

Healing Canada's Wounds: The Courtship

"There is a desire to see restoration. To see the English people in a new way, not through the hurts of the past but as friends and as brothers and sisters whom we love and from whom we can receive love." Odette Menard, a pastor from Montreal, shared these thoughts a few days before the Watchmen for the Nations National Gathering held August 1-3rd, 2002 in Charlottetown, PEI. During the days that followed, she and other church leaders from Quebec had the opportunity to open their hearts honestly about the struggles the French Canadian people, and especially those in Quebec, face to remain in Canada. *"My father taught me to hate everything that was English. I didn't have a heart for Canada, not one bit!"* shared Alain Caron, a pastor from Gatineau.

"One day the Lord came to me and He said if you want to see My glory, you will have to lay down Quebec and embrace Canada. And I said, " Lord, what your asking me is very hard! In the eyes of my father, I will be a traitor. I will be friends with the English and walk alongside them. But their people are their people and my people are my people. And the Lord said to me 'No, Alain, this is not My heart. I will embrace this nation from one ocean to the other and you will be one in My love.'" "Your look makes a difference," Odette continued. "Your hugs make a difference. Your words make a difference. Your 'franglais' makes a difference! It's like a balm on our hearts. You have the capacity to heal our wounded hearts. Please, don't forget us. We need your love. We need all of who you are. On the outside it seems like we may not need you. Quebec has the appearance of independence. But that's not what is in our hearts. What's in our hearts is for unity... and love."

There is a Wedding Coming

As Odette finished speaking, David Demian, Director of Watchmen, addressed the gathering. *"I don't believe we have what it takes,"* he said. *"We don't know how to open our hearts. And we need God to do a miracle. "A number of years ago",* he continued, *"God gave me a dramatic picture of His desire for English and French Canada. I was driving in Vancouver and as my eyes wandered to the license plate of the car ahead of me, it suddenly changed. I saw interlocking wedding rings on one side and the words "I do" on the other. Tears came to my eyes so fast that I had to pull over.*

When I did, the Holy Spirit said, "The day is coming David, where there will be a wedding in Canada, in Quebec, and English and French Canada will marry and they will call Canada home.' He said 'French Canada and English Canada live in Canada but they don't call Canada home. But this is the time where English and French Canada need to leave and cleave.' I feel we need to cry out to the Lord tonight. Lord, for the sake of what you are about to do in this nation and for the glory that you want to reveal, touch us! Change us! Deliver us! Free us!"

Intimacy is the Key

The next morning, the whole assembly entered into a prolonged time of deep, intimate worship. As hundreds sat in silence before the Lord, David Demian spoke. *"Yesterday, we prayed that God would open our hearts. And the Lord spoke to me and said, "David, I'm jealous that the Church will open their hearts for Me, first. I'm longing for a Bride that will have a passion for Me.' What we are doing here,"* David continued, *"is not a waste of time. This is what will give birth to what the Lord wants to do."* As the assembly continued in quiet reflection and worship, Dale Peck, an English pastor from Ontario, who now leads a congregation in Quebec City, began sharing how the Lord had touched his heart. *"Last night each time another French brother or sister shared, it dug deeper and deeper in my heart."*

In response to them, Dale read a poem that he had written during the night, which spoke of English Canadians deep need for the passion and the intimacy that is the redemptive gift of the French people. *"French people of Quebec,"* he appealed, *"you are our heart and we can't live without our*

heart. *We need you too.*” With this, a wave of wailing began rolling throughout the large auditorium. And French and English Canadians began weeping together as God began the process of healing generations of pain.

A Declaration of Love

As the weeping subsided, Ottawa pastor Ken Hall, along with other Ontario church leaders representing English Canada, called the Quebecois leaders on stage. Once they were assembled, each was presented with a dozen long-stemmed red roses. *“Red roses symbolize passion. And we’ve included with them baby’s breath, to represent purity and innocence. We want to say to you ‘We love you.’ ‘There is an old hymn that says ‘We Give out of His hand’. And we give you our hearts out of His hand’.”* With this declaration there was a perceptible release in the spiritual atmosphere in the room as the crowd broke out in wild applause and cheering that lasted several minutes. Then David Demian motioned to the crowd. *“I want [church leaders] Roger Mitchell from England and Alain Lopez from France to come as our ‘parents’ and release us to venture in this courtship together. But first, I want to ask the English Canadians, ‘How many of you want to go on a courtship with French Canada?’”*

A thunderous roar of approval arose from the English Canadians in the crowd. *“And now,”* he continued, *“I need to ask the French people: Will you accept our hand that is outstretched to you to enter into this courtship with us?”* As the French people exploded with a passionate “YES!” he looked mischievously at them and said. *“You know what that means, don’t you? You’re not available anymore for anyone else!”*

With the crowd still laughing in approval, Alain Lopez and Roger Mitchell came forward to call forth the blessing of France and England on Canada. *“Representing France, I bless you in the name of Jesus and I pray that you will be liberated into your destiny!”* Lopez prayed in French. Then Roger Mitchell, gazing out affectionately on the crowd like a proud father, said, *“We say a great well done to you Canada! You have found your way to this amazing day where the healing of the whole nation is in sight.”* And with that He pronounced the blessing of Joseph, Deuteronomy 33:13-16 over Canada:

Blessed of the Lord be his land - With the choice things of heaven and the dew - And from the deep lying beneath - And with the choice yield of the sun - And with the choice produce of the months - And with the best things of the ancient mountains - And with the best things of the everlasting hills - And with the best things of the earth and its fullness - And with the favour of Him who dwelt in the bush. Let it come upon the head of Canada/Joseph. Upon the one, distinguished among his brothers.

The Journey Continues

“We really want to be an example,” Odette Menard said later, *“of a nation who is walking together: Quebec with the rest of Canada”.* In the summer of 2003, the courtship begun in Charlottetown, will continue as a group of English and French Canadians journey together across the nation. Dubbed *La Danse* tour, the vision, says Demian, is simple. *“A team of English and French Canadians of all ages, races and denominations, will travel from Montreal to Victoria, stopping in 12 cities. Like Joshua when he took Jericho, the Lord has called us to march in obedience across the nation, blowing the trumpets in each city, declaring that the walls of separation between English and French Canada are about to fall down. And together with the believers in each city, we will celebrate what the Lord is about to do and the promise of a wedding day that is coming.*

We are going to possess our inheritance of a healed nation, of people groups, English and French Canadians, walking hand in hand, face to face, healed, taking the authority in this land.”

La Danse tour will begin July 25th in Montreal and end August 9th in Victoria. For more information about the tour, please visit www.ladanse.ca or email info@ladanse.ca