

# Fanning the Flames of REVIVAL

## *Participating in the Continuous Activity of God* An IFA Prayer Guide

### Introduction

Revivals are concentrated periods of intense and often widespread ministry by the Holy Spirit. They have occurred throughout history, perhaps dating back to the days when Israel was in Egypt. Revivals come in many forms and for various reasons, but they always fall into two categories:

1. Movements of spiritual renewal and reformation among God's people;
2. An outpouring of conviction among unbelievers, leading to repentance from sin and the conversions of many.

Intercessors play a vital role in the ignition and spread of any revival. Part "special-ops" teams and part "watchmen on the wall," intercessors pray for revival to come and that it would be protected from distractions and distortions once it does come. During the revival of 1949 on the Hebrides islands, evangelist Duncan Campbell observed that intercessors were engaged in "travailing prayer," which is described as *prayer "in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!"* (**Galatians 4:19**). This kind of praying is burdened, focused, pressing, and agonized, to a depth common among revivals but unfamiliar to today's comfort-and-entertainment-obsessed church culture.

### **God seeks intercessors who are willing to travail in prayer. Is He calling you?**

We are at a crucial point this year. Outpourings of spiritual renewal have come to Asbury University and have spread from there to numerous other colleges and universities, Christian and secular. How can we, God's appointed intercessors, fan the flames of revival so that they sweep across America and the world?

God has the power to stir up spiritual fervor in people's hearts (see **Ezra 1:1,5**). So the key is to pray that God would stir up in people the heart conditions for revival that He has laid out in the Bible.

When Solomon dedicated the temple he had built and God's glory filled it, the Lord spoke directly to him in a dream at night. His words to the king describe the heart conditions to which He responds with revival.

"When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place" (**2 Chronicles 7:13-15**).

### 1. Desperation

God's shutting up the heavens or commanding locusts to devour the land are examples of the shakings He allows when

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His people forsake Him, neglect Him, or rebel against Him. As Mario Murillo says: “Before a great awakening, there must be a rude awakening.” Adversity greater than human self-sufficiency can handle will bring us to the end of ourselves and make us realize our need for God. It is the first step toward people’s getting right with Him. Despair brings about the other heart conditions to which God responds.

## Prayer Points:

Pray **Psalm 139:23–24**: Before you pray for holy desperation in others, ask the Lord to reveal any trace of being too comfortable, self-sufficient, and independent in your own heart.

Pray according to **Proverbs 9:10** that America’s moral slide, both inside and outside the Church, will fill God’s people with holy fear and a burning desire to seek Him.

Pray through **James 5:4–6** and **Revelation 3:15–20** for the Holy Spirit to open our eyes and burden our hearts against any worldliness and lukewarm condition in the Church.

Pray through the prophecy and promise of **Zechariah 14:13–16** for the growing instability in the U.S. to bring about a godly fear in our nation that will direct hearts to return to God and worship Him.

## 2. Humility

The realization that we are very limited and have sinned against God by trying to go it alone and by doing what is right in our own eyes leads us to humble ourselves. Humility is a precursor to seeking His forgiveness and restoration. It implies an admission of guilt and a confession of sin in holy fear of the chastisement we deserve. Humility also means intentional dependence on God and obedience to His precepts and purposes for us. It is the heart condition necessary to pray and seek His face with a pure heart and the right motive.

## Prayer Points:

Consider the contrast of heart conditions in **Jeremiah 17:7–10** and ask the Lord to reveal any trace of pride, rebellion, and disobedience in your heart.

Pray through **John 16:8** for the Holy Spirit to visit His Church and our nation with conviction of sin.

Pray in the spirit of **James 4:6** for that conviction to bring us to humility before God and to the realization that we have offended Him, that we need Him, and that we must embrace and submit to His design for our lives.

Pray that, according to **2 Corinthians 10:5**, the barriers of pride and self-sufficiency and the false notions of success would be destroyed.

## 3. Prayerfulness

A heart that is humble before God expresses itself to Him in prayer. Prayerlessness is one of the biggest diseases plaguing the Church today. Prayerless hearts beget prayerless homes, and prayerless homes produce prayerless churches. On the other hand, a prayerful heart is attuned to God and eager to commune with Him nonstop. God’s desire for us is simple: *Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.* (**1 Thessalonians 5:16–18**).

Prayerfulness must be central in our lives and in His Church, and seeking the Lord in prayer is key to a nation that pledges to be “one nation under God.” After all, He created people for worship. He wants sinful people to return to worshipping Him, and He has made a way for them to do so. A prayerful heart desires to worship God and to commune with Him.

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## Prayer Points:

Pray through **1 Thessalonians 5:17** and **Romans 8:26–27** for your own prayer life first — that the Holy Spirit would invigorate it and help you listen to what He wants you to pray.

Pray through **Colossians 4:2** for a new and deeper devotion to prayer in the Church that seeks and welcomes spiritual renewal and revival.

Pray that this prayer movement will reflect **Acts 1:14** and unite us with a shared desire to see God move in our midst.

Pray through **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18** and **Philippians 4:6** for believers to desire and pursue a life of unceasing prayer rooted in worship and thanksgiving.

Pray through **Psalms 145:18** for prayer to return to public life in America in the conviction that it is God's will for people to pray, and that He is near to all who call upon Him in truth.

## 4. Hunger for God

A desire, hunger, or thirst for God leads to us seeking His face. And seeking God's face implies two things: urgency and awe. When we seek, we leave no stone unturned to find what we desperately want. And what we want fills us with awe, because it is the face of God — the mightiest, most glorious, and holiest Being in the universe. God desires that we seek His face more than His hand. When we seek His hand, we are after what He can do for us. It's like a friend you only hear from when he needs something. But when we seek God's face, we make it clear that we want the delight of His presence. We want to know His character. We seek Him because we love Him for Who He is. As it turns out, when you seek only His hand, you miss out on His face. But when you seek first His face, you get His hand also. According to **Acts 17:26-28**, a desire for His presence and a delight in Who He is are conditions of heart that are precious to God.

## Prayer Points:

Pray the Psalmist's prayer in **Psalms 119:36** that God would ignite a stronger hunger for Him.

Pray through **Revelation 2:4,5a** that a hunger for God and a passion for His glory would return to the Church.

Pray that, according to **Jeremiah 24:7**, the masses seeking reassurance and joy elsewhere will hunger for God and seek Him.

Pray that, like the first New Testament revival in **Acts 2:42–47**, the expressions of hunger and thirst for the presence of God in these current student revivals will be lasting and contagious and lead people inside and outside the Church to seek His face.

Pray for the Church to embody **2 Timothy 2:2**, ready to help seekers find the face of God and come into a strong daily relationship with Him.

## 5. Repentance

Humility, prayer, and seeking God lead to repentance: a deliberate 180-degree turn *away* from the life we were living and toward the life that God desires for us. Repentance is the precursor to salvation for an unbeliever. God forgives a repentant heart. Repentance leads to a more ardent pursuit of holiness within a believer. Repentance is a heart condition that motivates and empowers us to fight sin daily and to desire holiness as a way of life (see **Philippians 2:13**).

## Prayer Points:

Do you desire holiness? Pray through **2 Corinthians 7:1** that God would shine His light on you and intensify your pursuit of holiness and purity.

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Pray in the words of **Hebrews 12:14** for a renewed and sustained desire in the Church to pursue unity and holiness.

Pray according to **2 Corinthians 7:10** for conviction of sin by the Holy Spirit to lead to genuine repentance.

Pray for the Church to embrace **Colossians 4:4–6** and **Romans 6:11–12**, boldly but lovingly speaking to unbelievers about sin and its consequences, and teaching people to reckon themselves dead to sin and alive to Christ.

Pray through **Philippians 2:15–16** for holiness in God's people to attract unbelievers to Christ.

## 6. Joy

Humility, prayer, seeking God, and repentance are the conditions God places on accepting prayer and bringing forgiveness and healing to hearts, lives, and lands. Revivals are often marked by intense grief over sin and guilt, followed by immense relief and joy at the assurance of forgiveness and restoration. God's desire is for people to be brought into intimacy with Him so they can experience true joy, which comes from knowing Him (see **Psalms 126:5**).

### Prayer Points:

Search your heart to see if you have lost faith in God's promise of forgiveness and healing, and pray through **Psalms 51:10–12** for that faith to be restored and strengthened.

Pray for the realization in His people of **Isaiah 51:10**, that real joy for the redeemed comes from knowing and walking with Jesus.

Pray for unbelievers' hearts to be opened to God's call in **Isaiah 55:1–3** to find joy in knowing God, and to pursue that through humility, prayer, seeking His face, and earnest repentance.

Pray according to **Galatians 5:13–15** that joy will supplant judgment, criticism, and negativity in the Church.

## The Intercessors God Seeks

Revival is welcomed into the Church and in the land by intercessors who are seized by the plain and often ugly facts behind our need for God. Our IFA headlines remind us daily of those plain facts. Intercessors, a travailing prayer for God to move in revival is not something we can manufacture. It is brought about in us by the Holy Spirit, Who prays in us and through us. We must be willing and available, we must face battles against the Enemy and our flesh, and we must seek God's help to travail, persevere, and prevail in prayer. Seek Him today and ask Him if He is calling you to continue in urgent and desperate prayer until revival sweeps our land. Will you fan the flames of revival?

## Helpful Resources:

### Articles:

[“Sowing For A Great Awakening”](#) – Seedbed.com

[“How To Approach Revival”](#) – Reverence Journal

### Books:

[The Ten Greatest Revivals Ever](#) — Elmer Towns, Douglas Porter

[Sounds From Heaven](#) — Colin Peckham

[Brokenness: The Heart That God Revives](#) — Nancy Leigh DeMoss

[Longing For Revival](#) — James Choung, Ryan Pfeiffer

[Ablaze: Preparing Your Heart For Revival](#) — Kristi Lemley

[Prayer Matters](#) — Remco Brommet