

The Quickening

History is full of examples of God's transforming revival bringing unprecedented church growth –like the Great Awakening in the States, the Welsh Revival in 1904. But the scale of transformation has never been greater than in the last decade. The presence of God is being seen as the essential prerequisite for good governance. The people of God are calling out to God as never before.

If spiritual transformation is to become a reality hope must give way to faith and our goal must be to prepare the way of the Lord. What is the shape of God's handiwork?

Principles of Transformational Community

Comprehensive concept that affects everything in society, a culture that has been impacted by the fire of God. Transformation is for every level of society –political, economic, social, recreational etc. But can transformation happen at a community level –rather than a personal level? Some are sceptical because they haven't seen it take place at a social level. Transformation is not the perfection of society, but is both an event and a process in the shadow of God's presence significantly improving society.

Today's cities are full of people who suffer from spiritual homelessness, there is considerable evidence around the world of societies which are being changed at every level. Genuine revival is about nothing less than the genuine renaming of every area of society. These core principles are not strategies, but seeds that can be placed.

- **God invites us to join him** in seeing society transformed. God wants to bring healing health. God needs to add capacity to our lives. He needs to show us how empty and barren we are
- **God is drawn to holiness and humility.** To be change agents we must be changed agents. God dwells with the contrite and the humble in spirit. Pride is the biggest thing that impedes unity. Each of us needs to make a commitment not to be offended by others. A simple and sincere heart to depend on him.
- **Corporate revival begins with individual obedience.** God is impressed with obedience –seeking out his perspective. The burden is to seek God for what he wants us to do. Opposition will only make an impact on us if we react wrongly. A core group is needed to make a commitment –who will not give up but will continue to cry out to God.
- **Biblical unity is a majority with God.** God doesn't need a majority but will work with a few people. Unity comes as a by-product of relationship. Where hungry and humble hearts are joined together the presence of God comes. Unity is a supernatural thing God brings about.
- **Breakthrough prayer releases destiny.** Fervent, penetrating, persevering prayer is the foundation. Travailing, passionate prayer –we will not let go until we hear from you Lord. We must be result orientated in prayer. Prayer must be a priority.
- **God's work will always be unique.** The unexpectedness of God will always be a delight –like the wind of the Spirit. God has a perfect strategy for each city. We lack

God's processing power to be able to understand God's entrance. We will be surprised by God's approach. God will not allow his presence to be stage-managed.

- **God uses servant leaders** –committed to the community, able to cope with apathy and opposition, who will not relax but are committed to the long term. God is looking for leaders who will stand in the gap for their nation. God will do incredible things in our lives if we will not care who gets the credit. We are shareholders in the kingdom, not stakeholders. Revival leaders are often unlikely leaders. They might not have influence with the public but whether they have influence with God is the issue

Hindrances to Community Transformation: Common Obstacles

- **Theological misconceptions**, Is. 62:7, 2 Chron 7:14. If we do what God commands us to do he will act. We are the biggest obstacle –our fatalism, our unbelief.
- **Reliance on programmes** we try to plan our way to God –religious inertia is the result of us trying to plan what God wants to do. Humanism is the enemy. It is easy to move away from kingdom building to programme orientation. We cannot organise our way to success. We need God's direction, not man's ways, or be pressured into the world's answers. Preoccupation with plans and programmes have a seductive power and we become trapped by them.
- **Lowered Expectations** –we lower the bar and redefine it to accept minor victory and so miss out on the real thing –and become self-reliant. Apathy, complacency about the little God is doing. There is so much more that God wants to do. We have humanised the Gospel, the church and become so familiar with talking about Jesus than following him. Western Christians have so little faith for the supernatural. God's methods cut across the grain of human behaviour. The church thinks God is a movie – that's why he has to do some astonishing among us.
- **Misplaced Motives** –God wants us to know why he wants us to come. Is he a handyman or a lover? God is the king of the kingdom he searches out the disposition of his hearts. We must be careful against hidden agendas in our lives.
- **Intimacy with God** lies at the heart of the Christian faith. It is the purpose of our lives. The pursuit of God is central.
- **Ignorance of the Past** –sometimes there is a lack of diligence in using spiritual mapping. What is the history of the area. We are often ignorant of the depth of corporate sin. Past iniquity can only be dealt with by repentance and forgiveness. Improving our understanding of the past can help us understand ungodly covenants that have harmed us in the past. Intimacy is the by-product of unity. Pride is resisted by God. Unity is a revelation –only together can we get the results God wants. We need one another. We need the vision God has given to one another –to serve our city effectively.
- **Lack of Hunger** –Our use of time detracts u from. Busyness is the enemy. Revival cannot be fitted in. We must remove ourselves from the distractions of our culture. Otherwise his voice will fade into the background noise of our lives. It is time to seek the Lord.