

**Challenging Christians to Pray**

**PRAYER IS THE MIGHTIEST FORCE -- 2 CHRONICLES 7:14**



# Prayergram

**May - June 2022**



## **How to Resuscitate a 'Slumbering Church'**

**Prayer. Revival. Intercession.**

**What's** the purpose of the church here on earth? The church exists for no other reason but to draw people to Christ. If she is not doing that, all the buildings, clergy, missions and sermons, are simply a meaningless exercise.

God sent His Son for no other purpose other than to redeem fallen humanity. The church, God's institution is under attack, and the culture Run Amok and we don't even know how to counteract its intrusion because we lack steadfast obedience to Christ, our Lord. Harnack, the German theologian and historian was profound when he said, "The Church influenced the world most when it was most unlike the world." The early Christians were baptized with a "holy audacity," which propelled them into a world that was hostile to Christ and His message. Yes, God has placed such a power at the disposal of the Church that can frustrate and baffle the very strategy of Satan, and cause doubt and fear to vanish before the Lord of glory.

**Today**, we are witnessing a relentless effort on the part of some religionists to turn Christianity into a consumer-based organization by placing its message on the whims of men, rather than being true to the message of the Cross. Every movement which arises from various evangelical groups to restore the pristine glory and purity of the early Church, within a generation, is now inflamed with a driving ambition for "fame and prosperity," forgetting that "God will not give His glory to another" (Isaiah 42:8). As Christians, we have to send a powerful message to the world that we are not running away from Christ in order to attract the world, but rather, running to Him who is our source of power as we attempt to reach the world for Christ. **With frigid error on the right, and frenzied error on the left, let's give puzzled people the authentic answer about preserving vital "godliness" in the church. Any teaching that does not recognize the cleansing aspect of the precious blood of Christ is absolutely false and completely counterfeit.**

**Now**, let's turn back to the pages of the Christian history and the people who have made the greatest impact on "prayer and revival" and done most for the glory of God have all had one hallmark: Soul-travail and prayer. They were deeply committed to revival, and furthermore, they kept the "altar fire" burning. For example, **Matthew Henry** said, "When God intends to bless His people, the first thing He does is to set them on praying ground." **D.L. Moody** said, "Every great movement of God can be traced to a kneeling figure." **Charles Finney** said, "Unless I had the spirit of prayer, I could be nothing." **Jonathan Edwards**, the eminent Puritan thinker and theologian said, "Prayer is as natural an expression of faith as breathing is of life." **Sidlow Baxter** said, "Men may spurn our appeals, reject our message, oppose our arguments, despise our persons, but they are helpless against our prayers." **Charles Spurgeon**, the prince among preachers said, "I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men how to preach." **Andrew Murray** was profound when he said, "The man who mobilizes the Christian Church to pray will make the greatest contribution to world evangelization in history."

**In** the recorded history of the church there has never been a mighty revival which did not begin in protracted, persistent, prevailing prayer of a desperate people! It seems reasonable to ask, "Are we desperate for revival?" When pure revival comes, we shall no more ask who is preaching, for God, the blessed Holy Spirit will preach through His yielded vessels. In our revival discussions, we always talk about past revivals, and keep insisting that God should duplicate those revivals, as though He has lost His power, that He is unable to work in our midst NOW. Do you believe that God has shut down His shop and gone for fishing? Beloved, He is the same unchanging God and His promises are ever the same. Never doubt that a small number of loving, compassionate and praying Christians can change the course of history. Indeed, it has proven many times over!

**Before** we can experience the revival that makes us wholesome, we must seek the truth which makes us free. There is a growing crisis in leadership in the land, in the home, in the church, in business as well as in government. We are always in a crisis mode and looking for quick-fix remedies whether it is a religious problem or a secular one. God's will is holy and pure; His will is an indisputable precept. When we do His will, we will have His peace. There must be a revival in the home before we can have a revival in the church. **Let's remember the words of Jonathan Edwards, America's puritan preacher and thinker, "Every Christian family ought to be like a church, consecrated to Christ and wholly influenced and governed by His laws."** It seems that we don't want to be governed by God's laws. Is it any wonder we are drifting as a nation and a people?

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**When** God moves in the midst of His people with apostolic "power and purity," preachers will quietly lead their flock into a prayer chamber like our Master did. They shall not talk of visiting evangelist or famous Christian leaders, but they shall talk of the magnificent presence of the Holy One of Israel. When God works miracles, multitudes shall come, wanting to hear the gospel being preached in power. There shall be a total rejection of any perversion of biblical truth for personal gain and such manipulative activities would be considered as a sordid business. When Jesus comes in glory and majesty, pride and arrogance will disappear from the places of worship. When people are saturated with His Spirit, they will travail, mourn, weep, cry, fast and abase themselves. God is not interested in man-made revival, and He will give us a "holy and pure" revival, where He can work among His precious 'jewels of distinction' as the Lord of glory.

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**Decades of** profligate and self-centered living and lack of godliness have taken their toll on many evangelical Christians. Years of prosperity teaching, showmanship and the absence of "godly living" and self-denial have attenuated real faith and Christian character. And now we have reached the moment of reality. Either we firm up, stand up, speak up, and pray with importunity, or we run the danger of becoming a mere shadow in the night, or an irrelevant religious show. There must be a radical change and it must begin with God's appointed servants, and His faithful followers. There is no other way. We need a "holy invasion" and need it immediately.

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**Mr. Nichols**, a writer for the Wall Street Journal wrote recently about the dilemma of the Church in the West with profound clarity, **"The hope of the West lies in a revival of the Western Church, which will come only with a rediscovery of the incarnational, action oriented Christianity of the Semitic East. The West is materially strong but spiritually weak, hyper-political, overly digital and drifting in our faith."** I want to thank Mr. Nicholson for his timely observation and assessment of the condition of the present day church in the West. The early church grew under horrendous persecution as believers gathered to seek the face of God in one accord. And as a result, they were arrested by a power that was beyond human tricks and manipulations. Are people being arrested by such power today (Read Acts chapter 2)? When the test came, the early Christians stood like a rock. Beloved, we may not always face crises in our Christian journey, but when they come, it's all up in two (2) seconds, there is no possibility of a theological rendition, and we're unearthed right away. **Our prayer ought to be, "Rise, O Lord, into thy proper place of honor, above my ambition, my likes and dislikes, above my family and friends, and even my life itself."**

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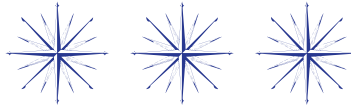
**The** real Church is beyond the realm of man and its true mission is to exalt and exemplify the living Christ as Lord and King. Christian history tells us that Western Europe became a launching pad for **Reformation**; but today materialism has become the popular creed in Western Europe and miracles have ceased. Let me be frank with you! A Church that does not believe and trust in the God of miracles is not much of a church. Dr. Charles Malik, a brilliant scholar and a humble Lebanese Christian was profound when he said, **"The Church is neither Western nor Eastern; she is neither Aryan nor Slav; she is neither Anglo-Saxon nor Latin; she is neither capitalist nor proletarian; she is the Church of Jesus Christ by whose 'Spirit are we baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free' (1 Corinthians 12:13). Let the Church therefore remain faithful to the kingdom of God and His Christ."** Amen and Amen!

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**Beloved**, our culture is in moral peril and it's off the rail. What an awesome responsibility for the church to be the church and reclaim and restore the lost moral and spiritual tapestry! Isn't it time that every gospel preacher should **weep between the porch and the altar, crying, "Spare thy people O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, where is their God?" (Joel 2:17).** Our puritan forefathers didn't trifle with the Word of God but tremble at His Word. For example, Ezra's day there was such an awesome move of God among the people that many trembled at the words of the God of Israel" (Ezra 9:4). We read His Word but do not reverence His holy name. Beloved, we have not prayed for REVIVAL in our nation as we should. In fact, many of our modern churches and preachers have dropped the idea of having revival altogether for various reasons.

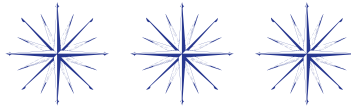
**Dear** praying saints, blood-washed people of God, let's give ourselves to "fasting and prayer." It is NOW or NEVER, time to enlist ourselves in God's praying army. Either we pray with passion for an ego-slashing revival or forever we hang our harps on the willows in utter helplessness and shame. The world is waiting for our next move. What will it be? This is the hour we have been waiting for. So on with our "agony and soul-passion." God's praying people are not weaklings; they are quintessential to the survival of the modern church and they are changing the spiritual landscape of the world. Currently, there is a shortage of intercessors in America and the world. Why we ask? The price says nothing of personal glory, or glamour or notoriety or applause, or crowd recognition, but loneliness galore. Dear ones, remember, God does not force His favor on us; He longs for us to ask, and then He is right there with all the resources at His command. Prayer transcends race, nationality, age, gender and church affiliation. For Christians, prayer should be our life, meat and drink.

**Finally**, when true revival comes, there will be a heart-felt desire to live a "holy life." A Christian is to be holy, not unholy. The word "holy" is one of the most irritating words among some contemporary Christians. THOMAS CARLILE, the 18<sup>th</sup> century poet and essayist was profound when he said, "**Holy living is the best argument that tells for God in an age of fact.**" There are some who refuse to seek a "life of godliness," because it cramps their lifestyles! They want to be godly, but not that godly. May I close the subject of "**living godly in a not- so-godly world**" with the profound words of Jonathan Edwards, America's foremost thinker and theologian, "When true revival comes, three(3) things happen: "**First of all, there will be holy living, secondly, ceaseless praying, and thirdly, cheerful giving.**" Have you seen these realities taking place in today's religious services?



**Revival** praying is desperate praying! In times of desperation, we do not "mumble" beneath our breath; we cry out in 'anguish and agony' for a world that's teetering on the "slippery slope," and a church that's comfortable in its ubiquitous slumber! When the world is at its worst, it needs a Church that's at its best—vibrant, courageous and unafraid. Let's sink to our knees with the cry, "Lord, Revive Thy Church."

--- Matthew Sħariaħ



## **The Confession of a Busy Christian**

**Lord, please excuse me!**

**Lord**, please excuse me, I must be going. My favorite TV show is about to start. I will talk to you next time when I have a need. I hope you understand my need for a little entertainment. By the way, if it makes any difference, I am a religious person and believe in you. After all, Lord, you can't expect me to "pray" all the time. I have other responsibilities, and I am under a lot of stress lately. Again, nothing personal, Lord! It's just the way things are and I am a casualty of the culture in which I live. I will be calling on you when something unexpected happens and need your help.

**Dear** friend, we should never look upon prayer as drudgery or a duty or a joyless experience, but a delightful and heart-warming exercise that transcends all other spiritual exercises. Visit the grand-galleries of the celestial city as often as you can. Believe me; you'll come away with the stunning discovery of the magnificent and life-changing power of God. Sad to say, to many, God has become a "blessing machine," nothing more and nothing less! We expect the Lord to be faithful and available to us; but doesn't it take the same commitment on our part to be faithful to Him? By the way, when it comes time to talking to God, many Christians can't think of anything to say to Him— but have plenty to talk about with a friend on the phone! Think about it, dear ones!

**Prayer** is developing the hunger to clothe our passion for God in language that gripes the mind and penetrates the heart and ignites the soul. This "prayer passion" is captured by heart consecration and discipline. **Prayer is soul-invigorating exercise, wouldn't you say?**

---Matthew Sħariaħ

# Culture Watch

By Matthew Skariah

## 'America, a nation in peril'

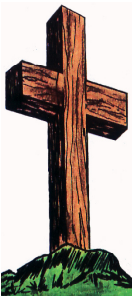
### The Rise and fall of a Nation

**"From bondage to spiritual faith;  
From spiritual faith to great courage  
From great courage to liberty;  
From liberty to abundance;  
From abundance to complacency;  
From complacency to apathy;  
From apathy to dependence;  
From dependence back into bondage."**

**When** we think of America, we think of America's founding fathers, men of faith and courage who honored God at every turn. As Christians and citizens of this great nation, we love our country and want her to "flourish and prosper," but if she continues to defy God and attempt to change His order of things, no one can tell what sudden downfall that may come upon us. Believe me; America is neither powerful nor strong enough to tamper with God's infinite creation. In God's sovereignty, He will brook no shared glory; man wants to be like God, and that's what the fuss is all about. It's an ego trip. Watch out for the tendency for self-exaltation! Evil never surrenders its hold without a bruising fight. So, the fight is on and victory is ours in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

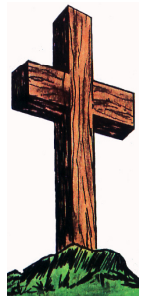
**The** modern man is very clever in manufacturing mind-numbing excuses for the inexcusable as he tries to brainwash his fellow citizens with his twisted logics and cultural and social pandering. The words of Voltaire, the French atheist come to mind, "Anyone who has the power to make you believe absurdities has the power to make you commit atrocities." America's founding fathers knew that they were under God's authority; but a new breed of Americans say otherwise. For those who pretend to be smarter and intellectually superior, may I humbly ask, if we're not under God's authority, tell me, then, under whose authority are we? **The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet**" (Nahum 1:3). America, **DO NOT** mock God because judgment lies at the door. No one can live as an enemy of God. Enough is enough. Cool it!

**The twentieth century philosopher George Santayana observed,  
"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."**



# The WPB Ministries

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