

PRAISE FOR THE POWER OF ONE

“My friend, Dr. Billy Wilson, is one of the most gifted visionary leaders I have ever known. His passion to reach everyone in the world, one person at a time, is both inspiring and infectious. I highly recommend *The Power of One* to every believer and leader. You will be inspired to join a global movement to complete the Great Commission in our generation, a movement that Billy is helping spearhead.”

– **Brian Alarid**

President of World Prays and Chairman of Pray For All

“If every believer would reach the ‘ones’ around them, we would have an overnight spiritual awakening! If every believer would set their eyes on the ‘ones’ all over the world who have no Gospel access, we could finish the Great Commission! Dr. Wilson is not only leading this charge, he has given us this book as a timely, prophetic, and visionary charge for the incredible hour we live in! Let us take up this cause together to reach the ‘one.’”

– **Andy Byrd**

YWAM Kona, The Send

“Dr. Wilson reminds us that all people matter to God; all people have the ability to respond to the message of salvation; and all people can fulfill their God-given potential. *The Power of One* is a call to move beyond missiological thinking into missiological action and is a reminder that finishing the Great Commission is doable!”

– **Doug Clay**

General Superintendent, Assemblies of God

“There is a big risk with individualism if it starts and ends with the person’s ego. But when there is a commitment to take personal responsibility to reach yet another person with the gospel, the whole world can be changed. When many decide to connect with just one person, the Church is on the move! This is an important document from Dr. Wilson, and it is filled with the Pentecostal passion that characterizes his ministry. May we all live in a Decade of Revival bringing in a great harvest!”

– **Daniel Alm**

General Superintendent, Swedish Pentecostal Movement

“Perhaps the most serious mandate Christ placed upon us is finishing the Great Commission. As Evangelical and Charismatic believers, we have the greatest and

most effective set of soul-winning tools at our disposal. Billy Wilson is one of the most skilled craftsmen at using those tools when it comes to reaping the harvest. In *The Power of One*, Dr. Wilson shares his experiences, research, and knowledge, but most importantly, his heart for reaching every person on Earth with the Gospel message by 2033.”

– **Tim Hill**

Church of God Presiding Bishop/General Overseer, Cleveland, Tennessee

“*The Power of One*, by Dr. Billy Wilson, is a remarkable book that demonstrates the transformative impact of the gospel and the potential within each believer. It challenges believers to take personal responsibility for the Great Commission, highlighting the opportunities in our interconnected world. Dr. Wilson emphasizes unity within the body of Christ, rooted in love and a common mission. The book inspires readers to bring about spiritual awakenings and a global outpouring of the Holy Spirit, while encouraging active participation in reaching everyone with the message of Jesus Christ. In a broken world, *The Power of One* is a timely guide for faith, unity, and personal responsibility, leaving readers inspired and ready to make an impact. It is

a must-read for those seeking transformation in their lives and communities.”

– **Terry Parkman**

Empowered21 NextGen Global Co-Chair, NextGen Pastor, River Valley Church, OneHope Global NextGen Ambassador

“The first time I met Dr. Wilson, I discovered a brilliant and anointed man carrying God’s heart in such a unique way. A few years later, when he shared the ‘EveryONE’ initiative, I started to cry as I was hearing and feeling Jesus’ deep heart and urgent desire to save every single soul. This book is a holy-massive-glorious bomb that displays a major key for believers of this new era to fulfill and to finish the Great Commission. As ‘each one’ of us stops for the ‘one’ and reaches ‘someone’ with the Gospel, very soon EVERYONE on this Earth will hear the Good News, and for the first time in history, we will be able to see with our own eyes an entire generation saved before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hallelujah! This generation shall be saved!”

– **Jean-Luc Trachsel**

President of the International Association of Healing Ministries (IAHM), President and founder of Europe Shall Be Saved (ESBS), Member of the Apostolic Team, Gospel Wave in Switzerland, Empowered21 Global Evangelist Alliance (GEA) Co-Chair

“The impact of personal evangelism has been at the heart of soul winning since the inception of sharing the gospel. In his book, *The Power of One*, Dr. Billy Wilson has once again illuminated the value of each person’s individual influence in saving the lost. Reflecting on a personal encounter with God that resulted in a refreshed and expanded vision, he takes the reader on a journey that is simple yet profound. Whether a new or seasoned Christian, each will be challenged to do more!”

– **Dr. Tony D. Stewart**

Assistant General Overseer, Church of God

“If our culture has shown us anything in recent years, it presents to us a world in desperate need of the good news of Jesus. In *The Power of One*, Dr. Billy Wilson offers both the challenge before us and the remarkable opportunity to proclaim the gospel in the power of the Spirit. As president of Oral Roberts University, I particularly appreciate his insight into Gen Z and its potential as a gospel force. We need a fresh burden for the lost and a renewed practice of evangelism that this book details!”

– **Dr. Ed Stetzer**

Dean of Talbot School of Theology

“Change starts with one man or woman saying, ‘Yes.’ Many hearts are being ignited in the Body of Christ for each member to play their part in a new era of soul-winning. In *The Power of One*, Dr. Wilson masterfully takes us through the biblical examples of how one interaction changed the course of history. With urgency in the pages, this book activates every believer to stand in this hour to declare that ‘Jesus Christ is Lord.’ This book will both challenge and inspire you to make your ‘Yes’ count for eternity.”

– **Nathan Morris**

Founder and President, Shake The Nations Ministries

In *The Power of One*, my mentor and friend, Dr. Billy Wilson, issues a clarion call for the purpose of activating the “one.” One person set free in the name of Jesus can change a generation. A multitude of “ones” filled with the power of the Holy Spirit can literally change the world. This book reminds all of us to be the “one” that reaches the “one” for the purpose of worshiping the “One”—Jesus, the risen Christ.

—**Rev. Samuel Rodriguez**

Lead Pastor, New Season Church, President and CEO of NHCLC

“My heart always burns when I talk about finishing the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus. That is why my heart is very happy to know that *The Power of One* is published. This book clearly explains the importance of one person to reach everyONE in sharing the Good News of Salvation. I believe that after reading this book, every person will be moved by their heart to immediately finish the Great Commission. By 2033, everyONE will have an authentic encounter with the Lord Jesus.”

– **Pastor Niko Njotorahardjo**

Senior Pastor, Gereja Bethel Indonesia

“*The Power of One*, by Dr. Wilson, is a must-read for anyone who desires to make a lasting impact for the cause of Christ. In this book, Dr. Wilson shares his expertise and insight on how to effectively reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. His approach is practical, easy to understand, and biblically grounded.

“Dr. Wilson’s passion for sharing the gospel is contagious, and his writing style is engaging and easy to follow. This book is packed with wisdom and practical advice that will inspire and equip readers to make a difference in the lives of those around them.

“If you are looking for a book that will challenge you to step out of your comfort zone and share the love of Christ with others, *The Power of One* is the book for you. I highly recommend it!”

– **Reggie Dabbs**

The Youth Alliance

“Dr. Billy Wilson has continually maintained his pulse on what God is doing on Earth and what He is doing in the next generation. In *The Power of One*, you will be challenged to your core to step off the sidelines to reach someONE with the Gospel. In an era of tribalism and divisive belief systems, the time to unite to see a world reached is now. Whoever you are, wherever you are, join this clarion call to step out and see the world reached in our generation!”

– **Eli Bonilla Jr.**

Empowered21 NextGen North America Co-Chair, Author of Mixed: Embracing Complexity by Uncovering Your God-led Identity, National NextGen Director, NHCLC

“*The Power of One*, written by Dr. Wilson, is an inspiring and compelling book that calls all Christians globally to unite around one cause, to preach the gospel to everyone, everywhere, over the next decade through the power

of the Holy Spirit. We are living in a kairos and pivotal moment in history, and *The Power of One* will ignite your Godly purpose and potential to be part of this end time harvest. *The Power of One* will propel you to participate in an audacious goal to take the good news of Jesus to the ends of the Earth. There are no limits.”

– **Daniela Freidzon-McCabe**

*Pastor and Speaker, King of Kings Church, Empowered21 NextGen
Global Co-Chair*

“In *The Power of One*, Billy Wilson presents an awe-inspiring vision of the global church’s potential to fulfill the Great Commission. Drawing from Scripture, history, and personal experiences, Wilson passionately lays out a plan to reach every individual with the Gospel by 2033. This compelling call to action is imbued with a profound understanding of the power of personal encounters with Jesus. *The Power of One* offers a must-read blueprint for believers yearning to impact the world for the Savior, one person at a time.”

– **Dr. Wayne Hilsden**

*Co-Founder of King of Kings Community, Jerusalem, President of FIRM:
Fellowship of Israel Related Ministries*

“In *The Power of One*, Dr. Billy Wilson shares a message that is so important in the days and times we live in. It is a clarion call to action that is inspirational but also very practical. As I read it, I was personally challenged and encouraged regarding my part in the Great Commission. Dr. Wilson is an outstanding leader and communicator who has impacted the lives of countless individuals. In this book, he lays out a clear strategy for every Christian to play their part in the purpose of God in our generation. I genuinely believe that *The Power of One* is a vital resource in this new era of evangelism and should be on the bookshelf of every follower of Jesus.”

– **Sharon Witton**

*Toronto City Church Co-Lead Pastor, Empowered21 NextGen North
America Co-Chair*

“Dr. Billy Wilson is a global voice whose influence is touching lives worldwide. I have had the honor of working with Dr. Wilson and seeing how the vision for reaching everyone on Earth has developed. In this new book, *The Power of One*, everyone can find their role in advancing the Great Commission, and together we can see God’s glory cover the Earth.”

– **Russell Evans**

Global Senior Pastor of Planetshakers Church

“Having known Dr. Wilson for many years, I have witnessed and admired his tireless commitment to serving the next generation of Spirit-empowered leaders. In *The Power of One*, he inspires us all with the profound truth that one changed life has the capacity to unlock a multitude of transformations. He reminds us that each individual, regardless of background or influence, possesses immeasurable worth before God. Dr. Wilson’s book relays a compelling call to action as it challenges us to embrace the task of reaching every single person with the transformative power of Jesus by 2033. Dr. Wilson’s wisdom, combined with his genuine care for people, shines through on every page, leaving us inspired and equipped to embrace our own role in reaching the world, one person at a time.”

– **Rob Hoskins**

President, OneHope, Inc.

OTHER TITLES BY BILLY WILSON

Father Cry:

Healing Your Heart and the Hearts of Those You Love

Fasting Forward:

Advancing Your Spiritual Life Through Fasting

As the Waters Cover the Sea:

The Story of Empowered21 and the Movement It Serves (co-authored with the late Vinson Synan)

Generation Z:

Born for the Storm

THE
POWER
OF
 **ONE**

BILLY WILSON



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The Power of One

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND DEDICATION

When one writes a book, they often reflect on their life’s journey. This is true of *The Power of One*. Stories and reflections within this text span the entirety of my ministry, from my earliest days as a newlywed to a recent encounter with someone in China. I attribute all of these moments and inspirations to the work of the Holy Spirit in my heart and life. He has been my constant Companion since the age of sixteen, and without Him, I could never have accomplished what the Lord has asked of me. Jesus changed my life! If possible, I would tell every person on Earth about Him. My prayer is that this book will help fulfill that goal as you and thousands of others do all you can to reach every person on Earth for Christ.

I want to express special thanks to several people, including Alyssa Sanders, who coordinates content and research for our Oral Roberts University offices; Max Barroso, whose missionary passion has been an inspiration; Kay Horner, who has edited nearly all of the books I have written—what a saint; Charles G. Scott, who is coordinating schedules and distribution; Johnie Hampton and Hampton

Creative for designing another great cover; Lisa Bowman and Eric Peterson, my right and left hands at ORU; my son, Ashley Wilson, for pushing me over the edge to get this done; Holden Hill with Cedar Gate for working with our offices on this project from beginning to end. Special thanks also to my friend Rick Warren for his kindness and words in the foreword. As always, I must express my heart's gratitude for Lisa, who is not only my other constant companion and faithful wife but my consistent encourager.

I dedicate this volume to the multiplied millions of people who have never had a clear opportunity to encounter Jesus and know Him as their Savior. I pray more unreached people will have that opportunity because of the words on these pages. If just one person comes to know Jesus because of the investment of our time, energy, and personal experiences, all will be worthwhile. Remember, when you become ONE who is found, you are immediately commissioned to be ONE who finds others.

Through God's power and our united effort, we can reach every person on Earth for Jesus Christ and demonstrate *The Power of One*.

CONTENTS

Foreword by Rick Warren	1
Introduction	5
Chapter 1 THE POWER OF ONE	15
Chapter 2 A RESTLESS SHEPHERD	35
Chapter 3 REACHING THE MULTITUDES BY REACHING ONE.	55
Chapter 4 THE RE-PERSONALIZATION OF THE GREAT COMMISSION	77
Chapter 5 THE WORLD IN WHICH EVERYONE MUST BE REACHED	111
Chapter 6 A NEW ERA OF EVANGELISM	149
Conclusion	171
Endnotes	177

FOREWORD

God never does anything accidentally! He has a good purpose behind everything He creates in the universe.

That means you are not an accident! It also means no other person alive is an accident either. God planned them for His pleasure! He formed them for His family. He created them to be like Christ. He shaped them for service. And He made them for a mission! They are priceless.

There are accidental parents, but no accidental children. There are illegitimate parents, but no illegitimate people. Everyone matters to God.

Your parents may not have planned you, but God did! Every person was made BY God and FOR God, who loves them deeply. Until people understand this fact, life will never make sense!

The fact that every person is valuable, loveable, forgivable, and usable by God is the fundamental truth beneath this outstanding new book by my dear friend, Billy Wilson. Every person matters for three significant reasons: 1) God our Father created them. 2) Jesus the Son died for them. 3) God's Holy Spirit wants to live within

them. Every human individual is both infinitely valuable and tragically broken. Both descriptions are true. That is why Jesus made all the effort to come to Earth, suffer, and die to save us. Everybody needs Jesus.

If you want to know how valuable every single person is, regardless of their brokenness and sinfulness, just look at Jesus hanging on the cross. With bleeding, nail-pierced hands and His arms outstretched, Jesus was saying, “THIS is how much I love you! This much! I’d rather die than live without you! I planned you, I made you, and I have loved you every second of your life! And no matter how badly you’ve messed up your life, I can save you.”

There are many good motivations for caring about every person in the world and sharing the Good News with every person in the world, but three of the best motivations are these: We’re grateful to God for saving our lives, we recognize the worth of every other life, and we want to bring glory to God by seeing lives saved and transformed.

One of the biggest reasons most Christian believers never share their faith is they don’t realize how deeply God wants His lost children found.

Just as Jesus explained that the Good Shepherd leaves ninety-nine sheep safe to go after the one sheep that is lost,

The Power of One explains why and how each of us can do our part in reaching everyONE with the Good News that they matter to God, Christ’s died for them, and that He wants them in His family forever!

—Rick Warren

Author of The Purpose Driven Life

INTRODUCTION

The carpet was soaked with tears as I lay on my face in a small prayer chapel in Cleveland, Tennessee. God's presence was tangible. The time was between 2:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m., and I was all alone. The revelation I received that morning more than twenty years ago would dramatically shape and change my life. Ultimately, this significant encounter would inspire the thoughts expressed in this book. Let me explain.

Our church was concluding a forty-day fast, and as the lead pastor of the congregation, I had fully participated during the fast by drinking only juice. This was a wonderful season in my life. My body was skinny, my spirit was broken, and my heart was open to hear the Lord's words. During the last week of the fast, the church established a twenty-four-hour, seven-day prayer chain with someone praying in the prayer chapel every hour of the day throughout the week. My committed hour for prayer was from 2:00 to 3:00 each morning. As a pastor, I thought choosing one of the more difficult hours would be a good example to others.

On this particular morning, my one-hour commitment turned into more than a two-hour, intense, spiritual

encounter. Though others usually joined me, I was alone this time.

Somewhere during those two hours, the Holy Spirit visited me, and I found myself facedown, crying out to God for a fresh revival in our generation. His voice interrupted my tear-filled prayer with a promise that would change my perspective and ultimately my world.

I heard the Lord say, “I am going to send a second flood—a *new* flood—like the flood of Noah’s day. Only this second flood will be spiritual and not physical. This new flood will not be a flood of retribution and justice but of mercy and love. My Spirit is going to flood the Earth!”

Instantly, I felt impressed to read Habakkuk’s prophetic words, “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (2:14). *How do the waters cover the sea?* I thought. An answer immediately came: *Completely!* Water covers the sea so completely that no dry places remain.

With my face against the ground in that small prayer room, God revealed to me that this flood would be a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and it would reach the whole Earth until there were no spiritually dry places left. In Noah’s day, the flood came from two sources: forty days and nights of rain from above and the rupture of underground water sources from below (see Genesis

7–8). This new, 21st-century flood would originate from three sources: a fresh, global outpouring of the Holy Spirit like rain from above; the opening of millions of personal rivers of witness from believers around the world like the rupture of hidden waters from below; and the convergence of spiritual streams and movements uniting to bring a confluence of spiritual power.

I staggered from the prayer room that morning, knowing God had spoken to me but in no way comprehending what the words I heard would mean to my life and leadership journey. It’s often said that hindsight is 20/20. After twenty years, I can now see that the Lord would use that early morning encounter to prepare me for a spiritually dynamic future. Within months of lying on the tear-soaked carpet in the prayer room, things began shifting in my life. Through a series of providential and supernatural occurrences, I began to transition from being a pastor and denominational leader to a broader kingdom role of servant and convener.

The Lord would require me to devote myself to living the vision He had given that morning and would change my ministry trajectory forever.

First, I was placed in a strategic role between two denominations to bring evangelistic impact and foster unity. Next, I was drafted by necessity into leading the

2006 Azusa Street Centennial Celebration. After the Azusa celebration, our ministry unified evangelical and Spirit-empowered leaders to form the Awakening America Alliance. Three short years later, we established an initiative that became known as Empowered21 to serve the future of the global Spirit-empowered movement. Eventually, I would be honored to become the fourth president of Oral Roberts University (ORU) and recently was elected to chair the historic Pentecostal World Fellowship. All of these initiatives and responsibilities, synergized with other opportunities during the last two decades, have given me a front-row seat to witness God's mercy and grace flooding the Earth so that the "knowledge of the glory of the Lord" is beginning to cover the Earth as the waters cover the sea.

Empowered21 is a relational network that God birthed in 2010 to help shape the future of the Spirit-empowered movement. It has given leaders around the world a platform to unite and flow together as we focus on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in the 21st century, new generations, greater unity, and world evangelization. Presently, Empowered21 has fourteen regional cabinets and several auxiliary networks, including a Next-Gen Network, Scholar's Consultation, Discipleship Commission, Global Evangelist Alliance, Global Prayer Alliance, and Global Worship Alliance. Significant, Spirit-empowered leaders from numerous denominations, networks, and every

continent form the Empowered21 Global Council, which gives inspirational oversight to this dynamic movement.

In January 2013, while the Empowered21 Global Council was meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii, the network's vision came into focus. The questions among council members at that meeting were simple. "What is something we can do that is so big, no single denomination or network of ministries can do it by themselves?" "What will keep us at the table together for the long term?"

As we prayed about this, several people in the group shared Habakkuk 2:14. The words God had spoken to me years before in my early morning encounter about a new spiritual flood were also shared. The Global Council's energy escalated as we discussed seeing the knowledge of God's glory cover the Earth until every person had an opportunity to encounter Jesus Christ. After several hours of discussion and editing, we adopted the Empowered21 (E21) vision as a commitment by all groups of the council. It is still the driving force holding the E21 network together and drawing us to kingdom collaboration. Our vision is . . .

*That every person on Earth would
have an authentic encounter with
Jesus Christ
through the power and presence of
the Holy Spirit . . . by Pentecost 2033.*

We chose Pentecost 2033 as our target date because it marks the 2,000-year anniversary of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as recorded in Acts Chapter 2, and because it gave us the greatest opportunity to fulfill the vision. Some discussion ensued as to whether the 2,000th anniversary of Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, the giving of the Great Commission, ascension, and the birth of the church at Pentecost was 2033 or 2030, or an even earlier date. Pragmatically, the group chose 2033, which was the date farthest away, to give us as much time as possible to pursue the goal.

This core vision for E21 does not mean that the Global Council believes every person on Earth will accept Jesus as their Savior and Lord (although that would be awesome). What it does mean is that we believe every person on our planet should have an authentic opportunity to intimately know Christ and develop a personal and eternal relationship with the one true God. This is only possible through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit as we once again prioritize the Great Commission in our generation.

To contemplate reaching every person on Earth is certainly an overwhelming vision, but usually, visions from God are beyond our human capabilities.

THINKING TOO SMALL—MANILA, PHILIPPINES

Just a few months after our meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii, where the Global Council adopted this big vision for Empowered21, I was in Manila, Philippines. In addition to preaching at a church for some friends, I was mobilizing for an upcoming Empowered21 gathering with leaders across the nations in Asia. While in Manila, my travel companion, Assif Reid, and I were invited to a Planetshakers Worship Night at a local Church of God. Since we had the evening off, we decided to attend.

The church was on the outskirts of Manila, and the journey to the concert was more arduous than expected. Manila traffic is legendary, and on that night, Filipino drivers lived up to their billing. When we arrived at the church, the meeting was in full swing. Music thundered from the stage and the auditorium was packed to the brim with young people worshipping Jesus. It was loud, it was exciting, and it was very young. When Assif and I walked in, we spotted a row of older adults (at least older than teenagers) and quickly made our way to join them. The area looked like a safe place for an older guy. At this point in the trip, I was dressed rather casually in jeans and a bright red shirt. This was my first time attending a Planetshakers

event, and I had never met any of the Planetshakers team before that night.

Filipino teenagers were screaming, yelling, singing, worshiping, and having a blast. The concert was anointed and powerful. Suddenly, one of the leaders of the group (I would learn later that he was Neil Smith, who served as an executive leader with Planetshakers) took the microphone and stopped the concert. From the stage, he said, “I’m sorry, but I must do this. God just gave me a word.” At that, to my surprise, Neil pointed to me and said, “Sir, you, there in the red shirt.”

Now, this is something I have been known to do—flowing in the Spirit and giving people words of knowledge—but it is rarely something others do to me. Yet, at that moment, Neil, whom I had never met or seen before, called me out and said, “I’ve never met you. I don’t know who you are or where you are from, but God just told me to speak to you for a minute.” His first statement was simply, “God is saying you’re thinking too small.”

At this statement, I was completely stunned. The E21 Global Council meeting in which we committed to reaching every person on Earth with the gospel by 2033 was only a couple of months in the past. Now, this man was saying I was thinking too small. I didn’t know what to do or think!

As I stood there, Neil continued and said, “God’s telling me to share with you that Reinhard Bonnke had 100,000 people saved at one time during a crusade, and afterward, he went to his hotel room, and said, ‘God, that’s it, I can die now. I’ve had 100,000 people saved in one service.’ And the Lord said to him, ‘No, you’re going to have a million saved in one crusade service someday,’ and it happened later on. He was thinking too small.”¹

Neil then told me again, “You’re thinking too small.” He continued talking about the Great Commission and the people I would reach. This man didn’t know me, what I did, where I was from, or that I was even a minister! I was shocked, but I knew in my spirit this was confirmation that we were on track. This E21 vision was on the heart of God, and it was time to think big.

THINKING TOO BROAD—BEAVER CREEK, COLORADO

About a year ago, I was alone praying in a cabin in the mountains as I do each summer, and I began thinking about the E21 vision of reaching every person on Earth. During my prayer time, I asked the Lord, “How can this possibly ever happen? How is everyone in the world going to have a chance to know Jesus?”

In Mark's version of the Great Commission, Jesus says to preach the good news to every single creature, to everyone, every person on Earth. When Jesus gave this command, approximately 300 million people inhabited our planet. Now, the global population is more than eight billion. I was overwhelmed by the magnitude of this task and asked myself and God, "How are we possibly going to reach every person on this planet and help give them a legitimate opportunity to encounter Jesus?" As I asked this question, the Holy Spirit spoke to me clearly. His response was a simple yet profound one. He said this will happen **"One person at a time."**

CHAPTER 1

THE POWER OF ONE

The smell of gunpowder and scorched earth wafted through the air across the plateau aptly nicknamed, "Hacksaw Ridge." The World War II Battle of Okinawa had raged on this plateau for over a month, and wounded men lay dying across several miles of terrain. This was a grim setting for one of the most powerful examples in history of how God's directive to reach individuals should propel us to action.

"Fall back! Fall back!"

At the frontline of the battle, commanding officers ordered a full-scale retreat as enemy forces launched a major counterattack on their position on May 5, 1945.

"Full retreat! Get to the cliff!"

Soldiers began running for their lives back toward the edge of the ridge, where cargo nets served as makeshift ladders that descended to a stronghold 500 feet below.