

Back to Basics: Daniel Kolenda and the Simple Love of God at Asbury

Pilgrims from all across the country are still making their way to the campus of Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky, to see for themselves this move of God taking place in Hughes Auditorium.

The desire in the hearts of so many Christians to see true revival break out in a country that desperately needs the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has seen travelers reach the point of exhaustion just to get a glimpse of what is taking place at Asbury.

This led evangelist Daniel Kolenda, President and CEO of Christ for All Nations and lead pastor of Nations Church, to drive almost 13 hours from Florida to Kentucky to see for himself what exactly the Lord is doing there.

"When I first arrived, it was three o'clock in the morning and rather than going to the hotel I thought, 'let me go to the actual service and see what's happening,'" Kolenda said in an exclusive interview with Charisma News.

"Because they said it was going 24/7. If you told me something's going on 24/7, I'm going to show up at 3 a.m. just to see if it's true. Sure enough, there were people in the building, worshipping and praying. It wasn't packed out or it was special.

"Very simple worship, just a piano player and acoustic guitar player and people loving Jesus," he recalled.

When Kolenda went back that afternoon more people were showing up, and by that evening the place was filled and overflow

buildings were being used.

But Kolenda noticed the atmosphere had not changed. This was not a “fire falling down from heaven” sort of experience happening. It was gentle, like the river of life that flows from the throne of God. There was still simplicity in the worship, prayer and confessions of sin that were taking place in the auditorium.

“What had been going on at three o’clock in the morning was still happening, very simple. Worship, just people lingering in the presence of God. Singing worship songs, nothing fancy. No rock bands, no lasers and smoke, not some big production. It was literally just students gathering together in a very simple way worshipping the Lord,” Kolenda explained.

That amazing movement is also bringing down the snares of religiosity that are driving critics of what is happening at Asbury. Some are denying this move of God saying it has to do “this, this and this” but God does not work like that. Humans cannot put the Holy Spirit in a box and say “He will only move if certain events occur and it manifests in a specific way.”

God is done with the Pharisees and is pouring out His Spirit how He sees fit.

When God moved in revivals such as Brownsville and the Toronto Blessing, He did so in the way He wanted to. There was established leadership in the form of Steve Hill and many, many others who God established at their particular movements.

Just because God is moving in a different way does not invalidate the revival that is taking place, it is simply unique for the time and place that God is moving. He knows better than any person criticizing the movement what the people experiencing His presence need in their hearts.

“You know, Brownsville was very different,” Kolenda continued.

“These powerful services [were] very different from what we’re talking about in Asbury. There is preaching, but it’s almost kind of like what had already been scheduled before [chapel services]. It’s just worship. It’s completely student led. It’s very unplugged and simple, and one of the things that’s just they’re singing, you just hear the voices. There’s no drummers, there’s no bass players, it’s about as simple as it can get without being acapella.”

This Spirit of God that brings rest and healing is justified throughout so much of the Bible, (Exod. 33:14; Matt. 11:28; Jer. 31:25). What better time than after the stress, anxiety, fear and depression than the pandemic and lockdowns brought to the people of the world? In a time when witchcraft and the occult are becoming social norms and people are spiritually tormented by emboldened spirits, the calming and healing presence of God is badly needed.

Now, rumors are spreading that the gentle fire at Asbury is spreading to other college campuses in America. As Christians should, test these movements to see if they are indeed moves of God as Asbury has proven. Do so not with a cynical heart, but one of expectation of the Lord’s goodness and repentance of sin. With contrite hearts turning back toward the Lord, a whole generation who came of age locked down can be set free by the healing love of Jesus Christ. {eo}

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