

# Revival in South Africa Interview With Erlo Stegen

by Erlo Stegen

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*Erlo Stegen shares the miraculous revival among the Zulu population in South Africa, highlighting transformation through repentance and God's power.*

**Duration:** 32:17

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 7:14, Matthew 9:35, John 14:12, Hebrews 13:8, James 5:16

**Topics:** "Revival Ministry", "Gospel Transformation"

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## Description

This sermon shares the powerful testimony of Domine Erlo Stegen's work in South Africa, where God's miraculous intervention led to a revival among the Zulu population. Despite initial challenges and lack of results, God revealed Himself in a profound way, convicting hearts of sin and transforming lives. The revival brought healing, spiritual renewal, and unity across racial divides, demonstrating the impact of the gospel in abolishing barriers and bringing peace. The sermon emphasizes the importance of revival, the conditions for experiencing it, and the ultimate solution for societal challenges lies in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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## Transcript

Good evening, South Africa is almost every day in the news. Political developments attract our attention. But we don't hear and don't read a lot of news, such as the work of Domine Erlo Stegen in South Africa.

He worked for 12 years under the black Zulu population of Natal, until the day came that he wanted to give up, because he didn't see many results. But then something miraculous happened, that was in 1966, something completely new, something unexpected. And now, 25 years later, he still works in Natal under the Zulu population.

And today he is here with us. But what really happened? All of a sudden, God revealed himself to men and women in awkward holiness and irresistible power. It was as if the Spirit of God came over the whole area, entered the homes, convicting them of sin.

They would come, conscious of things they'd have done wrong and sinned against God. They'd come saying, we have lied, we have stolen, we weren't faithful in our work. Schoolchildren hadn't been faithful at school, not honoring the teachers or the parents.

And they would come being convicted of these wrongs, not having been faithful in their marriage. And they'd say, can God forgive us? Is there hope for us? We are going in the wrong direction, our lives are not right. And that's how they turned to God.

I said in my introduction, you worked among them 12 years as a missionary, as a pastor. How were these 12 years? Well, without fruit. The black man says that Christianity is the white man's religion, Jesus is the white man's God.

But why did you go then as a white man to the black population, to the Zulus? Well, Christ came into my life, and then I felt the calling of going to these people to bring them the gospel. It was a very hard fight, so to say. It was difficult.

They say, well, you Westerners, you've built us schools and churches, that's good, but it's not good enough. It's a foreign religion to us. And that broke my heart and made me desperate.

And that I cried to God and said, oh God, reveal yourself to these people, that they realize that Jesus is not just the white man's savior, but for all mankind. There was a moment, you have told me, that you would like to give up, because you didn't see any results in your work, in your preaching. When did that moment come? That was in 1966.

And was there a reason for it? Well, I looked at the ministry, and I saw there wasn't much result. And Christ has commissioned his disciples to go to all the nations to teach them to keep whatever he's commanded us. And we were failing, and I was failing in that.

And I said, well, how can I stand before God one day, not having done what Christ has commissioned his disciples to do? And then did you decide to do something? We prayed and searched the scriptures and said, well, what does the Bible say? And then we said, well, let's accept the Bible as God's word for us today and take it seriously with our Christianity. And you didn't do that before? No. Well, there were modernistic ideas.

We'd say, well, it's not really for us today, not in the 20th century. Yes, in the 1st century. But we live in modern times, and we can't take it so strictly today anymore.

Can you give an example of what you thought was only for the past, for the days of Jesus or the apostles, and what was explicitly for today? Yes, in John 14, 12, the Lord Jesus says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the works I do you will do also, and greater works than these, because I go to the Father. I'd go through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John to read what Jesus did. I said, but Lord, I believe in you.

That means that I can do that as well, not because I'm something, but because he has gone to the Father. And these were things that showed me that I didn't have that, what the Bible had promised us. You mean Jesus went out preaching to the people, and the people were healed and touched by God and changed their lives, and that kind of thing? Yes.

Jesus taught them, and he set them free from bondage. He healed the sick. He forgave their sins, saved the souls, and changed their lives.

And we saw that the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ wasn't the same thing as we find in the acts of the apostles and in the disciples' ministry. They had power, but we experienced the opposite. When did you experience the opposite? In those 12 years on the mission field.

Can you give an example where you feel, well, we can't do what is written in the Scriptures? Yes, for instance, one day a mother came to me, and she says, is this true what you have told us, that Jesus Christ is the living God and that all power is given to him and that he's still the same? I said, yes. She says, well, I've got a daughter, and she's possessed. Could you ask your God to heal her? Possessed by demons? By demons.

She was bound. And so I didn't know what to do. Theoretically, I said it is like that, but in the practical, we weren't experiencing it.

God, for instance, promises if we abide in him and he in us, we'll ask whatever we will, and it will be given to us, and that we should pray in his name so that our joy may be full. But we didn't know such a life in practice, and that brought us to our needs. What did you say to this mother? We can't help you? I told her, well, I played for time, and I said, where is she? Could I see her? And I'll come with you.

So we went to her home, and we found the daughter. And it was worse than what I expected. And then eventually we prayed for her for three weeks, but after three weeks she wasn't set free.

I was just about to nervous wreck, and I didn't know what to do, which side to turn. That made us desperate, and that we cried to God and said, God, if you are still the same, and your spirit is still the same, and the word is the living word, why should it be different? And then God answered our prayer in 1966, when he came down and revealed himself in Poway. What did you experience then? You said God came down and revealed himself, but what really happened among you and among your co-workers and in your missionary post? Well, God started working in our own lives and dealing with things in our own lives that went right, like pride, jealousy, resentment, unforgiveness, our attitude not being right with each other.

So there was a cleansing process. Now we understand very well that we can't expect the heathen and the outsiders to be helped if we Christians aren't living in God's light. So in Peter we read it's time that the judgment of God begins in the house of God, and when God's spirit was able to work in our hearts, all of a sudden the breakthrough came amongst the ungodly as well.

Outside. People that weren't interested in religion, they never entered a church. They were atheists, spiritists, and all of a sudden God took hold of them.

There were no church bells ringing, no inviting people going on the street, inviting them to come, but the spirit of God literally was the divine magnetism drawing the people. Let's go back to the very beginning of the whole thing. Who were the first people or the first person even who came? God started with the strongholds of evil.

The first people that came were the witches. I know that there are a lot of them among the Zulus having that witchcraft and doing these dark things that we are a little bit afraid of. Can you explain what a witch doctor or a witcher is? Yes.

Well, the heathens, they take it more seriously with their heathenism, idol worship, spiritism, than we Christians with our Christianity. Spiritism and witchcraft is a part and parcel of their life. They don't do a thing without being in contact with the spirits of the dead.

Everything has got to be reported to them. When they go to work, when a child is born, a sacrifice has got to be brought. And that's very real in them.

They speak to the spirits and the spirits speak to them. So they are the spirits of dead people. They say they are the spirits of the dead.

We know as Christians those are demonic forces. When a person dies he goes to heaven or to hell. But they believe that these spirits are the spirits of the deceased.

And they worship them. And they pray to them. And they believe that they watch over them.

Could you say there is a form of what we call in the western world spiritism? It's exactly the same thing. And you said the first people came from that realm, from spiritism. People that were bound by these things and possessed by these things.

The first person that came was a witch. She walked for seven kilometers to the place. She had a training center for witches.

And she says, you know, I am bound with chains of hell. Who sent her? Yes, that was the question. I asked her, who sent you? She said, nobody.

I said, who invited you? She said, nobody. I said, I can't understand it. And she says, please don't waste my time.

I'm on my way to hell and I want to know, can Jesus Christ break these chains of hell? I couldn't trust my ears and my eyes. But she says, please, I want to know, tell me, can Jesus Christ save me from this bondage? And, well, I couldn't believe it myself. For 12 years, I had done missionary work amongst these people, trying to explain to them that it's wrong.

It's not according to the Bible. God has forbidden it. We shouldn't serve other gods.

He is the only true God. We shouldn't bow to any other god. But they say, well, it's God-given.

It's something good. And now, out of the blue, they came and said, they are bound with chains of Satan. Can Jesus Christ set them free? What did you say to her? I said, yes, of course.

And she said, how? I said, well, Jesus Christ came to take away our sin. He died for us on the cross. And she came out with their sin.

They were so convicted that they weren't satisfied with a general prayer, God forgive us our sins. They wanted to actually name their sin by name. And they confessed it.

And they came to Jesus, mentioning their sin, crying to God. They came with tears in their eyes, crying, repenting. But when they had confessed their sin and believed that Jesus had forgiven them, their faces beamed like that of angels.

And such peace and happiness came into their life that they were changed instantly. They went back home. The husband said, wife, what's happened to you? You look so different.

You're so peaceful. You've got such a joy. The parents didn't recognize their children.

They were so obedient, so respectful. Children going to the school. The teacher saying, but what's happened to you? I can't believe that you are the same old boy.

You were so unkind, so unfriendly. What's happened? And then they could testify that Christ changed their lives. And Christ kindled that fire.

Parents got converted. Teachers got converted. The owners of firms got converted.

And it was like a fire that went through the country. Through the whole Natal province where the Zulus live. Yes.

And then it spread to the others, to the whites, to the Indians, to the other races. It started with the Zulus. But before we knew what was happening, it wasn't just the Zulu kneeling at the cross.

There was a white next to him. And then there was an Indian next to him. With God there is no apartheid.

It just vanishes. We are all one in Christ. You've told me before that also miracles happened.

What happened then? Can you tell a little bit from the beginning what happened? Yes. Without people even being prayed for, as they gathered around the Word of God, it was as if Christ walked amongst them, touching them and healing them. The eyes of the blind were healed.

I remember one man getting up, walking with his walking stick, the white stick for the blind, walking up and down, shaking his head, speaking to himself. And he says, I've always said that Jesus is the white man's God. And now I've experienced him as my God and praising God.

He says he's my God. And the sick would be healed. A little girl was brought on a wheelbarrow.

She lay on the ground. She had a hunchback. Her knees pressed hard against her chest.

She was 11 years old. When the mother washed her, she could hardly put her hand between the knees and the chest. There were two hollows in her chest.

And she had to take a sheet, a bedding sheet, and just wrap it around the child. A black girl. A black girl.

When she was two years old, she got ill. She fell ill. And her whole body shriveled together, her arms and her knees.

And she was just like a bundle with a sheet around her. And the water was oozing out of her skin. And it didn't take long, and the whole sheet was wet.

And a man who was healed told the mother, You take the child to Mapumulu. That was where the mission was. Where the revival started.

Yes. And he said, They are Christians, and they worship a living God. They'll pray for your child, and the child will be healed.

And the mother cried and said, You're pulling my leg. You're mocking me. Don't play the fool with me.

I've prayed for years, and nothing happened. So the aunt of the girl, the mother's sister, took the girl, brought her. And in a meeting, all of a sudden, when prayer was made, suddenly she could stretch out her one leg, then the other leg.

Her hunchback suddenly left, and she was the first person to stand up and stand on her own legs. She said she felt the power of God coming over her. And she got up.

She was the first one to leave that room. The aunt was standing outside. And when she saw that girl, she just broke down.

She thought she had to carry the girl, and there she walked on her own legs. And you can imagine how the name of Christ is praised. And people say, Truly, he's still the same, as the Bible says.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And his name was glorified greatly. Yes.

Was it something that you expected? Did you preach healing for the body, physical healing, when you preached the gospel? No. To this very day, I've never held a healing service. We just prayed.

We just preached the word of God. And God works, as the Bible says, exceeding abundantly, above what we can ask or pray for. Even our faith limits him, because he says he works according to his riches in glory.

And that exceeds what we can pray for or believe. He comes and reveals himself in his greatness. I ask that because nowadays we have many people who go around preaching healing and having special healing services.

We know that from America, several other countries, also in Holland, now and then. But that was not your message. No.

The Bible says he sends his word and heals them. In divine healing, God starts with the heart. Physical healing hasn't got much sense if we're not helped spiritually.

First of all, we've got to be safe from our sin. If we're not safe from our sin, and a lame man is healed, he'll live a more dreadful life afterwards. He'll sin more.

So, what shall it profit a man, even if he gains the whole world, but loses his soul? The salvation of the soul is the first thing. And that is what matters. I'd rather be a Lazarus, sick from head to toe, but know the Lord and die and go to heaven than a healed man and go into the wrong place.

I mean, what happens in a meeting where you are preaching the word of God and from your Bible, and then all of a sudden people can see who were blind before? It's marvelous. Sometimes they get up, they don't say a word, and walk around. But you see, all their eyes are fixed on them.

The Zulus are inclined not to speak quickly. Sometimes they fear if they speak too quick, they lose it again. But their life speaks.

And you see how the eyes of the people are set upon them. And then they realize that Jesus isn't just the white man's God. He is their God.

He is their Savior. And they see that he's divine. Hundreds of people had gathered in a place that was so hard, where for over 100 years missionary work had been done.

But it couldn't be broken through. People would go to church, some of them, but the men wouldn't go. They say that's for the old women and for the children.

Like here in the West, many people say so. Oh, yes. Well, that's what happens in Africa.

And then God started bringing the people, and hundreds of people gathered. And in one evening, there were 10 blind people. And after the service, people were counseled.

And then the co-workers came and said there are about 250 people that ask for prayer for their spiritual needs. And in such cases, we pray for them in groups, not individually, because there are too many. So in groups of 20 or 30.

But if there are some that are very sick, we pray for 2 or 3 percent with laying on of hands. And that evening, they said there are 10 blind people. Couldn't those be prayed for individually? And after that, we could pray for the multitude collectively.

And then the wonderful thing happened that as they were prayed for, most of them, as they entered the room where they should be prayed for, they cried out and said, I can see. Christ touched them. But the wonderful part of it was that there was a blind person about 45 kilometers away.

And this woman wanted to come to be prayed for. But she had no opportunity. So she stopped a vehicle that came, but that vehicle was over full with people.

Sometimes in Africa, they don't understand that it goes according to the weight. They say, oh, there's still a little room in the place, and may I go in? And the driver said, I'm sorry, unless somebody else is prepared to get off. They all went to the mission post.

All went to the services. So she stayed behind. She wept when she stayed behind.

But the wonderful thing is that night, about 11 o'clock, when God healed these 10, Jesus in his mercy healed her as well at her home. The following day, when the people went home, they found this woman standing next to the road, telling them, I've received my sight. And they said, when? And it was exactly the time when Jesus Christ touched those 10 people.

So he heard her cry and was merciful to her. Amazing. So it doesn't depend on you and what you are doing? No, not at all.

It depends on him and him alone. Yes. This revival started in 1966, and what about today? Well, just before we left Africa to come here, a group of co-workers and Christians got together, and they said, you know, it is as if the revival only started yesterday.

It's still so new, so fresh. There's still this vital touch and the consciousness that God is present and God is working. Because in all these years, it's just been expanding and running through the country.

And still people are healed in physical needs also? We experience what we experienced in the beginning only in a greater measure. When people see this program, they might say, well, I'm sick and there's no hope for me medically. Why shouldn't I go to the mission of Kwasi Zabonto in Atal, to your mission, and to be healed there? What could you say to them? Well, actually, people come when they like and they leave when they like.

It's open to everyone. But what I can tell them is God isn't bound to a place. He can work in any place and situation, but we've got to get this straight, that the saving of the soul is the greatest thing.

That's why in James it says, if anyone is sick, confess your sin one to another and pray for each other so that you will be healed. The spiritual part first, and the physical is secondly. But we see that people knowing the Lord and having their life all right with God still die of diseases, sometimes very young.

What could you say to that? Well, if we are healed spiritually, it doesn't matter. We'll have to die one day. We are prepared for heaven.

Even Lazarus was raised from the dead, but he still had to die. So we've got to prepare for that. And if God in his mercy touches us, we are thankful.

If he takes us out of the world, we are prepared, and that's a better place. Then our healing will be perfect. You have experienced these wonderful things you told us about, and you still experience them in South Africa.

What are the conditions for having a revival? Because I think many Christians think at this moment, why shouldn't we have a revival in our church? God has promised revival. We've got such marvelous promises in the word of God. But it's good that we note that every promise has got a condition.

God is a sovereign God, and he's a covenant-keeping God. And every covenant has got two sides. God is faithful and just.

We can reckon with him. He's faithful, he'd do his part. But he's waiting for us to do our part.

For instance, in Chronicles, he said, So, it seems as if God has entrusted us Christians with the world. And it depends on us whether we are prepared to fulfill the condition. And whenever, by his grace, we do so, we will find that God is faithful to his word and to his promises.

And he will do exceeding abundantly, above what we expect. You've experienced these great things. You told me, among black and whites, both.

Does it mean that you have abolished apartheid already before the government officially did? Yes, that's true. And only eternity will reveal what has happened through the revival. It's all God's working.

And when Jesus works, that is abolished. We hear nowadays of violence, a lot of violence, and battles between blacks, among each other. What is the solution, the real solution for South Africa and its future? The best solution is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The preaching of the cross of Christ. Because the cross, through the cross, we are reconciled to God and reconciled to each other. In these very places where thousands of people have been killed, we go in with the gospel.

We preach to both sides. And we stand amazed to see what God is doing. In many areas where there's been fighting, there's peace now.

So, the key to the solution is the gospel. The word of the cross. And in many places, peace is made.

People are reconciled through the word of the cross.

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