

Reinhard Bonnke Searching for People Who 'Pray and Weep for the Salvation of America'

Few of us know what we want to be at the age of 9, but evangelist Reinhard Bonnke is one of the exceptions. The German evangelist, who has preached in front of crowds exceeding 1.6 million in Africa, says it was at that tender age that he got his calling to be a missionary.

Now, after 35 years and preaching in front of more than 74 million people, Bonnke is bringing his message, "American Shall be Saved," to the United States. His gospel crusade will bring his message from the Lord to Miami, Greensboro, Long Island, Houston, and Pittsburgh.

"Evangelism must always lead into the church," Bonnke says. "This is a central truth I have practiced everywhere. I, the evangelist, bring my nets and borrow the boats of the local churches. Together we will cast our nets into the human ocean and pull them in to be emptied on the beach. My promise to you is not to take a single fish but to leave them all with the local churches. Then I will dry and mend my nets and move to the next place."

Bonnke's next stop is Miami, where he will preach to a crowd at the American Airlines arena on July 18-19. Over 200 churches across racial, denominational, cultural and even linguistic barriers have joined forces to help Bonnke witness Jesus to South Florida.

Ordained in 1964, Bonnke first started working as a missionary in Africa at the age of 27. His first fellowship meeting in Lesotho attracted 100 people, but his audiences quickly grew until they filled an entire stadium. During the 1980s, he preached to crowds of 75,000 in Cape Town and 150,000 in

Malawi, eventually peaking at 1.6 million at a crusade in 2000 in Lagos, Nigeria. In 2001, Bonnke moved to the United States after he saw the need to do similar work here, and in 2013 he moved to Singer Island.

"I am scanning the skies for men and women who pray and weep for the salvation of America. As Bill Bright used to say, 'Let's leave our logos and egos.' Let's rally at the foot of the cross of Calvary and preach the Gospel of salvation to the nation," Bonnke says. "The Holy Spirit will cooperate. God is pouring out His Spirit with glorious indifference to our differences! He said, 'I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh.' And it seems to me He pours Himself into the mold of any vessel."