

Caine, Chan Challenge Young Pastors to Transfer Faith

If **Christine Caine's** words seemed a little weightier than usual to the 13,000-plus young pastors gathered at **Catalyst 2012** in Atlanta on Thursday and Friday, it's for good reason. The Australian speaker prefaced her message as the most important she'd give all year and followed with a no-holds-barred challenge for church leaders to cleanly pass "the baton of faith" to the next generation in God's "divine relay."

"This is our moment in history when we are holding the baton of faith," Caine said to a packed arena of young leaders. "It's not about who's the biggest, who's the best, who's the fastest; it's about all of us running in our lane, running our race and making sure we pick up the baton, hand it from one generation to the next and don't drop the baton."

Founder of **The A21 Campaign** fighting human trafficking, Caine spoke prophetically of how this generational leadership transfer will ultimately determine the future of the church.

"It doesn't matter how big what I build or what you build, if we do not carry the baton of faith from this generation to the next, we have to start all over again. We get this one shot in our lifetime," Caine said, citing the generation that followed Joshua in the Bible who failed to follow God.

Caine, who has been involved in youth and young adult ministry for more than 20 years, challenged younger leaders from Hebrew 12:1-2 to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us"—including what she identified as the current generation's sense of entitlement, opinion and position.

"A lot of us bypass the process [of God shaping us in obscurity] because we want the platform, because we want the lights. Nothing will kill you quicker than the spotlight. The

gift that is on you will destroy you if what is in you cannot sustain you. God has you in places of anonymity and obscurity because He's making you into who you need to be to do what He's called you to do."

Best-selling author **Francis Chan** followed Caine's challenge on Thursday night with a solemn plea for the church to focus on Jesus' Great Commission for us to make disciples, rather than busying ourselves with issues that have little to do with building God's kingdom.

"We're supposed to be doers of the Word and not just hearers who deceive themselves," the author of *Crazy Love* and *Forgotten God* said. "I think Satan is actually pretty happy with a lot of things that happen in our church services."

Chan currently leads a church-planting movement in inner-city San Francisco, after leaving the church he founded, Cornerstone Church in Simi Valley, Calif., in 2010. A frequent conference speaker, he has also been working with pastors such as *Radical* author David Platt and Passion movement leader Louie Giglio to help the church return to a primary focus on discipleship.

"Jesus said 'I will be with you,' but it's in the context of discipleship," Chan said, referring to the well-known passage in Matthew 28. "People say they're not experiencing the Spirit, that they don't feel the Spirit, but the Spirit was given. Jesus said, 'You will receive power to be My witnesses.' Maybe we're not experiencing the Spirit because we're not being His witnesses—we're not making disciples. ... Jesus said go and make disciples, but so often we just sit and make excuses and talk about why it's not really our job."

"I'm not here to try to make anyone feel guilty, that's the last thing I want. What God wants is repentance—so let's change. Let's start making these disciples and just do it. ... The church has to get back to making this a priority."

Other speakers at this year's main Catalyst event included pastors **Andy Stanley** (North Point Ministries), **Craig Groeschel** (), **Perry Noble** (NewSpring Church) and **Matt Chandler** (The Village Church), as well as leadership guru **Patrick Lencioni** and blogger **Jon Acuff**.