

Foreword by
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OLD
PATHS
NEW
POWER

*Awakening Your Church through Prayer
and the Ministry of the Word*

Believe me friends, when the next revival comes, it will come as a surprise to everybody, and especially to those who have been trying to organize it. No revival that the Church has ever known has ever been an official movement.¹

MARTYN LLOYD-JONES

How much will revival cost? Absolutely everything and absolutely nothing—that is how much it will cost. It will cost not one dime, and it will cost everything we have.²

A. W. TOZER

100,000 Points of Light

The early chapters of the book of Revelation picture the risen Christ walking gloriously among His churches. The apostle John, who during Jesus' earthly ministry was the "beloved" friend and participant in Christ's inner circle, was so overwhelmed with the magnificent vision of his triumphant, resurrected Savior that he fell to his face as though dead (1:17). In this holy encounter John saw:

One like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. (vv. 12–16)

Christ's opening words to John were, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades" (vv. 17–18). The One who is the beginning and the ending of the human story is still triumphant, present, and life-imparting in and among His people. He still demands our full attention, worship, and obedience.

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His messages to the seven churches in these early chapters of Revelation were varied in tone and substance. Yet our modern ears must be attuned to the relevance of His authoritative call to us today.

- Like the Christians in Ephesus, we must repent and be awakened to our first love for Jesus (2:1–7).
- Like the believers in Smyrna, we should see with new eyes the reality of future suffering and potential martyrdom, then embrace a faithfulness to death given our promised crown of life (2:8–11).
- Like the church in Pergamum, we must be aware of the work and wiles of Satan and rouse ourselves to reject the destructive deception of all forms of false teaching (2:12–17).
- Like believers at Thyatira, we must recognize, reject, and repent of all forms of sexual immorality and hold fast in purity until Christ returns (2:18).
- Like Christians at Sardis, we must be able to see when we have an appearance of life but are dead. We must answer the call to wake up and again strengthen the essential things of faith (3:1–6).
- Like Christ-followers in ancient Philadelphia, we must persist in genuine love, trusting our all-powerful Christ to bring his enemies into subjection, as we keep His Word in patient endurance (3:7–13).
- Like the Laodicean church, we must tune in to see our repulsive lukewarm condition and wake up to hear Christ knocking on the door, eager for a transforming reentry to His church (3:14–21).

We must be awakened, aroused, aware, and “Hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.” The living Christ still walks among His church, ready to bring them back to the fullness of His life.



In Their Own Words

Watch author and pastor John Franklin (John Franklin Ministries) speak honestly about “Revival and Responsibility” at <http://www.64fellowship.com/oldpaths/30/>

UNDERSTANDING REVIVAL

The old paths of best priorities and firm conviction create the environment for a new reality of the power of the Christ. Historically, we call this revival. Pastor Timothy Keller says a revival is “the intensification of the normal operations of the Holy Spirit through the ordinary means of grace.”³

Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote that revival is “a period of unusual blessing and activity in the life of the Christian Church. . . . Revival means awakening, stimulating the life, bringing it to the surface again.”⁴

Del Fehsenfeld Jr., founder of Life Action Ministries, wrote that “Revival is the moving of God’s Spirit, through the power of His Word, to the hearts of His children, that resurrects to new life those areas which have been lying stagnant, dormant, or out of balance, and that results in new love and obedience to Jesus Christ.”⁵

Pastor and author Iain Murray gave this comprehensive clarification of revival:

Revival is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, brought about by the intercession of Christ, resulting in a new degree of life in the church and widespread movement of grace among the unconverted. It is an extraordinary communication of the Spirit of God, a superabundance of the Spirit’s operations, and enlargement of his manifest power.⁶

Stephen Olford summarized with this definition, rooted in Christ’s presence: “Revival is ultimately Christ Himself, seen, felt,

heard, living, active, moving in and through His body on earth.”⁷

How important is revival to the church? “The only eras of church history that are really worth studying with satisfaction are those periods when the church was in revival,” writes Dr. Ed Hindson, dean of the Rawlings School of Divinity (Liberty University). He adds, “The highlights of the Christian church are its revival movements.”⁸

REVIVAL VS. EVANGELISM

Lloyd-Jones pointed out that revival “happens primarily in the Church of God, and amongst believing people and it is only secondly something that affects those that are outside also.”⁹ He underscored the need to differentiate between revival and evangelism.

To confuse these two things leads to much harm. There is nothing which is quite so foolish as people announcing that they are going to hold a revival. They mean an evangelistic campaign. An evangelistic campaign is the Church deciding to do something with respect to those who are outside. A revival is not the Church deciding to do something and doing it. It is something that is done to the church, something that happens to the Church.¹⁰

In our context, it is important to distinguish real, biblical revival from our scripted “movements,” multimillion-dollar evangelistic happenings, and other large, aggressively promoted gatherings that we even call “revival” events.

Yet the fact remains that real revival will result in an astonishing impact on the lost. In Acts 6:1–7 the revived environment of the early church, led by the praying apostles, overflowed to extraordinary conversions, even among the Jewish priests (6:7). During the revival of 1857–58 that occurred through a movement of prayer begun by a Christian layman in New York City, *one million people were reported to become Christ-followers* from a population of thirty

million in our nation.¹¹ That would be tantamount to 10.5 million conversions among the current U.S. population.

Professor Hindson observes, “Revival among the saved will always result in an outburst of evangelism among the lost. Evangelism is the automatic byproduct of revival. One may prod an unrevived congregation to soul-winning activity with gifts and gimmicks, but such prodding is unnecessary in the revived church.”¹² J. I. Packer underscores this, “God revives his church and then the new life overflows from the church for the conversion of outsiders and the renovation of society.”¹³ As we see in the book of Acts, “For we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard” (4:20).

ELEMENTS LEADING TO REVIVAL

Seek God, not Results

Imagine a genuine revival igniting even now as you are reading this sentence. A sovereign movement of the Word and Spirit sparks an awakening in our nation and beyond. The fervent prayers of an old path approach to leadership ushers in new power.

Now, imagine the scene twenty years later. The revival has subsided. The fruit of this awakening in the culture has transformed many elements of society. Things have changed for the better in astonishing fashion. Here is my question: Will we be praying with the same passion after the revival as we did before the revival? Hopefully the answer is yes. Our conclusion probably depends on the nature of our motivation. If the motive was only the desperate need for a touch from God, our prayers might have diminished.

There is difference between seeking revival from God and seeking God for revival. Seeking God for revival is rooted in a pure, passionate pursuit

The only enduring motive for prayer is that God is worthy to be sought.

of Him—nothing more, nothing less. As noted in an earlier chapter (and as I often remind myself), “The only enduring motive for prayer is that God is worthy to be sought.” As Lloyd-Jones reiterates, “The inevitable and constant preliminary to revival has always been a thirst for God, a living thirst for a knowledge of the living God.”¹⁴

A.W. Tozer captured this concern in these words:

We make out that revival is everybody running around falling on everybody else’s neck and saying, “Forgive me for thinking a bad thought about you. Forgive me for that nickel that I forgot to pay back.” Or we say a revival consists of people getting very loud and noisy. Well, that might happen in a revival, but the only kind of revival that would be here when the worlds are on fire is the revival that begins by saying “Oh God, give me Thyself! For nothing less than Thee will do.”¹⁵

Seek the Spirit in Us, Not around Us

The more I listen to modern worship songs that speak of the Holy Spirit as some impersonal force, hiding in the rafters, waiting for our invitation to appear in some magical fashion, the more concerned I become. Are we seeking a New Testament work, or some quasimystical understanding of His person and power?

A better New Testament truth emphasizes the Holy Spirit as the very presence of God living in us. He permanently indwells us as the proof of our salvation, teaching us, comforting us, guiding us, producing His character in us, and sealing us permanently until heaven appears.¹⁶ Our desire in worship should be that the Holy Spirit would fill us as we surrender our hearts to His control.

When we describe or sing of the Spirit “falling” on us, it suggests some ethereal idea of hoping that the Holy Spirit will decide to suddenly do something outside us or around us, as if we are expecting some blue gas to appear in the atmosphere. Rather, we should pray that we become fully yielded, so the Spirit might be

free to work powerfully in us for Christ's glory. As one professor said years ago, "The question is not how much of the Holy Spirit I have, but how much of me does the Holy Spirit have?"

Oh, how we need the Holy Spirit. But we need the real, New Testament, indwelling, empowering, enlivening work of the Spirit in our hearts as we fully surrender to the realities He describes about Himself in the Scriptures. When God sends true revival, He does it according to His Word. A bad pneumatology results in manipulated emotional substitutes that result in an ultimate setback of the true work of revival.¹⁷

The Power of Corporate Prayer

"There has never been a spiritual awakening in any country or locality that did not begin in united prayer," wrote A. T. Pierson.¹⁸ In the 1860s, C. H. Spurgeon led prayer meetings at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. People met at 7 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. every day. One evening a visitor asked why Spurgeon's ministries were so successful. Spurgeon walked his visitor to the sanctuary, opened the door, and let him watch the participants praying that night. Nothing more needed to be said.¹⁹

Jonathan Edwards, the great Puritan preacher and educator, having witnessed the effects of the Great Awakening, wrote a now-famous treatise in defense of revival. He believed in the undeniable need for united prayer in view of an extraordinary work of the Spirit. The *shortened* title of the book reads, *A Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, Pursuant to Scriptural Promises and Prophecies Concerning the Last Time*. Edwards understood and urged the reality that concerted, united, passionate prayer was always linked to revival. This is God's plan. As a result, this is one of the devil's primary strategies—to keep Christians from praying together.²⁰

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The Church, Not the Government

One of the great diversions today is the belief that electing a specific political party or redefining some social issue will bring real change to our nation. Please hear me. Christians should vote—always. We should graciously speak out on issues that concern us. But the United States and other nations are going downhill like an Olympic luge medalist because of one primary issue—the condition of human hearts. Hearts inform minds. Minds cast votes. Votes shape politics. Politics do not change the social landscape but rather reflect cultural realities. Only Jesus can transform hearts to reset the entire process.

Only the Gospel can change hearts, and changed hearts can change the world.

The governments of Jesus' and Paul's day were so pagan they make the American system look like a kindergarten recess. Yet nothing was mentioned about this evil state of affairs in any of the messages of Jesus or writings of Paul, except to say that we should pay our taxes and pray for our leaders. That is because Jesus and Paul knew that only the Gospel could change hearts, and changed hearts can change the world.

The great need of the day is for the church to pray for the church. Change starts among God's people. All other prayer targets are secondary and represent a superficial approach to the essence of revival. Two reminders underscore this essential focus. When Jesus commanded His followers, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," He did not indicate that any change would occur in the hearts of the enemies or persecutors. Note what He did say, "So that *you* may be sons of your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:44–45, emphasis added). He went on to reiterate, "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (v. 48). God's people change when they pray in the midst of a hostile culture.

When Paul prioritized the role of prayer in the church and went on to admonish believers to pray for “kings and all who are in high positions” (1 Tim. 2:1–2), he did not indicate that the political leaders would suddenly have a spiritual epiphany. Rather he says, “that *we* may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way” (emphasis added). It is ludicrous to think that a changed government would produce these qualities in the lives of Christians. No. The work of prayer changes us to live these lifestyles that adorn the Gospel. This is the source of change in society. Paul underscores this in the following verses, indicating that our lives will please God, who “desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:3–4). This only happens through the church.

Let’s pray for all people, including the government and the enemies of the cross that are becoming more aggressive in our society and the world. But first let us pray for us. We are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Transformation travels from the church into the world, not the other way around.

Indeed in a world darkened by sin, the redeemed people of God can serve as points of light. Such points of light can include an awakened and equipped pastor, a prayer mobilizer, or a church member who is committed to passionately and practically influence as many as possible. Those can seek God’s face via Scripture-fed, Spirit-led, worship-based prayer, with the result that their church becomes a true “house of prayer for all nations,” and an influence toward godly revival in our land.

Organic, Not Organizational

I have become convinced that the next revival among God’s people, exploding into a culture-transforming awakening, will not come through megachurches or highly-publicized-event machinery. In our statistic-obsessed, media-crazed, self-promoting culture, the

tendency toward self-exaltation is endemic. I sure feel the allure, and I assume you do as well.

Admittedly, we are all trying in some degree to grow our ministry and even expand our social media footprint. With the countless avenues available to us today, it would be very easy for highly visible, effectively organized prayer and revival endeavors to claim a piece of the credit for anything that looks, smells, or tastes like a work of the Spirit. For that reason, I believe that the next revival will be so organic that no one will be able to trace it to any highly touted human effort.



In Their Own Words

Watch Pastor and Church Planter Jason Aтры (Radius Church, West Columbia, SC) share his passion for “Revival Among a New Generation” at <http://www.64fellowship.com/oldpaths/31/>

“Organic” refers to something “arising as a natural outgrowth.” I am praying for what we might call “100,000 points of light.” It is a big dream. I am asking God to raise up 100,000 pastors of churches where the leaders have quietly and resolutely returned to the old paths. In faithfulness and obscurity they are doing what Christ has asked them to do. In obedience to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in their local context, they can lead each of their congregations to truly become a house of prayer for all nations. These 100,000 points of lights can shine the way for a revival in the hearts of congregations across America. I see this as the key to the next Great Awakening in our generation.

Os Guinness observes:

Our much-needed reformation today will not come when Christian leaders sit around a board table with yellow pads and [outline] their vision from “mission” to “measurable outcomes.” Rather it will come when men and women of God wrestle with

God as Jacob wrestled with the angel—wrestling with God with their conscience, with their times, and with the state of the church in their times, until out of that intense wrestling comes an experience of God that is shattering, all-decisive and the source of what may later once again be termed a reformation. “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”²¹

The goal is clearly not the elevation of any church, ministry, or personality—but that Christ would receive glory as congregations around the United States awaken to His presence and purposes. Worship-based prayer cultivates a deep repentance in His presence, a growing desperation for His power, and an unquenchable passion for His renown. J. D. Greear noted, “True revival is not noisy; at least, not at first. It usually begins in a hushed awe. Believers get convicted about sin and the seriousness of God’s holiness. Weeping is heard before shouts.”²²

His Glory, Not Ours

The cry of Psalm 115:1 must shape our longing for revival, “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!” I find it notable that “Not to us” is repeated twice. Our problem is seldom the desire to see God glorified. Rather, it is our tendency to want a bit of the glory for ourselves. I am continually convicted by God’s pronouncement, “I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols” (Isa. 42:8).

We are beyond carved idols, but we have varieties of mechanisms in our promotional repertoire that compete with the glory of God. In our local churches, many components of our worship experiences come close to a modern carved idol. They are not chiseled with wood but technologically mind-blowing products sold in Silicon Valley, designed by Sony, manufactured by Microsoft, or promoted by way of high-tech projection. While none of these

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modern worship supplements are wrong, I doubt the Lord is going to bring revival in such a way that our gadgets get the glory.

Today it takes an astounding amount of discernment and intentionality for us to keep an “old paths” mindset, especially when the new paths pulsate with such titillating appeal. Yet we must relentlessly embrace the attitude of Paul when he wrote,

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.” (1 Cor. 1:26–31)

All human boasting is an enemy of revival, in whatever subtle form it appears. The psalmist had it right when he wrote, “Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?” Revival is marked by singular rejoicing in God, His power, His presence, His exploits, His renown, and the glory of His Gospel.

THE FINAL WORD ON YOUR LIFE AND MINISTRY

As much as we all long for an extraordinary work of the Gospel and a coming awakening, there is a personal side to all of this. Our reward in heaven is directly linked to why we do what we do, how we do it, and for whom. The real scoreboard is in heaven. An Acts 6:4 approach to ministry is paramount to our reward in heaven and our reputation on earth.

Greear has written, “If everything you do is explainable by natural giftings, then at your funeral people will likely give you credit for your accomplishments. But if God is doing things through you that are ‘impossible with men,’ then at your funeral your friends are likely to give God the credit.” Then he concludes, “The Spirit wants to glorify Jesus in your life, not you. Live today with your eulogy in mind, asking God to do through you what only he can get credit for. I want the summation of my life to be the words of Zechariah the prophet, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit” says the Lord” (Zech. 4:6).²³

As Os Guinness has observed, “The church always goes forward best by going back first.”²⁴ I believe the key to your Christ-honoring legacy is rooted in a turn for the better. A turn back—to the old paths of “prayer and the ministry of the word.” A world-transforming work of the Gospel and the Spirit will not happen overnight, but we must believe that it can as we embrace the old paths. The sufficient Spirit is ready to meet us there with a new and transforming experience of His power.

Jonathan Edwards was perhaps the primary voice in the First Great Awakening, during eighteenth-century America. He noted that at the beginning, a few sermons were preached and some missions efforts were initiated, but a small number of converts were seen. “But then,” Edwards notes, “God in so remarkable a manner took the work into his own hands and did as much in a day or two that, under normal circumstances took the entire Christian community, using every means at their disposal, with the blessing of God, more than a year to accomplish.”²⁵

May God unite our hearts in this prayer, “Oh God, take our work into Your hands. Eclipse our ordinary approach to ministry with a fresh display of Your extraordinary grace and power. And may we see it in our lifetime.”

ON THE PATH TO POWER

A Dream for Organic Revival Among a New Generation

BY KYLE LANCE MARTIN

When a person hears the word “revival,” many thoughts flood the mind. Perhaps *emotions*, *tents*, even *disorder*. True revival, however, is much more than a word imbued with emotion or traditional connotations. There is a dream being birthed in America—a dream for true, organic revival, stripped down of religion and characterized by a genuine love for Christ that leads to proclaiming Him to others.

Only God could orchestrate what we are beginning to see unfold across our nation. As our Time to Revive team travels from city to city, encouraging local churches and equipping believers to humbly seek after God and share the Gospel in unity, we have seen the acts of the Holy Spirit like never before. For example, in numerous cities across the state of Indiana, public schools excused students to go and pray with others, RV factory owners shut down their assembly lines so we could share the Good News in the middle of their workday, Chrysler and other national factories opened their doors to prayer and the Gospel. Meanwhile doctors invited us into their waiting rooms to pray with patients, and

thousands of believers gathered to go out and share Jesus in their neighborhoods and towns.

After many years of seeking God for revival, we can honestly say that *revival is arising in Indiana*. No more hoping for it. No more thinking it can happen. What began as seven days of prayer in northern Indiana exploded into seven months of prayer and outreach throughout the state, and still continues to spread to neighboring cities and towns.

The dream that burns in my heart for revival is rooted in Acts 11:19–26, the record of how the church in Antioch was birthed through the obedience and faith of unnamed men. Organic revival in our day will follow the same biblical pattern seen in the work of the Holy Spirit to establish the early church.

Even as the early Christians were scattered, spreading the Good News as they went, today God is raising a remnant in the church, strategically placed throughout our nation and beyond (Acts 11:19). They have been perfectly positioned to impact their community and culture. As our team travels from city to city, calling the church together under the one banner of Jesus Christ, the remnant is rising up and leaving behind denominational, racial, generational, and socioeconomic barriers that used to divide. They are pursuing the kingdom of God and speaking the message of Christ in unity. When the church starts living and declaring the pure message of the Gospel in unity, a city and even a nation can be revived for His glory (John 17:23).

Our team's mission arose out of a simple, yet deep longing for revival amongst a group of no-names in Dallas, Texas. God furthered the early church through men of no prominence who were willing to follow the Holy Spirit and share the news that had changed their lives. Likewise, we are seeing Him birth something new through the obedience and faith of a group of nobodies willing to follow Him and devote our lives to furthering His kingdom.

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God is awakening a string of no-named individuals to the truth of Jesus and how it transforms lives.

Organic revival will take place only upon the shoulders of men and women who are content to remain unknown, seeking glory for the Lord, not themselves, and keeping the Gospel at the center. God will not share His glory (Isa. 42:8). Just as the men of Cyprus and Cyrene in Acts 11—men without office in the church and whose identities are unknown—took the Gospel to the Gentiles of Antioch, accomplishing a great stride forward in the early church, so a true movement of God will be one of no names and no faces. Revival will elevate one Person and One alone—Jesus Christ.

As we deliver this good news, we must get back to the basics the first century message was founded upon. Believers are growing weary of the complicated messages that have come with the Gospel over the years. The legalistic messages are exhausting. Traditions have become elevated to the mystery of the message. Let's keep to the Gospel as Paul did—death, burial, and resurrection: “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3–4). No need to make this difficult to embrace.

Organic revival will happen only because the Lord's hand is with us in our pursuit (Acts 11:21a). A true movement of God cannot be manufactured or contrived. It will only come in the Lord's timing and in His way, and we will know it's happening because large numbers will turn to the Lord (Acts 11:21b).

When examining a movement of God for its integrity, we must ask, “Are people coming to know the Lord? Are disciples being made?” We aren't talking transfer of sheep—people moving from one congregation to another. We are actually talking about people

experiencing new life in Christ (Acts 11:21, 24). And we're talking about people who become *disciples* of Christ, not just converts. The harvest is plentiful, we only need laborers willing to go out and ask God for the increase (Luke 10:2).

A movement of God will also draw seasoned believers and respected leaders who will begin to “come and see” (Acts 11:22). Jesus invited others to come and see, and so should we (John 1:35–46). There will be a time of testing and discerning what is taking place, and true revival will show itself pure. Faith leaders of yesterday will see what is happening and say, “That may not be how we have done things, but we see God’s hand in it and we are jumping in!”

The fruit of the Holy Spirit will be the evidence of a true movement of God, just as it was of the men in Antioch and of Paul’s work in spreading the Gospel (Gal. 2:8–9). For revival to spread, we must take the attitude of the early church pioneers who embraced God’s ways (as evidenced by the fruit), even when they were unexpected or nontraditional. We must watch ourselves, that we are not falling into the attitude of the Pharisees who couldn’t reconcile the new wineskin that Christ taught of with their self-conceived notions of what the Messiah’s coming should look like. Ask the Holy Spirit if what is taking place is from Him. And when you see the grace of God, be glad, jump in, and leave behind all the hesitations, questions, and what-ifs heaped upon us by centuries of tradition and ritual that have smothered the roots of our faith (Acts 11:23).

When a true movement of God takes place, people will want others to experience what they have seen. And those who have been touched by revival will come back to invest in the environment (Acts 11:25–26). And this newness of following Christ will be recognized as something separate, something different from the religious traditions our culture is accustomed to and comfortable

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with, just as the first believers in Antioch were set apart and given the new label “Christian.”

We must get on our knees to pray for and pursue revival. Our nation needs it. We are desperate for a revival that is so purely of the Holy Spirit it breaks the mold of anything we have seen in our lifetime. It’s time to revive who we are in Jesus Christ. True revival begins within us. Because when we embrace Him fully, the comfort zone we once put ourselves in goes away. There is no framework, and we are willing to follow the Holy Spirit wherever He leads, no longer concerned about pleasing man. It truly becomes walking by faith through the unknown. And that is when others will be drawn to Christ. They will want what we have.

He is coming quickly, and the time is now to awaken the world to His truth.

Kyle Lance Martin is the founder and chief executive officer of Time to Revive, an agency to share the Gospel and train disciples.

AN OLD PATHS PROFILE

PASTOR JON HOEKEMA

PASTOR JON HOEKEMA came to Horizon Community Church in Downers Grove, Illinois, in December 2003. After spending five years in sunny southern California, the winters of Chicago were just too hard to resist! The church website describes Jon as “passionate about prayer and seeking God’s presence in prayer in his life, at Horizon, and in leading a prayer movement among congregations in the Chicago area through a regional coalition of Christian Reformed churches. He is also passionate about God’s Word and making it relevant, real, and applicable to everyday life.”

Yet Jon’s passion for prayer was ignited only in recent years. After a ten-week sabbatical, Jon had a deep sense that something was missing in his ministry. After coming to a place of significant discouragement and

desperation, he attended a one-day event with Jim Cymbala in Minneapolis, sponsored by The 6:4 Fellowship. As he describes it, he returned from that event “with a passion for prayer.” He later attended other 6:4 events and subsequently participated in coaching groups designed to equip him in leading a culture of prayer.

Soon Jon brought his personal leadership to the weekly Wednesday evening prayer meetings; he also guided his leadership teams in extended time together in prayer. Jon regularly leads forty-five minutes of prayer before the Sunday morning services. Once a quarter he actually focuses the entire Sunday service on prayer.

Jon also has accepted invitations from other pastors who are hungry to experience a greater reality of prayer in their lives and churches. In recent

years, Hoekema has served as the regional prayer leader for the Christian Reformed churches in the Chicago area. He has also led prayer sessions at the denomination's national meetings and spoken at their national prayer conference.

The wonderful part of Jon's story is that his church is small, and Jon is bi-vocational. Yet his passion and desire to serve his fellow pastors has given him favor in the region and across his denomination. God is ready to use humble pastors, who share His heart, in ways that modern ecclesiastical celebrities often disregard.

"As a pastor of a small church, I appreciate the role we can play in spiritual revival," Jon writes. "I think for far too long the broader church has had the attitude that the megachurches have it right and the small churches have to learn from them. It fit into the American success story. But the small church, and the medium size church, stand side-by-side with the large church for the kingdom. Each has a God-given part to play.

The church, no matter what size, when it is led by prayerful leaders, can be used by God for a great influence for which God called it to be."

In a recent post to his fellow denominational pastors, Jon wrote, "If we say we believe in the power of prayer, if we believe that God works through the prayers of his people, if we see that the Holy Spirit moved powerfully in response to the prayers of believers in the book of Acts and in the history of the church, then why does the church today not give a higher priority to prayer among the leadership of the church? Praying is the work of the church!" After several responses from his colleagues Jon elaborated, "I think that we have relied on our wisdom, on our power, on our emphasis of the Word and our understanding of it to the detriment to our relying on prayer. A prayerless church is a powerless church.

"And prayerless preaching is powerless preaching."

Pastors like Jon Hoekema play a vital role in the dream "100,000 points of light."

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