

FIRESTARTERS 5

PRAYER TOOL

Igniting Prayer for Revival in our City • 5 Minutes to Read • 5 Minutes in Prayer

FOR THE WEEK OF July 19-25, 2020 - Vol 12

THEME VERSE:

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.
With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

Ephesians 6:18

THE GOD OF REVIVAL:

The 1927 Shantung Revival

The early part of the 20th century was a turbulent time for China. National disasters and intense suffering left people feeling hopeless and depressed. There was strong anti-foreigner sentiment towards missionaries, and local Christians faced increasing persecution from the government. The addictions to opium and wine had permeated the Chinese church, and trust in the Bible as God's Word had decreased significantly over time. Membership in churches saw consistent decline from year to year, and even many missionaries resigned from their posts in light of the great spiritual apathy, coldness, and lifelessness.

However, this was also a period when God saw fit to visit revival in many other places such as the United States and Korea and Scotland. The stories stirred up in the Chinese churches a longing and passion to see revival in their own country. Prayer groups with a distinct focus upon revival began to ignite throughout China, and the churches united in fervent prayer behind the slogan: "Lord, revive Your church, beginning with me!"

In 1927, in the town of Chefoo in the northeastern region of China known as Shantung, the Holy Spirit began to move powerfully through a series of meetings led by Marie Monsen, a missionary with the Norwegian Lutherans. They delved into God's Word and preached pointedly about sin. A thirst for God was on display, unlike anything the missionaries had witnessed before. Deep conviction of sin gripped the people there, whether unsaved or new Christian or preacher alike. God used Miss Monsen's words to cut to people's hearts and to compel them to examine anew where they stood with Christ. The Spirit of God set a revival fire ablaze in those meetings.

This awakening soon began to spread throughout the surrounding towns and churches. John and Jewell Abernathy, who were Southern Baptist missionaries, testified how the convicting power of the Holy Spirit would take hold of listeners. Often people would be moved to cry out in agony and to confess their sins right in the middle of a sermon. Through all this, God would work miracles and healings and set people free from demonic harassment. Believers would experience visions and dreams, and onlookers would see the palpable impact of the Spirit upon the lives of believers.

The Shantung Revival would last from 1927 to 1937, touching every province in China, and it led to momentous transformation in the church. Christians spontaneously began sharing the Gospel of Jesus and the cross with boldness. Broken or strained relationships in families were healed and restored to wholeness. Racial tensions among Western and Chinese workers were resolved and replaced with new-found appreciation and thankfulness. Many outreach teams from revived churches were sent out to various provinces where they would see the salvation of many souls. And the spiritually-awakened Chinese Christians now took ownership of their faith communities

and stepped courageously into leadership roles for the church in China. The church, which was at one point barely alive spiritually, was now revived and growing by the power of the Holy Spirit.

THE GOD WHO ANSWERS PRAYERS:

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.** Praise God for Centene Corporation, a large provider of managed care services for health plans, which plans to create an East coast regional headquarters and technology hub in Charlotte, bringing in over 3000 new jobs and more than \$1 billion dollars in investment by 2032.
- **SMALL ACTS OF HEROISM.** Thank God for the many ways our law enforcement officers serve our communities well. Praise God when police respond to a need and help to save lives, as in the case of South Carolina officer Kimbo who saved a baby's life in Summerville.

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE CITY:

- Continue praying for God to bring healing upon all who are sick, and pray that the COVID-19 pandemic would soon be ended.
- In light of the Governor's decree about extending Stage 2 for an additional 3 weeks, pray for minimal negative impact on our local businesses and economy.
- Pray for the teachers, administrators, bus drivers and school workers as they prepare for the fall school season. May the parents respond with trust in God, and may the church be voices of reason and sources of support for those severely struggling through this.
- May God bridge the divide in the Church that we are seeing in response to the culture's demand for racial equality. May the church shine light in the darkness. Where there is need for repentance, let us repent. Where there is a need for reconciliation, let us be ministers of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:11-21).

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD AND MISSIONS:

- As we pray for God to bring revival to our nation, we also want to always be expanding our heart for the whole world. To this end, this week we want to pray for full funding for the Bible translation of the Nigerian language known as the Gbari. Pray that, by the end of this four-year project, the Agbari will have the entire New Testament in their own language.
- Pray for the COVID crisis to be a time when missionaries can share the Gospel in new and creative ways wherever they are, despite restrictions.

FOR LOCAL MINISTRIES AND REVIVAL:

- **MINISTRIES.** Pray for the ministry of Love Life Charlotte, that they would have enough resources to press forward to share the Gospel and the value of life with everyone they see at the abortion clinics. Pray also that those volunteers who are sick may be strengthened and fully healed.
- **REVIVAL.** Pray that the church would long for more of God in all of our lives. Pray that, just like in the Shantung revival, we would cry out for revival to break out and for it to begin in MY life.

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