

Paul Cain ^{is} Totally Misunderstood[™] at Lakeland Revival

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The prominent 78-year-old prophetic minister told a crowd at a revival meeting in Lakeland that “allegations” and rumors circulating about him were not true.

The comments made many wonder whether, in alluding to his past, Cain was withdrawing his confession from three years ago, when he publicly acknowledged his failings involving alcoholism and homosexuality.

But a senior spokesperson affiliated with what’s dubbed the Florida Outpouring told *Charisma* that Cain was not denying his sins, but instead was attempting to refute any perception that he had not repented of them.

“It was unfortunate that Paul said something [May 4] that has now been misunderstood,” said Stephen Strader, senior pastor at Ignited Church, a converted storefront on the north side of Lakeland that traveling evangelist Todd Bentley quickly outgrew after revival broke out on April 2.

“Initial reaction to Cain’s statements caused many to believe he was denying [his past sin],” Strader said. “But Paul was referring to the rumors that he had not been restored and had not gone through a restoration process. It was just totally misunderstood.”

Three prominent Spirit-filled leaders—Mike Bickle, Rick Joyner and Jack Deere—urged Cain to submit to a specific process of restoration and healing after his dramatic public confession in 2005. But Cain eventually refused their recommendations and was deemed “fully restored” by a somewhat unknown ministry in California.

Because the three men were not familiar with the process Cain underwent, Bickle, Joyner and Deere released a statement last year saying: “We cannot say with confidence that this is a genuine restoration.”

Strader believes Cain’s restoration could be genuine. “Whether or not we agree with the group that restored him is irrelevant. He feels he’s been restored. Many people feel he’s been restored. We simply invited Paul to be present for when we replayed his prophecy from 1999.”

That prophecy, according to Cain’s Web site, involved a vision he had in 1999 where he saw “stadiums being filled in the last days” in Florida. Cain said astonishing miracles would take place and that the impact would eventually be felt globally.

“It would be presumptuous for us to say that this is it, but there is every indication that this is it,” Strader said of the prophecy. More than 10,000 people attended meetings each evening last weekend in Lakeland. Venues have included an arena, an open field and a stadium.

“This is day 41 and we are now fulfilling that prophecy, not because we wanted to, but because we’ve had to,” he said. “We did not plan to go to a stadium. It never even crossed our mind to go to a stadium. We were forced into a stadium because there wasn’t a large enough facility available to us.

“The only thing Paul was invited for was to honor him, honor the gift. We love Paul. He was not invited as a speaker. We honored the man, honored his years of service, and that was it. We did not restore him to ministry or anything.”

Though he did not respond to *Charisma*'s attempt to seek further clarification, the following statement was posted on Cain's Web site: "The allegations that Paul was referring to on Sunday in Florida as being untrue were simply allegations that he was unrepentant. Paul has repented of any wrongdoing publicly and has been fully forgiven and restored."

Strader told *Charisma* Cain had a stroke shortly after the incident last week, but is reportedly stable and recovering.

Now in its sixth consecutive week, the Florida Outpouring is an ongoing phenomenon of twice-daily revival meetings conducted by Bentley in large venues throughout Lakeland.

In addition to reports of miraculous healings and euphoric worship, millions worldwide watching the meetings on GOD TV or the Internet have fueled the revival. Bentley has characterized it as possibly the first "21st century revival." **—PAUL STEVEN GHIRINGHELLI**