

A Heartfelt Prayer for Revival

by George Verwer

This sermon delves into Acts chapter 12, focusing on Peter's miraculous escape from prison through the power of prayer and God's intervention. It emphasizes the importance of fervent prayer, revival, and the need for consistent prayer gatherings in churches. The speaker highlights the messy reality of revival, the challenges faced in missions, and the significance of standing firm on the Word of God amidst cultural shifts and reinterpretations. The message underscores the power of God's grace in weakness, the necessity of discipleship, and the call to pray for nations and missionaries worldwide.

Duration: 27:12

Description

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Transcript

Turn with me and your Bibles to the book of Acts chapter 12. We're going to look at a number of scriptures that are burning on my heart. But we'll start with Acts chapter 12. I'd encourage you to read the book of Acts as often as possible. I've just in a video series that's going to go out on television in the UK of 11 messages from the book of Acts together with two other men pray that God may use that to bring people into revival and reality. Acts chapter 12 we have Peter in prison.

You remember that? Sure, you've read it many times. Peter was in prison verse 5. This is a modern translation. So Peter was kept in jail, but the church prayed earnestly to God for him. That night when Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers bound with two chains. Other soldiers were guarding the door of the jail. This is an impossible situation, right? Suddenly an angel of the Lord stood there, a light shined in the cell, the angel struck Peter on the side, woke him up, hurry get up, and the angel said the chains fell off Peter's hand. The angel told him to get dressed, put on your sandals. Peter did, the angel said, put on your coat and follow me, and Peter followed him, a great jailbreak organized by the living God. Why and how did it happen? We've already seen that God's people, the church, was praying without ceasing, and he goes to the house, verse 12, look at it. When he considered this, he went to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, many people were gathered there praying, the prayer meeting. The

prayer gathering it's biblical And yet a high percentage of our churches now in America in Canada in England where I live Hardly have a prayer meeting if they have one hardly anyone's there.

I hope your church I hope you are the exception It's easy to talk about prayer We got a new book about prayer almost every month, but to actually get people praying get people on their face Seeking God's face praying for revival praying against The subtle attacks of the enemy is one of the greatest challenges and by God's grace When I was a teenager and experienced deep reality in Christ Seeking his face in days of prayer in nights of prayer. He burned into my life This habit Billy Graham says life my spiritual father life is filled with habits And if you're not willing to change your habits, you'll never walk with God It'll just be meetings and talk and conferences and books and conventions and by God's grace There's the influence of godly people in his Holy Spirit I started this practice of every day and then every week getting involved in prayer meetings Sometimes three or four hours long sometimes only 20 minutes, and I believe it's one of the reasons by God's grace I've lived in personal reality and revival every single day since my conversion in a Billy Graham meeting and The devil has got a lot of propaganda out and one of his biggest Propaganda trips is everybody has to backslide. Everybody has to lose their first love.

That's why we need revival, right? Because so many are backslidden so many have lost their first love Even people who were once in great movements of the Holy Spirit and great revival movements today They're in the desert. They lost their first love. I meet him everywhere in the world.

I've had a hundred and fifty thousand people Stand up in my meetings or come forward Repenting because they were in the wilderness even Christian leaders even evangelists and Bible teachers But I want to share with you what you probably already know. There's another way You believe on Jesus you put your hands on the plow You let his love fill your heart you let the power of the Holy Spirit fill your heart and you never no matter what? You never never turn back If I had preached this and I did as a teenager it wouldn't meet much When I preached it in my 20s people were still pretty skeptical And here I am praise God a grandfather like my friend Wesley I only have five Aren't grandchildren wonderful any any of you have grandchildren most of you look so young. Yeah Tony Campala says grandchildren is God's prize to you for not killing off your own kids Of course, I'm sure that never entered your head But I just want to testify to the grace of God to the reality of this book to the reality of Jesus That this needy Person, I'm still a needy person.

His strength is made perfect in weakness. His grace is sufficient. What's that all about? I Want to just share Every single day since that night March 3rd 1955 Madison Square Garden, I've known this reality this Power of his grace of his Holy Spirit One of the first things I ever preached on I guess I was 17 was 7 2nd Chronicles 7:14 I got it from a Billy Graham tract if my people will humble themselves and pray and seek his face He will hear their prayer and he will heal their land I used to be able to quote it perfectly the memories starting on a downhill run But I know, you know that great first and I hope you never lose your passion to pray for that kind of reality verse turn quickly to chapter 13 Chapter 13 we find a picture one of the greatest pictures of the church.

I hope it's a picture of your church They were gathered together in prayer fasting and worship Pick up the story and verse 2 I'm trouble pronouncing the names in verse 1 verse 2 they were all worshipping the Lord and Fasting for a certain time during this time. Whoa, the Holy Spirit said to them Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul to the special work for which I have chosen him So after they fasted and prayed they laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul and sent them out And one of the reasons I I sense it's such a privilege to be with you I've tried to follow your great diversity of ministry in different parts of the world Is

because I don't believe we can ever separate global missions from personal revival and Other other kinds of revival And we see these men experiencing a touch from God a direct Statement by the Holy Spirit and then we see the Holy Spirit Sending them out into missions The human tendency is to put everything in boxes our seminaries our theological colleges They love to put everything in boxes a lot of them don't by the way even have a revival box But they they often have a missions box. It's three doors down turn left there's the man in charge of missions as if Missions was a special category for a special group of people when the Lord Jesus himself Said just before ascending into heaven acts 1a when the Holy Spirit has come upon you You shall be my witnesses Jerusalem Judea Samaria and the uttermost part of the earth And my great prayer is that there will always be a marriage of the great streams of truth from the Word of God This great emphasis we have for revival for repentance for brokenness for the cross for seeking the face of God Together with Sharing our faith reaching out to the nations of the world There are 40 nations This is 2,000 years since the Lord gave us this task There are 40 nations that have less than one-tenth of one Percent of what we have in this country in terms of witness in terms of even good churches I know we got a lot of bad churches a lot of dysfunctional churches We've got probably a pastor every day in the United States falling into adultery from Maine to California we don't want to get into all the bad news, but we also have a lot of churches that are still faithful to the Word of God and Pastored by men of God men of God and women of God who have been touched in revival who have experienced the cross They're not perfect Yet as we look out across this planet 40 nations With less than one-tenth of one percent.

I won't give you the top 40. We don't have time. I'll just give you my top 10 North Korea, Tibet Afghanistan Iran Iraq Saudi Arabia Yemen including seculture where there's not a single non-believer almost no missionary Tunisia Libya and Turkmenistan There are 10 other nations trying to push into the top 10 There's so impossible Somalia is one of them the Maldiv Islands is another how can this be? when I was a baby Christian and God was moving in my life and I started to hear about the nations of the world millions that have never heard of Jesus Places where the church did not even exist I think I was 18 at the time the next year.

I went to Mexico God completely turned me upside down and inside out and Caused me to recommit my life firstly to him, but also to the people of the world Don't allow Missions to be put in a separate box don't think well until we get everything sorted out here until we get greater revival We can't really do much about missions if you are understanding that way you are living in deception That is not the way God's work I feasted on the Word of God and church history for 54 years God's greatest work is often in the midst of a mess Even after the Welsh revival the mess came in I've studied in depth the life of Evan Rogers Jesse Penn Lewis what happened at Keswick the book war on the Saints how Satan counter-attacked that revival Men fell back into drunkenness Immorality invaded the churches, but in the midst of the mess in the hundred years after the Welsh revival Thousands of workers went out into the harvest field bringing millions to Jesus and revival spread to Brazil It's spread to Korea. It's spread to many other parts of the world Let's not be intimidated when there's a mess I've written about eight books. They don't sell well So pick them up free take some for your friends even for your enemies, but if I write one more book, it's going to be Messy ology not Missy ology we've got a hundred Missy ology books some of them contradicting one another But my final book will be messy ology because in visiting 90 nations of the world Ministering 22,000 times living among God's people I've seen so often God works in a mess and Let me tell you those of us praying for revival when it comes When it comes Fasten your Holy Ghost seatbelt Because it will be more messy It especially gets messy when people start getting saved The reason it's so tidy in some churches is because nobody's been saved there for several months or even years but if people are getting saved like is happening right now in Nigeria where I've been not long ago or Brazil where I've just come

from a few months ago or Zambia where I was this summer where so many these smaller kinds of revivals are breaking out and People are coming by the thousands to Christ in repentance and brokenness as It comes the mess gets greater It's a mystery, isn't it? But if we don't believe this mess theology will never understand God Do you think God is working in doubt for do you pray for doubt for one of the greatest genocides in our lifetime? It's still it's it's slowed down praise God I just read yesterday hardly any have been killed in death for in the last weeks But in the previous years, I think 70,000 dead a million homeless But we've begun to see a little work in doubt for you remember, Algeria Algeria 30 years ago hardly had any believers Charles Marsh a man who lived in the power of the Holy Spirit and revival Labored there with almost no fruit I remember him coming like a tornado out of heaven into the OM Conferences and shaking us up and stirring us up for revival and prayer and the Muslim world And he died and never saw the fruit but in the last 20 years thousands Thousands of Berber Muslims have been coming to Jesus not just decisions but disciples new churches and Revival has hit the Berber people not the Arabs the Berbers and the Arabs don't get on and these are mainly Kabil Berbers a specialist people group many of them originally from the mountains probably one of the greatest breakthroughs in the history of missions among Muslims Isn't it amazing? But guess what among the Berbers in Algeria right now? It is very very messy And they're trying to close churches and the government's attacking Christians in the press Some of you've been praying for Yemen One of the most unreached nations in the world.

It's in my top ten and just a few months ago Nine people in Yemen were kidnapped. Did you read about it? Do you take an interest in what's going on around the globe or do you just live in your little in your little world? Three of those people were dead within a few weeks and Satan trying to use that for the greatest assault against the church in Germany that has ever hit the press The secular press the humanistic press of Germany because two of the girls killed were Germans Launched a nationwide attack against Christians making us all look I just went to Germany right after that like we were some kind of extreme nutcases Going to these nations trying to frost let eyes these people and leaving young girls laying dead because of our stupidity It's the war, isn't it? the other six Kidnapped have never been seen. I want to ask you Are you praying for the nations of the world? Do you have the heart of Jesus for the nations of the world? I? Believe probably I'm speaking to the choir And you already pray for the nations and you know what's going on in Yemen and you're asking for missionaries to be strengthened missionaries get away from Jesus One of the ministries God has given me and I'm Unworthy is to go around the world and preach this message of the cross and give away free copies of this book Literally now hundreds of thousands to see discouraged beaten-down missionaries who haven't seen fruit Sometimes their own marriages are about to break to see them come back to the cross to see them embrace Galatians 2 20 perhaps my favorite verse in the Word of God I am crucified with Christ level and nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ liveth within me and what a tremendous thing it is when revival hits a group of missionaries when revival hits one of our ships where 350 people are living together and as you pray for our ships to loss out there in Asia Logos hope in the Caribbean pray that there may be continued revival.

We always have some we're growing cold We have sometimes personality complexities people in the midst of the heat and the hard work get discouraged and One of the reasons I'm here is to bring this Macedonian call that those of us in missions I've been 49 years overseas without a furlough. We need your prayers The enemy is increasing his efforts, especially with the chaos and the confusion Concerning Islam we have 800 people working among Muslims some of them are discouraged Some of them have worked for years in countries where there's almost no fruit. We need to see in a sense the Holy Spirit tentacles of Revival from our own hearts from whatever small group you're meeting with and praying with we need to see that spread out To these other parts of the world Where there are many that have never

even heard the gospel my final passage of Scripture is From 2nd Corinthians chapter 12 if we can just try to wind up by looking at this passage Which has been one of the most important passages in my life, it's when Paul is Crying out to be set free From this thorn in the flesh.

I'm in 1st Corinthians chapter 12 by mistake. It's 2nd Corinthians chapter 12 and Paul is praying that this thorn in the flesh Somehow would go away. That's his that's his desire and As he prays it doesn't go let me read this interesting modern translation that I've only been using for a few weeks and Probably won't use it much longer like to try different things verse 7 chapter 12 so that I would not become too proud of the wonderful things that were shown to me isn't this amazing a Painful physical problem was given to me this problem was a messenger from Satan Sent to beat me and keep me from being too proud.

I Begged the Lord three times to take this problem away from me But he said to me my grace is enough for you when you're weak. My power is made perfect in you So I am very happy to brag about my weaknesses then Christ's power can live in me for this reason I'm happy when I have weaknesses insults hard times suffering all kinds of troubles for Christ Because when I'm weak Then I am truly strong. I just thank God for this great passage and other similar passages I try to share about it in some of my books because When I think of some of the people that have blessed me and influenced me godly people I could give you a hundred names.

I Feel so unworthy To even tie their shoelace I've been so privileged to sit at the feet men like Leonard Ravenhill Men like Ian Thomas men like Alan Redpath men like George Duncan men like Bucksingh of India who swept Tens of thousands into the kingdom when at his funeral a few years ago almost 400,000 people came from every part of India because this man who lived in continual revival had touched their lives I'd sat at the feet of men like Ralph Shalas who was involved with revival among North Africans and I just feel so weak so unworthy and I just thank God for passages like this. His strength is made perfect in weakness His grace is sufficient That's why as we pray as we long for greater things as we long for spiritual breakthroughs We have to constantly go back to God's Word You know, we're very involved in distributing books But some of the books out there today They're doing more harm than good They're doing more harm than good And so in the end more than ever in our generation with so many books so much confusion So many voices so many people telling us we have to reinterpret everything If you don't hear that going on you're not reading much that is a major thing in America today By some very gifted godly people, but I will tell you we need to be very careful when we start Reinterpreting what's in this book? Not that there are not lessons to learn not that there are not changes to make on how we do things That I believe the Bible is under assault in North America And it's spreading to Europe and I want to be among those who stand firm People especially are trying to tell us that we really can't believe anymore that everyone is lost. This is too narrow This is bigotry Surely God has different ways and when we need to be more inclusive We can't make people feel left out the Muslims and the Hindus and the in the atheists And I would urge you to stand firm to the Word of God Jesus said I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh to the father But by me if there's some great special second chance for those who are lost I've not read about it here, so I really don't want to get involved I might dream about it will probably become a nightmare, so I don't think I'll do that either This is God's Word Part of it is really rough I'm sure many of you have is your favorite verse I'd buffet my body and bring it into subjection Lest after preaching to others I become a reprobate and one of the reasons we're seeing literally thousands of Christian workers in North America Wiped out through adultery much of it We don't hear about that's still a tiny percentage in a land with a church this size But one of the reasons is we're not preaching the cross We're not practicing the cross and we certainly don't go around talking about buffeting your body Bringing it into

subjection Lest after preaching to others you become a castaway praise God when there's a special outpouring Praise God when there's a touch of revival whether it's big or small as we've seen in different parts of the world But if that crisis is not followed by God's process of discipleship commitment the cross Discipline yes buffeting the body bring it into this objection It will become one more abscess, and that's tearing my heart out Across the world to meet men and women who once were in meetings like this who were strong in God And somehow the enemy got in the marriage is broken.

They're off track Another one poured out his heart just two days ago an outstanding missionary living in the power of God in the Soviet Union and the enemy got Scott got in through weakness in the area of morality his ministry was over and The nightmare that he shared with me in an hour and a half non-stop pouring out his heart I will never forget it doesn't have to be that way We can put our hands on the plow every day Follow him in brokenness in reality Not in the absence of struggles and failures and doubt yet sometimes sin But in the midst of it as we deal with it Biblically as we repent as we walk in the light with one another and go back to the cross and if a needy struggling son of a Dutch atheist my grandfather Atheists from New Jersey with lots of struggles and problems and doubts can walk in the power of Jesus every day nobody has an excuse and as long as God gives me breath whether it's 80,000 in a stadium in Korea or 12 people in a home somewhere I want to shout about Jesus about his power about his grace And I pray that God will fill all of us in these days of fresh with this Holy Spirit Let us pray Lord. We thank you for your word. We thank you for the power of your Holy Spirit To invade our lives at the moment of conversion and Lord I pray if there's anyone here that's lost their first love Anyone here in which the fire has grown down and lukewarmness has come in that they would deal with that before they ever leave this conference and that Lord the Nation and the nations of the world will feel the impact of what your Holy Spirit is doing here in these precious days For we ask it in Jesus name Amen, amen

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