



Two Words from the Lord

A Perspective Published by:

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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.

Two Words from the Lord

P. Douglas Small

I wanted to share something I sent out in 2008, before the elections. I was jolted by this ‘prophetic’ word, which I rarely send. Some resisted it. Some asked to be removed from the mailing list. Some were offended. But, in the interest of the need for a national spiritual awakening – here it is again.

In July, 2008, God put two words in my heart. The first was about a “*valley of trouble.*” The second, about *deferred blessings and “the suddenly” of the Lord.* Before the political conventions, the elections or current economic turndown, *I heard God say that he was taking the nation into a valley of trouble.*

Hosea, a holy man, had married Gomer. The marriage was in trouble before the first child came. Things only grew worse (Hosea 1). The couple decided to divorce (2:2). In truth, what was happening to them was a metaphor for God’s relationship to the nation (1:2, 6, 9). Family life and national life are always tied together. The home is the microcosm of the culture. Just as the relationship would have ended, with justifiable cause, God took the initiative and refused to let Israel go. He hemmed in her way, reduced her alternatives, and turned her mind back to Him (2:6-8).

Finally, *he drew her into the “Valley of Achor”* (trouble) – but *not to destroy* her, *but to show her a door a hope*, to cause her to sing and to deepen the relationship between them (2:15-16). Amazing!

[2008] Our nation is headed for a Valley of Trouble. Things may not get better, before they get worse. A national consensus must emerge that says, *“We had it better when we were forthrightly a Christian nation. Pluralism is not our national answer.”* We could, as a nation, get to our door of hope, Christ Himself, and refuse to reenter a national relationship with God. We could miss our moment. But, I believe God has other plans. I think He wants to bring a national revival to the nation and spark a global spiritual awakening.

God is up to something. And He has not overlooked you! He knows your plight. He will take care of you. With all the casual talk about trillion dollar deficits, it is obvious that we have not gotten the message – the rich get richer, the haves hoard resources, the oppressor grows in strength, the poor feel powerless as they watch it all. Sadly, as a nation, we have not sought God. What will it take to bring us to our knees?

The second word that God gave was “suddenly” – connected to idea of “blessing!” From Genesis forward, it is the nature of our good God to bless. He is benevolent and giving. But, in seasons of trouble, blessings seem to be deferred. We wonder – *“Where did you go God? What did I do wrong? We may question our faith?”* Sometimes we wander into a season bigger than ourselves. The righteous suffer with the wicked – and yet.

In Luke 18, Jesus teaches on persistence in prayer? He tells of a widow woman going to court to request justice. It is a strange representation. Women of that day accessed the court through their fathers or husbands. Their rights were limited. Widows had virtually no rights. But *Jesus cast us in the image of a widow* who boldly pleaded for protection, for justice, for intervention – and she got her answer. *“Shall God not avenge his own elect, who cry out to him day and night? I tell you, he will avenge them speedily, though he bears long with them!”*

Here is the suddenly! A sudden answer. A sudden breakthrough. A sudden turn of events. The *delayed* blessing, it seemed would never come – *“though he bears long with them”* - but then the answer came *“suddenly – speedily!”*

God wants to bless you – in these times. He wants to answer your prayers. He wants to sustain you. He wants to miraculously, if necessary, supply your needs. And He wants, as a part of that process, for you and I to

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persistently and even desperately, seek Him. Here is why ...

The world treats us, the Church, the bride of Christ, as if we were a widow. That is what pluralism does. It levels all faiths. It puts them in the cosmic blender – and declares that all gods are the same god, known by a different name. We know that *our faith is different – Jesus is not dead.* And we are no widow! Christianity is not a mere set of principles. Not a mere moral code. Not a mere philosophy of life. Ours is a relationship with a Living God who conquered death, in Christ. Sin has no hold on Him, and it cannot hold us. He is unique and incomparable – God, above all gods. Jesus was no mere mortal. He was not simply a great teacher and exemplar

of truth. Buddha is dead. Mohammed, the warrior, could not win his battle over sin and death. Moses is buried on some mountain in the Middle East. The graves of Abraham and David can be visited. Only Jesus survives. The resurrection is not something we believe – it is something that actually happened in time and space. Jesus reigns, in exile. Though rejected by this world, from heaven – He hears, sees, and He answers prayers as proof that He lives.

Why does he want to answer your prayers in this time of trouble? So that all around you will know that you are not a widow. Jesus is alive and you have a prayer answering God. So this season is God's opportunity to show that He is faithful and alive. Your needs, in this season, are not about you. The valley of trouble is *our place – to sing! To point* to those around us – *the door of hope!* To declare, humbly and buoyantly, that Jesus is alive.

What the Future Might Hold for the Nation

I see two things on the horizon. Like distant mountains, I don't know how close or far they are, or precisely how near they are. The first mountain involves a *season of light*, but not without trouble, perhaps, in the midst of trouble. I have been praying for *a national spiritual awakening.* It is the only thing that can save our nation. I have been asking God to claim His tithe, 10% of the nation – 30-to-35 million people – who would be swept into the Kingdom in a great national spiritual harvest. A revival has an impact for a few years. But a Great Awakening has a generational impact – whole cities are stirred, God breaks out of the church into the cultural mainstream, conviction of sin goes public, God socks in a city with the fog of his presence – that impact lasts for decades. America's last, of four spiritual awakenings, was Azusa Street, one hundred years ago. God, send us another Great Awakening.

Beyond any Great Awakening, *I see a second thing on the horizon – a dark and ominous cloud.* This may include the silencing of the Church in

If people ask, "What is Alive Ministries about?" It is true, we do schools of prayer, pastor's conferences, men's events, family life seminars - but we are not about any of those. Each of those is a small tactical measure, a means to a greater end, aimed at a larger goal - a Great Awakening!

I see a Great Awakening. Hallelujah! And then, sadly, in my heart, I fear that following that time, this nation may not be a safe place for our grandchildren's children.

America, forcing it underground. That sounds drastic. When the reforms of young King Josiah were instituted, no one could have guessed that the death of the nation of Judah was only a few decades away. Pagan influences that had come to dominate were forced into retreat. The temple was reclaimed as a national treasure. Israel renewed their commitment to Yahweh. The Torah that had been lost, was recovered – and honored. It was the father of Jeremiah, the prophet, Hilkiyah (II Chron. 34:14) who found the book of the law, probably a copy of our Deuteronomy. The Passover was celebrated as a national spiritual holiday for the first time in 100 years (II Chron. 35:18). God was back. Morality was in. The spiritual renewal momentarily replaced the proliferation of idolatry in the land. A national revival was in full swing. Who could stand against it?

But when that season was over, after Josiah died – the next generation would take radical steps to reverse the national reforms. Prophets would stand helpless as the nation backslid. These dark days invited Babylon's invasion.

You might be asking, *"If the moral and spiritual national gains are to be ultimately reversed, what would be the purpose of the gains?"* John Adams, our second President, believed that the destiny of our nation was to share the gospel with the whole world. No other nation has been so central to missionary causes, than America. Now, for the first time since the days of the New Testament, we are twenty-to-twenty-five years away from completing the Great Commission, *"This gospel shall be preached to all nations (all ethnic peoples), and then shall the end come"* (Mt. 24:14). We have never been this close before! And God desires, around His throne, a representation of every tongue, tribe and people (Rev. 5:9).

In the coming season of global darkness, the world, which crucified our Lord, will want to stamp out His name. It will be caught up in a godless and pagan anti-Christ spirit (Rev. 13:7). But, before that happens, I see a light on the horizon. I see a singing people, pointing to a door of hope, in the valley of trouble.

Ten Things Alive Ministries is Doing in Hopes of Sparking a National Revival

1. **Doug continues his speaking ministry** – to churches and pastor’s conferences. Recently, he opened the ‘Heart Cry for Revival Conference’ at the Billy Graham Center. He will speak again this year at the Watchmen on the Wall Pastor’s Conference sponsored by the Family Research Council. He will speak at three pastor’s events this summer and a national conference in Colombia, South America.
2. Doug, and Alive Ministries, continues to conduct **Schools of Prayer** – in churches.
3. Increasingly, we are doing **prayer events**, schools, training events – across a city or with a number of participating churches. Recently, we gathered a dozen churches in West Virginia; churches across Miami; spoke at the National Day of Prayer event for churches in Charleston, SC; last year in Manassas, VA.
4. We have launched the ‘**Praying Church Movement**’ – and have produced significant materials to assist local church pastors and prayer leaders transform their churches into houses of prayer. Hundreds of churches are now a part of that movement.
5. The National Prayer Committee¹ has endorsed the “**Community Prayer Teams**” model conceptualized by Doug Small, as one of its official projects. There are 30,000 cities and town in the US and the goal is to see a significant number of them connect by gathering their prayer leaders – and getting them to the same table, creating a community prayer team, one that is diverse, and representative of the different national prayer organizations and churches, to steward a city-wide prayer effort in behalf of their community and the nation. Funding for the project is estimated to be \$250,000 over a three year period. What we can’t do separately, we can do together. Ten Cities will be invited into a pilot project by late summer. The Mission America Coalition meets in May to consider making the “Community Prayer Teams” one of its projects as well.
6. **Alive Publications**, our publishing arm, has produced the first volume of four, of a series, *The Praying Church Handbook*, a collection of thoughtful compositions on prayer. Contributors to the series include well-known theologians, Drs. French Arrington and James Beaty; General Overseers Drs. Raymond Culpepper and Mark Williams; Missions perspectives by Drs. Roland Vaughn, Grant McClung, David Ramirez; national prayer leaders such as Dr. Bill Bright, John Robb (International Prayer Council), Luis Bush and Beverly Pegues (10-40 Window), David Butts (National Prayer Committee, Chair), Jon Graf (Pub-

1 The National Prayer Committee was founded in the late ‘80s by Vonette Bright, wife of the late Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade. It is an organization that connects national prayer ministries and leaders of prayer for denominations. Alive Ministries: PROJECT PRAY is recognized as a national prayer ministry and is a member of the National Prayer Committee. Further, Doug Small serves as a member of the leadership team of the Denominational Prayer Leader’s Network. Recently, only a portion of those leaders were at the same table, but still, their collective reach was to over 100,000 churches in the nation. The National Prayer Committee sponsors the National Day of Prayer, the only annual prayer event that has the official backing of the Congress.

lisher, Prayer-Connect Magazine), Daniel Henderson (Acts 6:4 Movement) – and so many more. Currently, Alive Publications has five titles in print, and we anticipate releasing three more by the end of the year. Alive Publications is also releasing this year, *Prayer Requests Not Getting Answers? – The Great Exchange* – how prayer requests are tied to evangelism and witness and *Principles of Worship and the Study of the Tabernacle of Moses* – a pattern for prayer. Both will have a study guide. Additional studies are also on the way.

7. Alive Ministries: Project Pray and Church of God Prayer Ministries are partnering with **Acts 6:4**, to promote prayer among pastors. This is a new interdenominational prayer movement for pastors.
8. In August (21-23), we will conduct a **National Prayer Conference, ‘Praying Pastors: Praying Churches’** – this one with Pastor Jim Cymbala and Daniel Henderson, along with Dr. Mark Williams and other leaders. Over twenty workshops will be offered.
9. We continue to champion the **‘One Cry Movement,’** a national interdenominational intercessory prayer movement, now thousands strong with the goal of a million. Our goal is to raise up 25,000 intercessors across the nation to be a part of that movement.
10. We are working with **the Billion Souls initiative** to raise up ‘a billion hours’ of prayer in behalf of those who have never heard the gospel.

Here is how you can help –

Pray!

... And pray about becoming ***a financial partner!***

Here are the ways you can give:

- ___ Use the enclosed envelope.
- ___ Go to www.projectpray.org to make an online donation.
- ___ Call the office with a credit card donation, 1-855-842-5483.

***No gift is too small. No prayer is neglected by heaven.
And now, major gifts are critical to the mission we have before us!***