

Hints of Transformation in South Minneapolis

The *Minneapolis Star Tribune* called it the break up of possibly the largest prostitution ring in the history of Minnesota. It happened on the last weekend of *The Divine Experiment*—just a couple of blocks from one of the participating churches.

In another part of South Minneapolis, a woman woke up in the middle of the night to several police cars converging on the house next door. She looked out to see police with guns drawn, arresting her neighbors for operating a drug house. She had no idea that drug dealing was going on so close to her, but praised God for cleansing her neighborhood. It happened during *The Divine Experiment*.

On the last day of *The Divine Experiment* (May 21, 2007), a single mom testified that she received a call from her doctor, declaring with amazement that there was no longer any evidence of an incurable medical condition. On that same day, this mom was driving with her children, lamenting the price of gas and wondering how they were going to pay for it. As she prayed with her children about the need for God's provision, she suddenly felt the presence of God fill her car—and she watched in shock as her gas gauge suddenly moved from near empty to full! (If you find this hard to believe, check out the widow and the oil in 1 Kings 17.)

After 21 days of prayer, there are about 300 people in the South Minneapolis area who no longer needed convincing that **repentance is the key** to bringing healing and restoration to their community! For the past three weeks, they have watched God respond powerfully to their desperate cries of repentance.

Return to First Love

The pastors of the four churches that participated in *The Divine Experiment* also testified to the changes they have seen in their own lives. One pastor realized that he had lost his “first love of the Lord.” As he sought God every day with other pastors and believers, God revealed the hidden places in his heart. Through ongoing prayers of repentance, God restored his first love. The pastor shared that he is a changed man—and that all he wants to do now is just pray and worship the Lord.

Many of the people have been fasting and praying together for these 21 days, and at the closing prayer service this week many expressed their desire to continue on with a lifestyle of repentance. They are realizing the truth of 2 Chronicles 7:14, and God has given them enough of a taste of His transforming power that they don't want to quit now. They are determined to adopt lifestyles of prayer, repentance, and desperately seeking God.

An Unexpected Unity

There was great joy in the room on the closing night as people testified about how God had met them in unexpected ways. The ethnic diversity of South Minneapolis was demonstrated through the different worship styles as churches took turns leading. But the unity was overwhelming as new brothers and sisters in Christ roamed the room, looking

for people to hug and bless. Many publicly stated that they did not want to lose the new friendships that had been formed as the people prayed together each morning and evening. They no longer view the spiritual darkness of their community as hopeless because they have witnessed firsthand the infusion of the bright light of the presence of God. They have been unified as never before, and they have a growing sense of anticipation for God's ongoing work.

Allowing God to Break In

The Divine Experiment is a simple approach to God through fasting, prayer, humility, and repentance. According to Rhonda Hughey, author of *The Divine Experiment* prayer guide (www.thedivineexperiment.com), it is called *Divine* "because our confidence is in God's desire and faithfulness not just to meet us if we give Him opportunity in our schedules, but also to change us in the process."

"It's an *experiment* because we have not trusted God in this way or given Him an opportunity to break into our 'religious' lives and schedules. Shouldn't we at least pause in our busy schedules for a heart and life realignment?" she asks.

The pastors of South Minneapolis responded with a resounding, "Yes!" And their people followed their lead and joined them in a concerted effort to seek God on behalf of their communities. The results have convinced them that taking God at His Word is really not just an experiment. It is the new reality for their lives!