



Network for Revival Prepare 20 June 2020

We have looked at three motives for prayer for revival:

Pleading the love of God: He loves his church and wants to bless it. He loves unbelievers and doesn't want any to be lost. See <http://networkforrevival.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Prepare-17-February-2020-1.pdf>

Pleading the name of God: The name of God is being gravely dishonoured by the failings of the church and the godlessness of society. See <http://networkforrevival.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Prepare-18-March-2020.pdf>

Pleading the Kingdom of God. God's Kingdom is hindered by a failing church and hastened by prayer and preparation for revival. See <https://networkforrevival.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Prepare-19-May-2020.pdf>

In this issue we look at the 4th motive for prayer for revival.

Praying for Revival: Pleading the Blood of Christ

Obviously, over the years, like all Christians, I have been aware of the great importance of the blood of Christ in Christianity. And I have been aware that some people stress it in a way that sometimes seemed a little excessive. However, after I started really praying in depth for revival, the Lord began to speak to me about pleading in prayer in a way which was new to me. I have mentioned three aspects of pleading prayer in recent issues of Prepare! But the Lord also turned my attention – for the first time in an in-depth way – to pleading the blood of Christ.

It is obvious that, in the Old Testament, God strongly emphasised the necessity of blood sacrifice and the extensive ceremonial use of blood (sprinkled or splashed). The NT writers were thoroughly familiar with this and would therefore have focused on the blood of Christ. God clearly intended believers, including ourselves, to do that. There are references to the blood of Christ in 13 books of the New Testament, mainly in John, 1 Cor, Hebrews, 1 John and Revelation. Hebrews, of course, majors on the shedding of the blood of Christ in fulfilment of the Old Testament sacrificial system.

Jesus ensured that the church would regularly and vividly focus on his blood (Matt 26:27-28). He taught that it was essential to “drink his blood” in order to have eternal life: “Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them’” (John 6:53-56). Drinking from the Communion cup is “a participation in the blood of Christ” (1 Cor 10:16). It is the new covenant in his blood and to drink it unworthily is to sin against the blood of Christ and to incur divine judgment - which could be fatal (1 Cor 11:23-31). Peter says we “have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood” (1 Pet 1:2).

So, to focus on the blood of Christ, including in our intercessions, is fully in harmony with the New Testament. The writer to the Hebrews said “We have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus” (Heb 10:19). This includes coming into the Most Holy Place with our intercessions. The blood of Jesus is the foundation of our salvation and the basis for our pleas in intercession. It is important to plead the blood of Christ in our prayers. It is as if we are sprinkling the blood of Christ before the Ark of God's presence in the Holy of holies, and I find it helpful to imagine that. We can also refer to the blood of Christ in spiritual warfare – reminding the devil that he was conquered through the shedding of the blood of Christ.

There is another aspect which God has emphasised to me. When Christians do not bother to avoid sin or persist in sin this dishonours the blood of Christ. The failing of the church dishonours the blood of Christ. The sinfulness of the world also dishonours the blood of Christ. All this dishonour is because Jesus shed his blood – a horrific sacrifice – to save us from sin and yet we humans continue in this sin. In my mind's eye I see Jesus on the cross and his blood falling to the ground - and people trampling on it. This grieves me and inspires me to plead that God will honour the blood of Jesus by bringing many people - Christian and non-Christian - to repentance. It is a powerful motive for prayer for revival.

An experience of Revival

A friend of mine, Les Barnard, who has been greatly used as an evangelist over many years and has prayed for Revival for decades, has written a short inspiring description of an experience he had of Revival. He had been invited to preach at a Welsh Chapel, which he did, but was then invited to a prayer meeting much later in the evening. He was unprepared for what happened:

“It must have been after 12.00 midnight when it all happened. I cannot possibly describe exactly what happened - it defied even the most gifted to explain. Let me simply say that in this early hour of the morning, God came among us!!

I suddenly felt great waves of awesome awareness of God's utter holiness. My breath came panting like a runner in a race, my whole body trembled exceedingly and I was aware of my sin in such a manner that I could only cry for mercy. Things that I never counted as being contrary to the Lord became black and ugly. Things I hardly thought about became enormously wrong, whilst major sins I knew about but still did, totally overwhelmed me.

The worst thing of all was that I had lost the use of my legs, I seemed to be paralysed from my waist down. I, the preacher, was in total turmoil. I could only cry to God for mercy again and again. But I was a Christian, I was saved, born again, how could this happen?

The scriptures came into my mind "who shall stand when He appeareth, for He is like a refiners fire".

I understood, even in my sad and sorry state, at the moment when God came upon us that I was covered and protected by the garment of my Saviour's righteousness. But God is so Holy that any action of mine would be tested in the fire of His perfection. That, I realised, was why people so needed to be saved and become a child of God.”

(Les has written what I found to be a really inspiring book about his ministry experiences “A Touch of Heaven” which is available for £15 including postage – payable to Les Barnard - from Greystones, 44 Draycott Road, Breaston, Derbys DE72 3DA).

Starting to pray for Revival

I am concerned to encourage those who are already praying seriously for revival. But I also want to help those who are just starting out on prayer for revival. I attach a short paper I have written entitled “Starting to pray for Revival” which gives 11 practical points. **Maybe you know people to whom you could give this paper** to get them started praying for revival. We need to encourage more and more people to do so. I shall be adding a second section later which can take people deeper into intercession.

An answer to prayer

Thank you for your prayers for me as I seek to encourage people to pray and prepare for Revival. One answer to such prayer is that I was asked by Revelation TV to do a 25-minute interview on Revival on May 21st. I sensed the presence of God inspiring the interviewers and me and I trust many were inspired by it.

Update on the church

I have recently written a paper entitled “Update on the church – May 2020” which gives news on the following issues: The good effects of Covid 19; church growth; church decline, spiritual failure, theological failure, desecration; sexual abuse in the church; the homosexual issue (mainly in the Church of England), gender issues (mainly in the Church of England). This paper will give you numerous prayer topics and inspire further prayer for revival. See <https://christianteaching.org.uk/blog/churchdevelopment/update-on-the-church-may-2020/>

Be assured of my prayers for you, in the continuing crisis. I pray for you regularly by name.

God bless you,

Tony

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.