

July 7, 2008

It's been awhile since I wrote to you so there's a lot on my mind. Following our time in South America and the Call2All congress in Orlando, I was working on projects at the University of the Nations in Kona. On the morning of March 5th, I heard the Lord very clearly. "This is a day of victory and a day of defeat."

I've been pondering this word in the months since and I feel that it may refer to a boundary in the Spirit crossed by YWAM and perhaps even the Church in many nations.

God will contend for an outcome with great patience hoping for a maximum result. However both individuals and nations may fail to respond to God's loving intention. Whole generations have found themselves "carried away into captivity" instead of inheriting the promise of restoration. Psalm 106 is an honest telling of God's dealing with His people in this way.

This is a time of resolution similar to the events in the book of Nahum. Some things should no longer be grieved over. Dry your tears give your blessing and move on. Some things long hoped for will now take place as we exercise faith and obedience. This is a time of crossing over into the place that God has prepared for many.

As if to confirm this, I found myself exposed to the dynamics of a forty-year transaction during our time in New Zealand. Between forty and fifty years ago, several key young ministers experienced extraordinary things when they went to New Zealand, among them, Campbell McAlpine, Arthur Wallace, Bob Mumford, Derek Prince and Loren Cunningham. Movements were born. Signs of pending revival were evident and many believe that pending judgment was averted. A season of relative blessing and spiritual protection was achieved. I have been reflecting on the ways of God revealed through His dealings with that generation. I am grateful for both their obedience, and for God's mercy. I am also concerned that we who are currently in places of influence are sensitive to the Holy Spirit in our day.

Where are we now? All over the world, it is time for the intercessors to be alert, restful, full of faith, happy in the Lord, but alert. My prayer is... "Lord, impregnate us with Your prayers. Give us eyes to see the child of promise that is being born to us. Deliver us from fear and baptize us in your love. Help us to align with Your royal priesthood as we transact the changes in the Heavenlies that will bring in the new day." Remember that those praying for restoration often receive an answer in an unexpected way. God's Spirit will again fall on the outcast. Consider these unlikely candidates: Saul of Tarsus, the young Evan Roberts in Wales, Brother Seymour at Azusa Street and Lonnie Frisbee during the Jesus Movement. I feel warned by the story of Jephthah, a deliverer of Israel who ended up sacrificing the child of his heart in misguided zeal for the Lord.

I am particularly stirred for China. During May, I was in the Dominican Republic with missionaries from all over the Caribbean and in Guatemala with missionaries from Mexico and Central America but my heart and mind were being constantly drawn to China. I found many believers from these lands who also carried this burden for China.

One hundred years ago, Chinese Christianity was being served by a wave of Evangelical missionaries from the West. This was followed by a time of war and revolution, ending in the expulsion of missionaries in 1952. The indigenous Christian leaders experienced isolation from international missions and persecution from their government, yet emerged from the 1980's leading a church now grown to 60,000,000 and entering a time of relative openness. The church in China now faces a new challenge - the seductions of a consumer society and the need to reach the urban youth adrift in a world of competing ideologies.

On Wednesday, I depart for Hong Kong and Singapore. Ahead of me are weeks of involvement with Asian leaders. The focus is clearly China and its Diaspora. It is unwise to communicate details because of all the tensions surrounding the Olympics. It is sufficient to say that I will address many movements who expect me to bring a clear word. Cover me. Agree with me in prayer as I humble myself before God in my inadequacy.

The other great theme of our story is family. We are a dramatic picture of a family warring and worshipping together, contending for the Kingdom of God in the midst of the nations. When I got to LA from Guatemala the whole family was briefly assembled from around the world as they transited through to other points: Julie and Rachel, David, Katie, Emily and Gabriel, Paul and Amber, Matt and Cora, Keana and Eva. The house became so full that Julie and I moved out at night and slept on a bed at my office. What an exhausting, joyous, expensive, hilarious time. It was a loving outpouring of burdens and blessings and tears in three languages and many accents. We love them so much. They are so courageous and yet so vulnerable, facing many difficulties and heartaches, living by faith, yet staunch in their commitment to keep going in the callings that God has given them.

Thank you for loving us. In the midst of this marathon, I look over my shoulder at the faces of my friends and long for deeper fellowship. Perhaps the quiet sacrifice of our lives together is a deeper fellowship than the protocols of normal friendship. I love you and I thank God for you. This morning as I was praying for you, I saw a medieval army receiving a rain of arrows as they knelt beneath their shields. Suddenly the thud of incoming projectiles ceased and the soldiers rose and boldly followed their commander forward. Grace to you as you follow Jesus.

John Dawson