

## Chapter 6

# HOW THE VISION CAME TO PASS

Suddenly, I had a new plan, a new way of looking at ministry. God had commissioned an army – not a group of converts, but an army, trained to march forward and decimate the ranks of the enemy; but instead of taking prisoners of war, this army would be trained to free the prisoners of the enemy – a new breed of God’s people.

I had heard the cries of the world for help.

Every day, those cries echoed in my spirit. I remembered the anguished cries of the millions of souls I had seen in hell, and I knew this new way of ministry would help me reach many more to prevent them from ending up there.

I knew I could not preach enough in my entire life to reach as many souls as I needed to reach. I could preach morning, noon and night, every day, seven days a week, until I was one-hundred years old, and I still would not make a significant enough impact on the world. There were more people being born every hour. Those were people who eventually would need to be reached. I knew that even combining the efforts of all the world’s major evangelists – Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, A.A. Allen, T.L. Osborne, myself, and others – we would never be able to reach the world as thoroughly as it needed to be reached.

Each man could draw crowds in the tens or even hundreds of thousands, but this earth is crowded with six BILLION people! To put that number in perspective, the entire nation of the United States has only about two-hundred and seventy million people. That means there are twenty-two people in the rest of world for every one person in the United States.

On that floor in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in my pool of sweat, I had seen the key to a closing world – how we literally could reach the world.

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Think of every person you can think of in the United States...your mother, your father, your children, your spouse, your cousins, your friends, your neighbors, your co-workers, the people you see on television, the people you read about in the newspapers...

Add all those people up, and for each one of those people – for every person you can think of – there are twenty other people in the world – and that number is increasing every day.

That means that reaching that gigantic number of people is impossible for just one man, or even a crowd of well-known men who can draw hundreds of thousands of people at the same time – it just isn't possible.

I remembered back to the vision God had given me in Lima, Ohio, when I had looked all over for a man to lead the outpouring that God had shown me was going to come.

Though I had looked all over, I could see no man – God was saying that the major evangelists, though they were needed, would never be able to reach the world, would never be able to touch all the souls who so desperately needed touching.

But on the floor in that hotel room in 1962, I began to see how I could be instrumental in reaching the billions of souls on this earth, how I could truly fulfill the vision that God had given me.

I knew that a National could reach out to his home country and be more effective than I could ever hope to.

A National could get to areas of his country I might never see. He could reach people who would never come to see an American evangelist.

God showed me that to reach the world, I would have to raise up an army of spiritual warriors, people who were not just trained preachers, but lay people...doctors, lawyers, ditch diggers, plumbers, farmers, ranchers, carpenters, housewives, sailors, factory workers, household servants – everyone was a potential minister! These people could be anointed and trained to go to their own villages, their own

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cities, their own countries and saturate them with the Word of God, winning thousands and thousands to Christ.

A famous advertising slogan at one time was “How do you cook an elephant?” The answer, of course, was “One piece at a time.”

That became the crux of the vision – that each National could take one piece of the huge whole and, piece by piece, we could do what otherwise would be impossible – reach the world.

To accomplish this incredible task, we would transfer the anointing to the Nationals we ministered to, and we would train them in evangelism with a period of intensive training aimed at preparing them for the task they faced.

God had taught me another fundamental truth in Porto Alegre – all truth is parallel. For every natural truth we can mention, there is a spiritual truth to match it. For every spiritual truth we can mention, there is a natural truth that matches it.

I began to think of God’s command to build Him an army.

What I had been doing through the first years of my ministry was recruiting soldiers into that army – an army I hadn’t even yet known existed. I had been looking for a way to do more, and God had shown me the way.

No army recruits soldiers and sends them out into battle without training.

First, the army sends its soldiers to some kind of basic training, where the new recruits learn everything from scratch.

Young people who have done things a certain way all their lives have to re-learn everything.

They eat what the army decides they’ll eat, and they eat it when the army decides they’ll eat it.

These new recruits may come into the recruiting depot with any manner of different haircuts, some with long hair down to their shoulders, some with hair parted on the side, some with hair parted

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in the middle. Some people even come in with wacky haircuts spiked up a few feet off the tops of their heads.

But once these recruits get into basic training, no matter what kind of hair they came in with, they all walk out of the barber shop looking the same – heads all-but shaved. They don't have a choice to say, "just a little off the sides, please."

The new recruits must even re-learn how to dress.

When they were at home with their parents, they usually were allowed to wear pretty much whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted.

But when the recruits come to basic training, they learn quickly that the army has a way of dressing for every occasion. When inspection comes, they'd better have their shirts pressed just so, their belt buckles polished and shiny, their shoes so clean and buffed that the sergeant can see his face when he looks down at their feet.

When it comes to bed time, the soldiers can't wear pajamas with little pictures of Superman on them – they have to wear what the army gives them, and they have to wear it how the army tells them to wear it.

Each soldier is taught exactly how to make his bed, how to make the corners look just right, how to fold down the blanket and the sheets, how to place the pillow, and they have only a certain amount of time to get it done.

Each soldier, no matter how proficient with the weapons of war he may be when he comes to basic training, must re-learn everything, using the army's way. He is taught how to properly hold a rifle, how to aim it, how to squeeze the trigger, and how to disassemble his rifle and clean it to ensure it's always in top condition. He's taught that he must also disassemble, clean and reassemble the rifle in an allotted amount of time. He is taught the difference between a rifle and a sidearm. He must be proficient in the usage of both – for different kinds of combat.

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He must learn to depend on his teammates, those who are in his platoon, to help him in every aspect of military life. The loner can no longer run off by himself and expect to accomplish anything. He must now depend upon his fellow soldiers to provide a support structure for everything he does.

Each soldier, no matter how good his physical conditioning is when he comes into the army, must learn how to keep himself ready for battle. Each soldier must do pushups when the sergeant says, must do pull ups, must run an allotted distance in an allotted amount of time. Each soldier must complete obstacle courses designed to replicate the conditions of battle.

In effect, the army takes a young recruit and completely changes his lifestyle, retraining him so that he might do things the army's way when he goes into battle.

They thoroughly train a young recruit to face the battles that certainly lie ahead and to face those battles in a time-proven method.

As God had shown me, all truth is parallel. This natural metaphor had a spiritual companion that was no different.

When a new believer is won from the world into the Kingdom of God, he must re-learn how to live so that he may conduct himself accordingly when he goes into battle.

He must learn how to eat: where he formerly filled his mind and spirit with the things of the world, from television to worldly publications and chatter, he must re-learn to feed his spirit with the things of God.

The new Christian must learn to depend upon his fellow Christians to provide a support infrastructure of fellowship and glorifying God.

Where the new Christian may have been accustomed to waging war against his enemies with his fists or weapons, he must re-learn to do battle in the spirit world, with the

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weapons of Christian warfare, not against flesh and blood, but against spirits.

He must learn to dress himself in spiritual armor.

Everything in the new Christian's life must be re-learned, and that process is very difficult without the help of a mature Christian who has learned at the feet of God the proper way to conduct life as a new Christian.

If a Christian does not re-align his entire life after the way God intends, he will have a very difficult time being effective for God. When the battle comes, he will be unprepared, and will have to feel his way along by trial and error, and he greatly increases his chances of failure.

This army, unlike any earthly army, would transcend nationalities and ethnic groups. It would be an army without borders, a force the like of which mankind had never seen. Truly, the army would be as Jesus said: *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit...The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit"* (John 3:6,8).

This army's conquests would not be kingdoms or nations of this world, its goal would not be to overthrow despots and dictators or to bring natural revolution against the governments of this world – this army would conquer the devil's workings in the lives of men, it would overthrow the dictator of men's souls!

I began to think about the need to train ministers to bring the Gospel to their own nations, their own cities, their own neighborhoods.

In the natural world, I saw a cry rising up from the nations:  
Africans for Africa!

Asians for Asia!

Indians for India!

South Americans for South America!

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The entire third world had been ruled by first-world countries for centuries, but centuries of imperialism were slowly being rejected by country after country as they declared independence. Their cries began to ring out:

“Yankee, go home!”

“British, go home!”

“French, Belgian, Dutch, go home! We don’t want you to rule our countries any more!”

But now, with National ministers training their own people, those cries would no longer ring out – the Nationals would be welcomed in their own countries – they were the sons and daughters of local people; fluent in the local language and the local traditions.

Our single-minded focus had suddenly become clear: To build God an army of trained, motivated soldiers to win the world for Jesus Christ.

Ideas began racing through my head at lightning pace. This army would literally change the face of ministry all over the world – and I was humbled and awed that God had allowed me to be a part of it.

Immediately, we began to change the focus of our meetings. To be sure, we would still hold crusades; after all, how can you build an army if you don’t recruit?

But we began to hold National Training Institutes in 1963, immediately after God had given me the mandate to build an army.

At these meetings, we began to focus on raising up ministers, teaching them the basics of holding crusades like the ones we held, and at the end of our training sessions, we would call the Nationals up to the platform to be anointed with oil – a point of contact by which I could give to the Nationals what God had given me: the anointing to reach multitudes of souls.

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Toward the end of our intensive Institutes, I would step back and a National would come to the platform to preach the message, using the lessons he had learned through the transference of God's anointing.

Another National would give the altar call, inviting those in the congregation to come forward and receive what God had for them.

Another National would pray for the sick, the lost and those who had other needs.

This on-the-job training prepared the Nationals to go and do the exact same thing in their own villages and cities, to not be afraid to operate in the anointing of God and the power of His might!

Immediately, the new focus of the ministry on raising up an army of trained, dedicated Nationals began paying off. New ministers were inspired to begin ministering the Gospel to their families, their neighbors, their villages, their cities and their entire nations.

Many of the Nationals who attended our initial National Training Institutes went on to pastor and build from zero churches to thousands and thousands of members, imparting into those members the same ministry truth that God had imparted to them through God's servant.

At the same time the ministry was exploding with the expansion that came with the National Training Institutes, the list of friends that Theresa and I were mailing to became larger and larger.

More and more people wanted to know what the ministry was doing from day to day, and we had begun forming partnerships with many of our friends, who faithfully supported the ministry in prayer and finances.

In 1964, Theresa and I prayerfully decided to form a new magazine to explain to the people what we were doing. *Deeper Life* was born.

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*Deeper Life* contained reports from the mission fields of the world as we ministered to ever-growing crowds all over the nations. Our new staff photographer, George Ekeroth, began to accompany us everywhere so we could report and show our partners and friends exactly how God was moving through our crusades and National Training Institutes all over the world.

Many Nationals wrote to testify of the tremendous works God had done through their ministries after they had attended the intensive training of the National Training Institutes.

In keeping with the tremendous amount of work Theresa had always taken upon herself, she became the editor-in-chief of this new magazine, and under her guidance, it became a world-class glossy publication with photos on every page showing the tremendous works of God.

Almost immediately, thousands of people all over began to send testimonies to *Deeper Life* describing how God had used the ministry to touch their lives – they wanted the whole world to know what a powerful God we serve.

The ministry had long since outgrown our little garage. I had initially built a wall in our garage, one half was used to store the children's bicycles and other items you would expect to find in any family's garage, and the other half contained the implements of running an ever-expanding ministry, with tables to fold letters and stuff envelopes, and the huge autotype machines on which Theresa became so proficient.

Finally, when the ministry clearly had become too large to house in the garage, we moved the ministry into its first building, on Lamont Street in San Diego, where Theresa had found a suitable building.

It was from Lamont Street that *Deeper Life* was originally published. It didn't seem possible that such a tremendous, high-quality magazine could be published from such a relatively small office, but Theresa put her heart and soul

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into it and made *Deeper Life* successful and inspiring through her hard work and prayerful dedication.

Because we had to conserve every penny to make the most efficient use of the money over which God had placed us as stewards – we wanted to save every little bit we could to use in ministering to the nations of the world. We hired one of our first employees, a man named Lowell Warner, who ran a little print shop in the Lamont Street office. David, who by this time was getting older, even worked as an apprentice to Lowell, learning all the ins and outs of shooting negatives, making printing plates, operating the press and cleaning up afterward. (These days, David, who remains great friends with Lowell, jokes that he got to do all the jobs Lowell didn't want to do, like cleaning out the press's ink wells.)

As an interesting sidebar, that experience would come in handy later for David in the 1980s, as we were holding a School of Ministry (which you'll learn about later in this chapter) in Brazil. At the last minute, we discovered that we didn't have any diplomas for the graduates, so David, every bit as industrious as his mother, took an old diploma we happened to have with us and searched all day until he found a print shop. It was a weekend, and everything in the city was closed. But David convinced the owners to open the shop and let him run the press. Using that old diploma, David shot a new negative, made plates and printed up enough diplomas for all the students at the School of Ministry.

As our group of friends and partners around the world continued to grow, it didn't seem possible, but we also began to fill up the Lamont Street office. Desks, tables, printing equipment, letters, fliers and files were everywhere.

As unbelievable as it was, it soon became clear to us that even the Lamont Street office was no longer big enough to house our ministry, which was ever being expanded by the providence of God.

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For the first time, the ministry was in a position to actually buy a building to do the work of the ministry – a tremendous boon, because in the long run, buying a building is almost always less expensive than renting one of similar size.

As Theresa and I prayerfully looked all over the San Diego area for a suitable building that we could obtain for a reasonable price, we finally settled on building what, at the time, seemed to us to be a huge building on Mercury Street. The building was around ten thousand square feet, and it seemed to us that we would never be able to fill that much space – it seemed downright palatial.

In November of 1969, we moved our offices to Mercury Street, into the new building that seemed like a huge office complex to us.

But because of the tremendous growth of the ministry and the ever-expanding ministries of the Nationals who had learned through the National Training Institutes, the impossible happened; the Mercury Street building soon became too small to house our extremely busy ministry, and we had to erect another building onto the back of the existing building. Even though we soon began to outgrow even the new building that we had added on, but we would not move from the Mercury Street location for another ten years.

In 1962, I had begun immediately acting on God's mandate to build an army. For a few years, my initial concentration was on bringing Nationals through a spiritual boot camp, training them how to defeat the devil in prayer and how to bring the Gospel to their nations. But soon, I began to realize that spiritual boot camp was not enough.

The National Training Institutes were working very well, and they were very successful, but I began feeling an unction in my spirit to do more – to invest even more of what God had invested into me to the Nationals in whatever way I could.

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God deals with different people in different ways. To some people, like some of the old testament prophets, he gives specific, step-by-step, one step at a time directions, “do this. Now do this, next do this.”

But to other people, such as the Apostle Paul, God gave simple plans; He gave a directive – preach the Gospel to the Gentiles – and many of the details were left up to Paul from that point. God gave Paul a goal, and Paul was responsible for getting to that goal by the strength and anointing of God.

I find that more often than not, God directs me as He directed Paul. He gives a goal, a directive, and it is up to me to use the wisdom and anointing He has given me to get to that goal.

God had given me a directive: Son, build Me an Army.

From that point forward, relying on prayerful strength from God, it was my job to do whatever it took to make that goal become a reality, by the anointing God had placed on my life.

After we had started the National Training Institutes, I realized that we had not yet completed the vision that God had given me.

I began thinking again of the parallel truth of a natural army. A natural army, once it has trained its soldiers in basic training, does not just send them out into a field of battle with no weapons, no armor, no air support and tell them, “OK, go fight a battle – and we expect you to win!”

No, the army that behaved that way would quickly find it was doomed to failure as its ill-equipped soldiers faced opponents who were better equipped and supported by firepower from the air and land.

The army that wanted to be successful would equip its soldiers, giving them the most accurate rifles, the healthiest rations, the most efficient battle plan and support from other branches of the military.

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All truth is parallel. Through this analogy, God showed me that we had to do more than just train the Nationals to reach their nations.

Many of these Nationals lived in some of the poorest nations of the world. Most of these nations are so poor that even upper-class people do not have running water. Their excuses for streets are little more than dirt roads with gigantic mud holes every ten or fifteen feet.

To get electricity for some meetings, we had to set up generators of our own, because no place close had electricity.

It is not uncommon to find people whose only home is one they've made out of mud and grass.

For millions of people around the world, bathing is a luxury reserved for only the rich. Meat simply is not eaten – it's too expensive for the average person.

So to train these soldiers and then turn them loose with only a directive to “win the battle” and reach their nations was not as effective as we desired. We wanted National ministers who could reach people we could not reach, but we didn't want to send them out into the spiritual battle unequipped.

We formulated a plan, that, once we had thought of it, seemed so simple. To ensure that the Nationals we trained would be optimally effective, we would sponsor National Evangelistic Crusades. There the Nationals who had been trained and anointed at our National Training Institutes could use the training they had received to minister to their own nations in crusades that followed the pattern of our own crusades.

World Evangelism would provide financial assistance to the Nationals, who then would use the money to print handbills and posters, build a platform and rent sound equipment to conduct their own crusades. In addition, we would print and give the ministers “how to” manuals that

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laid out the fundamental teachings God had inspired us to impart to these precious Nationals.

Our partners and friends all over the world rushed in to support these tremendous National Evangelistic Crusades. At our seminars and Deeper Life meetings, our partners and friends would swarm to a large scholarship board we had set up with photographs of the ministers we wanted to sponsor. Our partners would choose a minister to sponsor, and they would donate whatever they could so that National ministers could lead crusades to their own people after they had been trained and anointed.

The response and results were beyond our wildest dreams.

In just ONE YEAR alone, World Evangelism partners sponsored 4,098 National Evangelistic Crusades. In addition, they established 3,060 churches or evangelistic stations overseas.

But the most astounding number, a number that was staggering to think about, was the number of recorded decisions for Christ that came as a result of just one year of this incredible ministry outreach: 1,692,356!

More than one-and-a-half MILLION people gave their lives to Christ as a result of just one year of National Evangelistic Crusades sponsored by our friends and partners' generosity!

Those numbers were only the decisions for Christ that were recorded! Who knows how many more went unreported!

At last, the vision of reaching the world through building God an army was producing results on a massive scale!

Those National Evangelistic Crusades continue to this day, although they are no longer called National Evangelistic Crusades.

In the 1970s, I again began to feel a rumbling in my spirit that we could do more – we could equip ministers for

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lifelong service in God's Victorious Army that God had called me to build.

Again, I began to think of the natural parallel to the spiritual truth we were living through the National Evangelistic Crusades.

We were recruiting soldiers in this great army through the crusades we conducted nearly everywhere we went, with attendance ranging upwards into the hundreds of thousands, and decisions for Christ sometimes numbering in the tens of thousands a night, by the grace of God.

We were taking the new soldiers through spiritual boot camp in the National Training Institutes that we were conducting to impart the anointing and train the Nationals.

We were sending the Nationals out into battle with the National Evangelistic Crusades as we provided the weaponry for them to succeed.

But I believed something was still missing.

In a natural army, after a soldier completes boot camp, he is not yet ready to go out to the battlefield. Almost any army in the world has a second training camp, a second level of instruction called advanced training.

It is at this second level of training that the raw soldier hones his newfound life of military service into a razor-sharp, well-oiled battle machine.

It is at advanced training that the raw soldier becomes a tank driver, or an aircraft mechanic, or an anti-tank gunner or a pilot, flying multi-million-dollar aircraft with the capability to destroy entire cities. It is at advanced training that the raw, faceless soldier learns a specialty, whether that be cooking for infantry or sitting up in trees with a sniper rifle or communicating in coded messages to the top command.

Advanced training is necessary for modern warfare.

Without advanced training, armies would be forced to fight as they had in the Middle Ages – groups of men armed

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with swords and clubs who would rush at each other, hacking and chopping away until one army had more men standing than the other. It was a brutal way to wage war, and inefficient in both manpower and equipment, not to mention the hideous mess that had to be cleaned up afterward by someone.

Advanced training changed that mob of brutes into a team that worked together as intricately as the inner workings of the most expensive grandfather clock, each cog, wheel, gear and spring working together to produce a perfectly running machine.

I knew the spiritual parallel to advanced training well:

*“For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body. And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary. And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked.” (I Corinthians 12:14-24)*

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Each part of the machine – the Body of Christ – had its part, and all parts were necessary to fulfill the goal of ministry: to win souls to the Lord. One person could not do the job of another, each person was selected and set apart to fulfill the specific role God had determined for them since before the foundation of the world.

I knew that God had separated these body parts – these soldiers who would go into advanced training – into five main divisions:

*“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:11-12)*

My job was to equip and perfect this fivefold ministry, this five-fronted attack force, with the tools and training they needed to effectively operate as a finely tuned army, destroying the works of the enemy, each person fully trained to implement the role God had intended them to fill.

I knew that to accomplish this monumental task, we needed a more intensive and exhaustive training than the National Training Institutes, with their limited time schedule, could accomplish.

Advanced training required a more intensive, more expanded and more individualized training plan. Those who had been turned into soldiers would now have to be turned into well-tuned ministry juggernauts who would be members of the special forces in God’s army.

The School of Ministry was born.

But we needed a place to house the students who would be training at this new School of Ministry. In addition, the offices on Mercury Street were bulging at the seams. The ministry had continued to grow and expand exponentially,

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and we were running out of room. Both the School of Ministry and World Evangelism needed a new home.

The El Cortez Hotel had been a historic San Diego landmark for years. In 1979, we were able to purchase the hotel to bring in Nationals from all over the world for intensive training at the complex.

But first, the hotel needed major renovations.

The El Cortez was really a five-block complex in downtown San Diego, including several small motels and a convention center. But the centerpiece was the historic and majestic hotel, which overlooked the beautiful city of San Diego like a sentry standing guard over a sleeping palace.

This building, which was designed to serve as a five-star hotel for the hordes of people and for kings and presidents who flooded to San Diego each year to vacation in one of the world's most beautiful and temperate cities, had to be completely renovated and redesigned to fit the purpose for which we intended it; to house Nationals in dormitory rooms.

Each step of the way, we had to completely re-do something. By the time we were finished, we had nearly completely gutted the entire building and re-built it from scratch.

We got rid of anything the hotel had that we couldn't use. In fact, one humorous story came from the renovations.

My son David had just finished college at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, and was in charge of the El Cortez renovations. He developed a plan for renovating the front of the building and decided to have an auction to dispose of some of the hotel's equipment that was no longer needed, and to raise some money for renovations in the meantime through the sale of the items.

Over the years, many people had taken their honeymoon or a memorable vacation at the El Cortez, and those people were extremely interested in obtaining memorabilia from the hotel.

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The auction was very successful, and David was able to finance many of his smaller renovation projects with the proceeds from the sale. One of the things David sold, however was the set of doors on the front of the hotel.

But renovations at the top floor of the hotel, which was to become a 24-hour-a-day prayer center, took longer than expected, so David never got around to the renovations at the front of the hotel he had been planning when he sold the front doors.

At that time, a woman named Pat Hulsey had become my administrative assistant, and when she got into the office vacated by her predecessor, she found a stack of letters that needed to be read and dealt with. One of the letters, she was shocked to find out, was from someone who claimed to own the doors to the El Cortez, and in no uncertain terms, he explained that he wanted to come get his doors as soon as possible.

Not too long afterward, I was overseas conducting a crusade, and Pat got a call from security at the El Cortez:

“Pat, come quick,” the security man said. “Someone’s here taking our doors!”

Pat rushed downstairs to the front of the building and witnessed a scene she described as straight out of the Indianapolis 500, as a crew of men had jumped out of the bed of a truck and feverishly begun dismantling the El Cortez’s ornate front doors as quickly as a pit crew would change the tires on a race car.

Pat, not sure what was going on, had called our lawyer and the police, and they had all shown up at the front of the building. The police determined that the man had the paperwork that said he indeed owned the doors, so there was nothing they could do to stop him from taking the doors. Pat and the security man stood by helplessly as the man took the doors he had bought and put them in his truck.

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To make matters worse, a local television crew had been filming the whole fiasco from across the street, and broadcast it on the evening news.

The doors had been oversized, and the hotel crew found out it would take two weeks to get new doors made that would fit the hole the man had left in the front of the building, so for two weeks, the front was boarded up with a tiny door built in until the new doors arrived.

But the setbacks – humorous as they were – were small and infrequent. The El Cortez was renovated to become a state-of-the-art learning center where Nationals could receive intensive training for a six-month or three-month session, and then take that knowledge back to their own nations and replicate themselves there, building up God’s Army throughout the nations of the world, one on one, even quicker than we had imagined.

Each National attended the School of Ministry on full scholarship provided by our partners. Room and board were provided, as well as meals, which were served in the completely renovated cafeteria, which was designed to serve one thousand students in less than thirty minutes.

Through the generosity of our partners, thousands of National ministers received in-depth ministerial training to go and reach their own nations for Christ – and the fruits were incredible.

To this very day, many of the graduates of the El Cortez School of Ministry are on the frontlines of doing the work of the Gospel all over the world. Many times, when I travel to the nations of the world, I find that graduates of the School of Ministry are hard at work, tirelessly canvassing their entire countries with an unending zeal for the Gospel, winning souls everywhere they set foot, just as God told Abraham, “...Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours...” (Deuteronomy 11:24), these Nationals

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were making inroads into countries that had never been reached before, and everywhere they went, they were winning that area to the Kingdom of God.

As with overseas crusades, the logistics of running a School of Ministry were nearly overwhelming. Students were chosen from a group of National Training Institute graduates – those who had been demonstrating the teaching in their own ministries. Then arrangements had to be made to bring the students to the United States for six or three months – no small feat, many times. Many countries have very strict laws regarding travel overseas, and most countries have a currency limit, meaning the students in the School of Ministry couldn't bring very much money; they were almost completely dependent on the partners of World Evangelism to provide for their every need.

After the students arrived in the United States, they had to be fed and housed – no small task for a school with more than a thousand students. Many of the students who came from seventy countries had never been to the United States, and even being in a room with a radiator was a completely new experience to them. Some students even hung their clothes to dry on the radiators in the El Cortez's rooms – and had to be taught why that was not a good idea by the School's staff.

The upstairs area at the El Cortez had previously been a bar where people went to imbibe alcohol and carouse in drunkenness.

But we renovated the upstairs into a 24-hour-a-day prayer center, complete with phone banks, called the I Care Prayer Center. Part of the training of the School of Ministry was to teach the students how to counsel and pray for people who needed those things, so each student served some time in the prayer center ministering to the needs of the thousands of people who called with prayer requests.

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Students attended classes every day, all day, and then on Monday and Tuesday nights, special generals of the Gospel such as Kenneth Copeland, Dr. Fredrick K.C. Price, Pat Robertson and Dr. Walter Martin would come and address the students.

During the day sessions, School of Ministry staff, including Pastors Dr. Charles Blair, Alex Ness, Paul Trulin and Ed Cole would teach the students the advanced spiritual principles they needed to become generals in God's Army.

In classes, the students had a state-of-the-art student response system built into the armrests of their chairs. Whoever was lecturing had a console in front of them that showed them who was in attendance, and if the teacher had asked a question, he could immediately see which students had answered which answer. This allowed the teachers to tailor their instruction to the specific needs of the students who were present at any given time. Projection screens were built with the capability to project lesson points even in direct sunlight.

The cost to run this incredible, ground-breaking school was immense, costing well over \$500,000 a month for the day-to-day expenses of housing and feeding students and teachers and providing them with the advanced spiritual training we knew they needed to be lifelong, effective ministers in their own nations.

In fact, it was such a massive operation, that a good friend of mine, Rex Humbard, came to visit us in San Diego one year. As he was touring the facility, he continued to remark to my son David, "Praise God, bless God" and other such remarks.

Finally, David could contain his curiosity no longer and asked Rex what he was praising God for.

"I'm praising God that this is yours and not mine," Rex said.

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But the effort paid off in the fruit. Those key leaders who were trained at the El Cortez School of Ministry are still to this day producing fruit in the nations of the world.

The school was indeed producing tremendous results, and God began to show me that we needed to take the limits off the School of Ministry.

We were having a tremendous impact within the four walls of the School of Ministry at the El Cortez center in San Diego – training many for lifelong service.

But up to this point, if someone wanted to attend the School of Ministry to receive this tremendous advanced training, they had to come to America, stay for three or six months, and then go back to their countries. Not everyone could make arrangements to attend the school, for various reasons, not the least of which was getting international visas.

God began to reveal to me a way we could consolidate the teachings of the School of Ministry and take it in a new brevity to the nations of the world, using existing facilities in those nations to host this advanced training. Truly, it would become a school with no walls, giving intensive training to the key leaders all over the world who would then impart that training to their own nations. The training would last for extended periods of time in these new Schools of Ministry without walls; sometimes for a week, sometimes for two or three weeks of focused, concentrated training they would be able to get nowhere else.

That way, people in every corner of the world could receive the training of the School of Ministry without having to come to America to receive it.

Besides its obvious advantage of training on the move, this mobile School of Ministry opened doors to this ministry that have never been opened to anyone else. Indeed, because the nature of the School of Ministry was to equip Nationals to reap results in their own nations, not to bring in foreign missionaries

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and evangelists to do the work, presidents and prime ministers of nations were inviting me to come and train their people how to be effective ministers.

While I was teaching a Ministers' Institute in Nairobi, Kenya, the president of Ghana sent an invitation to me saying, "I want Rev. Cerullo to come and train our National ministers to lead our nation in righteousness."

The Schools of Ministry quickly became more urgent for the ministry than the crusades; for in a mass crusade, I could preach the Gospel to hundreds of thousands of people, of which tens of thousands might give their lives to Christ in any given night.

But a powerful ARMY of dedicated, trained and anointed National ministers who had been trained in a School of Ministry in their own nation could effectively reach MILLIONS of souls in a small amount of time!

From the Schools of Ministry, I began to concentrate on how I could reach even more people with the intensive training of the School of Ministry to increase the penetration this Army we were building would achieve.

This focus and intensification led to one of the largest one-night outreaches in the history of mankind, the Million Soul Crusade.

When I had seen the vision God had given me of footprints, the time was before man-made satellites were even invented. Little could I have known that later a technology would be developed that not only would allow one person standing in one place on the earth to be seen simultaneously all over the globe, but that the area into which that signal would be broadcast would be called a FOOTPRINT.

When a signal goes up into a satellite, it travels through a piece of technology called an uplink. It then is received by the satellite and is bounced off, both to other satellites and down to the earth in patterns called footprints.

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People on the earth who have the right equipment can interpret that satellite broadcast using their television sets. All of this happens in a split second – while the speaker is still forming his words, television sets all over the globe are seeing the minister speak the words and hearing his voice come through their television’s speaker.

In 1984, in the midst of a time of intense prayer, God revealed to me that by broadcasting via satellite, I could send a School of Ministry to nine cities at the same time, and I could broadcast a huge international Day of Miracles to millions of people live via satellite all around the world.

When I received this revelation, I began to get excited. We would, for the first time in history, hold the largest spiritual meeting that had ever been imagined.

Like all things associated with bringing the Gospel to a lost and dying world, however, the conceptualizing was much easier than the actual implementation.

The logistics of a simultaneous linkup of satellite technology all over the world is daunting enough, but add to that the special needs of a School of Ministry and crusade service, and the logistics boggle the mind.

We had to have a team in each city, both in Brazil, where the broadcast originated, and throughout North and South America, where the crusade would be broadcast.

There were more than sixty cities in the U.S. alone, and a dozen in Canada.

In each city, at each site, we had to have technicians to run the equipment that would receive the satellite signal. We had to have an usher chairman, prayer counselors, testimony workers and announcers, who would speak before the satellite broadcast began.

Each city had to have a bank account set up to hold the finances for making the meeting happen – every little aspect

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of a crusade meeting takes money. In addition, each city had to have decision cards and Gospels of John.

To top it all off, we had to have a huge phone bank in Brazil to receive calls from each of the more-than a hundred sites at the beginning of the broadcast. Each site had to confirm to us that they had sound, they had video, and if they didn't, we had to have qualified technicians on hand to help the site work out the problems – all these calls and troubleshooting technical discussions had to take place in a matter of minutes, all at the same time.

Many people, who think of something like a satellite broadcast, never think of the tiny details that must be in place to make that broadcast happen, but we had to deal with each of those details, and we had to be prepared for any contingency.

As always, our partners in the ministry were faithful to God's call on their lives to reach out to souls and build Him an army – they faithfully supported the Million Soul Crusade vision and it was due to their support that the vision actually became a reality.

For an entire week, in which thirty thousand people took the School of Ministry, we broadcast the School of Ministry from São Paulo, Brazil, to eight cities all over Brazil. The signal was beamed by state-of-the-art satellite technology across the dense rain forests of the Amazonian jungle to Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte, Belem and five other cities throughout the huge nation of Brazil – an entire week of intensive, directed, anointed teaching directly from the Spirit of God to a gathered congregation of Brazilian Nationals hungry to be used of God to reach their own people.

But this historic satellite School of Ministry was only the beginning of that miraculous week God led us to minister.

At the end of the School of Ministry, on June 23, 1984, hundreds of thousands of men, women and children

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gathered into churches, auditoriums and civic centers all over Brazil and North America, during our crusade, called the Day of Miracles. Our Gospel-carrying signal did not just float into North and South America, however. The same signal that preached the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Americas also sent the signal to Hong Kong, and most miraculously, into the depths of Red China – our signal literally blanketed that closed country with the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

As live miracles were coursing through the arena in Sao Paulo, the anointing virtue of God was at work throughout the entire world as people were being healed and saved all across Brazil, the North American continent, China and Hong Kong – all at the same time!

That night, I had no way of knowing it, as I prayed for salvations throughout the audience, but more than one-hundred and twenty-five thousand people in Brazil alone answered the call for salvation and gave their lives to Jesus...all at the same time! God performed His greatest miracle – salvation – one-hundred and twenty-five thousand times in an instant in the most awesome display of His power I have ever personally witnessed.

Even before I began to pray for physical healings, miracles began to break out all over the arena in Sao Paulo, where we were hosting the hub crusade. Immediately, I recognized what was happening. God had personally stepped in and taken over the meeting. I no longer had any control whatsoever of what was happening in that arena that night. All I could do was stand and praise God as His Spirit ministered in such a powerful way and healed hundreds and hundreds of people. There no longer was any need for me to minister; God Himself had taken over completely.

When I was finally able to begin leading prayer again, the huge platform we had built in the arena was literally filled

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with people who had been touched in the precious, awesome move of God that night.

God had made a tremendous point to me that night. The power of satellite technology gave wings to the ministry He had entrusted me with, and allowed me to reach far more people than I in my wildest dreams had ever imagined I would be able to reach.

Through this new tool, I would even be able to reach into closed countries, with the life-changing Gospel...and there was nothing the despotic rulers of closed countries could do to stop the signal!

Over the years, I had been tremendously blessed and given favor by God to reach into many countries that were closed, but there were still some countries that did not welcome anyone preaching the Gospel. But through satellite technology, I could reach into those countries by the power of God and make inroads that were completely impossible before satellites.

The incredible harvest of souls we had been privileged to see saved in the Million Soul Crusade supercharged and energized our ministry. We began an intensified campaign to bring the School of Ministry to even more Nationals and to bring in even more souls through crusades throughout the world.

God had shown me that this new satellite technology was one key to accomplishing my final training dream for the Army He had called me to build.

I knew that the only way to maintain an effective and battle-ready force was through ongoing training.

A natural army doesn't just send its soldiers to boot camp and to advanced training, although both are necessary. If the army keeps its soldiers very long (and we intended to keep ours for their entire lives), it doesn't just let them sit around on bases, watching television and eating C-rations. No, the

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army invests in ongoing training, turning privates into corporals, corporals into sergeants, sergeants into lieutenants, lieutenants into captains, captains into majors, majors into colonels and colonels into generals.

Each soldier has a program of ongoing training to make even the best soldier better.

God showed me that I could institute a plan of ongoing training to God's Army's soldiers all over the world utilizing the same technology that had made the Million Soul Crusade successful, and by implementing a policy that each month, we would infuse our School of Ministry graduates with more advanced training to equip them to become better soldiers all the time.

This new plan came to be known as the Global Satellite Network, with as many as three-hundred sites in strategic locations all over the world – hubs for ministry activity and learning – that would receive training materials on a routine basis, via, videotape, audiotape and printed media.

Each month, I would send teaching materials to these locations of teachings that God had laid on my heart to share with these Nationals who were on the front lines of world evangelism.

Each month, video and audio teachings containing anointed messages to encourage, build up and train these soldiers, the Nationals would also receive another important tool, the *Victory Miracle Library* (later *Victory Miracle Living* magazine), packed with teaching materials – marching orders, if you will – that infused the Nationals with the manna of God's direction for the army we were building. Just as natural armies communicate with their soldiers via many forms of communication to let them know what's going on, we would send our communiqués out to God's Army to communicate God's directions for the army on a month-to-month basis.

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With the addition of the Global Satellite Network, the infrastructure of building God's Army was complete:

- \* Crusades would win souls and recruit soldiers.
- \* Intensive Schools of Ministry would take the soldiers through basic and advanced training.
- \* Ongoing communiqués via the Global Satellite Network would continually train the soldiers to become ever more effective in reaching the world, one nation at a time.

But if I thought the Million Soul Crusade and the Global Satellite Network were the best this vision would get, I was completely surprised in late 1988 when God again spoke to me, this time giving me a goal I would never have dreamed of in my entire lifetime, a goal that seemed so large it was almost beyond comprehension.

As the School of Ministry and Global Satellite Network strategies were achieving unbelievable success, I realized in 1988 that by the grace and providence of God, we had been able to train and equip more than four-hundred and ninety thousand Nationals to reach their nations for Christ! From the early days of the National Training Institutes and the El Cortez School of Ministry, I would never have imagined such a tremendous impact. If someone had asked me in 1962 if I could possibly train almost five-hundred thousand ministers by 1988, I would have told them I didn't think such a thing was possible. But God never calls if He doesn't also equip, and by His power, that's exactly what He had enabled us to accomplish!

God spoke to me very clearly and said, "Son, you must take the strategy I have given you to build Me an army and use this strategy to fulfill this new mandate: REACH ONE BILLION SOULS BY THE YEAR 2000!"

One billion souls.

Even the thought nearly knocked the breath out of me.

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I had never even considered such a tremendous challenge. One billion souls. To say the number, our minds often don't even conceive of the immensity of such a task. Most normal people can't even visualize the number one billion in their heads. Most people, if given a billion dollars, couldn't even spend that much, much less count it.

One billion people is one-sixth the population of the entire planet. That means that for every six people on the planet, God had commanded me to reach one through the strategy of Schools of Ministry...ONE out of EVERY SIX people on the entire planet.

Not only had He told me to reach this gigantic number of people, but He had given me a deadline: the year 2000.

For days, I was staggered by the immensity of the task that God had set before me. I knew that God wouldn't have called me to do the task if He wasn't prepared to equip me to accomplish what He had called me to do, but I still could barely conceive of the sheer unimaginable immensity of the task of reaching one-sixth of the population of the planet.

It would clearly be the most challenging thing I had ever set out to do.

Each time we held a crusade, the costs could run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars by the time the crusade actually happened. Each School of Ministry's cost was even higher, and the cost of conducting the ongoing Global Satellite Network was so high I dare not even mention it.

That, coupled with the sheer logistical details of each phase of the army-building operation, from the smallest School of Ministry with a few hundred students to the largest crusade with hundreds of thousands of members to coordinating dozens of Global Satellite Network sites each month, made the task of intensifying that to reach a billion souls seem even more difficult.

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But I sat down and began working on numbers to see exactly what would be needed to reach one billion souls. I knew that I could not afford to overestimate in my calculations – I would have to use the most conservative figures I could; I would rather reach too many people than not enough.

I calculated that each National – conservatively speaking – would reach an average of 1,200 souls after they had been trained by the School of Ministry. Some Nationals would reach many more than twelve-hundred, and some would reach many fewer, but the low-estimate average from reports we had received through the years was that on average the School of Ministry graduates reached twelve-hundred souls apiece.

That meant that if I was to fulfill the goal God had given me, I would have to train 850,000 Nationals before the year 2000!

Considering the fact that in the twenty-six years from 1962 to 1988, I had only trained 490,000 Nationals, a twelve-year window to reach 850,000 was a daunting task, indeed.

But I knew that with God's help it could be done, and so immediately, I began working feverishly, stepping up the pace of ministry to a new high, completely intent on reaching one billion souls before the year 2000. The Billion Soul Crusade was born.

The entire World Evangelism team stepped into high gear, working nearly around the clock to arrange crusades overseas, arrange Schools of Ministry all over the globe, and recruit more members into God's Victorious Army.

Throughout this fast-paced acceleration of the plan God had given me, our partners also stepped up their support, their prayers and their intercession on behalf of World Evangelism and the Nationals who were in the streets and alleys overseas preaching the Gospel.

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We worked almost non-stop, using every precious minute to forge ahead into uncharted territory. No one had ever even attempted to reach so many souls, but God had not called us to be attentive of precedents – through the strength of the foundation of the partners God had called to this ministry, the Billion Soul Crusade quickly became the rallying cry for hundreds of thousands of Christians all over the world whose desire, like mine, was to be part of this tremendous army God was building all over the world.

In 1995, God began speaking to me a new, even more ambitious direction for the ministry. One day, when I was deep in prayer, I heard the voice of God as clearly as I had ever heard it: “Son, reach the entire world before the end of the year 2000!”

But I couldn’t understand exactly when God wanted me to start this new focus He had given me. The year was 1995, still four years before the deadline of the Billion Soul Crusade.

I didn’t understand at the time what exactly God was trying to tell me.

But I found out a few months later.

Late in 1996, Lynn Hodge, who at that time was the executive vice president of the ministry, came into my office looking flabbergasted.

Lynn handed me a spreadsheet document with a string of numbers on it, wanting me to double-check his figures.

As I looked at the spreadsheet, I understood what had Lynn worked up so. According to the numbers on Lynn’s spreadsheet, by the middle of 1996, we had already reached our goal of one billion souls – three years before our deadline!

That announcement caught my attention.

Lynn and I began to meticulously go over all his calculations, one number at a time, checking corroboration and details. Each time we checked, we came up with the same number.

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To double-check, we sent the spreadsheet to several other vice presidents and directors in the ministry to see if they came up with the same number.

The verdict came back the same: Somehow, by the grace of God, we had fulfilled God's mandate to reach one billion souls – three years before our deadline!

My heart was deeply touched by the faithfulness our dear partners had shown to enable us to minister so effectively all over the world. The expenses of the Billion Soul Crusade were simply staggering when taken in perspective, and our partners had faithfully met every expense, every need had been met.

As I write this book more than three years later, I still cannot help but wonder how many crowns await our partners who gave and sacrificed so much to reach out to one billion souls all over the world.

*“He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.” (Matthew 10:41-42)*

Our partners had truly earned a prophet's reward. Though they had not been able to go overseas themselves to reach out face-to-face, they had been there through their giving and their prayerful support – nothing that had been done could ever have been done without them. It was truly a miracle of God, and when the story is finally told at the end of time, I'm convinced many will be shocked when they learn of the sacrifices made by so many people during the course of the Billion Soul Crusade!

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But I didn't have very much time to reflect or to savor the satisfaction of having completed such a tremendous God-given goal.

God, Who had known in 1995 when He began speaking to me to reach the world that the Billion Soul Crusade would soon be completed, had given me a new goal, and a new deadline: the end of the year 2000.

The goal was even more immense than the Billion Soul Crusade. This time, God wanted me to reach the ENTIRE WORLD before the end of the year 2000.

As I began to fast and pray together with the staff at World Evangelism, God began to give me a clear vision of how to accomplish this Mission To All The World...

It all came back to that old advertising slogan: "How do you cook an elephant? One piece at a time."

To cook this gigantic elephant, the entire world, we would break it up into smaller pieces and cook them one at a time, metaphorically speaking.

The world would be divided into ten major regions, with smaller sub-regions inside those regions.

Each region would be targeted with a massive effort to both preach the Gospel, through crusades and satellite television broadcasts, and to train an unprecedentedly large number of National ministers through intensified Schools of Ministry in each of the regions and sub-regions.

In addition, God showed me that to reach the world, we would literally need to blanket the entire planet in prayer by raising up a Global Prayer Strike Force of committed families who would turn their houses into Prayer Command Centers, where they and their friends and neighbors could meet to pray for Mission To All The World...and something that God had never directed me to tell my partners to do before: to pray for the soon return of Jesus.

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The last recorded prayer in the Bible was only six words long: *"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."* (Revelation 22:20)

But that prayer is one of the most powerful in the Bible. It declares that the person praying it is completely consecrated, separated and awaiting the Lord's return. God told me to stress everywhere that His will was that His army begin praying for Jesus to return to the earth to meet with us in the air.

I began to see a prophetic picture develop. Jesus had clearly said that He wouldn't return until the world had been reached: *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come..."* (Matthew 24:14)

I knew that although no man knows the date Jesus returns, we know He won't return until the Gospel is preached to the ends of the earth. After that day, Jesus can return at any time. It may be days, it may be years, but the way for His eventual return will be cleared.

With this Mission To All The World, we would actually be partaking and participating in end-time prophecy; we would be part of the prophetic machine God was using to fulfill the words that Jesus had spoken nearly 2,000 years earlier to a group of society's outcasts in the hillsides of Israel.

Immediately, I began gathering ministers and team members to go forth and set up the immense infrastructure we would need to fulfill this latest, most incredible goal God had given us. We would have to work diligently and quickly; we only had four years to accomplish the most difficult goal we had ever aspired to reach.

Other ministers joined forces with me as well, completely putting their own lives on hold to participate in this, God's end-time plan and His directive to us.

It had come such a long way since the early days of the ministry when I was preaching to groups of ten or twenty

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people in a small church in New Hampshire. It had even come such a long way since 1962, when God had come to me as I lay in a sweaty pile on the floor of a hotel room in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

God had taken this ministry through a series of steps that had positioned it to be in the privileged position of participating in the fulfilling of prophecy that had been spoken from the lips of our Lord Himself when He was in His physical ministry on the earth.

To this day, I am humbled and awe-stricken that God has allowed me to be a part of such a momentous end-times ministry. I never would have believed or imagined that I would be in such close proximity with so many wonderful moves of God in my lifetime. But truly, God uses the weak things of this world to confound the strong.

But the building of God's Army has not been the only outreach God has involved this ministry in.

Ever since I was a lost, little boy in a Jewish orphanage crying, "It's real and you can't take it away from me," I have had a heart for my physical brethren, the Jews.

As I stood on Israeli soil for the first time in 1955 after my first overseas crusade in Athens, Greece, I knew that God would call me one day to reach out to my brethren after the flesh. As you turn the page, I'll tell you the story of how God made that come to pass.