

(2006 Heart-Cry) Prayer and Revival Through History - Part 2

by Mack Tomlinson

The Third Great Awakening was a sovereign movement of prayer that resulted in an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, leading to sound conversions and a great awakening in New York City in 1857-1858.

Duration: 1:06:34

Scripture: Psalm 102:12-17, Jeremiah 33:3, Daniel 9:20-23, Matthew 14:13-21, John 15:13, Ephesians 6:10-18, James 5:16

Topics: "Prayer Revival", "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, a young actor in New York City shares his testimony of how he embraced Jesus Christ through attending prayer meetings for two months. He describes his life as sad and wretched, having grieved the Holy Spirit and nearly being ruined by drinking. The speaker then discusses how God has appointed times in history to do a new and accelerated work, saving multitudes and nations in a moment. He emphasizes that it is not just great spiritual heroes, but normal, ordinary Christians who can be used by God in prayer for His purposes. The sermon also highlights the importance of sound conversion as the mark of the Holy Spirit and references the 1858 prayer revival as one of the greatest works of grace in history.

Transcript

I appreciate Brother Don Curran doing those book reviews. I've always looked up to him in a lot more ways than one. I appreciate and love him and pray for him and his ministry.

For years he's just traveled far and widely preaching the gospel with the Canadian Revival Fellowship. I still hadn't figured that out, a Georgia guy with the Canadian Revival Fellowship. But that's all right.

I would like to invite you to turn to Psalm 102. As you turn there, you know, God tells us to remember his works. And right now is the 150th anniversary of the third great awakening in America.

It started in September 1857. So we're heading into the anniversary of it. And it was at its full blown beginnings by November there in New York City.

And so that's what I want to speak to you today on when heaven touched earth, America and the third great awakening. And I've chosen as a text because I believe it's fitting Psalm 102. We're going to read

verses 12 through 17.

But thou, Lord, shalt endure forever. And thy remembrance unto all generations, thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion for the time to favor her. Yes, the set time has come for thy servants take pleasure in her stones and favor the dust thereof.

So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord. And all the kings of the earth, thy glory, when the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer.

That verse 17 is one of the most precious promises about answered prayer, because it's not the great, the educated, the wise, the deep, the successful, the greatly gifted, the smart, the rich, the handsome, the beautiful. But it's the destitute that God says he will regard their prayer and not despise it. And what an encouragement to remember that the Bible also says that.

Any Christian. God delights in the prayers of the righteous. What a thing to think about.

I want you to note particularly verse 13, where David speaks of set times. He says the set time has come to favor her. That is Zion.

That is the people of God, the church of Jesus Christ. Yes, the appointed time has come. There are times in redemptive history where God says, in effect, I'm going to do a new work, an accelerated work.

I'm going to supercharge my kingdom. I'm going to quicken and enliven and enlarge and mobilize and accelerate my kingdom. I'm going to save multitudes in a moment and nations in a day.

This is what I'm purposing to do now, not by ordinary times and ordinary means, but by an extraordinary increased visitation of my power on earth. I'll make heaven touch earth once again, and I'm purposing to do it all over again. And I'll do this by stirring up my people to pray and enable them to lay hold on me so that they might participate with me and that I might get glory all over again by sending a season of refreshing from my presence, by reviving my work in the midst of the years.

And instead of sending wrath, I'll send mercy, mercy drops, not only mercy drops, but showers of blessing. That's what God purposes to do in these set times. So as Matthew Henry said, when God purposes to do a new work of grace, he sets his people to pray.

He stirs them up to pray. He quickens their hearts to call upon his name. He gives a prayer burden.

He gives desires. He enlarges their hearts to seek after him. He stirs them to pray in fresh ways, in new ways.

Well, one of those divine moments, one of those set times of the almighty was 150 years ago on 19th century American soil in the third great awakening. Now, before we begin to talk about it, I just, there were two truths on my heart about awakenings and revivals that I think are so important to have etched in our minds. The whole idea of revivals and awakenings especially includes two major truths.

Truth number one, in an awakening, the influence and the coming of the Holy Spirit is in a much greater measure and power during times of revival than in normal times. Now, he's always working. He's always building his church.

Every believer and every true church of Jesus Christ is always being sanctified and led and helped and kept by the Holy Spirit of God. He's always working. But there are times when God chooses to greatly increase the working of the Holy Spirit in great measures with fresh power.

It becomes an extraordinary time, not an ordinary time, a much larger increase of God's grace and power, a much larger giving of the Holy Spirit. When his presence comes more, when his power, remember that scripture in the Gospels, even about the Lord Jesus where it says, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. Duncan Campbell in the Hebrides revival in 1949 through 1952, 1953, he made the statement in trying to describe what God did in that visitation by saying something to the effect that even the town and the atmosphere was saturated with the presence of God.

So that's the first truth. An increase of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit is what characterizes revival. That's what causes revival.

Secondly, second truth, the Holy Spirit is primarily concerned in every genuine revival about one thing primarily. And some of us might say the glory of God. Well, that's a given.

But as far as among the hearts of people, his primary concern, the primary work in an awakening is one thing, sound conversions. This past year, I heard about the latest wave, and I don't know if it came out of Canada or Florida or where, but it's the drooling revival. And one prophet got the word that based on the scripture that says, unless we become as little children that we won't inherit the kingdom of God.

And what do little children do but drool? And so people gather together and they begin to wait on the Holy Spirit and suddenly they know he's moving because people begin to drool. Well, let me be on purpose, politically incorrect about this stuff. The barking like dogs, the howling like wolves, the crowing like roosters, the cackling like chickens and the falling backward where you think you've got the spirit is not the Holy Spirit's work in revival.

Now they've got a spirit all right, but it's not the Holy Spirit. I want you to look at a verse in Zechariah chapter 10. I'm sorry, 12 verse 10.

If you don't have a Bible, just listen close. But Zechariah 12 verse 10, it's the next to last book in the Old Testament. Go to Malachi and go back a page.

Zechariah 12 verse 10. Look at what God says will be the effect of the outpouring, the sending of the Holy Spirit. And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication, as brother Bill McLeod said last night, that can be translated the spirit of grace to supplicate.

And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced. This is the effect when the spirit is poured out. This is what results.

This is what happens. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced. So it's not the seeking of manifestations of some gift or experiences.

It's Christ centered. They shall look upon me whom they pierced and they shall laugh a lot, right? Well, the living Bible might say that, but my Bible doesn't. And I'm not trying to be funny.

They shall mourn for him as one who mourns for his only son and shall be in bitterness for him. What happened on the day of Pentecost? The Bible says when Peter preached a simple gospel sermon that they were pricked in their heart, they were stabbed in their consciences and they cried out. The primary work of God, the Holy Spirit, when he is poured out is conversion.

It is times where God moves mightily and profound conviction of sin and profound repentance occurs. Suddenly, those people in Jerusalem that morning at Pentecost, they woke up that morning, they didn't have a clue what was fixing to happen. And in a few hours, they were deeply broken under conviction of sin.

The Spirit, in times of revival, produces saving faith in Jesus Christ among thousands of people simultaneously. Pentecost was the conversion of 3,000 persons through one sermon. In times of spiritual declension, there are 3,000 sermons and maybe one conversion.

In times of awakening, there can be one sermon and 3,000 conversions. Turning men from their idols to serve the living God, turning men from Satan to the Savior, translating them from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's beloved Son, that seasons of refreshing might come from the presence of the Lord. Sound conversion is the mark of the Holy Spirit.

Proverbs says, turn you at my reproof, behold, I'll pour out my Spirit upon you. So this is central in understanding. And in the 1858 prayer revival, this is what happened.

This is the third great awakening in American history. And it's been regarded by many historians as the greatest work of grace that the world has ever seen since the day of the apostles. And yet, it may be the least known major awakening of all.

Because, maybe for two reasons. First of all, no major account of that awakening was even written until well into the 20th century. Oh, there was a book we have on the book table, *The Power of Prayer*, about this awakening in New York.

But it was written one year after the awakening in 1859. So a definitive record couldn't be written yet. It was only until the 20th century that two main works were written on it.

J. Edwin Orr's book, *The Event of the Century* and Roy Fish, *When Heaven Touched Earth*. So that may be why it's lesser known. Secondly, the awakening was not dominated or brought by any outstanding preacher, or revivalist, or theologian, or man.

As Orr said, the movement sprang from the labor of no great man or preacher. Yet, it became the most thorough and extensive and wholesome awakening ever known in the history of the Christian church. And I believe that's true.

Much bigger than the first Great Awakening. Much bigger and more extensive than the second Great Awakening. It was a sovereign movement of prayer that resulted in an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that was unparalleled in all of U.S. history.

For the most part, it was unexpected and sudden. Now, before the 1850s, there were several major periods of widespread awakening. The first Great Awakening, the years would be about 1727 to 1770.

George Whitfield died in 1770. And all through there, Whitfield preached for 34 years. And he saw awakening almost his whole ministry.

Dying in 1770. Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield, Howell Harris, Daniel Rowlands. And you should read their lives.

You should read the writings related to them because they represent the first Great Awakening. The second Great Awakening came 30, 35 years later, 1792 to about 1843. And there had been powerful revivals only a few years prior to the 1850s in New York City.

Under the ministries of such men as J.W. Alexander and a man named Asahel Nettleton. 20 to 40 years earlier, before 1858, J.W. Alexander, he was the son of Archibald Alexander, who was the primary theologian in America at the time in Virginia. And he was the founding professor of Princeton College.

And Alexander had seen mighty revivals. And his son, J.W. Alexander, had grown into and had lived among the fruit of great revivals. Alexander and Nettleton had experienced wonderful outpourings of the Holy Spirit under their preaching.

In several places, Alexander, for instance, writing to a friend in 1837 about God's work in New Jersey, said this. Brother, in New Brunswick, the old town is now shaken by a Great Awakening. And at Princeton, Alexander said soon after that, the entire college is now aroused.

From 100 to 200 students are now attending the college prayer meeting. And some of the worst young men on campus seem now to truly be converted. Now, previously, a Baptist author, and you know, you have to watch them because they're prone to evangelical exaggeration, as they say.

Described an outpouring of the Spirit in Hartford, Connecticut, wrote this description. The Lord seems to have stepped out of the unusual paths to affect this work more immediately in the display of His power and the outpouring of the Spirit, probably to show that the work is His and His only. Now, by 1856, one year prior to the prayer revival, Alexander had seen real stirrings of God in his own church in New York City.

He had taught at Princeton. He had gone to New York City to pastor, and later he would go back to Princeton. But here he is toward the end of his life, and he had seen stirrings.

In the spring of 1856, he invited, after one service one evening, those willing to be guided about seeking salvation to come to his home. And more than 40 people followed him to his house. God was stirring the waters and blowing on the embers.

And then as the nation came into the mid-1850s, several revivals began to happen, even before 57 and 58. There were two especially powerful outpourings of the Spirit in Pennsylvania and then South Carolina. In fact, in Buford, South Carolina, there was a major remarkable local revival.

Now, I don't know how big Buford was at the time, but my guess is it couldn't have been a thousand people. I don't know for sure. But in a matter of 14 weeks, 428 people professed sound conversion and were baptized in a 14-week period in the context of a genuine moving of the Holy Spirit.

And the whole county was in the grip of God's presence. Then soon after that, a significant movement of God in Canada, in Hamilton, Ontario. And that was a small beginning of larger things to come soon.

But the largest stirrings of the Third Great Awakening really began in New York City. The year was 1857. It's the fall of the season.

And how did it start? A small, very small, simple prayer meeting. That was started in September at the North Reform Dutch Church on Fulton Street. And let me tell you where this is.

The church building isn't there anymore, but it's right down near Ground Zero. In fact, if this church building had been there on 9-11, it would have been hit by debris. That's the location that the North Reform Dutch Church was on Fulton Street.

And in June of that year, a city missionary named Jeremiah Calvin Lanphier had left his business to begin to do mission work in the city. For nine years prior, he had been a member of J.W. Alexander's Church. But by 1857, he had joined the Fulton Street Church officially to become a local city missionary.

After he went there, two months later, a financial panic of 1857 began in New York City. An insurance company in Ohio had lost five million dollars and 55 banks in New York City held a major part in that company. Suddenly, it set off a huge financial chain reaction that affected first New York City and all the East Coast.

And so one 19th century historian says this. Suddenly, thousands who had been trusting in uncertain riches were suddenly ruined, lost their jobs or businesses, and tens of thousands of people were unemployed. Men were filled with distress.

People were homeless, without food, and their hearts were failing them for fear. And suddenly, in the context of God fixing to shake the city and the nation unbeknown to them, thousands of Americans were seeing the vanity and uncertainty of this world. And they began to feel their need for something more certain and more enduring.

Well, Jeremiah Lamphere saw this. He walked the streets. And one day, he saw in some men on the streets anxiety and stress.

And the thought came to him. You know, wouldn't a period of prayer at noon be something that could provide a blessing to people? So he decided, don't ever imagine that the least little real step of obedience by you is unimportant. Jeremiah Lamphere made some notice to announce a noon prayer meeting.

He said, I'll do it. He made some notices, which would be on the third floor of the church. The first meeting was on September 23rd, and he showed up at noon to pray.

And guess who was there? Him. He's the only one that showed up. Guess what he did? He started praying.

But at about 1230, he heard some steps coming up the stairs. One and two and three and four. And finally, five men from four different denominations, strangers to him, joined him.

Six men were praying that first day. And that six-man prayer meeting became, it was the beginning of what would be the most significant movement of prayer since the day of Pentecost. Now, perhaps the 1904-05 welts revival could be compared.

But at the second meeting, 20 men were present. And within three weeks, a hundred men were coming regularly at least. A number of which they thought appeared to be unconverted at first.

By mid-October, when the New York banks all ceased, they all closed, they ceased payment of any kind, the Fulton Street prayer meeting was into its fourth week and hundreds were coming. Lanphier records this in his diary. I called on a number today to invite them to the noon prayer meeting.

A large number present. We had a precious time. It was the very gate of heaven.

So the movement of prayer just spontaneously began to ignite. There was nothing he did. There was nothing that men did.

This was just a work of God. It spontaneously grew. It spread into other rooms of the church.

Soon hundreds and hundreds more began to come. And no sooner would a new place for people to pray be opened up than it would fill up and they would have to find other places to go. All kinds of people, men came and then ladies came and then young men and then young ladies.

And it was later that children began to have their own prayer meetings. It was like Psalm 32, six was literally fulfilled where David said, For this shall everyone who's godly. That is, everyone who's a believer.

Pray unto thee in a time when you may be found. God was saying, I'll be found right now. Call upon me.

Call upon me and I'll answer you. I want to be found right now. Ask of me.

Seek me. You won't seek me in vain. Just pray and call and I'll answer.

That's what God seemed to be doing. During this time, Alexander said this. I perceive such a degree right now of spiritual inquiry.

Now, we don't use such phrases today. Hunger, thirst, desire. As I've never seen before in all of my ministry, personal study is impossible.

For I am sought out continually by persons, many of whom I've never known, who are in distress and in search of spiritual counsel. Wouldn't you like to see that in your town? The prayer meetings, he said, are very sobering and edifying. The openness of thousands of people to sound doctrine and reproof is undeniable.

He said, rest assured that a great awakening is now among us with meetings of great size as God has poured out a spirit of grace and supplication. By March of 1858, six months after Jeremiah prayed the first morning, over 50,000 people were attending noon prayer meetings across the city of 700,000 in New York. There was no hysteria, no uncontrolled emotions, but simply a hunger in the hearts of thousands upon thousands of people to pray.

It seemed like they were drawn to pray by an unseen reality that couldn't be explained and couldn't be controlled. Minutes from the Boston North Church Association, 1858, read this. One of the most remarkable features of this work of grace, which has prevailed in our churches during this past year, is that it began and has carried forward by no specially planned methods, no special events, but by the instruments designed to be abiding and within the reach of all Christians.

Those being, of course, prayer and the scriptures, prayer and the word of God. Now, it's been wrongly reported that there was no preaching in this revival. Oh, there was.

There was preaching regularly, but preaching wasn't the primary. Like in the first great awakening with Edwards and Whitfield and those men, preaching wasn't the primary central means that God used. It was prayer, prayer.

And it became a classic example of widespread, sudden, sovereign revival in the land. Ian Murray states regarding the 1858 awakening, all the classic marks of a true spiritual awakening were present. Powerful and numerous conversions.

Hunger for the word of God and for real prayer. Spiritual appetite for serious Christian literature. A sense of wonder and awe.

Remember, it says that in the book of Acts, that men were in fear. Great fear came upon them and multitudes were added to the church. A sense of wonder and awe.

Profound serious mindedness. And the same power of the Spirit manifested not just in one place, but widely simultaneously. Joyful praise and readiness to witness.

And Murray says a change in the entire moral climate of the community. It reminds me what A.W. Tozer always liked to say. Revival changes the moral climate of the community, or it's not revival.

Well, as the revival began to spread, a spirit of prayer suddenly began to spread literally like a forest fire, a prairie fire and run through other states south into the west. John Gerardo, the great southern preacher during that time, said that during this period, genuine revivals and outpourings were occurring over practically the entire country. It was true all the way to South Texas and all the way to California.

I don't know what happened in the northwest, but all over the east and southeast and the south and the midwest and into South Texas. And as far as California, the Spirit of God was mightily, mightily saving thousands of people who had come to a prayer meeting. Simply coming to a prayer meeting.

Boston, then a city of 175,000 began to be powerfully affected and thousands came to Christ. Philadelphia, one of those original six men in the first prayer meeting, went to Philadelphia to lead the initial prayer meetings there. And God worked powerfully all over the city.

And finally, after about six months, they weren't sure if they were to continue those and they were thinking about stopping them. When in one of the meetings one night, when children found out that the meetings might not be going on again, suddenly into one of the meetings, it said that 200 children marched in together singing hymns. And the adults and the leaders began to cry.

And the meetings went on for another year there. In Newburyport, Massachusetts, the burial place of George Whitfield, it had a population of 13,000. It was reported that 600 conversions and additions to the local churches in a few number of months.

Many of them adults who had been professing atheists and agnostics. Whitfield's bones under the church at the time might have been rattling if somebody had checked. God was shaking Newburyport.

The last place Whitfield preached at midnight and he died that night in his room and he was buried there below the church. Many other places in Massachusetts communities, testimonies, powerful testimonies began to come forth that God was truly moving in power. From New Hampshire, the word came.

The occasion of the great prayer revival is in almost every city and town and neighborhood in our state. Daily prayer meetings being held at noon in all the cities and large places, not only in church buildings, but in public halls, stores and businesses. The voice of heartfelt prayer is everywhere, is everywhere.

Now, let me mention a neat story. There was an incident in in New York State where a true story was shared in the Fulton Street prayer meeting as a testimony somewhere in a rural area. There was a group of about 20 families, very rural, cut off, cut off from most towns.

And this place was noted for its outward wickedness and and profanity and violence. In fact, it had been come to know be known as Hell's Corner and civilized people wouldn't go there. Well, the residents of Hell's Corner had heard about people getting religion, so they decided they would hold a mock prayer meeting.

And there was one man there who had once professed to be a true believer in Jesus Christ, but he was obviously a notorious backslider. But they called on him to lead this mock prayer meeting. When he began before long, he broke down and he couldn't continue.

And suddenly the mockery and the snickering was gone, and a spirit of soberness just began to grip those men. And they sent someone to the nearest town that they knew of, and they invited a deacon from that town to come and lead a meeting. Well, he thought it was a trick to hurt him.

He didn't want to go to Hell's Corner. He thought they were trying to do something to him, but he sought counsel and he took others with him. And so they went to Hell's Corner to see the situation.

And his report was as follows. I had been there only a few minutes when I knew that the spirit of the Lord was there powerfully. Four or five hardened men had been struck under conviction of sin, and a meeting was held, and they and others were converted.

And it said these prayer meetings there continued. Many of those persons have been converted and have become praying men and women. And the work has spread from Hell's Corner with real power.

At the last meeting, they reported there were more than a hundred present. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh when men mock. In Pennsylvania, a lumberjack in the mountains related his conversion.

He said all through the Pennsylvania mountains, the Lord has been pouring out his spirit. And among these thoughtless, wicked men, as they are around here, he has brought many to repentance. For 49 years, I lived the life of an unrepentant sinner.

But now it has been over three months that I've been a true Christian. I had gone to a Methodist meeting and it pleased the Lord to awaken me in that meeting. I knelt down to pray and the Lord met me.

He led me to complete surrender and my burden was gone. And I knew my sins were forgiven. A young actor in New York City gave this testimony.

I trust that during this summer, I have been brought to embrace Jesus Christ as he's offered in the Gospel. I had attended these prayer meetings nearly every day for two months. And God has made them the means of my salvation.

My life and work has been sad and wretched beyond all description. Ten years ago, I was under conviction of sin when preparing for college. I then grieved away the Holy Spirit and I began to drink what's

nearly proved to be my ruin.

During this time, I was an actor on the stage with all its vices and allurements dragging me down to ruin. But God, who is rich in mercy, God's grace has been mercifully shown to me in bringing me a poor repenting sinner to the Savior. He surely saves to the uttermost all who come to God by him.

This was the kind of testimony among hundreds of thousands of people in the third great awakening. Missouri and Illinois were greatly affected by this prayer revival. In St. Louis, the power of prayer suddenly began to spread supernaturally.

It was said by one, We do not remember ever to have observed such a general awakening of the people on the subject of true religion. And as is now clearly seen here, Methodist preachers reported over 900 conversions in the Oskaloosa area of Missouri. And powerful movements happened in St. Joseph, St. Charles, and Troy areas.

The St. Louis News, a main paper of the city, gave this report. Now, folks, this is better than the Cardinals winning the World Series right here. There is scarcely, St. Louis News reported, there is scarcely a single county in our local states that has not shared in the blessing from heaven.

Almost every country meeting house in Missouri and Illinois has been or now is the scene of earnest and zealous preaching resulting in genuine revivals. Prairie fires breaking out everywhere. And men couldn't contain it or resist it or control it when it happened.

Ohio reported 10,000 conversions over 200 different towns. With the testimony that, quote, God has come down in mighty power and converted men by the thousands, universalists, spiritualists, Jewish families, and the most hardened and wicked men have been converted, whom the churches here had almost ceased to pray for. Now, in April, the Christian Index in Missouri, the Christian Index paper reported that they had heard that the revival had spread powerfully into Georgia and Alabama.

In Alabama, is that where we are? Powerful movements and numerous conversions happened suddenly in Mobile, Livingston, and Montgomery area. The Alabama paper, the Southwest Baptist reported, the most cheering reports continue to reach us from almost every point of our state, of a most gracious outpouring of the divine spirit. Colleges were shaken in this awakening in a powerful way.

In the 1850s, there were approximately 200 colleges of various church denominations in the nation from New England to California, though they were predominantly Presbyterian. They did include schools among Baptists and Methodists and other several other groups. And from the beginning of the awakening, colleges were profoundly affected.

Harvard, for instance, it had already by 1858 become Unitarian, but it saw a sovereign movement of God sweep through the campus, resulting in numerous conversions. Brown University in Rhode Island, Dartmouth College, both saw powerful visitations, numerous conversions, especially the wickedest students. Yale University in Connecticut saw the most powerful movement of grace since 1821.

200 students publicly professed Jesus Christ and they were turning to him. Princeton saw the power of God come down on campus. And when the smoke had cleared, there were 102 professed conversions among the 272 students on campus.

Now, of course, we know such statistics don't tell us the full accurate story. So we must keep that in mind. And what was probably a typical scene on those campuses in that day was described by one who experienced it firsthand.

He said this, a young man, shall I ever forget that memorable morning in the old classics room in that year of 1858 among my senior class of 20 members, most of whom were already true Christians. When such a divine presence overshadowed us, that we were constrained to stop class and spend the better part of the hour in prayer for the unsaved members of our class and school. Now, those of you in college, that doesn't mean Monday or Tuesday in class, you ought to tell the professor, hey, can we pray instead of study? But God had moved into that campus and those campuses, and he was moving powerfully.

The Civil War was affected by this awakening. We we need to remember that this greatest awakening America ever saw was three years prior to the beginning of the worst war America ever was involved in. There's no question, though, that the 1858 prayer revival was still affecting churches widely, even while their young men left for the battlefield.

In the fall of 1861, for instance, there was a powerful movement among the soldiers near Richmond. Numerous soldiers began confessing their sin and embrace the gospel message. The Confederate Lieutenant Thomas Stonewall Jackson wrote of another movement of God writing on December 12th, 1862.

Jackson said this, while we were near Winchester, it pleased our heavenly father to visit my troops with a rich outpouring of the Holy Spirit. There were probably more than 150 men in my brigade inquiring concerning the way of salvation. It appears to me that we may now look for many conversions in the army.

Now, I, being from the South, I didn't get to research the statistics on the conversions in the Union Army, but there were many. And I'm sure there were as many elect of God on both sides. They say, J. Edwin Orr says, that there were at least 150,000 soldiers that professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, reported this to their chaplains, and later were baptized after the war.

Hymns, songs, and spiritual songs were a great effect of this movement. Quite a number of gospel hymns were written during this Great Awakening or came into prominence during this revival. Fanny Crosby, you ever heard of her? She wrote a few, didn't she? Up to that time of 1858, she had mainly written poetry.

She began to write hymns after this, and God got a hold of her life fully. Daniel Webster, who served as a prisoner of war during the war, wrote the revival hymn, There Shall Be Showers of Blessing, Precious Reviving Again. And it was in the context of the 1858 revival that a simple children's hymn was written by a lady named Anna Warner with the desire to see children come to the Savior.

She wrote these words, Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. William Featherstone, at the age of 16, wrote the hymn during those days of revival, My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine. For Thee all the follies of sin I resign.

A strong, militant hymn came into prominence during the revivals, Stand up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross. Lift high its royal banner, it must not suffer loss. And Joseph Scriven, a teacher in Canada, wrote a hymn that powerfully influenced many during the awakening, What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear.

Now, the conservative estimates about the prayer revival of 1858 are that between three and five million professions of faith and salvation came to American churches. And remember, those were days where you didn't become a member of church by walking the aisle, signing a card, and you're voted on right then. They still counseled and dialogued and examined to see some credible evidence of regeneration and conversion.

There was a little examination that went on. Then it was still harder to become a member of the Church of Jesus Christ than to become a member of the Lions Club, unlike today. But three to five million professions of faith and additions to the churches, when the population in America was 30 million.

And the staggering after effects of the revival can't even be estimated. The largest revival America ever saw, and perhaps comparable to the 1904 revival in Wales, the biggest in all of history. So what's the main explanation of this movement of God? The promise of prayer.

Prayer. The sovereignty of the Holy Spirit working through prayer. Not prayers of great men and leaders.

Prayers of men and women and boys and girls. Of young men like Lanphier, who was prompted by the Holy Spirit to begin a prayer meeting. Prayer without question was the outstanding means and characteristic of the revival of 1850.

God poured out a spirit of grace and supplication. True, earnest prayer. Burdened, consistent prayer.

Sincere prayer. Humble prayer. People didn't care what others thought about their praying.

Now, you know what? Let me tell you something. In some of you, in your church prayer meetings, when the leaders or the elders call a prayer meeting, you won't ever pray. Because you're too prideful or scared about what people are going to think about your praying.

Here's a big theological word of counsel for that. Get over it. Put your pride to death.

You're praying to God, not men. It doesn't matter who's listening. God hears the cry of the heart.

That's what He hears. He hears the prayer of the destitute. And they gather, they begin to pray.

Strangers praying. It's rightly said that prayer was not only central to the awakening, but it was the means that God had ordained to bring this revival about. Now, regarding prayer and God's purposes, and prayer being a means of God working, Ian Murray says this.

It's a little bit of a long quote, but it's worth it. Listen to what he says. As a means God uses, something more needs to be said about prayer.

As with the preaching of truth, prayer itself has no inherent power within itself. Right? You understand what he's saying? Just prayer or preaching by itself doesn't accomplish anything unless God chooses to bless it and work through it. Prayer, strictly as a human activity, can guarantee no certain results.

But prayer throws believers into heartfelt need upon God with true concern for the salvation of sinners. And such prayer will not go unanswered. Prayer of that kind precedes divine blessing.

Not because of any necessary cause and effect. You know, that's what Charles Finney really taught. Among other things, it was wrongly.

And it's taught today. Cause and effect. If you do this, you'll get this result.

If you pray this way, you'll get this result. If you pray enough, you become desperate enough, serious enough, you surrender enough. And by the way, how do you surrender enough? There's nobody surrendered enough.

There's nobody except the man Christ Jesus that has ever trod this earth that was fully surrendered to God. So how do you surrender enough? But the theology of cause and effect, if we do it enough and do it rightly, do it sincerely enough, we can make God respond. No, that's not true.

Prayer of that kind, true heartfelt prayer, precedes divine blessing, not because of any necessary cause and effect, but because such prayer secures an acknowledgement of the true author of divine blessing. And where such a spirit of prayer exists, it is a sign that God is already intervening to advance His cause. Does God always hear and answer true prayer? Francis Asbury, in the second Great Awakening, said this.

Prayer, if it's the Spirit's groaning, if it's pure in motive, if it's for God's glory, if it's in true faith, without doubt, He does hear and answer. Now, the mysterious effects of the Holy Spirit in a time of true revival can never be explained or foreseen or planned or programmed or brought about by man, but they can be recognized and embraced when they occur. This certainly occurred in 1858 when powerful prayer resulted in hundreds of thousands of conversions to Christ.

Entire cities were gripped and transformed. And fervent praise ascended to God from the 19th century troubled American soil. What lessons do we learn from the third Great Awakening? Let me just give you a few, mention a few that apply to us.

Number one, the 1858 prayer revival teaches us that the absolute importance of personal obedience to God, the absolute importance of personal obedience to God, land fear on a normal day, in his normal routine, walking down the street, had the thought come to him as he saw these faces. You know, a prayer meeting at noon might be a blessing to some men. I think I'll do it.

That was a tiny seed. God at work. One man, God at work, a tiny seed.

Solomon said, the thoughts of the righteous are right. He had a thought and a desire and his feet joined his heart and he initiated a prayer meeting and he was the only one there at first. The absolute importance of personal obedience, the smallest, the smallest point of obedience with the blessing of the Almighty can bless nations.

Five loaves and two fish feed thousands. Secondly, second lesson, it is normal, ordinary Christians and not great spiritual heroes who are used of God in prayer for his purposes. Ladies, it could be your praying and your intercession that brings the fifth great awakening or the sixth one.

It can be your prayers, young men, that ignite an outpouring of the spirit in your school or among your peers. Normal, ordinary Christians, the Jeremiah land fears, the praying men of Barbours, Bill McLeod mentioned last night. I remember in two dear churches in Missouri that that I've been privileged to love and be close to for twenty five years.

I remember the report came that some teenagers, I think it was mainly girls, were served up to pray for their unconverted cousins and friends. They covenanted to pray together, just these teenagers. They've

covenanted to pray.

They made a list of their lost cousins and relatives. They begin to pray for them regularly. And one by one by one by one, those on that list began to be saved by the grace of God.

Bill McLeod's brother, Keith McLeod, came there preaching. And some of those young men were gripped by the power of God. And they were soundly converted.

And it wasn't because of Keith McLeod. It's because teenagers were praying with a heartfelt burden for their friends. Ordinary Christians used of God in prayer.

Two sisters in the Hebrides prayed for that revival that came in 1949. Two sisters. What were their names, Don? Peggy and I couldn't hear you, but I agree.

I want to say Peggy and Sue, but that's Johnny Cash. So that isn't right. 84 years old and 82 years old.

Shut-ins. I think one was blind. One was kind of crippled.

They were intercessors. They had a burden for the island and for the young people. They prayed every day.

And long story short, they had a burden for Duncan Campbell to come. They sent word to their minister and he felt like they were in touch with God. Campbell was invited.

He sent word. I can't. I'm booked for two years.

I can't come. The minister came back to the sisters and said, Duncan Campbell can't come. And he left.

And one of the sisters said to the other one, that's what Duncan Campbell said. But God says he's coming. And he did.

And God broke out all over those islands. Two sisters. It also teaches us a third lesson.

The power of united agreement in prayer. Now, I won't labor that, but there's something about saints agreeing together, praying together. Brothers, the blessedness of unity of heart in prayer.

And Psalm 133 says there the Lord commands a blessing. United agreement in prayer moves heaven. Fourth lesson.

When God gives a spirit of true prayer, he is especially purposing to answer prayer. Martin Lloyd Jones said this, he says, I believe this is a law. Write it down and follow it when a believer feels stirred and prompted to pray.

Always obey it. Always obey it. You ever feel that sometimes you may feel dry one morning and suddenly during the day, your heart is quickened.

You have desire to pray. Do it. Don't quench it.

Don't resist it. Always obey by the promptings of the spirit when you feel the desire to pray, because that is God at work in you, both the will and the do of his good pleasure in stirring you to pray. Fifth lesson.

Praying for more of the Holy Spirit is a biblical command. Cry for the spirit. J.W. Alexander wrote a marvelous piece.

You should read it entitled Pray for the Spirit, where he talks about that the saints ought to be ever crying out for more measures, more givings, more outpourings, more spiritual thunderstorms to break with clouds over their head, more givings and more outpourings and more visitations of the Holy Spirit. We ought to ever be crying out for. Praying for the spirit is a biblical command.

Sixth and final lesson. It's kind of a long one, but listen to it through prayer. God can pour out the Holy Spirit anywhere, anytime, regardless of the state of the situation, regardless of the state of the people, regardless of the state of the professing church or circumstances that exist.

Things don't have to be perfect or reformed or right or have all your ducks in a row or whatever you want to go. It doesn't have to be perfect for God to move. He can move.

He's not hindered. He can work, the Bible says, and who can resist his will? All power belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, that high priest who's enthroned above, and he can dispense grace and power anytime he wants to. And he wants all of you to be asking him to do it.

With him, the Bible says, is the residue of the Spirit. With him is the promise of the Father to pour out his presence mightily. He can rend the heavens and come down regardless of what America does or Islam does or wicked rulers does.

It doesn't matter. God says, I will be inquired of the house of Israel for this calling to me and I'll answer thee. So what must we do? We must look back and see a mighty example in American history where things were dark and people were just like us when God stepped down from heaven and touched our nation.

We must look back and then we must look up. The same God that moved in is our God. The same Spirit poured out is among us and he can quicken.

He can work. He can move. Let us in our hearts ever more and more ask God for grace to enable us privately, quietly, loudly, however he enables us, cry mightily to him to stir us to ever be praying.

Oh, Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years and in wrath. Remember mercy. If this doesn't happen in our nation.

She is gone. Now we have to be have more concern for the glory and honor of Jesus Christ than American patriotism. But God does revive his work and America's here.

Not for freedom. Freedom has become a big idol. America still exists for the glory and honor and praise of Jesus Christ in the advancement of his kingdom.

And to the degree that will happen, we need to pray mightily, Lord, revive your work in our land and in wrath. Remember mercy. Let's pray.

Father in heaven right now, the only thing that's on my heart. Is to ask you to start among all of us a new drawing and calling about prayer that you do a new work, Lord, that you'd be pleased to stir us to pray and that Lord, that ripple effects. That go forth from this conference would be that new reality and prayer, new power with God and prayer, new prayer meetings would spring up, that our own lives and families and

churches would be given.

The spirit of grace and supplication. Lord, it's not a work we can work of. It's grace you can give us and yet you commend us pray without ceasing, be devoted to prayer.

So, Lord, we're looking to you and we're asking in our hearts for a work of grace in this area. That would be real and lasting and life changing. So bless what you've said to our hearts in Jesus name.

Amen.

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