

Network for Revival February 2019

# How is the prayer going?

As you know, Network for Revival is not just a list of people interested in revival, but a network who are encouraging each other to pray for revival.

What the nation and the church desperately needs is a network of intercessors throughout the country, who are seeking to inspire others to join in. Such intercessors will prioritise prayer for revival as much as possible, making sacrifices where necessary.

#### **I UNDERSTAND YOUR TIMETABLE**

I have been in full time ministry for decades, with a large parish and congregation for most of the time. (I was also involved in the General Synod and in speaking tours in this country and overseas for many years). So I know what busyness is! I really wish I had spent more time in prayer and I have concluded that I found time for what I regarded as really important. But I didn’t apply that sufficiently to prayer until my last stipendiary parish.

I don't want to discourage anyone. But if we are to see revival we all need to go further in prayer. If we are concerned for the Lord's work and for the salvation of unbelievers, increased prayer will be the best investment we make.

If we’re retired or unemployed it is not impossible to spend an hour a day including half an hour prayer for revival. But half an hour including 15 minutes a day would be a good starting point for others. Also how about fasting e.g. missing one meal a week and praying instead? It’s worthwhile examining our timetable and agenda to see if anything can be reduced or removed.

#### **EXTENDED PRAYER IS REALLY REWARDING**

I know this isn’t the main motive for praying but I can testify to how very rewarding it has been for me, ever since I started having a substantial extra time of prayer each day to major on revival. Yes, sometimes I haven’t wanted to do it and haven’t looked forward to it. But I’ve always made myself do it and – without fail – it has been rewarding. I am amazed at the amount the Lord has said to me. I could write a book on it! Initially I thought I’d run out of things to pray about and wouldn’t be happy about sitting there just repeating “Lord, send revival” time, after time! But God has provided the prayer topics and I have seen such encouraging answers.

#### **PRAYER DIALOGUE**

Our prayer should be a dialogue - persistent petition and constant listening. The vital growth in holiness, which needs to accompany our prayers, depends upon hearing what God is saying. Also we need to be open to the Spirit overruling any prayer pattern or planned prayer. He has done that frequently with me. At other times I have started the prayer time with a blank mind. But God has led me to pray in a really encouraging way.

#### **REMEMBER HOW MUCH JESUS AND THE APOSTLES PRAYED**

Don't be discouraged by their great commitment to prayer but let's aim towards it.

Jesus often prayed and went up into the mountains to pray (Mt 14:23; Mk 1:35; Lk 11:1). He often spent the whole night in prayer (Lk 6:12). He urged us to follow his example and to pray persistently (Lk 18:1-8).

Paul urges us to “*pray continually*” (1 Thess 5:17 cf 2 Thess 1:11-12); to devote ourselves to prayer (Col 4:2 cf Rom 12:12; 1 Cor 7:5; Php 4:6); to “*pray in the Spirit on all occasions*” and to “*be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people*” (Eph 6:18). Prayer is part of our spiritual armour. The apostles also stressed that prayer is linked with holiness (1 Tim 2:8; James 5:16).

The early church majored on prayer (Acts 1:14). Also the apostles majored on prayer, delegating pastoral responsibility, saying *“It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”* (Acts 6:2-4).

#### **A PRAYER SUGGESTION**

Why not pray through an appropriate biblical passage, and repeat it over a number of days? I suggest Psalm 63 as a good passage to start with. It is entitled “A psalm of David. When he was in the Desert of Judah.” Many of us live in what is extensively (though not entirely, of course) the spiritual desert of Britain.

1You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

2I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory.
3Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.
4I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.
5I will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you.

6On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night.
7Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings.
8I cling to you; your right hand upholds me.

A FOLLOW-UP PRAYER

O Lord, come in revival to heal the grief and remove the dishonour which you experience because of the failings of the church and the widespread godlessness of society. Come to bring an overpowering sense of your presence, an inspired worship and a deep conviction of sin leading to a large number coming to faith. Come in revival to hasten the return of Christ. Have mercy on us, in the name of Jesus. Amen

### Quotations about revival

“There has never been a spiritual awakening in any country or locality that did not begin in united prayer.” (A. T. Pierson).

“The Holy Spirit is the leader in all God-sent revivals. He knows of God’s longing to send revival to his people. He Himself intercedes with groanings deeper than words as He joins with Christ. The Spirit gives prayer concerns and prayer burdens for revival on many of God’s children so that they may join in the same prevailing intercession.” (Wesley Deuwel).

### Thank God

There are now 500 people, mainly clergy and ministers on the mailing list (but lay folk just as welcome) and more responses are coming in! **Maybe there are people you could encourage to join**. We need as many people as possible praying in an informed way for revival. Please try to increase the number.

God bless you. I am praying for you regularly (by name).

Tony

