

Transformation in North Omaha

*If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves,
and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven,
and will forgive their sin and heal their land. 2 Chron.7:14*

In July 2007, several congregations joined together in North Omaha, Nebraska to go through the transformation “healing the land process.” Several members of the Fijian “Healing the Land Team” joined Fusion Ministries and the North Omaha pastors to lead families through this process. North Omaha was the first community in the Western World to go through the actual transformation process that has impacted the nation of Fiji, where over 200 villages have been transformed by the supernatural presence and power of God. It was a historic time and the Lord moved mightily in our midst!

The process began on July 1st with an opening service and welcome from the community to the Fijian and Fusion teams. Then, Monday through Saturday teams went into the participating North Omaha households to go through the transformation process. Each morning and afternoon the teams ministered to families until over 70 households were visited by the Lord, bringing life, healing, repentance, and reconciliation.

Each evening we met together as the corporate community to worship the Lord, share testimonies of what God was doing, and give people the opportunity to repent corporately for the sins that had impacted their lives, families, congregations, and community. The objective that week was to uproot the spiritual root system that was producing the bad “fruit” in the lives of people and the community. The process of repentance cleanses our hearts and removes legal ground the enemy feeds on to cause destruction. As the process continued, families were restored, healed, and rejoicing! The glory and joy of the Lord was evident on their faces and the excitement grew day by day as the testimonies spread throughout the community.



We experienced a bit of New Testament life during those 9 days! We realized this is what the Church SHOULD be doing! We should be meeting with families every day, ministering salvation, deliverance, forgiveness, and healing. We should meet together as the family of God in the evenings to rejoice in the what the Lord has done and go deeper to root out spiritual strongholds in the community itself.

Within a couple days of completing the healing the land process, we recieved testimonies of community impact. Crack houses were shut down and “renewal” efforts were launched targeting North Omaha, specifically the places we had targeted in prayer! God has come to North Omaha, and although this is just the beginning, it is real. We are so grateful to the Lord and encouraged about what is to come.

Opening celebration



The Native Americans welcomed the Fijians in native dress. They granted the Fijians permission to come into the land and minister in the community. The native pastor took his own prayer shawl and placed it on Chief Vuniani.



Several leaders from the city of Omaha joined us to welcome the Fijian Healing the Land Team to their city. Those leaders who participated included the Deputy Mayor, the Omaha Chief of Police, the President of a large local bank, members of the clergy, and Native American leaders. They each shared the pain of the community and their desire to see God come and bring healing. They also acknowledged that they didn't have the answer and that only God could heal the wounds of the N. Omaha community.

A Native American leader closed the ceremony by lighting a sacred fire in her grandfather's "fire pot" and praying for the fire to consume the leaders and the people. We ended by blowing the shofar and asking God to take us into the community like Gideon's Army!

Healing the Land process in homes

In the months preceding the transformation process in North Omaha, we wondered if families would really allow us into their homes and confess their sins to the Lord and then to each other. Will people actually repent – of real sin?

Yes! They did! Over 70 households representing entire families and sometimes extended families went through the healing the land process in N. Omaha during the week. The Lord's presence would come into the room, and families would repent to the Lord for their sin, the sins of their forefathers, and break any continuing sin from being passed down to their children.



The Fijian Healing the Land Team anointed the N. Omaha leaders to go into homes and lead families through transformation process.



Pastors prepared the oil, salt, and water mixture. The mixture was sprinkled throughout the homes at the end of the repentance process to cleanse, sanctify, and dedicate the home and family back to the Lord.



The team prayed for a young man in a family at the conclusion of the process and the Holy Spirit fell on the family! The young girl fell into a restful sleep when the peace of the Lord invaded the home!



A family at the conclusion of the process re-covenanted themselves back to the Lord and to one another.

Young people repented for rebellion, and prodigals came home to the Lord! Husbands repented to their wives for adultery and recieved freedom from years of shame and guilt! Mothers repented to their children for lack of love and anger! Parents wept together before the Lord confessing their sins and the impact on their children. Siblings repented to each other for jealousy and fighting! Addictions were broken! People were healed emotionally, spiritually, and sometimes physically! Families were restored and great joy came! The joy of the Lord and His glory were on the faces of the families that had been healed during the week. Life and hope are returning to N. Omaha!

Repentance and prayer on defiled sites in community

As we prayed about the spiritual strongholds over N. Omaha and asked the Lord to reveal defiled places that had impacted the spiritual atmosphere of the community, He led us to focus on 4 specific areas. First, we went to a park that is infamous across the United States as a site for paranormal activity, a place where many people visit to connect with demonic spirits and experience dark supernatural activity. The park is notorious in Omaha for suicide, bloodshed, racism, and immorality. It was clearly the “high point” of spiritual influence over North Omaha and we believe linked to much of the violence that occurs there.

The second site and probably the most powerful night was the confrontation with the issue of injustice at the Douglas County Courthouse.

The third issue the Lord had us address was the injustice of Native Americans. We visited a now vacant lot where a young Native American man was murdered. The business formally on the land was cursed by the man's father. Shortly following the event, it was torn down and now left barren and desolate, unable to be sold for more than 10 years.

The final site was the original Red Light District in downtown Omaha. This stronghold of immorality remained an active presence in Omaha for over 20 years, permitted to continue by many levels of city government and even the Church.

Defiled Site #1-Hummel Park



The Team listened to the history of Hummel Park and how the violence and bloodshed occurring are closely linked to N. Omaha.



We buried a cross into the earth to dedicate it back to the Lordship of Jesus!



Our Team walked through Hummel Park asking the Lord to sanctify and heal it from much bloodshed, occultic activity, and violence.



A Native American leader cried out to the Lord on behalf of her people and the land defiled by injustice.



Rhonda Hughey repented to a Native American leader on behalf of white Americans for the injustice and bloodshed of Native Americans, including taking of their land, not valuing who they were, removing their native identity, introducing disease. She also repented for the settling of our nation through pride, control, and domination without concern or care for who they were and the land God had already entrusted them to steward.



Then, we repented to the African Americans for taking them captive into slavery where they lost their identity, their families, their own land, and for treating them as a commodity.

The N. Omaha leaders shared their personal stories and the stories of their parents and grandparents and we responded to their pain with broken hearts and repentance. The reconciliation that followed was profound; this was not simply a prophetic act or symbolic gesture; we didn't do this because it was the "right thing to do." We simply asked God for His heart to intercede and root out injustice and its impact on our

friends on N. Omaha and the land where they live. We, as white people wanted to stand in gap before the Lord and just say "we're sorry". We prayed, "Lord, will you forgive us?", and then we asked our friends "we're sorry, will you forgive us?"



Wes Adams rejoiced in the Lord after the cleansing of the land and reconciliation process!

Defiled Site #2-Douglas County Courthouse

In 1919, one of the most infamous racial incidents in our nation occurred in Omaha - the lynching of Will Brown, a black man accused of raping a white woman. The circumstances surrounding this incident are shocking and so abhorrent it's difficult to even share the story without still feeling the pain and the shame of it, which is exactly why this became our primary prayer assignment in Omaha.

Will Brown was dragged out of the Douglas County Courthouse where he was being held for trial by an angry white mob – thousands of them. As the crowd grew, their anger turned into a demonic frenzy. Soon, they set the entire Courthouse on fire; they attacked the local police and fire stations and when the Mayor tried to intervene by offering himself in the place of Will Brown, the crowd agreed – and they hung the Mayor. Meanwhile, they captured Will Brown and dragged him through the streets, beating and kicking him, and hanging him from a pole. But they weren't finished. They continued to mutilate his body, finally burning it in a fire pit, and then the proud white men gathered around the fire and took pictures with their victim. Nauseating isn't it?



The evil ignited in the murder of Will Brown continued to terrorize the African Americans in the city and lead to a racial riot for 2 days that required the National Guard's intervention. As a result, the city created "restrictive covenants" to keep the African Americans within a certain boundary. Those false covenants were repelled in the 1940's, but of course the evil of the racially motivated boundaries established through bloodshed and injustice continue to impact the area today. The area of the restriction is known today as "North Omaha." This area of the city was literally birthed in bloodshed, racism, and injustice. And as far as we could tell, nobody has ever said "I'm sorry."



We went down to the Douglas County Courthouse on Friday night July 6th to say "we're sorry" and to ask God to forgive us as white people. Then we asked the African Americans for forgiveness so that God would uproot the injustice, bringing freedom, release, and healing to the community of North Omaha.

As we concluded and prayed, an eagle flew in circles above us. Our Native American friend and the Fijian team believed this was clearly sign from the Lord of freedom coming. Let it be Lord!



Chief Vuniani addressed the crowd gathered at the courthouse and explained why we were there and what the Lord wanted us to do together to root out injustice.

Rhonda Hughey shared the story of the lynching of Will Brown in 1919 that led to the race riot, anarchy, and eventually the "restrictive covenants" that forced all black people into the perimeter of N. Omaha.



Black and white pastors met face to face, as the African American pastors shared honestly from their hearts on the pain of racism and the impact of injustice in their own lives and the generations before them.



As the white pastors repented and asked for forgiveness, we sensed the heavens open over us as they reconciled together.



White youth take responsibility for the racism in their own hearts and for the youth that started the mob lynching of Brown.



The African American youth forgave them for past injustice and the current impact in their lives today. Many hearts were healed as they embraced and reconciled.

Chief Vuniani asked the white people and African Americans to stand facing each other.





When the opportunity to repent to the African Americans was presented, white people chose to kneel in humility. When they did they began to weep and many felt like they were glued to the concrete where they knelt, not able to stand back up. At that point, the Holy Spirit began to rest on the gathering and healing began to flow. The African Americans began to weep and extend their hands in forgiveness, rejoicing in the Lord and feeling released.



The crowd watched in awe and anticipation of what the Lord was doing.

Defiled Site #3-Native American Bloodshed

A couple of years ago, a young native American man stole some beer from a Kwik Shop. As he and his companion ran from the store carrying the beer, the cashier shot the young man in the back as he was running to his car. The young man died. A day or two after this incident, the young man's father gave a TV interview. In that interview, the father cursed the business and the land. The business ended up closing, and the land has never been sold. Although they have tried to sell the land, it hasn't sold for almost 10 years now. Eventually they took the sign down, tore down the building, and left the lot vacant.

Defiled Site #4-Red Light District

In the early 1900's, Omaha was filled with brothels in a large vice district downtown, under the gaze of city officials, the church, and families. The most notorious of the brothels were known as "the Cribs", where rows of shacks down the alleyways filled with young girls. In addition, the "Burnt District" was another notorious area of brothels downtown, at one time numbering over 100 with over 1,600 women caught in the trade. The area was described as a place "where sin held full sway and Satan reigned supreme." A businessman owned this district and made a considerable amount of money, which fed into the pocketbooks of local city leaders, policemen, judges, etc. The existence of prostitution on this scale was justified by the Christian community as a necessary evil; it was thought the district would help protect "good" women from sexual assault like a sewer that drains moral impurity from the Christian world.

The impact of these areas contributed to heavy corruption, terrible abuse of women and children, abortions, suicides, and 30% of the men in the city of Omaha had a sexually transmitted disease. These areas existed for over 20 years before they were successfully shut down.



Rhonda shared about of the corruption of the brothel business and its devastating effects on the people, city, and land.



The Fijian team and pastors rejoiced after praying together for God to uproot the vile history of the Red Light District and its continuing impact of immorality in the community. We prayed for God to bring healing, wholeness, and salvation to all those held captive in prostitution, sexual abuse, and immorality today.

Celebration & Commissioning Service



Healing the Land Team being presented with gifts from N. Omaha leaders to thank them for their love and sacrificial ministry into the community. Then, Fijians presented crosses to N. Omaha leaders and Fusion Ministry to “commission” them in the on-going work of transformation!



Rhonda Hughey leads the N. Omaha leaders in a prayer of corporate confession and consecration and invitation for Jesus to begin to dwell in the N. Omaha Village



Articles representing sin were brought by families and laid on the altar to be destroyed as homes were cleansed



Pastors symbolically removing the sin of idolatry, bloodshed, sexual immorality and broken covenants from buckets of soil at the front of the church now that the process has been completed



Fijian team symbolically cleansing the land with oil, salt and water to symbolize the cleansing work the Lord had done in the community during the week



A hope-filled people rejoicing in the goodness of the Lord and all He has done among them!

Why North Omaha?

While the journey of these North Omaha pastors began some years ago, it took a significant turn in April 2006 when they attended a Pastors' Retreat where Wes Adams and Rhonda Hughey were speaking on presence-based revival and transformation. The Lord spoke to the leaders from N. Omaha clearly about the issue of prayer, repentance and transformation of their community. They heard the instruction of the Lord in 2 Chron. 7:14 and desperation gripped their hearts.

The leaders recognized their hearts had grown sick from hope deferred. That recognition contributed to their desperation. They felt challenged by the transformational vision of what God wanted to do. But the devastated condition of their community, in spite of all their ministry for many years, seemed an insurmountable and unmovable mountain of impossibility. After years of ministry no long-lasting fruit was evident from all their individual labor. The reality was that their community was worsening on their watch! The response of these pastors was immediate, that next Thursday evening some of them went home from the leaders' retreat and began to repent to their families for their spiritual neglect and failure. Then on Sunday morning they repented to their congregations, and to their surprise the Lord came and began to minister to them in powerful ways!

Following a subsequent consultation with the Fusion Ministries team, the Lord confirmed to them to take a fresh look at their community and what He desired to do among them to bring healing and transformation. They set their hearts on the Lord and took responsibility for the "village" of N. Omaha. It's fair to say that these leaders, their families and their congregations, even the community itself, will never be the same!

What followed was a year of repentance. Leaders continued to repent to the Lord for their lack of stewardship of their village. Leaders began repenting to one another and reconciling their hearts over wrong attitudes, offenses, etc. This repentance carried over into their congregations; and as it continued the Lord began to draw near to them. Soon the presence of the Lord increased in their services. People were getting physically healed of serious maladies and some financial miracles began occurring, etc. During this early stage, an amazing thing happened. As the Fusion Ministries team began to walk alongside the leaders in N. Omaha, the Lord began to

knit our hearts together. We realized that the Lord had called us to become partners in His Kingdom purposes for N. Omaha! On a foundation of friendship and submitting to each other, the Lord began to rest on us, speaking to us, directing us, encouraging us. We had no clear plan of action but we agreed to pursue the Lord together and see where we ended up!

In January 2007 the N. Omaha leaders decided to participate in the “Divine Experiment” (now known as “Face to Face”) that God had suddenly given Rhonda. Without much information (because the Lord had so recently spoken to us about this), they abandoned themselves to a 21-day fast, a time of consecration and separation from the spirit of the world. They turned off their cell phones, stopped most regular church activities, added early morning, daily prayer meetings, turned off their televisions, stopped non-essential shopping and indulging in entertainment and other forms of idolatry. They fasted food and many other things to make themselves irresistible to God’s presence!

Much to our surprise, the Lord’s response to them was immediate and powerful. Within the first couple of days, dramatic breakthroughs were occurring and powerful testimonies were being shared. The Lord was doing much more than we expected. (See the January Participant Testimonies on: www.thedivineexperiment.com). We realized the Lord wanted to draw near to His people once they returned to Him with all their heart. N. Omaha pastors and congregations participated in the Divine Experiment again in March and the Lord continued to move and take them deeper into His heart.

When it was suggested that the community was prepared for the actual transformation process and that the Fijian Healing the Land team was open to coming to lead them through that process, the leaders responded again with an immediate “yes” and with abandoned hearts to whatever the Lord wanted to do among them. At every point and decision, the Lord’s will and the fullness of His Kingdom purposes was their objective. No matter how challenging this process sounded, they never compromised or held back. They never insisted on their own way or tried to protect their own ways and “culture”. They desperately wanted God to come to their village! Thus we said “yes” together to the most incredible journey of our lives! The first transformation process in a Western World community was scheduled for Omaha, July 2007... As God promised in 2 Chron. 7:14, when His people who are called by His name humble themselves and pray and turn from their wicked ways, He will HEAR their cry! He will FORGIVE their sin! And He will HEAL their land! God has begun responding to their response as He promised.

What are the keys of the N. Omaha story?

It’s important to consider both the context and the process of the N. Omaha testimony. First, we are talking about a remnant of leaders and congregations – 7 to be exact. We are NOT claiming that all the churches in N. Omaha are involved presently in this process. Neither is anybody claiming transformation of the whole community at this stage! What we believe is happening is the Lord has put a stake in the ground and given the beginning of a real breakthrough of revival and transformation in the community because of the obedience of this remnant of believers.

Certainly this is not the whole of ministry processes going on in the community. What has and is occurring is the process focused on presence-based transformation. It is tempting to look at this breaking through with its encouraging signs and fruit and just want to “pick the fruit”, or to find out what has happened and try to replicate it. We must be very clear regarding this – we can’t look at the transformation process and try to just do that in our communities. The journey of the N. Omaha story started 14 months ago! They spent over a year preparing themselves through humility and repentance, changing of mindsets, reconciling, praying and fasting, restoring broken covenants. If we want to see the fruit of THAT, then we must follow THAT process and prepare ourselves.

There are no shortcuts to Transformation! Each of these leaders had some things in common before April that made their hearts ripe for the transformation message:-Desperation for their community which was filled with violence, bloodshed, immorality, poverty, broken families, hopelessness, etc.-The cumulative effect of years of failures from past ministry attempts to fix the community on their own and through their individual efforts or programs. This contributed to their desperation-They had the heartbeat of the city. They were already in touch

with its pain, its history. They had a burden but were without direction forward.-They each wanted the community to be transformed but understood none of them could do it by themselves. Brokenness and humility was already present in their hearts. They had been in the wilderness for a long time.-Their mindsets were not focused on hope from another event or program. Their hope was in a Person, and seeking wholeheartedly His Kingdom as a lifestyle, a journey and a process.

Principles Identified During the Preparation Process: After watching “up close” these leaders work together for over a year, several critical transformational principles are evident! This list is a brief summary of some of the more important principles:

- 1. *Humility of the leaders.*** They live out a lifestyle of humility before the Lord and before each other, before their congregations and other leaders in the community. In their humility they work together closely with ministry “partners” such as Fusion Ministries who they recognize carry particular revelation and ability to serve them in their transformation journey. They submitted to the word of the Lord when they heard it because they realized they have never been this way before.
- 2. *Willingness to quickly repent.*** They live out a lifestyle of repentance. One of their mottos is “we refuse to be offended”. They work through disagreements, community ministry, with open hearts. Pride never gains a foothold among them, so the Lord is able to stay close to them.
- 3. *Absolute dependence on the leading of the Lord.*** Another key motto for them is: “we don’t know where we are going”.
- 4. *Desperation for their devastated community.*** These are leaders whose hearts are literally breaking over the ravaging effect of the enemy on their families, friends, congregations and community. They have hearts of compassion and enter into the role of intercession with a desperate cry for justice and mercy and breaking in of God’s power.
- 5. *Willing to respond quickly, not procrastinate.*** If God is moving and speaking they will respond immediately.
- 6. *New corporate identity.*** Their new corporate identity as leaders and congregations, along with the identification of their “village” gave them confidence and validation that God would lead them to success.
- 7. *Repentance begins with the household of God.*** The conviction that what is going on in the streets won’t change until they get it right INSIDE the church
- 8. *Kingdom culture.*** They didn’t gather a large group of leaders and find the lowest common denominator for unity. They intentionally kept the group small, until a Kingdom value system and culture was established.
- 9. *No quick fix.*** They understood the amount of work to be done inside and they had patience with God’s process, they didn’t rush ahead.
- 10. *Adjusting priorities.*** They adjusted their calendars to make meeting weekly and praying for the Kingdom to come to their village their highest ministry priority.
- 11. *Presence-based unity.*** The Lord’s presence in their weekly prayer meetings motivated them to be together.
- 12. *Kingdom camaraderie.*** These leaders moved from being pastors to brothers to friends. They no longer relate to each other according to ministerial titles and positions.