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MASSIVE PRAYER AND MISSIONS MOVEMENTS OF THE

90's

The decade of the 90s was an unprecedented time for massive prayer movements focused on praying for the last remaining unreached people groups of the world. I was caught up in the fervor of the times myself. As I have taken time to reflect on my own history, I have asked myself if there is any correlation between those prayer movements and the great explosion of evangelical growth globally during the same period. Is there something that we can learn from the connection between massive global prayer mobilization and breakthroughs at the frontiers of God's global mission?

Patrick Johnstone, author of the prayer guide *Operation World* and *The Future of the Global Church*, has said of the 90s, "That decade saw more evangelical converts to Christ than any other in history."

David Garrison in his recent book, *A Wind In The House of Islam*, has revealed that 69 of history's 82 movements of Muslims coming to Christ have occurred in the past two decades alone. That puts the genesis of this momentum squarely in the 1990s. Garrison goes on to say, "We are living in the midst of the greatest turning of Muslims to Christ in history."

I want to spotlight, especially for an emerging generation, a snapshot of just some of what took place during this special decade. My hope is that by remembering history we will ask the Lord to send more mighty waves of prayer awakening and missions from all nations to all nations—especially the last remaining unreached people groups of the earth!

1993—PRAYING THROUGH THE WINDOW I: 62 NATIONS OF THE 10/40 WINDOW

At one time it was called "the largest unified prayer effort in the history of the church." For 31 days 21 million Christians were united, praying and fasting—each day praying for two nations in the 10/40 Window. One hundred eighty-eight prayer teams took 257 journeys to every nation in the 10/40 Window. The book *Strongholds of the 10/40 Window* by George Otis Jr. was published by YWAM publishing.

1995—GLOBAL CONSULTATION ON WORLD EVANGELIZATION (GCOWE '95)

Held in Seoul, Korea, GCOWE '95 drew 4,000 leaders representing 186 nations gathered by both regions and tracks to consider the unfinished task. This event birthed thousands of plans to fulfill the AD2000 mandate of a "church for every people and the Gospel for every person."

1995—PRAYING THROUGH THE WINDOW II: 100 GATEWAY CITIES OF THE 10/40 WINDOW

Thirty-six million Christians in 102 nations prayed to God for the peoples of the 10/40 Window for one month and throughout the year. There were 407 dedicated prayer

teams from 48 countries that participated in 607 prayer journeys to 100 key gateway people centers. The book *Praying Through the 100 Gateway Cities of the 10/40 Window* was published by YWAM publishing.

1997—PRAYING THROUGH THE WINDOW III: THE 1,739 PRIORITY UNREACHED PEOPLES

An estimated 50-million people were praying together as a result of this event. Thousands took prayer journeys to unreached peoples of their choice. The book *The Unreached Peoples of the 10/40 Window* was published by YWAM publishing.¹

GCOWE '97—Over 5,000 global mission leaders attended this gathering in South Africa. A large percentage in attendance were from Africa.

1997—BETHANY PRAYER PROFILES FOR JOSHUA PROJECT

One local American church, Bethany World Prayer Center of Baton Rouge, LA, completed the production of all 1,739 prayer profiles for Joshua Project's priority unreached peoples.

This effort was called "the most comprehensive prayer and resource materials ever produced on the unreached peoples."

This accomplishment involved:

- 2 years of development
 - 50,000 man hours
 - 40 ministries participating together
 - \$450,000+ invested in research and printing
 - 2 million profiles in stock
- ...all from the initiative of one local North American church!²

This same year, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board restructured to emphasize unreached peoples and opened their arms to work with other mission agencies. They also changed their name to the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB).³

1998—John Piper's Bethlehem Baptist Church gave 30% of their annual budget to support overseas missions.⁴

1999—PRAYING THROUGH THE WINDOW IV: LIGHT THE WINDOW

Millions of believers around the world focused prayer on

all the countries in the 10/40 Window for 31 days.

These are just a sampling of the major prayer initiatives that took place in the 90s.

REFLECTIONS OF THE TIME...

"The last 20 years have been a race to find the unreached peoples and start ministry among them. The next 20 years will change the emphasis from quantifying the task, to quality of ministry in the task."—Patrick Johnstone and John Robb.⁵


Ralph D. Winter, founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission, called the AD2000 movement "the largest, most pervasive global evangelical network ever to exist." Paul E. Pierson, Dean Emeritus of the Fuller School of Intercultural Studies, said, "The Church in this decade has gone through more change than any other time since the Reformation. This is also the most productive and creative era in missions since the first century."⁶

So, what can we all learn from this decade? I am sure that in the middle of all of the good things that happened there

are also many things that we can learn from mistakes that were made. But more than anything I have become more convinced that prayer and breakthrough at the frontiers of God's global mission go hand in hand.

As scheduled, the AD 2000 and Beyond movement closed its doors in early 2001, but God had already begun raising up new night and day prayer movements, both in North America and in the Global South,

that continue on to this day. What will it look like for this generation to catch the fire of the night and day prayer lifestyle, combined with a renewed focus on the remaining unreached people groups—the remaining task of world evangelization?

Though we have made incredible progress, there is still much left to be done. Who will join in the next global wave of massive prayer for the unreached and unengaged? I hope it will be you! 

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¹ Pegues, Beverly. *WindowWatchman II*. Christian Information Network. Colorado Springs, CO. 1997. (p.10,12)

² www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/bethany-world-prayer-center-reaches-its-goal.

³ www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/re-viewing-1997.

⁴ www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/a-pastor-with-a-passion-for-the-worship-of-god-by-all-peoples.

⁵ www.ad2000.org/re00907.htm.

⁶ www.ad2000.org/celebrate/bush.htm.