

Newsletter Teaching for 6-27-07

You're Not Getting the Full Story!

If you are like most American Christians, you know more about what Satan and his forces of darkness are doing in our world than you know about the amazing and transforming work of God. The media has made that determination for you by choosing one-sided reporting that often excludes the dramatic movement of God in bringing hope and transformation to entire villages and societies.

At the recent *Empowered Conference* in Grand Rapids, Michigan, we had a chance to sit down with George Otis, Jr, president of The Sentinel Group (producers of the *Transformations* videos). George has documented firsthand accounts of revival and transformation around the world, and he has a perspective on the world that perhaps no one else on this planet can claim! He has seen amazing displays of God's power as they have tracked transformation in more than 500 locations globally.

For example, you probably haven't heard on the news about the foliage and leaves on the trees in communities in Brazil that began to glow as the people cried out in desperation for God to come and transform their communities. You are probably not hearing about the wonderful ways that God is choosing to "show off" His sovereignty over creation when people sincerely and humbly seek Him!

Take the Quiz

If you want to get an understanding of how limited your understanding is of the opposing light and darkness realities in this world, look at the following checklist of news items. Keep track of how many things you've heard about, and how many things are "news to you."

*Angered at the prospect of a NATO missile defense shield in Poland and the Czech Republic, **Russian** President Vladimir Putin has threatened to re-target his nation's nuclear capacity to **Western Europe**.

*In **Thailand's** Omkoi Province, tens of thousands of tribal people have given their lives to Christ. Children are leading the way in prayer at 4 a.m., and some have witnessed the presence of God in the form of a bright light. Buddhism is losing its grip in the region.

*Arab militias known as the jangaweed have been terrorizing defenseless refugees in **Sudan's Darfur** region for several years. Thousands have been raped and murdered, and over one million people have been displaced.

*After dedicating their land to God, a Christian farm in **Western Kenya** recently recorded the highest rice yield in history. Godly values have replaced idolatry and immorality, and thousands of people have been lifted above the poverty line.

***Venezuelan** leader Hugo Chavez has recently nationalized his country's oil assets, stripped his Central Bank of autonomy, eliminated presidential term limits, closed down independent media, and threatened to cut off petroleum exports to the U.S.

*Blimbing Sari, a village near Bali, **Indonesia**, has become a model community after inviting God into their affairs. Besides winning awards for cleanliness, educational excellence, and economic development, the community is free of drugs, AIDS, and crime.

*Analysts now believe **Iran** is about three years away from having an atomic bomb. Iranian president

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a messianic Islamist, has rebuffed all diplomatic efforts to deter Tehran from its nuclear ambitions.

*In the **Philippines**, Mayor Santiago Barcelona recently hosted a day of repentance in downtown Escalante—one of the nations most debt- and crime-ridden communities. Within months the power of God had eradicated civic debt, homelessness, and crime. Now, the city has been cited as the top urban success story in the Philippines.

*While **North Korean** leader Kim Jong-il has been producing nuclear weapons and testing missile delivery systems, his people have seen their daily food rations cut to near-starvation levels. Many have died.

*In the hills above **Rio de Janeiro**, the presence of God has settled on a community of 200 people living on a garbage dump. Dramatic healings have led to full church attendance. Now the community, formerly known as the “Slaughter House,” has adopted a new name: “The Fisher Village.”

--Taken from e-mail written by George Otis, Jr., June 14, 2007

About half of these stories have yet to make it into the news in our Western world. The reality is that the bad news is going to undoubtedly get worse. But there are also a rapidly growing number of amazing stories that illustrate that God is “on the move” in transformation.

These stories grow our faith to believe God for the transformation of our own communities. Although it can be hard to fathom the miracle of glowing leaves in Brazil or a healed stream in Fiji, God is demonstrating Himself to us with the encouragement that we “keep going” in our seeking of Him.

On the Right Track

We’ve had a taste of that here in the Twin Cities as a handful of south Minneapolis pastors called their congregations to 21 days of prayer and fasting in May. As a result, they witnessed physical healings, the closing down of drug houses, and the breaking up of a state-wide prostitution ring.

As we shared those stories with George Otis, he smiled and implored us to tell the pastors to press in and “go for the spiritual jugular” before people talk themselves out of recognizing God’s divine intervention. “The Lord has given you encouragement through dramatic demonstrations of His work,” explained George. “The Lord is telling you that you are on the right track.”

Are you ready to *press in* and *usher in* the good news in your community? Just as God is transforming communities in other parts of the world, He is desirous of doing that here as well. Let us take heart and not give up. Let’s not settle for the lesser thing of human programming and strategizing. We can believe God for the supernatural power of His presence as we humble ourselves, seek His face, repent, and turn our communities over to Him. Live your life according to 2 Chronicles 7:14 as if you truly believe God’s promises!