

The Need For Revival

by Doug Stringer

Transcript

A privilege of being on with this call for a solemn assembly. It's definitely needed. We see that even in the book of Joel, although the book of Joel only consists of three chapters, it was written as a wake-up call to a nation in crisis.

And this has been something burdening my heart for many years, and I'll share more of that in a moment. But let's start by just acknowledging the Lordship of Christ, because I've shared this for decades, that the highest form of worship is simple obedience to God. The first time the word worship is ever spoken about in scripture, the point of first reference, has nothing to do with singing or instruments, and yet it's about obedience to God.

And I really believe that we're in a season where, though we are saved by grace, not by words that any man should boast, but we have got to get back to the worship of the God of the house. In fact, last year, I wrote an article called Putting God Back in the House, His Own House, the L back in Bethel. You know, the scripture says that Bethel or Bethel means house of God, and yet we're not to worship the institution, we're to worship the God, the L, of the Bethel, the God of the house of God.

And too often I think that often we have become those who worship the institution, we worship the things that are secondary to what is most important, but there's something about the equalizing, being in the presence of a holy, holy, holy God. I remember Leonard Ravenhill, who'd become like a spiritual grandfather many years ago, and he had a teaching called Woe, Lo, Go out of Isaiah 6, and something about being wowed or woed in the presence of a holy, holy, holy God. 2 Chronicles chapter 5 speaks of when the priests came into the holy place.

When they came out, they came not according to division. And how does that happen? When we all have our opinions, we have our different personal preferences, our different ideas, we have different styles of worship, but there's something about when we restore the altar of authentic worship in the presence of a holy, holy, holy God. And we come into his presence with only his agenda.

He tends to equalize all of us regardless of our ethnic background, nationality, denominational background, or the presence of a holy, holy, holy God. We're wowed in his presence, we're humbled in his presence, and he's able to do things that we could not do in our own natural capacity or human ability. In fact, I'm reminded of in Matthew chapter 28, and it speaks of that after the resurrection that the disciples went to the mountain that was appointed to them, that Jesus had appointed to them, and it says they simply did one thing, and they worshiped him, period.

See, when we come, so often we come together in our gatherings, we have all kinds of personal agendas and our personal ideas and opinions, but there's something about coming into the presence of a holy, holy, holy God without any personal agendas that equalizes us in his presence. In Matthew 28, 2 Chronicles 5, we're in the presence of God. He equalizes us and he's able to do what only he can do.

In fact, it was in the 1980s, I remember our city, Houston, was going through so many different things. At that time, we were the fourth largest, fourth or fifth largest city in America. I think we're now arguably third or fourth with the Chicago, which is a very large metroplex, obviously, but I remember going through so many difficult things, and I realized there's some things that we have to recognize that we cannot do in our own strength, our capacity.

It takes the presence of God and only the presence of God through God's people walking together, crossing racial, denominational, generational lines, meeting at the cross of Christ, seeking his presence, inviting his presence, and I remember we did what we called Jericho walks and Jericho marches around certain rock concerts and like Black Sabbath and Twisted City. I'm aging myself now, but these were bands back in the day that were very heavy metal but also had a very demonic side to them, and so I remember songs like Motley Crue singing songs like Shout at the Devil, and just the things, especially back then, I was working on one of the highest crime areas of the city late at night, working with runaways, drug addicts, at-risk youth, gang members. It was one of those times where my heart was so broken.

Like in the book of Joel, we've been between the porch and the altar for those who have gone astray and who needed the Savior to give a revelation of the work of the cross and the power of the resurrection, so we began to do these Jericho walks based on scripture, you know, walk around each day for the once each day for six days on the seventh day, seven times around the walls of Jericho in silence, just prayer walking as we call them now, prayer walking and asking God, God, give us your heart. As the founder of World Vision used to say, God, break my heart with things that break yours. As we began to walk the streets and walk around these venues and concerts and just began to cry out for those that were blinded by the things that the flesh was attracted to, the Lord began to open up hearts, and without us even having to say a word, just being the presence, there's something about that, the presence, the ministry of presence of being there after we've been worshipped, prayed up in the presence of God, there's a presence that comes with us, 2 Corinthians 2:14 says, we become the dispensers or the manifestors or the fragrance of heaven, and so we began to see some incredible things happen.

I won't get into all those stories, but we began to do those. We began to do our Jericho drives around the city of Houston. We have a thing called the 610 loop, and now the larger one called the Beltway, and it's probably about 40 miles around back then.

It's large enough, the Beltway, but we drive around with caravans of buses and cars and drive around the city once each day for six days on the seventh day, seven times, and then we'd have a time to gather to worship together. There's something about being still in the presence of God, having him break our hearts with the things that break his, that opens up our hearts to know how to have informed intercession, but at the same time, by restoring the altar of worship, God then begins to even expand the capacity of influence to those who may not even be open to the gospel. We began to see incredible testimonies, so we fast forward from there, and in 1996, after we've been working with churches and gathering churches together in our greater Houston area, I remember taking about a month, the month of July of 1996, and just seeking the Lord at home, working from my house, being in a fasted mode, not complete fast, but being fasted, seeking the Lord, still taking care of things in the ministry, my telephone or things like that, but staying in

my house, just seeking God.

God, what is it that we need to do now for this next phase in our city and for our nation and the things you have us involved in around the world? And after that month of being fasted in my home, I remember the Lord putting it on my heart to rent an amphitheater and call it Houston Prayer Mountain. I understand Houston has no mountain, it's flat land, but I found the highest place we could find, it was an old landfill by these two major highways intersecting Houston, one of the most driven by crossways and highways in the nation, and I remember going and calling the owner, knowing that he gets, because it became an amphitheater, it became a place for rock concerts and all kinds of other activities, and I knew that he would do this, but I called him and offered him just a crazy amount for, just a minimal amount to rent it for 40 days. I wanted to have it for the last 40 days of 1996, and I didn't have the money, but I would just, I just, I thought if he says no, it's probably the pizza I didn't have the night before in that month of fasting in July, but after that month of fasting in July of 1996, I called him and I said, this is what I'm sensing I need to do, I'd like to rent your amphitheater for the last 40 days of 1996, and he laughed at me, so I knew that, oh, I knew it couldn't be the Lord, and he says, I know who you are, I can't take your money.

He actually said, look, I'll tell you what, just so I could pay the light bill, the water bill, I'll tell you what, I usually get X amount of thousands of dollars a day plus concessions for all these things, but I will give you the whole 40 days for half of what you offered me. I was taken aback, so then obviously the Lord was in it, and before we walked on that facilities at that amphitheater for those 40 days of last of 1996, last 40 days, we had 300 plus pastors come together, and we took communion together, we began to pray together, saying, God, we need to be equalized in your presence, we ask for you to show up and have your way, and that what happens these next 40 days would not just impact our city, but the nations of the world, so we will pray, give us Houston, give us the nations, and to our amazement, before we even walked into that property, the flat cost of the place was taken care of by people from all over inner city ministries, from Denver to people from Muslim countries, unbeknownst to them, they just called felt led to sow into what we were doing, these are Christians in Muslim countries, and so in those 40 days, we never took up an offering, except for we had a box for those who wanted to give to the ministries we were giving to around the city during the holidays, and helping them, and Isaiah 1 model, and so it was amazing to see at that time, over 25 to 30,000 people showed up in those 40 days, some from nations all over the world, and just felt led to come to Houston, those are one of those divine moments, I'm reminded of even what Duncan Campbell said in the supernatural move of God that happened in the 1948 Hebrides, and Duncan Campbell said this, it takes a supernatural to break the bonds of the natural, the reality is we need the supernatural of God to break the bonds of the things that are happening in the natural, even today, so in 1948, when Duncan Campbell said this, he goes on to say, you can make community, you can make a community missions conscious, you can make a community crusade conscious, but only God can make the community God conscious, just think about that, what would God do if it came to any, if God, what would happen if God came to any community in that kind of power, I believe he says, that day is coming, may God prepare us all for it, amen, and of course that was the conclusion of what he wrote in his, when God stepped down, meaning God stepped down into our world, into our circumstance, what would happen if as the church, an individual posture of humility, repentance, and worship, and then the corporate posture of authenticity came before the throne of heaven, what would happen, God would step into our current circumstances, God would show, we've all been praying for revival, been reading about histories and awakenings and revivals past, I don't want to just read about them, I want to be a part of what God is doing by surrendering my will, my desires, we have a saying within our ministry, while men reach for thrones to build their own kingdoms, Jesus reached for a towel to wash men's feet, while men seek exalted in high

places, the most exalted one left his highest place to pursue us, you see what we need is to get things shifted just like this, that slight adjustment, that spiritual adjustment, many people who go to chiropractors, if you've had your back out of alignment, you know that just one little alignment set, being set back in place, puts everything else back in place, the same is true, we've just been getting just slightly out of alignment, we need to get back into alignment to worship the El of the Bethel, the God of the house, we need to get back to putting, to worshiping God, not the worship itself, you see oftentimes we are so enamored by celebrity, even in the church, we begin to worship the worship, and we begin to worship the oratorically gifted communicator, begin to worship other people, but what we need to do is get back to the worship of the one who is worthy of all adoration and worship, the one who is worthy to worship him in the beauty of holiness, because it's the glory due his name, you see getting back, I don't want to lose the awe of what he did in my life, when he gave me a revelation of the work of the cross and the power of the resurrection, and it's easy in life and just going through the journeys of life to get out of alignment, and to begin to enjoy the institutional side of the church, rather than getting back to the incarnational manifest presence of God, I remember Leonard Ravenhill used to say to me that he said, God doesn't answer prayer, he answers desperate prayer, and I think there's something about the desperation that the tension that is going on around us in the world brings us to a posture of brokenness and humility, a place of authentic worship and saying, God only you, we need the supernatural, as Duncan Campbell said, the supernatural to break the bonds of the natural, and so that's where I sense that we need to be today, and as I look back at even Matthew 28 and 2nd Chronicles 5, that became a common theme at our Houston Prayer Mountain in 1996, when many people were touched from all over the world, without promoting it, not trying to make a big thing, we prayed every night, we worshipped every night, we had so many churches coming, and their different worship teams would take turns, and I remember people did not want to leave well after midnight every night, even though even work was going on throughout the holidays as well, and then starting again at six in the morning of times of worship, the Baptists in the fourth square, the Assemblies of God, the fifth church on the fourth corner, the Lutherans, the Methodists, there was all kinds of denominations coming together, equalized in the presence of a holy God in a place we called Houston Prayer Mountain, and Matthew 28 was another theme because it said, as I said earlier, that we came to the mountain that was appointed for us, that the Lord we felt had appointed for us to pray for revival for the nations, and for us to get our hearts right, it became every night a time of brokenness, humility with joy in the Holy Spirit, but it had to start with that posture of humility, recognizing we're nothing without him, we're undone without him, we need him, we gather to put aside our differences for 40 nights of worship, 40 nights of prayer, 40 nights of ministry together, and it was amazing how many churches, even megachurch pastors that normally would not come together, God did something so divine in those 40 years that only he can do because the supernatural broke the bonds of the natural. It was amazing to see Baptists and Assemblies of God in fourth square, and Church of God in Christ, and Missionary Baptists, so many gathered together, many began to exchange the pulpits later, and began to become friends, and it was an amazing season, but even into 1997, after those 40 days, the church began to come together and say, what would happen if God moved so massively in our region? We wouldn't be able to contain baptisms in the church, so I was sharing one day, I said, what would be great if we just had this outdoor huge place to baptize people getting saved, and while I was sharing that in a particular church, the owners of the water theme park looked at each other and said, we have a huge baptismal, and their water theme park, they had the wave pool, so out of that discussion, 103 churches came together, not to close the water park down later that year, in 1997, it was during the summer, but instead, we agreed to come together, encouraged our people to come, bring as many people we knew that maybe would not even know the Lord to have, and to come into the water theme park for a day, and then after church, and then that

Sunday afternoon, at a particular time that afternoon, we had built a little platform that went way out into the wave pool, and they made an announcement in the whole water theme park that at that particular time, to gather at the wave pool for a special presentation, so the whole water park closed down, except for coming to, and it turned out to be a record day, a record day of attendance, and to our, the media was there, and to our amazement, we had all these pastors coming into the water in case people wanted to come and give their lives to the Lord, and again, this came out of the place of worship together, corporate authority, it was released in corporate worship, corporate humility, and corporate repentance.

God began to do something in a corporate context throughout the city, and that day, we didn't think this through, we had the old carbon paper, and so we had so many people coming into the water to give their lives to the Lord, and obviously trying to write it down with pencil or pen, the carbon paper didn't work, but the media said there was over 600 people, and we had well over that getting baptized, and different pastors from all different churches in the water with us, baptizing people, giving their lives to the Lord, it was an amazing day to see the unity of the brethren that came out of the context of corporate worship, corporate humility, and brokenness in the presence of a holy, holy, holy God, and then we fast forward from there, we saw so many other things, reconciliation things happening in our city that I won't get into right now, but in 19, in 2011, because there were so many things happening up until then, in 2011, some friends of mine, the Cataldos from International House of Prayer from Kansas City wanted to meet with me at my office in Houston, along with some friends from the, at that time, Governor Perry's office and the governor of Texas, and of course, our friends David and Cindy Lane from the American Renewal Project, they came to my office and said, we wanted you to do a psalm assembly in Reliant State, now it's called NRG State, but it was called Reliant Stadium back in 2011, and it sounded great, but I said, look, so often, our get-togethers, and we call them psalm assemblies, or we call it a time of prayer, but it turns into a bunch of communicators and oratorically gifted speakers and preachers pontificating, and that's great, but if you're saying that we have a nation in crisis, we need to come together in authentic humility and repentance, reflection, to get a revelation of the work of the cross, the power of the resurrection, if we're ever going to see revival or reformation, we need to start in that place of a humble posture before God, through worship, corporate worship, and then understand we need this place of corporate humility and repentance, and they were saying, that's exactly what we want, I said, yes, but I know everybody says that, but they said, look, we're not going to even receive an offering, no egos, no logos, no selling of merchandise, I'm going, really, and so we began to process, took eight hours for them to finally convince me to participate, and I had the privilege of going into it optimistically, going into it cautiously optimistically, saying, look, if you've got these two other governors coming, and you've got all these people, it's going to be so much fodder and things about what it really is going to be, we've got to keep it pure, and to my amazement, and it was a privilege to be a part of it, to be one of the moderators that day, and to help facilitate the day, help mobilize that nationally, and on that day, to our amazement, we had some say over 50,000, some say 38,000, some, I think the average is 44,000, the people even worked at Reliance Stadium said that there was at least that many people coming through, and more so, but to see that many thousands coming together to fill Reliance Stadium for one purpose, to seek the Lord, to worship the Lord, in humility and repentance, there was a corporate release, I mean, you could mention so many, there are so many people, from Dr. Tony Evans, to John Hagee, to you name it, they were there, and there were so many others, if I named them all, you would know them, every denomination, they happened to show up, mainly because, obviously, because the governor trumpeted it, this call, it's called the response, but yet, at the same time, there was no one controlling the platform, we were seeking the Lord, and praying, and just moderating God's presence, no egos, no logos, no selling of merchandise, no t-shirts, no, it was just a place, even those in political positions, or denominational leaders, or well-known leaders, they came, they

prayed, some only prayed 30 seconds, some prayed a minute, some shared the theme, the prayer primer for that section, but no one took attention to themselves, it was an amazing day of what a psalm assembly should be, that it's not about ego or logo, it's about God, we are a people, desperate for your presence, we need your manifest presence, we need a renewed revelation of the work of the cross, and the power of the resurrection, and in that context, God began to move, even our, the naysayers, even the heads of the atheist organizations, and others that wanted to protest, many were touched, and there's so many stories of people that came to be critical, but people were touched in the process, when they saw the church, cross their racial, denominational, generational lines, meeting at the mountain of the Lord, so to speak, with no other agenda, but to lift up the name of the Lord, and to be in the presence of God, like a 2nd Chronicles 5, that when you're in the presence of a holy, holy, holy God, you come out of his presence, not according to division, but one sound, one voice, and even to those who were all in the community, the media, and others, and even Christians who said it was not going to be what we said it was going to be, they later realized it was exactly what the Lord wanted, it was something that God called together, regardless of who was there, we were being equalized in the presence of a holy God, so out of that, we began to see pockets of these kind of things spreading across the country, of course, I've been a part of the call from the very beginning, the first seven calls, with Lou Engel, back in the late 1990s, early 2000s, been a part of other gatherings like this, globally, and so I've just longed for the authenticity of God's presence, of God's people putting aside their agendas, to come together in the presence of a holy, holy, holy God, and as we do that, that's authentic worship, isn't it? Simple obedience to God is the highest form of worship. Well, I want to kind of go over a few things that I've been, that some of the things that we had even during the response, because later in 2014, I was called upon again, and they'd asked if I would help, because there was four more governors in 2015 that wanted to do something similar, and again, the same criteria, no promoting, no mentioning names, no promoting logos, or websites, or agendas, it was to just look up the name of Jesus, and so the governor at that time of Louisiana, governor of South Carolina, North Carolina, and Florida, had asked to do those in 2015, and of course, David and Cindy, of American Union Project, were gracious to help facilitate the funding of all that, and to make sure that it had direction, and that it kept our agenda, they approached folks like me, and said, would you make sure to help mobilize this, to help get the logistics together, and to make sure the platform stays pure before God, and I said, absolutely, if it's going to be similar to what we did in 2011, let's do it, and so it was an amazing time in those four states, little did I realize how significant many of those gatherings would be, again, these response gatherings based on Joel, chapter two, the book of Joel, and on 2 Chronicles 7, 14, that we all pray about, and there's something about the tension of where we are, these become now revelatory, not just things that are good sermons, or things that we do in concert, it comes out of that place of desperation, as Leonard Ravenhill taught us, that place of desperation for God's presence, and so as I said earlier, the book of Joel consisted of only three chapters, yet it was written as a wake-up call for a nation in crisis, so here Joel was pleading for his nation, and as many of you are pleading right now for our nation, you're pleading for God to intervene, for the supernatural to break the bonds of what's happening in the natural, it's an unseen force, we can't see this global pandemic, we can't see this COVID-19 or coronavirus, we can't see it, but we see the manifestations, and the disruption, and the pain, and the death, and everything else associated with the virus, and beyond, but by its effects, we see what the effects of it are, even though we don't see it literally, the same is true, many people say they can't believe in God, because they can't see him, but yet they are, they will believe in what they see about a virus, they're fearful of that, we need to help people see that through the plumb line of healing, and hope, and righteousness, and justice, they would see the fruitfulness, and the manifestation, and the reality of Christ through the church to the world, but they would see that even though God may, they may not see him

physically, they will, they can see the manifestation, or the results of, or the fruit of the church representing Christ, as ambassadors for Christ in a world that's in desperation, I believe it's a great time, because God, as we see in Colossians chapter one, that God says that Jesus is the son of his love, that all things are made to, through, for, and by him, that all principalities, and rulerships, and dominions, and kings are subject to him, and that that's in the seen, and unseen realm, Ephesians 3 10 said it's God's intention to give that authority to, and through the church, the manifold wisdom of God, the revelation of God, the influence of God, so I believe that even though many may not see God in face-to-face, the realities of God are everywhere, and he is ruler of all kingdoms, authorities, and principalities seen, and unseen, so we may not be able to see the virus, the COVID-19, and other things that are going on in the world, but God is ruler of all those areas, so we can seek the God that all things are created through, for, by, and to, that all things are made by, that we can pray to the Lord in corporate agreement, out of a passionate, authentic, heart of worship, and desperation, realizing we need God, nothing we can do in our human capacity is ever going to be enough, but we can ask for the Lord to give wisdom, manifold wisdom, and to give insight to our scientists, and medical professionals, and to pastors, and to all of us, that we will get a renewed revelation of our need for him, that he would invade our world, and change an unseen circumstances, that is actually affecting the natural realm, I believe that's true, we have biblical precedence over, and over, and over again throughout scripture, we look at even what's this past month of Nisan, which is just ended on sundown April 24th, it's a month of Nisan, is in the Gregorian calendar, in the Jewish calendar Nisan, but the Gregorian calendar March, April, but we see that in the month of Nisan, you had Passover, which we see Exodus 12, what a great example to us, of being under the blood, under the covering of the Lord, it's when we choose to step out, that we are now uncovered, we stay under his covering, that was a form of God called self-quarantine, when the plagues came over Egypt, and that when they stayed under the blood of the Lamb, and we know that the perfect Lamb of God, that was slain before the foundations of the world, is Jesus himself, so that when we stay under the blood, so we have Passover in the month of Nisan, we have Passover depicting the liberty, and the deliverance that God gave to Israel during the plagues of Egypt, and deliver them from that place, to go into the desert on their journey to the promised land, we see Passover, and Good Friday, Resurrection Weekend, for Christians, represents the Passover that happened 2,000 years ago, in the brutality of the work of the cross, that was the high cost of love by God, that he would come and give his life for us, that he would exchange our filthy rags for robes of righteousness, it was in that same season that we see in the month of Nisan, that God did a work on our behalf, that we could call upon the name of the Lord, and be saved, and that's why we can rejoice, we have these precedences, Exodus 12, we have the 2,000 years ago, the work of the cross, power of the resurrection, we have all those, and then we also have scriptural references of another deliverance that took place with Nehemiah, and I'll share that more in a moment, because I believe it's significant to where we are, and the beginning of the breakthrough, as we corporately cry out to God in authentic worship, restore, in that place of a personal reset with God, getting realigned with the Lord, in right posture, humility, repentance, personal reflection, we come to that place, God can do a work in us, and corporately do a work through us, beyond the crisis, because it's not just about the crisis, we need the long view of what are we going to do as the church, and be as the church, to be that fragrance, that sprayer, that manifester of the fragrance of heaven to a world that is looking and searching right now, we prayed for revival, we cried out for revival, it's here, we just need to begin to reset, get the mind of God, how do we now reflect Christ in this season, and in this global pandemic and crisis, it's a moment, it says in Luke chapter 21, I love this scripture, I've shared it for many, many years, Luke 21 talks about earthquakes, and famines, and tsunamis, and tornadoes, and fires, and wars against, and rumors of wars, it talks about nation against, ethnos against ethnos, that's race against race, it's called, it's ethnic fighting, and we see

this increase happening in the world, but it should not be so in the church, and so we see that Luke 21 speaks of all these things as a precursor to the coming of the Lord, and yet verse 13, chapter 21 of Luke, verse 13, jumps out in the middle of all these things, and he says, but, this is Jesus's words, but it shall be an occasion for your testimony, you see, the world keeps saying, and you hear it on the news all the time, crisis is a terrible thing to waste, I know they keep giving the tribute, attributing to different people, actually, I used to give that quote to some books I wrote, I, on leadership, I talked about that Tim Romer, Paul Romer, I mean, a U.S. economist actually said that, he said, a crisis is a terrible thing to waste, and that's talking about economics, and not just letting things go, but I believe as Christians, too, we should not let this crisis be a thing that causes fear, or for us to withdraw as into the perdition, but to press forward, find the heart and mind of God through personal reflection, seeking God for his wisdom, so that we can be those manifestors of the presence of God to a world that desperately needs to know him, so Luke 21 is an example of that, that all these things would take place, but in the midst of these crises, verse 13 says, but it should be an occasion, it shall be an occasion for your testimony, or an opportunity for your testimony, what a great opportunity, and that's a whole other thing that many, you know, in times of crisis, I've seen the church emerge all over, in our city, we have lots of, you know, hurricanes, and storms, and tornadoes, and of course, Hurricane Harvey was our last one, a big one, with all the flooding, and yet, when the national media contacted some of us, I said, before I answer your question, let me just say this, up until today, every day, all you ever hear is political division, division, division, division, all the media ever promotes is division, division, division, a nation divided, ethnic division, racial tensions, we hear all these divisions, but the reality is, right now, what do you see, in the midst of people being hurt, and devastated, their homes being destroyed, what do you see, all across the Gulf, Rockport, and Corpus Christi, Texas, all the way up to East Texas, and beyond, all across the Gulf, what do you see, what you see is, everywhere, you see neighbors helping neighbors, and when you go to those communities that were hit hard, you'll find, many will say, the church has been here, the church has been here, God's people have been here, see, it wasn't about, what's your race, what's, what's your denomination, what's your religion, it was the church, responding in a crisis, to the community, that left lasting equity, to advance the kingdom of God, not promoting any individual church, of course, everybody tries to leverage, but at the end of the day, the church gets credit, because the church was created, for times like this, Hurricane Sandy, the church responded, Hurricane Katrina, the church responded, the tsunami in Indonesia, the church responded, today, in the largest Muslim country in the world, we have a huge increase, of Christians throughout that country, as a result of the economic collapse of 1998, in Asia, and with all that Indonesia went through, the church responded, you fast forward to the tsunami, the church responded, a church that didn't care who got the credit, but the church coming together, to respond to a crisis, in the name of Christ, that gave equity, and today, we've seen some of the largest gatherings of prayer, and in fact, there's at least two million Christian intercessors, and pastors in Indonesia, a Muslim country, that prays for the Church of America, every day, that came out of tension, and struggle, and pain, and desperation, the church emerged, and became a light, in the midst of a dark side, even though churches were being burned down, churches were being vandalized, churches were being persecuted, yet in the midst of that, the church emerged, and there's a whole lot of incredible testimonies, that came out of that, that's not for me to share right now, but I feel like they're important for us to understand, that out of the most desperate of situations, the church responds, in right posture, God touches the church, uses the church, and creates an equity, and advancement of the Kingdom of God, beyond the crisis itself, so when we look at the need, and the type of crisis right now, we need this corporate response, that's why I so appreciate Dan Beiser, for calling us on this national call, or solemn assembly, because so many, you know, we are giving encouragement, many of us in churches, are having church, not as usual, but doing streaming, and other parking lot,

drive-in services, that I've been a part of, as well, and other kinds of avenues, forcing us to have to think outside the box, so to speak, but at the same time, we also need to recognize, to the church, as we give encouragement, and we show mercy, and grace, we encourage people, we need to also look at the realities, of what do we need to do, what's the biblical posture for us, as Christians, to take personal reflection, and have repentance where it fits, where the shoe fits, so that God can get us into a place of burning up the dross, scooping out the dross, turning up the fire, and that we are, that we are literally those, who God can use through the furnace of fire, that as we come out of this, we can actually be a greater influence into our communities, into our nation, into the nations of the world, this is a revival moment, so I do agree that today, we're living in very challenging, critical, and volatile times, every day, the news is filled with more human tragedy, or chaos, and sometimes, we just have to turn off the news, and hear the news of the Lord, and not to say we should be cognizant of, and be aware of what's going on around us, we need to, but at the same time, we need to also make sure we're spending time to hear what God has to say, I need to hear the voice of the Father, and so we, as the body of Christ, we must respond to moments like this, because God has equipped us for this, I thank God for Samaritan's Purse, and Convoys of Hope, and World Vision, and all these larger entities, and organizations, they respond in times like this, it's amazing, Operation Blessing, so many great organizations designed for disaster relief, some of us that are smaller groups, that do those kinds of things, have a network around the world too, that we work on a local level, working to and through local churches, but what I love is to see that in the midst of all this, the church is responding, and the church is doing something in very practical, intangible ways, as we seek the Lord, together, advancing the purposes of the kingdom of God on the earth, together, that doesn't matter who gets the credit, but that we lift up the name of Jesus, that's what's important, where we're equalizing the presence of a holy, holy, holy God, I believe a part of our response, it's been a wake-up call, hasn't it, I know people call it a wake-up call, I wrote an article years ago called Stop Pushing the Snooze Button, it's God's wake-up call, in fact, towards the end of 2019, we republished an article called God's Plan Reset, and obviously, we're all going through a reset right now, God always speaks to us, we just sometimes don't get the revelation of what he's really trying to say, or the depth of it, until we go through something, but we don't respond according to the world, we need to hear the voice of God, not the fodder of the world, be cognizant of what's happening, be aware of what's happening, but at the same time, we need to also be those who are tuning our ears into hearing the Lord, take the right posture, to fix our gaze on the Lord, so we can help others find that place of victory in their own lives. One of the five things that we did during the, the six things we did during the solemn assemblies that we were a part of throughout the years, and helped put together other ones, the response, as well as things in Bankersfield, and other facilities, other ministries that have asked us to help in giving them ideas, the first thing we did, is we realized the first part of a solemn assembly for us, not saying we have to do this, but I'm going to give you just what I've learned, and felt like the word had given to us, is one, we need a revelation, a renewed revelation of God's presence, that's what I've said earlier, the work of the cross, power of the resurrection, to do that, we need to ask God for his presence, you know, Luke chapter 24, it talks about the road to Emmaus, and interesting, after the resurrection, some of the women that were part, the notable women that were part of the company that were following Jesus, and with the disciples, noticed that Jesus was not in the tomb on the resurrection Sunday, and yet Egil said, don't be afraid, he's not here, he is risen, as he said he would, and so these women went to talk to the disciples, which some didn't believe, they're like, what, there's so much noise pollution going on around them, the news, and the father of the day, and they were listening to all these other things, and yet right in front of them, when Jesus showed up on the road to Emmaus, they did not recognize him, they were talking about him, they were thinking about the last few years, when they were journeying with him, processing everything they

had learned from him, and yet when he shows up, they did not recognize him, as they're talking on the road, finally, that he was about to depart from them, and Jesus says, why are you so sad, and they said, I'll give you my vernacular, dude, where you been, don't you hear what's happening, what happened to Jesus, and here's Jesus asking them what happened, and they're talking about Jesus, I can imagine what the Lord is feeling at that moment, but they did not recognize him, now we can give you some theological reasons why he was in a different state, he was not yet ascended to the father, but the point is, many times, even us, we don't recognize the moments that God brings us into, because we're so concerned everything else is going on, we can be talking about God, worshiping God, doing all, preaching about God, but at the same time, we miss the moment when the Lord himself shows up, and we've got to be sensitive to that, at least I'm speaking to myself, not to anybody else, and so on the road to Emmaus, and they're like, where have you been, and so he says, they're explaining everything to him, when he's about to depart for them, Jesus is about to depart, they said, wait a minute, our hearts have been burning inside of us, as you've been sharing with us, they still didn't get a revelation of him, but they said, would you stay with us, would you, they invited him to abide with them, there's something about the abiding presence of God that changes things, but it starts with an invitation, too often, what we do is we invite God to be a part of our lives, but we don't ask him to abide with us, let me give you an example of that, in that David Ravenhill, who became a dear friend, and one I highly respect and admire, the son, one of the sons of the late Leonard Ravenhill, who had, like I said, was like a spiritual grandfather, who adopted me in many ways, and spoke into my life, David was speaking at a gathering of pastors that I put together in the Houston area, and David shared a concept that I've shared every since, but I'll give it to you this way, he said, if I invite you into my home as my friend, and he used me as an example, if I invite Doug to my home as a friend, as an invited guest, and I said, my house is your house, feel at home, feel comfortable, and my wife and I, we go out and we have to go shopping, when we come home, we don't expect Doug to change the paintings on the wall, remove the furniture, put different furniture in, rearrange the whole house, because he's an invited guest, he doesn't own the house, but if I were to give you the title to the house, then Doug would feel at home to go change the paintings, and change the paint, change the furniture, rearrange everything in the house, because he owns it, he abides there, and the same is true for us, isn't it, that many times we ask the Lord, we invite the Lord into our situations, into our lives, but have we given him Lordship to abide with us? See, does God have the right to change the paintings on the walls of our heart? Does he have the right to change the furniture, rearrange the furniture of our lives and hearts? If we truly are the temples of the Holy Spirit, that we don't belong to ourselves, but we belong to him, he has the right of Lordship through our lives, and too many times we've been resistant of that.

I think about Jeremiah, when the people are going through great challenges, they ended up coming to Jeremiah saying, would you go seek of the Lord, and as you seek of the Lord, whatever he says to do, if we like it or not, we will obey. So Jeremiah goes, seeks the Lord, comes back, says, here's what the Lord says, and they called Jeremiah a liar. They said, oh that can't, they wanted to stone him.

Can you imagine how many times we though do the same thing? We could read that in scripture and say, why would they do that? Well, how many times do we say to the Lord, God, you have a right to do whatever you want to do in my life. You are the Lord of my life. I don't belong to myself.

My life is not my own. God, what is it you would do in my life? God, I give you my life. Your will, not my will.

We say all those things, and yet when it comes down to it, if we hear something we don't want to believe, because we had preconceived ideas, and that's exactly what happened in Luke 24, because they actually told Jesus we were hoping that. What they're saying is they had a different perception of how things

should have happened, and when it didn't happen the way they thought it should, they had become discouraged and sad. How many times we say to God, God, you have the right to be the Lord of my life.

You have the right to do whatever you want. Not my will, but your will be done, and when he begins to move or speak, we go, that can't be God. Just like in Jeremiah's, that can't be God.

You see, too often we've already had a preconceived idea of what we want to hear, but when it comes to the place of being in the presence of a holy, holy, holy God, we are humbled in his presence, and in that presence we do say, God, speak to me. Do whatever you want, because I know your ways are higher than my ways. Your ways are much higher than my ways.

God, I need you right now, and we need him right now to intervene on behalf of this global pandemic, on behalf of our nation, and Jeremiah, I'm getting on a tangent here, but I believe this is important. I'm sensing a direction here. In Jeremiah chapter 33 and 3, we all love to quote the scripture when he says, call upon me, I will answer you and show you great and mighty things you did not know already, and we love that scripture in pulling it out, but let's look at the context of the chapters before, during chapter 33, and the chapters that go beyond that.

It's speaking to a nation that's in crisis. God is speaking to Jeremiah, and he's saying to the people, call upon me, and I will hear you or answer you and show you great and mighty things. He's speaking to a people who says they need to re-covenant with God.

Those who have been untethered need to re-covenant with God for God to restore a nation, so God is speaking not to the world for St. Chronicles 7.14. God is speaking to us for those who call upon the name of the Lord, so for us first, not the world. We can blame the world, blame everybody, and get all off of these side tangents, and get off one of these other things, but we need to start with us individually. I need to look at my own heart, and I need to say, Lord, where is it in my heart where I've become untethered? Lord, I surrender my life again.

I want that fresh second circumcision, so to speak. It's time. We're in this wilderness time.

Before we cross into the place you walked through us, this great outpouring you want to bring, you need to circumcise our hearts. You want to prepare your church, the church, so God is calling the church to be re-covenanted with God. In fact, my daughter, who was 17 at the time back in March, is now 18.

She had three nights in a row visitations of the Lord. It's amazing how God speaks to our young people, but the thing in that visitation, she went straight under her knees to pray, and she began to seek the Lord, and she started reading through some scriptures in Leviticus. God directed a 17-year-old into Leviticus, and reading Leviticus, and the Lord, she came and shared with my wife, and my wife and her shared with me, God is calling for the ministers.

God is calling for ministers and pastors to get back to holiness. They have to start with them, get back to holiness. See, we're a royal priesthood, so yes, we can say pastors and ministers, but what about all of us? God is talking to the ministers, the priests, He's speaking to the shepherds and the sheep, and saying, get back and get together with me, get back to that personal consecration.

I'm not talking about some sort of external kind of religious religiosity and piety of holiness. I'm talking about the internal consecration of our hearts as God. My life is not my own.

Do as you will. Help me, Lord, to be what you want me to be, and as we do that corporately, God will re-covenant His church to Himself, and God will restore and bring healing and intervene for our nation and the nations of the world. This is a moment that we do not want to miss.

This is our moment in the midst of a crisis for the church to respond, and part of that response is to get a fresh revelation of God's presence, and also then restore the altered worship, as I shared earlier, and getting a revelation of the work of the cross, power of the resurrection. Let me just pause here, because I want to pray in a moment. Let's pray about that, because before we go into the next points, the revelation of God's presence, and restore the authentic place of worship, the altar of worship before God.

Prior to Easter weekend, and prior to Passover, actually, a friend of mine, Pastor Jeff Kersey, who's the pastor of Mount Horn United Methodist Church in Columbia, South Carolina, and is the pastor of the former governor of South Carolina, Governor Haley, became ambassador of the United States, United Nations. He called me, and we check in on each other from time to time. It was part of our response back in June of 2015, and so we were just talking, and he said, here's what I'm sensing about what I'm going to share on Resurrection Sunday, on Easter Sunday, and it so resonated with me.

I just want to share a little bit about what he said to me. I've developed it into an article called The Great Exchange, but I wanted to share with you something that he shared. He said, the spikes on the surface of the coronavirus gives this virus its name.

Corona, which is Latin for crown. In the Greek, corona means wreath or crown, and he said, oh my gosh, that's right. Corona means crown, so he's talking about all the things that the coronavirus has brought to the world, to us.

It's brought nothing but fear and anxiety, suffering, and death into the world, he said, but he said the crown of thorns also depicts, because of our brokenness and helplessness, Jesus took our punishment. Jesus took on the sickness of sin himself. He's not only our vaccine, but he's our cure.

A cure is not just a temporary cure, but a permanent cure for our sins, guilt, fears, disease, pain, death. You see, he took the crown of thorns that we might receive the crown of life, and when he said that, it just so resonated with me that truly, that if God is the Lord of the seen and the unseen, and he has dominion over all of these things, he is the permanent one who has authority over all these things, seen and unseen, that on the cross of Calvary 2,000 years ago, to get a true revelation of his presence, to get a revelation of the work of the cross, the power of the resurrection, what he did upon himself before going to the cross, because Luke 9, verse 51 says that when it was time to be beaten, to go to Jerusalem, to be beaten, crucified, scorned, mocked, humiliated, beat up, and he was torn apart for us, it says he steadfastly set his face to go when it's time to go to Jerusalem. Why would you steadfastly be determined to go somewhere when you know what's going to happen? But Hebrews chapter 12 is a great example of this, when he says, fix your eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith, before the joy set before him.

You see, he was able to look past the suffering, past what he was about to do, by yielding himself to the purpose and the will of God, to come be a lamb that was slain for the foundations of the world. He took upon himself the crown and received the crown of thorns, that crown of thorns that guilt and pain and death and suffering and disruption that is caused even by the coronavirus. Jesus took the crown of thorns, all those things upon himself so that we can receive a crown of life, the crown of glory, the crown of hope.

You see on the work of the cross, the power of the resurrection, he exchanged our filthy rags for robes of righteousness. He took upon himself the crown, even the crown of the coronavirus. He took on all these things for our salvation, our healing, our liberation, our deliverance, and our freedom.

For us as Christians, Paul says it well in Galatians 5.1, stand fast therefore in the liberty where Christ has set us free and be no longer entangled in the yokes of bondage. In that place of consecration is to give back to that place of holiness with God, that internal consecration saying, God, my life is not my own. You have the right to do whatever you need to do so I can be a person re-cognizant, tethered to you, for you're my Lord.

I'm under your covering. I'm under your alignment, Lord, so that in that God can do a work in us and through us and that also that all of our needs, all of our anxieties, all of our fears, all of the things that concern us, all of our sorrows, all that's going on in the world today, we know the Lord has taken upon himself. We need to agree with him because agreement's a place of power so he can do a work in us and through us.

That's the revelation I believe that we need is a renewed revelation of the work of the cross and the power of the resurrection. What I'd like to do right now is just take a moment and it's so difficult for some of us isn't it to just be still and know that he's God. Just take a couple moments right where you are and just take, if it's knee posture or laid out on the floor or just sitting, just take a humble posture for a moment and let's ask God to give us a revelation of himself because in that place, God brings us to a place of authentic reflection for repentance and before we go into that place, there's, see, it's one thing to say, I repent, but see, there's a difference between repentance and remorse.

Repentance is total brokenness as God, what have I done? Like King David, when he recognized what he'd done, when the prophet came and said, you're that man. Oh God, what have I done? But before that happens, we have to get a revelation of who he is and understand what our sins have done to him, that he took those sins upon himself for us to have life. He took the crown of our sins.

He took the crown of pain and suffering and shame and anxiety. He took upon himself for, he gave us salvation, healing, liberation and deliverance and freedom. He took all these things and so let's take a moment to reflect just like in 2 Chronicles 5 and in Matthew 20, it says, when they went to the mountain, it says, and they just worshiped him at that moment when they had one agenda, one agenda only, and that was to worship the Lord.

It says all authority was given to Jesus in Matthew 20 and all authority is given to him. That authority where that was imparted to the disciples who would yield to him to go make disciples of nations. That's what we call the great commandment, isn't it? That's what many of us call it, the great commission.

I mean, gives us this great commission to go make disciples of nations, but that came by first worshiping him and nothing else. That place of getting a revelation of who he really is so that we can then now begin to do a work that only he can do. So let's take a moment and just reflect now and ask God to give you a renewed revelation of the work of the cross, power of the resurrection, and ask God, God, where is there areas where I've been untethered from you? Lord, help me to get back to that place of when you first called me.

I know for me that I have so many landmarks along the way. I don't want to make an altar or idols to things that God may have done in my past, but I want to look at the landmarks of scripture through history and

landmarks of what God has done in my own life when he called upon me when I was 24 years old, when I was living in sin, professing to be a Christian, yet God gave me landmarks never to forget that moment when I got a revelation of the work of the cross and the power of the resurrection. Every difficult challenge or unexpected detour along the way, I can look back now to not those challenges, but I look back to the moment of the revelation of the work of the cross when the Lord came into, when God stepped down and revealed himself to me in my sin while still yet a sinner.

In that moment, I believe that God gives me a landmark to remember so great a salvation so that no matter what I go through, I also have landmarks of every time God has been faithful, faithful then and faithful then and faithful then. I don't live there. Those aren't altars, but landmarks to remember so that I know if he's been faithful all along the way, that he'll be faithful even now and today in the church, in my life, in the church around the world and give us an idea that God will definitely be faithful then tomorrow and in the future.

God, I thank you, even Jeremiah, reminding us that you give us a future of good and not of evil. God, in the midst of everything that's going on and all the struggles in our nation, in our personal lives, in our families, our communities, our cities, the nations of the world, those that are watching around the world, Father, I believe the heart of any community should be the church. God, help us to impact the soul of our communities, our nations, because we're heart awakened individually and corporately with the heart of the Lord for our communities and our nations.

Just take a moment now and say it in your own words, ask God to give you a new revelation of the work of the cross and the power of the resurrection. Thank you, Lord. Let's go and as we pray that, I want to move into a place of now reflection with repentance.

I know some people and there's some teachings out there and I don't want to get into an argument about it, but I know some people say, look, if you've been to the altar, you gave your life to the Lord, then you can do whatever you want. Look, I'm not talking about eternal salvation, but I am talking about if when I said yes to my wife and she said yes to me and we got married and we made a covenant of relationship, the covenant is secured. But if I choose to go out and live frivolously and go out and sit on my wife and go live like one would come home and say, but she's my wife.

I love you and she has to forgive me. When you have a covenant relationship, you don't want to go live according to your own flesh. You want to live for that relationship.

And the same is true with the Lord, that when we come to that place of the revelation of the work of the cross and the power of the resurrection, so great is salvation. And we have asked the Lord to be the Lord of our lives. He can't just be Lord sometimes.

He takes abiding ownership. He's not our guest. He's the owner of our lives.

And so why would I want to go out and intentionally live like the world to break the heart of my Lord who I'm in covenant with? Dr. Randall Pennell has been a long time friend and theological mentor who is Southwestern Theological. He was also helped start schools in Argentina, was a professor and at Regent University also was the interim president at North Greenville University, Baptist University, and has been friends all these, I've got 35 years, so it's been a long time. So when I have a theological question, I give a call to Dr. Pennell and it's always good to have somebody like that to call and be able to make sure what you're saying is right.

But I remember he taught a Bible study in my apartment when I had all these street kids and runaways and gang members and pastors and missionaries that leave their titles outside for 10 years. I would have a weekly gathering that we'd hit the streets and go minister to people afterwards. But Dr. Pennell was doing a series for us.

And I remember him teaching on the three sins of the Old Testament that really cover sins for us today. And he said that there are three types of sin. One was called Chata, one was called Pesha, and one was called Avan.

Chata means, and I call it Chata, Chata, Chata, because Chata means when we miss the mark. And we all miss the mark every day. Throughout the day, I have certain things that happen, I go, man, I just, I can't believe I did that.

Lord, that's not how I want to be. That's not the characteristics of the kingdom of God. God, that's not your characteristics.

Help me, Lord, to represent you well and not respond according to flesh or by your spirit. So we all Chata, Chata, Chata. We miss the mark throughout the day.

We miss the mark. And that's why, personally, I like to have at least two prayer times in the morning as my standard. And my first is my horizontal prayer time.

When I first wake up, the first thing I do is I spend time just not asking God for anything. I don't ask for supplication. I don't ask him to help me for the day.

I don't ask him for anything. My first prayer time is my horizontal time. When I first wake up, I must begin to thank him for everything I can think about.

Thank him that I have a roof over my head and I'm not homeless anymore. When I was a teenager for a short time, I'm not doing drugs anymore like I used to when I was younger. I'm not out in the world.

I'm not, I thank him for my wife and my daughter, my family, my mother, and I thank him for everything I think about the people I get to work with the privilege of the calling of God. I just thank him for everything. Then I get up and take my shower and have my coffee.

And then I, before I ever leave a hotel room, if I'm out ministering or if I'm somewhere else, or if I'm at home, before I leave my home, I always have my knee time. That's my supplication time. That's where I give the Lord the day and say, God, I'm way beyond my pay grade.

Lord, I know I'm nothing without you. Be glorified in all that I do. And I begin to lay out those supplications and the burdens of the day, the responsibilities that I feel pulled on me all the time.

And I give them that time. It's called my knee time. And then before I go to sleep at night, obviously I want to have my, my devotion time and prayer time, knee time with them.

And then throughout the day, I try to break away with the Lord and try to, as Paul says, pray without ceasing. Obviously it's, I can't do that humanly, but I try to have my spirit man always trying to be in intercession and praying. So even if I'm driving, a thought comes in and I say, Lord, I begin to talk in order.

I'm at my office and Lord, I need your wisdom. But I have my three primary stop moment times, my horizontal prayer time, my thankful time, my knee time before I leave my home or wherever I am, and my knee time before I go to sleep at night. This helps me as I began to seek the Lord.

And so anyway, it helps me also to recognize God through anything like David says, any presumptuous sin, any hidden sins, would you show them so I know how to ask you to forgive me. So as Dr. Pennell taught me, there's, there's the hatha, the missing the mark kind of sin. Then there is the avan.

And avan means to iniquity. And so there are many iniquities of our thoughts and hearts. How many times do we, we have an attitude? That's an iniquity of the heart.

Every time we see someone and we have a judgment that we don't know the windows of their soul. And yet we expect grace on us, but we judge others by what they do or do not do. But we only want to judge ourselves by our good intentions, as Dr. Evan Lewis's call used to say.

I want to be sensitive not to be critical or judgmental. Yes, I need to be able to be discerning of actions and sin, so that I know how to minister to that person to reach the soul of that person. But too often we turn our discernment into criticisms and judgments that I believe that, that inhibit us from being able to reach people.

And I've got a long ways to learn, but that place of the avan is the iniquities of our heart. So I always pray, God, help me where I miss the mark. Help me where I have iniquities of the heart.

God, I need you to renew my mind so you can change my heart. Help me to be who you need me to be. The third sin that Dr. Pennell used to teach us, and still does teach, but I remember it, is he said, there's a sin called pesha.

Pesha is the willful sin of rebellion, where we know to do right and do not do it, and we are habitually sinful. That'd be like a Hebrews chapter 10, verse 26. If you sin willfully after you receive the knowledge of the truth, there remains a fearful expectation of judgment because you've trampled afoot the spirit of grace and treated as nothing the blood of Christ.

And we see that in Ezekiel when Job, Noah, and Daniel were delivered because of their righteousness, but it says that we need to make sure that we are not overtly, willfully, habitually sinning. So again, this is not about an eternal concept here of salvation. That's in your theological mindset.

What I'm saying is, why would we want to not appreciate and walk in a love covenant relationship with the one who redeemed our souls? So in pesha is, if I have sinned and I know I'm going to sin, there's a willful sin, I'm habitually doing certain sins in my life, I need God to give me his grace. I need his abounding, great, amazing grace to help me to break the bonds of that. Because like I said earlier, Galatians 5.1, stand fast, therefore, in the liberty where Christ has set you free, and be no longer entangled in yokes of bondage.

That is a place of personal responsibility and honesty with God that says, God, if I have sinned against you, forgive me. Not what I feel, but help me to do and be who you want me to be and do what you want me to do. So I want us to take a moment as we reflect on our personal lives, where we become untethered, and maybe like King David saying, Lord, create in me a clean heart, bring your right spirit within me.

And if there be any hidden or presumptuous sin, would you show me so I know how to bring it before you? And again, I know there's some teachings out there that says you don't have to do this anymore. Look, there's something so precious about the altar. I learned from David Wilkerson, and from Leonard Ravenhill, Edward Lewis Collins, so many others, that there's something about weeping between the porch and the altar.

We don't have a right to preach to people a great sermon that moves people, because it won't have the lasting effect or fruit if we haven't in private wept between the porch and the altar ourselves for those that we're going to minister to. In a book I wrote years ago, I found an anonymous quote. It says, there are preachers who love to preach.

Then there are those preachers who love those to whom they preach. You see, God wants us to love the people that we're called to serve and to minister to them, not just preach and give a good oratorically gifted sermon. We're filled with oratorically gifted communicators and preachers and pastors and authors and writers and people in our nation and all over the world.

That's great, but there are maybe 10,000s of teachers, Paul says, but not many fathers in the Lord. What we need is for the heart of the father to work in our hearts to be able to share the heart of the father to the world around us. That comes by people seeing the authenticity of the gospel of life.

It starts with us. Without worrying about everybody else's issues, let's start with us. Let's take a moment and ask God to show you where there may be the place where you missed the mark, the hot tub, the other place where there is the place of iniquities, the avants, the iniquities of the heart that you know you keep dealing with.

The third is especially this, where you know that you continue to habitually willfully sin, even though you call yourself a Christian and myself a Christian, that we rebelled against God when he's calling us back to himself. This is not a place for condemnation, but a place of honesty. There's something about honesty that draws and attracts the presence of God.

Let's be honest for a moment, just ask God on a personal level, and then I'll pray for us as the corporate body of Christ to agree in together for God to give us a revelation of where we need to get back to the authenticity of a presence with him through humility and repentance. Thank you, Father. Thank you, Father.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. Thank you. Father, I agree with all those that are praying.

Maybe those who will watch this later, they weren't able to watch live. God, because I know that agreement is the place of power. We agree according to your word, character, nature, and spirit that we will be aligned with you and where there are hidden sins in our lives, where there are presumptuous sins or iniquities of our heart, or even where there is blatant rebellion or sin that we know to do right, we do not do it.

We have not yielded to your Lordship, and forgive us, Lord. God, as we start with us individually, as we look at the chambers of our own hearts, even as Zephaniah said that, or you spoke to Zephaniah about the reform of Josiah, to take lamps throughout Jerusalem to expose those who are settled in complacency or compromise. God, I see that also you speak to us as your church, that judgment starts within the house of the Lord in us.

We are the microcosm individually of the larger body of Christ, the church, the ecclesia. So, Lord, I'm asking you to take the lamps of the Holy Spirit to come across our own lives and throughout your church, across this nation, around the world. And as you expose the areas of compromise or complacency, I ask you to give us the grace that we would say that we are sorry, we repent, not remorseful because we're caught, but because we know it has broken your heart.

It inhibits us from walking in the fullness of your destiny. God, forgive us of our sins, the missing of the marks, the iniquities of the heart, the blatant intentional sin, which is rebellion, which is like the spirit of witchcraft. Forgive us, Lord, we have succumbed to any of those.

And we ask your abounding, great and amazing grace to to evade us, Lord, to give us that new sense of purpose because refreshing comes out of repentance. God, I pray that if there are areas that we can be reconciled, that you would help us to reconcile those that maybe we have intentionally or unintentionally sinned against. Thank you, Lord.

God, I know that we don't have to, we don't have to, to put you on the cross again. You've already been to the cross, you're raised from the dead. We're asking you, Lord, to help us to come to that, our cross, and take up our cross, not yours, but ours, to come before you so you would help us to be the men and women of God you called us to be.

Right now, Lord, I ask you to change my mind, the way I think, change my heart, change my life. I give you the right to do whatever you need to do to be the Lord of my life. And God, will I resist, but I pray for your grace over me, Lord, to help me to surrender to your Lordship.

Lord, I thank you that my life is not my own. I thank you for the joy of your salvation and the privilege of your calling, in Jesus' name, amen. Time is moving quickly, so I want to go down through some of these other ones.

What comes out of this, I believe, is a place of reconciliation. Again, I call these the six hours to help me, you know, we've shared these for many, many years, and this is kind of a build around some of our assemblies when we gather in larger gatherings, but the third is reconciliation. Now that we have been reconciled to God, see, when we were still yet in our sin, Jesus, the man, came to change us to help us to become new men or women, new creations in Christ, so that together, Ephesians 2 says, we become one new man, the corporate body.

So we are called now, because we've been reconciled to God, who have been separated from God, through Christ Jesus, have been reconciled to God, so now we pray that God would give us the ministry of reconciliation. That takes intentionality. Look, I was born in Japan.

My mother was Japanese. My dad, biological father, was an underwater demolition frogman during the Korean War. Later, during the Vietnam War, he became what's called the Navy Seals, history through the UDT, underwater demolition frogman, and so my dad was from Texas.

My mother was from Japan. I was born in Japan and born a U.S. citizen because my dad was in the military. My stepfather, also a career military, was from Waco, Texas, but I realize now that I'm not Japanese first.

I'm not Japanese American. I'm not Asian, now lumped in the group called Asian American. I'm an American of Asian descent, with Asian descent, who is now a Christian.

So my first and foremost commitment is to the kingdom of God. The Bible says, Jesus said, that his family are those who do the will of the Father. My family, be they black, white, brown, red, or yellow, my family are those who do the will of the Father.

My commitment is to the body of Christ, and through that corporate body, we can minister to all the cultures, to all those that might have diversities, because we come together at the foot of the cross together. We lay down our rights to become part of something bigger than ourselves. There's a place of intentionality.

We are reconciled to God. We are called with the ministry of reconciliation now, because we are now reconciled to God, but that's our ministry. See, I love what it says, when Saul was Paul, before Paul was Saul, he had a Damascus Road experience, where the Lord revealed himself, knocked him off the animal, blinded him, and said, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? Why do you kick against the goats? The Lord gave him that revelation, the work of the cross.

Here's the thing, when we all had our Damascus Road experience, we all had that moment where the Lord revealed himself to us. Our eyes were open, oh my goodness, Lord, you are Lord, thank you, Lord, come into my life. We had that moment, we had our own moment where God came and stepped down and invaded our world and revealed himself to us, the work of the cross, the power of the resurrection.

But in that moment, here's what Jesus says to Saul, before he became Paul, changed his name. He said, I revealed myself to you with a purpose. What is that purpose? The moment we get a revelation, the work of the cross, power of resurrection, we have a purpose.

What's that purpose? He says, to be a minister and a witness of the things that you have seen and the things you have not yet seen. What is he saying? I get a process, and Lord, when you gave me the revelation, you knocked me off the journey of my life and revealed yourself to me, even in my sin, I realized you gave me a purpose beyond my own earthly purpose. My purpose is to be a witness and a minister of the things I have now seen, or God will reveal to me the things I have not yet seen.

What does that mean? Proverbs 14.25 says that a true witness rescues lives. That means there are false witnesses and true witnesses. My purpose is to be a witness that rescues lives and saves souls.

And to be a minister, what is it? To minister not just behind the pulpit, that's what we have, we have equity in the right at the pulpit, or the pulpits or platforms God gives us, but that's not what it's about. It's about who we are in private when nobody else sees. It's who Christ is in us in our private moments, in our heart, and the purpose of God, God's given us.

We are called the ministers of reconciliation. We've been reconciled. How do we reconcile people? Through prayer, through our actions, our gestures, our words, every platform opportunity God gives.

How do we help people get reconciled to God? I like what Ricky Pratt and Ray Comfort used to talk about, that sometimes us Christians need to get saved. And that's, I'm saying that in a way, you know, if you're truly born again, you're born again. What I'm saying is a lot of times we've gotten so far away that we worship an institution rather than the one who gives us those institutions.

We need to get back to that place of authentic relationship. God, help me to be a minister of reconciliation, one who knows how to pray and administer through my actions and words and every opportunity you give me to see people reconciled to you. That means Christians who have gone untethered or went out in the

ocean and shipwrecked in life, help them to get reconciled to you, to redirect them back to you.

And for those who don't know you, Lord, how can they see you in me that will draw them to you? We see in Matthew 5, 16, Jesus said, let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and bring glory to your Father in heaven. God, right now, I pray for all of us. Remind us that we have a purpose beyond what we thought, that the moment you gave us the work of the cross and the power of the resurrection, you gave us a purpose to be a witness and administer the things we have seen and things we have not yet seen.

Help us, Lord, to recognize as true witnesses, we are called to win souls and save lives, to rescue lives, Lord. There are so many hurting, broken in the shipwrecked, in the sea of life and despair. Help us, Lord, to know how to minister to them and direct them to you.

And Lord, I pray that you'd also give us the ministry of reconciliation and not just the privilege of the calling of standing behind pulpits or platforms you give us, but Lord, in the ways that we live, even as Francis said of Assisi, he said, preach the gospel at all times if you must use words. Lord, let our actions, let our lifestyle reflect you that others might see our neighbors, those that see us at the gym or the supermarket, let them see something different about us. Let us be the fragrance of heaven, be that dispenser you've called us to be.

And Lord, I pray that you would help us in everything we do say, think that we would do so to bring glory and honor to you so we can be those ministers of reconciliation. So finally, I've got about nine minutes. Finally, two more things I want to cover, three more real quick is number four is then we pray for revival.

And as Leonard Ramey used to say, you know, I love his book, Why Revival Tarries. It's a classic and I still get so much out of it. I also love his book, Tried and Transfigured, which I would recommend.

But if we're going to see revival, I remember what Charles Finney said, revival is no more a miracle than a crop of wheat. What does Charles Finney mean by that? What he meant is that when you put John 12, I believe, says when you plant a seed, the seed, then the miracle doesn't take place because the seed is in the seed in itself or our planting of it. The miracle takes place when we obediently, simple obedience, highest form of worship, plant the seeds that God has given us into the soil of souls.

And what God does with the seed that's planted when we water it. So the seed, the miracle is what God does with the seed in our obedience to plant into water. So when Charles Finney says revival is no more a miracle than a crop of wheat, what he's saying is our responsibility is to get, be in the presence of God, seek God's presence, sow the seeds of God's kingdom, water those seeds, and then watch God do a miracle.

I've got so many stories of people. I thought that God, why would you bring that person in my life, a gang member one time? And why would you bring my life only for him to be shot and killed? And the Lord began to speak to me. He says, the greater tragedy is that you never shared the gospel with him.

And at that last moment, he would have never known who to turn upon. Could it be that at that moment, the seeds that we had planted in his life, at the moment before he gave his last breath, being shot, that he would have said, remember everything he learned from us. And we said, Jesus helped me.

You see, the greater tragedy is when we don't obey God in planting seeds and water seeds. God does the miracle when we do our part. And that's one other piece that we can get into later tomorrow when I come

back tomorrow.

And the fifth that I call the reformation, the reform of Josiah. We've all heard about the seven spheres of the culture, the seven mountains, and reform does come from time to time. But I remember the reform of Josiah 622, 633 BC.

And it was a great thing that when he saw how the nation had gotten untethered away from honoring God's laws, he legislated God's laws back. And I'm not saying we shouldn't get great righteous people, men and women, into political offices. Yes, we need to get righteous people there.

Because when the righteous rule of people rejoice, yes, we need to take that responsibility. But first, we need to recognize that every political cycle comes and goes every couple of years. It's always going to be something.

The only way to guarantee lasting change is to have the change of heart, individually and nationally. And so Zephaniah says it well to a contemporary of Jeremiah about the reform of Josiah, that if we're going to have lasting reform, yes, there's a legislation to bring reforms. We want that.

But from a biblical context. But what we need is to take the healing of Zephaniah when he said, look, he goes, this is a good thing, but the only thing that will bring lasting change is to deal with inward corruption of the heart. We've seen a lot of good people get into politics and they get corrupted.

We need to be praying that daily that God would help us to keep our hearts right, clean heart and sharp mind. I pray every morning, God, create me a clean heart. God, give me a clean heart, right spirit, a sharp, stable, sound mind.

I want to be able to be who God wants me to be. So let's pray for reform, but let's pray that God will change inward corruptions of our hearts and the corporate context of the heart of the church so that God can change the soul of a nation. Years ago, the late Dr. Bill Bright, the Campus Crusade and Max Lucado and Chuck Colson, a prison fellowship, the late Chuck Colson, I was honored.

I was in Washington, D.C. at the presidential prayer breakfast and around that time I get a phone call to please come and meet with Dr. Bill Bright and Max Lucado and Chuck Colson and Bill Bright, Max Lucado and Chuck Colson, and I forgot who else I just mentioned, but to do a taping on the soul of America. I was much younger and I remember going there thinking, wow, I can't believe it. So I'm on the set and while they're all speaking, I'm in awe of being in these giants of the faith.

And I'm just this young whippersnapper. So I'm just listening, forgetting that I'm on camera. They're taping this.

And I remember the producer puts up a sign that says Doug speak. And I remember saying, look, we're talking about the soul of a nation. We can all and we all understand that there's a battle for the soul of a generation, soul of a nation.

But I believe the heart of any community should be the church because God has called the church in every community, city or rural county, state or nation. God has called the church to be the heart. And if the heart has lost heart and the law has lost the salt or the loss of flavor, if God is, if our hearts need a defibrillation, then God needs to do a work in us so we can awaken the heart because the only way you can reach the soul of a city or a state or a nation or a community is to reach the soul is to reach through

the heart.

The heart needs to change the soul. I said, so we, the church need a heart awakening. If we're going to have a corporate revival or reformation that comes from a heart awakening and revival.

If we're going to reach the soul of our nation, the soul of our communities, we need a church awakening. So I'm praying right now, God, revive us, your church. Give us an individual and corporate heart awakening.

Revive us, oh God. Do a work in us, God. Awaken our souls, God.

We need to stop pushing our snooze buttons. Revive us, God, so we can recognize the moment of responsibility for a time such as this to reach the soul of our communities and the soul of our states and the soul of our nation, the soul of a generation. And I think I've got three minutes.

Wow. So the revival, reformation, and finally, when I believe we set those in order, God will give us the place of refreshing. And I'll just conclude at that because I never even got into what I believe is significant of where we are right now coming out of the month of Nisan and the importance of us now posturing ourselves, not just through this pandemic, through this global crisis.

God, as Winky Franny taught us before, God takes us out of our Egypt to get us in the wilderness, to get Egypt out of us so we can possess the land of promise. There are things of our past that we need to let go of. There are things of the plagues of Egypt or the plagues that come out of where, if it's a little hotter, these other things.

We need to realize that God is still protecting us. And while we're in the wilderness, not to lose heart and become murmurers and complainers and compromisers, but let us keep our vision on our destination. And to do so, let's have a long view of God's intended purpose beyond this crisis, because it's not just about maintaining while we're in this crisis.

It's about what are we doing to have God's reset, to position ourselves and posture ourselves with a deeper level of consecration and a higher level of expectation of the Lord for God to do what he needs to do. As I said earlier, as Duncan Campbell said in 1948, Hebrides Revivals, it takes the supernatural to break the bonds of the natural. God, do so, I pray in Jesus' name.

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