

## Teaching for 11-5-08

### A Prepared People

George Otis, Jr. President of *The Sentinel Group*, producers of the *Transformation* DVD's has told many times how he is working on having a *Wall of Fame* in the Sentinel Group offices in Seattle. These are pictures of the "heroes of transformation." Not well known, famous, influential people, but humble, unknowns who have simply been faithful to God's call on their lives, and were humble instruments in God's hands to usher transformation into their communities. Demonstrations of God's desire to use the simple to confound the wise of this world. It is an encouragement that God will use any of us who are willing and available. So what does it take to be one that God would use in such a way? How do we become a prepared people that God can use to usher in transformation in our communities?

### Desperation

Look at the stories of transformation going on around the world today, and you will find the story of situations where people had come to a place of desperation. They had come to the end of trying to figure out their own solutions to the issues that faced their communities. Whether these issues were political, social or ecological, they had come to the end of self and were thrown totally upon seeking God for the answer. Many people ask why it is that this reviving transformation is happening now in almost 700 locations around the world, except in the West. And of course the answer is that we in the West still want to look for our own *Plan B*, or *Plan C*. Few in our Western culture know the gift of total desperation. Yet this is an essential part of the formula in God's recipe for transforming revival, and those who would be on the *Wall of Fame*, have found and lived in that place. And they have seen how God responds to the desperate heart.

### Obedience

We are talking here about those who are willing to obey the Word of the Lord, no matter how crazy it may seem, how inconvenient it might be or how much it may cost them. Of course, as we look through Scripture it has always been that way. From Moses lifting his rod to part the sea, to Gideon and his pared down army, the history of God's dealings with man has always been this way. He is looking for those who fear Him more than man or self, and are willing to obey Him simply because He said so. The Sentinel Group video *An Unconventional War* tells the story of intercessors that went into enemy territory in Uganda to pray and break the evil power of the rebel army leader. In Brazil, the members of the small church in Joao Pessoa obeyed the fantastic dream given to a member of the choir about a dying desert community. The heart of God rejoices to find in us such radical, immediate obedience.

### Perseverance

Spiritual breakthrough does not come to those who give up on the one yard line. Every hero of the faith has been a man or woman, or child who knows how to keep pressing in to the Lord until he comes. They will settle for nothing less. Imagine the perseverance that it took for Noah to

build that ark. Imagine the perseverance that Abraham needed to believe that God really would give him a seed like the stars of the sky. John Mulinde of Uganda talks about the perseverance in prayer that it took to see transformation ushered in to his country through the corrupt rule of Mugabee and Idi Amin. In Cali, Columbia, the church had to persevere through the martyrdom of one of their leading pastors. In Brazil, the little First Baptist Church of Valentina had to persevere, driving three and a half hours to minister in a far away community with less than adequate resources. Yet, as they persevered, each one of these, and so many more have seen God break through in wondrous power, salvation and transformation of lives and the land.

## **Humility**

In spite of what these people have witnessed. Despite what God has done through them, you will never hear them talk about all the accomplishments they achieved. In fact, it is usually a talk just to get them to talk about these miracles of God, simply because they know these wonderful breakthroughs are not about them, but the Glory of God. It has been our own personal experience that the humility of these heroes of the faith is almost palpable. Their humility radiates from them and sets the very atmosphere of the room. It seems almost contradictory, but such deep and genuine humility is remarkable given the self promotion that seems to be the mindset of the Western Church. This humility comes from time spent in the presence of Almighty God, and knowing that what has happened was a profound gift from God. To be in the presence of such people is indeed a very moving experience.

The presence of God that brings transformation to a community is not accidental. God is attracted to the hearts of people who are desperate, obedient, persevering, and humble. Only one question needs now to be asked. Is God attracted to our hearts?

*Our gracious and loving Heavenly Father, forgive us for the ways that we have not understood what attracts your presence. Forgive us for being too easily satisfied. Forgive us for not being willing to obey not matter what the cost Forgive us for giving up way too soon. Forgive us, Lord for our pride and thinking that this thing is all about us. Break us, mold us, teach us, and then through us transform our land only for the glory of Your Name, and the salvation of those Jesus came to save. And we pray this in Jesus transforming Name. Amen*