

A Prophetic Word for the Church: Why God Is Sending Refugees From Syria

For the last few years corporate prophecy in Australia, and I suspect in nations across the world, has centered on revival. Many believe that a spiritual pregnancy is underway, and its delivery will be a great awakening of faith that culminates in miraculous manifestations. Surprisingly, given that I try to shy away from spiritual “hype,” I agree.

I believe that revival is coming. I believe that revival in the church is overdue. The Western church (and isn't it ironic that how as one body we still divide ourselves into hemispheric categories, seeing our brothers and sisters as “us and them”) has for too long been in a lax state, spending the little energy we do have fighting battles that I just don't believe are on the Father's heart.

So when I received this word from God yesterday, it resonated so strongly and looked so much like His ways that I knew I was to share it, no matter how it may be perceived or misinterpreted.

For surely God's ways are not our ways and are much higher than our own (Is. 55:9), so take this word, ponder it, weigh it and ask God what it could mean for you personally.

Our nation has seen the image of a tiny, lifeless Syrian child, faced down in the sand. This small child spoke to us. He made us uncomfortable. He made us sad. He shocked us out of our “statistic apathy” and forced us to realize that there are faces and names behind the tragedies happening abroad.

Our collective heart broke and we demanded that action be taken. Our nation's leaders heard our sorrow-fueled outrage

and have agreed to allow a greater intake of Syrian asylum seekers, many of them Christian.

And with them they will bring the revival our nation has been seeking.

So often when we read the Bible, we look at the Israelites and internally admonish them for their ignorance, wondering why they couldn't see the Messiah right under their nose? They were looking for a strong and mighty king, but God gave them a baby in a stable. What is the picture of revival you are imagining for our nation?

My vision certainly wasn't one of a displaced people, carrying a handful of personal possessions and countless invisible burdens and traumas upon their weary backs.

These precious, hurting people, whose lives have been torn apart by war and violence, will need our love, our acceptance and our service to help them heal.

There is the very real risk of pride in this. It would be easy to puff ourselves up, even if on an unrealized level, congratulating ourselves for our nobility in opening our borders to those "less fortunate than ourselves."

However, if we could pocket that pride for just a moment, we will begin to recognize that while these refugees will most certainly need our help as they adjust to a completely new way of life, they are also well-equipped to help us!

These Christians possess a faith that has been refined in the crucible. Theirs is a faith that knows the true meaning of the word persecution. Actual, true persecution. Not the "persecution" we in the west cry, which is, in most cases just the verbal consequence, or social shunning, of our own self-righteous behaviors.

Theirs is a faith that transcends circumstance, theirs is a

faith that in the face of tragedy has been able to echo Paul's words with sincerity, "I have learned to be content ..." (Phil. 4:11).

Theirs is a faith that understands genuine sacrifice and authentic self-sacrificial community.

Theirs is faith that understands the church should equate to family.

Yes, I believe the miracles will come. Yes, I believe supernatural experience will flourish. But I believe it will happen only when we too begin to understand what true community and self-sacrifice really is. It can only happen when our character foundation is strong, and our hearts aligns with His.

Jesus was moved with compassion toward people. It was out of this heart attitude that the miraculous flowed.

Comfortable is nice and comfortable is cozy, but comfortable doesn't stretch us, and comfortable doesn't lead to extraordinary.

How can we expect to see great moves of the Spirit when we can't even recognize where they should begin?

"For I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink, I was a stranger and you took Me in. I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you visited Me, I was in prison and you came to Me. Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? And when did we see You sick or in prison and come to You?' The King will answer, 'Truly I say to you, as you have done it for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you have done it for Me'" (Matt. 25:35-40).

If we will humble ourselves and keep our eyes open, our hearts soft and our minds teachable, we will receive a spiritual education that will birth an unstoppable revival.

It will be a revival birthed out of a conception of compassion and of unity.

It will be when we focus on the individual, when we learn to love each and every person as a face with a story, not just a gathering of statistics. We will then see the fulfillment of the revival prayers we have cried!

So many of us have prayed on weak knees with eyes full of tears: "Lord, send revival."

Note the wording: Send. Send revival.

And the Lord has replied: "I am. They're on their way. Ready your hearts."

God has not allowed this suffering simply so that we in the West may experience revival, this thinking is contrary to His nature. But I do believe that He is a master at working things together for the good of those who love Him (Rom. 8:28), even in the midst of horrific circumstance.

As with most fulfillment of prophecy, the outcome is reliant on the actions of the people, on the actions of you. What will you do?

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