

Seeking God for Revival

02-22-15 Exciting FCOG, Pastor Peter Smith

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.
Stir up Your might and come to save us.
Turn again, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and see;
have regard for this vine. Revive us, and we will call on your
name. Restore us, Lord God Almighty;
make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.”
From Psalm 80

Revive: def: Merriam Webster says:

to make someone or something strong, healthy or active
again

- God is calling us to Seek Him for our community at the start of this year
- We are to pray for people to become active again, to be energized again
- How do we know that people need to be revived?

Pastor and author A. W. Tozer (on the screen)

-proposed these 7 questions. When answered honestly, these questions speak volumes about our spiritual health:

- What I want most
- What I think about most
- How I use my money
- What I do with my leisure time
- The company I enjoy
- Who and what I admire
- What I laugh at

Another person listed the following 5 signs that I need spiritual revival:

1. More Apathy than Faith
2. A lack of love and concern for others
3. A lack of involvement outside my home
4. A lack of personal prayer
5. Less thinking about God

- How do these lists hit home in your life? Do they strike a nerve?
- These lists are trying to focus us *inward*, instead of on others. The starting place for Revival is right here in me.

Illustration:

A Bible student once asked Pastor Billy Graham how to pray for revival. Billy stooped down and drew an imaginary circle around himself. When he stood up he said, "I start within this circle". Billy Graham has seen more people come to know Jesus than many throughout history. And it all started here (point to my heart).

This week:

- we have prayed for Youth, unemployed, marriages, pastors and today for orphans. We are asking God to stir hearts, to ignite a fire within their hearts.
- We have started praying for countries within our hemisphere: in Latin America, South America, the Caribbean, and this coming week North America.
- What exactly should we pray for? How do we know if we are on target? What kind of prayers will God hear and answer?

1. God says to start with me

Why me?

- It's a matter of the heart
 - Remember Jesus teaching on judging others?
 "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but don't notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself don't see the log in your eye? Hypocrite! First take the log out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck in your brother's eye."

-Luke 6:41-42, HCSB

- Jesus works this way in the Bible

Calling the Apostles:

“Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons.” -Mark 3:13-15, NIV

- Often overlooked here is vs. 14: “*that they might be with him*”
- What was Jesus thinking? Relationship!
 - He developed the Apostles 1st before they went out on mission
 - He showed them God’s kingdom for 3 years!
 - He made it clear that they mattered more than being busy for God

2. Know God will work through my prayers

James offers instruction about faith and praying in
Speaking about prayer James 5:16 tells us:

“The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.” NLT

What can God do? Anything!!

What can God do when you pray? Anything!

Is God doing anything when you pray?

-If not, you need to pray for personal revival!

3. God asks me to pray with hope

- Know anyone without hope right now?
- Hope is believing something positive can happen
- Where there is no hope, people die, towns die, companies close...
- Where does our hope start? In the Bible!

Pray with hope by praying the Bible

- a. Page 9 of your journal quotes Jesus in John 7:37-38 saying,
“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”
 - Point: This is a promise from Jesus. He keeps his word

- Jesus taught us to pray...he said (boldly) **“Give us this day our daily bread”**. Why? God’s will is that we would not live on physical stuff but spiritual food from Him. He promises this to us, so we can ask it. And this leads us to Hope.
- Make it a prayer (read the paragraph below)
- When you pray for yourself or for others, personalize the Bible passage / promise
- This will produce hope!

Note: All of us have prayed without results. Only God knows when or how something will happen. Yet He tells us to pray!

He answers the prayers of Righteous People. Meaning without ongoing sin in their lives. Start there. Confess your sins as you pray and ask for Thirstiness to come to you.

Teenagers and students: pray 2 things this week:

1. Ask God to make you thirsty / desirous for Him
2. Pray that God would make this true for your teachers, too. This is Revival.

Parents: pray 2 things this week:

1. Ask God to make you thirsty / desirous for Him
2. Pray that God would make this true for your neighbors and co-workers, too. This is Revival!

All of us here today: Let us ask God for 2 things:

1. To ignite a fire inside of us for God and
2. To give us a desire for the Holiness of God. The bible says without holiness no person will see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).