

The Most Important Awakening in Church History?

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"The most important awakening in church history has begun."

When my ministry partners and I settled on that phrase as the subtext for the public relations messaging surrounding our film, *Come Out in Jesus Name*, we received a lot of questioning and even a little derision on social media. But if you've watched what is happening at Global Vision Bible Church or any of the ministries led by my co-laborers in this awakening—Alexander Pagani, Isaiah Saldivar, Vlad Savchuk, Mike Signorelli, Daniel Adams, Leon Du Preez and Henry Shaffer among others (each of whom is featured in the film)—you know we're not overstating what the Lord is doing in our midst. The same is true if you've taken part in one of the nationwide post-film prayer and deliverance vigils.

But is this really "the most important awakening in church history?" Why would we make such a claim? Allow me to explain as I tell the story of a film that has—through God's sovereign, supernatural hand—become a worldwide movement of revival and awakening.

My last book was titled *Revival*, which was also the subject of my master's thesis in seminary, so I'm careful to treat the words "revival" and "awakening" with a high degree of reverence. We're all—you included—at the front edge of a move of God of the highest order, and that should humble all of us. It has certainly humbled my wife, Tai, and me. There's no way I could have expected any of this to happen.

But long before the film, and long before the awakening, God sent revival. In fact, Global Vision and our online platform exploded with revival in 2020 for having refused to bow to the government mandated shutdowns and other nefarious schemes of the devil. I had just begun to be delivered of cessationist theology, so those early days were my season of preparation.

Every God-ordained revival in the Bible and throughout history was marked by six characteristics: They were always spontaneous, they were emotionally unbridled, they were filled with heartfelt worship and praise, they triggered unusual levels of conviction, they made lasting changes in their local communities and—above all—they were proven with notable salvation testimonies.

While we're indeed experiencing all six of these, the sheer spontaneity of the Holy Spirit working in our midst has been breathtaking. *Come Out In Jesus Name* is the organic overflow of this tremendous revival.

Embracing Deliverance Ministry

Once the Holy Spirit fire began to fall with force, the Lord fully delivered me from my cessationist beliefs, and the spiritual gifts began to flow freely. As shown in the film, once the Lord allowed a young girl to manifest a dark spirit while I was dunking her in the baptismal—catching me shamefully unprepared to help her—it wasn't long before we fully embraced deliverance ministry.

Initially, our church helped folks in need of deliverance one on one after Sunday services, and in no time, we found ourselves going until 2:30 the next morning—sometimes even later. That was unsustainable, so within weeks we began experimenting with mass deliverance sessions on Sunday nights under the tent.

Now, a year later, we haven't missed a single Sunday-night mass deliverance service. It was an unnerving transition, one

in which we felt like teenagers going where few had ever gone, but we studied the works of Derek Prince, Win Worley and other deliverance writers and trusted the Holy Spirit to lead us through it.

Those services started with a crowd of 165 in attendance, which seemed overwhelming at the time. Within a couple of weeks, we were ministering to crowds of 700, and on special nights, we've seen crowds in the thousands—multitudes of hurting (or simply curious) people—all there to experience the ministry of Jesus and the Holy Spirit's demonstrations of power on a Sunday night.

We've had Baptists, Pentecostals, Catholics, members of the Assemblies of God and folks from nearly every denomination and sect come to our tent for deliverance. Jews, atheists and followers of false religions have come to our tent to get saved and delivered.

We've even had pastors who attended seminary with me and thought I'd lost my mind come and receive freedom in our tent. One pastor came to our weekly Sunday-night mass deliverance service out of sheer curiosity. While he stood there in unbelief, his wife suddenly flared up from a dark spirit and fell to the floor, screaming and crying—until she got free.

"What do I do with this?" the pastor asked. Before long, he started preaching deliverance in his church, and it too exploded.

I've seen churches go from 30 folks on a Sunday to 500 within six months, all because they first received deliverance in our tent, then began preaching deliverance to their people. Once a believer witnesses these demonstrations of power for themselves, they can't unsee them. And if that doesn't immediately open their eyes, it will in time.

We all need deliverance from something. Even pastors and their spouses need deliverance. My wife and I are proof of that as

well.

Experiencing Biblical Revival

Through this massive transformation of our ministry, the six characteristics of biblical revival have grown more apparent in every way. Our ministry and those we serve began experiencing miraculous healings and demonstrations of power too amazing to ignore.

A man with a stage 4 brain cancer death sentence received deliverance and was subsequently cleared of all cancer. Next, the Holy Spirit spurred him to testify from our platform for all the world to hear. This triggered a chain reaction of cancer healings among the congregation and the folks we pray for. Dry bones were coming alive!

By the fall of 2022, we knew a true move of God was upon us, but there was no blueprint to tell us what to do next, so we simply trusted the Holy Spirit to lead us through every step. We lay out before the Lord and waited for Him to speak again and again.

This transformation drew us into deeper levels of repentance and humility. I repented for having taught a partial gospel throughout my ministry and for allowing worldly battles to distract me from standing fully armored up in the spiritual war. Our ministry team then reached out to deliverance generals around the nation and overseas who had been fighting this war long before we had.

South Carolina's Henry Shaffer helped us get started, and the Lord connected us with the other demon slayers one by one. *Come Out In Jesus Name* tells the remarkable story of how each of these anointed relationships unfolded in sudden, often dramatic ways.

Our ministry team hosted the first National Deliverance Conference on Labor Day weekend, just nine months after we

began teaching and ministering deliverance.

As with everything else during this revival, we had no idea what to expect, and I put no time into preplanning before announcing it would happen just a month later. The Holy Spirit said to do it without much build-up, so we just obeyed.

The Saturday night before the conference began, folks showed up in droves. Our tent seats 3,000 people, and by Sunday morning we had 4,500 trying to squeeze in. We eventually had to remove the walls so folks could stand outside and participate. Small tents popped up all over the place.

It all happened with incredible speed, and every session dripped with Holy Spirit anointing. I knew we needed to take this beyond our tent.

Producing a Mindblowing Movie

Earlier that week, I had met with my producer at Locke Media, Wayne Caparas, to discuss making a 30-minute documentary about what was getting ready to happen in our tent, so he got our crew together to capture all we could. But God had other plans.

Have you ever experienced an event so compelling that you realized it should be made into a movie? I think we all have. In those instances, I've often thought, *Man, if there were a film crew walking through this with us, we'd have our movie.*

That's exactly what the Lord did when He told me to start this project. By the time Tuesday rolled around, still reeling from all that had transpired across the three days of the deliverance conference, I felt led to ask Caparas if we could possibly turn his work into a feature-length film to show in theaters. "Would anybody want to show it?" I asked.

Caparas has been with us at Global Vision for a long time, so he answered without hesitation: "Absolutely." We put a

talented team together and walked it out.

This was about the same time Sean Feucht's *Superspreader* documentary released, and the success of that film inspired our team. Feucht is a good friend, so we talked with his people, made some calls and followed the Holy Spirit through every door He opened while avoiding every door He closed.

It was now mid-October, and though I knew it would be a massive challenge, I fully believed the Lord wanted us to get this message out to the world in March, before Resurrection Sunday. Nearly every industry pro we talked to said this was an impossible goal.

I, along with most of our team, agreed that it seemed technically unlikely. We realized a theatrical release would require an engaging theological discussion and a good bit more evidence of God's power than a single weekend in our tent. From a Hollywood perspective, we still needed a year's worth of script development and editing, production time for a full soundtrack and months to jump through all the business hoops required of a theatrical release.

It was all daunting. But we kept reminding ourselves that this was a work of God, not of man, and it was as if the Holy Spirit said, "Keep your hands to the plow, boys, and armor up ... I'm about to blow your minds!"

Over the next two months, He did just that. The production and scripting of this historic film was a true act of God in every way. Only He knew the unfolding plotlines that would build the story arc and the full biblical context of the script. Our job was to keep the cameras rolling, stay obedient to His Word, preach the gospel, cast out demons and watch Him do it.

Awakening God's Army

Minds have been permanently blown. Anyone expecting *Come Out In Jesus Name* to be a typical sleepy or overhyped documentary

need only read the thousands of testimonies plastered across social media or the hundreds of online reviews. This film is a verified act of God about the supernatural workings of God among the repentant remnant of God.

On our March 13 opening night, the film was No. 1 in per-screen attendance across the entire nation and No. 4 at the box office, with hush puppies and sardines for a marketing budget. God did that, too. We had 80,000 people in theaters all over America—on the same night—learning about the supernatural power of Jesus and taking part in the largest mass deliverance in the history of the Christian church.

The salvation, healing and deliverance testimonies that sprang up that night are overwhelming to read. Prayer vigils broke out coast to coast. Not even in our wildest dreams could we have foreseen a God-sized, miraculous, Red Sea moment for the body of Christ. When the encore screenings took place in early April and May, it all happened again.

The Lord brought an army of believers to minister in virtually every theater in the nation. Their testimonies are electrifying, and the Lord raised up more previously hesitant street preachers and deliverance ministers on these nights than ever before in church history.

Maybe you're one of them. What started as a movie has become a movement. Full-blown deliverance revival broke out in more than 2,000 secular movie theaters and poured into the streets. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Throughout church history, every time deliverance broke out during a major revival, the spirit of religion quenched it, and the revival soon died off. In the film *Jesus Revolution*, you can see how things started going south when at the peak of the revival, Lonnie Frisbee started laying his hands on people to set them free, and the leadership shut him down.

This set in motion the revival's downward trajectory. Until

now, there has never been a full-blown global deliverance revival, and this time, the Lord won't allow the spirit of religion to stop it.

You still may be wondering how we can call this "the most important awakening" of all. An awakening is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that transcends borders, leaders, denominations, race and religion. It has all the markings of revival, but to an exponential and lasting degree. An awakening is, in effect, a move of God that triggers unprecedented unity and awareness of God's presence among the body of Christ.

The Suddenlies that Grew into a Groundbreaking Major Movie

At the outset of the pandemic, we were leading tornado relief out of our tiny wedding chapel of a church, and suddenly we were under an intense global media attack for keeping our church open. In very short order, we went from 300 seats in the chapel to a 3-000-seat tent, and we have since baptized 8,000 converts in a horse trough. No man could have planned that, and all we did was reject the spirit of fear and trust the word of God at every turn.

While most churches were in retreat, we were experiencing unbelievable growth. But midway through it, God said, "You've stewarded this well, so I'm going to send revival in the midst of revival." It's not like we were looking for a bigger media platform or for more people to show up at our church. It just started happening. All the characteristics of revival were already in full swing when suddenly miracles broke out. Healings broke out. And prophetic voices began to flow in startling ways.

In *Come Out In Jesus Name*, we tell of how this seismic shift in our ministry was born through a series of spontaneous *suddenlies*, but none were more sudden than that day a young girl manifested a dark spirit while I was baptizing her. My

embarrassment was instant, and the deep shame Tai and I felt for not knowing how to help her finally knocked the scales from our eyes.

It suddenly became clear to us that mainstream Christianity has been ignoring a massive portion of the ministry of Jesus for a very long time. Through 30 years as an evangelist and pastor, I had to admit that I had just plain missed it, as I let my denominational lens blind me from seeing the full gospel well enough to simply take Jesus at His word.

I knew I had to repent and come clean with our large congregation, and it wasn't easy. I didn't really know what to expect, but I knew I would be putting all we had accomplished on the line, and I was positive I was going to lose a lot of my old cessationist friends in the ministry, but I was convicted.

In January of 2022, I delivered the riskiest and most controversial sermon I had ever preached. It was my very first sermon on the deliverance from demons. What started as a nerve-wracking confession turned into 45 consecutive sermons on Jesus and deliverance. The church grew in every good way imaginable, as the people had been waiting for me to get there all along.

Many of the great deliverance teachers of the past have said that when you get involved in deliverance ministry, you'll never have to advertise because people will come from all over the world to find you. Today, our church is living proof that it's true. Once the people of God (especially the hurting) find out that you believe you have the power and authority to cast out demons in Jesus' name, they will go to great lengths to find you, just as they did in the New Testament.

The number one work of power that Jesus performed was the casting out of demons. He did it over and over everywhere He went, even among the masses, out in the open for all to see

and especially in the church house. Somewhere along the way, the mainstream church lost sight of the importance of these works and demonstrations of power. Is it any wonder that average church participation is in a perpetual state of decline?

Spreading the Deliverance Revival

I've learned that there are five primary characteristics of a true move of God: The Lord continually gets the glory, religious people are immediately critical, the hearts of curious people are drawn to it, the stirring of God's presence is undeniable and the lives of those involved are forever changed. Whether in our tent, one of our co-laborers' churches or one of the thousands of theaters that show the film, all who have been touched by this awakening can affirm that all five of these are in full swing and growing stronger.

The ultimate proof that this may be the most important awakening in church history can be found throughout Scripture, but especially in the four Gospels. There, we see that more than a third of Jesus' ministry involved the casting out of demons. It was by far the most common of His supernatural works.

I like to ask the skeptics (like my former self), "Where did all those demons go that Jesus cast out?" It appears that everybody wants to talk about what would Jesus do until it's time to do what Jesus did—especially when it concerns demons.

Every believer knows that all of Scripture commands us to walk like Jesus in obedience to Jesus, and no one commanded us to cast out demons more definitively than Jesus Himself. In the climax of Mark's Gospel record, Jesus delivered this command in the context of His Great Commission, where He listed a series of supernatural signs that would mark believers. While all of these archetypal demonstrations of power have been mostly ignored or even vilified by most denominations over the

past 2,000 years, it is the dismissal of the first of these signs—the casting out of devils—that has left the body of Christ defenseless against demons and all the schemes of the enemy.

The same dark spirits that Jesus commands every believer to cast out are the very demons that have kept the lukewarm church in bondage. The simple fact that the Great Commission is incomplete without deliverance ministry is evidence that the church has not been preaching the full gospel.

If this is the awakening that corrects all of that, and I believe it is, could there be a more important move of God? As we prepare to spread this deliverance revival to all nations, consider the possibilities. What will happen when we finally start obeying God's plan to bring the full gospel to the whole world while setting the captives free? Get ready.

In these last of the last days, the Lord is indeed pouring out His Spirit on all flesh, and He will soon return for a pure, spotless bride. For that, I believe the most important demonstrable sign of this last-days outpouring will be the casting out of demons from our flesh, our homes, our churches and our communities—in Jesus' name!

Pastor Greg Locke is the founding and lead pastor of Global Vision Bible Church in Mount Juliet, Tennessee. He is also the founder of Locke Media and Global Vision Press. Locke has authored four #1 best-selling books, including the three-book *Spiritual Warfare* series. His newest book, *The Generosity Journey*, is available now on . He and his wife, Taisha, share six kids and one very blessed grandchild.