

INTERVIEW WITH WAGNER ALMEIDA, FOUNDER OF “SALA 57” (ROOM 57)

Dynamic Steward: What is Room 57?

Wagner Almeida: Early in my ministry I met Pastor Manolo Damasio. His father-in-law, Pastor Moura, now retired, was the one who, many years ago, coined the expression Room 57. The purpose of the room was to seek the daily baptism of the Holy Spirit in the early hours of the day, between 5 and 7 a.m. From my interactions with Pr. Damasio, I deepened my personal studies about the Holy Spirit. Investing the early hours of the day in prayer and studies became a daily routine.

I started realizing that something was missing in my ministry. There was a need for me to lean more on prayer and to develop a practical life in the Spirit, not only theologically, but to live in a close relationship with Him. I realized that not having Him as an active partner was the cause of my regular weaknesses and disappointments.

DS: Why from 5 to 7 a.m.?

WA: This time of the day is highly favorable for the development of a relationship with God.

There is a lower risk of interruptions. That was the lifestyle of the Master himself while He was living among men. I have personally experienced that dedicating the early hours of the day is crucial to keeping the spiritual life active and strong.

DS: Can you explain the beginning and growth of Room 57 as a prayer movement?

WA: Besides practicing Room 57 in my personal life, for thirteen years, I have encouraged my members, in all the churches I have pastored, to develop the habit of seeking God at dawn.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, after the annual ten days of prayer, some members continued to gather through Zoom, with the aim of studying the Bible in the early hours of the day. I was asked to coordinate these meetings, which had a regular attendance of fifteen families. I accepted the invitation and changed the whole dynamic. This was the beginning of Room 57 as it is known today. I led the group to experience four concepts that I have learned from the Bible and in the Spirit of Prophecy:

1. Experiencing communion with God by highlighting the role of the Holy Spirit
2. Demonstrating unconditional love in our relationships with others
3. Growing healthy church communities
4. Engaging in appealing witnessing

Room 57 is broadcasted through two online platforms: Zoom and YouTube. I believe that the growth of Room 57 is providential. The initial plan was to strengthen the pastoral district, and the Spirit of God made it possible for us to

reach thousands of people.

Our morning worship service was available to my district during the pandemic, and through the sharing of the links, it has reached more people in Brazil and beyond. It started with fifteen families, went on to sixty, and today reaches a much bigger audience. Recently on Zoom, during the live meeting, we had 1,000 hits accessed by mobile phone or computer. For YouTube, during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, we had 8,500 viewers on a permanent basis, and on a rotation, just about 25,000 daily.

Today, after the pandemic, we have reached 15,000 families in rotating attendance, whereas in permanent attendance we have 6,000 every day for the live YouTube meetings. Another indicator of growth is the 25,000 viewers who access our YouTube videos at a later time.

DS: What happens during these prayer meetings?

WA: Our main goal is the daily baptism of the Holy Spirit. We follow a regular, simple program but remain flexible to the needs of our viewers and spiritual direction.

1. Icebreaker, prayer
2. Opening hymn, with emphasis on the Holy Spirit
3. Study of the Sabbath School lesson (10 minutes)
4. Moment of intercession
5. Showing a video which narrates the vision of the valley of dry bones of Ezekiel 37. The goal is to highlight the purpose of the meeting, for us not to lose sight of our main focus.
6. Reading and meditation of the Word
7. Sharing of witnessing experiences
8. Final prayer
9. Fellowship time

DS: How has the prayer movement impacted the lives of those who attend it?

WA: Two great changes are visible among the participants: a deepening and

maturing in Christian life and a strong missionary impulse. They go out and preach the gospel. Frequently, we'll hear accounts of former Adventists being re-baptized, members of other denominations accepting the Adventist faith, and those who were not grounded in the faith making decisions for baptism. Many pastors testify that their members who participate in Room 57 understand more biblical teachings, have a keen sense of mission, and, consequently, are useful in the body of Christ.

DS: Have you observed any impact on the faithfulness of church members who chose to pray more?

WA: Without a doubt! We have used a feature that YouTube offers to learn about the growth in faithfulness. Here are the results for four questions:

- Have you improved your personal devotion habit by being part of Room 57? (1,000 votes)
 1. Yes: 71%
 2. It was already a habit: 19%
 3. No: 8%
- As you participated in Room 57, have you experienced a transformation in your prayer life? (1,200 votes)
 1. Yes, it has totally changed: 75%

2. I was already praying intensely: 18%
 3. Nothing has changed: 6%
- As you participated in Room 57, has your willingness to sacrifice for those who do not yet know Christ changed? (1,100 votes)
 1. Yes, completely: 77%
 2. I already sacrificed: 17%
 3. Nothing has changed: 4%
 - As you participated Room 57, has your faithfulness in tithes and offerings changed? (1,500 votes)
 1. I was already faithful: 53%
 2. Yes, completely: 30%
 3. Nothing has changed: 15%

DS: What would be your advice to pastors and church leaders who would like to start a prayer movement in their local church or district?

WA: With all modesty, I would talk about my experience, and if it is helpful to any colleagues or church leaders, praise the Lord.

To start a prayer movement in a local church, I would first do an analysis of my own prayer life. In Ephesians 6:18, one of the pieces of God's armor is the prayer in the Spirit. It's not about praying more, but praying in the Spirit. A clear understanding of this aspect was decisive for

my personal revival. It has improved the quality, time, purpose, and results of my devotional life.

If I do not know the Spirit, the consequence is to pray without His powerful intercession. I'm one hundred percent sure that the prayer life of many is marked by insignificance, precisely because they are unaware of the need to use the powerful weapon, prayer, only in the Spirit and not in human strength.

Another clear step would be to teach the members that in the dispensation of the Spirit, prayer is the weapon for receiving His anointing. Power will only be granted in abundance to those who insistently seek new baptism of the Spirit.

My advice can be summarized in these words: Let us continue doing almost everything which we are doing to lead our beloved church to a life of prayer and mission, but by acknowledging the person of the Spirit as the agent responsible for everything we need. We have to lead our loved ones to not only pray, but to pray in the Spirit; not only to walk, but to walk in the Spirit. We do not need more ideas, what we need is a conceptual reorientation, praying and doing in the Spirit.

I suggest reading some books about the topic, in addition to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy:

- Steps to Personal Revival: Being Filled with the Holy Spirit by Helmut Haubeil.
- Abiding in Jesus: How Do We Do It? by Helmut Haubeil.
- Dare to Ask for More by Melody Mason
- The Coming of the Comforter by LeRoy E. Froom



Pastor Wagner Almeida Teixeira is currently pastoring four churches in Valparaiso South, Planalto Central Conference, DF, Brazil. He is the founder of the Room 57 movement.

Getty Images

