern part of that country. I know we have some dear friends from Guatemala here with us this evening. I did not know anything about Almolonga at the time. I had actually been in the northern part of the country doing research on the Mayan New Year.

I was traveling with a friend of mine who worked with Wycliffe Bible Translators and it was the Mayan High Holy holiday. There were smoke altars and incense being lifted up on all the high places there. It was an oppressive feeling and it was very hot at this particular time. I was tired and I wanted something to drink in the worst way.

We came down out of the provincial capital of Quetzaltenango, and we passed under a banner that day that read in Spanish, "Jesus is Lord of Almolonga." And I thought, how wonderful on this day where all I have observed are offerings to the day deities of the Mayan cosmos. I have been to so many places that proclaim themselves to be the habitation of the Lord, then you get there and you cannot find any evidence that it is so. You begin to take the proclamations or declarations with a grain of salt. You know, where's the beef'?

My first inclination that something was different in this place was when I pulled off to the side of the road in the car and was looking for a place to get a drink. Low and behold, off the right side was the 'Vineyard of the Lord Beverage' kiosk.

Then, as I was filling myself from the Vineyard of the Lord, I realized, that I was not just thirsty, I am actually kind of hungry. It was fortunate for me that right across the street was the Angel's Bakery. Then I am kind of coming alive, so I turned and looked down the street and there was the El Shaddai Metal Fabricating plant. And pretty soon I am noticing that all the streets are named after Biblical places and there on the mud flaps of the big Mercedes produce trucks it says, "God is my Guide. A Mighty Fortress is my God." And there are churches everywhere and suddenly, like that guy on TV series, Lost, I am saying, "What is this place?"

This is a place where the Spirit of the Living God had come to reside and that is why in the National Press, they call Almolonga, the Ciudad de Dios, or the City of God. Like something that came right out of the book of Isaiah.

Author Wallace put it this way in his classic book, ***In the day of thy power revival must of necessity make an impact on the community***. And this is one of the means by which we may distinguish it from the more usual operations of the Holy Spirit - like physical healings, and salvation, and that sort of thing that is really normal, daily, Christian living. So, in the end, it is dramatic social, political, and even ecological renewal that sets these places apart from common experience.

If you have brought something to write, **here is the definition of transforming revival**.

- » In short, **a transformed community** is a neighborhood, a city, or a nation whose values and institutions have been overrun by the Grace and Presence of God;
- » **A transformed community** is a place where divine fire is not nearly been summoned, it has fallen.
- » **A transformed community** is a society in which natural evolutionary change has been disrupted by invasive supernatural power.
- » **A transformed community** is a culture that has been impacted comprehensively and undeniably by the Kingdom of God.
- » And, finally, **a transformed community** is a location where Kingdom values are celebrated publicly and passed on to future generations.

Collectively, that is what I am talking about when I use the term transforming revival, nothing less.

Prayer is Key

Now, obviously we have come to recognize **that prayer plays a very central and critical role to getting to that place of success**. There is a lot of prayer going on these days, as you may have noticed. With all of this recent emphasis on prayer, it would be easy to assume that the movement, the prayer movement, has finally entered its heyday.

Not only are more people praying today than at any time in church history, but they are coordinating their efforts in order to keep petitions before the Lord day and night. And on the surface, again, all of this looks mighty impressive. Most of us have been in these stadium prayer events or we participated in 24/7 prayer activities.

But at the end of the day, intercessory success is not a reflection of how many of us are praying or for how long. **These numbers speak to effort, not to results**. The only question that truly matters is are

our prayers getting answered? Are our prayers getting answered? **If you pray 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and your prayers are not getting answered, then maybe you should do something different.**

Now, that is the question tonight. Are our prayers getting answered? Well, some of them maybe. But, if we take an honest look at the big picture today, I think it is hard to argue that we are generating any kind of breakthrough momentum quite yet. And I am an optimist. And I am somebody that has spent the last 20 years following after God's breakthroughs and documenting them.

But on a global level, these are the facts.

- » Corruption is pervasive. Corruption is pervasive on the earth today.
- » Economies are failing.
- » Radical Islam is spreading.
- » Violence against women and children is increasing.
- » And there are a growing number of tightly wound conflicts in different parts of the world that have no obvious ends. Syria just being one case in point.

So, what have our prayers been accomplishing as far as these things are concerned? And, what has our growing prayer movement accomplished nationally?

Let us just talk about the United States.

- » In many American communities today, emboldened and militant atheists have taken control of the public market place.
- » On campuses, Christian student organizations are being portrayed as hate groups and denied access to facilities and services increasingly.
- » The institution of marriage has been redefined to include unions between people of the same sex, with other voices now clamoring for recognition of multiple spouse arrangements.
- » Pornography is exploding in snaring an estimated 54 percent of US pastors.

So, what is our growing prayer movement been accomplishing nationally?

Asking Hard Questions

I think we have to start with hard questions. That has to be a part of our process at gatherings like this along with the celebration. **If we want to win, we need to know what the challenge is. It is at the local level, not the international level, not the national level, the local level, the community level, that we should be observing the greatest impact from the prayer movements increased numbers and hours. But if we are, where are all the transformational stories? That they are a witness to the fact that our prayers are being answered?**

A few months ago. I got an email from the leader of a national organization that has spent more than 10 years with people from hundreds of US communities talking about, meeting, and strategizing how to take their communities for God - over a decade, hundreds of communities. I have been in several of

their meetings, and in this email that was sent out to everybody after more than 10 years of this, was this almost plaintive request, does anybody have any stories?

Many churches today, as I have suggested, **do not even have an allocated time for testimony.**

- » If God is not responding to our prayers - if He is not, what are we to make of this?
- » If we do not know or we cannot know, if our prayers are being answered, then why do we continue praying?

Secular society thinks this kind of behavior is crazy. We keep doing something and we are not getting the results - or, we exaggerate the results.

I think something is wrong with our approach to prayer, and I am not speaking to every individual. There are people in this audience tonight, probably many of them, who could run circles around me when it comes to effectual prayer. I know you are here and I salute you. But, there are many in the Church of Jesus Christ today in this nation, and many of our nations, that are not striking gold when it comes to their hours spent in intercession. We need to find out what is wrong. **Many Christians pray just enough to ease their conscience, but not long enough to win any decided victory. They play at praying; put very little into it, and therefore receive very little from it.**

As this good friend of mine said, "**Prayer is no longer a mighty force, but a harmless conventionality.**" I would like to suggest to you today **that transformational prayer is not centered on how many of us are praying or on how long we pray, rather, it is about who is praying and how they pray.**

I am going to unpack that in the next few minutes.

Now when we talk about who is praying, I am increasingly persuaded that if we want to see transformational progress, **we should spend less time praying and more time preparing ourselves to be heard when we do pray.** Let me give you an example of what I am talking about.

Cali, Colombia

Many of you know who Ruth Ruibal is. She is the widow of the late minister in Cali, Colombia, Julio Ruibal. Their story is featured on our first transformations video. Many people have celebrated this remarkable story that led to the breakthrough in that city in 1995, but there is an aspect of that story we did not cover in our documentary that is very important. I want to share it with you tonight.

The ministerial alliance in the City of Cali, Colombia before the revival broke out there was in shambles. Pastors in that city literally spent more time preparing dossiers on one another and handing them out - why you should have nothing to do with that minister or that church - than they did even preparing their own Sunday sermons. They fought like cats and dogs and the ministerial alliance basically disintegrated. To the point that the head of the ministerial alliance at that time, a man named Roosevelt Murial, told me the ministerial alliance and the City of Cali, Colombia came to consist of one box of files that nobody wanted.

Julio Ruibal and the 40-day Fast

Julio was one that left the alliance because it had become such a toxic environment. But, his heart was heavy and he decided that **he needed to have God increase his appetite for unity**, which he had lost.

And, he decided to commit himself to a 40-day fast to that end and he launched out on this fast in a very disciplined way.

After 10 days on this fast, the Lord answered his prayer. This profound affection for his fellow pastors bubbled up out of his inner most being. He longed to see them and to speak to them and to be with them. He felt the heart of God towards them in a rich and powerful way. If this had been me on this fast, I would have broken my fast that day, saying God, thank you, I have received what I came for, what I have been fasting for. But Julio did not do that even though the Lord had responded to him after 10 days. Julio pressed on with his fast to the 40th day.

As that fast and his time of prayer deepened and deepened and deepened, near the end of that time, his hunger for unity, his love for the brethren and his desire to see them reunited was so powerful, so intense, that his widow, Ruth, told me, "I believe Julio gave God the right to spend him if it would bring about this thing he now wanted more than life itself." Now that does not mean that God went out and hired a hit man. But what I think it did mean is that God lifted the extraordinary protection that would have belonged to Julio. I believe he would have been with us today, but, God knew that unless a kernel of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone. But, if it dies it brings forth much fruit. And it was a week later on his way to a meeting of pastors at a Presbyterian church that Julio was assassinated.

A week later at his funeral was the largest gathering of believers and ministers in the history of the city. Fifteen hundred leaders gathered at his funeral and they approached his widow that day with a signed covenant they had all signed saying to her, we have covenanted with one another that we will never, from this day forward, let anything come between us. And do you know, that that unity has held fast to this very day.

It gave birth to a series of all-night prayer vigils in which people broke the back of the cocaine cartel and the violence in that city and took that community back for God to the extent that every Saturday, they went out hauling in tons of garbage from areas of the community where there were no services. Every single Saturday, at least 500 people came into the Kingdom of God as a result of that effort alone. I do not know what you would call that ministry, **but the churches began to do more than the municipal government in both the areas of education and public health, all coming out of a seed that fell into the ground.**

It is not how long we pray or how many of us pray; it is who is doing the praying.

Blind Lady in Botswana

I remember one year going into the nation of Botswana in Southern Africa. I was going over to the northwest corner near the border with Namibia where there was a group of sand people. They are also known as the bushman, the oldest people tribe in Africa and the lowest on the social pecking order.

As recently as the 1800s, when the British were there in South Africa, you could actually get a license to hunt these people because they were not considered human. But, God had begun to move amongst them and had drawn several of them into the Kingdom, and I wanted to meet them. And I wanted to fellowship with them.

I had heard about this one particular woman who was an incredible prayer warrior. When she would talk to God things would happen. When I got to this community- it really was not a permanent community - it was an encampment is probably the best way I could describe it. They would live there for a little while and move on. But, I asked about her and they said, oh she lives over in this area. So, I walked over and there she lived in a hut, I guess you call it that. It was round, mud walled, but there was no roof on it. No roof.

I came up from behind where she was in this large opening in the wall, and she was sitting on a jerrycan that must have at one time had oil or something like that in it. She was sitting there on that can by herself in prayer, completely blind. She is completely blind, this old lady. And I want to tell you that when I got up to that opening, and I first saw her, it was as though this powerful force field almost knocked me off my feet. **The Presence of God in that place was as strong as anything I had ever felt.** I am out in the middle of nowhere. There is no conference going on, no churches that you could see anywhere. Just quietly this woman - really with nothing in her home, not even a roof, but I had this profound sense that she was famous in Heaven. That she had the full attention of the Most High God, and that when she spoke, the Almighty listened.

I often think about these great celebratory gatherings in these stadiums that we have, and I am not against them, 70,000 people, but I wonder how many of their prayers are actually being heard. I would rather be with 70 people whose prayers are being heard than 70,000 people where it is a mixed bag.

Transformational Prayer

And then there is the question of how we pray. Transformational prayer has also been called prevailing prayer, or effectual prayer, meaning that it attains the blessing that it seeks. And this is important, transformational intercessors know their prayers are being answered. They do not hope they are being answered, they know it.

Well, I want to give you a quick and simple definition of transformational prayer. It involves three things.

- 1. Praying with specificity within an urgent time frame with an expectation of results. Let us talk for a moment about this first element, praying with specificity. Many Christians assume that when something positive happens, it is the result of answered prayer. I do not. I am not one of those people. There is too much researcher in me. At the end of the day these people assume that when something positive happened it was a result of their answered prayer, but they cannot be certain because their prayers lack detail. The positive developments might just be a reflection of the law of averages. Good things happen at least some of the time. Right? Even to bad people. So how do you know that your prayer was answered if your prayer was abstract or general? You do not.**

In Mark 11:24, Jesus says, "I tell you whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours." Now, in this passage, **Jesus explicitly links prayer to faith.** And this is one of the things that makes transformational prayer transformational. The reason that generalized or randomized prayers do not get answered is because there is no faith attached to them. There is nothing to hook your faith to.

Now if you listen closely to much of the prayer that is lifted up these days, you will notice some things. First of all, you will notice that there are a lot of **generalized, blanket prayers**. “Heavenly Father, we ask that You will be with all those who are suffering today.” That is really helpful, is it not? “Lord, just be with all those that are suffering today.” “Oh, God, we pray Your blessing upon this nation.”

Do you have any specific thing that you would like to ask God to bless? “Lord, we pray that You would deal with the scourge of human trafficking.” In what specific way? Where? With whom?

And then there are the randomized prayers, which are very common in open floor prayer gatherings. “Jesus, I pray for Aunt Silvia's marriage to Uncle Robert.” And then the next person, “God I ask Your blessing upon the Aglow Conference in Orlando.” And the next person, “Yes, and Father we pray for the peace of Jerusalem.”

I feel like I have whiplash. Where are we going with this?

Many people today go to their knees and they pray for everything that floats into their imagination. But we cannot pray effectually for a variety of objects at once. If we talk to other people the way that we talk to God, most people would assume that we needed either medication or therapy. That guy has a bad case of ADD.

And our penchant for these generalized, blanket prayers is just as crazy when you think about it. It is like having a sales associate approach you in a building supply, store like Home Depot, when you are looking confused. “Is there anything in particular that I can help you find?” “I want everything I” “Well, you are just browsing then?” “No, I want something.” “So, you have a specific project in mind?” “Actually, I just want some tools and building supplies.”

I guarantee when you leave the store they will be talking about you in the employee lounge. Or, you would end up in the comedy section of Reader's Digest. Unfortunately, this is a pretty accurate depiction of the way that many of us pray.

Transformational prayer seeks a definite, specific object. We are not to expect something or anything; **we are to expect the particular thing that we are asking for.** We are lazy. We do not even take the time to get specific with God about our requests half of the time.

A Specific Prayer

Now let me give you an example of a specific prayer out of 1 Kings, Chapter 17.

“Now Elijah said to Ahab, ‘as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word.’” Now that is pretty specific, is it not? How could Elijah say such an audacious thing?

Because as James writes, “Elijah was just a man like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain and it did not rain upon the land for 3 ½ years. And he prayed again and the Heavens gave rain and the earth produced its crops.”. This is a guy who can pray and God would stop the rain and pray again and God would start the rain. That was Elijah's day, was it not?

The Flood of Blessings

Actually, the documentary that we are working on now is entitled The Flood of Blessings. I want to tell you just a brief bit about that story.

Several years ago in the **city of Joao Pessoa**, on the Northeast coast of **Brazil**, there is a Baptist church there called the Valentina Baptist church. It is very, very poor and they had been very conservative Baptists until the Lord started messing with them. Suddenly they began to open up to the fact that God could do some things they did not realize that He could do in this day.

There was one woman at this time who was not famous. She was very non-descript. Her chief claim to fame is that she sang in the church choir; otherwise, you would not notice her. But, God gave to this non-descript woman a dream. And she saw a community in her own nation of other Brazilians that were starving and that were dying in impoverished conditions that shook her to her core. But the interesting thing is, that not only did she see the vision of this place, she even got the name of the community in her dream. A place she had never heard of and never visited, called **Algodoao**.

She began to share with the people in her church about this dream that she had had because God had been moving in their midst. They were open to this and they immediately started to go and scurried to find maps to locate this place. They said, what do you think God was saying? She was saying **God has called us as a people to minister deliverance to these people that I saw in this community**. Okay, then. Let us find out where it is. But, it did not show up on any map.

After several months went by and they kept looking, people began to have second thoughts about whether this woman had actually received a word from the Lord. Then, just as they were about ready to give it all up, there was a visitor that came into the church and somehow, I do not actually remember the details, the discussion of Algodoao came up in conversation and they were saying we cannot find the place.

He said, actually, there is such a community. It does exist. And the reason that you do not find it on a map is because it is in an area where it has not rained in 25 years, so you do not get there by roads; you get there by driving up dry river beds. He said this is where it is located.

So, the church then took up an offering. Again, they are very poor, and it was just enough to purchase a full tank of gas for that church to send out a scout team several hours away to this particular community.

They parked their car near the community. They came to an elevated area where they could look over this kind of depression where there normally would be a lake or reservoir, but, because it had not rained in a quarter of century, there was nothing.

As they first looked on this site, including this woman, it was exactly the same that she had seen in her dreams. Little children just looked like you might have seen in Somali or Ethiopia during the height of the famine with destined bellies, suffering from mal-nourishment, dead carcasses of animals.

The water was down to just the brackish brine at the bottom of the underground water table. Many of the people had left because they could grow nothing there; and, there were just a few people in the community left and they were dying off. It was a terrible scene.

They walked down into the community not really sure what to do next. They walked up to one particular house. They knocked on the door there, and a man opened the door, and they said we have come from the city of Joao Pessoa, from the Valentina Baptist Church. God gave us a vision of your community and we are here because He has asked us to come and to serve you. The man disappeared into the darkness of the house. The team of four people stood there at the door for a long time wondering what had happened. Just as they were thinking, well maybe they were not welcomed and that they should move on, the door moved opened a little bit and there was a man with a whole family there and they were all weeping. This **was the only Christian family in the entire community. They had been praying to God specifically that He would send people to them to bring deliverance**, so, when that knock came on the door, it was not just some visitors that they would show hospitality to; **this was an embodied answer to prayer.**

So, what they began, the church, was a monthly routine where they would send a team up in the car, they would send them up with whatever they could afford to send, and that was not very much - a few clothing items, some beans that they would wrap up in a burlap sack. They would join this family on a rock out- cropping over the community. Every time as they would close their time together and they would pray over the region and over the community that God would come and bring deliverance and show Himself mighty.

Month and after month they would make their deposit there. Then it came to the month of December and the one thing about the Valentina Baptist church that was special, is that they would save up a little bit of money throughout the year for what they called a Christmas Feast. They would put together a wonderful meal and the Believers would fellowship together. But, now that December had come and they were aware of the condition of these people in Algodao, they just could not spend the money on the feast. So, they used all the money they had to prepare 80 little gift baskets.

They took them up to Algodao and they distributed them amongst the people. But, on the way home after spending time in prayer, a discouragement settled over them. They said to the Lord as they were praying on their way home, "Lord, why did you speak to us about this place? Why did you not speak to a wealthy church that could really have done a lot to help these people? We have so little." And the Lord spoke back to them and He said, **"I have chosen whom I have chosen."**

Christmas came and went and they are now prepared in January to make their next monthly visit up to Algodao and as they get to the area where they would drive into the dried river bed, they heard a sound that they had never heard before. It was a roaring sound. They came upon the river and it was a torrent of water just pouring to the point they had to park their car, form a chain, put the things they had across their back, and very carefully make their way across.

As they came up to that area, that elevated area where they had first laid sight on all of these suffering people, their mouths fell open again. This time, their mouths fell open a second time. But, this time, it was because everywhere their eye could see, there was water. There were animals drinking the water. There were little children splashing themselves. Remember, every young person, 25 years and younger, had never seen rain in their entire lives.

The women were washing their clothes. From that rock outcropping where they would go to pray at the end of every visit, there was a roaring water fall coming down from that very rock outcropping. As they moved into the community, they heard the story: Right after you left the earth shook here and water came up out of the ground and the Heavens opened and it rained and it rained and it rained and the mayor of the community called in The Flood of Blessings.

That community, many of its inhabitants, the majority of its inhabitants were swept into the Kingdom of God. Everything that they plant there now grows. They grow mangoes, they grow cotton, they raise bees, they produce this incredible, special, nutritious honey. The mayor now is in charge of the whole economic district in that part of Brazil. It is now an economic power house. People are now moving into Algodao instead of away from that place because the Lord has visited it.

So, God not only answers the pray of Elijah, He answers the prayers of people in Northeastern Brazil in just the last few years.

Cape Town, South Africa

Now, to give you another example of this kind of specific prayer: in the year 2000, I was in the city of Cape Town, South Africa. I was there for two reasons. I was there to speak to a global group of Anglicans, Bishops and Canons from all over the world that were interested in knowing more about transformation. Several hundred of them gathered and I spent a week with them speaking on the subject of transformation. Then I had a Saturday and Sunday free, and then was the next week speaking to a group of churches in the Cape Town area.

Well, on Saturday morning somebody approached me and said, there is a business man here in Cape Town who would like to invite you to share this evening at a transformations cocktail. I said, "well, I do not think I know what a transformations cocktail is." They said, "well, he has rented out the presidential suite of the Newlands Rugby Stadium, which is the largest public venue in the city, and he has invited sports celebrities, political leaders, business leaders from all over the city, a few pastors to talk about transformation. Would you come and speak to them?" I said I will absolutely do that.

It was a very interesting experience talking to people with their cocktails in hand, their gin and tonics and their martinis about repentance and prevailing prayer. They all listened with rapt attention. There was one man there that night that I had an extended conversation with who was one of the few people in the room that was actually a believer. He was the equivalent for the United States an FBI agent.

He was a Federal Intelligence Officer for South Africa that was in the Cape Town area because the city had been experiencing a series of bombings. Car bombs and pipe bombs had been set off routinely throughout the city by an organization. It happened to be an Islamic organization, which was named interestingly enough the People Against Gangsterism and Drugs. P.A.G.A.D they called themselves.

So, this group that was against gangsterism and drugs were making their point by blowing people and property up across the city. Makes you scratch your head. But, it was devastating the city's economy. Nobody was going out into public places. Everybody was scared to death. Parents would not let their kids go out to theaters and so forth. It was devastating.

And I said, finally, how can we pray for you? He said, well we know who is planting these bombs, but we have not been able to find where they are building them. We need to find the laboratories. I said, okay. We will pray about that. That was Saturday night.

The next day, which was Sunday, there was a city-wide prayer gathering called at a local college on their soccer field. There were probably between five and eight thousand people at this event. For sure the most boring prayer meeting I have ever attended in my entire life. Without a doubt. Everything had been scripted out ahead of time. Every single word that would be spoken in prayer that day had been worked out in a committee and written on a piece of paper and different pastors standing on a platform in the infield of this soccer field would read a part of a prayer and the people in the stands were supposed to read the other part back responsibly.

I had a camera there that day and I was looking through my telephoto lens at the people. I could tell that they were doing everything except praying. They were laughing with each other; they were leaning on their husband's shoulder and sleeping. I mean, they were completely disengaged. I am just thinking to myself, this is an absolute waste of time.

Just as I was thinking that we had to do something, there was another African brother standing right next to me who was reading my mind. He looked at me and he said we need to take a risk. I said, exactly. Well, what should we do? I said, I think we need to get up on the platform and hijack this thing.

We went up to the master of ceremonies who was a very dear pastor doing what he thought was the best thing to do and my friend whispered in his ear. He said this is not working. We have lost the people. We need to take a risk.

So, he said, well what should we do? He turned to me. I said we need to begin to pray transformational prayers. We need to begin to pray very specific things within an urgent timeframe expecting God to answer. And then he said, well like what? I said, what do you think is on the minds of everybody that has come to this prayer gathering today and we have not said a word about it? There are bombs going off all over this city. Why do we not ask God to reveal to the authorities where these bombs are being made so these people can be arrested and we can put an end to this? They said, okay, let us do that.

And we began to pray. I mean it is like somebody flicked a switch. Electricity surged into the prayer meeting; people woke up, they began to pray with passion. This was something that was touching their lives. They cared about it; it was detailed, and they cried out to God that He would answer that prayer. And you could feel these prayers being lifted up fervently to God. That was Sunday night, 24 hours after I had spoken to this federal official. We left there about 9:00 pm.

I got up at about 5:00 am, not my best time by the way. Do not ever ask me to speak at the early service. But, I had to get to the airport for an early morning flight to Johannesburg. The same fellow that had said, we need to take a risk, was driving me to the airport.

We came to a stop light and there was a little boy in the median of the road with a stack of papers. My friend rolled his window down, bought a paper, the light changed, so without even looking at it, he passed it over to me in the passenger side. Would you care to venture a guess about the headlines of that morning newspaper? Within two hours of that prayer, of nearly 8,000 people in Cape Town, the police swarmed into all of those laboratories, arrested all of those bomb makers, there has not been a

bomb set off in the city of Cape Town from that day. It ended. The economy rebounded and **the global day of prayer was birthed out of that time**. That is transformational prayer- praying with specificity.

2. Another aspect of transformational prayer is that it is transacted within an urgent timeframe.

David was besieged by his enemies and he prayed, “hasten o God to save me. O, Lord come quickly to help me because if You do not, it will not matter if I pray anymore.”

In Exodus 14, Moses cried out to the Lord as the armies of Pharaoh threatened to sweep them into the Red Sea. But in this case, so urgent was the timeframe that God Himself cut off the prayer and said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the Israelite to move on.” One modern translation simply reads, “Quit praying and get the people moving!”

In a great number of cases today, the need that we are bringing before God is pressing somebody, somewhere. And if God does not respond to that prayer within a matter of days or even hours, we can simply stop praying because it will not matter anymore.

In a situation like this, patient, open- ended intercession makes no sense whatsoever. That would be like soliciting bids from an architect to build a super market in a neighborhood where everybody is starving to death. Like going out to someplace in the Horn of Africa, maybe, by the time we select the winning design, we identify a building site, we go through the permitting process, we hire a contractor, we erect the structure, and then we stock it with food, all of our customers will be dead. What is the point?

George’s Daughter Drowned

My daughter; when she was two years of age, got into a swimming pool in southern California. We found her on the drain in the deep end of the pool; she had been there for we estimate 45 minutes. When my wife broke the surface of the water, she was as dead as a door nail. If I was ever going to pray within an urgent timeframe that was it; because you know when the brain is starved of oxygen, even if somebody survives, when they wake up they are not the same person anymore. So, I am crying out to God within an urgent timeframe.

Interesting thing, the first indicator that God was answering that prayer was that the emergency aid vehicle arrived at the house in 60 seconds because they just happen to be cruising that particular neighborhood in a subdivision on that particular time at that very moment. Hooked her up to some machines, got her breathing artificially and roared off to a hospital with my wife and I in a car behind the ambulance.

My mother standing there on the sidewalk and I am thinking, okay this is life and death. Who do I want to ask my mother to call to pray? Interesting now that it is life and death, you are going through a whole rolodex of names in big ministry leaders. No, no, no. Who do I need? I need somebody that God listens to, not just somebody willing to pray. **I need somebody that God listens to.** Who would that be?

I remembered two years before being in a church in Huntsville, Alabama, and before I spoke in the morning service, I was taken back into a little room and there was a group of little children that surrounded me, laid their hands on me to pray, and I remember the Presence of the Lord filling up that room. And as those little children laid their hands on me, electricity started flowing through my body

in the most extraordinary way. So I said, get a hold of so and so in Huntsville, Alabama, and get those children praying. I need somebody that will pray in a way that God will hear. I wanted the children.

By the way, I remembered seeing some footage not too long ago when I was visiting some contacts in Chiang Mai, Thailand, doing some research on a case of transformation revival in Omkoi Province there where upwards of 40,000 Animists and Buddhists had come into the Kingdom of God and this whole move of God was stimulated through the prayers of four- and five-year old children.

They got up every morning at 3:00 am, unbending by any adults, unaccompanied by any adults, asking for the Presence of God to come. I saw some video footage in that hotel room of these children that would pray up to 18 hours at a stretch. These little tiny bodies, tears streaming down the cheeks, their faces...and I looked at them and I felt two things. I felt overwhelmed by the Presence of God and a deep stabbing pain of conviction. And as I looked at these children thinking how do they do it 18 hours at a time? As I looked at them carefully, I realized that they were seeing something. They were seeing Someone. They were lost in Him and did not think about time or anything else. They could see Him.

When a situation is urgent, we do not have time for pulpit prayer committees, the next Wednesday evening prayer gathering, or even a lengthy prayer.

- » And by what right do we have to ask troubled and hurting masses in our communities to hang in there until we, the church, get our act together?
- » How do we preach patience to the drug addict that is losing his health, his family, and his self-respect?
- » What is our argument for waiting till the little girl is being sexually traumatized by a lascivious uncle?
- » And, what does our promise of a bright tomorrow mean for citizens that are being fleeced by greedy companies or corrupt politicians?

So many people around us today do not have time. So many circumstances are short-lived. We pray NOW. We need answers NOW, quickly, or it does not matter. What is it that makes us the least bit willing to live with this kind of brokenness and dysfunction in our midst? I have people come and ask me all the time, so how long will it take when we begin to prepare the way of the Lord before He comes? I said you are already 10 years too late. This should have happened 10 years ago. Move it!

It is analogist this sort of approach that we take today to living in a house where the toilet is overflowing. You know, instead of being dismayed by the situation, we sort of just accept it as normal. But it is not normal, is it? And you know when a toilet overflows, well, let us be honest about it. First of all, it is usually not your house. You are usually at a guest bathroom at somebody else's house. And when it overflows it is not empty. So it is a bad situation and it overflows. Initially it goes out until it hits a wall or something and then it starts going up. It rises and rises, first to our ankles, then to our knees, and eventually to our waist and then our chest. And even though the stench is noticeable, we continue to go about our business chopping lettuce in the kitchen at an island, vacuuming drapes in the living room, eating popcorn on the couch and watching the TV. I do not think so.

We need to understand one thing very clearly this evening. **The longer we take to prepare the way of the Lord, the greater the price our community will pay.**

3. Finally, we need to pray. If we are going to pray transformational prayer, we need to pray with an expectation of results. This is how Jesus prayed; this is how the early church prayed. And, frankly, it is the only kind of prayer that makes any sense. Desire for revival is one thing, but confident anticipation that our desire will be fulfilled is another thing entirely.

Duncan Campbell, Hebrides Revival

I want to share with you as I close; I am going to leave a few pages of my notes unshared tonight. I want to share an illustration with you that is from Duncan Campbell. Some of you, many of you have heard about him. He was the man that God used as a real catalyst at the Hebrides Revival in the late 1950s. It is a tremendous story about expectancy in the place of prayer.

I will just read this because I think it is so much more powerful in his own words. He was addressing at the time the largest Christian convention in Great Britain. **It was called the Bangor Convention.** It is in a coastal community in Northern Ireland. He said, "I was sitting on the platform just like these brothers and sisters here beside the Chairman of the Convention and the other speaker, when I was suddenly gripped with the conviction that I had to leave the Convention and leave at once to go to this particular island called Bernera."

Well that is nice, except that he was supposed to give the closing address.

"So I turned to the Chairman and told him my convictions. And he said, 'Oh, you cannot leave the Convention, you are scheduled to give the closing address.' But I simply could not give the closing address with this conviction of soul."

How many of us would have done such a thing? I mean, I am thinking about this Conference here. If that happened to me this afternoon, would I have had the courage to go to Jane and say, "I am sorry. I have to go. I cannot speak for your tonight. The Lord has told me to go to this particular island. I do not know anybody there. I do not know why I am going, I just have to go." But Duncan Campbell did.

So he said, "I left by plane to the city of Glasgow, and from Glasgow by plane to the town of Stornoway, and then by car across the island where a ferry met me and took me to this tiny island of 500 inhabitants."

I traced this route many times so I can see it vividly. Five hundred people on this island. Leaves the biggest Convention in Britain to go to an island of 500 people.

"On arriving, I met a young lad. I said nothing to the man who had ferried me across. They were strangers to me. I had never been to the island before, and to my knowledge knew no one who lived there. But I was there. So, I said to the man, would you direct me to the nearest minister? The man said, 'We have no minister on the island. At the moment, both pulpits are vacant.'"

Would you have questioned your guidance?

"Well, then, would you direct me to the nearest elder. Yes, the nearest elder lives in that house up there on the hill. So, I said to the young lad, 'do you mind going up to the elder and telling him that Mr. Campbell has come to the island?' And if he asks, 'what Campbell?' 'Tell him the Campbell that was on the Island of Lewis' (which is where the famous revival was underway).

So that young lad went up and after a few minutes came back and he said, 'Hector McKinnon (who is the elder), **was expecting you to arrive today**. You are to stay with his brother. And he asked me to tell you that he had already set up a meeting at the church at 9 o'clock tonight and he expects you to address it.'"

"Now, explain that as you will. Here was a man, the island Postman, who on the morning of the day that I sat in the Bangor Convention decided to spend the whole day in prayer. He was concerned about the parish community, particularly about the state of young people growing up indifferent to God. His wife told me that on three occasions that day, she went to the door of the barn and he was praying and heard him cry out, 'God I do not know where he is, but You know and now please send him.'"

"At about 10 o'clock that evening, Hector McKinnon was possessed of the conviction that God had heard his cry and that I would be on the island on this particular day. And now, here I was. We went to the church where about 80 people had gathered. The service was very ordinary. Indeed, by the end I wondered if I had been led to the island after all. But there were men there nearer to God than I was."

What a humble statement from the man that God had used as a catalyst in this mighty revival. By the way, just as a quick aside, **one of the studies we had done is to see if we could find any pattern amongst the thousand cases of transforming revival that we have studied over this last decade** - what kind of people God used and worked through as revival catalysts. We looked and we looked and we could not find any pattern. We saw mayors, we saw retired people, we saw students, we saw little children, we saw law enforcement people, and we were about to give up when looking one last time we suddenly noticed in flashing neon **this common thread through all of them. And that was that every last one of these individuals exhibited a pronounced humility.**

"Mr. McKinnon come to me after the service and he said. 'I hope you are not disappointed that revival has not come to the church tonight, but God is hovering over us and He will break through any minute.' He WILL breakthrough any minute. God is the God of revival, but we are the human agents through which revival is possible and God found that man in the Postman of Bernera."

"We are now walking down from the church, which is located on a hill 300 yards above the main road. The entire congregation is heading down the path and we are walking behind them. When suddenly (and here is the difference between evangelism and revival), suddenly the elder halts and took off his hat. "Stand still Mr. Campbell, God has come. He has come, look at what is happening." And I looked toward the congregation and saw them falling on their knees among the heather. And I heard the cries of the penitent. This was 11 o'clock at night and we continued on that hillside until 4 o'clock in the morning. The island was suddenly gripped by God. Was it because I had come to the island? Banish the thought. The mighty visitation shook Bernera Island from center to circumference. I questioned if there was even a single house on the island that was not visited that very night. An awareness of God, a consciousness of God seemed to hover over the very atmosphere. The night was charged with the power of Almighty God. That is revival."

In the words of the late A.W. Tozer, to pray without expectation is to misunderstand the whole concept of prayer and relationship with God. The Apostle James frames the issue in even stronger terms," let

him who prays ask in faith nothing waivered, for he that waivers is like the wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.”

Praying without an expectation of results is tantamount to gambling. It is like a ball in a roulette wheel. Round and round it goes, where it lands, nobody knows. All faiths project some form of seeking. But Christianity is a finding religion. Biblical intercession is not akin to spinning Buddhist prayer wheels where we hope to accumulate enough merit to warrant divine attention and reward.

Here is the point where I was going to talk to you if I had not been so long winded about what is involved in growing an appetite for God's Presence. But, all of these things that we are talking about last night and today are part of a larger body of teaching called **the journey to transformation**, which is all that God has shown us in His graciousness over these last 15 years. If you are interested in how to access more of this, we need to end now, but you can do that - getting CDs and so forth by going to the product table there at the end - in the next room.

I was at a prayer gathering in San Jose, speaking of the end, last year and I knew it was different when I walked in and it was a three-day prayer gathering and they spent 90 percent of their time at this prayer conference praying. What is with these people?

They had removed all the chairs from the auditorium and instead they had spread blankets out on the floor and there were families sitting on all these blankets. Most of these people were from India. And they were engineers and programmers from India that were now working for Silicon Valley companies. The fathers had come, the mothers had come, and the children had come to pray together. It was a powerful, electric time and they wore me out. I realized that I needed to build some stamina in the place of prayer.

At the end, I asked the man that was leading the meeting, a very humble man, about this and he said, well, I asked my mentor in India, this very godly, old man, one day he said how often do you pray? And he said, my mentor answered me and he said, **I pray until God speaks to me. But God must speak to me every day.** How simple. And yet how extraordinary.

We talk to God every day, but is it true that God speaks to us every day? There are many, many people that go to church week after week that will go weeks, months without hearing clearly and without mistaking it, the voice of the Lord. **We need to hear the voice of the Lord.**

There is one video that we have in ample supply and it is the most recent one from the state of Kentucky, so for those of you who wondered if this thing **called transforming revival can happen in America**, there is a great example of it.

A community where 90 percent of the young people were strung out on drugs, dying like flies, just recently won the Nation's highest award presented by the Drug Czar, from the Obama administration. He came to this community, presented them with the Nation's highest award for drug eradication. This is just one of the symptoms of what God can do when people cry out to him in transformational prayer.

God bless you and thank you for your patience this evening.

PS. George's 2-year old daughter lived and was completely healed.