

FIRESTARTERS 5

PRAYER TOOL

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

FOR THE WEEK OF Jan 9 - Jan 15, 2022 - **Volume 87**

THEME VERSE:

*But as for me, I will watch expectantly for the Lord;
I will wait for the God of my salvation.
My God will hear me.*

Micah 7:7

THE GOD OF REVIVAL:

The Revivals of the Carolinas: 2nd Great Awakening (Pt 3): Stranger Things

The tangible presence of God is always a feature of any true revival. His Spirit powerfully touches those in attendance, no matter what their age or stature is, at the time and place of His choosing. And when God touches a person, there are bound to be strong responses and sometimes strange behaviors. Falling down was one common response. This also usually came with a deep conviction of personal sin. But other behaviors have manifested during revivals.

Other forms of response included shouting or singing spontaneously, or weeping openly and profusely, or boldly exhorting those nearby to turn to Jesus. Other more controversial behaviors involved tremors or twitching in parts of one's body or sometimes uncontrollable laughter. Needless to say, this bothered a lot of people, especially those who maintained that God had to conform to their strict sense of order and decorum.

How are we to understand this? For most of these actions, there are precedents in the Bible or in Christian history. In the Bible, we read about prophets, kings, and even Roman soldiers falling down in the presence of angels or the Lord Himself. We hear about those falling to their knees as they sense their own sin heavily in God's presence. The Book of Daniel tells about the king whose knees knocked in fear upon seeing a supernatural sign. The Psalms speak of responding to God in fear and trembling.

And certainly, even the 1st Great Awakening saw its share of listeners falling down. John Wesley and his fellow revivalists watched this happen as they preached in the open fields and presented the good news of the Gospel. Unexpectedly, some of his listeners would simply faint to the ground. He did not expect this. He didn't encourage it. He didn't see it as proof of genuine faith. But neither did he oppose it. He reasoned that such out-of-the-ordinary behavior most likely had a divine origin. Therefore, he chose not to oppose what God was possibly doing. At the same time, he acknowledged certain manifestations might be of demonic origin. This did not disqualify the revival as a work of God. When God is working overtly in our midst, it tends to make demons very uncomfortable. It stirs them up and they begin to cause distractions. As a rule of thumb, revivals usually are messy.

But, perhaps the strangest behavior seen in North Carolina and in the other camp meetings was the intense spiritual hunger on display. Prior to the early 1800's, America was witnessing a time of spiritual apathy and cynicism. The frontiers were often rough and immoral places. It was not an ideal climate for spiritual fire. Yet, people would come to the revivals, even in terrible weather with sweltering heat or sleeting snow. At one gathering in the eastern part of North Carolina, thousands of people streamed to the campground, with over 200 horse-drawn wagons dotting the landscape, having come from 10 or 50 or 100 miles away. They were ready to stay for several days and several nights to hear the Word of God and to encounter Him. Those in attendance often

numbered more than the size of an average-sized town in the region. The power fueling revival was not the strategies of man nor group hypnosis nor dramatic preaching. It was - and always will be - the astounding impact of the very presence of God poured out on all the people.

THE GOD WHO ANSWERS PRAYERS:

Praise God for opportunities over the holidays to spend much-needed time with family and friends, even in the midst of health concerns. Keep praying that roads will be clear and the airlines will run smoothly as many college students head back to their schools soon for their spring semesters.

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

FOR THE CITY:

- **COVID UNDER CONTROL.** Let's keep one another in prayer as our city continues to pass through the effects of the Omicron variant. The numbers of new infections have been high, yet the relative rate of serious complications has been much lower than that of Delta. Pray for the spread and serious impact of COVID-19 to diminish soon and that fears will give way to renewed peace going forward this year. Pray for safe and effective new treatments and divine healing to show God's hand in people's lives at this time.

FOR JOBS, BUSINESSES, AND THE ECONOMY:

- **JOBS AND ECONOMY.** Pray for workers who are leaving the job force in the "Great Resignation" (over 4.5 million in November), that God will provide for their families and give them the comfort of His presence and guidance. Pray for new jobs creation (December 199,000 new jobs vs. expectation of 400,000) in the coming year. Pray for the containment of inflation (6.8% in 2021 vs 4.8% wage increases) which has been eroding consumer buying power and confidence. Finally, pray for wisdom on the part of leaders and policy makers impacting the economic health of our city and nation.
- **GOSPEL IN THE MARKETPLACE.** Please pray for believers to use their position in the marketplace as a platform for living and sharing the Gospel. Pray for revival to break out in the marketplace, bridging across generational, ethnic, and positional lines to share the love of Jesus with those who don't yet know Him.

FOR LOCAL MINISTRIES AND REVIVAL:

- **LOVE LIFE MINISTRY.** Pray for this national ministry whose goal is to see abortion end and churches stepping up to love those who feel like they have no other choices during pregnancy. Pray that the Lord will expand Love Life to 14 new cities this year and that more pastors and churches will take a stand to partner with Love Life in their cities. Please pray also for the 1st week of prayer walks taking place this year on February 12th as Week 1 of our 40 week journey of Hope. In addition, pray for the financial support needed to launch into new cities, to invest into existing ones, and to provide for existing missionaries. Finally, pray for their national staff here in Charlotte to lead well with God's strength and grace, working together in unity with the Church and always being expectant for God to do great things!
- **REVIVAL.** Pray for a pure and powerful longing for more of God in the midst of the church in our city. Pray for a holy restlessness to see God pour out in increasing measure His presence and power in our streets and homes. Ask God to touch us so mightily that we cannot help but respond to Him with complete surrender and trust. Lord, revive Your church again!

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