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PRAYERCONNECT

January/February 2012 | Vol. 2, No. 1



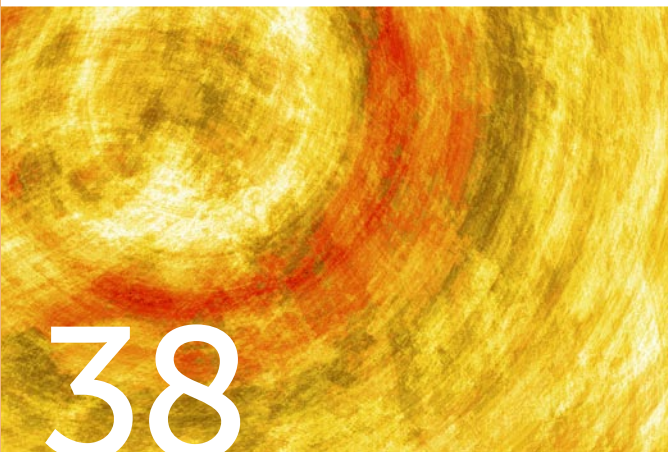
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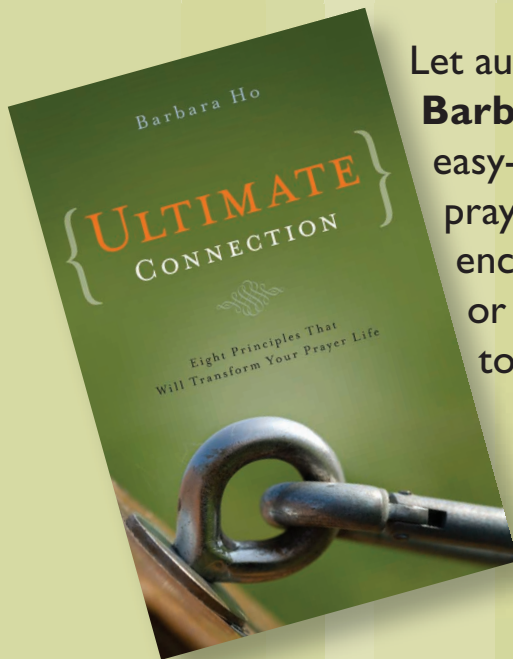
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Article Submissions

We are looking for general articles, ideas, and news stories on what God is doing as a result of prayer. As a start-up magazine, we are primarily looking for newly written pieces that have not appeared in other publications. Writer's guidelines are available by emailing Carol Madison at editor@prayerconnect.net. On news stories, we recommend emailing first to see if we have an interest in reporting on the event or item you wish to write about. Send your submissions to:

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Need a Speaker for Your Prayer Conference or Event?

There are a number of gifted speakers associated with *Prayer Connect*. Jonathan Graf regularly ministers in churches of varying sizes. Carol Madison is also available to minister in the area of prayer for revival and community transformation. Our parent organizations, Harvest Prayer Ministries and the Church Prayer Leaders Network, have many speakers associated with their ministries. You can find their contact information at the respective emails or websites.

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Carol Madison | editor@prayerconnect.net

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The mission of **PRAYERCONNECT** is

1. To encourage and equip believers toward a deeper walk with Jesus Christ through prayer—our experiential connection to God.
2. To resource prayer leaders and pastors with tools to help them motivate, disciple, and mobilize believers in churches to be a part of an army that seeks to pray the purposes of God for churches, communities, and the nations.
3. To be a unifying force between prayer ministries, community transformation groups, and churches.

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Order the Premiere Issue:

The premiere issue of *Prayer Connect* is still available for purchase in single or bulk copies. Articles by David Kubal, Arlyn Lawrence, and Dave and Kim Butts highlight the hope that God works on behalf of the prayers of His people who seek Him with humble and repentant hearts. Both Scriptural and historical accounts of God intervening in nations because of prayer will encourage you to believe that God can still save America. Order at prayershop.org.



A Sense of Calling

Did you ever feel a sense of the Lord's calling on your life? Some people feel a call to pastoral ministry. Others a call to be a missionary to another culture or nation. Still others feel called to minister in a significant way to their communities, to fight poverty or social injustices. Some feel a calling to a business or secular career, which can be just as significantly a calling from the Lord.



For roughly 15 to 17 years now, I have felt a significant calling to focus on two things—actually they are basically the same, as you will see in a moment: 1. Equip, encourage, and challenge people—and churches—to pray; and 2. Encourage those who, like me, are from conservative Christian camps, not to be afraid of the Holy Spirit.

Why do I think those are the same? In Luke 11, Jesus tells the story of the guy who has a late-night visit from a friend. He has no food to offer his guest, so he goes banging on his neighbor's door, pleading for some bread. You know the passage. Jesus says to ask, seek, and knock. The story demonstrates perseverance in prayer, interceding—being a go-between. But then Luke says something life changing: "How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13). Luke saw the connection between prayer and the activity of the Holy Spirit.

You see, my calling is to encourage people to pray. But the more we pray, the more we can discover the Spirit and presence of God at work in us, around us, and through us. As this issue of *Prayer Connect* clearly points out, we can't put the Holy Spirit in a box or control Him. We *can* quench His work, though, through such things as personal or corporate sin, attempts to control Him, and refusal to let Him work.

But the more we pray, the more we open ourselves to the work of the Spirit. So I love to encourage people and churches to pray.

Why a Magazine?

But why a *magazine* on prayer? No one in his or her right mind is launching a magazine these days. And what does a magazine on prayer have to do with a calling?

The answer is simple: We are called to do it—*using this format*. In fact, not just those of us at Harvest Prayer Ministries and the Church Prayer Leaders Network (CPLN) feel this calling. Revivals in history have often spread because print media (magazines and newspapers) reported the testimonies of what God was doing. This fueled the passion of like-minded hearts, and sent believers to their knees, to be catalysts for revival in their own circles.

Many prayer ministry leaders believe that without a magazine on prayer, there is a void in the prayer movement. As a result, a number of ministries are sacrificing finances, personal time, and marketing space they would normally give to their own ministry advancement to see that *Prayer Connect* gets up and running. It is a calling.

We hope you will choose to subscribe to *Prayer Connect*, and that it will become a trusted resource. We pray we may serve you well as we encourage you to go deeper in prayer and to be more open to the work of the Holy Spirit within you. And we pray that, ultimately, you will be stimulated to respond to a calling to pray for revival and spiritual awakening.

Jonathan Graf

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ONECRY

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A OneCry Initiative

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

David Kubal
President,
Intercessors
for America



John Bornschein
Vice Chairman,
National Day of
Prayer Task Force



Dave Butts
Chairman,
America's National
Prayer Committee



Jonathan Graf
Publisher,
Prayer Connect
Magazine



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LIFE ACTION
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NATIONAL
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PRAYER

GET AMERICA
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OneCry Calls for Urgent Prayer for Revival

Seeking Intercessors Who Will Take on the Call

Urgent, Christ-centered prayer rooted in brokenness and the desperate need for God's manifest presence are the hallmarks of a prayer movement that seeks to raise up 50,000 prayer warriors who will pray in agreement for revival. This national prayer initiative called OneCry is based on one premise: *Revival is our only hope.*



Birthing in the heart of Byron Paulus, the executive director of Life Action Ministries, OneCry is a call to people who will regularly pray for and speak on behalf of a nationwide spiritual awakening. The goal is to identify thousands of prayer warriors willing to give substantial time in prayer for revival, and be equipped as informed intercessors in principles of revival.

The Common Vision

OneCry will officially launch in February 2012. Already leaders and prayer warriors are joining the movement of crying out to the Lord with one voice for His reviving work. OneCry is recruiting 50,000 prayer warriors, 5,000 people who will speak and share the vision, and 500 leaders who will help mobilize churches and communities to pray.

Those who agree to join this movement will commit to:

- engage in earnest, intercessory prayer for revival
- walk in brokenness, humbly repenting

of every sin God reveals

- seek the manifest presence of God, believing that a revived church will advance the gospel of Christ throughout the world
- unite with others who share this revival vision.

The Need Is Great

Even in the pre-launch phase, OneCry has already inspired many to join the movement. The opening paragraph of the "Declaration of National Spiritual Emergency" (a OneCry core document found at onecry.com) summarizes the reason for this shared pursuit:

It is with heavy hearts and a sense of urgency that we, the undersigned, declare that the church of America is in a *state of spiritual emergency*. Like the churches warned in Revelation, many of us have become lukewarm and compromised. Though we have access to more resources and more biblical teaching than any other group of believers in history, we are not characterized by spiritual power that comes from the Holy Spirit.

Darryl Craft, a pastor and leader for OneCry, shared his response when he first heard Paulus cast the vision for OneCry in April 2011. "Immediately, I knew this was not another idea or strategy but rather a universal expression of all those who believe that we are in desperate need of revival and that nothing else will do. After almost 30 years of ministry, I am convinced that our greatest need is also our only hope—the unusual outpouring of God's presence in the lives of His people."

According to Scripture, Craft added, judgment begins in the house of God (1 Peter 4:17). "If there is any hope for this nation, we must begin with God's people experiencing the manifest presence of God."

National Endorsements

Other national leaders are also coming alongside and supporting the OneCry movement. Dave Butts, chairman of America's National Prayer Committee and president of Harvest Prayer Ministries, has joined the OneCry leadership team. Following a recent meeting with other national prayer leaders, he commented on the importance of revival:

Just today I finished a three-day meeting with the Executive Team of America's National Prayer Committee. The whole focus of our meeting was the desperate need for revival in our nation and how

continued on page 8



Prayer Calendar

- Seek God for the City**
February 22 to April 1
waymakers.org
- Collegiate Day of Prayer February 23**
collegiatedayofprayer.org
- National Day of Prayer May 3**
nationaldayofprayer.org
- Global Day of Prayer May 27**
globaldayofprayer.com

For more information on these prayer events, go to the event website.



we might mobilize for prayer. We wholeheartedly endorse and support the OneCry Initiative and believe that it is a significant part of what God is doing in the U.S. today.

An additional endorsement from Michael Catt, executive director of Sherwood Pictures (*Courageous*, *Facing the Giants*, and other Christian movies) and senior pastor of Sherwood Church in Albany, GA, speaks to the potential far-reaching impact of OneCry:

I believe OneCry is a revival ini-

tiative birthed in heaven. It is a God-sized vision that will overarch denominational labels, doctrinal preferences, and religious traditions. If taken seriously, the impact of OneCry could be the catalyst for a great awakening in our lifetime.

Pray until He Comes

The uniqueness of OneCry is found in part in the lack of an ending date. Those who subscribe to the movement must have a passionate commitment to seek God “until He comes.” The spirit of OneCry is to keep crying out to the Lord

until He chooses to come by manifesting His presence and power, or until He chooses to come again.

Those who sign up as intercessors will commit to pray daily with great hope for national revival and spiritual awakening. Those willing to join the sharing component must invest time in spreading the message of OneCry. Involvement as a leader requires a ministry platform that gives them denominational or regional ministry influence.

To join the movement as one who will pray, share, or lead, go to onecry.com and indicate your level of interest.

National Leaders Convene a Conversation on Revival

“My hope grows each year that we are at the threshold of a great move of God,” commented David Bryant at the opening of a national gathering of Christian leaders.

Sponsored by the National Revival Network, the National Conversation on Revival (NCOR) was designed to bring together leaders with hearts for revival to pray, discuss, and listen to God about His purposes for the Church. About 70 leaders met at the historic Moody Church in downtown Chicago, IL, in summer 2011. Through presentations, small group discussions, and reports of revival stirrings around the nation, the group spent considerable time discussing and praying with great hope for imminent revival.

A Renewed Hope

Robert Bakke, another one of the conveners, described the state of this nation in the 1700s just prior to perhaps the greatest awakening the United States has ever known. With obvious comparisons to today, Bakke challenged the group. “What you do depends on your vision of history,” he said. “If it is negative, you defend and protect. But if it is positive,

you can unite and confidently press forward with the belief that God is about to do the greatest thing He’s ever done.”

“It is a theology of hope,” Bakke added.

Dale Schlafer confessed the discouragement the National Revival Network has experienced in the last few years. He described the process of several leaders writing, revising, signing, and publishing *An Urgent Appeal*,¹ only to have it land “with a mighty thud.” A year ago, the network wondered if they should “go out of business.”

But now with renewed interest at the NCOR, Schlafer declared, “God has birthed this day—and we believe God is up to something beyond what we know.”

Evidences of God’s Stirrings

Several leaders gave presentations on various aspects of revival, including the centrality and supremacy of Christ, a call for unity and purity, and revival founded in both the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. Participants also shared encouraging stories of God’s stirrings of revival in different places around the nation. Evidences of God’s work were



Erwin Lutzer of Moody Church addresses the group.

repeated several times with stories of college campuses being touched with greater prayer and movements of revival.

In the spirit of Isaiah 40, leaders committed to “clear the highway and remove all obstacles,” getting everything ready as much as possible to receive the King of Glory in His revival fullness. With emphases on repentance, confession, and brokenness, as well as unity, reconciliation, lifestyle changes, and priority adjustments, participants left with an anticipation of preparing God’s people for a coming revival.

¹ *An Urgent Appeal* is available for purchase at prayershop.org.

CAROL MADISON is editor of *Prayer Connect*.



North American Prayer Summit Draws Three Nations Together

For the past six years, prayer leaders from the United States, Canada, and Mexico have met together in love and unity to hear from God and intercede for their nations. The most recent summit was held September 27-30, 2011, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, the site of the oldest capitol city in the United States, and, significantly, also the capitol with the highest elevation.

Each of the three days focused on hearing from and interceding for one of the three nations represented. In a spirit of cooperation, repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, and great love, the delegates heard how God is moving in the midst of each nation—along the borders, within the government, in the churches and through movements of prayer. Prayer leaders committed to stand with and by one another in prayer.

Strategic Focus on Children and Youth

Of great significance was a continual revelation about the training up of children and youth as intercessors, church planters, worshippers, etc. in nations experiencing intense persecution such as India, Indonesia, and Mexico.

The 4-14 Window (4to14window.com) focused on the demographic group from 4 to 14 years old, representing the age at which children are most receptive to every form of spiritual and developmental input. This window gives a powerful opportunity to transform the world as God radically changes the way the Church views the strategic importance of children and youth in His Kingdom. Delegates prayed for the next generations and for increased resources and awareness among the three nations toward

more intentionality in training children in prayer.

2012 World Prayer Assembly

Delegates were also invited to the World Prayer Assembly (wpa2012.org) that will take place May 14-18, 2012, in Jakarta, Indonesia, with representatives from perhaps every nation in the world. Indonesian and South Korean pastors and prayer leaders will cohost this historic prayer gathering. The focus will be to bring together prayer leaders, intercessors, church and marketplace leaders, children, and youth to accelerate the development of an ongoing, interactive global prayer movement toward the fulfillment of Habakkuk 2:14.

KIM BUTTS is the cofounder of Harvest Prayer Ministries.

9/11 Sparks Prayer Across U.S.

With solemn gestures, Americans across the country marked the tenth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., the World Trade Center (WTC) in New York City, and the plane crash in Shanksville, PA. Cry Out America (COA) was a prayer initiative that called Christians and churches to prayer that day.

Billy Wilson, executive director of the Awakening America Alliance (awakeningamerica.us), says, "What an amazing day of prayer! Millions of believers all over America united in prayer during COA rallies and at local churches. With more than 2,500 official prayer points in 1,450 counties and an average gathering size of 100 people, some 2.5 million people were clearly crying out for a spiritual awakening in 21st century America."

"It was an honor to be in New York City on 9/11 with leaders from across our nation," Wilson continues. "We prayed at the Statue of Liberty and near Ground Zero in New York harbor to begin the COA rallies across the nation."

A prayer cruise took the COA executive leaders through the harbor toward the Ground Zero site where the *USS New York*, a new battleship made out of steel from the WTC site, was guarding the water access to the area and provided a view of the new Freedom Tower under construction on the former site.

Tom Walker, founder and director of the National Governor's Prayer Team, brought a quilt that was signed by governors of all 50 states. It was laid out during the New York City prayer cruise for a special prayer vigil for every state and governor across the U.S.

A speaker for the Cry Out America prayer gathering in New York City was Rev. Rick del Rio, one of the first clergy responders to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. He arrived ten minutes after the second tower collapsed. He is widely believed to be one of the only identifiable clergymen on site after FDNY Chaplain Father Mychal Judge perished.

Positive, moving reports are pouring in from the various 9/11 prayer gatherings, Wilson says. "Our hope is that Cry Out America on 9/11 was only the beginning for countywide prayer and unity on behalf of a new Christ-awakening in our nation."

Cry Out America hosts prayer events every September 11. For more information go to awakeningamerica.us/cryoutamerica.

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Leviticus 6:13

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to build the global house of prayer in the nations...

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Fresh Fire

Hope for a Christ-Centered Revival

A few months ago I attended a gathering of Christian leaders who have a common prayer on their hearts—some of them having carried this burden for many years. It is the hope that God might one day soon visit our churches and nation again with a powerful revival and spiritual awakening.

At the conclusion of the gathering, David Bryant (one of the co-leaders) placed a plush and ornate chair on the platform to represent a throne. He challenged us to take a sheet of paper and write out a one-paragraph prayer for revival that we wanted to offer “before the throne of Christ.” In an act of worship, we knelt and left our scrawled-out prayers on the chair.

All the prayers were then compiled and sent back to us several weeks later. As I scanned the 40-some unsigned prayers, I quickly spotted my own. I recognized it because it has been the prayer on my heart for so long. In its unedited and quickly written form, here was my prayer that day:

Father, You know my heart. I desperately want You to release the fullness and glory of Jesus Christ into Your Church, that we might be cleansed, healed, restored, unified, and sent on mission to the world to reflect the power and glory of Christ. Revive us, oh God, with a passion for holiness and a zeal for the salvation of the lost. Please hear my cry, oh Lord!

Other prayers expressed similar longings. Among these leaders with hearts for revival, the cries were increasingly urgent. There were a few who had lost just a bit of their hope for revival—after praying for so many years and waiting on the Lord, wondering. But many others expressed renewed hope after praying together with like-hearted friends and hearing stories of God’s stirring in a few places in our nation.

God, What Is on Your Heart?

About a month later, when the staff of *Prayer Connect* prayed about and discussed possible themes for this issue, these questions were posed: “What do we believe God most wants to say to His Church in the coming months? If we had just one shot at another issue of this magazine, what should the theme be?”

The answer came quickly: “Hope for revival and the need to pray with urgency.”

You will learn more about revival in this issue from writers who come from a variety of perspectives. Our desire is to capture the hearts of those who have been leading, speaking, and praying for revival for a long time—and remain very close to the heart of God on this matter.

As you read this issue, may your heart be seared with “Fresh Fire: Hope for a Christ-Centered Revival.”

—CAROL MADISON, editor, *Prayer Connect*



Trully

An Exceptional Season of

Alive

to the Glory of Christ

Death Valley is an expansive desert in California, known as the lowest, driest, and hottest location in all of North America. It is a barren, desolate place that holds the record for the highest recorded temperature in the Western Hemisphere—a mere 134 degrees Fahrenheit!

Death is obviously a fitting description. Not much survives in Death Valley, whether vegetation or any human life exposed to the elements. But that doesn't necessarily mean life is not possible.

In 2005, a rare torrential downpour deposited six inches of rain into the cracks of the rock-hard valley

floor. Suddenly this lifeless desert blossomed with abundant and gorgeous flowers that had not been seen in 20 years! Dormant seeds, sitting underneath the soil for years and barely hanging on to life, were suddenly awakened when saturated with life-giving rain. The desert was alive, much like the promise of Isaiah 44:3-4:

“For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams.”



God's Extraordinary Work | **BY DAVID BRYANT**

This is a picture of revival—when the Spirit saturates a church with God’s Word about God’s Son so that God’s people come alive to His glory in whole new ways.

Revival: A Look Back and Forward

Revival, interestingly enough, was a shared experience by saints in both Old and New Testaments. There was a difference, however, between the two eras in how the experience played itself out.

In the Old Testament, the reviving of Israel was usually characterized by a look *back*, as the nation sought to return to previous high-water marks in Israel’s religious pilgrimage. Note how Elijah on Mt. Carmel challenged Israel to return to days of spiritual faithfulness before Baal worship had taken over (1 Kings 18). Or recall how Hezekiah

refurbished the time-worn temple and re-instituted the ancient Passover tradition, shaping the revival that emerged under his watch (2 Chron. 30).

In the New Testament, however, revival is characterized much more as a look *forward*. It is focused on fresh extensions of Christ’s reign among His people and into the world. Consider the prayer meeting of Acts 4: what they prayed, how God answered, and the aftermath in the succeeding stories of missionary advance—all forward-looking. In a Christ-dominated revival, the Holy Spirit increases vision for what’s *ahead*. He deepens our yearnings for greater approximations of the coming Kingdom.

In New Testament-style revival, Christians are aroused to a reality of Christ’s presence and power already theirs, but currently overlooked. They are summoned not only to recapture their first love for Christ (Rev. 2), but

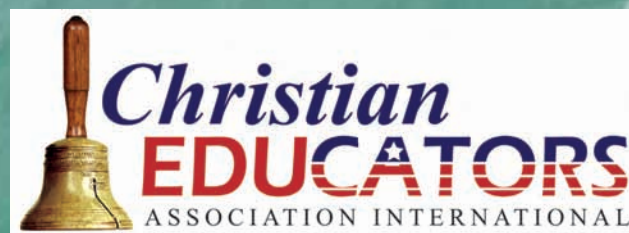
also to discover a passion for Him that surpasses whatever they have known before (Eph. 3). Reawakening us to greater dimensions of His glory, New Testament revival is ultimately about recovering and enlarging *hope in Christ*.

That’s why, as Jonathan Edwards (pastor/scholar of the 1700s) observed, revival is arguably the most dramatic display of Jesus’ Lordship in the present age. In no way depreciating God’s “ordinary” work with us on a daily basis, revival is an *exceptional* season of His “extraordinary” work among us.

In other words, God infuses His Church with fresh hope, passion, prayer, and mission by refocusing us on Christ for *all* He really is. *In revival, a church is recaptured with the supremacy of Christ by the Spirit of Christ*. That’s why my favorite term for this phenomenon is a “Christ-awakening.”

Revival is more than just an event in a

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church calendar. When God re-energizes a community of Christians, He intends Kingdom results that last many years. Scholars' research verifies that, following each of the four so-called "Great Awakenings" in American history (early 1700s, late 1700s, mid 1800s, early 1900s), decades of documented transformations took place both in churches and in society. God gave His people "fresh winds," not simply to fire up enthusiasm for spiritual things, but also to extend further the reign of His Son within communities and nations through His Church.

When Christ Reigns through Revival

Here's one story to demonstrate how revival can impact a whole nation for Christ's Kingdom.

At the close of the 20th century a wonderful move of God came to the beleaguered nation of Uganda. Once known as the "jewel of Africa," this beautiful land had become devastated physically and spiritually by multiple oppressive regimes headed by diabolical dictators. Economically, Africa's breadbasket had become its worst "basket case." Most distressing, tens of thousands of Christians were martyred for their faith, many by unspeakable tortures.

As a result, in the late 1990s hundreds of thousands in the churches began to cry out to God for a spiritual awakening in their land. The believers grappled with the need for soul-searching repentance inside the Church. They confessed all the ways they were actually complicit in His judgments on Uganda as a whole. Broken in spirit, they pled for God's mercy.

Finally, God answered their cries. Joyous confidence about Christ's Kingdom reignited their churches. Passion for the Promise-Giver once again marked thousands of congregations large and small. But this was just the beginning of revival.

At the same time, ungodly strongmen were unexpectedly expelled. Corrupt

continued on page 16

Phases of Revival

Perceive: Spiritual awakening comes as God's Spirit awakens believers to acknowledge not only that revival is urgently needed, but also that the promise of revival is for them.

Prioritize: Be willing to say, "A primary hope for my generation is a Christ-awakening, beginning in the Church. Therefore, out of my commitment to the preeminence of my Lord Jesus, I will give revival high priority in all that I do for Him."

Purify: In every revival, repentance must have precedence. Everything in us and in our congregations that disobeys the Holy Spirit—everything that is incompatible with Christ Himself, who is the focus of revival—must be confessed to the Father and put away.

Pray: Biblical and historical revivals reveal that whenever God is ready to reawaken His people to the glories of His Son, He stirs up prayer among them. Today, all of us should rejoice in the unprecedented prayer movement God has ignited among many churches and communities across our nation and world. We should do everything possible to strengthen the movement inside our own congregations.

Proclaim: Since "faith comes by hearing," any biblical revival must be a Word-anchored revival. Therefore, Christians should promote the biblical promises for personal and corporate revival, of which there are hundreds. They also should give reports of what God has done and is doing in revival around the world.

Prepare: Though biblical revival is preeminently a corporate experience, each of us must be willing and ready to become the starting point for a fresh work of God in His Church. We should act as if we truly expect God to grant us this gracious work of His Spirit. We should let our efforts at discipleship equip and prepare us for greater manifestations of Christ and His power in us and through us.

Partner: The hope of promised revival requires a new era of spiritual cooperation—among pastors, leaders of prayer movements, denominational leaders and others—as we stand together to seek and to receive a God-given Christ-awakening for our generation.

—DAVID BRYANT



structures of oppression were decisively dismantled. Political and religious prisoners were set free. Persecution of the Church came to an end. A devoutly righteous Christian leader became Uganda's president. He made his first official act a public re-dedication of the entire nation to Jesus Christ as its Lord!

Following that, to the amazement of all, significant economic recovery began. Far more importantly, a nationwide commitment to sexual abstinence turned back the plague of AIDS in this nation once known for the largest epidemic in Africa. It rendered Uganda the country with the least threat of AIDS—all in just one decade! Furthermore, some of the largest churches in Africa can now be found there, with one in Kampala growing from a few hundred to nearly 15,000 in five years. Fasting and prayer are a way of life for Ugandan Christians as they seek even deeper manifestations of Christ's reign in their generation.

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The Arrival of Christ

Steve Hawthorne suggests revival might be renamed *arrival*. It's as if Christ "shows up" in His Church afresh to recapture us and reconquer us. Isaiah 60 suggests God's glory was *already* breaking over Israel like a sunrise, exposing many dimensions of His Kingdom purposes to them. What they needed to do was "rise and shine" and seize the day.

That's why biblical texts frequently use the motif of *encounter* to describe spiritual renewal. We find this in Isaiah's picture of a future when God would rend the heavens like a garment, visibly descending like a fire upon saints and nations alike (Isa. 64).

The Puritans coined a great phrase to define the "arrival" experience. They called such seasons "the manifest presence of Christ." Here is how they reasoned: First, they said, there is Christ's *essential presence*. That is, Christ is everywhere present all the time. He is unavoidable.

Second, they also talked about Christ's *cultivated presence*. Christians can enrich their sense of fellowship with Him as they abide in Him day by day, faithfully obeying Him. We can cultivate a deeper knowledge of the Lord through Bible study and prayer, for example. As we do, Christ shows Himself to be much more present in our lives than we had realized.

The *manifest presence* of Christ, however, was something else altogether. This was the Puritans' third term for those times when God reveals His Son to a new generation of His people. He does so in such dramatic fashion that it almost seems as if Christ has been hiding from us until that moment. Then suddenly He reinserts Himself among us. He *arrives*, in other words.

Or, as I define it, revival is a "Christ-awakening movement." It is God's people waking up to God's Son for *all* He is, not only individually but also corporately; not only in a moment but for a season. Revival ultimately

becomes a movement with wide-reaching impact on society as well as among the nations.


Revival Is a Coronation

One could almost say that revival is like a *coronation*. In other words, it leads believers to reaffirm their wholehearted devotion to the Lamb who sits on the Throne (Rev. 5). It reconnects them to His marching orders as their King. It serves as a powerful sign of the supremacy of Christ. The renewing reality of revival should be basically defined as this: Jesus expressing Himself more fully to His people *as Lord*.

In fact, one cannot think rightly about revival at all if one does not think rightly about the glory of God's Son, Jesus Christ. He is the criterion by which we measure both revival's legitimacy and its impact. The *final revival* will emerge from fresh in-breakings of Christ's sovereign dominion before every creature in heaven and earth.

But until that final *consummation*, our Redeemer intends to continue invading His Church, extending His Lordship among us, regaining the praise He rightfully deserves, and enlarging His mission through us among all the earth's peoples.

Jonathan Edwards was on target. Revival is one of the most exciting expressions of Christ's supremacy any Christian can experience until He comes again. It is prior and primary. It is the prelude to all other manifestations of Christ's reign for, in, and through His people.

Many believe a gracious "Christ-awakening" even now is bearing down on top of us, in answer to today's unprecedented global prayer movement. May it be so! 



DAVID BRYANT directs Proclaim Hope, a ministry devoted to fostering and serving a nationwide Christ-awakening movement. He is the former chairman of America's National Prayer Committee.

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No Shortcuts on the

Where Are the Hot Hearts,

Pathway

Contrary to what we might expect, the blessing of revival is to be found in the pathway of true humility, repentance, and brokenness. There are no alternate routes; no shortcuts. The very things we dread and are tempted to resist are actually the means to God's greatest blessings in our lives.

Again and again in the Scripture, we learn that God resists or opposes the proud (Prov. 3:34, Ja. 4:6, 1 Pet. 5:5). The concept here is that God sets Himself in "battle array" against those who are proud. He stiff-arms the arrogant, keeping them at a distance. God repels those who are self-sufficient and who take unholy pride in their accomplishments.

On the other hand, He pours grace on the humble and comes to their rescue. As an ambulance races to the scene in response to a call for help, so God races to the scene when His children humble themselves and acknowledge their need.

Will God Hear Us?

These are days when many of God's people are coming together to cry out to Him on behalf of our nation. They are acknowledging that there are no human solutions to the tidal wave of evil in our land. Nothing short of divine intervention can overcome the darkness and the lostness of our world.



Set Aflame in Revival? | **BY NANCY LEIGH DEMOSS**

But we need to remind ourselves that there are some prayers God will not hear; there are some solemn assemblies He will not attend. There are some fasts that are not pleasing to Him.

When the children of Israel came to fast and pray with unclean hands and hearts, God said, *“Though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, I will not hear . . . though you make many prayers, I will not listen”* (Ezek. 8:18; Isa. 1:15, ESV). In fact, the Scripture goes so far as to say that our prayers and our fasts are actually an abomination to Him if they are not accompanied by humility and repentance.

We would all be quick to agree about the need for repentance outside the walls of the church. But are we as quick to recognize our own need for repentance? We can readily identify the sins of the White House. But have we become blind to the corruption in the “church house”? We decry the sin of our world. But have we not tolerated virtually all the same sins in the church?

As we read Scripture, we see that the sternest words of reproof were issued, not to the pagan world, but to the people of God. When the ascended Lord Jesus looked down from His throne in heaven, His final message to the churches was not, “Go and preach the gospel,” but, *“Repent!”* For an unrepentant church has neither the motivation nor the capacity to fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord.

True State of the Church

I have been asking God to help me see what He sees when His all-knowing eyes examine the Church in America. The picture is not a pretty one, and the truth is painful to admit. But we have to get honest, if we ever hope to get God’s attention.

The truth is, when it comes to how we live, how we think, how we look, how we sound, and how we “do ministry,” we have become virtually indistinguishable from the world outside the church. We have bought into the world’s philosophies and practices. Whereas the

Church used to tell the world how to live, now the world is telling the Church how to live. We have accommodated to the culture, rather than affecting the culture for Christ.

Thus, church and ministry have become big business—we are more familiar with management and marketing principles than with the principles of humility, purity, faith, and prayer. Many pastors and Christian leaders have become CEOs rather than spiritual shepherds.

We have utilized nearly every worldly method conceivable to attract the lost, and, in many cases, have lost both our distinctiveness and our effectiveness. In an effort to convince the world that Christianity is fun, we have entertained and amused ourselves to death. Why do Christian celebrities and comedians perform to sell-out crowds, while scarcely a few attend the prayer meetings?

Have we lost confidence in the power of the Word to convict, the gospel to

Living by Scriptural Standards

Inside the Church itself, in far more ways than we care to admit, we have failed to live by Scripture. Like King Saul, we say we have obeyed the Word of God. But how do we explain all the evidence to the contrary?

For example, we are a community of the forgiven who refuse to forgive. We live with unresolved conflicts—in our homes, among church and ministry staff, and between “committed” believers.

The bride of Christ has forgotten how to blush. We sin without shame. We have lost our ability to mourn and grieve and weep over sin. Even our language betrays our theology of irresponsibility. We speak of leaders “falling” into sin, rather than acknowledging that these men and women have chosen a pathway of compromise and gratifying the lusts of the flesh.

In our casual brand of Christianity there is little sense of the fear of the Lord.

An unrepentant church has neither the motivation nor the capacity to fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord.



convert, and the Spirit to draw people to Christ? We have seen what human effort, ingenuity, creativity, and technology can do; we know what money, organization, and promotion can do. But we have yet to see what God can do!

In an effort to make Christianity palatable to our soft, self-centered generation, many are preaching a diluted message that sidesteps the issue of sin, eliminates the demands of the cross, and overlooks the need for conviction and repentance. In an effort to make our message “relevant,” we have ended up preaching another gospel that is no gospel at all. We have preached Christianity as a way to find fulfillment, rather than a calling to take up the cross and follow Jesus.

How else could millions of churchgoers sit under the preaching of the Word week after week and leave unchanged, unmoved? How else could so-called believers who claim to believe in holiness, sit in their living rooms or hotel rooms, laughing at ungodly jokes, lifestyles, and philosophies purveyed through television, movies, and the Internet?

When was the last time you saw God’s people “tremble at the Word of the Lord”? When was the last time *you* trembled at the Word of the Lord (Isa. 66:2)?

Some Hard Questions

Yet, even as we list these standards, some of us may believe that we have not rejected

the ways and the Word of God. Then could I ask you some questions God has been asking me in recent days?

- If we are so close to God, where is the passion? Where is the compulsion, the unction, the fire?
- Where are the tears? Where is the mourning, the grieving, the weeping? Why are our eyes dry and our hearts dull? Where is the groaning, the crying out in soul travail?
- Where are the Isaiahs who stir themselves up to take hold of God, praying fervently, *“Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That you would come down!”* (Isa. 64:1, NKJV)?
- Where are those who abhor sin, whether in the world, in the church, or in their own breasts, who cry out with the psalmist, *“Indignation has taken hold of me because of the wicked, who forsake Your law”* (Ps. 119:53, NKJV)?
- Where are the Jeremiahs whose hearts are in anguish, and whose eyes overflow with tears for the desolation of God’s people? Where are the prophets who are willing to risk their reputations, their retirement funds, and their acceptance within the Christian community, in order to say what needs to be said to our generation?
- Is not God’s Word like a fire, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces? Then where is the preaching with conviction, confrontation, divine fire, and Holy Spirit anointing? Where is the urgency, the solemnity, when we talk to men and women about eternity and the condition of their souls?
- Where are the hot hearts, set aflame by the coal from the altar of the Lord? Where are the men and women who have been with God, who have tarried in His presence until they have heard His Word, and then descended from the mount with the glory of God radiating from their faces and the power of God reverberating from their hearts?

If our hearts are not broken over

what breaks the heart of God, if we are not part of the remnant that sighs and laments and groans within over the detestable things that are going on in the temple of God, then we are part of the multitude that is in danger of His chastisement and in desperate need of repentance.

God calls us to repent. He calls us to be afflicted and mourn and weep—first over our own sin. For He will not hear or heed our prayers for our nation, as sincere as they may be, until we have first humbled ourselves and repented of our wicked ways. *“For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God”* (1 Pet. 4:17, NKJV).

The Pathway to Revival

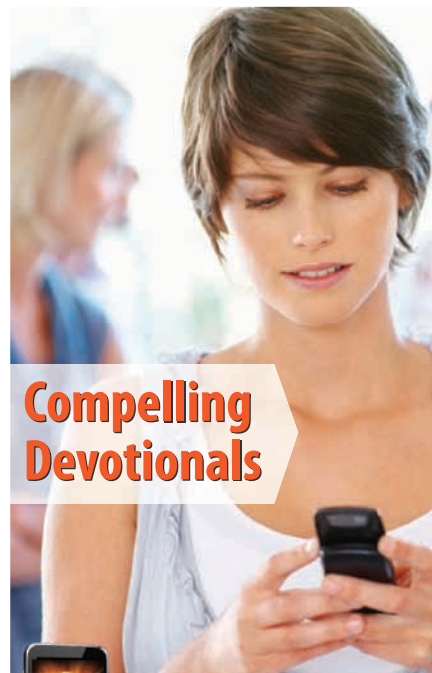
In a sense, revival is really nothing more than the release of God’s Spirit flowing through broken lives. Historical records of revivals bear this out over and over again. The most dramatic, widespread revival movements in history have begun with a handful of humble-hearted believers whose revived lives and prayers have become sparks that ignited the lives of those around them.

Interestingly, the most godly men and women on the scene have generally been the first to humble themselves and have then been used as instruments of revival. The greatest hindrance to revival is not others’ unwillingness to humble themselves—it is *our* unwillingness to humble ourselves and confess our desperate need for His mercy.

Revival blessings flow to and through those who are truly broken before God. Andrew Murray said it well: “Just as water ever seeks and fills the lowest place, so the moment God finds you abased and empty, His glory and power flow in.” ☞



NANCY LEIGH DEMOSS has communicated her burden for revival for more than 30 years. She is the author of more than a dozen books and is the host of a nationally syndicated daily radio broadcast “Revive Our Hearts.”



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Living as a Prisoner

A man in a plaid shirt stands in a field of tall grass, viewed from behind. His arms are raised high towards the sky, reaching towards the sun. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The background shows a hazy landscape with mountains or hills under a bright sky.

Captured by a Vision

of Hope

Last year I was traveling through Bartow County, Georgia, with a video crew interviewing pastors and leaders. We were capturing stories of the transformation God is working in individuals, families, churches, and in the larger community surrounding Cartersville.

I heard stories of deliverance from alcohol and drugs, reconciled marriages, churches restored to life and vitality, and powerful unity among pastors from many different Christian traditions. People spoke of more than ten percent of the student population coming to faith in Christ, with students aggressively sharing their faith with their peers. They told of more than 50 students responding to God's call to missions.

In addition, the community leaders were calling on church leaders for solutions to their problems. These stories and others left us amazed at God's activity.¹

Overwhelmed by these encouraging stories, I remembered a message from years before when I heard David Bryant speak about "Prisoners of Hope." His text was Zechariah 9:12: "Return to your fortress, O *prisoners of hope*; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you" (*emphasis mine*). A prisoner of hope is a person captivated by hope, filled with hope, and confident of a future happy reality.



for Spiritual Awakening | **BY CLAUDE V. KING**

Suddenly, I realized I am one of those guys, a *prisoner of hope*. I can't help it. I'm full of hope for revival and awakening in our land!

The Church Does Not Always Reflect Hope

But I have to confess that much of what I observe in churches and among God's people fights against that hope. A church I know of discovered that 75 percent of their men were addicted to pornography on the Internet. Church conflict and lack of unity and joy are more normal than exceptional. Biblical illiteracy is widespread and a biblical worldview is rare. Intentional discipleship is on the decline.

Pollsters tell us that church members are pretty much like the rest of the world in our beliefs and practices. Arrogance, judgmental spirits, impurity, iniquity, unforgiveness, bitterness, prayerlessness, apathy, conflict, divisions, selfishness, sexual immorality—these are far too common in our churches. If I keep my

author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart (Heb. 12:2-3).

Let's not grow weary and lose heart and hope for revival in our land. Let's keep our focus on the resurrected Christ who reigns in heaven as the King of kings. Let's keep our focus on God's activity and not on sinful humanity. Let's not forget the promises of the One who is Faithful and True (Rev. 19:11).

So, could you use some hope? Hope with me that:

- Christians (we) can be set free from the power and dominion of sin
- we can be pure and holy
- we can walk in unity with those who are different
- peace and joy can replace conflict and discord

God restores life, vitality, and His presence when He revives His people. He has promised revival *when* we return to Him and His standards for our living.

God's Revealed Activity

When LifeWay revised *Experiencing God* in 2007, we took a video crew to interview Lonnie Riley of Meridzo Center Ministries in Lynch, Kentucky.² He and his wife Belinda had moved back to her home town to minister to the mountain people in this poor Appalachian community. We sat in Rotary Park where Lonnie described a community prayer meeting that took place in 1999.

About 250 people gathered to pray for forgiveness for relying on the government, U.S. Steel, and International Harvester instead of depending on God. They asked God to improve the quality of their lives in such a way that they would honor God. Lonnie described the scene in his recent book *Miracle in the Mountains*:

The people began to pray with a fervency that we have rarely ever experienced. They literally fell to the ground, weeping and pleading with God to restore their land. I can only describe their cries to God as "wailing" as they cried out, "God, could You return to us?"³

As God's people returned to Him, He did return to them and began to restore vitality to their community. Coal mines reopened and new employers came to town. God began providing (sometimes in miraculous ways) people and resources to minister to needs for food, clothing, school supplies, jobs, and housing. Through God's provision the closed 95-room hospital was transformed into missions housing for volunteers coming to town.

As God revealed Himself to the people of Harlan County, many began coming to faith in Christ, and six new churches started. Even a closed Christian

continued on page 26

Let's not grow weary and lose heart and hope for revival.

eyes focused on churches and members living like this, my hope will fade from memory.

Paul prayed that "the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:13). God Himself is our source of hope. Our joy and peace and confidence come from trusting in Him because He is the One who can change our present reality. Our overflowing hope comes by the power of His Holy Spirit who lives in us. Christ in us is our hope of glory (see Col. 1:27). The writer of Hebrews instructs us this way:

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the

- vitality and service can replace apathy
- we will experience God's manifest presence in our worship services
- prayerlessness will be replaced with powerful and fruitful intercession
- our children will no longer leave the church when they leave home
- the good news of the gospel will be appealing to those who are yet to believe
- spiritual darkness will turn to light
- God's Kingdom rule will come on earth as it is in heaven.

If you could use some hope like that, listen to the God of hope—the Lord Almighty—who says, "Return to me . . . and I will return to you" (Zech. 1:3).

A 24-Hour Prayer Watch that Lasted 100 Years!

The Moravian Revival of 1727

BY CLAUDE V. KING

In *The Key to the Missionary Problem*, Andrew Murray described a moving revival under the leadership of Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf. Zinzendorf resigned from all his governmental responsibilities to provide spiritual leadership for a group of about 300 people who had moved to his estate to escape religious persecution. Most were Moravians, a religious group related to the martyr John Hus. But the refugees also included Lutherans, followers of Calvin and Zwingli, Anabaptists, and others.

In the spring of 1727 internal conflict was about to destroy the religious community. Zinzendorf and three other elders drew up a covenant of brotherly union that described the way these Christians would live together. It recognized their differences but insisted on brotherly love and unity in the body of Christ.

On May 12, 1727, the entire community repented of their divisions, were reconciled with their brethren, and entered a covenant to live in harmony to honor their Lord. Murray quoted from their diary account of that day: “The Brethren all promised, one by one, that they would be the Saviour’s true followers. Self-will, self-love, disobedience—they bade these farewell. They would seek to be poor in spirit; no one was to seek his own profit before that of others; everyone would give himself to be taught by the Holy Spirit.”¹

A Powerful Encounter

God began to bind this body of believers together in love and unity. On August 13, 1727, they had a significant encounter with their Savior at a Lord’s supper observance.

On Sunday, 10th, Pastor Rothe was leading the afternoon meeting at Herrnhut, when he was overpowered and fell on his face before God. The whole congregation bowed under the sense of God’s presence, and continued in prayer till midnight. He invited the congregation to the Holy Supper on the next Wednesday, the 13th.

As it was the first communion since the new fellowship, it was resolved to be specially strict with it, and to make use of it “to lead the souls deeper into the death of Christ, into which they had been baptized.” The leaders visited every member, seeking in great love to lead them to true heart-searching. In the evening of Tuesday, at the preparation service, several passed from death to life, and

the whole community was deeply touched.²

On Wednesday morning many were reconciled with one another on their way to church. During the service, they pledged their loyalty to Christ because He had loved them so sacrificially. They were deeply touched by this love of their wounded Savior.

A New Battle Cry

From the prophecy in Isaiah 53:10-12, they developed their battle cry for missions: “to win for the Lamb that was slain the reward of His suffering.” They determined that the best way they could express their love for Christ was to win for Him the souls for which He died.

Following that encounter with Christ, the Moravian Brethren were possessed by a zeal for missions. They began a 24-hour prayer watch for the causes of the Kingdom, which continued for more than 100 years. During the following 25 years they sent out more than 100 missionaries.

Some of those missionaries met John Wesley on a boat bound for America in 1735. In them Wesley saw a personal faith in Christ, a love for Christ, and a calm assurance that were different from his own. When he returned to London, Wesley came to personal faith in Christ in a Moravian chapel at Aldersgate. He went from there a different man and led the Evangelical Revival (the First Great Awakening) in England. Even William Carey, known as the father of modern missions, was greatly influenced toward missions by the testimonies of these Moravian missionaries.

At the Lord’s table those Moravian Brethren had a moving encounter with the wounded Savior, and they and their world were never the same. The living Christ met 300 religious refugees at a Lord’s supper service and transformed them into world changers!

With our resources, technology, and travel capabilities, what could God do with churches today if we would come to love and follow Him like this?

1. Andrew Murray, *The Key to the Missionary Problem* (New York: American Tract Society, 1901), 47.

2. *Ibid.*, 49–50.

Adapted from *Come to the Lord’s Table*, Claude V. King, Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2006, pp. 10–15. Reprinted and used by permission. Available from lifeway.com. For a video telling of this story go to vimeo.com/9361202.

college campus was donated and is now being renovated for ministry.

Lonnie was summoned to Washington, D.C., to report to the Appalachian Regional Commission. They wanted to know how an Appalachian economy was being transformed in Harlan County, and the answer was *God is doing it!* Based on the population of the region, the number of people who have come to faith in Christ, and the transformation in the community, God's activity in Harlan County might be described as a miniature spiritual awakening.

Doug Small, prayer leader with the Church of God Cleveland, invited me to join him with a group of about 70 pastors and coal executives in West Virginia to pray for their region. On my drive to West Virginia, I listened again to Lonnie's testimony. I drove through Manchester, KY, where the transformations described in *Appalachian Dawn* (see *Prayer Connect*, Vol. 1, No. 1 or go

to prayerconnect.net) are taking place. I thought about God's activity in Bartow County, GA (the southern tip of Appalachia). Then I began to think about revival stories I've heard recently in Harrogate and Cleveland, TN (also Appalachia).

Then it struck me: God is revealing (announcing) His activity in Appalachia. I'm learning to "watch to see where God is at work and join Him." Would you join us in crying out for the widespread transformation of this region of the country?

The Future Is Pressing In

Another source of hope for us is to look to our future. Revelation 19:7-9 describes the wedding supper of the Lamb when Christ's Kingdom reaches its fulfillment. We are told that the bride of Christ (the Church) will have made herself ready, and she will be dressed in fine linen representing the righteous acts of the saints. Revelation 7:9 describes a multi-ethnic multitude from every tribe, people, and language standing to worship before Christ's throne.

Are you aware that our future is pressing in on us? Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14). Organizations around the globe are uniting to "finish the task." Groups are adopting the last remaining unengaged and unreached people groups. The spread of the gospel is accelerating, people groups are hearing, and God is gathering the multi-ethnic multitude for that unimaginable worship service that will signal the wrap-up of time as we know it.

In July I was in Sierra Leone, West Africa. I heard stories and interviewed church planters who have seen more than 3,000 churches started in the past six years in a predominantly Muslim and animistic nation. They are carrying the gospel rapidly to other villages, people groups, and nations. I met one former sheik who came to Christ in 2007 and has now started 100 churches! We visited

one of these churches. We were the first white people to ever come to their village. They were less than one year old and had already built and outgrown their building. They are targeting starting churches in five neighbor villages.

Training for church planters in sub-Saharan Africa over the past six years has now borne much fruit. Presently 33 church-planting movements have been identified among people groups that were formerly classified as unreached or unengaged. Fifty Muslim people groups in Africa that were unreached or unengaged now have multiple reproducing churches. And God is on the move like this all over the globe.

Join God and Finish the Task

Stories like that make me a prisoner of hope! I also want to be a messenger of hope. But oh, how I want to see spiritual awakening come to our nation once again. Revival and awakening are acts of sovereign grace.

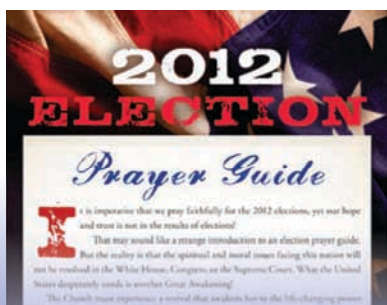
However, God has given us a prerequisite. Repent of our sinful ways and return to Him. Then He has a people through whom He can work in power.

Let's do our part to experience revival, join God in His work, and finish the task for His great glory! ☩

1. To view video testimonies of the Bartow County Transformations go to: vimeo.com/album/1489794.
2. You can listen to 55 minutes of Lonnie's story at vimeo.com/album/1624280.
3. Lonnie and Belinda Riley with Joyce Sweeney Martin, *Miracle in the Mountains: Experiencing the Transforming Power of Faith in the Heart of Appalachia* (Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks, 2010), 33.



CLAUDE V. KING is a discipleship specialist with LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, TN. He is coauthor of *Experiencing God*, *Fresh Encounter*, and more than 20 other books and resources. *Consecrate the People* is another tool he has written especially to help churches return to the Lord for revival. He posts a video blog at lifeway.com/GrowingDisciples.



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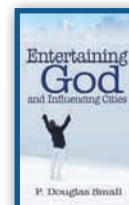
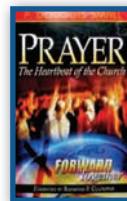
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Spirit

Expect the

Surprises

in Acts... and Today

Beware in your prayers, above everything else, of limiting God, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what He can do. Expect unexpected things ‘above all that we ask or think,’” urged Andrew Murray, a prolific writer, preacher, and champion of the South African Revival of 1860.

Historical revivals are characterized by unexpected ways that God worked through the prayers of His people. Whether in the surprises of Pentecost and the first church, or subsequent revival movements in various nations, God’s work cannot be predicted or orchestrated by man.

Surprise on Azusa Street

In the early 20th century in Los Angeles, Pastor Joseph Smale longed to see revival manifested in his church.

He visited Wales to meet with Evan Roberts, who was instrumental in the 1904-05 Welsh Revival. Smale desired a taste of what God was doing in the nation of Wales, where some 100,000 people had come to Christ in about nine months. Cultural values had been recalibrated; crime had fallen. A nation was spiritually renewed.

Inspired, Smale came back and challenged his church to pray. For 15 weeks they sought God fervently. When resistance surfaced, Smale resigned to start a new work. Sadly, that work also failed as the vehicle for revival. Still, a few among the group made their way to prayer meetings on Bonnie Brae Street.

And, surprise! Revival came there. Within a short time the Azusa Street Revival became a worldwide movement.



Unexpected in Revival | **BY DOUG SMALL**

During this same time, William Seymour (the son of a Louisiana slave) was hungry for God. Though badly scarred from a near-fatal bout with smallpox, he was undaunted. He attended the Houston Bible School of Charles Parham, but a racist deference forced Seymour to listen to lectures from outside the classroom. Through God's grace, Seymour possessed the humility to make spiritual growth more important than personal affirmation.

Surprise again. He wasn't the one outside of God's purposes. No one remembers the students inside that class-

room. But no one would forget Seymour.

With no clue of his destiny, Seymour traveled to Los Angeles to preach in a small holiness church. After one sermon, he was locked out of the church—another surprise. Almost immediately, he joined the integrated house prayer gatherings on Bonnie Brae Street.

As the crowd grew, another location was desperately needed. At 312 Azusa Street sat a burned-out, abandoned African Methodist Episcopal Church. That humble place, with its odd mixture of unmatched chairs and plank benches and an equally odd assortment of people

(including the humble Seymour), was soon at the epicenter of an awakening that would shake the deeply racist city.

Early Wednesday morning, April 18, 1906, after the Los Angeles newspaper had already been printed, San Francisco was virtually destroyed by an earthquake. People, looking for news, bought papers. Instead, the front-page story was the Azusa Street Revival. The curious city began showing up to witness the move of the Spirit and love between races. Rich and poor came, all hungry for God. For three years, services held three times daily were packed out, with hundreds waiting outside.

Twenty Indicators of a Spiritual Awakening

What would a contemporary spiritual awakening look like in America—in our church and culture? There are 20 indicators that will signal a Great Awakening in America. Listing these hopeful signs should ignite a passion for the Body of Christ to unify in prayer as we prepare our hearts.

In the Church

1. Increasing testimony of the manifest presence of God.
2. Increased conversions and baptisms.
3. Amplified participation in corporate as well as individual prayer, fasting, and other spiritual disciplines—leading to more effective discipleship.
4. A decrease in divorces and renewed commitment to marriage between a man and a woman in covenant relationship as God intends.
5. Imparting faith to children and youth as parents are equipped by the church to become primary disciplers of their children.
6. Among churches, a passionate pursuit for the well-being of their cities through the planting of new congregations, benevolent ministries, practical

- service, and focused evangelism.
7. Commitment to radical generosity as evidenced by compassion ministries and global missions.
8. Improved health among ministers as evidenced by their joy, decreased resignations, healthy loving relationships within their families, and an increased response among young people called to the ministry.
9. Christians involved in bold witness accompanied by miracles, dramatic conversions, and Holy Spirit-empowered victories over evil.
10. Heightened expressions of love and unity among all believers, as demonstrated by the unity of pastors and leaders.

In the Culture

11. Breakdown of racial, social, and status barriers as Christ's Church celebrates together—Jesus!
12. A restoration of morality, ethical foundations, and accountability among leaders of churches, government, businesses, and politics.
13. A transformation of society through the restoration of Christ's influence in the arts, media, and communications.

14. Increased care for the hungry and homeless, the most vulnerable, and the needy.
15. Young adults, students, and children embracing the claims and lifestyle of Christ through the witness of peers who live and love as Jesus.
16. Community and national leaders seeking out the church as an answer to society's problems.
17. Increased care for children as "gifts from the Lord" as the gospel addresses abortion, adoption, foster care, and child well-being.
18. Righteous relations between men and women: decrease in divorce rates, cohabitation, same-sex relations, sexual abuse, sexual trafficking, out-of-wedlock children, and STDs.
19. An awakening to the "fear of the Lord" rather than the approval of people, thus restoring integrity and credibility.
20. Neighborhood transformation and an accompanying decrease of social ills through increased expressions of "loving your neighbor" in service, compassion, and unity.

Compiled by Billy Wilson, Robert Bakke, and members of the Awakening America Alliance (awakeningamerica.us).

The Azusa Street Revival is commonly regarded as the beginning of the modern-day Pentecostal Movement. These were not preaching meetings. They were more often prayer meetings. Repentance and humility were the orders of the Lord.

A Whitewater Ride

God's ways are surprising. The Book of Acts is a whitewater ride down the rapids of early church history. Exotic sounds from heaven. Rushing wind. Fire. Glory. Open-air preaching. Thousands responding. Healing in the streets and at the gate of the temple. Boldness in the face of death threats. Dramatic intervention by the Holy Spirit to protect the integrity of the church. A no-nonsense God.

And there is more. There were dreams and visions, with special and specific direction by the Spirit. Philip was sent to translate the Scriptures for the Ethiopian eunuch, and then was caught up by the Spirit and transported elsewhere. Wow. That was a surprise!

A voice from heaven and a blinding light overcame Saul, the chief persecutor of the Church, leaving him blind and in the dust. This is theater. Ananias, an unknown and a mere disciple, was directed to minister to the fire-brand Saul. Baptize him. Induct him into the Church. Why not Peter? Or John? Why not one of the Twelve? Who is in charge here?

It was not man or an apostolic council leading the New Testament Church. It was the Holy Spirit—the *Ghost!* And the *Ghost* is full of surprises. The apostles were never in charge.

Jesus had commanded that they wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, “you have heard me speak about” (Acts 1:4). The Spirit “will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13). From the Spirit would come special revelation, empowerment, and comfort. He would convict of sin and convince of righteousness (Jn. 16:8). Christ rules His Church through the Spirit. And the sword of the Spirit is the Word (Eph. 6:17).

Peter's personal transformation, his bold empowerment, came by the Spirit—what a surprising change! Afterwards, he spoke without intimidation and with eloquence to authorities (Acts 4:8). The Spirit shook the place of prayer and informed the witness of the entire Church (4:31).

It was to the Spirit that Ananias and Sapphira lied, and by the Spirit that they were judged (5:3). The Spirit nudged Philip into a chariot and caught him up for a wild ride (8:39). The Spirit, after Peter's bewildering vision, told him bluntly to go with the three men Cornelius sent looking for him, “doubting nothing” (10:19-20, *nasb*). The Spirit, in the midst of Peter's sermon, fell on the Gentiles (10:44). Jewish Christians “were astonished” (10:45). This was not planned. Not on the program. Who was responsible for this? Surprise.

The pattern continues. The prophet Agabus warned of a famine, providing helpful intelligence information to believers (11:28). The Spirit, not man, thrust forth the first missionary team, and they went forth following the Spirit (13:2, 4). The final word at the Jerusalem Council was, “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit” (15:28). The Spirit was full of surprises.

The Spontaneous and the Intentional

Looking beyond the surprises, what appears *spontaneous* in Acts often intersects with the *intentional*. The 120 men and women did not expect a “sound from heaven or a rushing wind.” They did not anticipate a fiery cloud reminiscent of the night glory over the wilderness tabernacle. No one predicted that the language barrier would be broken, a strategic reversal of Babel. They did not see it coming—the sound and sign of a new people, a new order in the earth.

Who among the ten dozen souls would have predicted 3,000 converts in one day or the growth to 5,000 families just days later? Ten to 20 percent of Jerusalem's population began following Jesus just 50

days after His brutal crucifixion and triumphant resurrection. What a surprise!

Yet, closer examination finds a group of people who were faithfully obeying, patiently waiting, expecting, and hoping. While thousands were filling the streets for the feast of Pentecost, this group vigilantly kept watch. Their strategy was pray, hear from God, and obey.

For a week, nothing happened. Then there was a “suddenly.”

Although Acts 3 appears to be spontaneous, Peter and John were doing as they customarily did, going to the temple for afternoon prayer. The healing of the lame man intersected with their determination to be intentional and faithful in prayer.

Likewise, the power moment in Acts 4, where the place was shaken, also appears spontaneous. But the church had a pattern of calling a prayer meeting whenever there was a crisis. The shaking came in the midst of intentional prayer.

What appear as incidental, spontaneous, and *delightful* surprises from the Spirit, on examination, seem connected to the *discipline* of prayerful obedience.

Prayer Is the Predictable Context

Prayer is the context into which the Spirit descends (Acts 2). Prayer is in view when the lame man is healed (3:1-10). Prayer is the activity when the place of meeting is shaken and the persecuted saints are emboldened (4:24-31). Prayer is the action of Stephen when the heavens open and a persecutor named Saul witnesses the fearless death of the articulate young preacher (6:55-58). Prayer is what Ananias is told to do over the ready heart of the once-hardened Saul of Tarsus (9:10-19). Prayer is what the church is doing when the angel leads the imprisoned Peter from near death (12:5-19).

Prayer is the context when apostolic ministry is birthed (13:1-3). Prayer is what Paul and Silas do at midnight (16:25-30). Shackles and bondages break. Surprised? They were praying. Apostolic

ministry is birthed. Surprised? No, they were praying. Angels intervening. Surprised? Well, probably—but that also involved prayer.

The surprising twists and turns are indeed unexpected. Remarkable. At times astonishing. Even startling. But the predictable context is always prayer! Twenty-nine times we find prayer in 18 of the 28 chapters of Acts. Eight times we see corporate prayer gatherings. The church of Acts prayed—often and together.

Beyond the Obvious

There is also a parallel transformational theme in Acts often overlooked. The miracles are obvious. But evident supernatural *fire* is not the only “Wow!” factor. There is also supernatural *fruit*. Prior to Pentecost the ragtag band of competitive disciples had a tendency to rankle one another, displaying a fierce loyalty to self. In Acts, something happened to them.

First, the character of the conversions themselves is significant. They *received his word . . . were baptized . . . continued steadfastly in doctrine (teaching) . . . fellowship (community) . . . the breaking of bread . . . and prayer (2:41-42)*.

Second, notice the quality of community. *Believers . . . were together (unity) . . . they shared with one another . . . some sold things and gave to the needy . . . they continued daily with one accord . . . from house to house . . . with gladness and simplicity . . . praising God . . . finding favor with all the people . . . and the church grew daily (2:44-47)*.

Behind the visible stream of the miraculous is something more—a love, a fellowship, a selflessness. Suddenly, the whole city wants to be members of this group.

Luke purposely weaves these themes together. In Acts 4:31, it is easy to emphasize the *shaking*, and miss the *shaping* in verses 32-35. Clearly the supernatural also

involves *fruit*: They were of one heart and soul, freed from things (their stuff now belonged to God). Yes, there was the *fire*, as it was with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. But behind the public blaze of glory is a picture of sharing and caring (*fruit*), including the liquidation of assets to finance the first launch of the great commission effort. Here is a caring, sharing community—one that is committed to the mission of the Church!

Miracle of Character

Acts is more than a miracle show. Repeatedly in the first five chapters, the character theme is introduced. When the blatant violation of character by Ananias and Sapphira came like poison into the fresh purity and innocence of the early church, God judged. The severe example of judgment underscores that without integrity and a holy core, the Church will fail in its mission.

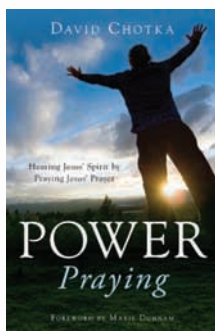
The Spirit, through the blazing supernatural, offers a public invitation into Jesus. Yet equally important is the supernatural character of the community into which new converts are invited. Without the miracle of character in the community, the flashing fire in the spiritual night is a false promise. Miraculous *praxis* can never take the place of Christlike *ethos*.

Advertisement with nothing in stock is always a disappointment.

Surprise! In true revival, the *fruit* of the Spirit is as supernatural as the *fire*. And God wants us to surprise the culture with both. God may use unexpected means to revive His Church and bring spiritual awakening to a nation. But you can always expect that the surprises of the Spirit will refine God’s people and point to the glory of Jesus Christ. ☞

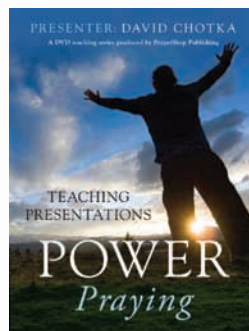
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DOUG SMALL is president and founder of Alive Ministries: Project Pray. He also serves as the International Liaison for Prayer Ministries with the Church of God, Cleveland, TN.

Praying for Revival

A Bible Study | BY SANDRA HIGLEY



Note: This Bible study is formatted for small group open discussion. If you use this study by yourself, we suggest that you journal your answers to the discussion questions. Also, *biblegateway.com* is an excellent resource for looking up passages in translations you may not have at home.

Is There More?

While many long for the next (and perhaps final) great wave of spiritual renewal, some of us can't imagine what that might look like, much less cry out for it passionately. Never having been touched by a revival firsthand, it is easy to believe that this is all there is—perhaps the miracles of the apostles and fervor of the first-century church are not for today. Since many of us enjoy the somewhat adequate and perhaps satisfying social life found in church today, we wonder, *What more is there to want?*

The word *revive* means “to live again.” It implies being restored to a previous state. If we have no recollection of anything other than our current state, we must embrace the idea that there is something beyond what we now experience. It means *there is more*.

Discussion Questions

Based on the following passages, do you believe there is more to the Christian life than what we currently experience? Why or why not? (Dan. 11:32 [AMP or KJV]; John 14:12; 1 Cor. 2:9)

David Bryant lists two alternate names for the coming move of God: *Christ-awakening* and *arrival*. Discuss his preferred word

choices, and share your thoughts on why these might be appropriate definitions of *revival*.

The arrival of Christ's manifest presence will bring great change. Doug Small calls it a “whitewater ride.” Based on these Scriptures, discuss some of the changes that might take place. (2 Chron. 5:13-14, 7:1-3; Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:1-13, 40-47; 8:6-8; 5:1-10; 19:11-12)

Most of us were overwhelmed with “shock and awe” as we watched the film footage of Japan's earthquake and resulting tsunami in March 2011. That earthquake shifted Japan eastward by up to 13 feet, shortened our day, and tilted the earth's axis.¹ Look up Isaiah 64:1-3 and describe similarities you see in the spiritual realm to what we viewed physically. How might this relate to a coming revival?

Many people fear change—do you? Express any anxiety or concerns you feel about experiencing what the church experienced in the Book of Acts. What excites you about the changes?

What current world situations accentuate our desperate need for a Christ-awakening?

Claude King describes himself as a “prisoner of hope.” How do you hope this move of God will affect you, your family, and friends?

Crying out to God in fasting and prayer seems to be the only hope for our world. But Nancy Leigh DeMoss reminds us that “there are some prayers God will not hear; there are some solemn assemblies He will not attend . . . there are some fasts that are not pleasing to Him.” Read the following passages and discuss God’s posture toward unrepentant prayers. (2 Chron. 7:14; Psa. 66:18; Isa. 1:15; 58:1-14; Ezek. 8:18, *ESV*)

What does the Lord desire from us? (Joel 2:12-17)

Action Steps

Allow each person in your group the opportunity to spend time in personal reflection on the following:

What three things do you believe the Lord is asking of you personally in response to this call for a Christ-awakening? Jot them down and keep them in your Bible. Revisit these action points weekly and evaluate where you are in accomplishing those goals.

Close in prayer. **PC**

1. nytimes.com/2011/03/14/world/asia/14seismic.html?_r=1

Note: As another action step, if your heart has been stirred by this issue and you desire to commit to regular prayer for revival, we encourage you to go to onecry.com and express your commitment.

SANDRA HIGLEY has authored numerous prayer guides and articles on prayer. Her book, *A Year of Prayer Events for Your Church*, is available at prayershop.org.

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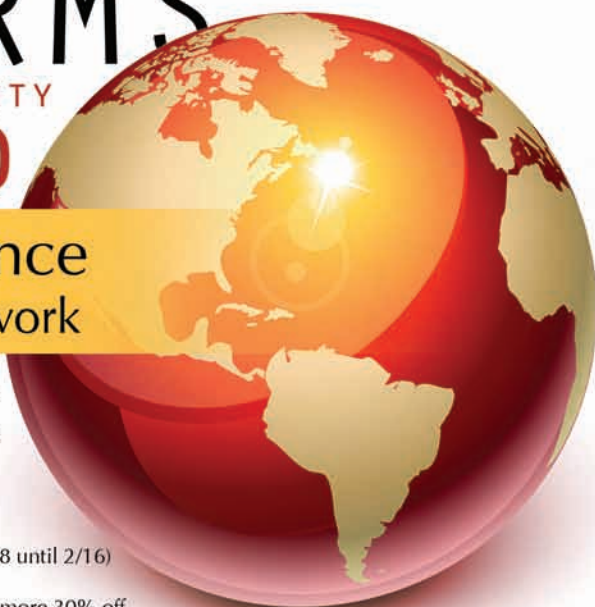
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But I Have
Prayed For
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By Steve Hawthorne

Praying Beyond Simple Fix-it Prayers

Can you recall the last time someone told you that he or she was praying for you? No doubt it was meant to reassure you. Telling people that you've prayed for them is a loving way of encouraging them or cheering them on.

Only once do we find Jesus telling someone that He had prayed for that person. But what He said about His prayer was not a reassuring platitude. Jesus was not offering up a simple fix-it prayer aimed to deal with obvious, right-now needs. Instead, His prayer focused on the precious value of God's purposes being accomplished, even in a maelstrom of evil.

Overriding Prayer

You know the setting. It was the upper room. Jesus was wrapping up the final meal with His disciples. He'd already washed their feet and offered the broken bread and the cup of the new covenant. Jesus was trying to prepare them for the devastating things that would happen within hours. But His friends somehow didn't get it. They couldn't imagine the catastrophe that was coming.

Jesus prayed for the greater thing.

Even though everyone was listening in, Jesus speaks directly to Peter: “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat” (Luke 22:31). This was not a warning or a threat. Jesus was not trying to coach Peter in ways to avoid tough circumstances or to evade opposition. It wasn’t advance notice to help him prepare. There’s no way to prepare to be threshed like grain by satanic evil powers. Jesus was showing the rationale and the hope of His prayer and God’s mighty purpose in Peter’s life.

Jesus uses some rather extreme language about Satan’s intent that made it all but certain that disaster was about to befall them all. The word translated in English as “asked” is a forceful word that would be better translated as “demanded.” It’s clear that Satan had successfully obtained permission to wreak havoc. We shouldn’t speculate on the details, but somehow Satan argued a case in the courts of heaven and came away with an authorization to do some damage. The image of sifting means that whatever can be ransacked, dismantled, and torn to pieces will be. The “you” is plural. Satan was going to demolish the entire fledgling community. But one by one, he would also shred their very souls.

And then came the words, “But I have prayed for you.” This time the word for “you” is singular. Jesus narrowed His prayer just for Peter. Imagine Jesus looking you in the eye and saying those words, “But I have prayed for *you*.” What Jesus prayed shows that He was focused on what mattered to one person, but also the greater purposes of God. He prayed “that your faith may not fail.” This simple prayer was attached to a larger purpose: “And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

Jesus’ prayer may surprise you. Because Satan was involved, some would expect Jesus to pray “against” the enemy. But instead of undoing Satan’s plans or canceling his assignment or binding the enemy

or breaking off the curse, or . . . you name it, Jesus simply prayed for something greater that would override, overcome, and overwhelm whatever Satan had plotted. It was a countersuit in the courts of heaven.

This isn’t the only way to pray, of course. But it may be the simplest way to pray. What matters most about Jesus’ praying was not that He knew the schemes of the enemy. What matters most was that He was praying toward the fulfillment of God’s purpose.

What Jesus Prayed

Consider how Jesus’ prayer was focused beyond the crisis toward the fulfillment of God’s purpose. There are three parts to this prayer. Let’s consider them in reverse order to better see what Jesus was envisioning.

Life purpose in God’s greater purpose. The ultimate outcome was that Peter could be told, with prophetic confidence, to “strengthen your brothers.” Much earlier, Jesus had told Peter that the name Peter, which means “rock,” had something to do with his role in what Jesus would do to build the church. Peter’s faith in Jesus would somehow anchor the entire church on the rock-solid reality of Jesus.

God had purposed that Peter would be a foundation man—a fixture, a stable, resilient strength for many others. Thus, Jesus telling Peter to strengthen his brothers wasn’t just a nice idea. Being a strength for others was Peter’s life purpose, which mattered tremendously in God’s global purpose.

Stepping into fullness of purpose. “And when you have turned . . .” What did Jesus mean by turning? “Turning” is a simple word that means several things. It’s a word that can refer to conversion. But an initial decision to follow Jesus is not what this is about. Turning describes

Peter’s choice to pivot away from living for himself and step into a costly way of following Jesus into the mission God had for Peter. It’s not something Jesus could do for Peter. He would have to choose.

I think this turning took place weeks later as recorded in John 21:15-22. To follow Jesus, to truly love Him, would mean Peter laying down his life for Jesus’ sheep. Stepping into God’s purpose means being changed.

Faith relationship for purpose. The simple core of the prayer was “that your faith may not fail.” Within hours Peter would fail in remarkable ways. But his trust in God would not fail. Later Peter would write that faith could come out like gold, “even though refined by fire” (1 Peter 1:7). He knew that Satan could be resisted, but only if someone could stand “firm in the faith.” If faith held firm, then sufferings would not end up as random acts of evil, but instead be transformed into acts of suffering with Christ, fulfilled along with “your brothers throughout the world” (1 Peter 5:9).

This is a clear reference to Jesus’ prayer. Peter, even though unfaithful, would be sufficiently full of faith so that he would end up strengthening his brothers.

How We Can Pray Like Jesus

During what was obviously a crisis moment in Peter’s life, Jesus prayed a greater prayer that can teach us how to pray beyond crisis in our own friends’ lives.

Pray for people instead of merely

praying about problems. When we only pray for circumstances to change, we can overlook praying for people themselves to change. Of course, it's good to pray about obvious issues and needs. Focus your hope on what God is doing to make that person like Jesus.

I try to imagine God smiling as He looks on the person I'm praying for. And then I think about what God finds precious in his or her future. Invariably, in the light of God's love and the promises of God's Word, I can get a glimpse of who this person may become.

Pray for people instead of against the enemy. There's a time and place to directly contend with dark powers. But whatever you may pray for God to do against the enemy, do not fail to pray for people. Consider yourself to be a court-appointed attorney, arguing cases in God's court on behalf of others. Enter God's courtroom with confidence that

whatever the accusations or plans of the enemy may be, God's purposes are greater. Ask God to do something that overrules by going beyond and above the schemes of evil powers.

Pray before and beyond crisis.

You've got to pray before a crisis in order to pray beyond it. There may be no better way to love someone than to gaze into his or her destiny, to prize what he or she will become in God, and to cry out with jealousy for it all to come forth. Be vigilant. The Spirit of God loves to give you cues about what to pray, but there's a lot to be said for simply paying attention to the story that's unfolding. Anticipate what good things are on the way.

Pray with confidence in the midst of contingency. By "contingency" I mean that things could go either way. God was not going to force Peter to love and obey Him. Peter would have to pass the test by choosing to step into the fullness of

God's purpose. Jesus said "when you have turned," not "if you turn." So Jesus was confident that Peter eventually would make that turn toward God's purpose.

But how long would it be? Jesus had focused His vision on what God had purposed for Peter. And you can do the same, for family and friends, as well as cities and peoples. Envision what God desires by reading what He's promised and accomplished in the Bible. Thanking God for what He's already done will clear your vision to see the unique life story that's unfolding for His glory.

May you soon say with faith and assurance to those around you, "But I have prayed for you." **PC**



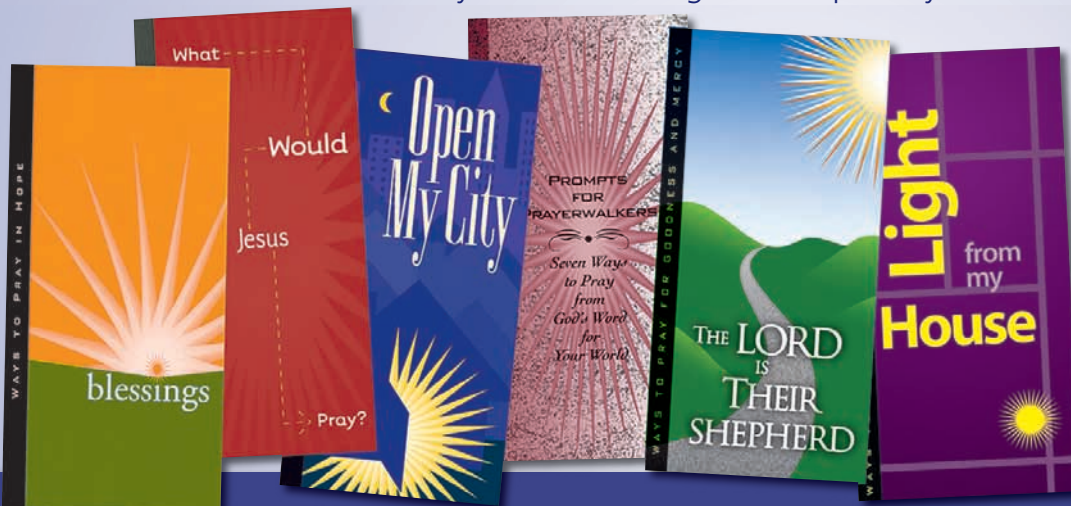
STEVE HAWTHORNE is the director of Waymakers in Austin, TX. He is the coauthor of *Prayerwalking* and the author of the *Seek God for the City* prayer guides.

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By Steven Furtick

A few years ago, I started realizing that I prayed some pretty dumb prayers. Not that I think God needs me to be eloquent or profound when I talk to Him. It's just that a lot of stuff I was praying was rather pointless and obtuse.

See if you can relate to this one: *God, just be with me today.*

Now, before you go getting all insulted (because I know you've prayed this one yourself), let me say that I understand the heart behind this prayer. What we *mean* is that we want to experience His presence and power in our lives.

God fills heaven and earth. Every inch on this planet belongs to Him. And if we're believers in Jesus, God lives in us in the form of the Holy Spirit. Do we really need to make sure He's going to *be with us*?

Or, how about this one? I used to prequalify my big prayers with the introduction: *God, if it be Thy will . . .*

So, does God need an opt-out clause before He's willing to sign on the line and cut a deal with Steven Furtick? Again, we don't mean any harm. On the surface, this whole idea seems very humble.

Over time, though, I realized I wasn't buffering my prayers with this condition because I was humble. I was doing it because I was scared. What I was really praying was, *God, I'm asking You to do this, but I'm not really expecting that You will. So, just in case You don't, let me acknowledge up front that You might not.*

ACITY

Like a Juggernaut

AUDACITY

makes regular

people behave with “boldness or daring, especially with confident disregard for personal comfort or conventional thought.”

A SUN STAND STILL PRAYER

When it comes to prayer, a lot of us have the standard stuff down. But learning to pray with audacious faith takes us into a new, unfamiliar, often intimidating territory.

Consider Joshua, who summoned up his courage and delivered one of the most gloriously unorthodox prayers in the entire Bible:

On the day the LORD gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel: “O sun, stand still over Gibeon, O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon.” So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar.

The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day. There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the LORD listened to a man. Surely the LORD was fighting for Israel! (Joshua 10:12-14)

A Sun Stand Still prayer is wrapped with urgency. It's filled with possibility. For most of us, it's a whole new way to pray.

I call it praying like a juggernaut. A juggernaut is defined as “a massive inexorable force, campaign, movement, or object that crushes whatever is in its path.” It's often used to describe an unstoppable movement. I like that image.

Joshua's Sun Stand Still prayer shows us a bold way to address God that we can emulate. And this is true of all the great prayers of the Bible. They're recorded in Scripture to set an all-time prayer standard for us. To force us out of our defensive prayer posture. To inspire us to rise

up and begin to pray—like juggernauts.

- Juggernauts like Moses, who stood in God's way and prayed that God wouldn't kill the Israelites after they worshipped the golden calf.
- Juggernauts like the apostles, who asked for and expected miracles, and who spoke out boldly in the face of persecution so that the name of Jesus could be lifted high.
- Juggernauts like Elijah, whose prayer both caused and ended a three-and-a-half-year drought.

You may push back on this, but I suggest that the prayers of these people are not abnormal. They are not the exception. At least they were never meant to be. The tragedy of our time is that we have taken what was meant to be ordinary and made it to be exceptional. We've put audacity on the highest shelf, out of reach, and declared it off limits. James 5:17 makes this eye-opening statement:

Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.

It's too bad that we focus on the second part of this verse. We're stunned by the superior power of Elijah's prayer life. We'd love to have an ounce of that power flowing in our prayer lives. But we

don't have to wish. That's the whole point of this passage. *We are* just like Elijah. *We are* just like Joshua.

PRAYERS WORTHY OF GOD

Think about it. Elijah had access to an all-powerful God who could stop the rain. Joshua had access to an all-powerful God who could make the sun stand still. We have access to an all-powerful God who can stop the rain and make the sun stand still. The only difference is that Elijah and Joshua had the audacity to pray prayers that lived up to God's character, God's heart, God's resources, God's will, and God's abilities.

That's what it means to pray like a juggernaut; to pray prayers worthy of the God we're praying to. After all, we're praying to a God whose capability always exceeds our audacity. You don't have to worry about ever putting God in an awkward or embarrassing position. You won't ever challenge Him to do something beyond His aptitude.

Prayer is the arena where our faith meets God's abilities. Is it really worthy of our God to ask Him for a *good day*? Or to ask Him to make our job more tolerable? You and I are called to pray *beyond* that. Not just that God would give us a good day, but that He would show us His greatness throughout the day. Not just that we will find the strength to tolerate our work, but that we will find a purpose that can drive us to excel in our jobs for His glory.

SUNSET ON THE LOADING DOCK

One of the most discouraging days of my pastoral career was in 2008 when our church was scheduled to sign a contract to occupy a 42,000-square foot facility in a local shopping center. We had big plans to retrofit the space and turn it into a worship center and ministry headquarters. But at the last minute, one of the other tenants chose to exercise a clause in its lease to deny us occupancy. We pleaded. The tenant wouldn't budge.

So we prayed. Not like beggars. Like juggernauts. We went to the facility that very night. We got down on our knees on the oil-stained loading docks behind the building and asked God to give us the property—in Jesus' name.

For a solid year, nothing happened.

Still, almost every day, when I drove by that building, I just couldn't let it go. I sensed that this space was supposed to be ours. So I prayed. Every time I passed it. Out loud. I must have stretched my hand toward that warehouse 300 times. And each time, I spoke these words of faith: "Father, I thank You that our church *will* have worship services in that warehouse and we *will* reach thousands of people for Jesus Christ, according to Your perfect plan, in Your perfect timing."

By September 2009, we were conducting worship services with thousands of people in that building. Not only that, but we also had the opportunity to baptize a couple hundred people on the very oil-stained loading docks where we had lifted our voices in bold prayer 18 months earlier. God had come through for us against all odds.

When it comes to standing on God's purposes and promises, why shouldn't we push the limits and aggressively pursue new territory? It's the approach taken by the great juggernauts of prayer in the amazing events recorded in the Bible. And it's the same approach that can enable you to become a juggernaut of prayer in our day.

RECONCILE YOUR DREAMS WITH GOD'S DESIRES

First John 5:14-15 is a classic juggernaut prayer passage:

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

Notice that it doesn't say "if we ask anything we desire" or "if we ask anything audaciously," but "if we ask anything *according to his will*." In other words, God wants our agenda to align with His agenda. Our audacity must be in sync with God's purposes.

Joshua prayed that the sun would stand still because God had promised the Israelites to fight for them and defeat their enemies. Joshua's bold request was based on a promise that God had made to him. He wanted to see God's purposes accomplished.

Sun Stand Still prayers are about changing your heart, activating your faith, and developing your confidence in God's Word and character. As this happens, the audacity of your prayers will increase because you will repeatedly encounter a God who has acted audaciously in the past and longs to do so today.

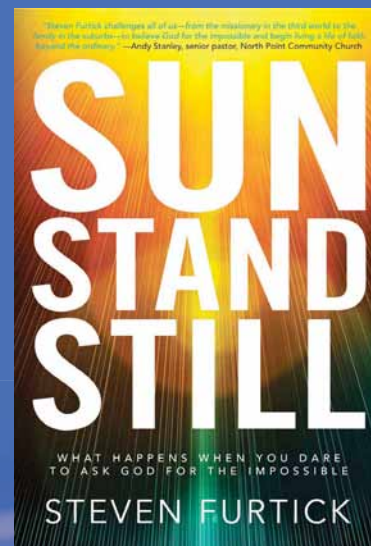
He still longs to make the sun stand still. In the past, it was a juggernaut named Joshua who acted on that promise. Now it's your turn. **PC**



STEVE FURTICK is the founder and lead pastor of Elevation Church in Charlotte, NC, considered one of the top ten fastest-growing churches in the nation.

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Operation World Offers Prayer Initiative for Churches

Considered by many as the “definitive prayer guide for the nations,” *Operation World* is one of the most exhaustive compilations of information, statistics, and prayer needs of every nation of the earth. Previously published by Patrick Johnston, *Operation World* is now in its seventh edition under the direction of Jason Mandryk.

For years, *Operation World* has encouraged informed prayer for the nations. The nearly 1,000-page book contains information on the geography, people, economy, politics, and religions of each nation, along with challenges and answers for prayer.

In partnership with Biblica (formerly the International Bible Society), *Operation World* has launched a 60-day prayer experience designed to engage congregations in a new global vision for prayer. According to Mike Dworak from Biblica, just one percent of the global church is involved in any kind of global prayer outreach. “Imagine,” he says, “if we could move that needle from one per-

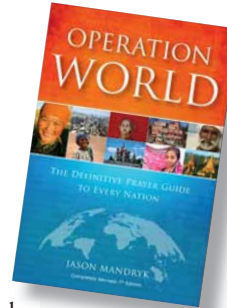
cent to two percent and double that. Just imagine what God would do!”

“It has been said,” Dworak adds, “that the work of missions is prayer.”

Daily Prayer Experience

In 2010, David Platt (author of *Radical*) challenged his church to pray through *Operation World* every day for a year, with the goal of encouraging all 3,000 members to develop a habit of continual prayer for the gospel to be spread around the world. The experience was so successful that it is now offered to other churches as one of five components of “The Radical Experiment” (radicalexperiment.org).

The 60-day prayer experience is a version of this challenge, designed to encourage a global prayer vision in a church of any size. A church can launch this campaign by registering at operationworld.org/churches, which then allows members to sign up for daily email reminders to pray for various nations. Those daily reminders can also be posted on the church’s website



or Facebook page to encourage unified prayer. Videos featuring prayer points for different nations (from prayercast.net) can be used each Sunday during the 60 days.

Additional resources designed specifically for the 60-day prayer experience include four weeks of sermon notes and outlines by David Platt, bulletin inserts, campaign email templates, and web banners. Copies of *Operation World* can also be purchased at discounted rates.

Tom Doyle, Middle East and Central Asia director for e3 Partners, has used *Operation World* in his prayer life and ministry for more than 20 years. “*Operation World* gives believers informed prayer requests. Even in the most difficult places in the world, believers are praying and God is answering.”

To learn more about the 60-day prayer experience, go to operationworld.org/churches.

Powerful Clips Stir Prayer for the Nations

Andrew Murray once said, “The man who mobilizes the Christian church to pray will make the greatest contribution to world evangelization in history.” This sentiment is at the very core of Prayercast, which was born out of a heart to see millions around the world reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ as His people pray.

Prayercast is an online media resource that highlights prayer needs of various nations through short video clips designed for viewing in your church. Featuring the voices of gifted intercessors



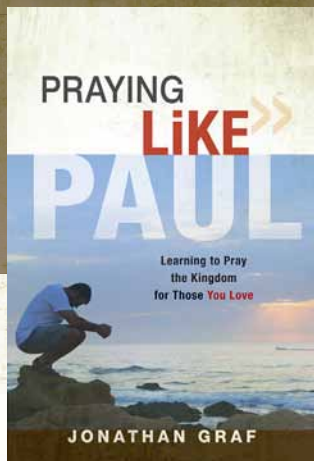
combined with gripping imagery and music, Prayercast videos are free downloads to help spur on heartfelt prayer.

With information about some 60 nations available for viewing, the two- to three-minute Prayercast clips are a

great way to spark a time of informed intercession in a small group or worship service. The vision is to see believers fervently interceding for people in every corner of the globe—calling on Him to do the impossible, break the unbreakable, and reach the unreachable. The website also features written information and current global news links to equip God’s people to pray informed and compassionate prayers.

To download free video clips, go to prayercast.com.

How did the Apostle Paul DO IT?



God used Paul to change the Gentile world. Prayer was the key. What did he pray for those under his care? What did he ask friends to pray for him? Now you can learn to pray like Paul.

Written by the publisher of *Prayer Connect*, Jonathan Graf, *Praying Like Paul* can radically change the way you view prayer and how you pray for others.

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6:4 Fellowship: Pastor to Pastor

The priorities of prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4) are foundational to a network of pastors that will host several gatherings in 2012. This new national movement hopes to encourage pastors across denominational lines to “say no to the distractions of lesser demands,” and instead focus on the core priorities of New Testament church leadership.

Daniel Henderson, cofounder and national director of the 6:4 Fellowship for pastors, traces the genesis of the movement back to a conversation in 2007 with Pastor Jim Cymbala of the Brooklyn Tabernacle. As they talked of the need for pastors to focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word, “Jim felt it was the single greatest need in our nation,” recounts Henderson. “As pastors go, so goes the Church. And as the Church goes, hopefully so goes the culture.”

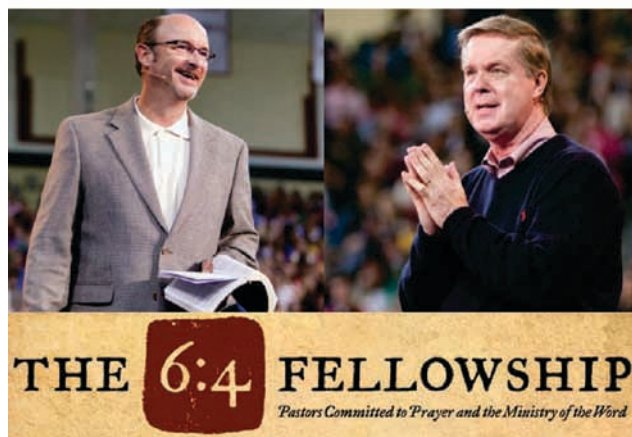
Both Henderson and Cymbala believe revival is crucial for the future of our nation. “It’s to be remembered,” says Cymbala, “that all revivals in the history of the Christian Church that have shook towns, cities, and countries, have all begun with people saying, ‘We can’t take what is anymore. We’ve got to ask God for something fresh—let’s pray.’ And God answers!”

Pastors Encouraging Pastors

The 6:4 Fellowship is a pastor-to-pastor community that exists to encourage, equip, and connect pastors in the priorities of prayer and the ministry of the Word. The movement is led by current and former senior pastors—all proven practitioners of Acts 6:4. National

directors include Daniel Henderson, Dave Butts, Dennis Fuqua, and Phil Miglioratti. Cymbala serves as a national cochairman.

Members of the 6:4 Fellowship can access a broad array of resources, including interviews, book reviews, timely messages, up-to-date blogs, webinars, and conference calls designed to equip



and encourage pastors. In addition, national and regional conferences are scheduled for 2012 as gatherings of “other like-minded leaders who are resolved to settle for nothing less than a major spiritual revival in our land, cultivated through extraordinary prayer in our churches and the uncompromising proclamation of the life-giving truth of God’s Word.”

“We believe,” says Henderson, “that when pastors kick back to the heart of Acts 6:4, that everything changes because we tap in once again to the supernatural source of high-impact leadership. Supernatural things will then occur in our lives and in our churches.” A national conference for pastors will be hosted May 18-19, 2012, in Indianapolis, IN. Regional conference cities include Austin, TX; Tampa, FL; Louisville, KY; Minneapolis, MN, and Calgary, Canada.

For information on conferences and the 6:4 Fellowship, go to 64fellowship.com.



Prayer Connect Website Offers More Than a Magazine

More than a magazine, *Prayer Connect* seeks to be a connecting point to help individuals deepen their connection to Jesus Christ through prayer. As a result, our website (prayerconnect.net) includes much more than just information on how to subscribe or access past issues of our magazine. Yes, that's there, and everyone who subscribes—whether through a print subscription, a Church Prayer Leaders Network (CPLN) membership (which includes a subscription) or a digital subscription—has access to all past issues and articles. But there is much more.

page, facebook.com/prayerconnect. “Like” that page and you will know as soon as a new piece is available.



Our Blog section hosts blogs by Jon Graf (publisher of *Prayer Connect*) and Dave Butts (chairman of America's National Prayer Committee). But we also RSS feed six additional prayer blogs, including ones from Daniel Henderson, Phil Miglioratti, and Carol Madison (editor of *Prayer Connect*). Additional prayer blogs will be added soon. This can be a one-stop place to see the latest thoughts on prayer written by prayer leaders.

Articles

Besides what appears in *Prayer Connect* magazine, the website includes links to articles on prayer designed to help novice pray-ers, intercessors, prayer leaders, and pastors. Because of our connection to the Church Prayer Leaders Network and Harvest Prayer Ministries, you are also only a click away from hundreds of encouraging articles and ideas.

Prayer Guides

This section includes prayer guides that you can download, print, and use in your prayer groups or with your congregation. We are on the lookout for new guides on various topics.



News

Our News section includes many more news stories than those that appear in *Prayer Connect*. Our goal is to add news pieces each week. They will be announced via our Facebook

International Prayer Calendar

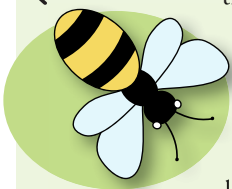
Our Home page includes two months of important prayer events. Click on Complete Calendar and see events as far as six to eight months out. This is great for planning your church's involvement.

Connection

Connection, our daily prayer devotional, includes devotional thoughts from books published by PrayerShop Publishing, plus Scripture-based prayer points. You can read it at the site, or sign up to have it emailed to you daily.

Create a **BUZZ**

We are excited to launch a new magazine on prayer. But we need your help getting the word out. You can help *Prayer Connect* reach stability quickly by doing one simple thing. Help create a buzz about *Prayer Connect* on Facebook and Twitter. How? Here are three ways:



1. When you read an article that speaks to you, tell your friends. Put a quote, or make a simple comment like, “I was just challenged by ‘Praying with Audacity’ in *Prayer Connect*, a new magazine on prayer. Check it out at www.prayerconnect.net.” (Or include the link to the article if it is one that is available to everyone at the site.) Don't be afraid to do this several times if you really like the issue. The more times people are hit with something, the more likely they will respond.

2. Encourage your friends to subscribe via a Facebook announcement. Link them to the subscription information page at www.prayerconnect.net.

3. Make sure you go to facebook.com/prayerconnect and click “Like”; then invite your friends to like us, too.

What's Not to Like?

Here are some prayer pages on Facebook we encourage you to “Like.” (Add www.facebook.com before the / on each address.)



Prayer Connect
[/prayerconnect](https://www.facebook.com/prayerconnect)

Harvest Prayer Ministries
[/harvestprayer](https://www.facebook.com/harvestprayer)

Pray Everyday
[/prayerjournal](https://www.facebook.com/prayerjournal)

OneCry Revival Voices
[/lonecryvoices](https://www.facebook.com/lonecryvoices)

Think Young! | By David Chotka

They were all quite young by our standards. Jesus chose disciples who were just getting started in life. He picked 12 18- to 24-year-olds and trained them for two of His three-year ministry. Then, 11 of those 12 disciples went on to transform the inhabited world with His teaching—empowered by His Spirit and employing the same method of discipleship.

At the root of everything Jesus did was His prayer life. Jesus deliberately prayed before He acted. In fact, John's Gospel tells us that He could do nothing unless the Father showed Him (Jn. 5:19, 30). After a night of prayer, the Father revealed to Jesus His leadership core—and they were young (Lk. 6:12-13).

The 12 young disciples were so intrigued by the prayer life of Jesus that they asked Him to teach them how He did it (Lk. 11:1). They had seen prayer before, but never with the powerful results of Jesus' prayer. He raised the dead, healed the sick, taught unearthly truth, and was transfigured before their eyes.

Earth-changing Strategy

Jesus' discipling strategy was simple. What did He do? He picked teenagers and young adults, and taught them to pray and obey like Him.

This was a vital, dynamic prayer of encounter. This was prayer that clearly heard the voice of God, discerned the action of God, and then entered into it, accomplishing wonders to the astonishment of all. In fact, Jesus refused to act unless He had a clear, direct leading, a command from God for every action.

He did not merely speak to God, but He heard God, interacting with Him back and forth until the fellowship (and/or the assignment) was complete. Jesus taught the Twelve to do this.

He mentored young Peter to hear the

voice of God—and obey. (The conversations between Jesus and Peter are some of the most instructive and warmly human accounts we have from the Gospels.)

Jesus also brought three young adults with Him to learn together. Peter, James, and John were there when He prayed to raise a little girl from the dead. When Jesus prayed about His future, talked with Moses and Elijah, and was transfigured, those three disciples were witnesses. And they were there when He prayed in death-

Ask the Lord to show you some teens or college-aged adults in your church and pour yourself into training them to pray effectively.

anguish in Gethsemane. Even in grief, He taught them to pray like He did.

And He worked with nine more "20-somethings" in the same way. Then there were 58 others in the group called "the 70," who also followed Him. Jesus required them to watch and learn and do as He did. Then He sent them out two by two to practice what they had learned.

Most of Jesus' time was given over to instructing teenagers and young adults. God sent His Son to spend enormous amounts of His time with this age group during His ministry. By doing this, He gave them (and us) a method that can be easily replicated.

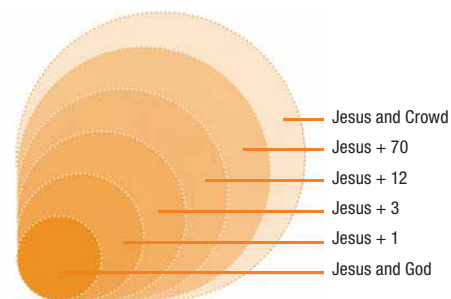
Here it is:

- Develop your prayer life to hear God (without this step, none of the others apply).
- Ask the Lord to lead you to teenagers and young adults who can learn to hear the Lord with you.
- Mentor one, three, and 12 at a time in how you hear and obey the Lord.
- Hear and obey God in front of them.
- Send them out to do the same, and then report the results back to you.
- Celebrate the successes, correct the failures. Laugh together.
- Instruct them to find one, three, and 12 others to disciple.
- Then start over again yourself with a new group.

Think Younger

As a prayer leader, are you struggling to get people to join together in prayer? Maybe you need to think younger. Ask the Lord to show you some teens or college-aged adults in your church and pour yourself into training them to pray effectively.

That was Jesus' method. We would be wise to imitate it. **PC**



DAVID CHOTKA is lead pastor of Spruce Grove Alliance Church in Alberta, Canada, the head of prayer ministry in his denomination, and the author of *Power Praying*.



Keep Praying until God Answers! | By R. A. Torrey

In my first pastorate there were two whom God put upon my heart and for whose salvation I prayed through my entire time there. But I left that field of labor without seeing either one converted. When I went to Germany for further study, then took a new pastorate in Minneapolis, I kept on praying every day for those two.

I went back to the place where I began my ministry to hold a series of meetings, still praying every day for their conversion. Then one night when I gave the invitation for all who would accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, those two arose side by side.

There was no special reason why they should be side by side, for they were not relatives. When I saw those two for whom I had prayed all those years standing up side by side to accept the Lord, *what an overwhelming sense came over my soul that there is a God who hears prayer if we meet the conditions and follow His method of prevailing prayer!*

God Wants to Train Us

Why is it that God does not give to us the things that we ask, the first time we ask? The answer is plain: *He would do us the far greater good of training us in persistent faith.*

For our own good God compels us to be persistent in our effort. He would train us to be strong men and women of prayer by compelling us to pray hard for the best things. He compels us to “pray through.”

Many tell us we ought not pray for the same thing a second time. They say the way to pray is to ask God for a thing and then “take it” by faith the first time we ask.

While doubtless there are times when we are able through faith in the Word, or through the clear leading of the Holy Spirit, to claim a thing the first time we

have asked of God, nevertheless, there are other times when we must pray again and again and again for the same thing before we get our answer. We are told distinctly regarding our Master in Matthew 26:44, “And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.”

Spiritual Laziness and Unbelief

There are many who, when they pray for a thing once or twice and do not get it, stop praying. They call it “submission to the will of God” to pray no longer when God does not grant their request at the first or second asking.

But as a rule, this is not submission to His will, but spiritual laziness and lack of determination in that most all-important of all human lines of effort—prayer. I am glad that the first time we ask, God does not always give us the things that we seek from Him.

There is no more blessed training in prayer than that which comes through being compelled to ask again and again and again, even through a long period of years, before one obtains that which he seeks from God. Then when it does come, what a sense we have that God really does answer prayer!

Revival Comes with Persistent Prayer

Many prayers fail to accomplish that which we seek from God. We pray and pray and pray, and are almost up to the

verge of the attainment of that for which we are praying, and right then, when God is just about to answer the prayer, we stop and miss the blessing.

In many churches and communities there are those who are praying for a revival. The revival does not come for some time, but they keep on praying. They are right on the verge of attaining what they sought, and if they would pray a little longer, the revival would break upon them. But they get discouraged, throw up their hands, and quit.

In January 1900 or 1901, the faculty of the Bible Institute of Chicago instituted a late prayer meeting Saturday nights from nine to ten o'clock, to pray for a worldwide revival. After we had been praying for some time, people came to me and would say, “Has the revival come?”

“No, not as far as we can see.”

“When is it coming?”

“We don’t know.”

“How long are you going to pray?”

“Until it comes.”

And come it did—a revival that began in that prayer meeting room of the Bible Institute in Chicago, then broke out in far-away China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, India, and swept around the world. In Wales, under Evan Roberts and others, it resulted in 100,000 professed conversions in 12 months.

Oh, men and women, pray through!

Do not just begin to pray and pray a little while and throw up your hands and quit; but pray and pray and pray until God rends the heavens and comes down! **PC**

R. A. TORREY (1856-1928) was an American evangelist and pastor. Torrey joined D. L. Moody in his evangelistic work in Chicago in 1889, and became superintendent of the Moody Bible Institute. He preached around the world, led many revival services, and wrote many classic books on prayer.

Pray God's great promises for people near you who may be far from God

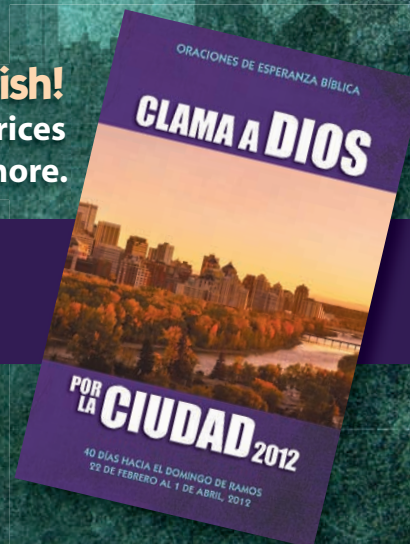


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