

A Short Version of the Holy Spirit moving in the life of Rev. Paul Normand Edward Teske, a Missouri Synod Lutheran Pastor.

I was baptized by the Holy Spirit in 1994. The outpouring was unsolicited and the Spirit fell on me while driving back to Westport, CT from Newport, RI. This new season in my life was immediately confirmed by a sign. Signs, wonders, healing, miracles and the outpouring of the gifts of Spirit began to slowly manifest in the church. Most dramatically was the Holy Spirit drawing Jewish people to the church of which twenty-two were baptized. (Another story to be told.)

After waiting eight years, my wife, Rivers, received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit on May 26, 2000, in Hartford, CT. We had attended a small meeting in an inner-city Hispanic church where Rev. Kingsley Fletcher was preaching. Kingsley called me up during the service and told me that in 21 days, God was going to open doors and that I would be faced with incredible opportunities for ministry. (This was the first Word of Prophecy that I had ever received.) Toward the end of the service, Rivers quietly walked to the front and stood with her eyes closed before Kingsley. Standing there all alone, Kingsley draped his suit jacket over her; and as the Holy Spirit fell on her, she fell to ground and began to sob. This was the long awaited day that I had been praying for, because Rivers and I became fully yoked together in our ministry. Several months later, I asked Kingsley what the twenty-one days meant. Kingsley told me that the twenty-one days may be literal, or could be spoken figuratively. He reminded me that it took the Arch Angel, Gabriel, twenty-one days to fight through the heavenlies to reach Daniel.

From that time forward, Rivers and I began to intersect with a number of people. Most importantly was our introduction to Harald Bredesen (a man who had been ordained as a Lutheran minister in 1946 and was baptized in the Holy Spirit in 1946). Harald asked me if he could be my Pastor-at-Large; and from that day forward, he became my mentor, and I became his “boss.” (Another wonderful tale of two Lutheran ministers.)

Fast forwarding, Rivers and I attended a dynamic, miraculous Benny Hinn Crusade in Madison Square Garden in August, 2003. A young woman who had been attending my congregation agreed to attend the crusade with us. She had been struggling with cancer for several years. At this stage, the cancer was in her brain, lungs, liver and bones. She could neither stand nor sit for any length of time. However, following the crusade, she was totally healed. Since then, all her cancer markers have tested normal. I had her give her testimony several times in the church and many people have been blessed through her words.

On May 4, 2004, a prophetic woman from California was speaking to me on the phone when she cried out for God to “protect my head and to dispatch angels to safe-guard me.” Little did I know the significance of this prophetic word.

On May 7, 2004, I was the guest speaker at the New Canaan Society. Approximately three minutes into my 30 minute talk, my left leg went completely immobile. By this I mean that I could not move it. I had no pain or headache; so I thought that maybe my leg had gone to sleep, or I had pinched nerve. As disconcerting as this felt, by the grace of God I continued to speak. As I was speaking, I thought maybe this was what it meant to be “really slain the in Spirit.” At any rate, I finished my talk and realized that I could not take a step. I collapsed. I never lost consciousness or had a seizure. I had no pain. But I felt the incredible presence and peace of God. I truly cannot explain how I felt, but I knew that God was completely wrapped around my circumstance.

I was immediately rushed to the hospital by ambulance. The initial diagnosis was uncertain, because I had full use of my left arm which ruled out a stroke caused by a blood clot. I had no headache, but a CAT

scan indicated that I had a 2 cm hemorrhage in the right side of the brain. Later a MRI would confirm that there had been no further hemorrhaging. Initially, they kept me in the Intensive Care Unit for two days. Then I was moved to the neurological wing. Five days later I was moved into the hospital's rehabilitation unit. I was told that I would be in the hospital for two to three weeks minimum. Twelve days after the stroke, I was released with a brace and walker to an out-patient therapy program for several months. However, God had another time table for my recovery.

Deep in my spirit, I knew God had healed me, and knew I must wait for Him to manifest my restoration. God gave me a scripture passage several weeks earlier. Hosea 6:2: "...in two days I will revive; on the third day I will restore." I began to dwell on this word. Was this passage somehow connected to the 21 days? After praying, I concluded that these were directly connected.

On Friday, May 21, Reinhardt Bonnke was scheduled to speak at the New Canaan Society. I was determined to go. I had already made arrangements with the hospital to give me a day pass to attend, but since I was now released, I asked my wife, Rivers, to drive me to the 7:30am meeting. I asked her for my watch. She said it was locked in my briefcase along with my cuff links. She handed me the case as we were leaving the driveway of our home. I opened the case and took out the watch. The hands of the clock were not moving. The time was 7:58—May 7th. I thought that it was strange for a self-winding watch to stop. I turned the hands forward thinking this was 7:58pm. However, when the hands past 12 o'clock, the date did not turn over. I said to Rivers, "My watch stopped at approximately the moment I had my stroke." Then I asked her if she had moved the briefcase around. She said that it really did not make any difference, because I had worn the watch at least thirty minutes after I had the stroke. I pondered this as we drove to hear Bonnke. What was the significance of my watch stopping and then allowing me to witness this phenomenon? Does God still reveal that He controls the hours of the day? I shook my watch and it started running again.

I walked into the New Canaan Society. Fourteen days had passed since I had stood before this very audience. I was invited forward to say a few words. I used a traditional four-legged walker supported by a brace on my left foot to keep my toe from drooping. After receiving a standing ovation, I shared that it was by grace that I was there and gave God much glory. I met Reinhart who laid hands on me and prayed for healing. He also prayed for Rivers. I felt the awesome presence of God that morning, but I knew that this was not my hour for healing. The words kept ringing in my ears, "two days to revive, third day to restore." 21 Days!

The physicians advised me to take it easy for a few weeks, because I could not drive due to having to take seizure medication (just as a precaution); I asked Rivers if she would drive us to Baltimore. I called my friend, Bruce Hughes, and asked him if there would be anyway to get seating at the Benny Hinn Healing Crusade in Baltimore the next week. I had such a strong unction that if I went to this crusade, God would touch me. Bruce told me that he would have our names added to the list. I informed my church leadership that I was going to the crusade and would be gone for a few days.

Tuesday evening, I received a phone call from a dear friend from St. Louis. He pastors a large Lutheran church, and he had flown in the prior week to preach for me. After returning to St. Louis, he experienced chest tightness while working in the yard. Because of what had happened to me, he saw his physician the next day for a stress test and an EKG. The physician told him that he had major blockage around his heart and that he must come in the next day (Wednesday, May 26, 2004) for an angiogram. He was advised that there was major blockage and that either a stint or bypass surgery may be necessary. That night, he and I prayed over the phone. I told him that God had his heart in his hand and was healing it, and the doctors would be confounded the next day.

The next day, Rivers and I left for Baltimore. I called my friend, Greg, and left a message on his voice mail that he was Greg the Lion-Hearted and would run with the lions. Later that day, he called and could barely speak. After running the test the first time, the physician told him that he had made a mistake and had to run the test a second time. At the end of the second test, he was informed that everything looked good and that no further action had to be taken concerning his heart. Greg was given Lipator and sent home. I told him that God had healed him and that he must declare and decree this to his people. I told him that God would be glorified in this; and many of his people, in hearing this, would be set free. I told him that as hard as it would be to inform a large Lutheran congregation of such a healing, it must be done. He agreed in principle and said he would pursue this declaration.

Thursday morning, Rivers and I met Lisa and Bruce for breakfast. We were excited and anticipating great things. We made our way over to the arena and were seated five rows from the front. I had a cane and a leg brace (under my trousers) and the thought of a chair in front of me for support was pacifying. The worship was wonderful as was every other aspect of the crusade. Unexpectedly, Benny Hinn came down the aisle and gently prayed for Rivers and me. We both fell back in our seats under the awesome power of the Holy Spirit. Following the service, we went back to our room. “Two days to revive, the third day to restore” kept flooding my mind as I drifted into sleep.

The next morning, we woke. I was feeling fatigued. I told Rivers that I thought I would rest and not attend the 10:00am service. She would not hear of this, and volunteered to go over early and get our seats. I agreed and made my way over about 9:30am. She was about seven rows back from the front. I joined her. David Palmquist came over to us and said that we looked familiar. I told him that I was Harald’s pastor, and that we had met the previous August in Madison Square Garden (the lady with the blue mattress). A few moments later, David returned and said that he would like to move us to the second row in the middle section. He left and then returned. We followed him to the front row where he sat us directly in front of the podium. We were shocked, but thrilled. I was feeling a little uncertain about standing for long periods of time. That chair in front of me would have been a great security blanket. (God would make a way!)

The crusade started. Toward the end, Benny called all of the Pastors forward for a blessing. Rivers and I walked to a place under the pulpit and stood there. Hundreds came for a blessing. Rivers and I had previously been blessed by Pastor Benny in New Jersey and New York City crusades where he had laid hands on us three consecutive times in each service. I told Rivers that with the leg brace, there was no way I could walk through that crowd and up those stairs. I felt content to just stand there and wait on the Lord. About that time, Lisa Hughes came over and told us we had to come on stage and receive a blessing. I told Lisa it was impossible for us to walk up those stairs. She said that we must come, so we walked through a small path security had carved for us. Our turn came. Pastor Benny, not one, not twice, but three times prayed for us. Were we blessed!

Later that day, I saw David in the grill at the hotel. I thanked him for the seating and he explained that he could not sit us there again. We told him that was just fine and that we would sit anywhere.

Great anticipation surrounded Friday evening. The 21 days of Kingsley’s prophecy four years earlier resonated. Then I realized something significant. The Friday night that Kingsley had given me that word was the Friday evening before Memorial Day, 2000. This was the same Friday evening before Memorial Day—four years later. “Two days to revive, third day restore.” This was the third Friday since my stroke; the third service at Baltimore. I know that this was the hour God had foretold. Rivers and I were praying with great expectancy!

We made our way over to the arena with brace, cane and water bottles about 6:30pm. Much to our surprise, we were led to the same two seats in the front that we had sat in the morning service. A young female pastor was seated next to me. We introduced ourselves, and I asked her how she was feeling. She said that she had been very sick in the restroom in the entrance area and was contemplating leaving before the service began. I told her that Satan was trying to rob her of her joy. We prayed for God to intervene and heal her. The service began. About thirty minutes later, she told me that she felt wonderful, and she was delighted that she had stayed.

The flow of the Spirit began to move as we entered into worship. Without warning, I was touched by the power of God. While standing, I began to shake in a way that I cannot duplicate this day. This lasted for about five minutes. Rivers immediately sensed, as I did, that I was being healed. Pastor Benny called out a word of knowledge for several healings including someone with a brace. Hallelujah!

The dilemma I faced was how do deal with that brace under my trousers while I am standing front and center. I looked over and saw the multitudes flocking to the front eager to share their testimonies. I told myself that I had been blessed by Pastor Benny several times and that this was their opportunity. Deep in my mind, I felt like Simon Peter facing that moment when he had to take that step into the Sea of Galilee. I knew that I was healed; I kept shifting my weight back and forth on my legs. "Do I undress and remove the brace?" Then I remembered the words of Harald, "Make it easy on you and hard on God." That was it! I said, "God, if you want me on that platform to give witness to what you have done, then you make it happen."

All of a sudden, Pastor Benny stopped everything and walked over to the pulpit. He looked directly at Rivers and me and said, "Come up here!" Rivers later reported that she looked around saying, "Do you mean us?" I on the other hand was saying to myself, "Well Lord?" I knew that this was God. We walked over to the stairs and onto the platform. Pastor Benny asked, "Who are you people?" I said that I was a Lutheran Pastor from Westport, CT, and that Harald was my Pastor-at-Large. He responded, "You are the Lutheran Pastor he is always talking about." Then he asked, "Do Lutherans believe in this?" I said, "This one does." He then touched us and down we went. Then he had us picked up, but before he said anything, Steve Brock told him that I had experienced a miracle. Pastor Benny asked me to share.

I shared about my stroke and that I felt that I had been healed. Pastor Benny then told Rivers and me that the reason he had called us onto the platform was to tell us that we were going to have a healing ministry. He prophesied over us and gave us "the mantle of healing." Then he said people would start coming to my church this Sunday for healing.

Saturday morning, I woke up and felt totally restored. I did not need my brace or my walker. I was still a little weak as we loaded up the car and headed for home. Sunday morning, I told Rivers that I had to go to church to see if people would start coming for healing. I attended the second service where I sat in the back of the church. At the beginning of the service, I went forward to assure the people that I was doing well and would return to the pulpit the next Sunday, June 6, which would be the twenty-eighth anniversary date of my ordination. Following the sermon, a Lay Minister asked for prayer requests. I stood and asked for continued prayers for the church and for what God was doing through His people. A woman, who had walked into the service late and sat in front of me (she did not hear me speak at the beginning and did not know that I was the pastor) stood up. She said "God had told me that if I came to this church today, I would be healed." She then pointed over her shoulder and said, "When I heard that man (me) speak, I knew that I had found the right church." (She had traveled approximately thirty miles to our church she even though she did not know that we existed.) Following the service, I went to her and offered to pray for her. While I was praying for her, she was completely healed. The next morning, she

left a message on the church voice mail saying that the pain she had for six months was gone. She could go back to work to a job she was forced to leave due to her pain.

As I walked out of the service, a woman showed me a picture of her twin grandchildren and told me that the little boy (two year old) had a blood count 200 and the doctors thought that it was leukemia. I took the picture and prayed that the test results would confound the doctors. She called later that week and told me that the blood count was 720 (normal 1000) and that the physicians had completely ruled out leukemia. (In addition, there have been several other healings which I will not take time to mention.)

A week after I had returned from Baltimore, I went to see my Physical Therapist Physician MD who examined me thoroughly. He said that I am three months ahead of where he thought I would be and that within a couple of weeks, I would be out of physical therapy.

There is much more that I could say, but this is a synopsis that hopefully captures the essence of my recent experience with the Living God.

Postscript:

As I look back, I believe that what Satan intended for harm, God is using for good. This episode took me to a new place in my walk with God. I believe that I am living on God's time by His grace, and that my life is wholly committed to God. There is no holding back for the Kingdom work that God has set before me. After 28 years of ordained ministry, I believe the next years will be better than the first. (Job 42: 12a: "Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than the beginning...")