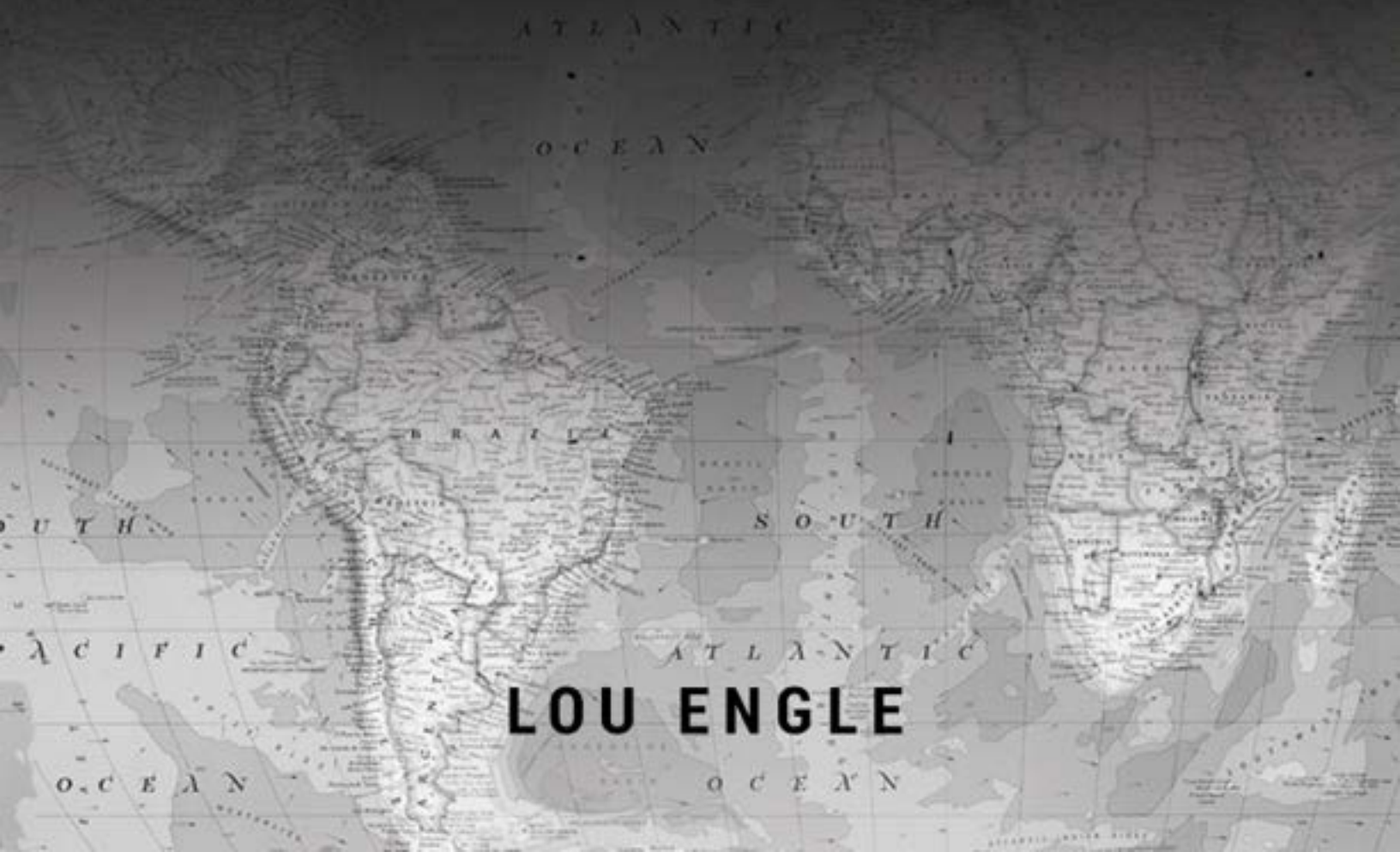




PRAY! EKBALLO!

A PRAYER REVOLUTION FOR THE GREAT HARVEST



PRAY! EKBALLO!

APRAYER REVOLUTION IN ONE VERSE

Lou Engle

Pray! Ekballo! by Lou Engle



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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my radical Reese Howell's company in the Ekkballo House of Prayer.

Your fasting in faith, your desires and dreams and your sacrificial obedience are what vindicates the authenticity of this book.

You are an Ekklesia, the Royal Air force, the Himalayan Honkers, a Moravian Lampstand.

THANKS

Thanks to Therese my wife, my 'Hallelujah Lassie', who's been willing to follow the Lamb wherever He goes. To Che Ahn, who dreamed a dream of the Great Harvest and called me into it. Thanks to my children who burn for the nations. To Jeremiah Ingrassia, the mobilizer of the movement. To Terrelle Wilson, my friend and prophetic scribe, who wrestled day and night to hammer out this message. To Rachel Holden, the most joyful and excellent project manager, without whom this book would not have been possible. To Dean Briggs, a master crafter of words who massaged the text. Thanks to John Lambert for writing the story of the SVM. Thanks to Brian Kim, who reawakened the dream of 'Antioch Again' and the unreached peoples. Thanks to Brian Brennt, Andy Byrd, Amy Sollars and clan, the dwarves who came into my comfy hobbit hole, sang an ancient song of harvest, evangelism and mission and gave me Ekkballo. To Mike Bickle, who prayed for me daily for five months that I would receive my inheritance in Pasadena. And finally to our dear friends, Dave Datema, Bruce and Christy Graham, Chong Kim, and the US Center for World Mission, who have provided a refuge for our Moravian Prayer Band. We rejoice to be called your friends in the great task: 'The evangelization of the world in this generation'.

*“There is one thing stronger
than all the armies in the world,
and that is an idea whose time has come”*

— **Victor Hugo**

INTRODUCTION

Tiananmen Square, Boston Tea Party, Woodstock, the fall of the Berlin wall, Luther's Ninety-Five Thesis, the Mount Hermon 100, Azusa Street. Every revolution has one defining moment that is remembered long after the names of politicians and kings have been forgotten. At every massive shift in human history—whether political, cultural or religious—a flash point occurs. Cultural sea changes, whether for good or evil, are spawned in these flashpoints. Such rare slivers of time actually define destinies, as key men and women seek to courageously shape the future by *“clarifying and organizing ideas that ignite the circuit between the individual and the masses and thereby alters history. Great leaders and great ideas succeed when events have prepared the way for them, when the community is waiting to be aroused”* (Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.).

A flashpoint requires leaders to articulate those thoughts, passions and aspirations quietly groaned for in the bosom of the masses. The formula is rather simple:

$$(\text{Moment} + \text{Message})^n = \text{Flashpoint}$$

with n representing the exponential variable of **Collective Readiness**

You see, when the response to a ripe Moment with a right Message is magnified by Collective Readiness—“when the community is waiting to be aroused”—widespread explosive action inevitably results. In Scripture, this is dubbed “the fullness of times.” Friends, we are living in such days. Tectonic generational shifts are occurring in which the people of God are progressively bending history to conformity with the Original Idea. A message whose time has come is not only greater than all the armies of the world, but, if the idea be divine, then all the armies of hell, too. The Word of the Lord simply will not return void. It will accomplish that for which it was sent (Isa. 55:11).

At the outset of this book, I must ask, are you willing to believe that? I hope so! Because I write to call us back to the simple, sovereign Word of Matthew 9:38. I don’t claim originality or sophistication, just a roaring desire to obey. My convictions are simple:

1. Christ himself commanded this Word;
2. We have generally neglected this Word, therefore its potency has never been fully tested;
3. History depends on its fulfillment.

Our neglect was never acceptable, yet it is even less so now. The times are more full than ever. In this single verse of Scripture, we have been entrusted with fuel for global revival. Matthew 9:38 packs enough dynamite to spark a worldwide reformation of evangelism and missions, mobilize tens of thousands of missionaries and reformers, and literally bring back the King. In fact, I daresay the absence of a final, great harvest is not primarily due to the lack of sincere effort or commitment, but principally to the inconsistency with which we have attended to this verse, for it is the Lord of the Harvest’s most elemental harvest strategy.

My friend, listen with me. Hear it afresh! We will see in Chapter Three how this divine idea emerges from Love, produces a Prayer, yielding Labor, all to satisfy and reward Love. But for now, let us recognize that heaven's program for evangelization is a *prayer idea* launched in red type. Jesus describes the ground war, which is God's strategy to redeem humanity:

*"The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. **Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers** into His harvest"* (Mat. 9:37-38, emphasis mine).

No doubt you've heard this before, as have I, but to be honest I had never really *heard* it. Soon, I'll hold a magnifying glass to this remarkable passage and unpack a few of the profound possibilities that shall accompany the reversal of our historic neglect. But first we must more completely grasp the eternal program of heaven to save the lost, for it is this revelation that will infuse us with the necessary vision, hope and motivation to pull the missing trigger of dogged, relentless prayer.

THE ETERNAL PROGRAM OF HEAVEN

The whole Bible is a story of a missionary-hearted God. Glimpses of His plan are woven throughout the scriptures. Beginning with Abraham in Genesis 12, God unveils His heart to bless every nation and family on earth.

"Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen. 12:1-3)

Isaiah saw the coming of the One who would be a “light to the Gentiles.” He records the words of God that say “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” The book of Psalms, a musical orchestration and proclamation in song, foretells the great worship explosion among all nations and peoples around the throne of Yahweh. The prophet Haggai foretells the coming of the One who is called the “desire of all nations.” Then, in yet another fullness of time, the offspring of Abraham—the promised Seed that would bless all peoples, Christ Himself—appears in blazing technicolor proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom. This means deliverance to the prisoner. It means healing to the sick and afflicted. And though His direct ministry was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Jesus prophetically revealed in Matthew 24:14 that His larger ambition was for the good news of the kingdom to be preached to all nations before He would return to Earth a second time.

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” (Mat. 24:14)

THEN THE END WILL COME

Only a few verses form the axis around which all eschatology orbits, and this is one. In the often contentious debates between various eschatological camps, surely we can all agree that this verse is a sort of bedrock statement, a compass given to guide our labors toward the fulfillment of redemptive history. In other words, the final chapters of redemptive history can't be written until every tribe, tongue and people are represented in a historic crescendo of worship before the Lamb of God. Then and only then can we expect Jesus to return. *Then* the end will come. By this North Star of Divine Purpose, we set and center the main priority of the church, mobilizing her resources and laborers unto the fulfillment of that program. Equally, in light of this central, glorious enterprise, many other competing labors must necessarily shrink away.

Surprisingly, it is only in the last eighty years that this eschatological vein has been freshly mined. New energy and focus have resulted. Prior, the missionary enterprise of the church was historically focused on going to the “nations” (as it is translated in most versions of Matthew 24:14). As such, while the church moved ahead in the light it had received, our understanding remained limited. Missionaries carried the gospel into geographically recognizable nations of the earth, thinking this was the sum total of the Great Commission. But in the 1930's, a man named Cameron Townsend had a missional epiphany. He was in Guatemala, preaching the gospel, when he began to realize that most of the people did not even speak or understand Spanish, the official language of the country. One man came to him and said, “If your God is so big, why doesn't He speak my language?” Suddenly, it dawned on Townsend that whole family groups, tribes and languages were totally disconnected from Guatemala's predominant language and culture—which meant his model didn't fit his mandate. A great and practical crisis occurred, revealing huge gaps in the strategy of the day.

During this same period of time, others like Donald McGavran and Dr. Ralph Winter began to awaken church to the understanding that the Greek word for nations in Matthew 24:14 is actually the word ‘*ethne*’ from which we derive our English word, ethnic. Spirit-breathed, a generation awakened to the power of this single word, fresh and unfiltered. As a result of the questions that followed, inadequacies in the current strategies of the day were revealed. The Holy Spirit caused a paradigm shift in missions understanding. Strategy shifted, enlarged and refocused as a result. If the word is actually *ethne*, then it means the gospel must be preached to every ethnic group, tribe and tongue, not merely delivered inside borders on a map. Convinced of this simple truth, Cameron Townsend launched the great missions organization, Wycliffe Bible Translators. Illumined by one, simple word in one, single verse, the missions movement—which is really the church’s movement—received fresh impetus to carry on, and a clearer blueprint for how to do so. Our central focus was no longer nations, but tribes and tongues: *unreached people groups!*

New implementations and new models followed. Yet, even as this revelation has percolated for a generation, it remains unrealized. Why? Is it too abstract, too difficult, too grand? Not at all. We are closer now than ever! But, I contend, our missionary zeal has not been properly bathed in prayer, which, according to Jesus, is the resourcing instrument for all mission endeavors. Thus, the nearer we get to the end, the more prayer will be needed. If we have sufficiently prayed in the past—and I fear we haven’t—we must pray even more now, for the battle lines are hardening and will only harden further. Beachheads of darkness that blind the eyes of the lost are becoming more contentious, not less.

The reason for this is self-evident, or do you think the enemy is not fully aware of the timeline implications of Matthew 24:14? This is why Jesus also made clear that our witnessing effectiveness absolutely requires the power of the Holy Spirit, for it will be resisted by many unholy spirits.

“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be My witness in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth (i.e. unreached people groups)” (Acts 1:8).

This bespeaks the action of prayer. Our power to witness is insufficient to the daunting scope of the task. We must actively engage, coordinate and communicate with, and respond to the Holy Spirit if we wish to be truly effective. Thus, if we will commit to mobilizing prayer on the scale with which we have mobilized missions, we will at long last see the job finished.

But not until.

Once again I must reiterate: Jesus will not return to reign on the earth until every tribe, every tongue and every nation has heard and witnessed the gospel of the kingdom. Because His word is true, this means He cannot return until such a time, because He will not violate His word. The book of Revelation confirms this end time purpose of God.

*“And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of **every tribe and tongue and people and nation**, and you have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.’” (Rev. 5:9-10)*

*“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of **all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues**, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” (Rev. 7:9-10)*

In his epic book, *The Passion for Souls*, the great missionary pastor and statesman, Oswald Smith, describes an end time scenario involving a trepidatious conversation between Satan and his demonic emissaries concerning his eventual doom. Allow me to present an abridged passage:

“Fifty years passed. Restlessly his Satanic Majesty paced back and forth. Dark, foreboding frowns passed over his countenance. It was quite apparent that something of an unusual nature was troubling him.

“‘It must not be,’ he muttered to himself. ‘They seem to have caught a vision of it at last: To hasten the return of our Lord by following his programme for this age to ‘preach the gospel in all the world for a witness to all nations,’ and ‘to take out of them a people or his name...among peoples, tribes and nations where Christ is not named.’ Then that phrase of theirs, ‘Bringing back the King.’ The King, The King! It shall not be. I must frustrate their purposes! What will happen to me when He comes?’”

As the implications sink in, Lucifer begins to rage and despair:

“And now,” roared Satan, “all is lost! Thousands have been saved...but the news I have just heard is the worst of all. He may come now. At least it will not be long, for with the vision of these people, every tribe, tongue and nation will be reached. And then, woe, woe is me!”

Smith’s tale reveals a great truth. Even Satan glimpses God’s program, and his cause for concern should be our rallying cry, for we perhaps have failed to glimpse it with the vividness and certainty of our enemy. But no longer. In the coming days, and by the end of this book, I hope you find yourself increasingly possessed by the awesome hope of His return.

When a great personage arrives, we are said to “roll out the red carpet” for them. This was an action taken in the royal courts of old to prepare for visiting dignitaries or the return of an absent king.

To us has fallen this privilege, and it is not theory, it is the clear instruction of Scripture. A red carpet of the shed blood of Jesus winds through every *ethne* of earth. If we follow that trail, we will roll out His welcome. Our king shall return. Let us hasten that day.

The flashpoint is prayer.

CHAPTER 1

THE PRAYER THAT EXECUTES THE PLAN

Let me tell you a true story. A young woman from Biola University attended an event at her church in which names of various, unreached people groups were written on slips of paper and posted on a wall of prayer. People were challenged to take one of these slips off the wall and adopt in prayer whatever people group was written inside. Moved by the challenge, she lifted one slip from the wall. Written inside was the ‘Jat People’. Then she went to another section of the wall and took another slip of paper. Again, was written, ‘Jat People.’

Satisfied that God was leading her, she committed herself to pray regularly that the Holy Spirit would move among the Jat and that God would send laborers to minister among them, even though she knew little about them other than their name. Two years later she embarked on a short-term mission trip to India where her team faithfully shared the gospel from village to village, but with little visible fruit.

At length, they came to another village and they shared the gospel again, as they had every time before. This time the results were very different. The chief of the village came to the team and said, “We have been moved by your message about Jesus. I, and my whole village have chosen to give our lives to Jesus Christ.”

Inquiries were made as to the name of his people. By now, of course, you are ahead of me in the story. The chief responded, “We are called the Jat.”

Coincidence? Hardly. Oh my friends, do not harden your heart to the simple wonder of God keeping His Word. With little visible response from one village to the next, suddenly a whole community comes to Christ, and it all occurred in the *same geographical region* among people of *similarly entrenched beliefs*.

Could it be that the deciding factor was prayer? Can you believe this with me? Can we collectively decide to let Christ be Christ and follow His commands? Or do you think that the Lord of the Harvest doesn't know how His harvesting works? Mission's history is replete with these kinds of testimonies. Far more than interesting little vignettes to tell others when you return home, they are actually shouts from God that *prayer strikes the winning blow!* Prayer matters. Consider the simplicity:

One young lady praying, "*Lord of the Harvest, thrust forth laborers to harvest the Jat.*"

One simple prayer for a people she does not know.

One willing heart to become the answer to her own prayers.

In response, one *ethne* receives the witness of the gospel of the kingdom. Oh! We must not be so wise and sophisticated as to reduce this wonder, nor complicate it, nor dismiss it with idle speculations. No, no! The line is direct: Before her prayer, there were seven thousand unreached people groups. After her prayer, there are six thousand nine hundred and ninety nine! Read that again. That's math and glory, all in one. The Jat people now gather around the throne and worship the Lamb, leaving us one clear, measurable step nearer to the return of the King.

In light of this, a question must be asked: Would this people group have come to Christ *without* this young woman's prayers? If God's sovereignty does not involve our prayers, then why did He tell us to pray?

My clear conviction and the central premise of this book is that the Jat would remain unreached apart from her prayers...and so shall every remaining unreached people group (UPG) for whom Christ yearned during His time on earth, and for whom He continues to yearn while ruling in heaven.

If this is true, then it is a microcosm, another “Cameron Townsend-styled” watershed moment when missions become fully grafted into and sustained by concerted, importunate, global prayer. Consider what would happen if millions of saints worldwide adopted people groups with the stubborn commitment of that young lady from Biola. Imagine the impact of millions praying daily: “Lord of the Harvest, thrust forth laborers into the harvest fields!”

I tell you the truth, *it shall be*, and when it is, the revolution of the gospel will penetrate the very ends of the earth. There is hope, but not until we honestly admit the pragmatic limitations of current “Prayer Lite” methodologies. Here, as elsewhere, math intervenes. If every tribe and tongue must be reached, then this requires thousands and thousands of laborers. Where are they? Why are missions so often rare and underfunded? Why are the laborers few?

Jesus gave us the answer. Not enough laborers equals not enough prayer.

A PRAYER MOBILIZER’S CALL TO PRAY MATTHEW 9:38

Now let me tell you a bit of my story. In 1995, a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place in the three thousand seat Mott Auditorium on the campus of U.S. Center for World Missions in Pasadena, California. John R. Mott, the auditorium’s namesake, was the great missionary statesman of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) from 1886-1940 (more on John R. Mott and the SVM in Chapter Six).

For now, suffice it to say that this era saw perhaps the greatest missions mobilization in history. And it was right there in Mott auditorium, in 1996 with the fires of revival burning in our hearts, that we established a 24/7 houses of prayer.

Day and night, for three years we prayed, from which was birthed TheCall solemn assemblies. The very first gathering in 2000 brought four hundred thousand young people to Washington D.C. to fast and pray. Since that day, hundreds of thousands worldwide have gathered in stadiums and arenas for similar gatherings. I cannot be more emphatic: it was birthed in prayer.

During this glorious season, a word of encouragement was given to me that my DNA was D.N.A., i.e. Divine National Assignments. I went through what I call a “prayeradigm” shift. In 2004, the Spirit of the Lord began to apprehend me with a new assignment to raise up a prayer movement called Bound4Life, mobilizing Americans to pray for the ending of abortion. Since that time, nearly half a million believers have put red “life bands” on their wrists, reminding them to pray a simple, daily prayer: “Jesus I plead your blood over my sins and the sins of my nation. God end abortion and send revival to America.”

We believe these prayers have granted a great window of mercy to America and have been a catalyst to the great pro-life movement in recent years. In terms of legislation, court decisions and most importantly, in the conscience of the average citizen, a remarkable thing has begun to happen of late. The unborn is beginning to win what was considered an unwinnable war. Life is being valued once more. Praise the Lord.

Over this entire span of fourteen years, my focus has always been turning America back to God, and I am no less apprehended by this call today. However, another great prayeradigm shift has begun to take place within me. Let me explain.

FUSING PRAYER AND MISSIONS—THE COMPACT IN FLORIDA

It began in 2008 during TheCall Orlando. Several YWAM (Youth With A Mission) leaders (including founder Loren Cunningham; Mark Anderson of The Call to All; Steve Douglas of CRU; and other world missionary leaders) stood with myself, Mike Bickle (of International House of Prayer—KC), and other national prayer leaders. Together, we solemnly and joyfully proclaimed that *the prayer movement was joining with the missions movement*. Now we know that prayer has always been central to the great mission enterprise, but in a real and unfortunate sense, the relationship at a strategic level has been largely academic far too long.

Together, we solemnly and joyfully proclaimed that the prayer movement was joining with the missions movement.

There in Orlando, we were jolted as a prayeradigm shift began to grip us all. In the last decade and a half, much of the world has been swept into the “house of prayer” phenomena. While this in itself is an amazing fulfillment of biblical prophecy, the prayer movement as a whole has not necessarily been focused on world missions, even though it is another key prophetic template of the end times. Behind the scenes, God was patiently at work. While missions’ leaders were getting gripped with prayer, prayer leaders were getting gripped with missions. Why? Because the Lord of the Harvest is perfectly committed to His own brilliance, and *He* wants to return even more than we want Him to return.

Because the Lord of the Harvest is perfectly committed to His own brilliance, and *He* wants to return even more than we want Him to return.

I believe our transaction together in Orlando was a holy compact before God, but I was still mostly clueless as to what it meant for me on a personal level. A year later, Loren Cunningham came to the OneThing conference in Kansas City and confirmed his resolution from Orlando. He had not forgotten, though I still understood very little of my own role. In fact, I was quite comfortable in the hobbit hole of my living room in Kansas City. Like Bilbo Baggins in Tolkien's epic story, *The Hobbit*, I too have a rather sedentary side that prefers to stay home and fish, and enjoy the comfort of family and football. In literary terms, it is the Baggins side of my nature.

But, like Bilbo, I also have a Tookish side that yearns for adventure and longs to journey to the mountains, find gold, and slay dragons. So, if you'll allow me a bit of playfulness, one fine day this young group of dwarfs—YWAM dwarfs—came into my living room and wakened my heart with their ancient song of harvest and nations. Some slumbering Tookishness stirred within me as the ancient dream of God began to call my name in very personal ways. (If you want to understand more, rent *The Hobbit* and listen to the deep, rumbling song of the dwarves).

I was about to enter a whirlwind.

Andy Byrd and Brian Brennt, chiefs among these young, firebrand YWAM dwarfs, gathered their company and began to prophesy to me that TheCall was making a critical transition from the focus of fasting and prayer alone to the proclamation of the Gospel in signs and wonders. In a moment of inspiration, they proclaimed that a new generation would pick up the mantle of Billy Graham and stadiums would be filled with souls being saved and healed in America. For two days, heaven rested on my little hobbit hole living room. I began to ask "Maybe TheCall becomes TheSend?"

Only halfway joking, I sensed the stirring of the Holy Spirit on such a thought, regardless of the name. Maybe TheCall had been a temporary, John the Baptist-type forerunner to an even greater Jesus Movement, reaping a harvest in America that would send forth laborers to the unreached peoples of the earth? Could it be? Dared I dream? These YWAM leaders shared their own vision for eighty million souls to be saved in America, resulting in two hundred thousand “sent ones,” wave after wave of missionaries crashing against the unreached shores of the earth with good news.

Maybe TheCall had been a temporary, John the Baptist-type forerunner to an even greater Jesus Movement...

At the very end of our two days of dreaming and praying together, an established prophetic voice in America called my close friend, Chris Berglund, who had shared all these experiences with me. The prophetic man said, “Tell Lou I had a visitation of the Lord last night. The Lord said TheCall was in a great transition and there would be a shift from just fasting and prayer to the proclamation of the gospel, the release of signs and wonders, and stadiums would be filled with souls being saved.” Then he added, “It has to do with the mantle of Billy Graham falling again on a generation.”

“TheCall was in a great transition and there would be a shift from just fasting and prayer to the proclamation of the gospel... “

We were astonished at the precise confirmation and timing of this word, especially since this man knew nothing of our time together. He lived in another city hundreds of miles away! Either this was a bad joke or it was God. I have come to know by personal experience over the years, these things come from God. He will manifest Himself in extraordinary ways if we pray and believe.

These encounters laid the foundations for my current prayeradigm shift.

But there was more to come.

A year later while traveling with the YWAM Circuit Riders, I found myself once again in Orlando with these young radicals. And once more (this time sitting around a hotel swimming pool), their dwarven song began to stir me. Our sense of the largeness of God's purpose in this moment of history was being enlarged even further. Brian Brennt began to rehearse our story line, excitedly informing us of a "swirl of God" that had recently transpired in California. It seems he had been with a group of leaders there, discussing our history. He had described the vision of stadium Christianity and the strategy of gatherings that intentionally joined prayer and evangelism into an indissoluble whole. While admitting that he wasn't sure what the name of these gatherings should be, my Canadian spiritual daughter, Faytene Grasseschi, suddenly interjected that the name should be "ekballo." It seemed inspired, but no one was exactly sure what that meant, so they began to research this ancient Greek word, '*ekballo*.'

The answers form a prayeradigm shift for all of us, and this book is your summons to join the ekballo prayer revolution.

It seemed inspired, but no one was exactly sure what that meant...

ANCIENT WORD REBORN: **EKBALLO!**

Ekballo is the word Jesus uses in Matthew 9:38, where He instructs His disciples to “Pray the Lord of the Harvest to send forth (Gr. *ekballo*) laborers into the harvest field.” What is striking is that *ekballo* is not the normal term used for “send” as most of our translations have it. A general definition of sending is “to cause to go or be taken, or to arrange for delivery.” It’s a perfectly useful word for the agreeable transfer of a thing from one place to another. I can send greetings, mail, and money, all with relative ease. Ekballo, on the other hand, is neither polite nor restrained. Ekballo is far more strident and spiritually confrontational, filled with passion and force. It is used when Paul is “thrown” into prison (Acts 16:37) and Stephen is “cast out” of the city and stoned (Acts 7:58). You see, *ekballo* is not pretty. It is effective, but it is not pretty. If we applied Greek to baseball, we would understand that pitchers don’t *send* the ball out of their hand toward the batter at home plate, they *ekballo* the ball! This is the same word Jesus uses when he says, “If I by the finger of God, cast out (*ekballo*) demons, then the Kingdom of Heaven has come upon you” (Luke 11:20). Whoa! You realize, demons do not come out willingly, right? They must be *ekballoed*. Great force must overcome great resistance.

When Jesus *ekballo*s demons, demons gotta go! When Jesus *ekballo*s laborers, evangelists and missionaries gotta go! Thus, *ekballo* is a verb of:

1. intense spiritual energy
2. creating alignment with divine purpose
3. which proves the kingdom is advancing.

Jesus said, “If I *ekballo*...then you know the kingdom.”

It should come as no surprise that *ekballo* vehemence is necessary to disrupt the convenient lives of recalcitrant, under-envisioned laborers. Everything about world missions threatens our comfort.

We greatly love our hobbit holes and insularity. The idea of preaching to people who come to us may get a hearty amen, but going to them? That takes ekballo. Something strong and forceful must grip us. Ekballo molds human will to the divine will, until human labor becomes divine labor, so that earthly kingdoms become divine kingdoms.

It should come as no surprise that ekballo vehemence is necessary to disrupt the convenient lives of recalcitrant, under-envisioned laborers.

Brothers and sisters, even Jesus was ekballoed! When the Son of God goes to confront Satan in the wilderness, the gospel of Mark says, “The Spirit drove (ekballo) him...to be tempted by the devil.” Jesus was not softly bidden, nor did he necessarily relish the thought of high temptation in a weak state of physical depletion. Even so, He was compelled by the Spirit of His Father, who was clearly spoiling for a fight. And so Jesus went, and triumphed.

Needless to say, this ekballo revelation rocked me. Suddenly, Matthew 9:38 became a fire in my bones, an end time trumpet I was being summoned to blast forth. That night, again in Orlando, the fusion of missions and prayer fused inside me. I preached my first message on ekballo, declaring that in one verse the prayer movement and the missions movement are intractably joined together.

Matthew 9:38 became a fire in my bones, an end time trumpet I was being summoned to blast forth.

Pray (prayer movement) the Lord of the Harvest to ekballo (missions movement) laborers.

Even as I preached, I myself was being apprehended by a new prayer assignment to herald this call: Pray! Ekballo!

CHAPTER 2

SWITCHBLADE AND SHOES

By twelve midnight, it wasn't funny anymore. Enough already! No, not enough. The heart-wrenching prayers would not cease, could not be stopped, until the people peacefully slumbering around him were finally disturbed. Overlooking the Hudson River, the intercessor poured forth a torrent of loud agonizing prayer, crying, "Lord of the Harvest, thrust forth laborers into the gangs of New York City!" When the police arrived to arrest the man for disturbing the peace, they discovered that he was praying for the city. Heaven came to his defense. They refused to interfere. And so the prayers continued...

Dick Simmons had no idea of the divine energy he was releasing as he prayed ekballo from Matthew 9:38. At that time, he probably didn't know or care about the finer points of the Greek (discussed above), yet on the very night he was praying, it was later discovered that a young man in Pennsylvania saw a photograph in *Life Magazine* in 1958 of seven teenagers who were members of a gang in New York. The Holy Spirit moved him with compassion, and was drawn to go to preach to them.

History records the young man's name as David Wilkerson. *The Cross and the Switchblade*, the conversion of Nicky Cruz, Teen Challenge, thousands of drug addicts and gang members converted, Times Square Church, millions impacted by the gospel through the life and ministry of David Wilkerson—all this because one man cried ekballo into the quiet night. David Wilkerson recently joined the great cloud of witnesses and all the world knows his name, but who knows Dick Simmons? I tell you, heaven knows Dick Simmons. One man praying one verse, Matthew 9:38, thrust forth one laborer. And behold the harvest!

Tens of thousands of souls will not only be credited to Wilkerson's account, but to the account of a praying man. Ever has it been that history goes to the intercessor. The person who went and the person who prayed both reap the harvest, and both receive their eternal reward.

One man praying one verse, Matthew 9:38, thrust forth one laborer. And behold the harvest!

Again, the question begs: Would David Wilkerson have been thrust forth into the harvest if Dick Simmons had not prayed Matthew 9:38?

I received the answer to my own question in the most profound way soon after my Orlando ekballo whirlwind. It became the catalyst for this book, and even now, why I am under divine constraint to call the church to faithfully pray this verse. While reading the classic book *Rees Howells: Intercessor*, I was suddenly arrested by the following paragraph.

*“For years Mr. Howells had been praying for the gospel to go to the world. Before he went to Africa, the Spirit brought before him God’s promise to His Son in Psalm 2:8. He had not let a day pass without praying that the Savior should have ‘the heathen for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession,’ and it was in willingness to be, in some measure, the answer to his own prayers that he had accepted the call to Africa. Then, while in Africa, he had been struck by Andrew Murray’s comment on the Saviors word in Matthew 9:38, ‘Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest.’ **Andrew Murray has pointed out, on the strength of this verse, that the number of missionaries on the field depends entirely on the extent to which someone obeys that command and prays out the laborers;** and the Lord had called Mr. Howells to do this.”*

“The number of missionaries on the field depends entirely on the extent to which someone obeys that command and prays out the laborers.”

As I read, I cannot describe the effect of these words on my soul. It was as if every other vision fled from the intensity of their light. In one moment I knew my whole life would be completely consumed with this call. There in that book, right beside, “And the Lord had called Mr. Howells to do this.” I wrote, “And the Lord has called Lou Engle to do this.” A vision came to me of raising a million believers worldwide who would pray Matthew 9:38. Day by day. Pray. Ekballo. Read again this one statement by Andrew Murray and let it grip you as it gripped me. “The number of missionaries on the field *depends entirely* on the extent to which someone obeys that command and prays out the laborers.”

A vision came to me of raising a million believers worldwide who would pray Matthew 9:38. Ekballo.

Depends. Entirely. Depends entirely! Entirely!
If Andrew Murray, one of the great revival and missionary statesman in church history, and one of the greatest bible teachers and authors in this past century, makes this outrageous claim, should we not be shaken by its implications?

If this Scripture and Andrew Murray’s commentary is true and the church really grasped its importance, then overnight Matthew 9:38 would become the fiery petition on millions of lips across the planet. Every single day, we would not relent. Sadly, it is not so. Why? Consider the massive challenges we face: millions in America without Christ, our inner cities ravaged with hopelessness, violence and destruction, seven thousand unreached people groups in the earth today of whom 2.8 billion people have never heard the gospel. Yet if Andrew Murray is right,

the great overwhelming problem of the harvest is not primarily our lack of laborers, *for the Lord of the Harvest has promised to ekballo them!*

It is primarily a lack of prayer. I am shaken by this. I am disturbed. Could it be so easy? Have we been so arrogant and dismissive? I began with myself, but now I am asking all those reading with me:

**Have I taken Matthew 9:38 as merely a suggestion?
Have I trivialized the prayer that finishes the mission?**

I believe an Earth-shaking revolution is about to take place because the Lord of the Harvest is once again breathing upon the prayer He told us to pray. If the first apostles were commanded to pray this prayer before they were sent, how much more will the last apostolic generation be required of heaven to pray this prayer? Friends, we are nearing the end of the story. The final horizon is coming into view and the stage is being set for the return of Christ. “The harvest is the end of the age” (Mat. 13:39), yet still Jesus cries out, “The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Pray the Lord of the Harvest to thrust forth laborers into His harvest fields.”

I have quoted this verse and will continue to. I do not apologize for the repetition. We have ignored it long enough.

We must Pray! Ekballo!

How much more will the last apostolic generation be required of heaven to pray this prayer?

THE ALABAMA SIGNAL: SHOES

Soon after this prayer awakening in my soul, I preached Matthew 9:38 at TheRamp in Alabama with a thousand young people jammed into a small room. The environment that night was electric, a furnace of expectation, and I could sense the Holy Spirit brooding powerfully among these young people as I boldly shared the ekballo message. At the end, the Lord stirred me to give an altar call from Romans 10.

“For ‘whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? (I then added, ‘And how shall they be sent unless someone prays, ekballo?’) As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!’ ” (vs. 13-15)

How shall they be sent unless someone prays ekballo? In that explosive moment, I summoned them, “Whoever is willing to pray this Matthew 9:38 prayer daily, and whoever is willing to put feet to their prayers in an act of sharing of the gospel, I want you to take off your shoes and lay them on the altar.”

I tell you the truth, hundreds of kids pressed through the tightly packed crowds, crying and weeping, dedicating their lives to prayer and the gospel. At the end, no one came back to retrieve their shoes; a sacrifice and an offering had been made. By experience, I knew that God's heart was moved. You see, in the three years prior to TheCall as we travelled and preached on the vision of stadiums filled with praying youth, it was common for kids to surge toward the altars and offer up their phones and finances, their shoes, bicycles, tennis rackets, anything of value. We even received *car keys* (which we returned). At last, as I stood on stage at TheCall DC, staring at a sea of four hundred thousand young people, I wept, asking God, "How in the world did this happen?"

His response to me was clear, "*This is not about you. I am sending fire on the sacrifices of those kids!*"

The similarity of that moment to the one in Alabama struck me deeply. I knew something special had begun. The response of those kids was too deep, too organic, too spontaneous and real. I tell you, another wave of free will offerings has begun, and we must be swift to nourish it. A window has opened for the ekballo message to penetrate our hearts, young and old, but I believe young people are our clearest marker. No one is excluded, but they are the litmus strip. If we respond rightly, then the Lord of the Harvest will bring forth grace upon grace to fulfill His Word. Another stadium movement will be part of it. Bold preaching of the gospel. Healings, miracles. Radical love. But most importantly, an even bolder thrusting forth of laborers. Oh, I want you to feel what is burning in my soul. I've had the extreme privilege to be eyewitness to a movement that swept hundreds of thousands of young people into their divine purpose. Now I am looking at another: *Shoes are being offered again!*

After that extraordinary meeting, I met with Karen Wheaton's staff of forty or so incredible young men and women. As we met, the leader of their prayer ministry excitedly recalled details of her devotions earlier in that very week. "I was reading Matthew 9:38 and I looked up the Greek word for 'send' and found out that the word was 'ekballo.' All week long I have been telling our team 'The word is ekballo! The word is ekballo!' Then you came...and the word is ekballo!"

Of course, she did not know what was scheduled in God's heart, nor did I, yet from her testimony I knew the Lord was encouraging me, "Thousands are going to hear this word, pray ekballo, and respond." How could they not? If the church hears and prays in agreement with heaven...missionaries gotta go! As I said at the start, this word is not original, but that's not the point. It is *new* again, and it's coming from all corners, not just mine. Ekballo is beginning to resonate throughout the entire Body of Christ. The time for this heavenly idea is unquestionably *now*.

To top it off, like a little kiss from heaven, in this very same window of time, I discovered a missions movement led by David Sitton called Ekballo Initiative, targeting UPGs. You see, it's not just a Greek word, it's a movement. It's the very plan of God.

CHAPTER 3

THE RADICAL PLAN

In his book, *The Radical Prayer*, Dr. Derek Morris unpacks Matthew 9:38 (also found in Luke 10:2). The outline is simple, but profound. In fact, one might even say, it's radical!

1. The Radical Perspective: the harvest is *truly* plentiful
2. The Radical Problem: laborers are *few*
3. The Radical Prayer: *pray* the Lord of the Harvest to thrust forth laborers into the harvest.

Let me unpack the dimensions of this radical prayer Jesus commanded His disciples to pray.

RADICAL PERSPECTIVE

First we must discuss perspective. What is it? How does perspective change? If our perspective changes, what else will follow? Perspective is simply defined as our prevailing view of the world and its reality. It is the lens through which we see our lives. Our perspectives are vital because they determine our attitudes, beliefs, actions and journey throughout life. When we are at the base of a mountain, we have one perspective that is drastically different than when we are at the top of that same mountain.

I remember seeing the Swiss Alps from a distance as the sun was setting. I was amazed at their grandeur and beauty. Yet the next day after thirty minutes of riding a trolley car up the side of what seemed to be a straight incline, my perspective changed drastically. From the top of the mountain another world opened to me. I could see not only the jagged snow capped peaks of the Alps, but the surrounding towns, villages and cities as well. In that moment, I felt like I could see all of Switzerland.

The mountains hadn't changed, nor was their beauty altered, but my view had nevertheless definitely shifted. This small example shows the importance of perspective. This is why I believe that Jesus is shining the light of revelation upon the correlation between Matthew 9:35-38 and 24:14. He is actively searching for open hearts that are ready to forsake the lower view and ascend to His high, full perspective, eager to participate in the great harvest of history. The context for *Pray! Ekballo!* is set up in the two preceding verses:

“Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people but when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.” (Mat. 9:35-36)

Here we are, standing on the pinnacle of the Holy Spirit's perspective in this passage, asking for whatever shift we need so that we can see as He sees. The first thing that strikes me are those words “all” and “every.” Jesus is going throughout *all* the cities and villages, teaching and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing *every* disease and *every* affliction. This is not hyperbole. By emphasizing the word *all*, the Holy Spirit is informing us to forsake smallness and exclusivity. His grace is broadly inclusive. All who hear and respond are welcomed. In fact, one of the prevailing themes of John R. Mott's Student Volunteer Movement was “all to go and go to all.” The radical perspective of Jesus is that this gospel is for every city, every village, every unreached people group, and according to Mark 16:15, every creature. Jesus is the “All” and “Every” Man.

Jesus is the “All” and “Every” Man.

The second thing we notice is that He heals every sickness and every disease, everywhere he goes. Let that shift stuff inside you. The missional reality of Jesus was “*to destroy the works of the devil*” (1 John 3:8) The Son of God came to pick a fight with every physical manifestation of satanic oppression. His viewpoint was not to heal some diseases and leave others alone. No, every disease and sickness must bow before His rule. “*He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil*” (Acts 10:38). This means He wants to touch the sickness in your own body, in the members of your family, in the neighbor down the street, in your colleague at work, and also to eradicate the ravages of AIDS in Africa. He wants to liberate and restore the sex trafficked child, so cruelly abused by demon-controlled henchmen.

Jesus welcomed a crucified thief as much as the holy scribe. He loved lepers and prostitutes as much as His adoring worshippers. He refused to be limited by socio-economic classes or geographical boundaries. His message was for all. His power was greater than every.

But there is a problem.

Put yourself in the story for a moment and imagine with me. The Son of Man strides the earth on a campaign unlike any other in history. *Not a single person who comes to the Savior leaves unhealed and broken.* He keeps giving and giving of Himself until all are made whole. And why not? If you were Jesus, fully cognizant of the vast wreckage of sin, what must it have been like to finally move among the very people you love, hand delivering their long prophesied hope, bringing light, working miracles, restoring the image of God? This tortured species has known mostly sorrow and darkness for thousands of years, yet at long last, justice and redemption have come! No wonder this is called good news!

As I close my eyes and consider the scene, I most readily imagine Jesus being continually filled with explosive joy over the fruitfulness of His campaign, and no doubt much of the time He was. Yet not here, not this moment. Why? In this, our critical passage, the view of the Great Shepherd shifts.

We must shift with him. What is the problem He sees?

In my mind's eye, I imagine Jesus ascending a hill to enter into the next city. Suddenly cresting the top, He is overcome by what awaits Him down the shepherd's trail at the base of the slope. A great throng of people has gathered. They are poor, dispirited, many lame and demonized. They have no purpose and even less hope. They shuffle aimlessly, waiting. Of course, they have heard One is coming. They are eager for Him, but also fearful. What if He passes them by?

Then Jesus comes into view. They see Him. High on the hill, it is the Lord!

Their downcast eyes rise to greet Him, but Jesus sees deeper than they. A window opens into their collective souls. All the wrath, defilements and cruelty of His great enemy lay bare before His gaze, compressed into the throng. Filled with zeal, He knows with total certainty that *this* is why He has come. He *will* move among them. He *will* destroy Satan's works. He *will* save and deliver. Yet that day, in Matthew 9, Jesus must have felt His humanity in extra measure, for it reaches all the way down to His bones. Perhaps for the first time in His ministry, the Messiah is confronted by the profound limitations forced upon Him by His own incarnation. He may be the All and Every Man, but He remains only *one man*, and that means He is practically restrained by time and space.

The Messiah is confronted by the profound limitations forced upon Him by His own incarnation.

So what happened on that imagined hilltop? Gazing at that impoverished crowd, was Jesus given a burst of divine revelation by which the one village was transformed into a metaphor for Every Village? Or did He perhaps receive a panoramic, supernatural vision of all future peoples in every nation, billions yet unborn, waiting to fill the earth? Did He see Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim nations, or the descendants of the Mayans and Incas, or the island peoples, or the pagan tribes of Africa. Did He see *all* of them? Did his shoulders slump?

You see, the light of the Kingdom may have been breaking forth in that tiny, dusty speck of land called Palestine, but in Matthew 9, Jesus was being gripped not with the joy of His task, but with the brutal question of who would carry His heart to the rest of His beloved, lost sheep. He is not moved with anger by their sin, nor overwhelmed by the despair of their need, not at all! Instead, what does it say? Jesus is moved with *compassion*.

This is key. This is the perspective we seek. We must tap deeply into the tender mercies of God. Get rid of your notion of the God of Disgust. Be delivered from the condemnation of your own failures, as well as the judgmental attitudes we so often show others in their frailty. These greatly limit our mission. Where we see wretched, dispensable sinners who should know better and need to get their act together, Jesus sees beloved sons and daughters—people with names and stories of pain, waiting to be liberated with His message of love.

...Jesus sees beloved sons and daughters... waiting to be liberated with His message of love.

The phrase “moved with compassion” (v. 36) is the Greek word *‘splanchnizomai.’* It speaks of the deepest possible locus of human emotion in the belly, where you groan. The connotation is of an almost painful yearning melded with passion, a wounding of love that moves one toward the object of its affection. In different places in the gospels we find Jesus actually weeping with compassion over cities and individuals,

“O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how I have longed to gather you under my wings as a mother hen gathers her chicks.” (Mat. 23:37)

“Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!” (John 11:33-36)

This is the radical perspective we desperately need. It is Jesus, in His mission, limited by His incarnation, yearning still to reach *all* and heal *every*. Such is the heart of the Great Shepherd, who found you and loved you and saved you, and He feels no less for those that still remain outside His tender embrace. Thus, He cannot help but see a truly *plentiful, unreached harvest*.

Now that you better understand His perspective in Matthew 9, He can tell you the problem, and the solution.

CHAPTER 4

A RADICAL PROBLEM DEMANDS RADICAL PRAYER

The clarity we gain from His perspective also means the radical problem requires little further illumination. In light of the vision of this great harvest, where Jesus sees the people like a field of wheat, waiting to be gathered into His love—and furthermore, given that the Son of Man was only *one* man—Jesus calls His disciples together and shoots straight. Basically, He says, “Guys, we’ve got a problem. It’s a big, radical problem, the laborers are too few. I want to save and heal them all... but they don’t know that and I can’t reach them all! That’s why I labor ceaselessly, because My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me. I desire that none should perish, *but they don’t know that! The laborers are too few!*”

It’s a big, radical problem, the laborers are too few.

Again, imagine Jesus ministering to these vast crowds day after day, laying His hands on the sick, witnessing firsthand their most cruel forms of demonization. As soon as one is healed, a thousand more take his place. It is daunting and exhausting, and this is only one village.

Have you ever been the dutiful one, the only person at your job actually getting any work done? Or have you ever been surrounded by volunteers sipping coffee and eating donuts while you scurry hither and on to actually finish the task for which you all signed up? Of course you have. Me, too. (I’ve also been the guy sipping coffee, to be honest!) The point is, we all know what it feels like to be faced with a colossal challenge that far exceeds our physical and organizational capacity when it’s all up to us, alone. What’s different in those scenarios is that we can often walk away with little emotional toll, feeling justified that we did our best.

Not so, the Savior of Man. Not so, the Shepherd. He is moved with compassion. He is *invested*. In fact, this will cost Him His life. All must know, all must hear, all must be touched with His gift.

In light of this, I can hear Jesus groaning inside, “There has got to be more workers! I must have those who will carry on. I need healers of the sick, casters out of demons, justice reformers, proclaimers of good news!”

It is the classic problem. The great dilemma Jesus faced in His day is still the radical problem of our own. Jesus said go. So I challenge you, *go*...

... to the red light districts of Bangkok and Amsterdam, or to the beaches of America, and see thousands lost in lust and depravity,

... to our inner cities, where crushing poverty, addiction and gang violence rule,

... to the universities of the world where tens of thousands of students are being mentally wrapped in the chains of false ideologies,

... or to the Ganges River, where masses devoted to a million Hindu gods bathe in the river for the forgiveness of sin.

These and many other human ailments can be readily identified on nearly every corner at home and abroad. The scope of our collective, human lostness is daunting, especially since, in all your seeing, the one thing you will not so readily observe is *the laborer*. Who among these masses bears the message of Christ? Who among the broken brings healing? There are so few. This is the radical problem!

At the time of this writing, JoshuaProject.net projects that the seven thousand UPGs constitutes nearly 2.8 billion people. Nearly three billion people, yet missiologists also say that only ten percent of active missionaries are actually among those unreached. Something is very wrong here! Friends, this is a radical, radical problem.

In fact, it might seem hopeless if it were not for an answer from the Lord of the Harvest. This answer, one word, a revolution in a verse, is about to change history. Again.

RADICAL PRAYER

In Matthew 9, we have arrived at the climax. Jesus is going to reveal the remedy which the heavenly perspective supplies to the radical problem. The King James version adds vital emphasis. In light of this problem, “pray ye therefore!”

“Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest!”

Let’s be honest. Many would prefer another strategy or approach. We are drawn to our own clever solutions. But Jesus will have none of it. He didn’t encourage us to think more, flowchart, strategize and program. He said to pray! If we too quickly skim along Matthew 9:38, it may seem we are listening to a casual exchange between Jesus and His disciples rather than hearing the marching orders of the Lord. If you are like me, in the past I have read the verse as a simple exhortation to pray from time to time for laborers to get more of a burden for souls. However, when we examine it in context, the language convinces us otherwise.

...It may seem we are listening to a casual exchange between Jesus and His disciples rather than hearing the marching orders of the Harvest Lord.

When you are encouraged to pray, what do you think of? Often, we default to the idea of saying grace before a meal or nice, gentle bedtime prayers with our kids, “Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep...” Though I believe in the effectiveness of these prayers, this is not the kind of prayer Jesus is talking about.

The Greek word for pray is ‘*decomai*.’ It is not one of the more common words used for prayer in the New Testament, for it means to beseech and beg earnestly, to entreat with urgent intensity. It is not a passive, under-your-breath type of prayer, but a resounding cry of intensity and desperation. Jesus is not calling His disciples to bloodless, passionless, vague, namby-pamby “prayer requests.” He is inviting us to shake heaven with our voices until laborers fall out!

Don’t believe me? Let’s look at other biblical examples where this word is used. In Luke 5:12 a man with leprosy falls to the ground and *begs* Jesus to make him clean. Same word. Now from what we know about leprosy this man understood his life hung in the balance and Jesus was the only one who could change his fate. Do you think his prayer was casual and vague? Then in Luke 8:38 we read of the story of the man who was possessed by a legion of demons. After Jesus restored him to wholeness after years of demonic possession, we are told this man *begged* to go with Jesus. Finally delivered, how do you imagine that conversation went? Was the man stoic and reserved in his request? “Thank you, kind sir. Perhaps I could accompany you on the rest of your travels!” Or was he more like, “Son of David, I’ve been in torment for as long as I can remember! Then you came...to me! I don’t want you to walk out of my life. Wherever you go, that’s where I want to be. *Please let me come with you!*”

How would you act? Which is easier to believe? I’m convinced the heart-wrenching cry of the latter is far more likely.

Finally, in Luke 9:40 we find the story of a desperate father whose son was so severely demonized that the spirits would routinely drive the boy to life-threatening injury either by burning himself alive or drowning in water. Imagine! With his last ounce of hope, this wretched father comes to the disciples and *begs* them to cast out the demons. Can you hear the anguish and desperation in his voice? Friends, when Jesus uses this same word to convey to His disciples the kind of prayer that will remedy the radical problem, He is actually speaking out of His own pain and agony.

He is pleading, “Won’t someone come and help Me with My mission!”

As we further examine the Greek word *decomai* we see that it is used in what is called the aorist imperative verb tense. This means Jesus expects and demands an active response. To His original listeners, the Lord’s exhortation would sound more like this, “Start praying earnestly! You are not praying as you should! I command you to beg Me to hurl forth laborers into the harvest fields! Do it now and keep doing it until all are reached! Don’t stop! Pray!” Jesus is not giving His disciples a polite suggestion so that they can feel involved. He is not asking them to fit this into their schedule every now and then. No! He is unbridling His own intensity so that they feel constrained by the burden of it.

Get this, and get this good: If there were any other alternative that could better remedy the radical world evangelism problem of too few laborers, do you really think Jesus wouldn’t have inserted *that* solution in Matthew 9 instead? If prayer was merely one of many good ideas, then might it not actually distract us from better ideas? Why risk it if it wastes our already limited time? I feel a little like a broken record, but the Lord of the Harvest Himself is commanding the method of harvest, and it is one, single, active, passionate, imperative verb: Pray!

Earlier, the question was raised, “Why are the laborers few?” To Jesus, the answer is unavoidable. *Laborers are few because prayers are few*. Therefore, the Radical Problem persists, without prayer, it will *never* change. We will never complete the task, no matter how much money and sincere, evangelistically-motivated human brilliance we throw at it. Brothers and sisters, I promise you, if you have ever feared that your prayers are not being answered, try this one. The Lord of the Harvest delights to hear this prayer, and will respond, he commanded it and it’s in the Bible.

The only trick is this. In His sovereign design, He is waiting to be asked. Many may reply, “Why do we need to cry out, why do we need to go to this extreme?”

Are we trying to change God's heart?" The answer is no, not at all. His heart is set. He is ever moved with compassion. Therefore, God doesn't need to be convinced to act or save anyone. His name is Savior and He has demonstrated the full extent to which He longs to save humanity through His own death on a Cross. But a secret process happens with this prayer, and it is of high value to the kingdom. In the process of crying out to God, we find that it is in fact our own hearts that need to change, not His. When we enter the depths of sharing the Savior's compassion, our hearts get conformed by His desires. Love is awakened. If you do not feel passion for His lost sheep, pray. It will come!

But this is only one application. Do all who pray become the answer to their own prayers? If you pray for Africa, does that mean you will inevitably go? No, of course not. You might, but if you do it will be because He changed your desires from the inside out. Do not get caught in over-mentalizing the brilliant mysteries of God's commands. Our response is simply to obey. We do not have to understand exactly *how* the laborers will get sent, or why He waits for us to pray *before* they are sent. For us, the question is far more elementary. Will we take Him at His word and pray?

Others may ask, "I don't know how to pray like you suggest. How can I change my schedule so I can have more time to pray like this? Now, after reading this, I just feel rotten because I'm not praying enough. Ugh!" Now mired in self-condemnation, you will shrink back from even attempting to "Pray! Ekballo!" because you feel too weak, as if your small prayers could affect nothing. Or perhaps you are looking at your schedule and doubting you could ever feel such a groan in the time you have available. In short, for whatever reason, you feel inadequate.

No, my friend, don't go there. Simply start somewhere, however small. Start with the commitment to grow and expand as the Lord gives grace. I want to reassure you that Jesus is the master of taking small, weak things and moving mountains through them.

All of us struggle with weakness and difficulty in prayer, myself included! Thankfully, the accounting system for prayer is the most advanced algorithm in the world! God uses countless short, cumulative, moment-by-moment prayers during your days to fill the intercessory bowls of heaven until they finally overflow into huge, history-shaping moments and movements. Our small, weak, faithful petitions have real impact.

God uses countless short, cumulative, moment-by-moment prayers...

CORNELIUS THE MISSIONARY?

As proof, consider Cornelius in Acts 10, praying continuously, giving alms to the poor. I picture a man who no doubt petitioned the Lord intensely at times—what we most often consider prayer—but also probably offered up many, little whispers throughout his life. Then suddenly an angel appears to him saying, “Cornelius, your prayers and alms have risen as a memorial before God and now I have come down.”

I can imagine Cornelius. *Huh?*

But it is simple. The Father remembers every prayer, great and small, until finally, there comes a time, unbeknownst to you, when your prayers have actually constructed a memorial before Him in heaven. Likely, you will only discover that fact when He moves in earth shaking ways, or you may never fully realize what all your prayers have wrought. It doesn't matter. Heaven's mandates are assembled by general contractors of prayer on earth. Because of his steadiness, Cornelius and his family became a hinge of history for the gospel invasion of the Gentiles.

Let me be more specific. *Part of Paul's ekkballoing was due to Cornelius's prayers.* The missions movement of the early church was birthed by prayer in Cornelius's home, while he sat on his mule or worked at his shop, whispering prayers.

Two more examples will solidify this truth in your heart. First, Jesus said if we have faith the size of a mustard seed we could move mountains, right? Mustard seeds are small and seemingly useless. No one would expect anything great to happen from sowing a mustard seed. However, from Jesus' perspective a mustard seed of faith can move masses of rock and boulders and accomplish great things. Also, twice in the gospels, Jesus uses five loaves and two fish to feed a multitude. Small materials, big results. Lunch for twenty thousand. It is the pleasure and majesty of God to use weak things to achieve great ends. But as my friend Mike Bickle says, "We can't do His part, and He won't do ours." So even if your prayer feels utterly feeble, you must believe that God can still use it to touch the nations! He is not looking for ability or gifting but faithfulness and availability. His eyes are searching the earth for a heart that is *loyal* to Him, not the All-Star Intercessor. Can you be touched with His compassion for the lost? Then be loyal to Him in that and don't worry about the rest. He will work through you.

**His eyes are searching the earth for a heart that is
loyal to Him...**

The Lord has deposited faith in my heart to believe for one million Christians worldwide to begin praying Matthew 9:38 every day. The accumulation of millions of these little prayers will build a memorial before God. I believe He will answer with laborers, healers, proclaimers and reformers to carry the message of the gospel to every tribe and tongue and nation. Will you be one? In the midst of our normal day, let us begin to cultivate the habit of seeing the harvest with eyes of faith. Let us envision the people around us, harassed and helpless, and begin to allow this prayer to get hold of us more and more until our whole being becomes a groan. In time, this groan and the collective groan of the church worldwide shall most certainly usher in the final, great harvest.

CHAPTER 5

PRAY! EKBALLO!

Earlier in the book we noted the vigorous words Jesus employed for both the command, “Pray!” and for the result, “Ekballo!” Let’s explore ekballo a little further. We are asking the Lord of the Harvest to “thrust forth” laborers. That is ekballo. As mentioned, it means “to forcibly expel; to thrust out violently, to fling”. Ekballo is used thirty four times in the New Testament, and each time it is with pronounced forcefulness. The zeal of the word almost borders on anger, especially in its application to the Lord’s confrontation with demons. If we are going to challenge the hell holes of spiritual darkness on earth we need much more than a little emotional inspiration, we need a forceful thrusting out and empowering by the Spirit that comes in answer to the forceful cry, ekballo! We catch a glimpse of the divine anger in another interesting passage.

“When He had made a whip of cords He drove them all out of the temple with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changer’s money and overturned the tables” (John 2:15).

He “drove them...out.” Again, this is ekballo, and it was done in the court of the Gentiles. The clutter and corruption of the money changers was hindering access for the Gentiles to enter the presence of God in the Temple, and this stirred a holy anger in the Lord. So what did he do, ask them to leave? No, he ekballed them with a clear restatement of His divine mission: *“My House shall be called a House of Prayer for all nations.”* Zeal for His house consumes Him. It is a global House of Prayer for all people’s, tongues and tribes, comprised of every *ethne*. This is not the gentle Savior, but the mighty King, who drives out all that hinders His church from becoming the fullness of His desire, which is a House of Prayer for all nations. How can this happen, unless laborers are sent forth?

And how can that happen, unless prayer fills His House, for “that is what you are” (1 Cor. 3:17, NASB)? As we pray ekballo, He will lovingly (and forcefully, if needed) fan into flame our dormant passion for the lost, resulting in the hurling forth of missionaries under the glorious compulsion of the Holy Spirit.

Actually, I am convinced that perhaps the most orthodox mark of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the ekballoing of zealous laborers! Jesus said to His disciples “*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the [unreached people groups] of the earth*” (Acts 1:8). When we are praying the radical prayer ekballo, we are actually praying for a massive worldwide baptism of the Holy Spirit in which laborers are constrained by the dream of God—“your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams!” (Acts 2:17)—such that they have no choice but to go. In Luke 10 we read the following verses.

“After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, “The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. But whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ” (Luke 10:1-9)

...A massive worldwide baptism of the Holy Spirit in which laborers are constrained by the dream of God...

This passage records the expansion of the labor force into the harvest in answer to the prayers of Matthew 9:38. The original twelve were commanded to pray for laborers and immediately they were sent in answer to their own prayers. But here in this passage we now see seventy being sent out. Do you see it? The Lord of the Harvest is already answering the prayers of the twelve. Today, in response to our cries, God is faithfully keeping His word, ekballoing laborers from China, Indonesia, Brazil, and all over the earth, into the hard, dark, unreached places. We will never know what this radical prayer has accomplished until we enter our eternal reward, but I firmly believe, once there, individuals and entire people groups will greet us with joy and thanksgiving for thrusting missionaries into their homelands by prayer, which led to their salvation.

We will never know what this radical prayer has accomplished until we enter our eternal reward...

Surely this is common ground for us. Can evangelicals, pentecostals and charismatics find a general consensus in this vision of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and rally to this cause in unified prayer? Baptize us, oh Lord, we pray, that we might fill your House with prayer, and the Lord of the Harvest do His work! Ekballo, once again, for the fields of earth are ripe, and we long for the coming King!

There is a unique difference between the Matthew 9 and Luke 10 passages. In Matthew 9:38 the disciples are commanded to pray the radical prayer and then they are sent. In Luke 10, the seventy are first sent out and are commanded to pray the radical prayer as they are going. This is important, because the clear implication is that missionaries on the field are to be *continually praying for more laborers* to join them on the field. In fact, in Luke 10, the seventy are actually a forerunner

visitation of Jesus Himself. He sent them before His face “into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.” When laborers in the field pray ekballo, they are actually preparing the way not just for other laborers to come, but for an invading foretaste of the presence of the coming King.

ANSWERS TO THE EKBALLO PRAYER

Years ago while reading the profound and provocative book on missionary prayer, *Born for Battle*, I was arrested by the question posed by the author, Arthur Matthews:

“Which of the workers on the field now are there as a direct answer to a prayer of mine to the Lord of the Harvest to thrust out laborers?”

That question has haunted me for years. Now, having been freshly apprehended by this radical prayer, I have begun praying Matthew 9:38 continuously, day by day. The Lord surprised me almost immediately with a stunning answer to my prayer. It began with my own family. My seventeen year old daughter came to me excitedly saying that she had received a dream. The baptism of the Spirit was at work, and my own daughter was catching the vision of God.

“I was sitting in the front row of a large packed auditorium and Loren Cunningham, the leader of YWAM (Youth with a Mission), was on the stage preaching on the mantle of Moses’s leadership being passed to Joshua. He was looking right at me when suddenly he fell to the ground and died. I looked around and saw that no one was doing anything, so I leaped up onto the stage and began to give him CPR. I was crying over and over, ‘You can’t die yet, your task isn’t finished! You can’t die yet, your task isn’t finished!’ In the dream, he suddenly raised from the dead. Looking at me intensely, he said, ‘It’s not my task to finish, it’s yours!’ ” Do you know what it means to dream the dream of God? Have you ever been

gripped by such clear and vivid revelation that you were compelled to respond? With that encounter my daughter was undeniably and forcefully apprehended by a call to missions, which she is now actively laboring to fulfill. And here is the connection that must not be missed: I was praying ekballo, and my own daughter became a first fruit of that prayer! I did not have to persuade her, because the Lord of the Harvest is more than able. He spoke her language, from the inside out. As a result, she wasn't convinced, she was compelled. I believe God gave this encounter first within my own family to personally confirm for me the power of the radical prayer and His intense willingness to answer it immediately. Such a prayer is magnetic to the heart of God. It draws heaven's response because it touches the deepest seat of compassion in the Savior's heart.

Please understand, this dream is not in any way prophesying Loren Cunningham's death! The point is the symbolic transfer of the Great Commission from a missions general of this generation to a dreamer of the next so that the task of world evangelization can be completed. While this dream was a personal ekballo call to my daughter, I'm convinced it is also prophetically foretelling the destiny of this generation of young people: the evangelization of the world in this generation. As a young man, Loren Cunningham also had a vision of waves of young people going over seas as missionaries. It guided him. That vision was the catalyst for YWAM. As one of the largest and most prolific missions organizations in history, YWAM is comprised of people from over one hundred eighty countries, spanning a broad cross-section of Christian denominations. Publicly accessible numbers reveal that roughly eighteen thousand full-time volunteers labor for the gospel out of nearly a thousand ministry locations, mobilizing nearly twenty-five thousand short-term missions workers on an annual basis.

Amazing! But hang on. Listen to Loren's take on this, because the last time I spoke with him, his eyes lit up.

*"The great numbers of YWAMers that have gone forth in the last fifty years is small **compared to the great wave of missionaries I saw in my early vision,**"* he said.

The consistent cry of the Matthew 9:38 prayer will be an earthquake touching off the final tsunami of laborers. This tsunami will crash over the islands, the coastlands, the inlands, the deserts and even the great Himalayan and Caucasus mountain regions. *"All the earth shall be covered with the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"* (Hab. 2:14). Ekballo! Ekballo! Lord of the Harvest, send them! Within my own household, the story continued. Shortly after my daughter's dream, my son, Josiah, received a powerful dream encounter as well. God was moving again in answer to this prayer. This is his own recounting of the dream:

"I was in a big auditorium filled with people. I was sitting in the back row. On stage, Loren Cunningham of YWAM was preaching. I don't remember what he was preaching, but I was so deeply moved by the message I couldn't stay in the building. I ran outside to my car and in the dream I began weeping and crying out over and over, 'Here am I Lord, send me! Here am I Lord, send me!'"

These are case studies of how dramatically and supernaturally the Lord of the Harvest works. After that dream, do you think anyone had to convince my son to go? And once again in the dream, tellingly, it was Loren Cunningham preaching, possibly the greatest missions statesman and mobilizer of the last several generations. To my mind, Loren represents the pleasure and high purpose of God as one who has given his life to this difficult and glorious enterprise. The time of the Original Idea has come around again. The times are full. The flashpoint is ready. This word is going to reach "the back row" of the church and throngs of young men and women,

currently stuck there, bored stiff, not knowing what to do with their lives, are going to be forcefully apprehended with the heart of Jesus for the lost. Souls will be awakened as many receive a fresh baptism of the Spirit's missionary zeal. God's dream will silence the droning, self-centered materialism of the "entertain me" culture. The passivity and narcissism of the American Dream is fading away. The Kingdom is advancing, violently and forcefully. Prayers are being marshaled in the House. Shall wave after wave of ekballo not soon follow? I tell you, in my own household, it has already begun. The young people will find something to live for, and yes, even die for.

The Kingdom is advancing, violently and forcefully.

FIRE BEGETS FIRE

Another dimension that springs from the ekballo prayer is the depth of our response to the message, "Go ye therefore." When the Harvest Lord sees the broken masses and cries out, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Me?" an intercessor picks up that cry and begins praying, even begging, "Send forth laborers into the harvest fields! Send forth laborers into the harvest fields!" At the sound of that prayer, Jesus unleashes His burden into the heart of the unburdened. Fire begets fire. Compassion begets compassion.

Those sitting comfortably in the pews or standing idle in the marketplace, previously unconcerned and unengaged, begin to cry out, "Here am I Lord, send me!" I have witnessed this process firsthand. Within months of his dream, Josiah carried the Jesus Film and a guitar in his backpack, co-leading a YWAM team through the Himalayan mountains of Nepal, trekking from village to village to show the film, preach the gospel, and heal the sick among those who had never heard name of Jesus. Everything changed. The dream of the Harvest Lord was deposited into my son's spirit. His response, 'Yes, Lord' was the answer to my prayer. Lord, ekballo.

And so I have no doubt that some young man or young woman now reading these pages is finding something screaming inside of them, “I want to do something that matters for eternity! I don’t want to waste my best years, I want my life to count, I want to live for the big dream of God! Let me touch that dream and I will go!”

Right now you can make a decision, “I refuse to waste my life in neutrality to the call of God. I refuse to drown in the status quo of a missionless Christianity.” Right now you can get on your knees and cry out, “Here I am Lord, send me!” Make the determination to follow a road less travelled. Arthur Wallace, a great church statesman in the Charismatic movement in England, once said, “*If you want to do the best for your life find out what God is doing in your generation and throw yourself into it.*”

“I refuse to waste my life in neutrality to the call of God. I refuse to drown in the status quo of a missionless Christianity.”

In every generation, God has summoned us to Matthew 9:38. But I assure you, this word is more vital now, more ripe, more abundant with grace and victory and meaning for your life than ever before.

God is raising up prayer and evangelism in this generation. Throw yourself into it.

Pray Matthew 9:38 daily.

Then go to your friends, go to your neighbors, become a part of that generation who will finish the task of world evangelization. In your lifetime, it *can be done*. And so in the next two chapters I shall close by summoning this generation to the next, great Student Volunteer Movement, as well as describing the steps I have personally felt led to take to fuel this mighty convergence of prayer and missions.

CHAPTER 6

“DO IT AGAIN GOD!”

JOHN R. MOTT & THE STUDENT VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT

During a dark time in our nation’s history, God raised up evangelist Dwight L. Moody to shake His people from their complacency. In his formative years, Moody had been challenged by a revivalist named Henry Varley who said, *“The world has yet to see what God can do with a man fully consecrated to Him.”*

Moody responded, *“By God’s help, I intend to be that man.”* Moody eventually took his ministry overseas to England and turned Cambridge University upside down. Out of his evangelistic meetings, a group of young men at Cambridge gathered together and started to pray.

At the same time, young people in colleges in America, banded together and also began to pray. One group consisted of three young men at Princeton University. They prayed that the Lord would somehow open people’s hearts to the need to go as missionaries into the world. Their group covenanted together with this intent, “God permitting, we will go as foreign missionaries.” One of them, the son of a former missionary to India, was named Robert Wilder. He and his sister, Grace, had been greatly burdened for a missionary movement from the universities of America to break out. Robert Wilder, Grace Wilder and other burdened students prayed fervently for widespread missionary fervor to grip the college students of America. Candles of prayer continually burned during the long, lonely night watches of this breakthrough company. In essence they were praying Matthew 9:38. What they didn’t know was they had become an “upper room” for the birthing of missionary zeal in what was soon to be known as the Student Volunteer Movement. Moody called a convention of college students to meet in Mt.

Hermon, Massachusetts in 1886. Students from all over the country were invited to come. Robert Wilder was hesitant to attend but Grace persuaded him to go. Later Robert recalled: "She insisted on my going. Before leaving, my sister said to me, 'I believe our prayers will be answered at Mount Hermon, and that there our Princeton beginning will become intercollegiate.' She also prophesied as I remember it, that there would be a hundred volunteers listed there."

Oh, for the young men and women to see their visions come into being and act upon them! This is the mark of the Holy Spirit upon a generation.

So a year before, in 1885, a young man named John R. Mott transferred to Cornell University. There, he studied political science and history. In his eyes, he had two options: to pursue law or his father's business. Instead, at Cornell University, Mott's life would be changed forever.

J.K. Studd, brother of the famous missionary to China, C.T. Studd, was invited to come to America by D.L. Moody and leaders of the YMCA to speak at college campuses and share with them a missionary message. On January 14, 1886, Studd spoke at Cornell University.

Mott was late getting to the meeting, and when we arrived he heard J.K. Studd say from the pulpit, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not. Seek ye first the kingdom of God!" Mott was instantly arrested by those words. He could not sleep as he pondered what they meant for his life. The next day he engaged Studd in a private conversation and was deeply impressed by the evangelist's life example. The encounter changed him, but it was only the beginning.

Though missions was heavily emphasized throughout this season, Mott did not commit himself fully until the summer of 1886, when he represented Cornell University's YMCA at the first interdenominational, international Christian student conference ever held—the very same one called by D. L. Moody. The conference hosted two hundred fifty one college students from eighty-nine colleges and universities, and was held on the Northfield College conference grounds in Mt.

Hermon. Though world evangelization was not supposed to be a topic of the conference, Wilder and Grace pressed the issue. Wilder convinced a man named A. T. Pierson to give a bold, missions message. His title was "All should go. And go to all." Following this, Wilder went directly to Moody and asked for permission to gather ten students to hold a session on "the forgotten peoples." Those ten students each had three minutes to share. This ended up being the climax of the whole event resulting in further missions messages being preached. On the final day, Robert Wilder gave a missionary challenge and an aggressive appeal for personal commitment. All in attendance were deeply moved. Wilder sought to keep track of the commitments made by asking the small assembly to write a declaration similar to that which he and his friends had covenanted to keep a few years before.

It stated, "We, the undersigned, declare ourselves willing and desirous, God permitting, to go to the unevangelized portions of the world." At the end of the conference, ninety-nine men had signed what was known as the "Princeton Pledge." In the very last meeting of these student volunteers, the one hundredth volunteer slipped in, knelt and signed the pledge. These men became known as the "Mount Hermon One Hundred."

John Wesley once said, *"Give me a hundred men who fear nothing but God, hate nothing but sin and are determined to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and I will set the world on fire with them."* Among that hundred was none other than John R. Mott. The meeting was the beginning of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions.

At Grace Wilder's memorial service, Rev. Stanley White spoke of how God used her to start the SVM. *"In closing I am privileged to mention what is known to but very few, namely, Ms. Wilder's relation to this Student Volunteer Movement...others are receiving the praise of this movement. We should not forget that God redeemed His promise of answering prayer, and that it was the*

faithful and effectual prayer of Ms. Wilder and her brother, which, humanly speaking began this work.”

Let me frame and elucidate the significance of this previous quote. **The whole Student Volunteer Movement was birthed by one woman and her brother praying the radical prayer, “*Lord of the Harvest, thrust forth laborers into the harvest fields.*”** Here is one of the clearest examples of the extraordinary power of just a few praying this radical prayer. First, one hundred were ekballoed, which then led to one hundred thousand!

So tell me, what would happen if a million worldwide took up the prayer of Matthew 9:38 every single day? I tell you, in a short while we would hear the final trump and the Lord returning with a shout, for the task would be done. **John R. Mott said it well, “*If added power attends the united prayer of two or three, what mighty triumphs there will be when hundreds of thousands of consistent members of the church are with one accord day by day making intercession for the extension of Christ’s kingdom?*”**

Mott officially organized the Student Volunteer Movement in 1888 with the rallying cry, “*The evangelization of the world in this generation.*” As leader and organizer of the SVM, Mott had a huge task before him if they were to see their motto fulfilled. He stayed the course and led the SVM for more than thirty years. Others like Wilder also stayed the course and despite different assignments for different seasons, they were committed for life.

Mott felt that the best way to fulfill their motto was to mobilize thousands of college students to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

He attempted to do what organized religion had never before done, which was to join students from all different denominational backgrounds in a single, unified purpose: delivering the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

John Mott never lived overseas as a long-term missionary, but he traveled the world in an effort to connect with missionaries

and national students in every country he visited. Today, we would call him a “missions mobilizer.” His work made it possible for great numbers of people to effect world evangelization through praying, giving, and going. The Student Volunteer Movement was arguably the most potent force for missions we have ever known. In about ten years’ time, one hundred thousand had committed themselves. Eighty thousand young people met together in small groups on a regular basis, actively praying for global evangelism. Twenty thousand of the eighty volunteered to go overseas (and actually went), while the other sixty stayed home and formed themselves into a group called the Layman’s Missionary Movement. This movement was composed of college graduates who went on to become the businessmen, lawyers, bankers, and doctors of the day. They met regularly to pray for those who had gone overseas, mobilizing large sums of money for their support. Leaders of the SVM like Mott and Wilder showed that the power students and young adults have to start world-shaking movements. They showed why prayer and organization together are vital; and that is what they did. Men like Moody fanned the flames, but young people forged the movement. But there are many pieces to this puzzle, and all are important. Without missionaries like Studd visiting and challenging the students with bold, sacrificial messages, stirring deep ambitions for the sake of the gospel, the movement would not have located its top organizers and promoters, those most stirred to take up the charge. Furthermore, spiritual fathers like Luther Wishard and A.T. Pierson, who mentored and guided the movement, kept it on track through difficult times. Finally, but most importantly, without the hidden prayers of unsung heroes like Robert Wilder’s sister, Grace, the fires of missionary zeal would surely have become cold embers. Grace received a prophetic word that one hundred men would volunteer at the Mt. Hermon conference and that word came to pass. God employed Grace to plow the hard ground and push the

missions movement forward. Isn't her name beautiful? He can employ such grace in you, too.

Both Robert and Grace Wilder took off for college campuses around the country in order to spread the message. At this time, Wilder's father was on his deathbed, causing Wilder deep misgivings. He was about to back out of the circuit of mobilization he was committed to, but his father called him to his deathbed and released him, saying, "Let the dead bury the dead. You go and preach the Kingdom." Within twelve months, traveling by train, Wilder had visited one hundred sixty-two campuses and received the commitments of two thousand one hundred and six students to volunteer for missions. Five hundred of them were women, remarkable for that day.

All of these forerunners took strength in the stories of those who had gone on before them such as Samuel Mills and the Haystack Prayer Meeting that had seized the students at William's College and launched America's first notable missionaries, men like Adoniram Judson. The sacred histories of previous generations gave these ones permission to stand upon the shoulders of giants and dare to believe. So they did. They went further, faster, with even more boldness.

Every generation has the opportunity to consummate what the previous generation attempted. What was theirs to begin is passed like a baton and becomes ours to complete.

First, we must see what Jesus saw as He gazed upon the harvest of His day, and from their, to the harvest of all time.

Second, we must also consecrate ourselves, praying dangerous prayers like, "My life for the Gospel and the glory of God among the nations, whatever the cost!" or "Here I am Lord, send me!"

“A missionary movement which would evangelize the world in this generation must acquire great momentum; and this can result only in more Christians giving themselves to the ministry of intercession...The SVM owes everything to prayer. It was conceived in days and nights of prayer at Mt. Hermon. The missionary enthusiasm in which it called forth all over the student field had its springs in prayer.” (John R. Mott, emphasis mine)

CHAPTER 7

CAN THESE BONES LIVE AGAIN?

Andrew Murray made a bold statement. He said, *“The person who mobilizes the church to pray will make the largest contribution in history to world evangelization.”*

“The person who mobilizes the church to pray will make the largest contribution in history to world evangelization”

When I read this quote, I feel a fire in my bones. As Moody himself was led to pray, *“By God’s help, I intend to be that man.”* By the grace of God, I intend to be a mobilizer of prayer. This book is my humble attempt to fulfill this heavenly quest and commission. When the prophet Ezekiel was confronted with a valley filled with dry bones, God asked him a pointed, almost depressing question, “Can these bones live again?” By any human measure, the answer is surely no. But the story is not done, because the storyteller isn’t human, He’s God. Ezekiel was told to prophesy. Bones began to rattle and come together. He prophesied to the wind and breath came into those bones. What does it say? It became “an exceedingly great army” (Eze. 37:10).

In this final chapter, with whatever measure of faith and grace I possess, I want to prophesy another worldwide SVM (and even greater) is coming. Bones are rattling. The breath of God is filling the dry, empty carcass of our forgotten purpose. God’s Original Idea is becoming the Now Idea, the *kairos* flashpoint of a generation. An exceedingly great army of evangelists and missionaries are being prepared for their last days deployment into the earth.

God’s Original Idea is becoming the Now Idea, the *kairos* flashpoint of a generation.

I, personally, am committed to nothing less. I've pushed all my chips in, and am playing my only hand. In 2004, I left Pasadena and Mott Auditorium and went on a journey across country to raise up prayer for the ending of abortion. In 2007 at TheCall Nashville, where seventy-seven thousand gathered to Titan Stadium, GODTV blasted across the world the message of LIFE. After that, I moved to Kansas City and became a part of the leadership team of the International House of Prayer. Toward the end of our wonderful five and a half years there I felt the stirrings of transition. I went to Mike Bickle and told him of the journey I was on. He responded saying I needed to go and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Trouble was, I had no specific place to go! But the end of our conversation, Mike said, "Lou I have been praying for you everyday for the last five months that you would receive your inheritance back in Pasadena at Mott Auditorium." I was stunned. I began to ask the Lord if he wanted me to return to the land of my promises, many of which remain unfulfilled. Soon after my conversation with Mike, Dave Datema, the successor to Dr. Ralph Winter at the U.S. Center for World Missions, called and asked if I would consider moving back to Pasadena to raise up a house of prayer for the unreached people groups in Mott Auditorium. The timing was amazing. My wife and I began to pray for further guidance.

My prophetic friend, Chris Berglund, was given a dream. In his dream, an angel appeared to me and gave me a key with the number seven hundred thirty one on it. Then the angel said, "My name is, "I'll Meet You on the Mountain." I realize this dream might seem bizarre to many, but it was actually profound to me, for in 1996 on a forty day fast, we started a Moravian-styled house of prayer in Mott Auditorium, and during that time I received a dream in which Mott Auditorium was the mountain of the Lord.

Dreams frighten some people, but Biblical history is rich with this form of divine communication. In my personal history, this is how God often chooses to speak to me, so I innately understood some of the symbolism. The mountain of the Lord corresponds with a forty day fast such as Moses and Elijah completed. They were on the mountain of the Lord, Mt. Sinai (also named Horeb in Elijah's case) when they fasted and met with God. Bearing this in mind, I determined to go pray for forty days to Mott Auditorium on the U.S. Center for World Mission for a period of time which would conclude on July 31. I had a simple, childlike faith that on this 7-31 day, God might visit me. Who knew, perhaps even a literal angel would appear to me and give me a key! I know, crazy. But I believe we need to get used to crazy more and more in the days ahead. Angelic visitations are a thoroughly biblical phenomenon, so maybe the only crazy thing is that we don't see more of them!

I had a simple, childlike faith that on this 7-31 day...

Anyway, it seemed strange even to me, yet I was determined to follow the prophetic trail, especially since my friend, Chris Berglund, has been mightily used by God with great precision many times before in my life. So the forty days of prayer continued, during which time a number of dynamic things occurred. Then, on the evening of July 30th, Dave Datema called my wife saying he had ordered a book on the history of Mott Auditorium and it had just arrived that afternoon. Knowing my dream, he thought I might be interested in reading the book that night as I was entering 7-31. That evening I received the book and what I saw on the title page shook me to the core. The title was "The Key Works". I told you, this is often how God deals with me, so let me break this down:

- The title of the book is "The Key Works"
- The picture is of Mott Auditorium on the mountain with a great key over it

- Since I received the book near midnight, I first read it in the early hours of 7-31
- I believe that angels assisted the delivery of the book to me on 7-31

In that moment, I knew this unbelievable confirmation was heralding something beyond the walls of Mott Auditorium. It was a sign and a shout from heaven that the Lord of the Harvest is going to raise up another massive Student Missions Movement like that which occurred under the leadership of John R. Mott. It was a sign that prayer would be ignited for the harvest in America, the nations, and the seven thousand remaining unreached people groups. I also knew, deep in my bones, that I was moving back to California to raise up a house of prayer for a new John R. Mott Student Missions Movement.

I believe that the Lord is going to visit this place once again with great revival. There will be Davidic worship day and night and a company will be drawn here to ceaselessly petition the Lord of the Harvest to ekballo laborers into the far flung regions of the earth. A west coast 'Urbana' is being commissioned on the campus of U.S. Center for World Missions. Thousands of young people will converge here over the course of time, caught up in worship and equipped for the harvest fields. This is the dream we are daring to declare. With many other confirmations, my family and a small, but incredible company of men and women have moved to Mott and started the Ekballo House of Prayer. Day by day we are praying for a great harvest in America with stadiums being filled. We are praying that the Lord would send one hundred thousand students from the universities of America to finish the task. We are sending strike teams to fast and pray for breakthroughs in the power centers of world religion. In 1996, we received a dream of a Buddhist house of prayer dominating a Christian house of prayer in a sort of spiritual wrestling match. Suddenly the Christian house of prayer did a reversal and began to dominate the Buddhist house of prayer.

From that dream I received my life's job description: **Raise up a house of prayer that will contend with every other house that exalts itself above the Lordship and supremacy of Christ!**

This dream is being fulfilled right before my eyes. Over the coming months, by the grace of God, I am going to deploy further strategy to mobilize prayer. I am going to raise up an "Air Force Academy" of contending intercession. Others have their part, and it is all glorious in the Lord's design, but this is mine. Watch and listen for info. Sizeable plans and infrastructure are being put into place. We are calling young men and women who want the Lord's high and best calling for their life, who want to shape history with prayer and fasting, come and join a consecrated community who have set their face to worship Jesus and pray until the Great Commission is fulfilled. One by one, we shall mobilize a million toward the great, ekballo prayer.

WILL HE COME?

Briefly and finally, return with me to the top of that hill we imagined as the setting for Matthew 9. There, Jesus has just crested the hill and is gazing down with love and longing toward the people below. He is both weary and determined. Two thousand years ago, if you will enter the story with me, we can easily imagine the waiting crowd, because over and over that's what the crowds did. Jesus came, they gathered, sometimes waiting in advance of His coming, and sometimes attempting to follow Him after He departed. They couldn't get enough of Him. Word spread, and they came.

We have tried to see what Jesus saw to better understand His perspective. But here, at the last, let us attempt to see with their eyes, too.

Look up from that village, not down from that hill. Get in the valley with them, below, in the grime and sorrow. See their only hope, a God Man, high on the ridge. This time, they don't rush forward. They don't have the strength. Instead, they wait

with a sort of knowing dread. Once again in our vision, this small, unnamed Jewish village has become Every Village. Whether they know it or not, theirs is the story of all who have never heard His name. A question remains unanswered in their soul. *Will He come?*

Of course, having never heard, the lost do not know how to phrase their need. They are bound by sin, broken by life. They only know their emptiness, that is all; but they hope nonetheless. Will the Deliverer come? In Palestine, that day, they got their answer. Grace upon grace, yes, Jesus strode forth, descending the hill toward them. He will come! All shall be made well. Salvation in sandals marches into their village, and demons and sickness flee. They are not abandoned. But it is not always so.

Let your soul be tender for a moment. Do not harden your heart. Do not begrudge the melodrama of this tale. I am gripped by *splagchnizomai* and *decomai* and most of all, *ekballo*.

The agony of multitudes destined for hell have no such comfort of His visitation, unless we bring the gospel to them. Slavery, sin, addiction, cancer, malnutrition, AIDS, poverty, child prostitution. Gaze into His eyes. Gaze into theirs. Do not leave that space until your soul is seized by what He sees and feels. There is a vehement, forceful passion at work, and it will mess you up. Your life will change. Your priorities will change. Your prayers will change. Bottle a volcano if you can, but you could never restrain the depth of His love for the lost. For this reason, pray, *ekballo!*

It is an idea whose time has come.

Lord of the Harvest, thrust forth laborers!

“Prayer and missions are as inseparable as faith and works; in fact prayer and mission are faith and works. Jesus Christ, by precept, by command, and by example, has shown with great clearness and force that He recognizes the greatest need of the enterprise of worldwide evangelization to be prayer.

Before ‘give’ and before ‘go’ comes ‘pray’. This is the divine order. Anything that reverses or alters it inevitably leads to loss or disaster.”

Report of the Toronto Convention, 1902
(emphasis mine)

FURTHER RESOURCES:

1. TheCall

An organization mobilizing solemn assemblies in the US and the nations of the earth. Become a part of the worldwide CALL community. Go to the website to be abreast of the current movements of TheCall.

2. Ekballo House of Prayer

A committed community of fathers and mothers and young intercessors leading the ekballo surge focusing on prayer for breakthrough in America, the nations and the unreached people group. TheCall.com/ekballo

3. JoshuaProject.net

We are seeking to recruit one million people to become a part of **JoshuaProject.net**, a worldwide prayer community praying for the unreached people groups. Visit the site and download the app, then unite in daily prayer with tens of thousands. A different unreached people group is featured every day as the focus of prayer.

4. U.S. Center for World Missions

We would highly encourage you to become familiar with the U.S. Center for World Missions. (uscwm.org). This strategic mission organization was raised up by the late Dr. Ralph Winter, and for the last fifty years has been a critical ideological hub for frontier missions research, innovation and mobilization. From this place has arisen one of the most effective avenues for mission mobilizing, the class on “Perspectives of the World Christian Movement.” (Add perspectives)

5. The Ekballo Project

The Ekballo Project is a documentary team traveling to the remotest parts of the world capturing the move of God among missionaries who have experienced an “ekballo moment” with God and are now living among the unreached. The goal of these film and media projects is to spark individuals to answer the call to *pray* and *go*. The launch of their first short (filmed in Nepal and India) is coming soon.

Visit **EkballoProject.com** for more info.

OTHER BOOKS BY LOU ENGLE:

The Jesus Fast

Digging the Wells

Nazarite DNA

Elijah Revolution

Co-authored with Sam Cerny:

Contending House of Prayer

Moment to Confront

COMMITMENT CARD

By signing my name in the box below, I affirm the following commitments by the grace of God:

1. I commit by the grace of God, to pray daily Matthew 9:38, "Lord of the Harvest, thrust forth (ekballo) laborers into the harvest field." – into my family, my school, my nation, and the unreached people groups of the earth.
2. I will download the app JoshuaProject.net and pray for an unreached people group of the day.
3. I will go to unreached people groups (For additional training go to www.thecall.com/ekballo) and also give financially as the Lord leads.

Name: _____

Date _____