

Hoping for Brighter Days—Part 3

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Total Devotion

In this issue, we will finish our look at the Steps to Revival, specifically the need for complete devotion and a commitment to prayer. Second Chronicles 7:14 says, “***If My people ... will seek My face ...***” This is a way of describing someone who is pursuing God, someone who is going after God with all of his or her heart. What God is talking about is total devotion.

Practically speaking, how do we seek His face? By being in His Word. The Bible is the means through which God reveals Himself to us. So in our devotion to Him, we spend much of our time reading and meditating on the Scriptures.

The Bible is to be the rallying point for the Christian Church. It is the meeting-place for God and the individual Christian. If I am seeking God’s face, the Bible will be a priority in my life. Millions of books have been written, but there is only one Book in the world that is the inspired, inerrant, authoritative Word of God—the Bible. We, of all people, in all of history, are the most privileged because we have more access to the Bible than any generation before us! But along with this privilege comes great responsibility.

Some years ago, a man wrote a book entitled, *Sodom Had No Bibles*. The implication was that if God judged Sodom, which had no Bibles to teach people the truth about God, what greater judgment will He bring upon those countries that have free access to the Bible, yet neglect or disobey it? God expects us to take that privilege seriously.

Prayer

The final step is prayer. “***If My people ... will pray ...***” Prayer is one of the greatest—and most neglected—privileges of the Christian life. Prayer is direct access to the God of the

universe. When I see the moral disintegration in our society, I often think, “If I could just get to somebody at the top and talk to him ... If I could just share my views with the President ...” But, as we all know, such things rarely happen. Even if I did get that opportunity, there is no guarantee that anything would actually change.

In contrast, we as Christians have the incredible privilege of going straight to God—the Governor of the whole universe—and saying to Him, “Lord, did You see that? Lord, what do You think about that? We should do something about that, shouldn’t we, Lord?” Then God gives us direction and begins to work. What a privilege we possess! Yet tragically, prayer meetings are usually sparsely attended at most churches today.

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seriously. Let us
answer His call!**

History illustrates the importance of prayer for spiritual awakening. In a booklet entitled *The Role of Prayer in Spiritual Awakening*, Dr. J. Edwin Orr wrote, “In September 1857, a man of prayer, Jeremiah Lanphier, started a prayer meeting in the upper room of the Dutch Reformed Church Consistory Building in Manhattan. In response to his advertisement, only six people out of the population of a million showed up. But, the following week, there were fourteen, and then twenty-three, when it was decided to meet every day for prayer. By late winter, they were filling the Dutch Reformed Church,

then the Methodist Church on John Street, then Trinity Episcopal Church on Broadway at Wall Street. In February and March of 1858, every church and public hall in downtown New York was filled.”

“Horace Greeley, the famous editor, sent a reporter with horse and buggy racing around the prayer meetings to see how many men were praying: in one hour, he could get to only twelve meetings, but he counted 6,100 men attending. Then a landslide of prayer began, which overflowed to the churches in the evenings. People began to be converted, ten thousand a week in New York City alone. The movement spread throughout New England, the church bells bringing people to prayer at eight in the morning, twelve noon, six in the evening. ... More than a million people were converted to God in one year out of a population of 30 million.”¹

Isn’t that incredible?! And what God has done in the past, He will surely do in the future if we will take the steps towards revival and if we will pray for it to come. Consider this—what if we decide, corporately, to set aside an hour a day to pray that God would pour out His Spirit? And what if we get together one evening a week with a couple of friends to pray and begin asking God to pour out His Spirit?

I’ll tell you what will happen. God will pour out His Spirit. As we read in 2 Chronicles 7, God says, “***Then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.***” God promises to respond as we take His call seriously. Let us answer His call! 🙏

¹ J. Edwin Orr. “The Role of Prayer in Spiritual Awakenings.” Oxford Association for Research in Revival, Los Angeles, California, 1976, pp. 4–5.