

How This Evangelist Learned to Fight Hate With Love

The year 2020 was a challenge for many of us. At the very beginning of the year, the Holy Spirit gave me a message that I shared in Nairobi, Kenya. I preached that 2020 would be a year of unprecedented global shaking, but that this shaking would lead to unprecedented awakening and revival. I had no clue of the magnitude of both the devastation and glory that I would see unfold in 2020.

Political tensions were high early on as 2020 was an election year. Then in March, the pandemic hit the U.S. like an avalanche. Many were forced to stay at home, afraid, isolated and unable to work or pay their bills. The people were set on edge and ready to riot. Then as if things could not get any worse, more devastation hit as George Floyd was suffocated to death by a police officer, and many around the world watched it through a viral video.

This was the breaking moment. Many decided to get out of their home lockdowns and express their rage. For some, it was the deep unhealed pain of racial injustice, for others, the anger of the lockdowns and for still others, an excuse to go outside and release the anarchy within. To say the least, a great shaking hit America, and our cities were aflame with chaos.

Coming Out of Hiding

When this all went down, I was away from home, praying in the Washington, D.C., area. Floyd was killed in Minneapolis, 15 minutes from my house in St. Paul, Minnesota. I watched live videos of my neighborhood being set on fire, mobs destroying buildings I often entered. My neighborhood became a war zone. Martial law was on the verge of breaking out with Army vehicles, helicopters swarming and curfews in place. Anger,

hurt and chaos filled the streets as buildings burned to the ground. I asked myself, "Where is the church in all of this?"

As a global missionary with a passion for revival, I usually travel to more than 10 nations a year. I was scheduled to go to Portugal, and everything in my flesh wanted to go there because it is easy, beautiful and filled with kind people, but the Holy Spirit began to grip my heart for my home state. I thought, How can I go to the nations right now when my very own neighborhood is on fire with riots and mayhem? At the same time, I felt what many were feeling: hurt, confusion and fear. I really didn't want to go back home to the war zone, but I also didn't want to disobey the Holy Spirit. I was wrestling with God.

I asked God, "What do You want me to do?" As a white man in the wake of an injustice done to a Black man, I felt useless. But I felt as though the Holy Spirit said, "Love, serve and use your gift to unite people to see revival. Call the church out of hiding and into the frontlines of the battle like Gideon in Judges 6."

So I asked God for a sign to confirm that I should go back home. The Spirit told me a friend named J.T. Thomas would be coming to Minneapolis, and I needed to assist him. Thomas is a powerful Black preacher who saw the riots of Ferguson, Missouri, turn into a revival that brought healing and racial reconciliation in the aftermath of the 2014 police-involved shooting of Michael Brown. Just as I was praying about Thomas coming to Minneapolis, he called me and said he felt led to come and asked if I could assist him. That was my confirmation. I knew for sure God was calling me to go back home into the war zone. So I booked my ticket and landed in the chaos to assist Thomas. We then went to the George Floyd memorial, which was filled at that moment with confusion and anger. The spiritual climate was intense.

Local and national ministries were already there on the

ground, reaching out to people. God had found a group of warriors with courage who were not afraid of the frontlines of battle, and He was about to unite and use them mightily to turn the story around and help this bleeding community heal.

Confessing Christ in Baptism

One particular church, located on the same street as the George Floyd memorial site, had served there faithfully for 39 years. They graciously allowed us to set up a stage in front of their building, which was very close to where Floyd was killed. The team asked if I wanted to preach, but I said no because I wanted to let the Black brothers and sisters take the stage due to the racial sensitivity of the memorial. I was content with serving and helping see all the ministry pieces come together.

People were pouring into the Floyd memorial at that point from all over the world. It was a place of mourning. Each night brought a fresh crowd, mainly of unbelievers searching for answers.

I'll never forget the first night. More than 1,000 people were at the memorial site. Worship filled the atmosphere, and the gospel was proclaimed by a team of Black preachers. Hundreds of hands went up to receive Jesus. People from every background—atheists, anarchists, Muslims and many ethnicities—put their hands in the air to receive Jesus. Many were weeping and getting hit by the power and love of God. Deliverance was taking place as the team of many believers went in the crowd praying for those who were open to it. Hearts were being healed of tremendous pain and confusion. This was a huge breakthrough moment for the revival that was building at the George Floyd memorial.

At that point, we did not have a baptismal on site. With permission of the pastor who had allowed us to set up our stage in front of his church, I was able to get a baptismal

set up right next to the stage.

The next night a Black sister from a ministry called Circuit Riders preached the gospel powerfully, and many gave their lives to Jesus. But this time, they invited people to be baptized!

During my time at the George Floyd memorial, I posted a number of Facebook Live videos to document what God was doing in an attempt to capture good news in the midst of this tragedy that had left so many hearts hopeless. The live video of the baptisms went viral around the world, giving hope to many who were looking for something positive to come out of the woes of 2020.

We found out that before George Floyd died, he helped his pastors carry a baptismal into the streets for people to be baptized. I thought, What better way to honor this man than to see baptisms happen at his memorial!

Fighting With Forgiveness

As things were going viral and momentum was building, the church was coming together in unprecedented unity to see ashes turn to beauty. There really wasn't any one superhero who made this revival happen. Rather, many members of the body of Christ prayed, gave food, served and stepped up to love this hurting community and preach Good News in the midst of the continual bad news that was suffocating hope from our land.

Thomas and some of the national ministers who came into town had to leave, and they asked me who we should have led the revival. I did not want to lead it publicly because I'm a white guy. But I told them to look no further than my dear friend Dr. Charles Karuku and his wife, Lindsey. They had been there from the beginning, praying, preaching, serving and plowing the ground. Yes, I am a revival preacher, but I was content to help behind the scenes to see the body of Christ come together.

So Charles and Lindsey took the public lead of the revival meetings at the George Floyd memorial, which lasted for about 60 days straight. Charles is Black, and Lindsey is a white woman who grew up in Iowa. The couple tag-teamed, preaching a message of racial reconciliation and forgiveness. Almost every night at the memorial, you would see people of every color in each other's arms, crying uncontrollably and forgiving each other of racism and division. The gospel was bringing much-needed healing to a bleeding community searching for answers. The main message preached repeatedly was the cross: "Be reconciled with God through Jesus vertically and receive God's grace to forgive and reconcile with one another horizontally."

Many ministries and members of the body of Christ from various denominations came together to keep this revival going. I could write books about the supernatural unity and miracles I saw at the George Floyd memorial revival. Thousands heard the gospel, hundreds gave their lives to Jesus, dozens were baptized. Demons came out of many, and people were set free of drug abuse, depression, hopelessness and suicidal thoughts. The gifts of the Spirit were in full operation through diverse parts of the body of Christ. Many testified to receiving miracles, and people came from all over the nation to serve, love and give. Racial reconciliation happened, and the riots in Minneapolis subsided.

At the same time, the environment was not without persecution and danger. I had death threats on my life, and our team was continually slandered with false accusations and threatened by gangs. But it was worth it all!

Seeing Revival on the Streets

Overall, the pain of what happened from George Floyd's death went around the world. But the church stepped into the scene and brought beauty from ashes. The testimony of the revival that took place at his memorial went around the world as well. Bad news was turned to good, and hope was released. Inspired

by our example, people in other states and even nations began to preach the gospel in public, baptize and engage in racial reconciliation.

One example of this took place in Kenosha, Wisconsin. In August, I had a good friend from Wisconsin at my house, and I was telling him about all God was doing at the memorial revival. While my friend was on his way home, Jacob Blake was shot, and riots broke out. My friend lives 15 minutes from Kenosha, and his neighborhood became like my neighborhood, a burning war zone overnight! He asked me what to do. I told him to pray and begin to unite the church in the area. I talked to local pastors and to the team I was working with at the George Floyd memorial, and we decided to go to Kenosha and hold a revival meeting right where the protests were happening.

In Kenosha, the multiracial church united and gathered for prayer. The gospel was preached with power and love. Angry rioters got hit with the Holy Spirit and were delivered. The love and power of God changed hearts full of anger, bitterness and hatred. Many were baptized, and from that night, the Kenosha riots stopped. Coincidence?—I think not!

Another testimony many have heard was from a well-known missionary worship leader, Sean Feucht. He came to the George Floyd memorial and witnessed the move of God there. He told our team it was one of the strongest revivals he had ever seen in the U.S. He was very encouraged and believed God wanted to move across America in the midst of all the shakings.

Inspired, Feucht went home to California and started a revival that would go far beyond what we saw at the George Floyd memorial. His inspiration became a tour of 48 cities being rocked by the gospel. I went on this tour and witnessed tens of thousands gather, thousands receive Jesus and thousands get baptized publicly—in America! I witnessed people who were suicidal and depressed from the coronavirus lockdowns run to the altar, receive Christ and get set free. I witnessed

anarchists, prostitutes and satanists give their lives to Jesus. In Nashville, Tennessee, alone, around 500 people were baptized in one night. In one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in Chicago, we baptized so many people in the back of a truck that I lost count.

These are just a few testimonies, but a new season of revival has been birthed on the streets of America, and I feel it is just the beginning of what's coming.

As we see these global last-days shakings continue, I believe we will see an even greater last-days awakening and harvest of souls. COVID-19 gave us one blessing in that it pushed the church out of the building. In the midst of the chaos of the hour we live in, I believe we are going to see powerful revivals break out on the streets once again like what happened with Jesus in the Gospels and with the disciples in Acts.

Church, we need to be ready. More shakings are coming! When crisis hits, we need to refuse the temptation to hide and, instead, run to the battlefield, unite with other believers, love people and preach the gospel with boldness and power.

You don't need to be a superstar to see revival touch your city. You just need to be obedient to the Holy Spirit, and God will be with you every step of the way.

My prayer is that this testimony of riots turning to revival will inspire you and that it will repeat itself many times over for the glory of God. Amen.

READ MORE: To learn more about racism in American culture and the church's response, visit [here](#)

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