



Network for Revival May 2019

What is the Network really about?

In a phrase – Intercession for Revival.

I frequently have a picture in my mind of a photograph from space of the country at night, in darkness except for the bright lights of cities and towns. To me that sums up what the Network is really about – we are meant to be a network of bright lights shining in the spiritual darkness of our nation.

Yes, there is a lot of moral light in the country - kindness, caring and self-sacrifice – but most have no time for God. People carry on their lives without thought of God, of eternity, of judgment, of heaven and hell. The spiritual darkness is deep.

Yes, there is the spiritual light of believers throughout the country – but how many (including church leaders) are really interceding in depth, at length, including for Revival? The spiritual light of many believers (and churches) is dimmed.

What the nation desperately needs is a network of holy intercessors throughout the country, who are seeking to inspire others to join in. They need to prioritise such intercession as much as possible, making sacrifices where necessary. Their prayer should be a dialogue - persistent petition and constant listening. Growth in holiness depends upon hearing what God is saying and putting it into practice.

It's easy to be interested in Revival and to be excited by the accounts of what has happened in previous revivals. But what the Network is really about is in-depth, persistent, sacrificial intercession.

The significance of remarkable victories through intercession in the past

Rees Howells, the founder of the Bible College of Wales, was one of the most outstanding intercessors. His experience of intercession goes way beyond the experience of most Christians. His son Samuel Rees Howells followed in his footsteps. I have found reading the books about them in recent years profoundly challenging and very helpful.

Probably the most important contribution Rees Howells made was in his in-depth intercession during World War II. He held prayer meetings at the college every night from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and 10 p.m. to midnight and usually long after. But the prayer was very deep and passionate. They prayed situations through to victory. One of his biographers wrote "As each crisis in the war developed, the Holy Spirit guided our prayers and each time we knew that victory had been gained in the spirit before news came over the radio or in the newspapers of victory on the field of battle."

Knowing the remarkable depth of Rees Howell's intercession, I am quite sure that his prayers were a major factor in bringing about the victory which Britain experienced. Yes, there was a great deal of military skill and sacrifice but, knowing the frequent occasions when defeat seemed inevitable and the extraordinary deliverances that followed, it is clear that they were an answer to prayer. Without those prayers we would have been defeated. (See below for books about Rees Howells, which are very much worth reading).

However, Rees Howells and his colleagues may have been leaders in intercession but they were not the only intercessors. For example, there were National Days of Prayer. If you want to learn more about the truly remarkable deliverances, which can only have been divine intervention, look at the material produced by a Minister who calls himself Pastor John. I have had conversations with him and support his ministry. He has sent his *Wartime Miracles* leaflet to 25,000 churches in England and Ireland. Write to strengthenthefaithful@gmail.com.

There are two very important things we can learn from all this. One is the extraordinary power of prayer, including for topics on a national scale, which is the scale on which we are praying for Revival. The other is how urgently we need

to pray for Revival. God intervened miraculously to deliver this nation during World War II, in answer to prayer, but, as a nation, we have largely turned away from him. This is *very* serious and means we deserve his judgment (and some current events suggest we are beginning to experience it). So how we need to pray for God in his mercy to bring Revival resulting in repentance. We certainly don't deserve it, but God is merciful.

Quotations about revival

A description of revival in Ballantrushal, on the West coast of the Isle of Lewis in the Hebrides Revival: "The outstanding characteristic of the 1949 revival was the presence of God. The presence of God was so powerful that you were constantly living in the expectation that something was about to happen. You would feel a sort of excitement inside yourself. You were afraid of saying anything wrong. You were afraid of saying or doing anything that would remove His presence. There was a subduing, an awe that was everywhere and the joy! Even in the fields you felt an inward urge to sing. We were up until 3.00 or 4.00am at meetings and then up again between 7.00 and 8.00am to go to work, and we were not tired." (*Colin & Mary Peckham, Sounds from Heaven, p. 218*). Do it again, Lord!

I am praying regularly for you (by name) that God will bless you and inspire your prayers

Tony

BOOKS ABOUT REES HOWELLS

Rees Howells Intercessor by Norman Grubb, Lutterworth Press 1972

The Intercession of Rees Howells by Doris Ruscoe, Lutterworth Press 1983

There is also a book about Rees Howell's son Samuel who continued his intercessory ministry:

Samuel Rees Howells: A life of intercession by Richard Maton, ByFaith Media 2012

[I should add that Rees Howells came from a very different age and culture from us and you may find a few incidents in his life rather odd and challenging. I did until I found out more and I'm *quite certain* that he was a remarkable man of God with a huge amount to teach us]

Revival is a supernatural event in the church and society. It is a work of the Holy Spirit which brings: an overpowering sense of God's presence leading to uplifting, inspired worship; an awesome sense of God's holiness leading to a deep conviction of sin, even amongst those outside the church; a supernatural drawing of people together and an outpouring of love for one another, all of which leads to a huge number coming to faith. People's lives and whole communities are transformed.