

## **TESTIMONY: MY HOPE FOR REACHING CITIES AND NATIONS**

By Dr EDGARDO SILVOSO

I stand before you today representing every continent in the world that owes so much to Africa. Millions of people today are believers, and Africa played a key role in that plan of salvation. Do you realise that it was Africa that protected the Lord Jesus as a baby when Herod was ready to kill Him? And do you realise that when our Saviour was carrying the Cross and He fell short of Golgotha and couldn't carry it any more, it was an African by the name of Simon of Cyrene who picked up the cross and carried it to Golgotha?

Africa, I say to you "Thank you in the name of the Lord." And the best is yet to come for Africa. The largest churches in some of the most unthinkable places, like London, are pastored and led by Africans. You go to Kiev, and the largest churches there are led by Africans. You go to Brazil where the Church is growing by leaps and bounds, and the roots to Africa are there. Oh, Africa, I bless you in the name of the Lord. The best is yet to come!

We often have a peachy, rosy idea of revival. We think that in revival everything has to be orderly and in a fashionable way. But in the Bible, revival almost consistently happens in the context of crisis and tension. And the reason for that is that, when sin has abounded, God says: "OK, now grace is ready to overflow!"

In my country in Argentina, about a year and a half ago we had a major crisis when the country went broke and riots broke out all over the place, and that happened in the best of a revival. Some of us were perplexed for a season, not knowing exactly how to process that, but in that context the Lord spoke to us and told us: "Re-read the Great Commission." The Great Commission in Matthew 28 is not about making disciples, it's about discipling the nations. It is taking entire nations and discipling them, and that is exactly what you are doing here.

We understood that in the midst of the crisis – the violence and everything – we sent prayer expeditions to the four corners of Argentina, to the far north, the far south, the east and west and central region of Argentina, and there, in a context of great weakness, the Church linked arms. We repented of our own sin, because anytime anyone has a problem with riots, rubbish results. You clean up the rubbish and the riots go somewhere else. We repented of the sin in our own hearts, in our own churches, and then we said: "Lord, we raise a canopy of prayer over Argentina." And in the five points where we raised the canopy, in one of them the Governor became a Christian and dedicated the province to the Lord Jesus. In the other one the Governor offered all the schools to Christians to lead them spiritually. In another one the Governor appointed a pastor to his Cabinet and now he is running as the candidate for Vice-Governor because of so much good that came out of that. In another region the rate of violence decreased, the economy rebounded. Then, about two months ago, we had elections, and now we have a freely elected President. We are looking forward to the month of October, when we are going to dedicate the nation to the Lord Jesus Christ and say: "Lord, we are going to disciple Argentina."

In Revelation 21, when the City of God comes down, the Bible tells us very clearly that nations and kings will bring their glory to the City of God. And that means that nations will be saved, governments will be saved. Sometimes that is difficult to understand because of our traditions. In Luke 19:10, we read: "For the Son of Man came to seek and save that which was lost." When I ask people what that means, most of them say that Jesus came to save the lost. Is that true? Yes. Is that what the verse says? No! That verse says: "He came to seek and save THAT which was lost." And that is more than the souls of people.

In the Garden of Eden, three things were lost: our relationship with God (and we all agree on that); our relationship with each other (because Adam and Eve no longer walked together and came to know evil); and the government in the market place, in education (because we were cut off from the voice of God as far as education was concerned). We were cut off from godly principles because people were no longer walking with God, and we were cut off from the marketplace because the ground was cursed. And the Lord Jesus spoke those words because He was being criticised for having taken the Kingdom of God into the homes of the successful marketplace leader by the name of Zaccheus. When He took the Kingdom of God to a beggar by the name of Bartimaeus everybody rejoiced, but when he took it to the home of a powerful man, everybody said: "No, the Gospel shouldn't go to the powerful and the rich, the Gospel shouldn't make incursions into politics, we want just to be saved ourselves." And the Lord said No! "I came

to seek and save that which was lost." Everything.

He wants us to claim nations, and to get into the heart of the nations, business, the government, education, and take the Kingdom of God into the heart of the nations. When we learned that, a lion was set loose in Argentina and all over. People who were just looking forward to Sunday morning to get enough of a break to survive the week ahead of them, they went to work and the moment they worked through the front door, they declared: "The Kingdom of God has come to the workplace and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." And people were going to schools and saying: "The Kingdom of God has come to these schools and the power of evil shall not prevail against it."

I share with you about a gentleman who inherited eight corporations, one of them being a motel with 1 600 rooms in eight buildings. Each room was being used five times a day by prostitutes. He now understood that Jesus no longer came just to save him, but came to empower him to be reconciled, even to those whom the Evil One was using to turn motels into whore houses. And he understood that he had the power to claim that back and he made the declaration: "I am the pastor of these motels, even though the people who work here don't know that they are my sheep." He then applied Luke 10, where the Lord Jesus exhorted us by saying: "The harvest is plentiful..." I don't have a problem with the harvest, my problem is with the harvesters. They have developed allergies to the harvest. Rather than going for the harvest they are hiding in buildings, praying for the wind of revival to uproot the harvest and blow it into the barn. And that is not how you bring the harvest in. What do you do to bring the harvest in? Do you bless the harvest, fellowship with the harvest, take care of the harvest, and then and only then do you have the right to speak to the harvest and tell them who the Lord is? This man did that for over two years and three months. Since then, all of his 2 000 employees have become Christians. And they built a chapel in each one of the motels and they instituted intercessory services in the motels. And when people check in they get the key to their room and the receptionist tells them: "If you need a miracle or prayer, dial 7, because our intercessors are waiting for you!" And they have led over 10 000 clients by the last count to the Lord because they understood that our call is not to save individuals, it is not to make one or two disciples. Our call is to disciple the nations and tell them that Jesus "came to seek and save that which was lost".

It is interesting that Paul the Apostle was sent forth in Acts 13, and in more than 12 years, he preached every week to religious people in a religious building, and he never saw the city or region transformed, until Acts 18 and 19, where Paul connected with Priscilla and Aquilla, people from the marketplace, and they moved into the marketplace to do business in the name of the Lord. They preached and taught every day in the marketplace, and the city of Corinth was touched, and later Ephesus and the whole of Asia were transformed.

So my word of hope comes from the Scriptures. When the Lord Jesus instituted the Church He declared very clearly that it is His church and He will build it. Hands off the Church, it's His, and He will build it. Your job is to take the Kingdom of God where the Gates of Hell are, with the warranty that they will not prevail against it. And as we pastors have begun to recognise the Aquillas and Priscillas in our congregations, and have begun to commission them, not just to win souls, but to pastor corporations, to oversee the work of the Lord in the marketplace, we have seen the greatest harvest ever.

I have the privilege of encouraging all of you – Come to Argentina the last week in October, and I will take you to two cities where it is very difficult for anyone to go to Hell. For anyone to go to Hell they will have to turn God down on the average seven times. Every block has a pastor, every business has an intercessor, every government building has a person who sits at the gate and intercedes for the king in there. You can feel and sense the glory of God.

Oh Africa, hear the word of the Lord. The best is still to come!

This year we are not going to five points, we are going to all 24 points in Argentina and we are raising a canopy of prayer, and we are commissioning people to run for mayor, governor, deputy, senators, and we are looking forward to having a born again, Bible believing God-praying President in Argentina by 2007.

Some people may say: "Aren't you afraid that you may be wrong in your prediction?" No! I rather aim for the stars and miss, than aim for a skunk and hit it. So I say to you: let the Lord speak to us today because when the Lord Jesus introduced the Church, He said: "My Church shall overcome."

What that gentleman did in that motel and what other people have done, is what we call today "Prayer evangelism". But then comes the commissioning of people to go into the marketplace, to pastor the

people, not just to tell them that they are in trouble and that they should repent and be saved! We need to tell them that in their troubles God cares about them. We need to be willing to pray for a miracle, to pray for God to heal the economy, the labour unrest, and so on.

Every major revival in the Old Testament happened in the marketplace in secular contexts. It is about time that a generation of Daniels and Josephs arose. It is about time that some of you with a passion for politics will submit yourself to the Lord and dive in. We used to think that God would have to clean up politics in order to put Christians in it. Until He told us: "No! I will put Christians in it so that they clean it up." Which means we must learn to swim in dirty water. When Daniel heard that the king had given the order to kill the witches and warlords in Babylon, he didn't wait for the king to kill them all before he told the king he was the only one left and gave him the interpretation. He sent word to the king not to kill any witches or warlords, but that he would give the interpretation. He interceded for the people because he knew they did not know what they were doing. And after he interpreted the dream, he was awarded the chairmanship of the witches and warlord union of Babylon – and he took it!

Church in Africa, let the Spirit of God speak to you. Let Him show you politics. Let Him show you business. Let Him show you government. Let Him show you education. Let Him remind you that the Giants in the land are going to fall down because "Greater is He who is in you than the one who is in the world."

But for us to do it properly, we need to understand that the harvest will not come to us, we must go the harvest. But we must go to the harvest in the Spirit of Christ. When Christ was hanging on the Cross, His last forgiveness was for those who had put Him there. And He gave us a reason – they didn't know what they were doing. That is why we have to receive an anointing of compassion so that we can go to evil people and they can sense the Spirit of God in us. Jesus was first full of grace, and then full of truth. When you reverse the order and you speak the truth so that they receive it, and then you will give grace, it doesn't work.

I remember once when I was praying for my neighbours, rather than praying for them, I was complaining to God about the people, the drunkard, the promiscuous woman, the fighting couple, and so on. and asking God to do something! He said: "Ed, I am so glad you haven't witnessed to anyone yet!" I asked why? He said: "Because I don't want your neighbours to know that you and I are related!!" He said: "I love your neighbours, I died for them, I visit them, I am merciful to them!" I argued: "But Lord, I am speaking the truth." He replies: "Yes, but when you are speaking the truth, without wrapping it in grace is like giving a good kiss with bad breath!" – it doesn't matter how good the kiss is, people don't come for seconds!

Church in Africa today – let the Spirit of Compassion come upon you. Let the Lord grab your heart right now with a passion for your President, your government, even for the people who have been evil to you. Please stand up with me before the Lord right now, asking God to give us the Baptism of Compassion. "Father God, I stand before you, and I ask you – I need a new anointing of compassion. Give me that anointing. Give me the heart of Jesus. Not only for the good people, but especially for the evil people. Lord I lift up my hands to you. They are empty, but by faith I ask you. Give me the anointing, and by faith I receive it and by faith I will use this so that all of Africa will hear your voice. In Jesus Name. Amen."