



A New Apostolic Epoch

A White Paper by:

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March 2018

A White Paper Published by PROJECT PRAY
PO Box 1245 • Kannapolis, NC 28082-1245 • 855-84-ALIVE
projectpray.org • pdouglassmall.org • alivepublications.org



Doug often says that he “backed into” the prayer movement. After almost two decades of offering teaching-training ministry to local churches, prayer, he discovered, was the missing element in both the life of the church and the personal daily life of the typical believer. For that reason, Alive Ministries refocused much of its attention to prayer training, offering Schools of Prayer and coaching in the area of prayer ministries.

A New Apostolic Epoch

P. Douglas Small

Every 500 years or so, there is a seismic shift in the direction of the Church. The last shift was the Reformation. On October 31, 1517, Luther nailed 95 Theses to the door of Castle Church. That date became the symbolic marker for the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. Five-hundred years previously, on Saturday, July 16, 1054, immediately prior to the commencement of afternoon prayers, a representative of Pope Leo IX, Cardinal Humbert, walked boldly to the altar of Hagia Sophia, the great Cathedral of Constantinople, and declared the excommunication of the Patriarch, Michael Cerularius. Leaving the written declaration on the altar, he turned and left the church and the city. He is said to have shaken the dust of the city and the church from his feet. A week later, the patriarch responded by condemning the cardinal. The Church was officially divided, East and West, Rome and Constantinople, Roman Catholics and Eastern Greek-Russian Orthodox. Both events are complex and they create a historical narrative that bridges decades, if not centuries. They serve as symbolic watershed moments, as snapshots frozen in time, marking these major shifts.

Go back another 500 years and one finds the collapse of the Roman Empire. In 476 C.E. Germanic leader Odoacer overthrew Romulus. The order of Rome that had lasted for a millennium was over. The transition was gradual. In Edict of Thessalonica in A.D. 380, Emperor Theodosius I made it

the Empire's sole authorized religion. In A.D. 313, the Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity. For the first time, Christians could openly identify with Christ and worship without fear of persecution. Churches multiplied throughout the empire. Theodosius the Great was Emperor from A.D. 379 to A.D. 395. In 380, and again, in 381, he affirmed Christianity as the official religion of the empire. In A.D. 391, he declared the sacrifices and the worship of other gods illegal. The fall of Rome created the vacuum that eventually gave rise to the Holy Roman Empire.

Of course, the great apostolic epoch of all time, the incarnation, ministry and mission of Jesus, the Christ – his sacrificial death and burial, his resurrection and ascension, his enthronement and the descent of the Spirit, the birth and launch of the apostolic church. Subsequently, the destruction of the temple and of Jerusalem itself, and the shift from Jerusalem as a center, tied to Jewish roots, to multiple centers of Christianity, manifest in multiple cultures. The proliferation of churches had been foreshadowed in the birth of the synagogue movement after the Babylonian Captivity (605–535 B.C.) and the destruction of the Solomon's temple (586 B.C.) and its rebuilding by Zerubbabel (516 A.D.). Another 500 years backward, and we are in the time of the Davidic kingdom and the reign of Solomon and the dedication of the first temple.

By apostolic, I do not mean to imply the apostolic gift, but rather, the assertive sovereign governance of God by which he intervenes into history for missional purposes. It is my sincere belief that we are on the edge of such a moment again. Jesus described such a moment as a 'mountain-moving' event.

In the cold waters of the arctic zones, icebergs are common. They are often huge, like towering, frozen mountains adrift in frigid waters. Their icy peaks reach hundreds of feet above the surface. Some are as large as a city. Ninety-percent of their bulk is hidden and under water. Occasionally, one of these huge mountains of ice flips. Studies at the University of Chicago calculate that when such an iceberg overturns, the energy released during the three-to-four minute inversion is similar to the explosion of an atomic bomb. It can set off a tsunami or trigger an earthquake. The most common inversions take place after a huge chunk of ice separates from a glacier. The iceberg breaks off, and then flips. It reorients its massive weight. There is a new up and down in the quest for balance.

Apostolic epochs involve a breaking away, a new definition and a reorientation. They refocus kingdom purposes. The apostolic epoch that we are now entering is the fulfillment of the desire of Jesus, that his church be a house of prayer for all nations. This is not the mere amplification of prayer as it is often perceived. It is not the addition of a missing prayer

component, or prayer even as a bountiful additive, a power pack, to what we are currently doing. It is not the mere deepening or heightening of the value of prayer; it is a seismic apostolic shift.

This means a shift in emphasis:

- From the church as a Christian theater, from praise as performance and inspirational preaching, to a house of prayer – a place where the hurting and wounded, even children, come to talk to God, to hear from God, and from which mission is launched to the nations.
- From church to kingdom, to church as an expression of the kingdom. From superficial commitment to a church to profound submission to the King. From convenience to sacrifice.
- In the role of the pastor, from standing before people on behalf of God (preaching) to standing before God on behalf of people (intercessor) – a shift in which the prayer life of the pastor is more important than his preaching life; his private life with God, in fact, becomes the root system of his public ministry.
- In ecclesiology – from a pulpit centered church to an altar centered church; from passive participation to active engagement; from preaching designed to inspire and comfort to preaching designed to disciple and prepare for mission. [Currently, some 3% of our people or less share their faith. According to one survey, 89-93% pray, but do so in a manner that is often self-absorbed. In another survey, the time spent in prayer was minutes daily, less than five. And 92% identified themselves as casual or crisis pray-ers – only 8% met the criteria of committed pray-ers.]
- From edification to edification-evangelism, that is, the church no longer merely ‘building up’ and encouraging the saints as an end in itself, but doing so for missional purposes.
- From the centripetal to the centrifugal. In the Old Testament, Israel went to the temple, and the missional goal was to attract, by the glory of God, the nations to the temple. It was a ‘come to,’ invitational, attractional missional model. In the New Testament, the mission strategy is reversed. We have been given a ‘go ye’ gospel. We move from the center outward – first Jerusalem, then Judea, not forgetting Samaria, then to the uttermost.
- From place to person. In the Old Testament, the focus was on the temple, Jerusalem, the place where God had put His glory. In the New Testament, the emphasis is on person, “the Word become flesh,” upon whom the glory of God tabernacles. And then, from one person to the people, lively stones, together a temple, thrust out into the world.

[We continue to use an Old Testament missional model – focused on *place* and attraction, rather than a New Testament model, focused on *people* who carry God’s glory to the nations.]

Repurposing the Temple – The Flipping of the Iceberg

The ministry of Jesus is bracketed by two episodes in which he cleansed the temple. One, at the beginning of his ministry, appears in John 2. The other, at the end of his ministry, is in Matthew 21:12-17 and in Mark 11:15-19. At two points, the first near the beginning of his ministry and one at the end – Jesus ‘cleansed the temple,’ calling for its reformation. In a sense, his entire ministry, much of it removed to Galilee, some in the distant synagogues, but a huge portion in the village streets and the countryside, was a call to reformation. In a significant and underappreciated way, the ministry of Jesus was anti-establishment. He went to the poor and crippled, to the outcast and marginal, who were neither appreciated nor valued by the temple establishment.

In the last few days of his life and ministry, he engaged in a protest against the temple as an enterprise. In Matthew 21, coming into the city, riding on a donkey, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9, which is in the context of a warrior hymn, he rumbles into the temple and overturns the tables of the moneychangers and the sellers of doves and other sacrificial animals. The exchange rate, the exorbitant prices of the sacrificial animals, were all designed to line the pockets of the priests, the wealthy temple system leaders. The selling and money exchanges were taking place, not in the temple proper, but in the court designated for Gentiles. This is why the designation in both Isaiah 56:7 and Mark 11:17, “*for the nations,*” is important. The Jewish leaders have essentially displaced ‘the nations’ by repurposing the court that had been dedicated for them to come and inquire of the Lord, for commercial purposes. The court designed for missionary activity had become a money machine for the temple enterprise.

And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves.

And He said to them, “It is written, ‘MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER’; but you are making it a ROBBERS’ DEN.”

And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they became indignant and said to Him, “Do You hear what these children are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read, ‘OUT OF THE MOUTH OF INFANTS AND NURSING BABIES YOU HAVE PREPARED PRAISE FOR YOURSELF?’” And He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there (NAS).

“*Hosanna*,” – save now! The prayer was directed to Jesus, the Son of David. Something is shifting. A new apostolic epoch is beginning. The blind and the lame were not allowed in the temple, even in its outer courts. The Court of Gentiles would have been the open space around the temple proper. Moving from the Court of the Gentiles, one would have passed into the Court of the Jewish Women, then into the Court of Israel for Jewish men, then into the Court of the Priests. Jesus is beginning the process of removing the barriers, of opening the temple to the foreigner and the less than whole (Isa. 56:3-8). The children are shouting in the temple, “*Hosanna to the Son of David*,” – the disenfranchised, less than whole, impoverished classes, with no money to exchange or buy doves, are receiving ministry from the Messiah. Isaiah 56 is being fulfilled. The missional purpose of the temple is being affirmed. The iceberg is flipping! A tsunami is imminent.

In Mark 11:12-14, leaving Bethany, headed to the temple in Jerusalem, Jesus sees and approaches a fig tree, implying hunger – a metaphor for the spiritual hunger that drove simple people to the temple only to be met by religion as enterprise, by the barriers of money and the need for supposedly perfect sacrifices in order to even approach the altar. The fig tree was a symbol for Israel, but it was barren, another metaphor. Those whom God had raised up, and blessed, to be a blessing to the nations, had proved barren. Jesus cursed the fig tree, and returning from the temple incident, the following day, it was dried up (Mk. 20-21). There may be another connection with the fig tree. It was with fig leaves that Adam and Eve had covered themselves after the embarrassment of their fall (Gen. 3:7). The new apostolic epoch will no longer allow fig leaves to cover sin, nor yet, the skins of animals from a sacrifice (Gen. 3:21). Both systems, man’s attempts to hide his sin and the temporary sacrificial system are to be swept away by the lamb’s sacrifice. The bridegroom has come. The old garment cannot be patched, a new outfit is needed. The old wineskin cannot be repaired, a new wineskin is necessary (Mk. 2:21-22). “*Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29).

Jesus is clearly frustrated with the temple establishment – and its lack of fruit, its priestly insensitivity to the poor and the hurting, with its missional blindness, with religion without life and heart, with fig leaves and a hardened wineskin – and so he calls for the end of it all.

Mark adds a note about how amazed the disciples are that the fig tree is dried up so quickly. The response of Jesus is, “*Have faith in God...*” and what follows his note about mountain moving faith. The connection I think we have missed is this – the moving of the mountain is a divine challenge to the status quo. It is a shaking of seismic proportions. It needs to occur

repeatedly, whenever the temple – the church establishment – arranges itself in a manner that is comfortable and exclusive to insiders, but closed to outsiders. When we are missing the missional dimension, in order to move us to mission, there comes a mountain moving shaking of seismic dimensions and for a time, things get messy.

A seismic episode leaves enormous rubble – and there is an ideological debris field each time the church enters a new apostolic epoch. Like the season after an earthquake, boundary lines must be redrawn, the property stakes have moved. Buildings sit at new altitude levels due to the settling of land. Some things must be set aside, completely discarded. In the coming apostolic epoch, there will be debris in moving from:

- People as spectators to participants in mission.
- Passive to active.
- Active pulpit – passive pew interaction to altar-engagement.
- Laity as supporters of the pastor to laity and pastor as partners, mutual equippers for mission.
- ‘Come to’ attractional models to a ‘go ye’ model of empowerment.
- Church as a place of ministry to the church as a staging area for ministry.
- Ministry at the church to ministry in the marketplace.
- Horizontal (it is about us) to the vertical (it is about God), and back to horizontal other (mission).
- Church to kingdom, and to church as an expression of kingdom.
- Ministry inside the church – to insiders; to mission – to outsiders, to the significantly different (E2/3 evangelism).
- Church for us; to the gospel of the kingdom for them.
- Empowered insiders to empowering outsiders.
- Isolation to synergy.
- Engaging dark powers in prayer to ‘Saving Private Ryan.’

The Isaiah 56 Connection

John records the first temple cleansing (2:13), at the time of the Passover,

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, “Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a place of business.”

His disciples remembered that it was written, “ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME.”

The Jews then said to Him, “What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?”

Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."¹

The plan of Jesus, it would seem, was to destroy the physical temple – its old system, its corrupt enterprise, its self-preoccupation, its Jewish exclusivism – and replace it with an organic temple – his own body, and by extension, a new community, the church, created post-resurrection.

I wonder if the recurring message of Jesus is still not persistently, "Take away these things..." That is, the things that encumber mission: culture in the place of gospel, self-ingratiating systems in the place of sacrificial service, show-time religion in the place of messy God encounters, the church as a house of religious inspiration and information in the place of the sacrificial obedience and spiritual formation.

Martin Luther's posting of the 95 Theses was another – "take these things away...make the church a house of prayer..." It must have seemed, to the Pope, that he was throwing over the tables of the moneychangers – and he was. Wesley and Whitfield's preaching in the fields, when they were forbidden the use of churches, calling for heart-felt faith, again challenged the status quo of establishment churches – and arguably, the preaching of Whitfield gave birth to the American Revolution. The Pentecostal movement has been dismissed as hyper-spirituality among the ignorant, the lower classes, the disenfranchised – precisely the Galilean types Jesus seemed to prefer over against the temple establishment. Such a class and education-deficit claim against Pentecostals is hard to maintain today. In its primitive and fermenting state, it drew in the wounded, the rejected, the 'never-wills' – the crowd that was prohibited from accessing God's Presence in the days of the Temple – it again overthrew the tables of established religion. It was, like the Reformation movements before it, a new apostolic paradigm. Sadly, with every movement, the wineskins harden. The garment, once glorious now needs patching, until it cannot be patched again – and God moves on. It is often difficult to move with Him, to watch certain things be disestablished in order to give birth to the new.

You cannot understand the cleansing of the temple without exploring the Old Testament roots of the passage. Jesus is quoting Isa. 56:7, "*My house shall be a house of prayer for all nations.*" The passage is chiastic in structure.

1 *The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His body. So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken. Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man (John 2:20-25).*

That is, verse 7, the reference to the missional house of prayer, is the central idea of the passage. Before and after it are declarations of mission to the son of the foreigner (v. 3, 6) and to the eunuchs (v. 4). In essence, God says to Israel, “*You must be agents of reconciliation!*” This is a call for Israel to act as a

Look at the Structure

What I want! – the prescription!

- **1- 2 Behavior Matters** – Keep the Sabbath, and do righteousness and restrain evil. Worship must affect one’s walk and ways.
 - 3-7d **MISSION:** You be agents of reconciliation – Give faith away. Don’t let anyone say, “The Lord has separated me ...”
- **7e MY HOUSE SHALL BE A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR THE NATIONS!**

What will be! pronouncement!

- 8 **MISSION:** The Lord will be an agent of reconciliation – “The Lord will gather ... outcast of Israel and others!”
- **9 - 12 Behavior Matters** - God calls for judgment. The reason? The leaders are not godly, praying leaders who will fulfill the vision of Israel as the gathering/uniting and healing nation! They are corrupt and self-indulgent.

missional nation to the nations. To open the court of the Gentiles to every tongue and tribe on the planet. After this declaration of the temple as a house of prayer, you find this note (v. 8), “*The Lord gathers the outcasts of Israel...[and] others...*” Israel is called to join their gathering Lord. However, they are blind to such a mission. They are blind to the reconciling nature of the God they serve. They are blind to their own arrogance and exclusiveness.

The ‘son of the foreigner’ is the socially, culturally, linguistically, ethnically distant and differentiated. The ‘eunuch’ is the sexually neutered, the deformed, the less than whole, the exploited servant of the wealthy and the rich. In this context, he

represents the crippled, the diseased. Both classes, foreigners and cripples, were barred from the temple compound – they were outsiders. Thus the man, in Acts 3, who sits at the temple gate is so near, but so far away. Upon being healed, he raced into the place from which he had been barred and celebrated his wholeness. God, in Isaiah declares, “*I will bring him near...*” – the rejected, the overlooked, the disqualified, I will give them a place in my walls. It is not a coincidence, that the story of the healing of this lame man and his invasion into the sacred space of the temple, follows immediately on the heels of the outpouring of the Spirit. With the coming of the Spirit, the organic church is constituted. It is not a place, but a people. It is a church of lively stones, bound together around Christ and energized by filling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). This church will be, it must be, missional, inclusive of those who seek transformation in the presence and by the gracious empowerment of a holy God.

In Isaiah 56, there is not only a missional, inclusive theme that is found, but also a concurrent note about behavior and thus, the credibility of witness before a watching world. In verses 1-2 and 9-12, the theme can be called, ‘behavior matters.’ This theme emerges at the beginning and the end of the chapter. Without credibility, there is no witness. Like a glowing parenthetical ideological weight, God underlines the critical importance of lifestyle. “*Keep judgement and do justice...keep the Sabbath and don’t pollute it...blessed is the man that does this...that lays hold on it*” (56:1-2), And then, in verses 9-12, you have the opposite behavior than God desires. Here are spiritually blind, priestly leaders. Ignorant, silent guards (Isaiah uses the denigrating term, dogs, for these priests – a term reserved for

the unclean, for the unredeemed gentile). These priests/pastors love the easy life of slumber. They are corrupted by greed and selfishness, lacking understanding. They look out for themselves, for personal gain. They seem obsessed with planning and then going from one party to another. They obviously do not keep judgement and justice. They do not keep sacred time and space in their lives. They do not champion righteousness. They do evil. Such leadership invites judgement.

Between the notes about what should be, behaviorally (v. 1-2), and what is happening (v. 9-12), in verses 3-7d and verse 8, there is the note about mission. What God wants – mission out of righteous behavior and sacred time and space in our lives for Him – is a declaration of what will be! What will be is like a seismic event – unstoppable.

- *For thus says the Lord, 'I will give a place in my house...'* v. 4-5.
- *I will give them an everlasting name...* v. 6.
- *To the son of the foreigner, "I will bring them to my holy mountain..."* v. 7.
- *I will make them joyful...* v. 7.
- *I will accept their sacrifices...* v. 7.
- *MY HOUSE SHALL BE*
- *The Lord God... gathers the outcasts* v. 8.
- *I will gather...* v. 8.

This is sovereign! The question is not, will it happen, or even, how do we make this happen. God moves the mountains! He creates the moments when movements shift, rivers change courses, movements recede and others arise, and icebergs flip.

The major obstacle to the church as a house of prayer noted in Isa. 56 is the same encountered in John, in Matthew and Mark, and throughout the ages – blind leaders, watchmen who are not watchmen, pastors who do not pray. Dogs who do not bark – leaders who love sleep and slumber, who are driven to make ministry decisions based on the monetary value – they are greedy. The term *dog* as a derisive term reserved for unclean, spiritually dull Gentiles. Here, the shepherds, spiritual leaders, are no better than non-Jewish Gentiles. They are shepherds who who look out for themselves. A party spirit has emerged in the church. Self-interest has come to dominate.

Here is the problem: being blind, we cannot see that we are part of the problem. Being self-interested, our spiritual sensibilities are numb. We are locked into a system that needs shaking, reordering. We can become a part of the debris field or a part of the rising new organic movement of destiny – the church as a house of prayer for the nations.

The Tabernacle of David

'On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down,

and repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name,' Says the Lord who does this thing.

'Behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And all the hills shall flow with it. I will bring back the captives of My people Israel;

They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them.'

In Amos 9:11, the prophet predicted the rise of the Tabernacle of David that had fallen. Its breaches would be walled up – that is, the whole of the wall would not need to be replaced, only the gaps. Certain things would need repair and other things would need to be built or established. When this tabernacle is rebuilt, the remnant of Edom, the Septuagint reads, the Gentiles, the nations, will seek the Lord. The harvest that came would be so dramatic that the plowman, who put in the seed, would overtake the reaper. That is, as fast as a crop was reaped, another would be sown. There would be no down time. The treader of grapes would follow on the heels of the sower, the harvest reaped almost as fast as it was sown. In that day, the captives would return – perhaps a reference, not only to Israel's scattered, but to backsliders who have wandered from God into the captivity of sin, a massive returning to God across the globe, nations impacted.

The tabernacle of David, unlike the tabernacle of Moses, did not consist of material, physical furnishings, ceremonies and the like, but of their essence.

- Instead of the brass altar, the bloody sacrifice and ritual, you have the lifting of the hands, the surrender of the worshipper, repentance and brokenness.
- Instead of the mirrored laver with water and ceremonial washings, you have the washing of regeneration, the purging with hyssop of the inner man – the idea of consecration and sanctification.
- Instead of the bread on the golden, crowned table, you have the idea of meditation, of feeding on the Word of God.
- Instead of a golden lampstand in the shape of fruit, actually the almond tree, filled with oil and crowned with seven dancing flames, you have the idea of the anointing – here you find the ministry of the Spirit, both the fruit of the Spirit and fire.
- Instead of a golden altar of incense that burned twice daily, you have prayer itself as incense (Psa. 141:2).
- The only piece of furniture in the tabernacle of David, from Moses' tabernacle, was the Ark of the Covenant.

Here are the spiritual realities to which the natural, the rituals, pointed.

Every piece of furniture is revealed, explicitly or implicitly in the Revelation.

- In Luther, God rebuilt the altar and restored the simple principle of justification by faith, salvation by grace, but the discovery created a seismic shift. It left a debris field. It reordered the church.
- In Wesley, you have the Oxford 'holy club,' and a serious call to consecration – to prayer and fasting and sanctification. You have heart-felt, experiential faith. And you have another seismic shift.
- In the Moravian prayer and missionary movement, and the great century of missionary work that followed, decorated by the names of such men as Livingston and Carey, Adoniram Judson and Hudson Taylor, David Brainerd and Robert Moffat, Mary Slessor and Lottie Moon – you have men and women who began to take bread from table to the nations, to those who had never heard, to the foreigner, the excluded – and you again have a major seismic shift.
- In the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the birth of the Pentecostal movement, there is yet another seismic shift in the church. And there is a considerable debris field – resistance to apostolic gifts, to tongues, to heart experiences that do not fit into neat left-brain rational constructs.

Every movement tends to defend its own authenticity. The wineskins harden. Each movement sees itself as the zenith of God's action in history. Then, God moves another mountain and humbles all, and calls us to move on with Him. Now, around the world, He is calling us to the altar of incense, and there is a rising tide of prayer and renewal. The reformation is not finished.

- In the first reformation the church was freed.
 - In this reformation the people are being freed.
- In the first reformation the church was decentralized.
 - In this reformation ministry will be decentralized.
- In the first reformation the church moved closer to home (a German, Swiss, English, etc., church emerged).
 - Now, the church must move closer to the world, missionally.
- In the first reformation, the Scripture was returned to believers.
 - In this reformation the Scripture must be given to the unbelievers, to the nations, in their language.
- In the first reformation, we divided, and then proliferated in hundreds of denominations and then thousands of micro-movements.
 - In this reformation, we must come together, organically, not organizationally.
- In the first reformation, we focused on core theology, then came to emphasize nuances, secondary theology, denominational theology.
 - In this reformation we must return to valuing core theology over our differences. We must agree on the essentials and grant

- liberty on secondary theology. And then, we must embrace together ‘task’ theology – becoming collaboratively missional.
- In the first reformation, we heard human names – Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Menno Simons, Cranmer, and more – and we rallied around them, creating diverse movements.
 - o In this reformation, we must exalt Jesus and honor leaders, but we must not allow human personality and influence to divide us, if we adhere to sound theology and humbly engage in mission.
 - In the first reformation, the theological ideas of the reformers fueled heady discussions and drew differentiating lines.
 - o In this reformation, the call to humble dependence on God, the Holy Spirit, without whom we are left to our own devices, must triumph. We must find ourselves united on our knees.
 - The first reformation was a reformation of Biblical ideas.
 - o This reformation must be one of Biblical ideals, not of the head, but of the heart.
 - The first reformation emphasized truth – and it argued truth, too often without love.
 - o This reformation must be one of love and truth. It must speak truth in love. It must value above love, holiness – the holiness of God that informs truth and inflames love.
 - The first reformation was about being right – and more right than others.
 - o This reformation must be about being whole – again, holy, a transformed people before a watching world.
 - The first reformation occurred with the church almost oblivious to mission theology or purpose.
 - o This reformation must resurrect the missional church committed to finish its obligation to the Great Commission, in the spirit of the Great Commandment, out of energy of the Great Commitment.

Every movement draws on the previous movement. To that extent, we dare not underappreciate the contribution of Luther or Wesley, or of the modern missionary movement, or of evangelicals or Pentecostals in the modern ear. The blood of the altar, the water of sanctification, the bread of revelation, the oil of the Spirit – these all culminate at the altar of incense, the place of worshipful intercession. These all inform true prayer – hearts sprinkled with blood (altar), our hands washed (laver, Hebrews 10:22), our lamps filled (lampstand, Mt. 25:3), our souls fed and full on the bread of life (table, Mk. 14:22; John 6:51).

Summary

1. We are on the early side of what will become an apostolic-seismic shift. In the end, the current global call to prayer will be as significant as the birth of Protestantism out of the Reformation, and as significant to Wesleyans as the ministry of Wesley, and to the missionary movement, as the Moravian revival and the great century of missions. And to Pentecostals, as the outpouring of the Spirit around the world in the last century.
2. We are not being asked by God to merely add prayer to what we are doing. We are being called to finish the reformation. In order to do that, we must make the church a house of prayer for the nations.
3. This is not an option – there will come a point at which it is clear, that the current church culture of entertainment must go; and the preacher-active/member-passive model must be swept aside. Not all will do this – many will persist in the old paradigm.
4. There will be a debris field. For a season, things might get messy. Already, the 24-7 prayer movement is rising up around a struggling, dying church committed to an old wineskin. We are worshippers of the temple we have created. Without realizing, we are church-centered, not Christ-centered – and as Christ himself came to the temple unrecognized, we may be facing the same scenario, with pastors and people who are more committed to a mode of church than to missional purpose of the church.
5. God is not simply changing the flavor of the church – this is not superficial. This is a profound call to change out of which mission will accelerate, and it is already accelerating in places of desperate prayer.
6. A key element will be the centrality of the altar – experiencing God. A people who are no longer content to merely hear about Him or be prayed-for, but praying, they will know God themselves.
7. This was the essence of Pentecostalism – a profound God-encounter, a transcendent embrace by God that left on speechless. However, the shift that is now occurring does not mean an affirmation of Pentecostalism among non-Pentecostal denominations. It will require a significant shift for Pentecostals, moving from being pneumatically-centric to a Christ-center, from experience for the sake of experience or experimentation, to empowerment for service, from Pentecost as an experience, being baptized with the Spirit, to deep dependence on the anointing of the Holy Spirit.
8. The completion of the reformation demands that we take seriously the priesthood of all believers; and all believers take seriously their priesthood. And by that we mean, as Luther meant, not the right to pray personally to God, in a privatized sense, but the responsibility

to pray, every believer, for others, and most especially, we would add, “the foreigner and the less than whole, the excluded...”

A Word about Pentecostal Contributions

God consciousness, Spirit awareness cannot be taught. It must be awakened. There is what Rudolph Otto calls a “supra-sensitivity to truth... the [work of the] Holy Spirit of the heart.”

Walter Hollenweger observed that the strength of Pentecostals was not in what they conceptualize intellectually, but in their ‘lived liturgy,’ their lives so evidently impacted by a God-encounter, the enactment and dynamic of faith. It is not that Pentecostals are anti-intellectual, but rather, that they are anti-intellectualism. They insist on commonsense faith, that anyone who sincerely reads the Bible will gain an understanding adequate for a holy life. They refuse to have the Bible taken from them again, as in the past – and given to a class of the intellectually elite. They believe the maxim, ‘To be a theologian is to pray truly, and to pray truly, is to be a theologian’ (Otto, p. 22). As Douglas Jackson expressed it so quaintly, Pentecostals have learned to ‘think in the Spirit’ (Otto, p. 23). For them, the encounter with the Spirit changed everything – they see the world differently. Harvey Cox applied the term, ‘magical realism’ (p. 41).

Speaking in tongues has become a contentious issue. Admittedly, we Pentecostals may be missing the point over the reduction of tongues to initial evidence. The greater point is that we speak a primal language, a language of the heart, that our experience with God is at times so weighty that we lack language. The God-encounter defies description. We can neither respond to God or rationally offer an explanation to man. By grace, we cross into the zone of mystery. We pray in the Spirit. We speak the mysteries out of our own heart, by the enabling Holy Spirit, to God. We may pray the mysterious, incomprehensible will and word of God over some situation, some person or place, and be rationally unaware of the implications of such a moment in the Spirit. When the Spirit intercedes in such a manner, no mediator is necessary – we break the language barrier, we break language limits, we pray beyond our capacity. In such a moment, we move beyond knowing ‘about’ God to appropriating God and being appropriated by God. It is more than the mere recovery of what Cox calls an ‘ecstasy deficit’ in the culture. It is not a phenomenon related to natural deprivation in a narrow social-experiential sense. It is a phenomenon related to dependence upon God, instrumentation by God in a mysterious manner related to mission and purpose. We, as Pentecostals, cannot be ‘evangelicals with tongues,’ or ‘evangelicals on steroids.’ There is an embracing of the Pentecostal dimension that is absolutely essential to moving from the lampstand to the

altar of incense, and then eventually, to moving inside the veil to receive an impartation of God's glory! And to be thrust out before a watching world! This is just the start, and the best is yet to come.