

The Power of Two or More

Forming Revival Prayer Clusters

By Cheryl Sacks

How many believers does it take to ignite a revival? Maybe fewer than you think.

In fact, almost every revival recorded in history started with as few as two or three people praying together! From these humble beginnings, the seeds of revival multiplied into dozens and even hundreds of clusters of praying believers, until entire cities and nations were ablaze with the presence and power of God.

Don't get me wrong: massive prayer gatherings are vital and powerful! My husband Hal and I have participated in many of these. The most memorable was "The Call DC" in 2000 when more than 600,000 (mostly young people) gathered on the Washington, D.C., National Mall to pray for America.

Hal once participated in an all-night prayer meeting in Kampala, Uganda, where intercessors filled 18 sports arenas throughout the city, calling out to God with one voice to send revival. In one coliseum alone, 20,000 people were praying. Hal described the sound of intercession as like the roar of a freight train.

But how did these massive prayer gatherings and other historic, large-scale revivals begin? They started with "two or more" believers united in prayer, such as:

- **First Great Awakening** (1727–1742), which was marked by multiple small clusters praying in cities, towns, and regions.
- **Haystack Prayer Meeting in the U.S.** (1806), which

started with five Williams College students praying for revival—contributing significantly to the Second Great Awakening.

- **Businessmen's Revival** (1857–1863), which began with six men praying in a church in New York City and grew to 30, 60, then 300, then 2,500 people. News spread and prayer groups sprang up from city to city. Within a year, one million people were saved!

What's remarkable about these groups is how quickly they multiplied:

- In 1905, when American evangelist R.A. Torrey visited Australia, he witnessed 2,100 prayer cells with 20,000 people praying in homes. The meetings had an atmosphere of revival, and there was a remarkable harvest.
- The Hebrides Revival in Scotland (1949–1953), also known as the "Cottage Revival," began with two sisters, Peggy and Christine Smith, ages 84 and 82, praying every night in their little cottage for revival to come to their island. At the time, churches were dead and practically empty. Not one young person attended church. It wasn't long before others on the island joined Peggy and Christine in prayer each night from their cottages. The revival lasted four years, and 90 percent of the island was saved—especially the teenagers and young adults under 40.

Revival Today

This pattern holds true in modern-day revivals as well. In our book, *Fire on the Family Altar*, Hal and I tell the story of our friend Chris, who traveled to Uganda to document stories of how revival began there. He had seen large stadium events attended by multiple thousands who gathered to worship and

pray for their nation. At one gathering, President Yoweri Museveni proclaimed Uganda to be a Christian nation.

When Chris interviewed Christians who had participated, they talked about how the revival had actually started in their homes. It became clear that family units praying together were the real foundation of the revival. People shared stories of how marriages were healed, prodigals came home, and family members were delivered from addictions.

From their homes, the Ugandan Christians expanded their prayer clusters and invited the Holy Spirit into their schools, workplaces, and every sector of life—even to the Bank of Uganda, the president's office, and Parliament.

It's Happening Again!

We are entering the beginning of a God-breathed, worldwide Great Awakening like never seen before—marked by a growing societal awakening and a desperation for the healing of our nation and the brokenness of her people.

Already we are seeing believers responding to the call of God's Spirit to pray for lost friends, colleagues, and fellow students. They are gathering in homes, churches, schools, and workplaces, crying out for Him to send conviction, healing, and transformation.

This sense of calling is driven by the Holy Spirit, not by any human. No one is organizing this. There is no template or formula for how these clusters of believers are forming—though it's extraordinary how closely they resemble the practice of the early Church in the Book of Acts, who worshiped, prayed, and fellowshiped from "house to house"!

Believers emerged to share the gospel with boldness and in demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power to heal, save, and

deliver.

We see the same emphases developing in prayer clusters forming today:

Families Praying “House to House

- Praying with family and friends for revival in their households and nation.
- Opening their homes for other believers to join in fellowship, teaching, sharing meals, and prayer (Acts 2:42).

Praying for the Holy Spirit’s Power

- Praying to share the gospel with power, evidenced by healings, miracles, and deliverances.
- Praying by name for friends, family, and colleagues to know Christ and be set free.

Becoming Watchmen and Gatekeepers

- Serving as spiritual gatekeepers for families, schools, cities, and the nation.
- Occupying and transforming the spheres for which they are praying.

Clusters are forming in neighborhoods everywhere. Christians are intentionally getting to know their neighbors, reaching out to help elderly neighbors and single moms with home improvement projects, taking meals, and praying for those who are sick. Many who are being befriended, prayed for, and ministered to are accepting the Lord.

For example, our friends Guy and Teri Chadwick began sharing a weekly “Taco Tuesday” meal with four other couples. The couples challenged one another to pray for revival in their

individual homes every night at 8:00 p.m. Then, on Sunday afternoons, they all meet together to pray for revival in their city of Manhattan Beach and for the nation, often prayerwalking the neighborhood. Guy and Teri always include in their prayers that “not one family member or friend will miss the revival—they will all be saved and fervently serve the Lord.”

One professor we know encourages her students to form clusters to pray for one another and for revival on the university campus. We heard of a city official who formed a cluster with her fitness trainer. They pray together every time she goes to the gym.

The New Wine Is in “the Cluster”

You might notice that these prayer groups are unconventional. That’s why, rather than more familiar terms like “prayer groups” or “prayer cells,” I like the term “revival prayer clusters” when referring to the new thing the Lord is doing. The prophet Isaiah speaks of this when he declares,

Thus says the Lord: “As the new wine is found in the cluster. . .” (Isa. 65:8, NKJV).

The emphasis here is on the *cluster*, not individual grapes. The grapes are not plucked individually but must remain together to produce the new wine. New wine speaks of the Holy Spirit’s anointing.

The Spirit of God is doing a new thing! No one needs to sit on the sidelines in this next great move of His Spirit. We can all actively **pray for** and **BE the Revival!** We can be part of producing the “new wine.” It’s as easy as calling a friend to start praying together or inviting your neighbor to coffee and seeing if there is a need you can meet or something for which you can pray.

Remember Jesus' words: “. . . if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them” (Matt. 18:19–20).

What a powerful promise!

Pray with Me

Let's pray together that the light of Christ in us will shine brightly so that the world will see and give glory to God for the coming revival:

Lord, let not one of Your disciples be found sitting on the sidelines of this emerging revival. We declare we will obey Your command to “go” share the gospel (Mark 16:15–20) and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18–20). We pray that we, Your Ecclesia, will be activated like the Church in the Book of Acts—to share the gospel in power so that thousands will be added to the Church daily.

CHERYL SACKS is the author of six books, including *Fire on the Family Altar*, a guide to igniting revival in your home and nation. You can learn more about Cheryl and Hal Sacks' ministry at bridgebuilders.net.