

FIRESTARTERS 5

PRAYER TOOL

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

FOR THE WEEK OF April 11th - 17th, 2021 - Vol 50

THEME VERSE:

*Call to Me, and I will answer you
and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.*

Jeremiah 33:3

THE GOD OF REVIVAL:

The 1908 Manchurian Revival: Jonathan Goforth

Manchuria is a region that sits in the northeastern part of China, adjacent to Korea. It was an area that, around the early 1900's, was filled with fierce anti-foreigner sentiment and the bloody memories of the Boxer Rebellion of 1899. God had long been preparing a man to pray for this place and to press in for a Holy Spirit revival. The man's name was Jonathan Goforth.

Goforth had been sent as a missionary from his native homeland in Canada to the missions field of Honan Province in China in 1888. As Jonathan and his wife Rosalind readied themselves for this difficult field, the experienced missionary Hudson Taylor had warned them of the hostilities they would face and exhorted them that the key would be "to go forward on their knees" in persistent prayer. They took these words to heart, so they prayed fervently. Yet many trials awaited them. By late 1901, the heavy work and challenges began to take a toll on Goforth. He had witnessed the loss of 5 out of his 11 children to illness, and he had narrowly escaped an attack with a sword during the Boxer Rebellion. The harvest of souls he so greatly desired to see was nowhere in sight. So, he dove again deeply into the Scriptures for the Spirit's leading, and he consumed every book on revival he could find. When the unfolding stories of the Welsh Revival of 1904 started trickling in, he realized it was not merely a thing of the past but something from God to pursue. He continued to pray. He continued listening and trusting in God's instructions. When the opportunity opened up for him in 1907 to travel to Pyongyang, Korea, just as a powerful awakening was breaking out, he jumped at the chance. What he saw provoked him to pray with even great diligence that God would do a similar work among the Chinese.

Goforth returned to China that fall with a soaring heart, fully convinced that God longed to set the nations afire through revival. He stopped by Mukden in Manchuria to share the exciting stories of what God was doing. The missionaries listened intently and enthusiastically invited him to return to share more about revival in February of the next year. As he journeyed, sharing the stories of God's outpouring, most of the listeners were profoundly moved in spirit, and they covenanted with him that wherever they might be serving, they would pause to pray for revival every day until God brought it to pass. Unfortunately, when Goforth returned in 1908 to Mukden, the first meeting ended with a great sense of opposition from the church leaders themselves. Discouraged and fighting back his tears, Goforth voiced his concerns and disappointments to God later that night. And God's clear voice spoke to him from Jeremiah 33:3: "Call to Me, and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know."

The next morning, one of the Chinese elders in the church privately came to Goforth. He confessed that during the destruction of the Boxer Rebellion, when many of the accounting books had been destroyed, he had given in to temptation and stolen money from the church. In fact, he and his family continued to live off the money to the present day. He told Goforth that he was tormented by the reality of his sin and that he felt he had to admit it to the congregation that morning. After Goforth's message that day, this elder came forward and made his confession to the church. Admitting that he had sinned against the Lord, he then resigned as elder. Then, even more amazingly, one by one other elders came forward to admit to their own sins. And then many of the deacons. And then, even the pastor himself confessed how he had failed the church, and like those before him, he resigned because he felt he was unfit. But then the church members began to speak up and said they forgave them their sins and declared they would reinstate them as their pastor, elders, and deacons.

The deep conviction of sin and granting forgiveness continued for many days. The revival fire spread even to the missionaries, igniting fierce and agonizing prayers for the backslidden and the lost. The Holy Spirit was clearly present through all of this, breaking through the hardest of hearts and releasing His revival fire as a vibrant answer to the faithful prayers of His people.

THE GOD WHO ANSWERS PRAYERS:

- Praise God as conditions surrounding the pandemic have improved significantly in just the last month. Thank God that more businesses can open up safely while taking basic precautions. Praise God that He faithfully provides comfort and encouragement everyday through His Word, our times of prayer, and fellowship with brothers and sisters in the Lord.

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE CITY:

- **SHOOTINGS IN YORK COUNTY.** Pray regarding the senseless killing of 5 people recently in nearby York County, South Carolina. Pray for the recovery of the sole survivor who was injured during the incident. Pray for the families of all those who were killed, and also for the family of the killer. Pray for the community trying to make sense of it all and for God's comfort at this time.
- **MARIJUANA CONCERNS.** Pray that our leaders will exercise Godly wisdom in the decision whether or not to legalize marijuana in NC. It was just legalized in Virginia.
- **VACCINATIONS.** Pray for those who recently have adverse reactions to the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. Sites were temporarily closed in NC, but are re-opening upon CDC assessment that the batches are safe. Pray for increased safety measures and transparency.
- **HEALING.** Pray for God to continue to protect our city and bring healing to the sick. Pray for a quick and thorough end to the pandemic and its impact.

FOR THE WORLD AND MISSIONS:

- **AFGAN REFUGEES.** Currently 2.7 million registered refugees in the world are from Afghanistan. Please pray for missionaries to share the Gospel with them and that many Afghan families will embrace Jesus Christ and become bold witnesses for Him.
- **KEY PLANE REPAIRS.** JAARS is an important missions organization based here in North Carolina. Please pray for a float plane JAARS pilots are working on to go to Peru in August. Having this aircraft deployed to Peru is paramount to continue serving the local and missionary communities with aviation service into very remote areas of the Amazon rainforest.

FOR LOCAL MINISTRIES AND REVIVAL:

- **LOCAL CHURCH WORSHIP.** Pray for worship leaders to be filled with God's Spirit, focusing on Biblical truth as they guide the church in worship. Pray for Christians to find themselves energized by the Father's zeal to be truly worshiped in love. Pray for Christ-centered worship to emerge in every ethnic community of our city.
- **REVIVAL.** Pray for the enormity of God's love to be revealed to many in our city. Pray for Christ to encounter struggling believers with heart-changing clarity, so that they live in the power of His love. Pray that many believers will respond to His love and ask Father God to revive the Church with a powerful fresh outpouring of His Spirit that we desperately need.

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