

Hillsong Conference Makes History at NYC's Radio City Music Hall

More than 300 million people have reportedly come to **Radio City Music Hall** to see stage shows, concerts, movies and special events since it opened in the 1930s, but this past weekend's **Hillsong Conference 2013** was the first time the gospel of Jesus Christ was ever presented from the New York City landmark theater's stage.

It was also the first time Hillsong Church, the Sydney, Australian-based "global church" that is world famous for its hugely popular **worship music**, has held its annual conference in the United States.

Nearly 7,000 people filled the seats at Radio City on Friday and Saturday to worship with Hillsong worship leaders and listen to a variety of speakers, including Carl Lentz, Christine Caine, Robert Fergusson and Hillsong senior pastor Brian Houston along with his wife Bobbie, who pastors and leads the Colour Conference for women.

"We need a generation of adventurers in the church," said Brian Houston, who encouraged the audience to be "outrageous" for Jesus and live with a "pioneering spirit."

"You don't know what God will do with you unless you step out into the great unknown," he added. "Mystery is what gives Christianity its excitement. Play-it-safe Christianity leads to mediocrity. Don't live like the crowd that never left the shore."

The purpose of a **Hillsong conference** is to champion the cause of the local church. The speakers gear their messages toward empowering the local church.

“No more settling for humdrum Christian life,” Carl Lentz said. “The best way to change the world is to continue to allow the Holy Spirit to change your life. [We are] wrecked for anything else but saying to God, ‘Use me. Send me.’”

In looking for the spectacular, people often miss the supernatural, Lentz said, then encouraged those in attendance with, “Look for the supernatural in your supernormal.”

Robert Fergusson, teaching pastor at Hillsong in Australia, said unity and diversity are vitally needed in today’s church, and he used the early church as an example.

“The early church breathed in the Spirit of God and breathed out the Word of God. One church but many expressions of the **body of Christ**,” he said. “The first breaths of the early church were inclusional and missional.”

The intensity, traffic and noise of New York City did not slow down or discourage the leaders of Hillsong. “The only sound that New York City does not know is the sound of **heaven**,” said Lentz, who lives in New York. “Our gospel is better than anything on the street.”

Hillsong will continue the **mission** by bringing its big conference to Los Angeles, Oct. 18-19. Next year, the church will move its New York conference to the Theater at Madison Square Garden and has already set the theme “No Other Name.”