



Network for Revival Prepare 26 February 2021

In recent issues we have looked at seven motives for prayer for revival: Pleading the love of God; Pleading the name of God; Pleading the Kingdom of God; Pleading the Blood of Christ; Pleading the promises of God; Pleading for those without hope and Pleading for angelic intervention. In this issue we look at another motive:

Pleading the grief of God

This is something which the Lord has impressed upon me recently. I have touched on it before but I have come to see it in much greater depth. Of course, the Lord is not *subject* to grief, as we are. But he does *choose* to grieve over the human condition and the failings in the church. These are my recent thoughts.

Try to imagine what it is like for God to have his deep love for humanity rejected or ignored billions of times. God's love isn't a fiction. He feels great love to every human being. How do we feel if our love for someone is rejected or ignored? It happens billions of times to God.

Try to imagine what it is like for God to choose to endure the pain of Calvary, allowing agony into the heart of the Trinity, in order to win the love of those he *deeply* loves, but for this sacrifice to be ignored or rejected by billions of them, and the blood of Jesus to be trampled under their feet.

Try to imagine what it is like for God to see billions of people he *deeply* loves make a mess of their lives through godlessness, choose other 'gods' who will only seriously harm them, choose to head for eternal disaster.

Try to imagine what it is like for God to see millions of people he *deeply* loves accept his gift of salvation, purchased by the blood of Jesus, then, instead of loving him – as he longs for them to do - they give a half-hearted, selfish response; don't bother to talk or listen to him most of the time; put their own desires and needs before him; indulge in sins for which Jesus died, even justifying such sin and refusing his generous gifts.

I find this a very powerful motive for praying for revival. God, who is love, created human beings to love him – but billions don't. He longs for all human beings to love him – but billions don't. It is profoundly distressing. Let's redouble our prayer for revival to reduce this grief.

But there's something more

In preparing for Revival we need “to make ready a people prepared for the Lord”

[This is a new aspect of Network for Revival with extensive advice and practical resources outlined below]

As I mentioned in the last issue, when God called me to major on prayer and preparation for Revival, he impressed the following verse upon me: “make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1:17). And we need to do that – through our prayers, but also through prayerful action in the churches and fellowships we are involved in. Leaders need to do that, but non-leaders (and retired leaders) can both pray and influence others to do so.

I have described above where all too many Christians and churches are spiritually: half-hearted in commitment, relatively prayerless, not seeking God's will, tolerating sin. The Lord wants us to be **RADICALLY BIBLICAL IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT!**

Firstly, this will be achieved through our intercession. And, of course, when revival comes, it will transform the church. But to leave it all until revival comes is a cop-out! We don't need revival to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit. We already have the Holy Spirit (but we need to seek the fulness of the Spirit). Furthermore, being radically biblical is simply obeying what the New Testament teaches the church should always be like – not just in times of revival.

A further point is that the church needs to be ready to receive, encourage and build up those who are swept into the Kingdom through revival. The blessing of revival can be lost if there is not really good – biblical, prayerful - follow up.

Our own experience of being radically biblical in the power of the Spirit

So, as we approach the gradual re-opening of churches after Covid, I urge you to pray and work for individual Christians and churches (especially your own church/fellowship) to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit. The resources outlined below are the result of lessons we learnt in seeking to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit in our Essex church. The Lord took hold of an ordinary (divided) church and brought about quite remarkable changes: deep unity, transformed worship, extensive numerical growth, vibrant prayer life (expressed in 28 weekly prayer cells), radical delegation (mainly through 12 area weekly Ministry Groups which functioned like mini-churches, including in evangelism), pastoral care and counselling. It led to a national and international ministry with thousands of churches using the resources outlined below. This was the Lord's doing, not ours. We simply did what we were told (by him). He can do it anywhere, given prayerful obedience.

Resources to facilitate churches being radically biblical in the power of the Spirit

You can read about what happened in our Essex church in a brief summary (20 pages) [A short history of a parish church in radical renewal](#) and a longer version [That the World May Believe](#).

You can also download the course God led us to write to encourage all churchmembers to do - [Called to Serve](#). This is a 20-session course including Turning from sin; Turning to Christ; Remaining in Christ; Receiving power; Doing the Word; Resisting the enemy; Living by faith; Talking with God; Worshiping the Lord; Loving the church; Serving the flock; Honouring the leaders; Discerning the gifts; Extending the Kingdom; Giving to God. It has been used by churches in many countries of the world and some 100,000 people. You can also download **audio recordings** of my leading the course (which are best listened to with the written course). There are also [Called to Serve Leader's Notes](#).

You can also download our [Minister's Guide to Church Development Strategy](#) which covers: How to become united as a church; Uniting around a written vision; Delegating through congregational Ministry Teams; Discerning gifts and ministers; Running a Leaders' Fellowship; Running prayer cells; Running the young church; Developing worship; Evangelism and mission etc. You can also download **audio recordings** of Patricia and me leading these sessions - again, best listened to with the written notes). (Patricia, who wrote the guide, is a theological graduate and experienced lay minister).

There are other relevant papers on [Church Development](#) which is a new section of the website.

Please note that my Christian Teaching Resources website has been radically updated. If you follow an old link, you will probably get a message saying 'Page not Found'. You will need to go to the site [Christian Teaching Resources – Practical, user-friendly resources for clergy, ministers and lay folk](#) and use search. The name of the file you are searching for should be clear on the old hyperlink. Just enter the file name in Search.

'Basic Knowledge for Christians' Resources

Another issue we want to campaign over is the fact that many Christians are not well-informed about Scripture and don't take Bible reading and prayer seriously. So we are building up a new section to the website which has some relevant resources [Basic Knowledge for Christians](#). We'll keep you informed.

The Covid pandemic has been a time when God wanted us to take stock and re-examine where we, and our churches, are at spiritually and biblically. Let's do so, if we haven't already.

God bless you,

Tony

PS. We are also called to make ready a people prepared for the Lord's return. See the revised version of the paper "A brief overview of the signs of the End spoken of by Jesus" which I sent you in November, and I've combined with it the paper "Our response to the Signs of the End" which I sent out in January, because all the many hyperlinks on them have become ineffective due to the radical revision of my Christian Teaching Resources website. The replacement paper has active new hyperlinks. Go to [A-brief-overview-of-the-signs-of-the-End-spoken-of-by-Jesus-revised.pdf](#)