

Christians Confront the Scourge of Abortion

Prayer-based group TheCall rallies tens of thousands of intercessors to Washington D.C.



[] The slogan of a national prayer movement—"end abortion, send revival"—became the anthem of a huge crowd gathered on the National Mall Aug. 16 where roughly 70,000 people chanted the phrase during 12 hours of worship, fasting, repentance and prayer.

"We are praying today that God drives the issue of abortion like a wedge into the national elections," said Lou Engle, who founded TheCall eight years ago to make the issue of abortion a justice issue. "I believe we are at a breakthrough moment to release life to our nation."

Engle's plea to God seemed to be achieving results the very same day. As an estimated 70,000 people gathered in Washington to pray, California pastor Rick Warren brought the abortion debate to the forefront during a civil forum he hosted at his Saddleback Church with presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama. The convergence of TheCall with Warren's forum focused national media attention on the issue.

During TheCall, Alveda King, niece of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., likened the battle for ending abortion to the

civil rights

struggle of 1963. She brought to remembrance the impact of a similar August

gathering on the Mall 45 years ago, when America was galvanized by her uncle's

"I Have a Dream" speech. King noted that what had seemed impossible became a reality soon afterward.

Bishop Harry R. Jackson Jr.,

an African-American pastor and founder of the

High Impact Leadership Coalition from the metro D.C. area, said that believers

in this hour have the same call that King did to change the course of

America.

"God wants there to be a release of justice and righteousness in this

generation, but He's got to have somebody who will create the justice," Jackson

told the crowd. "Today, this mantle is available to you."

Many of TheCall gatherings have been held at pivotal points of change in

U.S. history. The first Call rally was held in Washington, D.C., in September

2000, during the final months of the hotly contested presidential race between

George W. Bush and Al Gore.

TheCall Boston was held only 11 days after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist strikes in New York City and Washington D.C.

As threats of war and terrorist activity increase, "Joel 2 gatherings of

national repentance with fasting and prayer represent the most inexpensive and

effective form of homeland security," said Mike Bickle, senior leader of the

International House of Prayer in Kansas City, Mo. "Mercy

triumphs over
judgment.”

Leaders of TheCall emphasized that the primary blame for perpetuating abortion and other societal sins did not lie with political leaders, but with those who claim to know God. Former presidential candidate Mike Huckabee began the prayer rally by directing attention to the Capitol. “Repentance and revival cannot start in the building behind me,” he declared, “until it starts in the temple inside me.”

Huckabee told *Charisma* that oftentimes Christians forget how 2 Chronicles 7:14 places the responsibility for healing on God’s own people, not on secular government. “Leadership starts with us,” he said, “with our own hearts being broken for broken people.”

Asher Intrater, director of a Maryland-based Messianic Jewish group called Revive Israel Ministries, agreed. “What America needs most is a turn from immorality and humanism,” he said. “With 70,000 people praying and fasting, I believe we can affect the government and we can affect the nation.”

Ten year-old Mahan Greaves of Grandview, Mo., is proof that God answers prayer. Before Mahan was born, her mother, Nayomini Greaves, visited a crisis pregnancy center thinking she had entered an abortion clinic. Counseling from the center and a call from her “prayer warrior” brother helped convince her mother to keep her baby.

Soon after, Greaves gave her life to Christ. And with the

encouragement and
assistance of a local church, she and her newborn flourished.

At TheCall D.C., Greaves was one of the prophetic worship
singers leading
the loud chorus of “end abortion, send revival.” She also
prayed that God would
give others an experience similar to the one that saved her
daughter’s life.

“Lord, steer cars away from abortion clinics,” she prayed.
“Turn them around,
and redirect their path.

“My life is a testimony of what can happen when you allow the
Lord to work
on your life, and when a community of love stands behind you,”
Greaves declared. —**Jon Hamill**
in Washington, D.C.