

Storm the Gates

Effective prayer cannot be half-hearted. This is war.

One of my closest mentors is a humble Nigerian apostle named Mosy Madugba, an amazing guy who has raised the dead, confronted demon-possessed warlocks and led whole villages to renounce idols and embrace Jesus. The miracles are impressive, but Mosy doesn't focus on the sensational. Prayer is his passion.

Mosy sponsors a huge annual conference in Nigeria called Global PrayerQuake. About 8,000 pastors and church leaders from many African nations attend this event in the city of Port Harcourt. For an entire week Mosy and his team offer training in intercession, and they spend hours praying for world evangelism.

When I was with these Spirit-filled Africans in January I could feel the ground move and the rafters rattle as they prayed. Everyone was rocking back and forth, shaking their fists and shouting in tongues. They were serious about dislodging devils.

The same contagious passion for prayer was evident in the city of Lagos, where I attended a pastors' prayer meeting that same week that lasted from 9 a.m. until way past noon. Motivated by an upcoming presidential election, more than 700 leaders came to pray for the future of the country. They repented for government corruption and asked God to transform all of Nigeria for Christ.

Most of these pastors were on their knees or standing with their hands raised for almost four hours. They were not

talking on cell phones or exchanging business cards. I wondered if our prayer meetings could attract so many pastors from one city.

The sad truth is that we Americans have become a prayerless people. Most of our churches don't have prayer meetings anymore. Prayer, especially of the fervent variety, has been crowded out by trendy church-growth programs and sophisticated technology.

We are so hip now. Who needs old-fashioned stuff like fasting, travail or all-night prayer vigils? And tongues? We've relegated this to a back room for fear of being labeled fanatics.

Leonard Ravenhill, one of my favorite writers, was an unappreciated British prophet who often preached about the sin of prayerlessness. He wrote in his 1959 classic, *Why Revival Tarries*:

"We pray with a 'take-it-or-leave-it' attitude; we offer that which costs us nothing! We will display our gifts, natural or spiritual; we will air our views, political or spiritual; we will preach a sermon or write a book to correct a brother in doctrine. But who will storm hell's stronghold?"

Thankfully God has raised up some American prophets today who are willing to storm hell's gates—and to mobilize the rest of us to return to our knees. The men on our cover this month, Dutch Sheets and Chuck Pierce, are heroes of mine because they've taken a radical stand for prayer in a time of national crisis.

In the 1980s Chuck was instrumental in organizing prayer for the fall of communism in Eastern Europe. Dutch was behind a huge prayer campaign in 2000 that most likely swayed the presidential election that year. Two years ago both men committed themselves to leading prayer events in all 50 states in order to mobilize intercession for a sweeping spiritual revival they are convinced is headed our way.

Chuck, Dutch and my Nigerian friend Mosy have helped me discover that effective prayer cannot be half-hearted or lukewarm. It is not a job for sissies. This is war. It will require the audacious courage of an Elijah.

What would happen, I wonder, if thousands of churches in this country suddenly heard the alarm that is sounding in heaven today and began to take seriously Jesus' words: "Could you not tarry one hour?" What if we put aside our timid, wimpish prayers and began to pray with bold, apostolic authority? What if we stopped relying on our smug American sophistication and started praying like a bunch of zealous Nigerians?

I believe God would stir us to the core and unleash His convicting presence on a wayward nation. The question remains: How desperate are we for a fresh Pentecost?

J. Lee Grady is the editor of Charisma. Check out his weekly online column, along with many other exclusive Web features, at [jlee.com](#). You can also post your comments about this article on our Web forum.