

The Church Needs To Repent

by Douglas Small

Transcript

Well, I've been listening to Dan this morning and in 1992, in my denomination, I was tasked with writing a solemn assembly manual for my denomination. And I found myself chatting with people, particularly in the Southern Baptist tradition, who had been for almost five years dancing with this idea that when nations sin, they need to be accountable to God. And so, sadly, most of us went through a solemn assembly phase.

We tried solemn assembly as a kind of a testing test. We sampled it, and then we said, well, that was interesting. And for a large part, we put it away.

We forget that God keeps a record of our sins, not just personal sins, but family sins and city sins and nation sins. There is in Scripture, and you'll hear me mention this perhaps again, what is called the brim of iniquity. That's the point at which the cup of iniquity, the record of sins in a particular entity overflows.

And when it reaches that point of overflow, God meets out judgment. There are five things that in Scripture cause God to wash his hands and walk away from a culture. And these five things are the shedding of innocent blood.

We immediately think about 60 million plus abortions, but we have 16 to 17,000 murders. Every year, many of which are not solved. Bloodshed has become a common thing.

In the Old Testament, when a body was found near a village, the elders of the village, of the two nearest villages gathered, and they gathered by a stream in an unplowed field, and they offered a sacrifice, and they asked God to reveal the sin, their culpability, if there was culpability, and then forgive them. There is a church in, I think it's Durham, that sends a group to pray for every homicide in the city. They go to the site, they pour out wine, and they pour out juice, and they pour out oil.

And they weep over the casual violence that has cost another life. They will reach out to the family, not only the victim, but the perpetrator, and they will weep with them. And then at the beginning of their service, they have a lament.

Laments constitute 40% of the Psalms, but we don't lament. We have a high level of celebration narrative in our worship. It's everybody on your feet, put your hands together for Jesus.

We act as if the world around us isn't falling apart, and the nation isn't in sin. We haven't made a place to weep over our sins. I grew up, I'm old now, and I remember you never went to church unless you responded to the Word of God in repentance.

You had singing, some kind of congregational worship, you had word engagement, but then you also had alter time. And nobody was allowed to leave unless they had engaged God and dealt with sin in their life. That's gone away.

We set this kind of assumption that God kind of automatically takes care of our sins. Whenever a culture fails to reckon with growing levels of sin and transgression against the law of God, that accumulates. Number one, when innocent blood is shed.

Number two, when the dead are treated with disrespect, they're left, even the despised criminal in the Old Testament was to be given a burial, the sacredness of the body. And that has implications far beyond how we treat the dead and how we respond in some kind of ceremony. I think the number is approaching now 40% of people in America who do not want a sacred funeral, who do not want a Christian funeral, who are opting either for no funeral at all, or are not a preacher who is engaged to talk to their relatives about getting right with God and about the finality of death.

How we respond to death as a culture and how we treat the of life and the sacredness of a life. Number three is the breakdown of the family through the proliferation of cheap divorce. Number four is sexual deviation, particularly homosexuality, the whole issue of sexual identity.

And that really rises out of and is related to some extent. Number five, the proliferation of idolatry, false worship centers and sites, paganism with its priest. The only response to these kinds of egregious sins was prayer, was a solemn assembly in which a family or a church or a city gathered and they repented before God.

You remember in the seven letters of Jesus, his epistles to the churches in the Revelation chapter two and three, two are commended, five are called to repentance. But in those five that are called to repentance, they're good people, they're godly people, they're righteous people, they're people who are commended. But the church itself is still under the conviction of God because of things that are happening in that congregation.

You can be in a relatively good church that still needs to repent. The only way that church gets right with God is not just the sole condition of its members, but that the church itself as an assembly has a solemn moment and comes together and seeks God and repents. We have to, in repentance, acknowledge the sin and then in redirection, turn away from it.

If we don't redirect, then repentance is superficial, it's hypocritical at best. And so there is repentance, godly sorrow, but it's godly sorrow that brings redirection in our lives. These five things that I mentioned, five egregious sins, the shedding of innocent blood, the lack of respect for life itself, the breakdown of the family, sexual deviation, and idolatry.

When they reach a certain level, here's what God does. He packs up His glory and He leaves. I know I'll repeat this, but let me just say it to you again.

In Romans chapter 1, you have in verse 12, this concept that the wrath of God is revealed. And you have the recognition that we knew truth, but we turned away from that truth. We denied the Creator, His rightful place, and we worship the creature more than the Creator.

Rather than realizing our sacredness, that we were created in the image of God, made out of dust, but but sprinkled with the glory of God and in-breathed with His presence, elevated. We may be made from dust,

but we identify more with God than the world. We're set apart.

We're set apart unto Him. We're created special, but this has been rendered by evolution, this connection, this concept. And now we identify with creation.

And rather than extolling God for all of His greatness and glory, we come to identify as we do. And I know that this sounds a bit over the top, but we identify even as cities with animals through our sports teams, with the spirit of the lion or the panther or this or that or some other thing. We have not come as cities to be bound together around God and His values.

We've come to be bound together around other things. When this kind of thing happens, when a culture turns away from God, what happens is God packs up His glory and leaves. He gives them over, Romans 1, three times it's mentioned.

It's actually a legal concept. It's as if God in heaven, in His courtroom, is filing an injunction against the people. And He's saying to stop, stop this behavior.

But each time we violate the barricade, we violate the warning, we go further and further into the depths of degradation until finally at the end of Romans 1, God washes His hands. And He says, okay, this is the greatest judgment of all, is to leave us to the consequences of our own behavior so that God is no longer speaking. He's no longer intervening.

I want us just to stop in my section here and pray. I want us to pray. And if you'll let me just pray with open eyes.

Father, I just pray that you will not abandon America because we've run through every one of these three barricades in Romans 1. With the new Supreme Court rulings on sexual identity, we violated all of them. And we have embraced the most egregious kind of moral degeneration as a norm. I'm asking you, don't leave us.

I'm asking you, don't abandon us to our own consequences. I'm asking you to have mercy on us. I'm asking you for the sake of your own purposes, your own will, the purpose for which you raised up this nation, as John Adams said, to fulfill the Great Commission.

I'm asking you for the sake of your own purposes to intervene. I'm asking you, Lord, to somehow bring us to our senses regarding abortion and the shedding of innocent blood. The kids who know that their sibling died at the hands of an abortionist in an abortion clinic.

God, would you turn their hearts of these millennials of Gen Z back to you and say, not on my watch, not with my kids. I'm just praying, oh God, that you would wake us up to the violence, to the senseless killing, 16, more than 15,000, approaching 17,000 in some years, senseless homicides and murders in the nation. Would you have mercy on us, oh God? Would you intervene, God? The thing that comes back, the fountainhead of it all, the intersection for all of this is fatherlessness.

It's the breakdown of the family. It goes back to the 1962 or thereabouts, a Supreme Court ruling on divorce. When the court said unwisely, we will no longer invest our time in trying to keep families together.

We will no longer use the legal force of the nation to hold to family integrity. We shifted, without even realizing it, to a culture that was bound together by healthy families, where there was a covenant among

people, husbands and wives and children and grandchildren. That family unit, we shifted to individualism and now to hyper-individualism.

We changed with that court ruling the whole basis on which we organize our culture. We were organized as families, healthy families, knit together, committed families who worked out their problems together and stayed together. Moving from that, we moved to a culture of individualism and now hyper-individualism.

The thing that's killing us is families. I'll come back to this, particularly tomorrow in my section. I'll talk about the fact that no spiritual renewal is complete unless it rebirths the family altar, unless it brings us back to husbands and wives praying together and children and grandchildren connected together.

Unless you bring faith home and unless that faith has transformational impact, it will not sustain any kind. You can't do at church, you can't substitute at church what's not happening in the home. God, we just repent over the direction of our nation.

We repent over the fact that we have gone our separate ways. We repent over prayerless families. We repent over the discomfort that keeps us from praying together as a husband and wife.

From opening a Bible, we repent over homes where we grab our meals and go in this direction and that direction and eat on the run and the family never comes together. There's no regular moment in which the family is constituted and sits together and there's no moment in which the scripture is open and we hear it read and we see a father weep and we see a mother share her concern for us. We don't have as our Jewish friends have a Sabbath where we light the candles and meet together over a meal and experience something of honoring God in that moment and keeping our faith alive in the home.

God, we repent. We repent over the absence of faith in our home, over going to church and hoping that a pastor has fire in his belly because we don't and we grab a little bit and we enjoy the singing but we're unmoved. 50 percent of the people in America, according to the MOVE study, 2,000 congregations across seven denominations, 50 percent do not even feel close to God.

50 percent have a brushing encounter with this presence at church but other than that they call themselves Christians but they're not walking in a dedicated, consecrated way. Only 25 percent, only one in four of the people who go to church and that's now only 16, 17 percent in America of the population. 82, 83 percent of the population is not in church on any given Sunday and if you stretch that out over eight Sundays it's only about 23 to 25 percent.

We are a nation that in this generation has turned away from God and we've turned away from God to our idols, to the things that we love. We may not have wooden idols. We may not have gold and silver plated idols but we have idols.

We have things that we value. It may be our job. It may be our money.

It may be our name. It may be our football team or our NASCAR driver or something else. We have idols.

Idols are simply the pleasure points of our life or the power points of our life or the focus and purpose points of our life that are other than God. They've not been sanctified. They've not been brought into the kingdom of God.

They've not been subordinated. They may be fine. They may be fine as casual concerns in our life but they cannot occupy the central place of our life.

That belongs to Christ. Only 25 percent of people who attend church on Sunday are living anything similar to a Christ-centered life. God we repent.

We repent of things that cause you to pack up your glory and leave. Sin at the level of abomination. Five things that are mentioned in scripture.

The shedding of innocent blood, the lack of respect for life, and the suicide culture is a part of that. The breakdown of the family, sexual deviation, idolatry. If you have anything going on in your life that's even close to this kind of thing or in your family, I just want to give you a minute to repent.

I just want to give you a minute to ask God, show me this. God if there's been an abortion in our families, we repent. We have in our old yard out here a little flower garden, bricks.

They were memorial bricks that were part of a church that pastored for a while and we had bought a brick, a memorial brick, and one was my mother and one was my wife's mother and other members of the family that had passed on. And then there's one, two, a baby we lost. Because I'll never forget somebody saying to me one time, tears streaming down her face, she said, God never forgets life and even that child is sacred to him.

I had never, never thought about it in that kind of very personal, poignant way. The other day I was out doing some weeding and I ran across that and I got to thinking about what would that boy or girl, what would be the effect of that child? You may have lost a child. You may have lost a spouse and you know the poignancy, the sacredness of life.

You may be estranged from a family member and the Lord may be saying to you, I want you to heal that relationship. You may have things in your life that mean far too much to you. And I tell you, if there's anything God's saying to us in this season, it's to get our priorities right.

Even church can become a form of idolatry and we can substitute the church for Christ. Father, if there's any of these things that we have become partisan to, I pray, reveal them to us and help us to repent of them and deal with them in our lives. Our lack of respect, the sacredness of life, the integrity of our families, our sense of identity and God's right as creator, as the sovereign God to make us like we are and for us to be okay with that and to be fine with that.

All of these five things are things that we've struggled with as a nation. I don't think we're at the point where God has just washed his hands and walked away, but I do think we're on the warning track of judgment. And we've had 9-1-1 and we've had the banking housing bubble crisis, and now we have this global pandemic.

And we don't hear God in this. God is speaking to us about this. He's speaking to us in the context of this.

He's telling us that we're not as fortified as we think we are. 9-1-1. He's telling us we can't put our faith in money.

We can't be so driven by that, the banking crisis. And he's telling us that there are invisible enemies that can stalk us and find us. And medicine doesn't have a cure.

We may surpass that 60,000 death in America, God forbid. There are places where this is just beginning to break out in South America and Africa. God's talking to us.

And God gave them over. And God gave them over. And God gave them over.

And at some point, God either brings judgment of a severe kind that impacts the nation and causes it to have to reconstitute on another basis. We're one of a handful of nations whose constitution has lasted more than 100 years. France has gone through seven new constitutions.

The stability of this nation is extraordinary. But we're reaching a point where we're fragmenting and we're coming apart. You see it amplified in Washington.

You see it in every news conference. The only thing that can save us is a spiritual awakening that would come on the hills of a national solemn assembly. In this time, I have been doing a lot of thinking and a lot of writing.

And let me see if I can find the paper that I was looking for earlier. I've written a couple of white papers. And I hope, Dan, it's okay for me to mention them.

One is the coronavirus isn't a message from God. The other one is the coronavirus, a window of change, seven things we must consider. I've written on Passover as an opportunity for the family to recreate, begin to recreate a family altar.

And by the way, you don't have to feel bound to Passover season. This might be a good thing for you to do anytime to start recovering the family altar. I have written most recently on the need for city elders in view of the overreach of the culture.

There are problems in your city that can only be dealt with when unity forms around the idea of revival and spiritual renewal. This paper, seven things we must consider, I want to just take you through this. And just forgive me if I look at the paper here and not at the screen.

Seven things. And I just want to stop and pray with each one of these. Number one, my challenge to churches is that we cannot go on as we've gone before.

If there's anything that God is saying to us, he's saying to us, you've got to change and you've got to take an inventory of where you are. So would you just pray with me right now. Father, I'm asking you, if you're a pastor, that you would give me the courage to know how to call my church to repentance and change.

I want the first Sunday out to be different than any other time before. I'm asking you for the message that I need to share with my people, even leading up to our first Sunday back. I'm asking you that we not go back to three songs and offering a special and a sermon.

I'm asking you that we not get back into a rut. We were in a rut. You've stirred us.

You've called us. You're challenging us. I'm asking you, Father, to have mercy on us, Lord.

Here's three things that I'm saying to churches and pastors. Number one, I'm saying, when you come back from this, open your church. Before Sunday, open your church.

You can do this now. You can open your church to, in most places, less than 10 people in the sanctuary at any time. Put a throne chair where the pulpit normally stands, just to switch it up and let it represent God.

Drape some blue cloth over it, the glory of God, some purple, the royalty of God, some scarlet over it, the blood of Christ, some white over it, a reminder, a call to holiness. Put worshipful music on and just let it play all day and put scriptures on the screen regarding the holiness of God, regarding the love of God, the goodness of God. It's the goodness of God that brings us to repentance and the sovereignty of God.

Let people just sit for as long as they want in the presence of God, in the sanctuary. Let them come and kneel at the altar. Let them get prostrate before God.

If you need to limit it to 10 or families of 10, open your church before the first Sunday. Open it to people and encourage them. Get right with God.

Put the communion tray out. If you need to have an elder there that stands, watch over it as many liturgical churches require, that's fine. The great camp meeting revivals of the early 1800s, the great service would be on Sunday, but the people would come in in wagons on Thursday and Friday, and they would spend Saturday listening to preachers call for repentance.

They would meet with pastors. They would meet with preachers, and they would have those preachers pray with them about the sins in their lives. They did not want to receive communion before getting right with God.

Boy, we've gone away from this. We've forgotten the holiness of God, the sacredness of God. We've forgotten the wrath of God.

We've forgotten the judgment of God. We taste the elements, the blood, the brokenness of the body of Christ with such a casual spirit about us. This is what caused the second great awakening.

It was this recognition that families needed to get right with God. It was the great camp meeting experiences of 10, 20, 30,000 people. Open your church.

Call for repentance. Call for a new reverence for the holiness of God, a recognition of the sovereignty of God and His right to intervene even in judgment in cultures, and yet the goodness of God. Number two, gather your elders or your deacons or whatever you have and their spouses because as you see in Ezra, and I'll go there tomorrow in my time, as you see in Ezra, it is not until because the priest had married pagan wives.

I'm so stunning. The rulers had married pagan wives. The husbands had said, son, I'm marrying this woman.

She's not a woman of faith, but I would recommend that you marry her daughter or whatever. I mean, it's just extraordinary. The sin, it was not until the homes were recalibrated in holiness and righteousness that there was true revival and it never is.

So you have to have elders or deacons or whatever you call them in your denominational or congregational structure. You have to have your leadership and their spouses. You need your staff and their spouses.

You need your prayer leadership team, not just intercessors, but a broader team than that. I don't know how many that will constitute for you. It probably, in most cases, will be on the lowest end, 12 to 15, on the high end, 40 to 50.

You may have to wait until you feel good about the whole social distancing thing, but I'm pleading with you to consider before your first Sunday that you call a leadership solemn assembly. Don't so much worry about a script. Just have your people bring their Bibles.

Don't do it in the sanctuary where they're lined up in rows looking in the backs of women's heads. Do it in the fellowship hall with carpet on the floor and chairs in a circle or layers of circles. Don't have an agenda.

If you do have it, write it in pencil. The whole purpose is to get together and read scripture to one another as the spirit would lead and pray over those scriptures and say to God, what are you saying to our congregation? What are you saying to us? What are you saying to us? I could see extraordinary value if a congregation did this, and in the course of the first month back, if you had multiple congregational meetings of multiple leadership teams of congregations in cities, Baptist and Pentecostal, liturgical and non-liturgical, Calvinist and Armenian, come together. Come together around the simple center of Christ and his supremacy and make your denominational theology secondary to that and come together around task theology, your obligation to engage the city with the gospel of Jesus Christ and see a great spiritual awakening in your city.

Two things. I'm going to mention a third. Number one, open your sanctuary and engage your people and encourage them.

Drop in at your convenience. The church is open from whatever time in the morning to late at night. Put the music on.

Put scriptures on the screen. Put some prayer stations around. Put a throne chair up in front, and let's just remind ourselves of the sovereignty of God.

Call a leadership assembly of your people, a kind of prayer summit before God from nine o'clock in the morning to three o'clock in the afternoon to four and just spend time praying. Say six hours of praying without an agenda. Yeah, it'll fly away.

It'll absolutely fly away. If you give the Holy Spirit a chance to settle down on you, it will fly away, and I'll guarantee you people will move from their chairs to their knees and some to their faces, and people will begin to weep before God, and you'll hear brokenness, and this is what has to happen in our churches. Brokenness has to come back.

Pray the scripture. Pray Isaiah 6. Pray John 15. I'm going to release a resource for this called Transformational Prayer Meetings, and you can find it on my website, Project Pray, or my Facebook site or something like that, or I'll make it available through Dan.

The third thing you want to do is you want to make that first service coming out different than services you've had in the past. You want to rejoice. The joy of the Lord is our strength, Nehemiah said.

We've got the rubble in the city, but the joy of the Lord is our strength. We feel conviction of sin, but the joy of the Lord is our strength. You know, godly repentance is not groveling.

It's this quickening by the spirit of this thing that's wrong in my life coupled with the recognition of grace, and it's the recognition of grace that brings joy. You want both. If you just have cheap grace, as Bonhoeffer called it, then you dismiss the depravity and the potential of sin to destroy your life, to eat away and corrode your life and your marriage.

You must take sin seriously, and you must repent, and you must be broken over your sin, but that brokenness, those tears are just exposed and conjoined to joy because of the grace of God. If my people who are called by my name will repent, humble themselves, turn from their wicked ways, seek my face, then I'll hear from heaven, and I will forgive. There's grace.

There's grace, but it involves seeking not merely the hand of God to get us out of trouble, but the face of God to know him. It involves humility before him. It involves true change and the capacity of change that comes by grace.

It involves a turning away from sin and the redirection of our lives. Number one, here's what God said to me in the middle of this crisis. He said, you must repent.

You must take a hard look at where you have been and the style of what you've been doing and the comfort and church as idolatry. He said to me, he said to me, our worship must change. It must move from audience passive to a different level of worship.

Worship, or the old Anglo-Saxon word, is really a lousy translation for *proskunio*, which means to kiss the hand or even the ground upon which God stands. It's the idea of deference to a king, to the face of a king. But the Greek word seemed too intense.

So when the English Bibles were produced, they chose to translate and use an English word, worship, and not the literal meaning of the Greek idea of worship, bowing before, prostrating yourself before. That just seemed too intense. Kissing the hand of, kissing the ground before God, that just was too intense.

So we keep dumbing down worship. We keep alleviating it of reverence. We don't stand before God.

In fact, people choose to stand if they want to stand. You don't do that in a courtroom. But we don't, we lack reverence for God.

Worship, or worth-ship, to the old Anglo-Saxon word, is the idea of my values around what do my values revolve. What is worth the most in my life? It's really an issue of value. It's not lifting your hands and praising God as Pentecostals do.

It's not clapping your hands. It's not a response to the music. It's much, much, much deeper.

It's the evaluation around what does my life revolve and what would I die for and what do I live for. That's worship. A worship service is intended to recalibrate those values.

A worship service is intended to examine those values. It's intended to force me to take a look at what is the most important thing in my life. And if we're dying to get out of church to make sure that we get to a game somewhere, that's what's worth the most to us.

And these are the kind of things that are killing us in America because of our lack of true devotion, of true devotion to God. Here's the fourth thing that I think God spoke to me in this virus. He's calling pastors back to himself.

I think even pastors have fallen in love with the church. I'll never forget leading a prayer summit in, and I did this, many, many cities, probably 150 of these, where pastors of a whole city would get on the bus and go out of town and pray together. Sometimes it was a handful of pastors, 20, 25 pastors.

Sometimes it was 60 to 70 pastors. And for three days, four days, they would spend time around a communion table, and they would pray, and they would bring their relationship back to God. And I'll never forget a pastor praying one time, God forgive me for adultery, forgive me for the woman that I'm having an affair with.

And he was talking about the church. He said, I'm having an affair with your church. I've never forgotten it.

I've never forgotten the depth of his conviction as he realized in that moment that the church had become, that preaching had become more important to him than Christ had become to him. Peter, do you love me more than these? Do you love me? I'm calling you back to me. If there's anything I think God is doing in this crisis, it's that he's calling pastors back to a love relationship with him.

Pastors that are too busy to pray. Pastors that are on the run that don't have time for God. He's saying, I don't want you, I don't want you to be so caught up in the church that you are missing me.

I remember a pastor saying, a pastor at a large church, a couple thousand. And he said, every morning I was going to the hospital an hour away to be with somebody and pray with somebody. I prayed for people, but I didn't spend time in prayer myself.

God is calling you as a pastor and as a member back to him, back to a relationship with him. He doesn't want us to center off the church. He wants us to center off him and a relationship with him.

Here's the fifth thing that God spoke to me during this time. We must, again, become missional. The church must not be about us.

We don't even know the neighborhood around us. We don't even know the number of people who don't go to church. We don't even know the spiritual conditions, the broken walls of our city.

We don't even know those things. And the result is, the consequence is that we are not missional. The church is all about us and what it does for us.

60 to 70 percent of people look for a church that can minister to their needs. It's become a service station for us, filled with children's programs and youth programs and singles programs and family programs and seniors programs. And all of those things are wonderful, but not one of those ministries is mentioned in the Bible.

Instead, it says the church should be a house of prayer, a house of prayer to the end that we evangelize the nations and we disciple those nations. The church must become missional again. And then number six, there has to be a shift in our prayer theology from self-interested prayer that's all about us and our needs.

I say to pastors all the time, and I know I'm misunderstood and you will misunderstand me again perhaps, prayer requests in our church services are killing us. Five minutes of woe of one prayer request and one prayer request and a minute of prayer. The Bible actually never tells us to bring our prayer.

There's nothing wrong with praying for one another, but the Bible never tells us to bring our prayer requests to church so that other people can pray for us. There's nothing wrong with that, but that's not the purpose. The purpose is that I go to God with my own needs because in that moment, God is wanting me to consult with him about the things that matter in my life and about the solutions that he might have for me and about the faith that I need and the strength that I need to get through that crisis.

Our prayer theology must shift. It must shift from prayer that seeks to get God to please us to the desire, Hebrews 11 and 6, that we please him. It must shift from getting something from the hand of God to getting to seeing the face of God and knowing God.

It must shift from acquisition, what we get out of prayer, to what we give to God. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice. It must shift from a transaction with God, my bringing faith to him in exchange for this thing that he gives to me, healing or a breakthrough or whatever else.

It must shift from actions with God to transformation. The great need is not that God changes things. The great need is that he changes me.

And if I'll allow him to change me, he'll change everything else. We need a radical shift in our prayer theology. We've defined prayer theology or prayer almost exclusively as asking things of God.

I run a prayer line every Saturday night at nine o'clock. It's called Saturday Night Fire and we're praying for awakening. And every once in a while, I'll have somebody hears about this line and they'll come on and crash into the line and say, I'm only here for you to pray for me.

And sometimes I'll pause and pray for them. And sometimes I'll say, if you'll hang around at the end of the call, we'll pray for personal needs. But right now we're praying for a greater need.

Revival in the church and awakening in the culture. I've got some people who promptly hang up. They have no time for that.

All they need, all they want is for somebody to pray for their needs. We have to have a better prayer theology than we have now. And then the last, then last, there has to be in our lives a driving desire to see a great awakening.

A revival will impact a local church. It's typically confined to a church. Sometimes it spills over to another congregation.

It'll impact a church for 18 to 36 months, maybe a little longer than that. But often six months after revival, the church is worse off than it was before the revival. And here's why.

Because it never used the revival as an opportunity to repent. The revival was full of hype. It was full of joy.

It was full of excitement. It was full of a charismatic evangelist. It was full of this or that.

And people were tantalized. They were moved. They were stirred, but they never changed.

You see in Ezra, you see the people convicted and they say to Ezra, they say to Ezra, what we've sinned. But that's not change. They're at the gate of change.

They're at the threshold of change. But there is much that has to happen before that change comes. Years go by before that change.

God is dealing with them. They have to have an encounter with the Word. They have to have a continued intercessor, Ezra, who's broken before God.

He brings them in multiple occasions before God to pray and to seek God. So here's prayer. Here is the intercessor.

Here's leadership, deliberate, intentional leadership. Here is a focus upon a sin, but a growing focus upon what the city could be when Nehemiah comes and what could happen in the city if true revival came. So prayer engagement, an intercessory leader, word engagement, a conviction of sin, and then finally, here's when real revival comes, the reordering of families, the reordering of homes.

True revival is not just a stirring because of a group of series of messages that we've had at church and people who have been touched. That may not even get us to the real threshold of genuine revival. A revival, if it brings systemic change to a congregation, it'll have a three to five-year shelf life.

But a great awakening is when God comes to a city and not just a congregation, and in a sovereign move of God, he captures the attention of an entire city or region with his glory. And suddenly, the most outstanding and outlandish centers are gripped by God and brought into the kingdom of God. And radical conversions fuel any movement.

That, my friend, has a shelf life of 10 to 20 years with a shadow effect of 25 to 40 years. It affects the next generation that saw a radical change in their father, in their mother, or even in their grandfather. And it tends to ride out for the course of 20, 25, or more years.

We need a great awakening. Seven things that I felt like God spoke to me about in my hiding away with him during this coronavirus. Let me pray them.

And you pray them with me. God, don't let the church continue as it is. You've stopped us.

You put the pause button on. And there are people who want to get back to life as usual. And there are pastors who want to get back to just like it was before.

This is not where you're trying to take us. This is not what you want. God, please, don't let us go back to business as usual, to church as usual.

And Lord, if only 20 percent of the churches could change. If only 3 to 5 percent of the churches were pioneer churches, pioneering a new way to do church, a new way to be church, and then 15 percent followed, that would shift the culture of the church. God, don't let us go back to church as usual.

Number two, I pray. Bring us to a place of repentance and repentance that empowers redirection. Bring us to a place of brokenness.

Bring us to a place of tears. Bring us to a place where we're willing to change. Bring us to a place where the Holy Spirit by grace and faith empowers that change.

Bring us to an understanding of Scripture that gives us a template for change, so we're not just doing as we've done for 50 years, trying to find good ideas from another church and implement them in our own

space. God, I just pray. Bring a spirit of repentance and brokenness to the church.

I don't hear weeping, God. I don't hear brokenness. I don't hear desperation.

I hear anger in the streets. I hear the blowing horns. I hear the bluster.

I hear our economy is going to be tanked. I hear the fear of where we might be with economic calamity, but I don't hear where we are with spiritual bankruptcy. God, we're not broken yet.

We're not broken yet. And as much as I fear to pray this, and as much as I don't want to even say this, the only hope of the nation is that you bring a significant number of people to the place of brokenness about our spiritual bankruptcy until they are moved to action. If that doesn't happen, then there's no hope for us, not as a nation.

We may last another 10 years, another 20 years, but this will not be a safe place for our great-grandchildren. I pray, God, bring us. Don't let us continue as we were before this.

Bring us to a place of brokenness and repentance. Third, Lord, help us to see that worship is not a place. It's a relationship.

It's a posture before you. Help us to get over the celebration narrative of our worship that allows no opportunity for lament and no place for repentance, no significant exposure in many evangelical Pentecostal churches to the Word in a systemic way, preaching that's piecemeal about this and that and designed more to interest the people than it is to call them to real-word engagement. Change our worship.

Change our worship in a way that our values shift and you become the center of our life. I'm praying, God, don't let us continue on the course that we were on. Bring us to a place of brokenness and repentance.

I'm praying, God, bring us to a place where you renew genuine worship. Number four, I'm praying, call your pastors back to yourself. Call your pastors back to you.

Call them away from church activities. Call them away from a love affair with the church and preaching back to a love affair with you. I'm asking, God, and in fact, somewhere I had a quote by John Smith about the pastoral office.

Prayer is the life and the soul of the sacred function. Without it, we can expect no success in our ministry. Without it, our best instructions are barren and our most painful labors idle.

Prayer often gains a success to little talents. That's good news for most of us. While the greatest talents without prayer are useless and pernicious, a minister who is not a man of piety and not a man of prayer, whatever other his talents may be, he cannot be called a servant of God.

He can't be called a holy man of God. That intercessor between God and his people, that reconciler of man to his maker, if he does not see himself as a man of prayer, this pastor, the great calling, number four, is the pastor will become a man of prayer. We will give oversight to the deacons, but we will give ourselves to prayer and to the word.

Number five, God, I'm praying, help the church to become missional. Help us to become missional. Help us to become concerned about the lost.

And number five, or number six, help us to deepen our prayer lives from praying on the run to time with you over an open Bible in the morning. Help us to deepen our prayer life, our devotional life from reading the scripture to praying the scripture and waiting and letting you speak to the scripture through the scripture until it changes us. God, help us to move from the little bread box where we get a scriptural promise and run on it for the day until we begin to weep over open, marked up Bibles, changes, God, transform us.

And then God, and then God, number seven, number seven, help us, Lord, to experience a great awakening. The great Robert Weber said one of the problems with our worship, and actually with Christianity in general, is that it's become a matter of style and not a matter of substance. We go to churches that have the kind of worship style, the kind of music, the kind of preaching that we like, and the problem is we're not being engaged substantively.

The substance of the word, the substance of conviction, the substance of transformation, the substance of bare bones calling us, digging us out, and thrusting us in a direction of mission and personal purpose. Seven things that must change, seven things that must change if we're going to fulfill our destiny, seven things that God spoke to me about. I just want to give you a moment just to reflect on those things and to pray, and then I'm going to quickly take you to what I'd actually planned to take you through this morning, and I hadn't gotten there yet, and we'll be finished on time.

But I just want to give you a moment to pray. Pray for brokenness. Ask yourself if you have substituted going to church for a relationship with the living Christ that you demonstrate in daily prayer.

Ask God for the grace to shift back to a Christ center. That won't, that's not away from the church. That'll actually intensify.

That'll intensify your involvement with the people of God in mission. Pray about that. Ask God to help you identify the idols in your life, the things that have become far too important that drive you, that you get up in the morning thinking about, that cause you to be too busy for prayer.

Ask you to think about what is it that your life revolves around, orbits around, because that's your God. Listen, if you put God, Christ at the center, then there can be other things obviously orbiting around your life, but they can't be your sun. They can't be the center of your solar system.

That has to be Christ himself. Ask him, how is my life ordered? Ask God for the grace to repent. Ask him for a spirit of repentance.

Ask him, give permission for the Holy Spirit to break your heart over your own sin. You know, it's a frightening thing to say to God, show me my sin, because he will begin to do that. And here's the difference between condemnation and conviction.

Condemnation, you see your sin and your failings before God, and it causes you to give up and run away and hide and not deal with them, and guilt overwhelms you. But conviction, conviction is the work of the Holy Spirit in pointing out how change could come to your life and where change could come to your life by grace. It is the direct, forthright honesty of God about your condition, while at the same time embracing you with the mud and dirt of the world all over you.

It embraces you. The fear of God that is phobic and servile pushes you away from God, but the fear of God that is holy fear, reverent fear, is fascination. It draws you to God, tethered to respect and reverence

before him.

Ask God, reveal yourself, your love and your grace, but at the same time, your holiness to me, and bring me to a place of change, the kind of change I cannot produce in myself of myself. Pray about that. Drive through your city.

Nehemiah surveyed the walls of the city at night. Viewing the city at night, it's a different animal. Different spirits sometimes that swirl in the nighttime atmosphere.

But drive through your city. Ask God to show you the broken places. Do some research on your city while you are at home.

You may be surprised to find different groups operating your city that are quite ungodly, and they have an agenda for your city that is completely contrary to biblical ideals and norms. And remember, the people who are in office are in office by political machines that put them there, and behind those political machines are the real power brokers of your city. And unless those power brokers are changed, the political machines won't change, and their values won't change, and you won't have the kind of people in office that will respect godly principles.

There has to be people who are empowered by God to feel the need to see a city change, who create movements where people, godly people, begin to care about the city. We've segregated ourselves, and God is saying, no, I want you, I want you to be light in the midst of the darkness. I want you to be salt touching the decay.

Look at your city. Begin to research your city. Does it have godly roots? What kind of city is it? What's the nature of the city? What drives the city? What unifies the city? And I'll tell you, in most cases, 90% of the time, you're not going to find, it's not about, even if you have a Christian university there, it's not about God anymore.

Father, would you touch our cities? Would you help us, Lord, to see our city in a different light and be moved to believe that you could send a spiritual awakening to the city? What would happen if God became the talk of the town in your city? That's a spiritual awakening. That's when God's out of the box. That's when he's moving in ways that are evident.

That's when his glory is manifest in ways that even the unrighteous see it. That had to be God. That had to be God.

Just as many are seeing now. This has to be something of the finger of God. As the magician said, of Egypt said to Pharaoh, this is the finger of God.

This is not just natural phenomenon. Something about this is the finger of God. And what's he after? He's after the gods of Egypt to show that they're not as, they're inferior to him.

He's wanting to show himself glorious in behalf of his people and his purposes. And that's what he wants to do now. He wants to show himself glorious in behalf of his people who are committed to his purposes.

Oh, hallelujah. Well, Dan said we should lace in moments of worship. Let's take a moment and thank God.

We want to thank you in advance for changing us. We want to thank you in advance for pastors who are moved and changed and transformed as a result of spending time with you over an open Bible. We want

to thank you for shifts that will come to our churches.

We want to thank you for recentering us on things that really matter. We want to thank you for brokenness and repentance. We can see church services taking place when the churches are reopened, where people stand and confess their sins and testify to your grace and your goodness during this time.

When the altars fill up with people who are hungry for you, who are praying for revival, when there is an awareness that these are indeed eschatological signs of the end of the times that we are tasting now. And we cannot escape the fact that the world in which we live will see the wrath of God, we pray, Lord. We pray, Lord, for a spiritual awakening and we thank you coming out of this that we will see moments, places, times when you will invade history and you'll manifest yourself right in our own time and you'll mark our nation for your glory.

We want to thank you for reordering our families coming out of this. We want to thank you for touching our pastor. We want to thank you for helping us become missional.

Change us, our families and our churches coming out of this situation to be different than they were going in. I pray this for your glory in Jesus' name. Now I want to use the last bit of time that I have.

If you've got a Bible, I want you to go with me to the book of Amos and I want to just take you on a quick tour through the book of Amos. It's not an in-depth study by any means and if you've done an in-depth study of Amos, you may find yourself chuckling at what I leave out. But I just want to show you a big principle in Amos.

Now I'm going to go through the weeds so I don't want you to get lost. You've got a Bible. Grab your Bible and let's just talk about it.

I want to show you a phrase that appears over and over in the book of Amos. First, I want to show you this. The Lord roars from Zion.

He utters his voice from Jerusalem and the pastors and shepherds mourn and the top of Carmel melts. There are times when God thunders, when God injects himself into history. I feel sorry for pastors who are saying to their people, God has nothing to do with this.

It's reminiscent of the time of the prophets who spoke and said, this is the voice of God. He's talking to us. He's calling us for repentance and other prophets were saying nothing of that kind.

That's not true. God won't deal with the nation like this. He'll never let the nation fall.

Listen to me. He let Israel go. Judah was scattered in 586 BC, came back 516, 515 and then scattered again in 70 before they came back in 1948.

Don't tell me that. God judges nations and he's speaking to us. He's talking to us.

He's roaring. The question is, are we hearing what he's saying? The Lord roars. The Lord utters his voice and we have to pray.

Give us discernment to hear what you are saying and the recurring phrase, it recurs seven times for three transgressions and for four. This is the brim of iniquity. This is the point which God says, all right, no more.

You've crossed the line. I'm going to bring judgment. This is Romans and he gave them over and he gave them over and he gave them over for three transgressions and yet for four.

There is a limit. There's a point which God says no more. If we have not reached that limit, we are on the warning track and the question I think we have to ask ourselves is if revival comes, will it only seed hope after the nation falls apart or will it be enough to save the nation? The reforms of Josiah didn't save the nation.

They were radical reforms, but they didn't save the nation. They only seeded renewal after the 70 years of captivity were over. I think we're at that critical point.

Can the nation be saved? Can a revival save our nation or would a revival, either way we need revival. Would a revival only seed the rebuilding when we come back from any kind of devastation, when we fall apart as a nation? For three and yet for four. In the case of Damascus, it was for cruelty.

In the case of Gaza, it was enslavement. They took captive. We've done that.

Cruelty and enslavement of a race. In the case of Tyre, it was because of treachery to their neighbors during a time of difficulty and international conflict. In the case of Eden, they hunted down those who were fleeing as refugees and gave them over to the Babylonians who were attempting to capture them.

This is utter insensitivity. In the case of Ammon, it was insensitivity to pregnant women, to the unborn. It was the attempt to depopulate a people.

Then he comes to Judah. It was their casual approach to the law of God. They had despised the law of God, just as we've done in taking the Ten Commandments out of schools and taking the Ten Commandments of public property.

We despise the law of God, the principles that lead us to godliness. Then in the case of Israel, they sell the righteous for silver and the poor for a pair of sandals. Seven nations, seven nations.

God, in a sense, goes around all the nations. Here again, just to make the point that God judges nations, that God keeps a record of national sins. He says, I'm going to deal with you.

I'm going to judge you as nations. In the case of Israel, he completely destroys the nation and scatters them, never to be populated again. I want to just take you through a series of things very, very quickly here in the book of Amos.

In chapter 2, verse 9, he says to them, we have a history together. I was the one that destroyed your enemies. I was the one who led you through the wilderness for 40 years.

I was the one who did all of this and gave you the new land to possess. I did this for you. We have a history as a nation.

Number two, I've been speaking to you all along. I raised up some of your sons as prophets and your young men as Nazarites, calling them to a vow of deeper consecration. But you said to your sons, I don't want you to be a preacher.

I've got so many other things I'd like for you to be. There's so many other professions that you could engage in. And you said to your sons, and you said to your sons, and you commanded the prophets, do

not prophesy.

And you also said to your sons who became Nazarites, you don't have to take it that seriously. I know you've taken a vow not to shave your head and not to drink wine and not to do this and not to, but you don't have to take it so seriously. You don't have to go that far with your faith.

One generation dumbs down the fate of the next generation. It mutes the voice of their children who are crying out to God about righteousness and godliness and holiness. It mutes what they call or see as fanaticism in their children.

We have a history. I've been talking to you, but you repress my speech, even in the voice of your children who I'm raising up to be prophets and calling them to a deeper consecration than you were ever comfortable with. I am at the point where I realize you have refused to hear me.

And you have committed yourself to compromise. And I'm weighted down with your sins. There's a limit to how far I'm going to without judging you.

And then number five, hear these words. The first time it occurs in Amos, it's in chapter three, verse one. It's a call to the courtroom.

It's a summons to the courtroom of heaven. Hear these words, these charges that I have spoken against you, Israel, the nation, and you as a family. And again, the idea is that we have a history.

You have a unique calling and purpose as a nation. I have invested discipline in you. I have tried giving my energy to turn you as a nation, and you have not turned.

The goal is congruence. Can two walk together unless they be agreed? You and I no longer agree about your purpose. We no longer agree about your values.

And so I'm about to sever the relationship between you, me, and you as a nation. This is sobering. This is absolutely, absolutely sobering.

In chapter three, God says, I'm serious. Do you not hear me? I'm roaring like a lion. Can we hear him? Do you not hear me? I'm crying out like a young lion.

Do you not hear me? You're like a bird. You will not escape. You can't fly away from my judgment.

You can't get away from this. Do you not hear me? You've wandered into places that you shouldn't have gone, and you're trapped in a snare. You're caught in a trap.

You cannot get out of this. Don't you hear? Are you so deaf? I'm speaking like a trumpet, but you don't hear me. Can you not hear me? Can you not hear what I have called you to do? And I've brought calamity.

Don't you see the calamity that's upon you? And don't you interpret that as my judgment, as my speaking to you as a nation? A lion has roared. Who will not fear? And yet we don't. We are not fearing God.

Quickly, I'm moving to Amos here, to the Book of Amos. There are seven charges that he brings against the nation. Seven charges that he brings against the nation.

Number one is the charge of violence. The fact that in palaces, the rich have been made richer by the exploitation of the poor. The great gap between rich and poor, the creation of what is really called and

known as a class society is taking place.

There's a wonderful book about that by a sociologist. It's taking place in America. We've got two groups, an upper echelon of elites that don't even talk to, don't even know the poor.

They have no idea who they are, the working class. They store up violence indirectly in their palaces. He says, here, I'm going to testify against you.

I'm bringing you into my courtroom. This is not an American courtroom. This is God's courtroom.

Here's the second problem. Your worship is polluted. I'm going to visit the altars at Baal.

I'm going to cut off the horns of the altar. Your worship is not changing you. It's not transforming you.

Those horns, the power, symbolic of the power, is going to fall to the ground. You're going to taste my wrath. Here's the second here.

Here do cows abase him. It has to do with, it's a sad, it's a typical cynicism of a prophet. It has to do with what's going on in family dynamics.

As spouses say to their husbands, I don't have enough money. I want to do this. Bring wine.

Let us drink. The result is that the men, to make more money, only exploit the poor and hurt them and harm them in creating systemic poverty, systemic oppression. He says, because of this, you've not come back to me.

I'm going to judge you. There's a cynicism here that's found in the passage. Come to Bethel, house of God, and transgress, and come to Gilgal, and multiply transgressions, but bring your sacrifices every morning.

The people are worshiping at the tabernacle. This is pre-temple. They're worshiping at the tabernacle, and they're offering Thanksgiving offerings with leaven, freewill offerings.

The freewill offerings, of course, are the offerings of the burnt offering, the grain offering, and the peace offering. Here's what they're not doing. They've left out the sin offering and the trespass offering.

In other words, they've constituted a kind of worship that celebrates, but it doesn't repent. It assumes that it can consecrate itself to God without dealing with its sin. It assumes that it can work for God in the harvest field, the grain offering, but it doesn't have to get right with its neighbor, the trespass offering.

It never knows true shalom, true peace. It never ends with reconciliation because the peace offering was one in which the offerer got back a portion, and the altar became a table. He could share with his friends and family portions, pieces of the meat sacrificed, and now there's a celebration.

The celebration of unity, the celebration of reconciliation comes out of the sin offering, repentance, the trespass offering, restitution, and reconciliation, the consecration offering, the giving of myself to God, the grain offering, the dedication of my hands and my talents, my capacity to make money, my abilities in the harvest field. All those four, sin, trespass, offerings of reparation, burnt offering, the offering of consecration, and the grain offering culminate in the peace offering. They've left off sin.

They've left off trespass. They no longer are forcing themselves to go to their neighbor. Jesus said, if you bring your gift to the altar and you have altar against your neighbor, go to him and be reconciled to him.

So you can't deal with your sin without also dealing with restitution or reconciliation issues, and those are foundational to any true consecration because God is wanting us to be together. He's wanting us to be unified in heart and purpose and regard and regard for one another, not just as Baptists and not just as Pentecostals, but across the denominational denominational continuum. Here's worship that's not transformational.

Here's worship that doesn't take care, deal with sin. It isn't confronted by the lack of sin, and so here's what God does. I gave you famine.

I gave you drought. I withheld rain, erratic weather patterns. You had water issues that caused one city to look to another city, and yet you did not return to me.

In fact, now you begin in the book of Amos to get over and over this phrase, and yet you have not returned, and yet you have not returned. I brought this judgment, but you did not return. I brought this drought, but you did not return.

I allowed the locust to come. A locust plague is moving across North Africa now. It destroyed vineyards and fig trees and olive trees.

Your harvest was taken away. We have an economic locust that's eating away at our harvest now. Its companies will close as a result of this.

God says, I did this, but yet you did not return to me. You didn't come back to me. I sent plagues among you, but you did not return unto me.

I sent upon whole cities were overthrown. You say, well, we haven't seen that. Well, we did in Katrina, and we did in Miami, and we have in the Bahamas, and we have in the earthquakes of San Francisco and Haiti, and riddled with witchcraft and voodoo, as is New Orleans, and earthquakes and flooding in different places.

God says, I wiped out whole cities, wiped out whole cities, but you've not returned to me. These are signs. These are signs.

Therefore, prepare to meet your God. I'm about to reveal myself. I'm about to come out of hiding.

I'm about to show myself. You don't believe I exist. I'm about to reveal myself.

The Lord of Hosts is his name. I'm the one that formed mountains. I'm the creator.

I'm the one that administrates the cosmos, the morning and the evening. I'm the one that walks on top of your mountains. I'm a giant like you have never ever seen before.

The Lord of Hosts, or the Lord of the Army of Angels of Heaven, that is his name. And here's the third. Hear this.

The third courtroom summons. Hear this. It is a lamentation.

Israel has fallen. Here's the complete collapse of the culture, the complete collapse of the nation. After all of these warnings, you say, what happened? We haven't gone that far, but I could see.

I could see glimpses of this in God's dealings with our nation. I can see moments here that you can put America on this, these pages in Amos and say, this is the finger of God. This is the trumpet of God.

He's talking to us. He's calling us to repentance. Well, why do we want to go back and just crank up the drums and the music and start all over again? It says nothing has happened.

God is saying, I want you to repent. Here's what he says. He says, seek me and live.

Don't go to Bethel. It's not a better place. Don't go to Bethel, house of God.

Don't go back to Bethel. Don't go to Gilgal. Don't go to Beersheba.

All these are worship centers. All of these are worship centers, places where the tabernacle had been. Seek me and live.

What I'm wanting is a profound turning to me. Not a place, but a person. In the Old Testament, God is associated with a place, with a holy place and the most holy place.

His glory was attached to a place. But in the New Testament, the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld the glory of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth. Suddenly the glory of God moved from a place to a person.

And now in the coming of the Holy Spirit, the word of God is moved from a person Christ to a people with whom he shares his glory, through whom he wants to manifest his glory. The church of the living God, lively stones fitted together. It's not about a place.

It's about relationships. The people of God bound together for common worship, that's values and mission purpose. Don't go.

Don't make this about a place. Make this about coming back to me. I'm the creator.

The Lord is his name. I'm calling you back to me. And then verse 14, seek good and not evil, that you may live, establish justice in the gates.

I've released two white papers about elders in the gates. It's an old idea that goes back to the time when I was involved in pastors' prayer summits with Multnomah Bible College. And we were trying to get pastors to come out of a prayer summit for their city and establish an eldership for the city, not over the city, but to serve the city.

A servant leadership team might be the best way to say it. To steward grace, to steward the concern for the city, to steward holiness in the city, to pastor sheep that were not of their own pasture, to pastor a city together. I've released one paper too.

I'm getting ready to release the third. I hadn't intended to even write these papers and they just come out of my time of spending time with the Lord here. Every city needs an eldership, not a city council.

That's civil. You need a spiritual eldership in your city that asks, what can we do to promote justice in this city, righteousness in this city, revival in this city, and to avert judgment on this city? Where is the iniquity

level in our city? Is it about to brim over in our city? Can we fill the bowls of incense? And they are brimming over as well. And until God sends a mighty revival from the altar of heaven and thunders in our city and causes a spiritual awakening, this can't be done by one church.

It cannot be done by one pastor working alone. This is the pastors of a city coming together in behalf of the city. Establish justice in the gate.

Hate evil, love good. And it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious to the remnant. It may be that he will send a revival to your city.

Oh, hallelujah. Oh, glory to God. Hallelujah.

It may be that there is grace left. Amos said, I didn't intend to say this. I'm no prophet, not the son of a prophet.

I just have a little business gathering fruit, selling in the market. And I get it when you say to me, Amos said, go prophesy somewhere else. Take that message somewhere else.

We don't want to hear that here. I get it. I get it when you tell me to go back to my own country.

I tell you, I get it when you tell me to go back to my little town or my village. I get it. You don't want to hear this message in your city.

You don't want to hear this message in your nation. Don't spout against the house of Isaac. All right? If that's the way you feel, then this is what's going to happen.

The full weight of the judgment of God is going to come upon you. A survey line will be set out. Your city will be divided.

Your nation will fall and become captive to aliens, to outside forces. That's what will happen. You see, we can't force the listening, the hearing of our message, but we can pray.

We can engage God asking him. See, it isn't ultimately an intercessor is a sign that God is moving. And our persistence is the sign to heaven that God has a rising tide of people who are willing to move with him.

Because what we want is for things to happen in the earth as they're happening in heaven. We want the bride of Christ to be coordinated with Christ. We want this bride to be beautified and holy and righteous.

And then we want God to begin to dance around us with inescapable indications that there is something supernatural happening about us. And our message needs attention. Christianity can no longer be placed in the smorgasbord of all religions treated like Islam and Buddhism and Hinduism and atheism and any other thing.

It's not merely a dead philosophy that comforts the hearts of people. This is a living faith. It has at its head a lion and he's roaring now.

And we can pray that he will be heard, that God will speak. We don't want to come to the place in Amos where the famine is the famine of hearing God's word. We want to come to the place where he raises up the tabernacle of David and the Gentiles, the nations.

80 to 100 million USA people, people in America, are now first or second generation immigrants. They brought their own gods with them. But if we were to see a revival that would touch that immigrant population, matriculated into the U.S., it would set off a global revival, a global spiritual awakening, the likes of which we have never, ever seen.

And then he says, and then he says that all of the Gentiles, the nations, who are called by my name, the days are coming, he says, when the plowman will overtake the reaper. A harvest is coming so great that the treader of grapes will overtake the one who sows grapes. You'll be taking a harvest out as quick as you put a harvest in.

And I will bring back the captives, the backsliders from Israel, and they will build away cities. I know that there are implications of this passage that have to do with the millennial reign, but I think there's a foretaste of this that we're already seeing. Do you know that more people have come to Christ in the last 30 years, particularly the last 25, 27 years, since the pray through the window experiences that have come to Christ since from 100 AD to 1900, from 1900 to that period in 1990.

We've seen a thousand years of harvest in one generation, but we've not seen it here. We've seen the entire continent of Africa turned to Christianity. We've seen South America explode with Protestant heartfelt faith.

God has moved south and he's moved east, but we've not seen it here. And my prayer is that we will see a spiritual awakening here in America and that we will not suffer the fate of Israel and subsequently Judah twice. I was recently, and I'll close with this.

I was recently in Israel and then right out of that, I was in a conference here in America with a number of people from Israel, former Arab Christians, the son of the Messianic movement in Israel. And he was saying that only 30,000 of the 6.3 million Jews, 6.2 million Jews in Israel have become Messianic. And he was talking about how God, he believes is going to visit, visit the Jews and the sons of Kedar, many of which are Muslim Arabic and see a mighty revival that would intertwine them together.

And it would be the sign of a global revival among the nations. Let me tell you something. I was moved when I heard that.

God wants to do something. And he said, well, he's sovereign, he can do whatever he wants to. He's chosen, East Stanley Jones says, to do what he does in an alignment with us.

And prayer is the means by which we align ourselves to the purposes of God. And then he's able to do things through us that could not, would not otherwise be done. Don't look at the world.

Look at us. Don't don't even look at your church. Look at yourself.

God, help me to repent. I repent. Help me to recenter my values, pull down the idols of my life.

Help me to understand worship. What really is worth the most in my life? Help me to become a missional person concerned about others and finding what you want me to do and what you want to do through me. Help me to fall in love with you even more than the church.

And I love the church. You love the church. You died for the church.

Help me to spark a revival of renewal in my own family. Help me to pray with my spouse and bless my children and my grandchildren. Help me.

God, help me. Change me.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/836udlJjEVU.mp4>

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