

FIRESTARTERS 5

PRAYER TOOL

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

FOR THE WEEK OF Sept 6th - 12th, 2020 - Vol 19

THEME VERSE:

*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you
so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that
whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.*

John 15:16

THE GOD OF REVIVAL:

The Burnt-Over Districts of New York in 1825

The 2nd Great Awakening started in the small towns of New England, blazed through the frontiers in Kentucky, and spread like wildfire across the nation. God used men like Asahel Nettleton, who saw numerous revivals break out as he ministered. In upstate New York alone, he witnessed hundreds of listeners in one setting crying out to God for mercy, and he led thousands upon thousands of sinners in the region to give their lives to Christ.

Charles Finney was also raised up by God as an unlikely revivalist. Finney had grown up in the church, singing in the choir and occasionally reading the Bible. But his heart was cold and indifferent to the Lord. As a young lawyer, he openly expressed his doubts and ridiculed how many Christians of that day would pray without actually expecting God to answer them. One day in 1821, he went out in the woods near Adams, New York, desperate to meet with God. He recalled the verse in Jeremiah 29:13 that says, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." God met with Finney that day: in the woods and then later at home in his study. God's palpable presence and powerful love overwhelmed him and forever changed him. He left his law practice to go into ministry as an evangelist and revivalist.

Finney felt that the people of his time only wanted God as long as they could have everything else they desired in this world. He knew that most people were unwilling to pay the price to completely follow after God. So he called them to make the choice for Jesus, to surrender to Him, as the most crucial decision they could ever make. He would travel from town to town and preach in a pointed logical way while also calling passionately for the lost to put their trust in the Savior. Beginning in 1825, God called him to begin ministering in areas of New York that he named the burnt-over districts.

What is a burnt-over district? This term was coined by Finney who recognized that in the early 1800's God had sent numerous revivals throughout New York. This happened to such a significant extent that spiritual fervor had been pervasive among the citizens, and it seemed like there were almost no more lost people with whom to share the Gospel. But it also raised up many who were jaded to God's plans and to God's move towards revival. God called Finney to preach in these places, and as he went, the presence of God would powerfully manifest itself and cause people to face God honestly. Even in the most hardened and burnt-out regions, God would use Finney to set ablaze the fresh flames of revival fire.

Finney strongly believed that a person genuinely transformed by God's grace can be used to radically transform culture and society. It's estimated that over 100,000 people came to know Christ through these revivals. In Rochester, New York, the District Attorney remarked that the revivals cause the crime rate to drop by two-thirds for the next two years, even as the general population increased significantly. They would make many people aware of the evils of slavery

and prompt believers to start organizations to seek after social justice and world missions. In this way, the 2nd Great Awakening deeply shaped America through the 1800's. And today God can profoundly reshape America once again.

THE GOD WHO ANSWERS PRAYERS:

- Thank God that, as Charlotte continues moving into phase 2, the numbers show that the COVID-19 cases are being stabilized. Just recently, only 6.7% of all those tested locally resulted in testing positive for the illness. In Mecklenburg County, we are averaging only 115 new infection cases per day (down from the number several months ago), and with 95% of all cases not requiring any hospitalization.

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE CITY:

- FUTURE PLANS. Let's pray for ongoing truth and accuracy with the numbers concerning the coronavirus. Pray for our leaders to be accountable to others and to demonstrate wisdom and courage to do what is best for our city.
- ELECTIONS. Pray for our city & others as Election Day in November draws closer. That the devil's schemes will be thwarted. For freedom from corruption, injustice, and violent behavior.
- HEALTH. Pray for the health of the city: for diminishing COVID-19 infections and deaths. For safe vaccines and effective treatments. For God's healing power and provision for the sick.

FOR THE NEEDS OF OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY:

- DAY OF PRAYER. Pray for the Christian Business Men Connections as it prepares for the September 16th National Day of Prayer and Fasting for Businesses of America. Pray for its impact upon the businesses and business people of the nation; that it will reach, encourage, unify and bring hope to thousands across the country.
- NEXT PHASE. Pray for safe expansion of business functions as we enter the next phase of NC regulations for COVID-19 recovery. Pray for continued focus on measures to ensure the safety of employees and customers in businesses that have reopened.

FOR LOCAL CHURCHES AND REVIVAL:

- MINISTRY. Pray for churches that are working to provide study locations for students who cannot attend school now and are doing online learning. Pray for volunteers, supplies, favor and protection day by day in this unusual ministry opportunity.
- NEEDS IN THE CHURCHES. The needs are great for the churches that are seriously struggling through the pandemic. Pray for financial provision and relief during this difficult period for our local churches.
- REVIVAL. Pray that God would stir a new hunger for Him in any spiritually "burnt-out districts" in our city. Ask God to send a fresh and powerful revival to His church so that the world might see what He can do when He truly works among His people. May His people pay attention, take notice, and respond to the Holy Spirit when He is poured out again!

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