The Power of Prayer: A key to revival and church growth, preparing for the end times

Biblical lessons on prayer

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face... (2 Chr.7:14)
Vision Statement

- To become a stronger, healthier body of believers through a stronger prayer life and spiritual relationship with God
- To become a true “praying church”
- To rekindle the passion for prayer in our personal lives and experience a greater joy, and victory as we witness God’s faithfulness and power in answering prayer
Goals and Objectives

- To learn the value of what Jesus and His followers taught about prayer and fasting (Matthew 6)
- To learn how to develop a more consistent, passionate, exciting, Spirit-filled prayer life
- To experience a close walk with God by “praying without ceasing” (Gal. 6:2) and “walking in the Spirit”
- To understand from history the power of God that is moved by our prayers when we “pray in the Spirit”
- To experience revival and church growth as the fruit of private and collective prayer
Key Bible Prayer Verses:

- (2 Chr 7:14) If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

- (Jer. 33:3) Call on me and I will answer and show you great and mighty things you knew not of.

- (James 5:16) Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
More Prayer Bible Verses:

(Mat 6:6) But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

(Mat 18:19-20) Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. {20} For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

(1 Chr 4:10) And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, “Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!” So God granted him what he requested.
Today’s Situation
(let’s do personal inventory)

- Most Christians in our churches struggle to have enough personal time with God (too busy)
- Less than 5% of believers regularly meet with someone to share and pray together
- Too many of us are not entering into consistent intercessory prayer
- Many of our churches do not have prayer meetings in homes or church like the early church did
- Too many churches are not growing much
How Did We Get Here?

- Needs are met in our prosperous land which diminishes our dependence on God
- Today’s culture in North America is filled with too much independent living
- Prayer is not mentored enough in small groups or one-on-one settings
- Lack of testimony of answered prayer in our services and meetings
Can revival happen today?

- What is revival?
- What does it look like?
- Can it happen to any generation?
- Would we welcome if it came?
- Is revival the result of seeking His face?

(Yes it is, God says “If my people will humble themselves and pray”)


What is revival?

An evangelical revival is an extraordinary work of God in which Christians repent of their sins as they become intensely aware of his presence in their midst. They manifest a positive response to God in renewed obedience to the known will of God, resulting in both a deepening of their individual and corporate experience with God, and an increased concern to win others to Christ.
What does revival look like today?

- Genuine repentance and prayer
- Holy Spirit inspired prayers
- God’s presence experienced
- Holiness and hunger for spiritual things
- Burden to pray for others
- Fruit of the Spirit evident in believers lives
- Joy and passion to share our faith that can’t be contained
Revival in the Early Church

- Believers pray in Jerusalem
- Waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit
  
  "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

- Holy Spirit is poured out on the day of Pentecost
- Hundreds and later thousands are saved
Let's look into testimonies of the revival history and see the role of prayer and seeking the Lord.

**Revivals of 1700s**

- 1727 - 13 August - Herrnhut, Germany (Nicholas von Zinzendorf)
- 1735 - January - New England, America (Jonathan Edwards)
- 1739 - Thursday 1 January - London (George Whitefield, John Wesley)
- 1745 - Thursday 8 August - Crossweeksung, New Jersey (David Brainerd)
- 1781 - Tuesday 25 December - Cornwall, England
Revivals of 1800s

- 1800 - June-July - Red & Gasper River, Kentucky (James McGready)
- 1801 - Cane Ridge, Kentucky (Barton Stone)
- 1821 - Wednesday 10 October - NY, America (Charles Finney)
- 1857 - October - Hamilton, Canada (Phoebe Palmer)
- 1857,58 - Nov to March - New York, America (Jeremiah Lamphier)
- 1859 - Monday 14 March - Ulster, Ireland (James McQuilkin)
Prayer precedes Pentecost (the outpouring of the Holy Spirit). The disgruntled community at Herrnhut, early in 1727, was deeply divided and critical of one another. Heated controversies threatened to disrupt the community. The majority were from the ancient Moravian Church of the Brethren an anabaptist based church.

Then they began to pray like never before.
A Moravian historian wrote that “Church history abounds in records of special outpourings of the Holy Ghost, and verily the thirteenth of August 1727, was a day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. “ Their church history records...

“We saw the hand of God and His wonders, and we were all under the cloud of our fathers baptized with their Spirit. The Holy Ghost came upon us and in those days, great signs and wonders took place in our midst. From that time scarcely a day passed but what we beheld His almighty workings amongst us. A great hunger after the Word of God took possession of us so that we had to have three services every day, 5.00am and 7.30 a.m. and 9.00 p.m. Every one desired above everything else that the Holy Spirit might have full control. Self-love and self-will, as well as all disobedience disappeared and an overwhelming flood of grace swept us all out into the great ocean of Divine Love.”

(see Power from on High – John Greenfield)
On 22 July 1727 many of the community covenanted together on their own accord to meet often to pour out their hearts in prayer and hymns.

On 5 August the 26 year old Count Zinzendorf spent the whole night in prayer with about twelve or fourteen others following a large meeting for prayer at midnight where great emotion prevailed.

On Sunday, 10 August, Pastor Rothe, while leading the service at Herrnhut, was overwhelmed by the power of the Lord about noon. He sank down into the dust before God. So did the whole congregation. They continued till midnight in prayer and singing, weeping and praying.

On Wednesday, 13 August, the Holy Spirit was poured out on them all. Their prayers were answered in ways far beyond anyone's expectations. Many of them decided to set aside certain times for continued earnest prayer.

On 26 August, twenty four men and twenty four women covenanted together to continue praying in intervals of one hour each, day and night, each hour allocated by lots to different people.

On 27 August, this new regulation began. Others joined the intercessors and the number involved increased to seventy seven. They all carefully observed the hour which had been appointed for them. The intercessors had a weekly meeting where prayer needs were given to them.
At the beginning of 1858 that Fulton Street prayer meeting had grown so much they were holding three simultaneous prayer meetings in the building and other prayer groups were starting in the city. By March newspapers carried front page reports of over 6,000 attending daily prayer meetings in New York, 6,000 attending them in Pittsburgh, and daily prayer meetings were held in Washington at five different times to accommodate the crowds.

Other cities followed the pattern. Soon a common midday sign on businesses read, 'Will reopen at the close of the prayer meeting.'

By May, 50,000 of New York's 800,000 people were new converts. A newspaper reported that New England was profoundly changed by the revival and in several towns no unconverted adults could be found!

In 1858 a leading Methodist paper reported these features of the revival: few sermons were needed, lay people witnessed, seekers flocked to the altar, nearly all seekers were blessed, experiences remained clear, converts had holy boldness, religion became a social topic, family altars were strengthened, testimony given nightly was abundant, and conversations were marked with seriousness.
Revival and growth testimony in our time:

Brooklyn Tabernacle Church Revival

Are we open to read the account of how this small church, that dwindled down to 25 people, changed to become a praying church and experienced revival and powerful growth? It’s the story of what happened when God’s Spirit began to move in 1975 when they began to pray like never before! God used a humble, non-seminary trained pastor, Jim Cymbala, to lead a church revival and by 1999 they grew to over 5,000 believers in NY city and are still growing.
ASK FOR MORE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT’S WORK IN OUR LIVES

(Luke 11:13) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

- Are we willing to ask Him personally and collectively to come with His mighty power?
- How has He come with power historically?
- Is an Early Church type experience welcome?
- Holy Spirit inspired prayers are always effective
COME HOLY SPIRIT

Will we prayerfully seek Him as we sing in this song?

“Come Holy Spirit, dark is the hour, we need your filling your love and your mighty power. Move now among us fill us we pray, come Holy Spirit, revive the church today. “

( learn the lessons from revival history such as the testimony of the Brooklyn Tabernacle Church and God working through prayer – When we are weakest God show’s up when we pray )
What Does the Bible Teach on Prayer?

1. Attitudes about prayer
2. Settings of prayer
3. Types of prayer by content
4. Types of answers to prayer
5. Results of effective prayer
1. Attitudes About Prayer

- Prayer is the heart cry and breathing of the soul (it all begins with God working)
- Does my prayer really make a difference?
- Do we see a spiritual battle is raging in the invisible world? (Eph 6.)
- Why is praying in secret important?
- Confession and honesty with God and man is important (James 5:16)
- Testimonies from revival history changes our attitudes of what is possible
Attitudes of prayer cont’d

- What does it mean to “pray without ceasing” or being “instant in prayer”?
- What is the relationship of faith and prayer?
- Will we pray much if we don’t believe?
- How can we get a passionate attitude for prayer? (ask for the Holy Spirit’s working)
- How can we hear His voice more clearly?
- As our intimacy with God grows, He speaks things to our heart to pray about and to do
Do we see clearly the spiritual battle that is raging in the invisible world and our authority of the enemy?

- We know from scripture that invisible spiritual powers and enemy attack and strongholds are all around us and by prayer (asking for help from above, this brings down the enemy)

- (Eph 6:12) For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

(Play section 6 audio – “man needs Jesus not money”)
Our weapons of warfare and authority in the name of Jesus Christ:

- (Cor. 10:4) For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds

- (Mark 16:17) And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils;

- (Mat 10:8) Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

(Our foreign missions in Africa, Brazil, Papa New Guinea have learned this more than we have — What was it like to be living in the book of Acts?)
2. Setting of Prayer

- Personal, private (secret) prayer
- Small Group prayer (family, prayer partner, Bible study group etc.)
- Public prayer (in church, retreats, camps or at other public events)

( Testimony of these prayer settings )
(Werner to share Kitchener Prayer service format )
“TEMPLE PARABLE” OF PERSONAL PRAYER

- OUTER COURT PRAYING (Noisy)
- PRAYING IN THE TEMPLE (more focused)
- PRAYING IN THE HOLY OF HOLIES

( praying until you “break through into the Holy of holies” – praying in the Spirit)

Powerful things happen in the Holy of Holies with God ( amazing joy, presence, power and answers to prayer )
3. Types of Prayer by Content:

- Worship and honor (lift up God’s name)
- Thanksgiving & Praise
- Petition prayer (asking for ourselves for something)
- Intercessory prayer (asking God for others for some need)
Types of prayer by content cont’d

- Life direction prayers (fleeces & doors)
- Healing and health related prayers
- Prayers for salvation for self or others
- Other needs for self or others
- Prayer for the Holy Spirit presence, anointing or gifts (read Luke 11:13)
Ask for the Holy Spirit, His fruit, gifts and empowerment

(Luke 11:9-13) And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. {10} For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. {11} If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? {12} Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? {13} If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

( Gal. 5:22) The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, patience...
4. Answers to Prayer
( Is all prayer answered? )

- Yes proceed ( Go )
- No – that’s not my will ( No )
- Wait ( Slow )
- God says “Let me show you my will in my time as you seek my face"
4. Answers to Prayer
   (Secret to prayers being answered powerfully and often)

John 15:7 – “If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, you will ask what you will and I will do it.”

- Abiding in Christ (walking in the Spirit close to the Lord, hearing His voice)
- His word’s and promises strong in our hearts (hiding His word in our hearts and praying & claiming the promises of the Word)
Reasons for prayers not answered the way we expect

- Not asking or asking lightly (James 4:2)
- Not God’s will (James 4:3)
- Not God’s timing (Rom 8:28)
- Not enough faith (James 1:6)
- Prayer is being hindered by sin (1 Pet. 3:7)
- Not accompanied by fasting (Matt. 17:21)
- Needs more people praying (Matt. 18:19)
5. Results of Effective Prayer

- Prayer is powerful and effective (James 5:16)
- Amazing events and God’s touch is evident
- People get saved and lives changed
- It encourages even more prayer
- A powerful testimony of God’s love and care builds the faith of others (Psa.96:3)
The Power of Prayer and Fasting:

- Additional spiritual power is released with fasting added to prayer.
- Jesus said “Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.” (Matt. 17:21)
- Fasting is a normal lifestyle of the believer (has this teaching been lost?)
- Jesus said “When you pray...” He also said “when you fast...” (it was not “if you fast”)
The Attitude when fasting

16 “Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (Matt. 6:16-18)
Great Promises:

- (Psalm 50:15) And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

- (Jer 33:3) Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.
Eph. 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Getting together often with a friend/mentor to talk and pray is so biblical and powerful
Small Group Prayer ideas:

- Become part of a small group in your church for Bible discussion (Bible Study)
- Build spiritual relationships/accountability
- Include prayer time at the end
- (ie. 1 hr lesson & 45 minutes Holy Spirit led prayer time - open for group to small group testimonies)
What’s going to happen when we pray fervently?

- You will be more involved in the lives of people you pray for.
- You will follow up with people to see what is happening.
- You will be excited as you see God work.
- You will find the excitement rubs off and grows as others see God work.
Conclusion & Action Items

- Commit to becoming more of a “praying church” (we can’t grow without God’s hand and Spirit among us)
- Pray for a revival of prayer often (let’s do it now)
- Include prayer time more at leadership meetings
- Teach God’s people how be bolder in spiritual warfare prayers, especially for the lost, taking authority over the enemy in the name of Jesus (See book of Acts prayers, and Eph 6, 1 Cor. 10:4)
- Meet with someone regularly (Prayer partnering – as encouraged by James 5:16)
- Give God thanks publicly for answered prayer (give testimony in our churches at greetings/announcement time)
Action Items Continued

- Encourage prayer at all levels (personal, small group, and church/public/camp/prayer meetings)
- Pray for wisdom to implement church-wide prayer meetings like the early church (in a peaceful, godly way that honors the Lord) perhaps starting once a month to replace midweek service with hymns and prayer service combined
- Encourage God’s people to sign up for prayer vigils such as 60 hrs of continuous prayer for Elders meetings
- Encourage prayer and fasting in teaching/sermons
- Use this PowerPoint (modify ending) and present to churches/retreats to encourage prayer
PRAYER TIME

- Pray for the end times preparation
- Ask for revival of prayer in our churches
- Ask for the Holy Spirit to be poured out

- Additional requests